

**TERRELL COUNTY BOARD POLICY
Competitive Interscholastic Grades 6 - 8**

**Descriptive Code: IDE(2)
Date: 11/1992
Rescinds Code:
Date Issued:**

The Board of Education supports the offering of competitive interscholastic activities in grades 6-8 subject to reasonable rules and regulations concerning eligibility to participate and on the condition that participation in such activities shall not interfere with the academic achievement of participating students.

Definitions

Accrediting agencies – the Georgia Accrediting Commission or one of the following regional accrediting agencies.

1. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)
2. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
3. North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA)
4. Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC)
5. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
6. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Competitive interscholastic activities – any school-sponsored program involving competition between individuals or groups representing two or more schools. Cheerleading is included in this definition.

School day – the period between the time students are required to report and the time of dismissal as specified by the Board of Education policy.

School-sponsored activity – any activity held under the auspices or sponsorship of a school system or school that uses or refers to the school system's or school's name and that involves the staff members and/or students.

Requirements

The Board of Education is responsible for regulating competitive interscholastic activities, and therefore adopts the following requirements as to student eligibility, physical examinations, time restrictions, seasonal practice, special provisions and appeals.

Student Eligibility

1. The grading period shall be a semester as specified by Board of Education policy. The same period shall also be the minimum length of the ineligibility period.
2. Students participating in competitive interscholastic activities shall pass five subjects in the grading period immediately preceding participation. These subjects shall carry credit toward grade promotion.
3. Students in grades 6-8 participating in any competitive interscholastic activity shall take a minimum of five subjects during the grading period of participation.
4. Eighth-graders promoted to the ninth grade during the year shall meet the first on-track test upon completion of one school year (two semesters).
5. Student eligibility shall be determined on the first school day of the subsequent semester. Exception: A student is eligible to begin practice for fall semester activities if the student passed five courses the preceding semester.
 - a. A student who participates in competitive interscholastic activities may have 14 calendar days after the close of each semester to complete make-up work. 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.
 - b. Summer school is an extension of the second semester of the school year, a maximum of two Carnegie unit credits may be counted for eligibility purposes.
6. Independent study course credit taken in summer school may be used to gain eligibility.
7. Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under this policy shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission or a regional accreditation agency.
8. Each coach and/or sponsor of any competitive interscholastic activity shall produce and file with the school principal an eligibility list for each sport showing the participant's name, grade, and date of first practice. The list shall be checked and available prior to tryout, conditioning, practice and competition to ensure that only eligible students participate. The list shall be retained in the school's file for five years.

Physical Examinations

All students in grades 6-8 who participate in competitive interscholastic athletics and 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 approval for participation and be signed by a doctor of medicine or a doctor of osteopathy. The

physical examination form shall include the date that the exam was performed (month, day, year), the student's name and the physician's signature.

All students participating in interscholastic athletics, including seasonal practice must be insured. Insurance coverage is a prerequisite to participation.

Time Restrictions for Activities

1. The dates for practice and play officially adopted by the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) shall be followed. Competitive interscholastic activities with dates not set by GHSA shall be considered in-season for the entire school year.
2. Competitive interscholastic activities and all individual and group practice for such activities by students in grades 9-12 shall be conducted outside the school day.
3. For students in grades 6-8, competitive interscholastic activities and group and individual practice on a day preceding a school day may not begin prior to the end of the school day and must end by 7 p.m.
4. For students in grades 6-8, only one day or night each week preceding a school day may be used to schedule a competitive interscholastic activity; tournaments are excluded from this restriction:
 - a. During the week it is permissible to schedule and play a game or match in one sport or at one grade level on one day and another game or match in another sport or at another grade level on another day. It is also permissible to schedule girls on one day and boys on another.

Time Restrictions for Students

1. No student in grades 6-8 shall participate in more than one basketball game per week on a day preceding a school day.
2. No student in grades 6-8 shall participate in more than one game or sport per week on a day preceding a school day.
3. Students in grades seven and eight shall not play more than 60 percent of the number of regularly scheduled games played by the high school varsity in any given sport. One tournament, not to exceed four games, may be played in addition to the regular season games.
4. Students below grade seven shall not play more than 50 percent of the number of regularly scheduled games played by the high school varsity in any given sport. One tournament, not to exceed four games, may be played in addition to the regular season games.

Seasonal Practice

1. All out-of-season practice, except spring football practice, is prohibited during the school year by this rule (August 1 through the end of the school year for students). Spring football practice is permitted during the month of May for ten (10) consecutive school days as provided for in GHSA's Schedule of Events Calendar. However, such practice shall be scheduled so that it does not interfere with other regular season sports or with final examinations. The school is prohibited from having an interscholastic game during this ten-day period. If a team or individuals are participating in scheduled league or association playoffs, the individuals are excused for the duration of the playoffs.

2. Neither schools, sponsors nor coaches shall suggest, require, or otherwise attempt to influence students to participate in, practice and/or condition for a competitive interscholastic activity outside the GHSA-designated season.

Special Provisions

1. 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 programs designed exclusively for students with disabilities are exempt.

2. Students who have not attained ninth grade status but are participating in high school competitive interscholastic activities shall abide by the appropriate grades 6-8 requirements. The principal of grades 6-8 shall be responsible for the compliance of this requirement.

3. Ineligible students are prohibited from practicing or dressing out for competitive interscholastic events. The school(s) shall maintain documentation and, upon request of the department of education, produce evidence that an ineligible student did not participate. Such evidence could include rosters, scorebooks, newspaper reports, yearbooks and/or testimony from a coach, sponsor or student.

4. Award banquets are exempt from this policy.

5. The Board of Education authorizes the high school(s) to join leagues or appropriate associations collectively for the purpose of formulating and enforcing uniform rules of eligibility and play. Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to authorize the use of state or local tax dollars for membership in these organizations.

Red-Shirting

Retention of students for athletic purposes (red-shirting) is prohibited.

1. If a school chooses to retain a student in grade 6, 7, or 8 who has passing grades, the school shall document the educational reasons for the retention. Written documentation shall include the following information:

- a. A parent/guardian written request outlining the reasons for requesting the retention and/or a school-initiated written request with accompanying written approval of the request by the parent/guardian.
 - b. Statements from two professional sources from outside the school justifying the retention for educational reasons.
 - c. Written approval of the retention request and justification of the retention for educational reasons by the principal, the Superintendent and by two teachers (other than athletic coach) who have taught the student.
2. Required documentation shall be available prior to the retention of the student and shall be maintained in the student's permanent record.

Related Regulations

1. Each school principal shall ensure that all staff members adhere to these requirements.
2. Any certificated staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to referral to the Professional Standards Commission. (Such referrals shall have no advance effect on the compliance status of the school system or school(s)).
3. Violations of this policy shall be referred to the State Superintendent of Schools or designee for investigation and/or technical assistance.
4. During this process, these determinations shall be made:
 - a. Whether the Superintendent, principal, coach or other certificated staff member has violated this rule.
 - b. Whether a school cited for violations requires assistance to update and/or correct its operational procedures.
5. The school system or school shall report suspected violations of this rule to the department of Education.

Waivers

Requests for waiver of this policy may be made to the department of education and to the Georgia Board of Education. The request may be made by the student, the student's parent or guardian, the student's principal, the school system or the Board of Education.

Such requests shall include the following information.

1. Basis for request

2. Documentation of medical conditions, if appropriate
3. Grade report and transcripts for student
4. Principal's statement regarding request
5. Activity in which student wishes to participate