



Student Eligibility Guidance for High School Principals and Athletic Administrators

Bylaw 4-4-1, Scholarship

This document will focus on Bylaw 4-4-1 and the four exceptions which accompany this rule:

BYLAW 4-4-1 *In order to be eligible in grades 9-12, a student must be engaged in coursework during the immediately preceding grading period. For the purpose of this Bylaw 4, Section 4, the term “grading period” is defined as the school’s Board-adopted calendar (e.g., six week, nine week, 12 week or semester) and does not mean an interim marking period. Additionally, at the conclusion of the immediately preceding grading period, a student must have received passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation. For the purpose of this bylaw, the term “immediately preceding grading period” refers to the grading period of the school which immediately precedes the grading period in question. Please see Bylaw 4-3-1 for enrollment & attendance requirements during any given grading period.*

Additionally, a student engaged in a College Credit Plus (CCP) Course during a high school’s semester shall be presumed to be passing that class until it is shown that the student has received a failing grade at the conclusion of the class or subsequently dropped the class, at which time the class can no longer be used to assist the student in meeting the five-credit standard. A student who is engaged in a CCP course has an added responsibility to immediately notify the school for which they participate when any changes with their enrollment status within the CCP course occurs, and it is the school’s obligation to confirm the schedule change upon receipt of notification.

Bylaw 4-4-1 is the standard high school eligibility rule. It is based on a school’s grading period and requires a student to have received, when that grading period is concluded (think of this as a “snapshot” of the student’s academic performance up to that time), passing grades (not necessarily a traditional letter) in subjects that are worth an equivalent of five one credit courses. Please be advised that it is necessary to verify compliance with this bylaw at the end of each grading period regardless of the educational option the student-athlete has selected, with the exception of College Credit Plus (CCP) courses- See Exception 4. Whether the student is home-schooled; is attending a Community, STEM or non-public school as a non-enrolled student; taking an online credit recovery course; is attending the Career Center, is taking Credit flex courses; or any of the other myriad options for students, the school administrator must receive a written accounting of the grades received or evidence of passing the requisite five one credit courses or the equivalent when the grading period of the member school at which the student is seeking eligibility ends.

Here is a form to assist you in collecting those grades:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/CCP.Non-EnrolledStudentGradeSheet.pdf>

Here is the guidance to assist you in understanding how to compute equivalencies:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/EligibilityGuidelinesGuidanceCounselors.pdf>

This bylaw has four exceptions, each of which is explained below and includes the information needed to waive the bylaw in accordance with each exception.



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EXCEPTION 1

EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director's office may waive this requirement for a student in 12th grade and in their final year of school who (a) has accumulated sufficient credit hours to have graduated in the preceding semester/trimester; (b) continues to maintain engagement in coursework to the satisfaction of the school and in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-1; and (c) can demonstrate that the underlying purposes of this bylaw have been otherwise fulfilled based on an assessment of the student's past behavior records, attendance and previous grades.

Exception 1 Guidance: This exception will only apply for a senior who has accumulated a sufficient number of credit hours (*not necessarily the exact courses required*) to be declared a graduate in the preceding semester (this would be semester six for a first semester senior or semester seven for a second semester senior), along with meeting criteria b & c. **To request a ruling on Exception 1**, please complete the following form:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/4-4SufficientCredits.pdf>

EXCEPTION 2

EXCEPTION 2: The Executive Director's office may waive the requirements of this bylaw provided the student had been physically withdrawn or removed from school during the immediately preceding grading period because of circumstances due to personal accident, illness or family hardship. An appeal for such a waiver must come from the principal of the school using the form prescribed by the Executive Director's Office and shall include documented supporting evidence regarding the circumstances. The appeal for waiver shall contain documents with school and medical supporting evidence.

Exception 2 Guidance: This exception recognizes that students who cannot attend school during a grading period or who must take a reduced course load should be provided relief from this scholarship requirement, and thus the standard of passing five one credit courses (or the equivalent), when the reasons for that inability to meet that standard can be verified, should be waived. Please note that in order for the Executive Director's Office to consider application of this exception, this supporting evidence must be contemporaneous with the decision to withdraw the student from school or reduce the student's course load. Evidence obtained "after the fact" will not be accepted. **To request a ruling on Exception 2**, please complete the following form:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/4-4Hardship.pdf>

EXCEPTION 3

EXCEPTION 3: If a student's failure to meet the requirements of this bylaw are due to an "incomplete" given in one or more courses which the student was taking during the grading period in question, the student may have his/her eligibility restored by the Executive Director's office once the "incomplete" has been changed to a passing letter grade provided:

- a) the failure to complete the required coursework during the grading period was due to calamity day(s), family tragedy, or illness or accident as verified by a physician contemporaneous at the time of the incident; and*
- b) the "incomplete" was given in accordance with Board of Education/other governing board adopted policies and procedures and is applicable to all students in the school; and*
- c) the previously scheduled work and/or exams is/are completed within the time period provided in Board policy for completing work required to convert an "incomplete" into a letter grade; and*



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if there is no evidence that the "incomplete" was given in order to afford the student extended time in order to provide the student tutoring or other educational services simply to avoid a failing grade.

Note: This exception only applies where an "incomplete" has been issued and not a letter grade that is subsequently changed as a result of the extended time/additional work. If a high school district/system does NOT have a Board Policy on the Restoration of an Incomplete to a Grade or did not have a policy when this exception was requested, the student shall not be able to avail him or herself of this exception.

Exception 3 Guidance: Please note that this exception only applies when a student has received an Incomplete in one or more courses, not a letter grade. Further, if a high school district/system does NOT have a Board Policy on the Restoration of an Incomplete to a Grade or did not have a policy when this exception was requested, the student shall not be able to avail him or herself of this exception. **To request a ruling on Exception 3**, please complete the following form:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/4-4Incomplete.pdf>

EXCEPTION 4

EXCEPTION 4: A student enrolled in a College Credit Plus (CCP) course or courses which credit hours would have counted towards the satisfaction of this Bylaw BUT FOR the fact that the actual course work did not commence in the grading period in question (but within the same semester), can nonetheless have the course credit/credits count towards satisfaction of this requirement PROVIDED the student was enrolled in the CCP course at the beginning of the semester in question. Likewise, if the CCP course work is successfully completed within the semester of the high school's calendar but before the high school's calendar's next grading period within the same semester starts, the CCP credits can count towards satisfaction of this requirement. (See Bylaw 4-4-1 for enrollment requirements during any given grading period)

NOTE 1: This exception does not apply to CCP courses taken over the summer (see Bylaw 4-4-7) or those completed during a different semester.

NOTE 2: If a student utilizes this exception to satisfy the requirements of this bylaw and subsequently drops the CCP course, the student shall become ineligible for the remainder of the grading period in question upon the school's confirmation of the schedule change. If the CCP course was not necessary to satisfy the requirements of the bylaw (5- credit standard) then there would be no penalty for dropping the course.

Exception 4 Guidance: This exception removes the obligation for school administrators to determine when a CCP course starts in relation to the school's grading period. Per the second paragraph of Bylaw 4-4-1, a student engaged in a CCP course is assumed to be passing it until it is shown the class is dropped or failed. Therefore, students who are enrolled in a College Credit Plus (CCP) course(s) **at the beginning of a semester** are permitted to use that class to meet the 5-credit standard even if they are not engaged in the course during the grading period in question. There is no form or ruling required by the Executive Director's Office for the application of this exception. It is a self-regulated exception processed at the local level. Please contact the OHSAA Office with any questions.

Word of Caution: If a student utilizes this exception to earn their athletic eligibility and subsequently drops the CCP course, Note 2 requires that the student become ineligible for the remainder of the grading period once the school confirms the schedule change.



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NOTE ON ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR:

Please note that the concept of “substantively eligible,” as expressed in Bylaw 4-1-1, Administrative Error, is NOT applicable to this high school scholarship standard. Requests for appeal citing this bylaw shall be denied. *“Students who have not met the high school or middle school scholarship requirement are not “substantively eligible;” and a student who fails to register for enough credit hours, fails a class(es) or drops a class that lowers the student below the requisite number of credits, always has a shared responsibility for this shortcoming thus disqualifying such shortcoming from the “due solely to an administrative error” category. Therefore; this Bylaw shall never be used to waive the standards found in Bylaws 4-4-1 or 4-4-5.”*

NOTE ON EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS:

On occasion, the OHSAA is asked to provide guidance on how to evaluate completion of a course requirement that is being taken in one of these non-traditional offerings. The Board of Education or governing board of each member school is essentially tasked with that responsibility, but as educators we can provide suggestions. Some school districts set standards for completion, particularly with online or credit flex courses, which require a student to complete a specific percentage of the course at the end of each grading period in order to receive a satisfactory grade. This process keeps students engaged throughout the duration of that course work and deters a student from failing to complete any work during a specific grading period. To assist with these options, we do need to know the duration of the course and the credit to be awarded. When supplied with that information along with the delivery mechanism, we may be able to help you with this determination. Please feel free to consult us if you have any questions.

Please feel free to contact Kristin Ronai (kronai@ohsaa.org) or Ronald Sayers (rsayers@ohsaa.org) if you have any questions!