

**160-5-1-.18 COMPETITIVE INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES IN GRADES 6 -12.**

**(1) DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **Competitive Interscholastic Activities** – Any organized competition between schools that is held outside the regular instructional day. This does not include vocational clubs, academic bowls, geography bees, spelling bees, science fairs, math bowls, or specific subject area fairs.

(b) **Competitive Interscholastic Athletics** – A competitive interscholastic activity specifically pertaining to any organized athletic sport which shall include cheerleading.

(c) **Course** – any subject with a state approved course number as defined in Rule 160-4-2-.20 LIST OF STATE-FUNDED K-8 SUBJECTS AND 9 -12 COURSES FOR STUDENTS ENTERING NINTH GRADE IN 2008.

(d) **Full-Time** – A student enrolled and attending the full six segments as defined in the Quality Basic Education Act or the equivalent thereof.

(e) **Georgia High School Association** – The association with which the State Board of Education has a cooperative relationship to establish statewide regulations for 9-12 interscholastic competitive activities.

(f) **Local Education Agency (LEA)** – local school system pursuant to local board of education control and management.

**(2) REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy regulating competitive interscholastic activities.

(b) The school principal shall regulate competitive interscholastic activities in his or her school and shall ensure that all staff members adhere to local board of education policies, and rules of the State Board of Education.

(c) A student wishing to participate in interscholastic competitive activities shall be enrolled full-time in a public school during the semester of participation.

(d) Retention of students for athletic purposes is prohibited.

(e) Middle Grades Requirements.

1. These provisions are considered as minimum standards for each LEA to abide by or surpass in its efforts to maintain the highest possible standards relative to its competitive interscholastic activities.

(i) Student Eligibility.

(I) For determining student eligibility, the grading period shall be a semester. The same period shall also be the minimum length of the ineligibility period.

(II) Students participating in competitive interscholastic activities shall pass a minimum of 70% of courses carrying credit toward grade promotion in the semester immediately preceding participation.

I. Students initially enrolling in the first semester of the sixth grade are exempt from this requirement.

II. An exploratory course that is comprised of several multi-week courses taken during the same period of the day within the semester shall be averaged to count as one subject for eligibility purposes.

III. If more than one exploratory course is taken during a semester during two different periods of the day, then each course shall be individually calculated into the average to determine student eligibility.

(III) Student eligibility shall be determined on the first school day of a semester.

I. A maximum of two courses taken in summer school and carrying credit toward grade promotion may be counted for eligibility purposes for participation in first semester activities.

II. If a student receives an incomplete for a subject that will be used to establish eligibility, he/she may complete make-up work that will change the incomplete to a grade provided this opportunity is available to all students.

A. Make-up work must be completed within 14 school days after the start of the semester.

B. A student is ineligible until make-up work is completed and the required passing grade(s) is/are recorded in the student's permanent record.

(IV) Independent study course credit taken in summer school may not be used to gain eligibility.

(V) Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. For summer school credits to be accepted for eligibility purposes from either private schools, or home study

programs, the credits must have been earned in programs approved by an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education in accordance with Rule 160-5-1-.15  
ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSFER CREDIT AND/OR GRADES.

ii. Physical Examinations.

(I) All students who participate in competitive interscholastic athletics or cheerleading shall have an annual physical examination prior to participation in any tryout, practice or conditioning, whichever comes first. The physical examination form shall indicate whether the student is cleared without restriction, cleared with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment, specify whether the student is cleared for certain sports or all sports, and be signed by a doctor of medicine or a doctor of osteopathy. The physical examination form shall also include the date that the exam was performed (month, day, and year), the student's name, gender, age, and date of birth.

(iii) Special Provisions.

(I) Special education students shall meet the same eligibility requirements as regular students, except that the courses passed must be according to the student's IEP. Special Olympics or other athletic programs designed exclusively for students with disabilities are exempt.

(II) Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2161 local school systems shall facilitate the opportunity for transitioning children of military families' inclusion in extracurricular activities, regardless of application deadlines, to the extent they are otherwise qualified. The meaning and determination of military children shall be as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2130 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2131.

(III) Local boards of education may allow schools within its jurisdiction to join leagues or appropriate associations or the purpose of formulating and enforcing uniform rules of eligibility and play. Nothing in this rule shall be deemed to authorize the use of state or local tax dollars for membership in these organizations.

**(3) EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIP.**

(a) The State Board of Education supports a cooperative relationship with the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) in establishing statewide regulations for 9-12 interscholastic competitive activities. A local board of education may allow a school within its jurisdiction to join GHSA; however, nothing in this rule shall be deemed to authorize the use of state or local tax dollars for membership in GHSA.

(b) The State Superintendent of Schools or designee serves as a member of the State Executive Committee of the GHSA. Reports shall be made to the State Board of any changes in the Georgia High School Association Constitution and Bylaws.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-240.

**Adopted: November 4, 2009**

**Effective: November 24, 2009**