

Middle/Junior High School Athletic Eligibility

Only students in grades seven through nine may participate in middle school (7th and 8th grades) or junior high school (7th, 8th and 9th grades) interscholastic athletic competition, provided ninth grade is housed in the same building with seventh and eighth grades. In order to qualify for public school participation, a student must meet the following requirements:

Academics

In grades seven and eight, the student must pass at least one less course than the number of required core courses each semester and meet promotion standards established by the LEA.

If an athlete is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester. It is the responsibility of the school principal to check the academic status of each student/athlete enrolled in school at the beginning and close of a semester.

NOTE: An athlete becomes eligible or ineligible on the first day of the new semester.

Age

The principal must have evidence of the legal birth date of the student. A student shall not participate on a seventh or eighth grade team if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.

A student shall not participate on a ninth grade junior high school team if the student becomes 16 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year. A middle/junior high school student who is overage for middle/junior high school play shall be eligible for senior high school participation.

Ninth graders can be divided so that some play with the seventh and eighth grades at the middle school, provided the ninth grade is housed at the same building. Others play at the senior high level, depending upon local policy. Once a student begins practicing with a high school team, he/she may not, at a later date, move down to the seventh, eighth, or ninth grade (junior high school) team. A ninth grade student beginning play with the junior high school team may, at a later date, move to the high school team, but could not return to the junior high school team.

Attendance

A player must have attended school at least 85% of the previous semester. A student must, at any time of any game in which he or she participates, be a regularly enrolled member of the school's student body, according to local policy. If there is no local policy, "regularly enrolled" is defined as enrolled for at least one-half of the "minimum load." It is recommended the student be in school the day of the contest.

Eligibility Lists

Eligibility lists shall be certified with the signature of the principal and filed with the local superintendent (or his/her designee) prior to the first game or contest in that sport. One copy shall be kept on file in the office of the principal. All eligible students shall be included and all information must be complete and accurate when certified by the principal. It is recommended to keep these lists on file for at least three years.

Promotion

Promotion is defined as progressing to the next grade. In grades seven and eight, the student must meet state and local promotion standards each semester. This includes the academic requirement listed above. Regardless of the school organization pattern, a student who is promoted from the sixth grade to the seventh grade automatically meets the courses passed requirement for the first semester of the seventh grade.

Residence

The student must meet the residence criteria of G.S. 115C-366(a). The student may participate only at the school to which the student is assigned by the LEA. Transfers within the same administrative unit may be governed by the local Board of Education policy. A student transferred from one administrative unit to another by mutual agreement, as provided in G.S.115C-366.1 (F), is immediately eligible for athletic participation in the receiving unit.

Semester Rule

No student may be eligible to participate at the middle school level for a period lasting longer than four (4) consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's entry into seventh

grade. The principal shall have evidence of the date of each player's entry into the seventh grade and monitor the four (4) consecutive semesters.

Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form

In order to be eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletic contests, the student must receive a medical examination once every 365 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S.90-9, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2. The recommended Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form can be found at: <http://www.nchsaa.org/pages/464/health-safety-sports-medicine/>.

Students absent from athletic practice for five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury must receive a medical release from a physician licensed to practice medicine before readmittance to practice or contests. Students with potential head injuries must receive a medical release by a physician licensed to practice medicine before readmittance to practices or contests.

It is recommended that players be covered by adequate medical and accident insurance and that medical aid be immediately available at all times. Schools should have medical release forms on site at athletic events in case medical treatment is required.