



2009-2010

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY BROCHURE

Students: Your participation in high school activities is dependent on your eligibility. PROTECT that eligibility by reviewing with your parent(s)/guardian(s) this summary of Minnesota State High School League rules which govern your participation. Complete regulations are found in the MSHSL Official Handbook which is available at each member high school and which is also posted on the MSHSL Web site: www.mshsl.org. Please keep this brochure for reference, and if there is a question about any rule interpretation, **CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR.**

I understand that once I sign the eligibility statement all eligibility rules apply:

- Twelve (12) months of the year;
- Whether I am currently participating or not;
- Continuously from the first signing of the statement.

Parents/Guardians: REVIEW the following rules with your son or daughter. Your role in stressing the value of following these rules cannot be overstated.

Checklist for Student Eligibility (If you cannot check all 11 items, see your athletic/activities director or principal)

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| _____ 1. Making academic progress toward graduation. | _____ 8. Have not and will not compete in non-school events in my sport after reporting for the school team. |
| _____ 2. Will not have turned 20 before the start of the season in which I participate. | _____ 9. Have not and will not use or possess tobacco or alcoholic beverages, use, consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substance, including steroids. |
| _____ 3. Physical exam within the last three (3) years on file with the school. | _____ 10. Have not and will not violate the racial/religious/sexual harassment/violence/and hazing bylaws of the MSHSL. |
| _____ 4. Have not transferred schools. | _____ 11. I agree to fully cooperate in any investigation honestly and truthfully. |
| _____ 5. Will not play more than four (4) seasons in any sport in grades 9-12. | |
| _____ 6. Have not dropped out of school or repeated a grade while in high school. | |
| _____ 7. Have not accepted cash in any amount or merchandise valued at more than \$100 for participating in a sport. | |

INFORMED CONSENT: By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury and the transmission of infectious diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis B, herpes and others. Although serious injuries are not common and the risk of HIV transmission is almost nonexistent in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Participants have the responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their own equipment daily.

GENERAL RULES

1. ***ACADEMIC** — (Credit Requirement) To be eligible, a student must be making satisfactory progress toward the school's requirement for graduation.
2. ***AGE** — A student representing a member school in League activities shall be under 20 years of age at the start of the season. If, however, a student has started a season, the student will be permitted to complete that season after reaching the student's 20th birthday. Adapted athletes are eligible to participate until their 22nd birthday provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.
3. **FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS** — Approved Foreign Exchange Students are limited to 1 calendar year of high school eligibility beginning with their 1st date of enrollment and attendance.
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – students not participating in a CSIET approved foreign exchange program are eligible only at the B-squad or JV level for one calendar year.
4. **AMATEUR** — A student must be an amateur in that sport. A student may not receive cash or merchandise for athletic participation. A student does not lose her/his amateur status because of reimbursement for officiating, instructing, teaching or coaching a sport.
5. **ATHLETIC CAMPS AND CLINICS** —
 - A. **School Year:** Students may attend athletic camps and clinics which have been approved by their high school principal.
 - B. **Summer Vacation Period:** Non-school specialized athletic camps and clinics do not require approval.
 1. The non-school sponsored camp or clinic fee must be provided by the student or the student's parent(s) or guardian, unless other arrangements are approved by the Board of Directors.
 2. A student may attend a camp or clinic where a member of the school's coaching staff (sophomore, B-Squad, junior varsity or varsity) in that sport owns, administers, directs, organizes, or serves as an instructor or is a staff member during the student's attendance.
 - C. **Penalty:**
 1. First Violation: After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks of that season, whichever is greater. If there are fewer than two (2) events remaining in that sport, the loss of eligibility will continue into the next season in that sport. Note: This means that a senior who violates the bylaws at the end of one sport season will lose eligibility for two (2) games in the next sport season in which the student participates.
 2. Second Violation: After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests or three (3) weeks, whichever is greater.
 3. Third Violation: After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests or four (4) weeks, whichever is greater.
6. **CONSECUTIVE PENALTIES:** Penalties shall be consecutive beginning with the student's first participation in a League activity and continuing through the student's high school career.
7. **AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS BYLAW** — Acceptable awards to students in recognition of participation in high school activities include medals, ribbons, letters, trophies, plaques and other items of little or no intrinsic value (\$100.00 or less). Violation will render a student ineligible for participation in that activity.
8. **COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY TEAMS** — Individuals who have participated with a college or university team are ineligible for participation in any activity of the League.

9. **FAIR HEARING PROCEDURE** — The League Constitution provides a Fair Hearing Procedure for the student or parent contesting a school's determination of ineligibility for a student. **The student has 10 calendar days in which to appeal the school's decision.** The appeals process includes an appeal before a hearing panel at the school and the right, if desired, to appeal that decision to the League's Board of Directors. An independent hearing examiner will hear the appeal and make written findings of fact, conclusions and a recommendation for the Board of Directors following the hearing. The Board's decision shall be final. A complete listing of the Fair Hearing Procedure may be obtained from the athletic director or principal of the high school or on Web at www.mshsl.org in the Publications section.
10. ***ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE, AND REQUIRED SUBJECT LOAD** — Students must be fully enrolled in (as defined by the Minnesota Department of Education) and attending the school before they are eligible to represent that school in MSHSL sponsored activities. Students must be properly registered, attending school and classes regularly, and enrolled in the required number of credits to graduate in four (4) years after first entering the 9th grade.
11. ***GENERAL ELIGIBILITY** — In order to be eligible for regular season and MSHSL tournament competition, a student must be fully enrolled as defined by the Minnesota Department of Education and a bona fide member of his or her high school in good standing. A student who is under penalty of exclusion, expulsion or suspension, whose character or conduct violates the Student Code of Responsibilities and is not in good standing, shall be ineligible for a period of time as determined by the principal.

Student Code of Responsibilities

As a student participating in my school's interscholastic activities, I understand and accept the following responsibilities:

1. *I will respect the rights and beliefs of others and will treat others with courtesy and consideration.*

2. *I will be fully responsible for my own actions and the consequences of my actions*

3. *I will respect the property of others.*

4. *I will respect and obey the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.*

5. *I will show respect to those who are responsible for enforcing the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.*

A student ejected from a contest shall be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled game or meet at that level of competition and all other games or meets in the interim at any level of competition, for the first ejection. All subsequent ejections shall result in ineligibility for four (4) regularly scheduled games or meets.

12. ***GRADUATE** — A student shall not be a graduate of a high school or any secondary school. This includes foreign exchange students and international students.
13. **LAST DATE TO JOIN A TEAM** — To be eligible for section and state competition, a student must be a member of that school's team not later than the fourth Monday from the official start of that sport season. Gymnasts must be on the school's team not later than the third Monday from the official start of that season. When a sport season begins on a Monday, that day shall be counted as the first Monday.

14. **NON-SCHOOL COMPETITION AND TRAINING FOR TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL SPORTS** —

A. **During the High School Season:** During the high school season a student may not participate as a member of a team or as an individual competitor in non-school sponsored games, meets, tournaments or contests, in the same sport. *Participation defined: practice, training, tryouts, scrimmaging and competing. Season Defined: The high school season shall run from the first date that practice may begin until the team is eliminated in MSHSL tournament competition.* Baseball, Softball and Skiing are exceptions to this rule.

Exception: Non-School Training During the High School Season for Athletes Who Qualify as Individual Competitors to the State Tournament: (Swimming, Cross Country, Tennis, Skiing, Gymnastics, Wrestling, Synchronize Swimming, Golf, and Track and Field)

Lessons/Training: During the MSHSL high school season athletes may take lessons from professionals and other non-school coaches without limit as to where, when or who may provide the training. Athletes may not miss a high school practice, game, or meet to take a lesson or train for a non-school event. Athletes may take lessons and or train with a non-school team/club during the high school season in the same sport.

Competition: Athletes will be able to compete in non-school events/competitions that do not match the events in which athletes currently compete in high school competition.

Exception: Summer Vacation Period — Students may participate in non-school competitions, meets, games, tournaments in the same sport they currently play at the high school level during the summer vacation period. *Summer Vacation Defined: Summer vacation shall start on the Saturday following the fourth Friday in May and end on Labor Day.*

Summer Coaching waiver: If a student participates on a team coached by a member of the high school coaching staff, coaching contact shall end on July 31 unless a conditional extension to the summer waiver is granted by the school's athletic director.

Students may take private lessons during the MSHSL season.

- B. **During the School Year, Prior To and Following the High School Sports Season:** A student may participate in contests, meets or tournaments as an individual competitor or as a member of a non-school team provided that these activities are voluntary and not influenced or directed by a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff.
1. A student may not use any type of high school uniform.
 2. A student may not receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport. Power skating, tennis, gymnastics, and indoor soccer are included in this limitation.
 3. A student may receive training through private lessons from a person who is not a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport.
 4. A student's fee for non-school coaching or training must be provided by the student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) unless approved by the Board of Directors.
- C. **Summer Vacation Period:** A student may compete as an individual or as a member of a nonschool team even though competing on a high school team in the same sport. *Summer Vacation Defined: Summer vacation shall start on the Saturday following the fourth Friday in May and ending on Labor Day.* (Exception: Summer Coaching Waiver)
- D. **Penalty:**
1. **First Violation:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks of that season, whichever is greater. If there are fewer than two (2) events remaining in that sport, the loss of eligibility will continue into the next season in that sport. Note: This means that a senior who violates the bylaws at the end of one sport season will lose eligibility for two (2) games in the next sport season in which the student participates.
 2. **Second Violation:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next six (6) consecutive

interscholastic contests or three (3) weeks, whichever is greater.

3. Third Violation: After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility in that sport for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests or four (4) weeks, whichever is greater.
4. Consecutive Penalties: Penalties shall be consecutive beginning with the student's first participation in a League activity and continuing through the student's high school career.

E. Special Considerations:

1. National Teams and Olympic Development Programs — The MSHSL may permit participation by high school students on bona fide national teams or in Olympic development programs if:
 - a. The program is approved and supported by the national governing body of the sport or if there is an Olympic development program of training and competition.
 - b. Directly funded by a national governing body on a national level.
 - c. Authorized by a national governing body for athletes having potential for future national team participation.

Students who are invited to participate on National Teams or in Olympic Development Programs must contact their high school principal to obtain an application form. This must be completed at least thirty (30) days prior to participation.

2. During the school year, students who participate for their school in a sport may participate through training, try-out or competition on a National Team or in a United States Olympic Development Program provided the student receives an individual invitation from the United States Olympic Committee or the United States National Governing Body on the national level for that sport.
3. Students who have completed their eligibility in a sport are exempt from the non-school competition and training rules in that sport.

15. *PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND PARENTS PERMIT — Any student who intends to participate in high school interscholastic athletics and cheerleading activities must have on file in the school, a record of a physical examination performed within the previous three (3) years. A health questionnaire shall be completed annually and could indicate the need for a physical examination prior to participation. The signature of the parent or guardian approving participation is required.

16. *SEASONS OF PARTICIPATION — No student may participate in more than four (4) seasons in any sport while enrolled in grades 9-12, semesters 1-8 inclusive.

17. *SEMESTERS IN HIGH SCHOOL — A student shall not participate in an interscholastic contest after the student's eighth semester in grades 9-12 inclusive. All eight semesters shall be consecutive, beginning in the 9th grade. The attendance of 15 days or more in one semester will count as a semester in administering this standard.

18. JUNIOR HIGH PARTICIPATION — Participation in high school interscholastic programs is limited to students in grades 7-12 inclusive. Students in grade 7, 8 and 9 may participate if enrolled in the regular continuation school for the educational unit and if all other eligibility requirements of the League have been met. Elementary students in grades 1-6 are not eligible for participation in any MSHSL-sponsored activity; B-squad, junior varsity or varsity level.

19. TRANSFER RULE — Bylaw 111

- A. A transfer student is eligible for varsity competition provided the student was in good standing on the date of withdrawal from the last school the student attended and one (1) of the provisions in Section B (below) is met.
- B. A transfer student is eligible for varsity competition if:
 1. 9th Grade Option: The student is enrolling in 9th grade for the first time.
 2. Family Residence Change: the student transfers from one public school district attendance area to another public school district attendance area at any time during the calendar year in which there is a change of residence and occupancy in Minnesota by the student's parents. If the student's parents move from one public school district attendance area to another public school district attendance area, the student will be eligible in the new public school attendance area or a non-public school if the student transfers at the same time the student's parents move. If the parents move from one public school district attendance area to another, the student shall continue to be fully eligible if the student continues enrollment in the prior school for the balance of the current marking period or for the balance of the academic school year. If the student elects either of the current enrollment options above, the student will be fully eligible upon transfer to the new school. A student who elects not to transfer upon a parent's change in residence shall continue to be eligible at the school in which the student is currently enrolled.
 3. Court Ordered Residence Change for Child Protection: the student's residence is changed pursuant to a child protection order placement in a foster home, or a juvenile court disposition order.
 4. Custody of Student: a student of legally divorced parents who have joint physical custody of the student may move from one custodial parent to the other custodial parent and be fully eligible at the time of the move. The student may utilize this provision only one time during grades 9-12 inclusive.
 5. Move from Out of State: if a student's parents move to Minnesota from a state or country outside of Minnesota and if the student moves at the same time the parent establishes a residence in a Minnesota public school district attendance area, the student shall be eligible at the first school the student attends in Minnesota.
 6. Enrollment Options Program: a student who utilizes Minnesota Statute 124D.03 Enrollment Options Programs, and transfers without a corresponding change of residence by the student's parents shall elect one of the following:
 - a. retain full eligibility for varsity competition for one (1) calendar year at the school where the student was enrolled prior to the transfer after which time the student shall become fully eligible at the school to which the student has open enrolled; or
 - b. be eligible only at the non-varsity level in the school to which the student has open enrolled for one (1) calendar year.
- C. If none of the provisions in Section 2 (above) are met, the student is ineligible for varsity competition for a period of one (1) calendar year beginning with the first day of attendance in the new school.
 1. Students are immediately eligible for competition at the non-varsity level.
 2. A student may not obtain eligibility as a result of a transfer. If at the time of transfer the student was not fully eligible in the previous school, the student shall be ineligible in the new school. A student who was not in good standing at the time of transfer shall be ineligible until the penalty from the previous school has been served.
 3. Each time a student transfers and the conditions of the transfer do not meet any of the provisions of Bylaw 111.2.A., the student will be ineligible for varsity competition for a period of one (1) calendar year beginning with the first day of attendance at the new school. For example, if a student, while serving a one-year transfer suspension, transfers to another school and none of the provisions of Bylaw 111.2.A. are met, an additional one-year suspension will be applied. The student will begin serving the additional one-year suspension immediately following the completion of the previous one-year suspension.

20. *MOOD-ALTERING CHEMICALS

A. Bylaw

Twelve (12) months of the year, a student shall not at any time, regardless of the quantity: (1) use or consume, have in possession a beverage containing alcohol; (2) use or consume, have in possession tobacco; or, (3) use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any other controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.

1. The bylaw applies continuously from the first signing of the student Eligibility Brochure.
2. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the student's own use by her/his doctor.

B. Penalty:

1. First Violation: After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
2. Second Violation: After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant or three (3) weeks, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
3. Third and Subsequent Violations: After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant or four (4) weeks, whichever is greater. If after the third or subsequent violations, the student has been assessed to be chemically dependent and the student on her/his own volition becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, then the student may be certified for reinstatement in MSHSL activities after a minimum period of six (6) weeks. Such certification must be issued by the director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center.
4. Consecutive Penalties: Penalties shall be consecutive beginning with the student's first participation in a League activity and continuing through the student's high school career.
5. **Denial Disqualification: A student shall be disqualified from all inter-scholastic athletics for nine (9) additional weeks beyond the student's original period of ineligibility when the student denies violation of the rule, is allowed to participate and then is subsequently found guilty of the violation.**

21. *SEXUAL/RACIAL/RELIGIOUS HARASSMENT/ VIOLENCE and HAZING

A. Reference Bylaw 209.00:

A student shall not engage in the sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing during the school year or any portion of an activity season that occurs prior to the start of the school year or after the close of the school year.

B. Reporting Procedures:

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute hazing, shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.
2. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to a school district human rights officer or to the superintendent.
3. Teachers, administrators, officials, volunteers, and employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or had other knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing, shall inform the building principal immediately.
4. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

C. Reprisal

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, coach, official contractor or employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

D. Penalties for Category I Activities:

1. First Violation: the student shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks, 14 calendar days, of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. *Recommendations: 1) It is recommended that the school develop a local education program through which the student would receive information about sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing. 2) It is recommended that, when appropriate, the school refer a student to a community agency or a professional individual outside the school for counseling.*
2. Second Violation: the student shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests or three (3) weeks, 21 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant. *Recommendation: It is recommended that before being re-admitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student shall show evidence in writing that the student has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.*
3. Third or Subsequent Violations: the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests or four (4) weeks, 28 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.
4. Progressive Penalties: Penalties shall be progressive beginning with the first violation and continuing throughout the student's high school career. Penalties shall be served consecutively.

E. Penalties for Category II Activities:

Each member school shall develop penalties that it will apply to the participants in these activities. A current copy of the member school's policy shall be kept on file in the member school.

22. SERVING AN MSHSL PENALTY — a student must be a student in good standing, and able to be placed in the game, meet or contest except for the penalty being served. (Students who are not in good standing due to suspension, expulsion, injury, illness, family vacations, etc are not able to be placed in a game, meet or contest and are therefore not able to count those contests toward the penalty).