

I. Eligible Students**A. General Policy**

Any student in grades 9-12 who is assigned to a school based upon the residence of his/her parent/guardian or legal custodian is eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that school. A student is eligible at his/her assigned school if he/she has attended school within that administrative unit the previous two semesters.

B. Gaston County Magnet Schools

Students enrolled in the Gaston County Magnet School (a school absent of attendance zones) are eligible for interscholastic athletics. In the event a Magnet School student chooses to return to the home school, the student will be eligible for interscholastic athletics provided the prohibition against playing the same sport for two schools in the same season is not violated.

C. Gaston County Choice Programs

Any student accepted to a School Choice program (a program within a school that has attendance zones), prior to the starting date of the fall athletic season, is eligible for interscholastic athletics at the assigned school. In the event a School Choice student chooses to return to the home school, the student will be eligible for interscholastic athletics provided the prohibition against playing the same sport for two schools in the same season is not violated.

D. Change of Domicile

Any student who changes domicile (moves) will be eligible to remain in the school of origin and be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics if “properly” enrolled for one calendar year prior to the change in domicile provided the student has been enrolled for a period of 365 days.

E. Transfers From Outside of the Local Education Agency (LEA)

Students in grades 9-12 who are domiciled inside of Gaston County and who transfer into the LEA will be eligible to participate.

II. Ineligible Students**A. Transfers to/from Schools within Gaston County**

Students in grades 9-12 who are domiciled inside of Gaston County and who transfer from one Gaston County School to another Gaston County School are ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 days from the date of enrollment in the new school.

B. Transfers from Outside Gaston County

Students in grades 9-12 who are domiciled outside Gaston County and who transfer into a Gaston County School will be ineligible to participate in athletics for 365 days from the date of transferring into the new school. The student shall be assigned to a school within a reasonable proximity to the student's domicile that meets the best interest of the student and the orderly and efficient administration of the public schools.

C. Feeder School Transfer

A student is not eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics in a high school based on his/her transfer and participation in athletics at a middle school which is a feeder school to that high school. The student is only eligible if he/she is assigned to the high school based on the residence of his/her parent/guardian or legal custodian.

III. Waivers

An athlete who has been deemed ineligible due to the above defined transfers may request a waiver by the Athletic Director in limited circumstances. A waiver request form will be available in the office of the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will notify the student and the parent(s) of his decision.

A. Medical/Health Related

A student with a serious physical or mental illness, handicap, or disability may be reassigned to a school which meets his needs. The student's physician, psychiatrist or psychologist shall complete a form provided by the Athletic Director describing the nature of the student's medical difficulty. The Medical Review Officer for the Gaston County Schools will determine, after necessary consultation with the student's physician, the necessity of the transfer. The

Athletic Director will be notified of the decision of the Medical Review Officer.

- (1) Under this provision, the student will be assigned to the appropriate school in the student's attendance area, wherever possible. If no space is available or the needed program is not available in the attendance area, the student will be assigned to the nearest appropriate school which meets the student's needs.

The student's parent(s) will be notified of the decision by the Athletic Director that a waiver has been granted.

A Medical Review Officer will be appointed annually by the Superintendent who will report the same to the Transfer Committee of the Board.

B. Specified Requirement of Social Services or the Court System

A student whose custody has been established by court order at the request of Social Services or by the court on its own motion may request a waiver. (This does not include custody orders entered into by agreement of the parties). The Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services will validate any such information to the Athletic Director who may grant a waiver

C. Student Protection

In the event there is a documented need to protect a student, the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services will provide the necessary school, court or other documents to the Superintendent who may grant a waiver.

D. Student/Child of School Employee

A "full time" school employee who has a child/student athlete who is granted a transfer under the regular transfer policy (to the school which the parent works or school in the closest geographical proximity to parent's employment) may request a waiver.

E. Siblings

Siblings of students who have transferred from one high school to another high school may request a waiver to that same school as long as there remains one eligible sibling in the school.

IV. Appeals

A student may appeal the denial of a waiver by the Athletic Director to the Superintendent. The original waiver request form shall be reviewed by the Superintendent along with any other evidence or pertinent testimony the student or parent(s) believe to be important in their appeal. The Superintendent's office will notify the student and parent(s) of the time, place and date of the hearing. The hearing will be informal and closed in accordance with N.C.G.S. §143-318.11.

V. Governance

In addition to School Board policies (in particular policy 4170, School Assignment), administrative regulations and local school rules, interscholastic athletics at the high school level are also subject to the rules and regulations established by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

NOTE: Students with transfers (including those from outside of Gaston County and who received one full year's credit with Gaston County Schools the previous year) approved prior to the adoption of this Board Policy (6/16/03) will be granted eligibility throughout high school at the original school of transfer only.

Adopted: 0716/2001

Revised: 06/04/2007, 06/19/2017, 02/18/2019, 03/16/2020