



# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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## REQUIREMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

AP No. 5122  
Effective Date:  
September 25, 2024

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- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this administrative procedure is to delineate system wide academic eligibility requirements for students who participate in interscholastic athletics and to establish guidelines for developing strategies to encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities.
- II. **POLICY:**
- A. The Prince George’s County Board of Education (Board) recognizes that interscholastic athletics can play an important role in promoting the academic success of students. Athletics instill a sense of pride in school and community, teach lifelong lessons and skills of teamwork and self-discipline and facilitate the physical and emotional development of our youth. The Board recognizes that student participation in interscholastic athletics is not only a privilege but is also an honor that requires responsibility for maintaining one’s academic standing in the classroom and for maintaining a high standard of conduct.
- B. The Board is also committed to ensuring that all Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) students have equitable access to educational programs and school-related activities. The Board believes that access to, and participation in, extracurricular activities engages students’ interest and ability and is an important part of students’ overall educational experience. (Board Policy 5122)
- III. **BACKGROUND:**
- A. PGCPS envisions an interscholastic athletic program which will allow students to pursue academic and athletic excellence through participation in a high-quality sports

program. It has been the belief of PGCPSS that student participation in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities is a way to achieve a balanced educational program. All PGCPSS students should be encouraged to seek and maintain the highest possible academic achievement. Interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities are important and beneficial to students.

- B. Additionally, the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) believes that the ultimate indicator of value of school athletic programs must be the level of citizenship displayed by those who participate.

**IV. DEFINITIONS:** The following definitions apply to the content of this administrative procedure:

- A. *Extracurricular activity* – Any approved before or after school activity that is utilized for academic enrichment or to promote service to the community, excluding interscholastic athletics.
- B. *Interscholastic athletics* – Approved athletic competition between or among two or more middle or high schools.
- C. *Interscholastic Athletics Eligibility Index (“Eligibility Index”)* – The grade point average of at least a 2.0 for the quarter preceding the eligibility period.
- D. *Graduation Cohort* – Class of students who are considered to have entered grade 9 in the same year. Each cohort is defined and referred to by the expected graduation year.
- E. *Graduation Cohort Year* – A group of students who begin as first-time ninth graders in a particular school year.
- F. *Participate/Participation* – For purposes of this administrative procedure *participation* in interscholastic athletics includes taking part in official team practices, playing in official games, attending games along with the team members, and wearing the team uniform.

**V. PROCEDURES:**

A. Interscholastic Athletics

1. Academic Eligibility for Participation

- a. All students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 must earn an overall quarter Eligibility Index of at least 2.0 in order to participate in interscholastic athletics during the following quarter. Students entering the 6th and 9th grade for the first time are exempt until the first grading period is completed.
  - b. If a student's Eligibility Index falls below a 2.0 while participating in a sport which continues through the following quarter, the student will no longer be eligible for participation in the sport. The student will need to cease participation, effective the date the report cards are released to students, as listed on the approved Board of Education school calendar.
  - c. Students may participate in athletic contests for a maximum of four seasons in any one sport in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 starting from their COHORT 4- year program. After the 4th year, students may not participate in sports if they are enrolled in high school for a 5th year. Students may not repeat the 12th grade and participate in sports (no waivers).
  - d. Students who are **19 years or older** as of August 31 are ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. Middle school students **who are older than 14 years of age** at the beginning and/or during each sport season are ineligible to participate while in middle school. Middle, intermediate, or junior high school students are not eligible to compete or practice with high school teams.
  - e. Students engaged in virtual learning through the PGCPs Online Campus enrolled as full-time students are permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics with their designated boundary school. The above academic requirements are applicable. Athletes must provide their own transportation for practices and games.
2. Athletic Equity for Students with Disabilities
- a. Students who meet the eligibility requirements may not be excluded on the basis of disability from the opportunity to try out for and if selected, participate in mainstream interscholastic athletic programs.
  - b. Schools shall provide reasonable accommodations necessary to provide students with disabilities with equal opportunities to participate to the fullest extent possible in mainstream athletic programs.
  - c. Students with disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements may be

excluded from mainstream athletic programs if inclusion:

- 1) Presents an objective safety risk to the student or others based on an individualized assessment of the student; or
- 2) Fundamentally alters the nature of the school's mainstream athletic program.

### 3. Computation of Students' Quarter Averages

- a. PGCPs Information Technology personnel will compute the Eligibility Index for all students in grades 9-12 at the end of the first, second, and third quarter and for all students in grades 8-11 at the end of the fourth quarter. (Averages will be rounded to two places behind the decimal.) This data will be sent to schools. The Extracurricular Activities Eligibility Index (Quarter GPA) will be printed on student report cards at the end of each quarter.
- b. If a student transfers to PGCPs from an approved, unapproved, or unaccredited school during an academic quarter, the quarter GPA will be determined by averaging all grades for all credit bearing courses attempted during the previous quarter. Each local school will be responsible for computing the quarter GPA for these students using the processes developed for this purpose by Information Technology. During the next academic quarter, the student's Eligibility Index will be calculated by Information Technology.

### 4. Raising Grade Point Average (GPA) Through Summer School

- a. A student may raise their GPA by retaking a course or through taking an additional course in summer school.
- b. A student who passes all courses at the end of the year but achieves a fourth quarter GPA below 2.0 may enroll in any summer school course approved by the Instructional Director or the Area 3 Associate Superintendent. The course may be for original or repeat credit.
- c. A student who fails a course in English, social studies, mathematics, and/or science must repeat and pass the course failed.
- d. A student who fails a course which is not offered in summer school may enroll

in a summer school course which has been approved by the Area 3 Associate Superintendent or their designee. The course must be in the same content area.

- e. If a course is repeated in summer school or evening school, the new grade will replace the existing grade for purposes of determining eligibility only. If a course is taken for original credit in summer or evening school, that grade will be averaged with existing grades for purposes of determining eligibility.
- f. The Eligibility Index should not be recalculated manually. Information Technology will distribute to schools the process to update the Eligibility Index from summer school or evening school grades.

5. Student Exemptions and Probations

- a. There is no probation period allowed nor are eligibility exemptions given to ineligible students for any reason.

6. Students Ineligible for Participation in Interscholastic Athletics

a. Evening Virtual Program (EVP)

Students in EVP will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics. Due to the times of class and attendance requirement, student-athletes may not be fully enrolled in the Evening Virtual Program and participate in interscholastic athletics.

b. Educational Online Program (EOP)

Students in EOP will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics during a sports season and enrolled in EOP at the same time.

c. Home School and Non-public High School

Students enrolled in homeschool programs are not permitted to participate in PGcps interscholastic athletics. Students enrolled in the PGcps non-public high schools must have prior approval from the Office of Athletics to participate at their boundary school.

d. Non-traditional High School

Students enrolled in non-traditional high schools are not permitted to participate in PGCPs interscholastic athletics without prior approval by the Associate Superintendent of High Schools and Non-Traditional High Schools.

7. Appeals

- a. Any appeal involving the challenge of a course grade should follow the steps described in Administrative Procedure 5116 – Grade Change Authorization and Appeals.
- b. Appeals for the denial of interscholastic athletic eligibility should be made to the Coordinating Supervisor of Athletics or their designee.

B. Participation in Extracurricular Activities

The principal/designee will provide and communicate opportunities for all students to participate in extracurricular activities by ensuring that there is a total program of extracurricular activities in the school that is comprehensive and well-balanced, providing many and varied opportunities for all students. All students may participate in extracurricular activities regardless of academic standing. All students may participate in extracurricular activities regardless of race, color, national origin, citizenship status, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or age.

**VI. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:**

- A. The Office of Interscholastic Athletics is responsible for the monitoring and compliance of requirements outlined in this administrative procedure.
- B. The Office of Interscholastic Athletics will provide training to Athletic Directors and Principals annually.
- C. The Office of Interscholastic Athletics shall keep a record of all appeal requests and their outcomes for five (5) years.
- D. For the Superintendent’s annual report to the Board, the Office of Interscholastic Athletics is responsible for tracking the number of participants in interscholastic athletics, and the number of students declared academically ineligible.

**VII. RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:**

Administrative Procedure 5116 – Grade Change Authorization and Appeals

Administrative Procedure 5121.3 – Grading and Reporting for High Schools, Grade Nine through Grade Twelve

**VIII. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:**

The Interscholastic Athletics Office and the Area 3 - High Schools & Non-Traditional Programs Office are responsible for the maintenance and updating of this administrative procedure.

**IX. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES:** This administrative procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 5122, dated August 1, 2016.

**XI. EFFECTIVE DATE:** September 25, 2024

Attachments: