

2431 ATHLETIC COMPETITION

The Board of Education recognizes the value of a program of athletic competition for both boys and girls as an integral part of the total school experience. Game activities and practice sessions provide opportunities to learn the values of competition and good sportsmanship. Programs of athletic competition, both intrascholastic and interscholastic, offer pupils the opportunity to exercise and test their athletic abilities in a context greater and more varied than that offered by the class or school or school district alone, and an opportunity for career and educational development.

For purposes of this policy, the program of athletic competition includes all activities relating to competitive sports contests, games, or events or sports exhibitions involving individual pupils or teams of pupils of this district when such events occur within or between separate schools within this district or with any schools outside this district.

Eligibility Standards

Athletes at Hopewell Valley will follow the eligibility requirement established by New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and this policy, and academic requirements stated as follows:

1. Eligibility requirements

Eligibility rules herewith stated shall apply to all freshmen, sophomore, junior varsity and varsity teams involved in interscholastic athletic competition.

- a. Eligibility Certification - Upon the request of the Executive Secretary Treasurer, schools must furnish him/her with eligibility lists for their various teams, containing such information as he/she may deem necessary for establishing the eligibility of the players named on the list.

Wrestling - Minimum Weight Certification

All member schools conducting an interscholastic wrestling program must file a minimum weight certification form with the central office as provided for in the Rules and Regulations, Rule 23, Section 8, Article 2.

- b. Eligibility Responsibility - The Principal of a school is responsible for the observance of the eligibility rules contained in this Article and for the entire program of his member school. Eligibility determinations shall in the first instance be made by the coaching staff under the supervision and direction of the Athletic Director. Any appeal to the Building Principal seeking to overturn the initial determination shall be in writing and shall state specifically the error alleged to have been made and the factual basis for the appeal. The Building Principal shall set forth his/her determination in writing.
- c. Age - An athlete becomes ineligible for high school athletics if he/she attains the age of nineteen prior to September 1. However, any athlete attaining age nineteen on or after September 1 shall be eligible for the ensuing school year. A birth certificate, issued at the time of birth, is the normal proof of age; in the absence of this, other proofs may be used. The records used will be baptismal records or the earliest school records.
- d. Interscholastic athletic participation offers an opportunity for a select group with special talent to perform. It also offers opportunities for pupils to play supporting roles. The choice of pupil athletes for performance may be based upon subjective judgments of talent by approved coaches, particularly where the number of otherwise eligible pupils exceeds the capacity of the program. In such cases, the judgment of the coaches shall be subject to review by the Building Principal only upon a finding that unlawful bias or an abuse of discretion exists.
- e. Athletic Scholarships - The granting of "athletic scholarships," free tuition, or other assistance of monetary value at any level is forbidden when there is evidence that such grant was offered to induce an athlete to attend a school.
- The total value and dignity of the individual should not only guarantee to all an equal opportunity to participate in athletics, but should also preclude any excessive emphasis on the importance of athletics.
 - Similarly, the proselytizing and recruiting of grammar school athletes is strictly forbidden.

- Specifically, proselytizing and recruiting shall be understood as attempting to induce an athlete to attend a particular school by means of:

Mail, in the form of letters and brochures, comparing high schools and contrived to point out the assets of the sender, and sending district; or

Proselytizing interviews, initiated by school personnel or associates, and often further aggravated by the offering of an "athletic scholarship" either from the school directly or indirectly through some affiliated body or individual.

2. Academic Requirement

Academic requirement shall apply to all pupils in grades seven - twelve.

- a. To be eligible for athletic competition during the first semester (September 1 to January 31), a pupil must have received a passing grade in each of six or more full year courses, or the equivalent in courses of shorter or longer duration, for the preceding school year. A full year course is one that meets for an equivalent of a minimum of three class periods per week. A pupil must have passed 25% of the credits (27.5) required by the State of New Jersey for graduating during the immediately preceding academic year.
- b. To be eligible for athletic competition which begins during the second semester (February 1 to June 30), a pupil must have received a passing grade in the first half of each of six or more full-year courses, or the equivalent in courses of shorter or longer duration, at the close of preceding semester or mid-year point (January 31). A full-year course is one that meets for an equivalent of a minimum of three class periods per week. A pupil must have passed 12.5% of the credits (13.75) required by the State of New Jersey for graduation at the close of the preceding semester.
- c. To be eligible for a fall or winter season, a pupil must have earned a 2.0 GPA from the second semester of the previous school year.
- d. To be eligible for the spring season, a pupil must have earned a 2.0 GPA from the first semester of the current school year.

Health Requirements

Good physical condition, freedom from injury, and full recovery from illness are prerequisites to participation in athletic competition and practice for such competition. HIV status shall not be screened as a part of athletic physicals or reported in school health records.

An examination of each candidate for a school athletic squad or team shall be conducted within 365 days prior to the first practice session with examinations being conducted at the medical home of the pupil. The “medical home” is defined as a health care provider and that provider’s practice site chosen by the pupil’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the provision of health care. Since the school physician is a “health care provider”, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may chose either the school physician or their own private physician to provide the medical examination.

The medical examination shall be conducted in accordance with N.J.S.A 6A:16-2.2(h)1 and 2 and Regulation 2431.2. The medical report shall include a determination concerning the pupil’s participation on an athletic team or squad from the examining physician, nurse practitioner/clinical nurse specialist, or physician’s assistant. The medical report shall be provided to the school physician if the school physician did not provide the medical examination.

If the pupil’s medical examination was completed more than sixty days prior to the first practice session, the pupil must provide a health history update of medical problems experienced since the last medical examination in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2(h)4. This health history must be completed and signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

The school district will provide written notification to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), signed by the school physician, stating approval of the pupil’s participation in the athletics, based solely on the medical report, or the written reasons for the school physician’s disapproval of the pupil’s participation. The school physician’s signature on the notification indicates the medical report complies with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2(h)5.

The health findings of this medical examination shall be maintained as part of the pupil’s health record.

The medical examination conducted to determine the fitness of a candidate for athletic competition and the health history update must include, as a minimum, the respective medical history information and physical assessments set forth in rules of the State Board of Education and incorporated in their entirety in regulations implementing this policy.

Emergency Procedures

Athletic coaches shall be trained in first aid and in the identification of pupil athletes who are injured or disabled in the course of any athletic activity.

The Superintendent shall prepare and present to the Board for its approval procedures for the emergency treatment of injuries and disabilities that occur in the course of any athletic activity. Emergency procedures shall be reviewed by the Board not less than once in each school year and shall be disseminated to appropriate staff members.

Interscholastic Standards

The Board shall approve annually a program of interscholastic athletics and shall require that all facilities utilized in that program, whether or not the property of this Board, properly safeguard both players and spectators and are kept free from hazardous conditions.

The Board adopts as Board policy the rules and regulations of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and shall review such rules annually to ascertain that they continue to be in conformity with the objectives of this Board.

The Superintendent shall annually prepare, approve, and present to the Board for its consideration a program of interscholastic athletics that includes a complete schedule of athletic events and practices and shall inform the Board of changes in that schedule as they occur.

The Superintendent shall prepare rules for the conduct of pupils participating in interscholastic athletics that will conform to rules of the State Board of Education, the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the Colonial Valley Conference.

N.J.S.A. 2C:21-11

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-3 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.7; 6A:16-1.4; 6A:16-2 et seq.

Adopted: 27 April 2009