



Ohio High School Athletic Association
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Guidance for 2020-2021—High School Principals and Athletic Administrators

Bylaw 4-4 - Scholarship

Overview – Verification of Eligibility and Summer School/Other Educational Options

Fundamental to the privilege of participation in interscholastic athletics is the notion that students are to be scholars first and athletes second. Thus, the members have adopted a series of bylaws that reinforce a minimum level of scholastic achievement that is required for a student to be eligible to participate in contests, **which are defined as any game, meet, competition, preview or scrimmage**. Practices and training are exempt from this prohibition, and schools **may** choose to allow students who are academically ineligible to continue to practice with their teams.

This section of the student eligibility bylaw represents the only required OHSAA academic standard. The required grade point average standard (G.P.A.) is mandated by state law for all schools in Ohio. The G.P.A. is established by the local Board of Education or governing board in a non-public school and is overseen exclusively by the member school. In addition, member schools may adopt more stringent standards and may review them more frequently; however, a student who is not compliant with this bylaw may not have his or her eligibility restored except at the beginning of the next grading period as stipulated in Bylaw 4-4-3.

Please note that students who are not enrolled in the member school are required to fulfill these scholarship requirements. That includes students who are home educated. Despite what some may contend, interscholastic athletics is a privilege to be accorded to those who meet the eligibility standards. Refusal to comply with this scholarship standard shall render the student ineligible.

The intent of this series on the Scholarship Bylaw is to provide guidance as to the purpose behind each bylaw and any action required in support of adopted exceptions.

This document will focus on **Bylaws 4-4-6 and 4-4-7 – Verification of Eligibility and Summer School**. These bylaws read as follows:

4-4-6 - The primary responsibility for verifying eligibility rests with the receiving school. Eligibility shall be verified by reviewing school records or **written verification** from the sending school.

Please note the importance of establishing this scholastic record through written verification whenever a student enrolls in your school for the first time or transfers from another school from either within Ohio or from outside Ohio.

4-4-7 - Summer school or other educational options may not be used to bring a student into compliance with Bylaws 4-4-1, 4-4-4 or 4-4-5.

NOTE: The prohibition in this bylaw is applicable both prospectively and retrospectively.

The members have verified this bylaw several times in the past 30 years. Currently all course work must be completed during the grading period except as specified in any of the exceptions to the scholarship bylaws. Thus, summer school or any other educational options outside of the end of the preceding grading period shall not be used to replace failing grades from the preceding grading period or to add to course work from the preceding grading period. This prohibition includes College Credit Plus coursework taken during the summer. Such work shall not be used to satisfy the requirements of the scholarship bylaws 4-4-1, 4-4-4 or 4-4-5 for the first grading period of the new school year.

4/3/2020

In addition to checking a students' eligibility at the conclusion of a grading period, it is also always important to check students' course schedules at the beginning of each grading period to determine that the students are taking enough course work to support eligibility for the next grading period.

In addition, **please remind students and parents frequently that a student-athlete should never change a schedule or drop a course without consulting either the athletic administrator or the principal.** We recognize that school counselors do a fantastic job advising students, but it is not their primary responsibility to advise students on athletic eligibility. **Scheduling decisions are primarily the responsibility of the student and parents.**

Please feel free to contact Deborah Moore or Roxanne Price if you have any questions!