

**PHILOSOPHY:** Eligibility is the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics attained by complying with all minimum standards established for student-athletes that are cooperatively determined by member schools through the LHSAA By-Laws. A student-athlete's participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a right that is obtained by adhering to the uniform minimum standards adopted by the membership. Uniform standards are limitations governing eligibility that are a necessary prerequisite in interscholastic athletics because they protect the integrity of the interscholastic program; they protect the opportunity of qualified student-athletes to participate; they help to ensure competitive equity among member schools; they encourage academic achievement by student-athletes; and they promote the health and well-being of the student-athlete.

- 1.1 APPLICATION OF RULES** - All eligibility rules shall apply to all students participating in interscholastic athletic competition in all sports at all levels of play (varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, or freshman teams). An ineligible student shall not dress out in uniform; however, with the principal's permission, they may sit on the team's bench during any interscholastic athletic contest (game or scrimmage).
- 1.2 OFFICIAL RULING REQUEST** - If at any time the eligibility of a player is in question, a principal shall have the right to ask the Executive Director for an official ruling on the player's eligibility. All information provided by the school on the student shall be true and accurate. A principal may ask for an eligibility ruling on a player from his/her own school or from another school. Official eligibility ruling requests shall be made on the LHSAA Members' Only website. Only written rulings or rulings issued through an automated email from the LHSAA Members' Only website are official. Verbal ruling or opinions *are not official*. Once a principal officially requests an eligibility ruling or a bona fide change of residence investigation on a student from his/her school, *the student shall be ineligible* for interscholastic athletic participation at all levels of play in all LHSAA sports until an official ruling has been issued by the Executive Director. If a request for an eligibility ruling is made and time does not permit its consideration before a game, the game shall be played; but if upon sufficient evidence, it appears that a player is ineligible, the Executive Director shall ban the player from further competition until he/she may become eligible. The games he/she played in shall be forfeited to the opposing team and other penalties may be imposed on the offending team.
- 1.2.1** If a school is dissatisfied with an eligibility ruling made by the Executive Director, the principal may appeal the decision to the Executive Committee. The appeal should be submitted in writing within 5 calendar days of the ruling. While the Executive Director's ruling of ineligibility on a student is appealed to the Executive Committee, the student on whose eligibility on appeal is pending shall not participate in any athletic contests until his/her case is ruled on by the Committee. The Committee ruling is final unless a school applies for third-party arbitration within 5 days of the Executive Committee's decision. When a school applies for third-party arbitration, the Executive Committee's decision will remain in effect until such time as the arbitrator's decision is rendered.
- 1.2.2 The arbitration procedure shall be as follows:**
1. The arbitration shall generally comply with the spirit of the rules and procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
  2. The arbitrator shall be approved by the American Arbitration Association and the parties.
  3. Arbitration shall be implemented only after all LHSAA remedies have been exhausted, including appeals to the Executive Committee.
  4. Each party (that is the school that applies for arbitration and the LHSAA) shall bear the cost of its own representation and other costs for presenting its case to the arbitrator.
  5. The school applying for arbitration shall pay the initial fee to the arbitration association. Except as provided in subparagraph 4 of this article, the losing party shall bear the costs of the arbitration proceeding paid to the arbitration association. A member school seeking arbitration shall be required to deposit \$5,000 with the LHSAA to be held in trust. Should the member school prevail in arbitration the initial fee and the deposit shall be refunded to the school.

Should the LHSAA prevail, the LHSAA shall use the deposited amount to pay the arbitration association and any remaining deposited monies shall be returned to the member school. Should the cost of arbitration exceed \$5,000, the school shall be invoiced for the additional cost. The invoice shall be paid within 30 days from the date of the invoice. Failure to pay in a timely manner shall result in the school being placed on restrictive probation and shall not be eligible for championship honors in all sports until the outstanding balance and a ten percent penalty are paid.

6. The arbitrator's decision will be final and non-appealable to any court.

**1.3** **BONA FIDE STUDENT AND ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS** - A student-athlete shall be a bona fide student of his/her school. He/she shall be enrolled in and attending an LHSAA school on a regular basis and taking the required number of subjects which shall be recorded on the student's official transcript unless the student is a special education student who is not pursuing a high school diploma or a student in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade or below. A student shall not be a graduate of a high school or secondary school or the recipient of an equivalency diploma. If a student has not enrolled in and attended a school in the first 11 days of the school semester at any school, he/she is ineligible to participate the first 30 days of his/her attendance in that semester. A student in a home bound program shall not be considered a bona fide student of an LHSAA member school unless he/she is enrolled in the member school and his/her grades are transferred and recorded on the student's official school transcript.

**1.3.1** The LHSAA has jurisdiction over member schools consisting of grades 9-12. Schools having fewer than four high school grades (9, 10, 11, and 12) may use students above the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level from any junior high school in the same school attendance zone. The principal of the senior high school is responsible for verifying that these students meet all eligibility rules. A high school with first-year 9<sup>th</sup> grade students shall be considered a four-grade high school. The LHSAA shall recognize the grade configuration a member school submits to the Association on its LHSAA Membership Renewal form submitted annually by the school. The grade configuration submitted shall be consistent and shall coincide with the grade configuration reported on all forms submitted annually to the LDE. If a member school reports to the LHSAA that it does not contain a 9<sup>th</sup> grade or below in its grade configuration, for interscholastic athletic purposes, the principal of grades 10-12 shall not have interscholastic athletic jurisdiction over any grades below the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. If an LHSAA school does not contain a 9<sup>th</sup> grade, in order for eligible 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate on any of its LHSAA teams, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade shall be under the jurisdiction of an individual who is not an assistant principal or faculty member of the LHSAA school and not the LHSAA principal. If the school has on file a written statement signed by one or both parents that the above rule has been read and explained to them, a student from a junior high school above the 8<sup>th</sup> grade choosing to participate in athletics at a senior high school shall not, after participating in any interscholastic contest with that school, transfer to another senior high school in that attendance zone and be eligible for athletics until he/she has been enrolled there for one calendar year.

**1.4** **LENGTH OF ELIGIBILITY** - Upon entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, a student shall be eligible for competition on high school athletic teams only during the ensuing eight consecutive semesters or terms of 90 days unless one of the by-laws found in the "Students in 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade" section apply. The Louisiana cumulative record shall suffice as evidence of the date of entry into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Proof of entry into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade shall be available to the LHSAA within 24 hours, if requested.

**1.5** **REGISTRATION AND SUBMISSION OF STUDENTS**

**1.5.1** No student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition until his/her name with all required information has been submitted online to the LHSAA each school year. Prior to the first interscholastic contest (jamboree or regular season game) of each sport each year, each student shall be properly and completely *registered and submitted* on the LHSAA Members' Only website before the student is allowed to participate. Proper and complete registration of each student shall include the correct date of birth and last four digits of the student's social security number. Only the school principal, using his/her assigned user name and password, can submit students for eligibility. At the time a student is submitted online, the school must have a completed eligibility folder on the student as outlined below.

Students do not have to be registered and submitted *before* participation in a *scrimmage* but shall be prior to playing in a jamboree or regular season contest, whichever occurs first. After a student is registered and submitted for the initial sport he/she participates in, the student must be added and resubmitted to the roster of each additional sport he/she participates in during the school year. A student shall meet all eligibility requirements *in all sports at all levels of competition* to participate in scrimmages, jamborees, and contests throughout the year. Eligibility rosters in all sports do not have to be exchanged between schools unless the exchange requirement is adopted by the district. It shall be the school's responsibility to verify and certify that each student is eligible under all LHSAA's eligibility rules. Email verification from the Executive Director's office that a school's online student eligibility has been received and registered does not assure that the student(s) registered online is eligible under all LHSAA rules.

1.5.2 Schools *shall* maintain an individual folder *or electronic file* on each student-athlete in a *centrally located place* in the school to be determined by the principal. A school failing to adhere to all required rules and/or failing to have all required eligibility forms properly completed, signed, and maintained in the school's files shall be subject to the penalty. Each folder shall contain the following required eligibility documents:

1. Legal proof of birth as required (Rule 1.6)
2. Completed and properly signed LHSAA Medical History Form (Rules 1.7)
3. Current Medical Examination Form (Rule 1.7)
4. Completed and properly signed LHSAA Interscholastic Athletic Participation Form (Rule 1.8)
5. Completed and properly signed LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract (Rule 1.9)
6. Official copy of grades (final grades from previous school year for first semester or mid-term grade for second semester) (Rule 1.10)
7. An official copy of the student's transcript (Rule 1.10)
8. Checklist for 7th/8th Grade Student Participating in LHSAA Sanctioned Athletics, if applicable

1.6 **AGE AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS** - A student becomes ineligible for interscholastic athletic participation if he/she has reached his/her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday before September 1 of that school year. If he/she becomes 19 on or after September 1, he/she is eligible for the remainder of the school year, if he/she meets all other eligibility rules. The principal shall have on file at all times sufficient evidence of the legal birth of each student-athlete and evidence of the student's entry into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Proof of birth shall be available to the LHSAA within 24 hours, if requested. Evidence of legal birth date shall be established by one of the following:

1. A legal copy of a birth certificate.
2. An official record of birth from the Bureau of Vital Statistics.
3. An official notification of birth issued by the state, parish or county health unit.
4. An official passport.
5. A hospital certificate signed by a physician and/or the hospital administrator.
6. Legal adoption papers issued by a court.
7. Official records verifying proof of birth issued by the Department of Welfare.
8. Official immigration and naturalization papers issued by the United States Department of Immigration and Naturalization.

1.6.1 Any birth certificate issued within one year of birth shall be accepted as final proof of age of a student. If a protest or question arises as to the age of the student, a delayed birth certificated based on information filed with the Bureau of Vital Statistics more than one year subsequent to the date of birth will not be accepted as final proof of correct date of birth. The eldest age given on any eligibility list, or the eldest age shown by school records, may be used as a basis of eligibility until proof otherwise is submitted and accepted by the Executive Director or the Executive Committee.

1.6.2 The penalties for failure to have proof of age in the school files as required in Rule 1.6 shall be as follows:

1. A school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport for each legal proof of age document not on file with the school not to exceed \$500 per sport.

2. A student in violation of this rule shall be withheld from further team practices and interscholastic athletic participation until the required proof of age is provided to the LHSAA. A school shall have 24 hours to provide legal proof of age to the LHSAA.

3. If legal proof of age cannot be provided *within the 24-hour time period*, the student shall have participated as an ineligible student and the school shall be penalized under Rule 5.11.3.

4. The coach shall be penalized under Rule 5.12.

5. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.

**1.7** **MEDICAL HISTORY EVALUATION AND EXAMINATION** - *To be eligible* for interscholastic athletics, all students shall have his/her parent(s)/guardian properly complete and sign an LHSAA Medical History Evaluation Form *and* pass a medical examination administered by a licensed physician, a licensed nurse practitioner in collaboration with a licensed physician, and/or a licensed physician's assistant under the supervision of a licensed physician *prior to the first time* he/she *practices or participates* in a sport at an LHSAA school. A copy of a current, properly completed and signed medical history and medical examination form shall be on file at a school for every student-athlete at all times.

**1.7.1** Once a student passes the initial medical examination and completes an LHSAA Medical History Evaluation Form as required in Rule 1.7, he/she shall *annually* pass a medical screening or medical examination administered by a licensed physician, a licensed nurse practitioner that is in collaboration with a licensed physician, and/or a licensed physician's assistant under the supervision of a licensed physician *and* shall update the LHSAA Medical History Evaluation Form. The medical examination shall be valid until the last day of the month in which it is performed.

**1.7.2** The penalties for failure to have the required LHSAA Medical History Evaluation Form(s) for all students completed, properly signed, and maintained in the school files are:

1. A school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport for each LHSAA Medical History Evaluation Form not completed, properly signed, and on file with the school not to exceed \$500 per sport.

2. A student in violation of this rule shall not be ruled ineligible for this infraction unless he/she has not taken and passed a medical examination but shall be withheld from further team practices and interscholastic athletic participation until this form is completed and a copy submitted to the LHSAA. The completed form must be postmarked prior to the athlete's participation.

**1.7.3** The penalties for failure by a student(s) to *take and pass a medical examination*:

1. The school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport if the medical exam has been taken but is not in the student's file for a maximum of \$500 per sport.

2. If the student(s) has failed to take and pass the required annual medical exam, the student(s) shall be ruled ineligible, and the school shall be penalized under Rule 5.11.3.

3. The student(s) shall be withheld from team practices and further interscholastic athletic participation until he/she has passed the required medical examination and written documentation is provided to the Executive Director.

**1.8** **ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FORM** - Schools shall be required to provide all students who participate in any LHSAA sanctioned sport at any level of play with a copy of the LHSAA Athletic Participation/Parental Permission Form. *To be eligible* for interscholastic athletics, *prior to the first time* a student *practices or participates* in a sport at an LHSAA school, the LHSAA Athletic Participation/Parental Permission form must be properly completed and signed by the student's parent(s) or guardian. Schools shall be required to keep the properly completed and signed form on file at the school for the entire time the athlete is a bona-fide student at the school.

- 1.8.1** The penalties for failure to have the required LHSAA Athletic Participation Form(s) for all students completed, properly signed, and maintained in the school files shall be:
1. A school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport for each LHSAA Athletic Participation Form not completed, properly signed, and on file with the school not to exceed \$500 per sport.
  2. A student in violation of this rule shall not be ruled ineligible for this infraction, but shall be withheld from further team practices and interscholastic athletic participation until a copy of this form is completed and submitted to the Executive Director. The completed form must be postmarked prior to the athlete's participation.
- 1.9** **ABUSE AND/OR MISUSE OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES** - Each member school shall develop and implement a substance abuse/misuse policy including procedures for chemical testing of student-athletes. *To be eligible* for interscholastic athletics, *prior to practicing or participating* in a sport at an LHSAA school, a student-athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian shall sign the LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract developed and distributed to all schools by the LHSAA. Once signed, the LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract shall remain in effect for the remainder of the student-athlete's eligibility. Schools may also have the student and parent/guardian sign a school issued form in addition to the LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract. Schools shall be required to keep the signed form on file at the school.
- 1.9.1** The penalties for failure to have the required LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Contract(s) for all students completed, properly signed, and maintained in the school files shall be:
1. A school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport for each LHSAA Substance Abuse/Misuse Form not completed, properly signed, and on file with the school not to exceed \$500 per sport.
  2. A student in violation of this rule shall not be ruled ineligible for this infraction, but shall be withheld from further team practices and interscholastic athletic participation until a copy of this form is completed and submitted to the Executive Director. The completed form must be postmarked prior to the athlete's participation.
- 1.10** **SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS** - To be eligible under the scholastic rule, students, other than special education students who are not pursuing a diploma, enrolled in high school subjects (grades 9-12) shall meet all scholastic requirements. Individual schools or school systems may set higher, but not lower, scholastic requirements for interscholastic athletic participation. All subjects/units passed shall carry Carnegie units which shall be recorded on the student's transcript and include all credits/grades earned in any method of remediation and/or distance learning courses approved in Bulletin 741 of the LDE. **Notes:** College subjects do not have to be recorded on the student's high school transcript. Eligibility requirements for special education students who are not pursuing a diploma can be found in Rule 1.10.13.
- 1.10.1** **First Semester Eligibility:** To be eligible for the first semester of the school year, a student shall have earned at least six (6) units from the previous school year, which shall be listed on the student's transcript and shall have earned at least a "C" average as determined by the Local Education Authority when considering all "graded" subjects.
- 1.10.2** **Second Semester Eligibility:** To be eligible for the second semester of the school year, a student shall pass *any combination of at least six (6) half (.5) units from the first semester.*
- 1.10.3** **Promotion into High School:** Promotion from the 8th grade into the 9th grade for the first time shall fulfill the scholastic requirements. In this context, elementary schools include grades 1-8; high schools include grades 9-12. Promotion into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade shall be in accordance with the approved local Pupil Progression Plan.



- 1.10.4 Seniors:** A senior (12<sup>th</sup> grade) student who has accumulated 20 or more units shall be required to take any combination of at least four (4) half (.5) units per semester, none of which shall be units the student has previously taken and passed. The combination of four (4) required half (.5) units may include college courses that have been approved by the State Department of Education and/or the Louisiana Board of Regents. Under the 4 x 4 block system, a senior must be enrolled in a minimum of two (2) units per semester to be eligible to compete. A senior who experiences an eight-period day or an A/B block and has accumulated 23 credits shall be required to take any combination of at least two (2) half (.5) units per semester, none of which shall be units the student has previously taken and passed. A senior who experiences a 4 x 4 block and has accumulated 23 credits shall be required to take at least one unit per semester, none of which shall be units the student has previously taken and passed. A senior attempting a combination of four half units in the first semester must pass all units to be eligible in the second semester. Likewise, a senior attempting a combination of five half units in the first semester must pass all units, and a senior taking a combination of six or more half units in the first semester must pass any combination of six half units for second semester eligibility.
- 1.10.5** Failure to have the required official transcript or report card for all student-athletes as per Rule 1.5.1 in the school files:
1. A school shall be fined \$50 per student, per sport for each official transcript or report card not on file with the school not to exceed \$500 per sport.
  2. A student in violation of this rule shall not be ruled ineligible for this infraction but shall be withheld from further team practices and interscholastic athletic participation until the student-athlete's official transcript and report card are submitted to the Executive Director. The transcript and report card must be postmarked prior to the athlete's participation.
- 1.10.6 Determining Grade Point Averages:** The grade point average shall be determined by dividing the total number of subjects/units attempted toward graduation into the total number of grade points earned by a student.
1. For the purpose of determining a student's GPA, the point value of each grade is as follows:  
A = 4 points    B = 3 points    C = 2 points    D = 1 point    F = 0 points
  2. Do not round off numbers when computing a student's GPA.
- 1.10.7 Block Scheduling:** The following process shall be used to determine the scholastic eligibility of students enrolled in schools that schedule classes for one full unit of credit during one semester of classes.
1. In determining the scholastic eligibility of a student at the end of the first semester of a school year, a subject's Carnegie unit value shall be multiplied by two when calculating the number of subjects a student passed.
  2. In determining the scholastic eligibility of a student at the end of the school year for the first semester of the next school year, a subject's Carnegie unit value and the grade point earned in that subject shall count as earned (no multiplication allowed).
- 1.10.8 Grade Corrections:**
1. For a grade correction to be accepted for eligibility purposes for the first semester of a new school year, it shall be corrected by the first day of the school year for the school.
  2. For a grade correction to be accepted for eligibility purposes for the second semester of a school year, it shall be corrected by the 7<sup>th</sup> school day following the end of the grading period for the first semester.
  3. It shall not be permissible to give a second examination in order to make a student eligible unless required by an approved school system pupil progression plan.
- 1.10.9 Incomplete Grades:** If a student fails to remove an "incomplete" grade in a course within 15 school days of the official end of the first semester or within 15 days of the official school year, the grade shall be considered a failing grade in that course for scholastic eligibility purposes.

- 1.10.10 Repeating Subjects:** Unless it is necessary to improve a GPA for a school year, a student shall not repeat any subject that he/she has already passed. If a subject is repeated, this shall be accomplished through a remedial program approved by the State Department of Education. *Interpretation:* When the association added a GPA to its scholastic rule, a rule was passed to allow students to repeat a subject(s) they had already passed if they were repeating the subject(s) to improve their GPA. This is the only time a high school student (grades 9-12) may repeat a subject he/she has already passed and count it for eligibility purposes.
- 1.10.11 Change in Scholastic Eligibility for Second Semester:** The date a student's eligibility status changes for the second semester shall be on the seventh calendar day following the end of the grading period of the first semester. A student shall then become eligible/ineligible for the second semester based on the student's first semester grades. A student who was ineligible for the first semester because of the scholastic rule shall become eligible for the second semester on the seventh calendar day following the end of the grading period of the first semester. A student who will become ineligible for the second semester because of the scholastic rule shall become ineligible on the seventh calendar day following the end of the grading period of the first semester. *Exception:* For schools completing the first semester on the day immediately prior to the Christmas holiday period, the official end of the grading period for these schools shall be the first day that teachers officially return to school following the holiday period. The next calendar day shall be the date a student shall become eligible/ineligible for the second semester.
- 1.10.12 Special Education Students:** Special education students other than those classified as "gifted and talented" shall be eligible if they meet the provisions of the present rule. This rule's purpose is to make athletic programs accessible to students; however, once a student reports for a sport, he/she, like any other student, is subject to earning a place on the team. Special education students shall be evaluated every three years for eligibility purposes. A student shall be placed in a special education program for at least two-thirds of a given semester in order to establish eligibility for the next semester. A regular education student who fails to establish scholastic eligibility shall not become eligible as a special education student until he/she has established eligibility for one entire semester.
- 1.10.13 Special education students not working toward a high school diploma:** Special education students identified and placed according to state regulations, by virtue of the design of their IEP, who may or may not earn the necessary Carnegie units, shall meet the following requirements: (These are the current students who are alternatively assessed and classified as LAA1 and LAA2.) A statement of assurance form shall be completed on each special education student who is not working toward a high school diploma. The student's participation in interscholastic sports shall be monitored at regular reporting periods to assure satisfactory progress in the student's individual education program. This form shall be signed by the student's parent(s)/guardian, teacher, and principal and attached to the IEP on an annual basis. A student shall make satisfactory progress through performance and attendance in the student's IEP goals at the end of a semester to be eligible for the entire next semester.
- 1.10.14 Special education students working toward a high school diploma:** When a special education student takes enough Carnegie unit subjects to meet the basic requirements of the LHSAA's scholastic rule, his/her scholastic eligibility shall be determined as follows: (1) To be eligible for the first semester of the school year, a student shall have earned at least six (6) units from the previous year which shall be listed on the student's transcript, including any special education subject(s), and shall have earned at least a "C" average as determined by the Local Education Authority when considering all "graded" subjects; (2) To be eligible for the second semester of the school year, a student shall pass at least six (6) subjects from the first semester, including any special education subject(s).

**1.10.15 Earning Credit Through Non-Traditional Means:** Carnegie units and grades earned in state approved subjects taken through non-traditional means such as, but not limited to, summer school, credit recovery, virtual school, distance learning, etc. may be used for scholastic eligibility under the following provisions:

1. The non-traditional course shall meet all guidelines as outlined in Bulletin 741 including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Courses that are taught through distance learning, online, credit recovery, etc. shall be comparable in length, content, and rigor to courses taught in a traditional classroom setting.
  - b. The instructor and the student shall have ongoing access to and regular interaction with one another for purposes of teaching, evaluating, and providing assistance to the student throughout the duration of the course.
  - c. Evaluation of the student's work shall be conducted by the appropriate academic authorities in accordance with the high school's established academic policies.
  - d. The course shall be acceptable for any student and the school's policies for such courses shall be followed consistently for both student-athletes and non-athletes with no exceptions made for student-athletes.
  - e. The student's work (e.g., exams, papers, assignments) shall be made available for evaluation and validation upon request; documentation shall be on file to verify that the credit was earned. Failure to include the proper documentation shall not allow the course to be included in total credits needed to be eligible.
2. If the subject is repeated, this shall be accomplished through a remedial program approved by the LDE.
3. The non-traditional course shall count as a Carnegie unit or one-half unit. In order for the non-traditional online course to count toward scholastic eligibility, the student shall complete the entire coursework with a passing grade/percentage to receive a Carnegie unit. In order to receive one-half unit, the student shall complete a minimum of one-half of the online coursework with a passing grade/percentage.
4. In order for a non-traditional course that is taken during the second semester or over the summer months to be considered for scholastic eligibility for the first semester of the succeeding school year, the student shall complete the course prior to his/her school's participation in a jamboree contest or the first day of classes in the school year, whichever occurs first.
5. In order for a non-traditional course to be considered for scholastic eligibility for the second semester of the school year, the student shall complete the course no later than the final date of the marking period of the first semester.
6. If a student is repeating a subject by means of a non-traditional course that he/she took during the preceding semester or preceding school year, the subject the student took during the regular school year shall not be used in determining the student's GPA if the school elects to count the grade earned by a non-traditional course.  
*Example:* A student takes six subjects during the regular school year and passes all of them except science and math. The student repeats the same math course in a non-traditional course and passes it. The school may discard the math grade and course the student took during the regular school year and divide by six subjects when determining the student's GPA.
7. If a student is taking a subject in a non-traditional course that he/she did not take during the preceding school year, the new subject shall be added to the subjects pursued during the regular school year when determining the student's GPA. Example: The same student in the previous example elects to take typing in a non-traditional course in an attempt to gain scholastic eligibility; he/she did not take typing during the regular school year. The school shall divide by seven subjects when determining the student's GPA.
8. A student who is eligible at the end of the regular school year shall not become ineligible by attempting a non-traditional course.
9. A school that allows a student-athlete to attempt a non-traditional course free of charge or at a reduced fee (if a fee is normally charged) shall be in violation of the illegal recruiting (undue influence) rule.
10. A person or organization connected with the school that pays the non-traditional course fees for a student-athlete (if a fee is normally charged) shall be in violation of the illegal recruiting (undue influence) rule.



- 1.10.16 Connections 8th Student:** The Connections Program is a one year process designed by the LDE where overage students, who are 15 years of age by September 30 of the current school year and are two (2) or more years academically behind their peers, receive targeted instruction and accelerated remediation aimed at attaining a diploma, GED, or State Approved Skills Certificate. The LDE has requested the LHSAA adopt a policy to allow these students to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at a member school. A Connections 8th Student is defined and classified as a bona fide student of an LHSAA member school if the student:
1. Is enrolled in and attends an LHSAA school under the jurisdiction of the LHSAA school principal
  2. Is classified as an 8th grade student
  3. A Connections 8th Program student shall only be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the sub-varsity level. If the LHSAA member school does not offer a sub-varsity level in a particular sport, the student shall be ineligible for competition in that sport.
  4. A Connections 8th Program student shall only be eligible for interscholastic athletic participation in an LHSAA member school located in attendance where he/she resides with his/her parent/guardian or any other household with whom he/she has been residing for at least the past calendar year. This zone shall be considered his/her home attendance zone for the purpose of applying the Residence and School Transfers rule. With written permission from the LHSAA, a school system may allow a Connections 8th student to participate at his/her home attendance zone school while attending a Connections 8th Program center located within the school system.
  5. Placement in the Connections 8th Program for the first time shall fulfill the scholastic requirements for the first semester of the school year.
  6. To be scholastically eligible for the second semester, he/she shall pass at least 75% of all subjects taken and shall earn at least a "C" average as determined by the LEA in all "graded" subjects.
  7. Connections 8th students shall begin their ensuing eight consecutive semesters of eligibility the first year they are classified as a Connection 8 student.
  8. To be scholastically eligible for the first semester of the next school year, he/she shall have been promoted to the 9th grade.
  9. Connections 8th is a one year process and shall not be extended for athletic eligibility purposes.
- 1.10.17 Transitional 9th Grade Student:** A transitional 9th grade student shall be defined as a student who does not meet the standard and does not meet the requirements for other state waivers for promotion to the 9th grade due to failure to pass the required sections of a statewide or school system mandated examination required for promotion to the 9th grade. The student may be placed in the transitional 9th grade option by the School Building Level Committee of the LEA. To be eligible for athletic participation, a transitional 9th grade student shall be enrolled in and attending an LHSAA member school under the jurisdiction of a member school principal. The student shall be taking a full class schedule that includes at least one high school subject or Carnegie unit(s) and a remedial subject(s) as required which fulfills the scholastic requirements for interscholastic participation for the first semester of the school year.
1. A transitional 9th grade student shall begin their ensuing eight consecutive semesters of eligibility.
  2. The results of a statewide or school system mandated examination for promotion to the 9th grade shall not be used to determine a student's scholastic eligibility for the first semester of a school year. In this context, the promotion examination is considered to be in addition to the other requirements set forth in the school's/school system's pupil progression program.
  3. When a student described in this rule takes enough Carnegie unit subjects to meet the basic requirements of the LHSAA's Scholastic Rule, a student's scholastic eligibility shall be determined as follows:
    - a. To be scholastically eligible for the second semester of the school year, a student shall pass at least six (6) subjects, including remedial subjects, from the first semester of the school year.
    - b. To be scholastically eligible for the first semester of the next school year, a student shall have earned at least six (6) units from the previous year, which shall be listed on the student's transcript and shall have earned at least a "C" average as determined by the Local Education Authority when considering all graded subjects.

4. Students placed in transitional 9th grade shall not be included in the high school graduation cohort during their first year on the high school campus but they are still eligible to graduate in four years. Any student that has been classified as a 9th grade transitional student and does not graduate in four years shall not be eligible for athletic participation in his/her fifth year of high school. A transitional 9th grade student shall also not be eligible for hardship consideration during his/her fifth year of high school.

### 1.11 **RESIDENCE**

1.11.1 School districts or attendance zones designated by the public school boards or the federal courts shall be used in determining the eligibility under the transfer rule. School bus routes shall not be used in determining the eligibility under this rule.

1.11.2 LHSAA non-public, university laboratory, and charter schools shall be bound by the same parish public school districts or attendance zones that have been designated by the parish public school boards or Federal Courts for the traditional public high school physically located in their area.

1. If a parish does not consist of at least one parish public traditional high school, the attendance zone(s) assigned to parish public full magnet high school(s) shall serve as the factor in determining the LHSAA athletic attendance zone for the non-public, university laboratory, charter, and state recovery public high schools physically located in their area.

2. The parish boundary lines shall serve as the athletic attendance zone for all non-public, university laboratory, and charter schools, if it does not contain a traditional public high school or a full magnet public high school.

1.11.3 A student shall be considered as enrolled in a high school when he/she has officially enrolled in and attended at least one class in that school.

1.11.4 Once a student establishes eligibility at a school through attendance for at least one calendar year, he/she shall remain eligible for as long as he/she continues to attend that school regardless of where his/her parent(s)/guardian reside unless this eligibility is negated by another section in this residence and school transfers rule such as in the bona fide move section or the foreign exchange student section.

1.12 **SCHOOL TRANSFERS** - A student shall be considered a transfer student if he/she, after establishing eligibility in a school, changes attendance to another school for any reason. A student will be considered as establishing eligibility when he/she has attended at least one class period or prior to the start of school by playing in a contest (scrimmage, jamboree, or regular season game). A student is considered to have transferred whenever the student changes from that school in which the student was enrolled to any other school regardless of whether the school in which the student transferred or to which the student transfers is public or non-public, member or non-member or whether the high schools are with the same school athletic attendance zone. If a student transfers schools, he/she shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletic competition at any level of play in all sports at the receiving school until he/she has officially withdrawn from the latter school. A transfer student must have been eligible to represent his/her former school academically as well as eligible under any district, school or athletic policy that was in place when the student transferred to be considered for interscholastic athletic eligibility.

1.12.1 **Completion of a Sports Season:** If a transfer takes place during the sport season in which the student has participated in at least one regular season interscholastic contest at the sending school, the student shall be ineligible in that sport for the remainder of that sport's season in the receiving school. This rule would not apply to a student who has been deemed to have made a bona-fide move of a distance of fifty (50) miles or more based on the distance from school to school. Under no circumstances would a transfer be eligible at the receiving school once the sport's season is more than 60% complete.

- 1.12.2 Transfers Within the Athletic Attendance Zone:** If at any time a student transfers from one member school to another member school in the same attendance zone, the student shall become immediately ineligible for a period of one calendar year from the date of enrollment/attendance in the second school. The student shall always be eligible at his/her school of first choice in the attendance zone. A transfer student will be ineligible for a period of one calendar year at the new school unless he/she transfers under one of the following exceptions:
1. Majority to Minority Transfer as written into a federal court desegregation order
  2. Transfers from Academically Unacceptable Schools pursuant to the Louisiana School and District Accountability System
  3. Homeless Students as defined by the Federal McKinney-Vento Act
1. **Non-Member Schools:** A student, who has been attending a non-member school, shall be immediately eligible at the LHSAA school of his/her first choice should he/she elect to attend an LHSAA school in his/her athletic attendance zone.
  2. **School Closure:** In the event a member school closes, discontinues all interscholastic athletic competition, or is suspended from membership in the LHSAA, all students who have been in attendance at the member school for at least the preceding calendar year, shall be eligible at a member school of their choice in the same athletic attendance zone of the school closing or discontinuing athletic competition. If the school closing or discontinuing athletic competition is located outside a student's athletic attendance zone, the student shall be immediately eligible at the school he/she first attends in his/her athletic attendance zone provided he/she has never attended a member school in that zone. In the latter case, if he/she has attended a member school in his/her athletic attendance zone, he/she shall be immediately eligible only at the member school he/she had first attended in his/her athletic attendance zone. When a school is closed and legally merges with another member school, all students who have been in attendance at the school that closes for at least one calendar year shall be immediately eligible at the latter school.
  3. **New Member Schools:** A student who has already attended a member school in that athletic attendance zone shall be granted a new option when a "new" member school is added to that athletic attendance zone. This choice shall be afforded only at the beginning of the first year the "new" school is in operation in the athletic attendance zone. A student electing to attend a "new" school after that time shall be ruled ineligible for a period of one calendar year at the "new" school. In this sense, the word "new" shall refer to any school added to that athletic attendance zone for any reason. Once a student attends a "new" school, it shall become the student's school of eligibility and transfer to another member school not covered by this exception shall cause the student to be ruled ineligible at the school for a period of one calendar years from the date of his/her enrollment. A student shall be allowed to use this option only once. When a school becomes a new member, any student residing outside the athletic attendance zone of the new member school, but who has been attending that school for at least the preceding calendar year, prior to the school's admittance in the LHSAA, shall be immediately eligible. Otherwise, the student shall be ineligible until he/she has attended the new member school for calendar years from the date of enrollment in that school.
- 1.12.3 Administrative Transfers:** The LHSAA shall not honor school-system approved administrative transfers that are granted for the following reasons:
1. To a student attending a school in which his/her parent(s) is employed if the school is located outside of the student's home attendance zone.  
Exception: The above rule does not apply to a student whose parent(s) is an on-staff full time faculty coach or an on-staff full time administrator. A coach must provide verification that he/she has been an on-staff full time faculty coach for a minimum of three previous school years. The transfer of the student shall occur at the first opportunity to attend after the coach or administrator is hired.
  2. To a student attending a school located outside of his/her home attendance zone because of medical or health reasons.

3. To a student attending a school located outside of his/her home attendance zone because of academic reasons or because a specific course(s) is not offered at the school in his/her home attendance zone. A transfer to a magnet school, a school with a magnet program, or Recovery School District (RSD) public high schools shall be an exception to this rule, if the transfer meets the requirements outlined in Rule 1.19.
4. To a student attending a school located outside of his/her home attendance zone because an LHSAA sport is not offered at the school in his/her home attendance zone.
5. All other school system administrative transfers granted a student attending a school located outside of his/her attendance zone for a reason not covered by any exceptions under the residence and school transfers rule.

**1.12.4 Outside the Athletic Attendance Zone:** Any student who attends a school outside his/her athletic attendance zone shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that school for a period of one calendar year from his/her first day of attendance. Exception: A first year 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade student who is transferring outside his/her athletic attendance zone shall be eligible to participate at the sub-varsity level only. The one year period of ineligibility may be waived and the student shall be immediately eligible if:

1. The student continuously attended the entire 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grades at a middle/junior high school of that same member school or school system located outside of his/her athletic attendance zone. The school shall be required to register and certify the student's eligibility status on the Members' Only website.
2. Provided the student's situation is approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee, a non-public student may be declared eligible provided he/she attends the entire 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year in a non-public school operated by the same organization/federation as the high school the student chooses to attend in the 8<sup>th</sup> and/or 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and provided he/she enrolls and attends class the first day of school in his/her 8<sup>th</sup> and/or 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. The school shall be required to register and certify the student's eligibility status on the Members' Only website.
3. Transfer from outside the attendance zone: If at any time a student transfers to a member school from outside of his/her athletic attendance zone, he/she shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that school for one (1) calendar year from the date of his/her attendance in that school unless he/she transfers under one of the following exceptions:
  - a. Bona-fide Move: A student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) make a bona-fide change of residence as defined in Rule 1.13 of the LHSAA Bylaws.
  - b. Custody when Parents Live Separate and Apart: A student transfers due to parents living separate and apart as defined in Rule 1.14 in the LHSAA Bylaws.
  - c. Military Transfer: Notwithstanding any policy, rule, or regulation of the LHSAA to the contrary, no student otherwise academically eligible to participate in an extracurricular interscholastic athletic activity shall be determined ineligible for or otherwise prohibited from participating in such activity at the school if the student's transfer to the school was because of a move necessitated by military orders issued to the student's parent or legal guardian if the following is applicable:
    1. The parent or legal guardian is a member of the uniformed services as defined in R.S. 29:403(13).
    2. The student resided with and was supported by the parent or legal guardian prior to the receipt of military orders by the parent or legal guardian.
    3. The military orders constituted a change in duty station such that the move was necessary to comply with the orders. A student of a military employee who transferred to an active military base and is residing on the base:
      - A) is eligible at any school located in the parish where the base is located
      - B) is eligible at a non-public school that is located outside the parish where the military base is located that the following is applied:
        - a) The student was previously attending a non-public school the entire school year prior to the transfer.
        - b) The student enrolls in the public or non-public school immediately following the relocation to the military base. Any school transfer after the initial move will be subject to standard eligibility regulations. A student of a military employee who

transferred to an active military base and is residing OFF the base is eligible at a public or non-public school in the attendance zone of the residence provided.

d. Ward of the Court or State: A student declared a ward of the court or state and who is placed in a home by the court shall be ruled immediately eligible at a member school in the athletic attendance zone in which the home is located, provided the student's case is investigated and approved by the Executive Director.

e. Death or Incarceration: If death of one/both parents or the household with whom he/she has been living with continuously for the past calendar year requires a student to change residences to another person of his/her first choice, the student shall be eligible at his/her school of first choice in the attendance zone of the new residence after the situation has been investigated and approved by the Executive Director. If the incarceration of one/both parents or the household with whom a student has been residing with continuously living for the past calendar year requires a student to change residences to another person of the student's first choice, the student shall be eligible at his/her school of first choice in the athletic attendance zone of the new residence after the situation has been investigated and approved by the Executive Director. Should the person(s) incarcerated be released prior to the student attending the new school for one calendar year, the student's eligibility shall revert back to the person he/she was living with prior to the incarceration and, upon the person(s) release, shall become immediately ineligible at the new school until he/she has been in attendance for the entire calendar year. At that time, the student shall have established eligibility at the new school and shall remain eligible at the school as long as the student does not break his/her chain of attendance at the school.

f. Homeless: A student declared homeless and enters a school as an "unaccompanied youth" under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible for interscholastic competition

g. On-Staff Faculty Coach or Administrator: The LHSAA shall honor the transfer across athletic attendance zones to a student whose parent(s) is an on-staff full time faculty coach or an on-staff full-time administrator. A coach must provide verification that he/she has been an on-staff full time faculty coach for a minimum of three previous school years. The transfer of the student shall occur at the first opportunity to attend after the coach or administrator is hired.

h. Foreign Exchange Students: A foreign exchange student attending an LHSAA school through an approved program of student cultural exchange (as provided below) shall become eligible immediately for a period of one calendar year under the Residence and School Transfers Rule when he/she meets the requirements in the following rules. These rules shall not apply to a foreign student who has been attending a high school in any state prior to becoming a foreign exchange student.

1. The foreign exchange student is attending the LHSAA high school through and by a program of foreign student educational and cultural exchange for Private Sector Programs and/or Rotary International Exchange Programs approved by the Academic and Government Programs Division of the Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation of the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The organizations designated to administer such high school foreign student cultural exchange visitor programs shall be posted on the LHSAA Members' Only website.

2. The foreign exchange student is living with a host family to which student was assigned by the approved foreign student cultural exchange program.

3. The host family for the foreign exchange student maintains its sole residence in the athletic attendance zone of the LHSAA school to which the student is assigned and attends.

4. Neither the husband nor wife of the host family or any other adult member of the family shall be a head coach, assistant coach (faculty or non-faculty), administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school to which the foreign exchange student is assigned and attends.

5. The foreign exchange student shall not be attending the LHSAA school for the primary purpose of participating in high school sports.

6. The foreign exchange student shall not have been recruited for athletic reasons by anyone connected with the LHSAA school.



7. The foreign exchange student shall not have attended another high school in this state or any other state of the United States prior to becoming a foreign exchange student.

8. The school shall be limited to only one foreign exchange student at the varsity level in each sport during a season and shall be the same student initially registered with the LHSAA in that sport.

i. A first-time 9th grade student who attended an unattached/stand-alone elementary/junior high school, i.e., K-8, 5-8, 6-8, 7-8, etc., that does not naturally matriculate into a 9-12 member school, who starts the first day of school at a member school located outside the attendance zone in which the student resides and who has not made a school of choice by participating in interscholastic athletic competition on the high school level as a 7th and/or 8th grader at a member school shall be immediately eligible to participate at any level of play other than varsity. If the member school the student makes a choice to attend only has a varsity level of play, the student shall not be eligible to participate and this shall not be a condition for a hardship appeal.

4. Once a student has established athletic eligibility at a school outside his/her athletic attendance zone, that school shall become the student's school of eligibility and a subsequent transfer to another member school without a corresponding bona-fide move shall cause the student to become ineligible for a period of one (1) calendar year from the date of his/her attendance/enrollment in the school. The school shall have on file a written statement signed by one or both parents that the above rule has been read and explained to them.

**1.12.5** In all transfer cases, the receiving school shall have the parents/guardians complete an LHSAA Residence Eligibility form. This form is designed to help the school when considering a student's eligibility. The student must actually be attending the school before the Residence Eligibility Form is utilized. Providing false or misleading information on this form may result in penalty to the student or school or both. A copy of this form must be retained on file by the receiving school.

**1.12.6** In all transfer cases involving two LHSAA member schools, the principal of the receiving school (school to which the student transfers), and the sending school (school from which the student transferred), must complete an LHSAA Principal's Concurrence Form. This form shall be initiated by the receiving school principal and provided to the sending school principal using a valid, registered email address listed on the contact portion of the LHSAA's Members' Only for completion by the sending school principal. Concurrence online with the transfer by both principals is required but does not guarantee or assure eligibility. The LHSAA reserves the right to investigate any transfer and make a ruling on the student's eligibility. It is recommended a student not participate in an interscholastic contest until the transfer form is fully executed by both principals and is on file in the office of the receiving school. The receiving school has the burden of proof should the eligibility of a transfer student come into question. Providing false or misleading information on this form may result in penalty to the student or school or both. The deadline to return the Principal's Concurrence Form to the receiving school principal is ten (10) days. Failure to timely complete the LHSAA Principal's Concurrence Form shall result in the school (sending and/or receiving) being fined \$100.

**1.12.7 Transfers from Academically Unacceptable Schools:** A student, who is enrolled in and attends or is assigned to attend a traditional public school or the traditional curriculum of a dual-curriculum public school that received a letter grade of "F", or any variation thereof, for the most year pursuant to the Louisiana School and District Accountability System (academically unacceptable) and transfers to enroll in and attend classes at a member school that has been classified by the same school system as an academically acceptable school that is physically located outside of the student's home attendance zone, shall be immediately eligible at the latter school provided the transfer is officially executed within the first 11 school days of the year.

1. During his/her eight semesters in high school, a student shall be allowed to make only one transfer from an academically unacceptable school in his/her home attendance zone to an academically acceptable school under this rule. Should the student transfer to and enroll in and attend one class in a second academically acceptable school at any time, the student shall be ineligible not only at the second academically acceptable school, but also at the first academically acceptable school for a period of one calendar year from his/her enrollment date.

2. If the student returns to, enrolls in, and attends one class at the school he/she has been attending in his/her home attendance zone, he/she shall be ruled immediately eligible at that school, if that school was the school of first choice, and shall not be allowed another choice at an academically acceptable school for immediate eligibility consideration under Rule 1.26.1.
3. The application of Rule 1.26.1 shall not provide that student with a second choice of schools in his/her home attendance zone or any other attendance zone.
4. Rule 1.26.1 shall not apply to a student who transfers to another school that has been classified as an academically unacceptable school by the school's state school system or a school that has not been classified by its school system.
5. If the academically acceptable school to which the student from the academically unacceptable school transferred to is later classified as an academically unacceptable school by its state school system, the student shall be given a new choice at an academically acceptable school under Rule 1.26.1 or may remain and retain eligibility at the school that the student was attending before it was re-classified as an academically unacceptable school.
6. It shall be a violation under the Recruitment Rule for anyone connected with an academically acceptable school to contact a student at an academically unacceptable school for athletic purposes.

**1.13** **BONA FIDE CHANGE OF RESIDENCE** - Under the residence and school transfers rule, a bona fide change of residence (move in good faith) shall occur when a student's parent(s)/guardian, or another household he/she has been residing with for at least the past calendar year, abandons their former home as a residence and makes a permanent move into a home that is their sole residence in another school district/attendance zone. A change of residence shall be made with the intent that it is permanent. Determination of what constitutes a bona fide change of residence depend upon the facts of each case, but in order for a change of residence to be considered bona fide, each of the following facts shall exist:

1. Under no circumstances can a family have two legal residences for eligibility purposes under the bona fide change of residence rule.
2. The original residence shall be abandoned as a residence. It shall be either sold, in the process of being sold, rented or disposed of as a residence.
3. It shall not be used as a residence by any relative of the student.
4. If the original residence is not in the process of being openly advertised for sale or rent, the family shall have the utilities disconnected in this residence.
5. All personal belongings, household goods, and furniture, appropriate to the circumstances shall be removed from the residence, unless the original residence is rented furnished and a legal lease agreement shall state exact furniture/items to remain in the residence.
6. The mailing address shall be changed and the telephone(s) shall be disconnected from the previous residence.

**1.13.1** When a bona fide change of residence is made, the student shall be eligible at the LHSAA school of first choice in the attendance zone that the new residence is located. Under the residence and school transfers rule, when a bona fide change of residence is made, the student may remain at the LHSAA school he/she has been attending and shall retain his/her eligibility, if he/she has been in attendance at the school for at least one calendar year.

**1.13.2** A change of residence for the purpose of creating interscholastic athletic eligibility shall not be considered a bona fide change of residence and the student shall be declared ineligible at all LHSAA schools for one calendar year.

**1.13.3** If a bona fide change of residence is made and the student's parent(s)/guardian establish another residence outside of the school's attendance zone (other than the original residence), the student shall become immediately ineligible at that school until he/she has been in attendance for one calendar year from the date of enrollment. If the parent(s)/guardian move back to the original residence before the student has been in attendance at the school for at least two calendar years, he/she shall become immediately ineligible until he/she has been in attendance at that school for two calendar years from the date of the move back to the original residence.

- 1.13.4** A student who has been residing with a household other than his/her own for at least the past calendar year shall be eligible at an LHSAA school if the household makes a bona fide change of residence into the school's attendance zone. The student shall remain eligible at the school if the family moves out of the zone after the student has been in attendance at the school for at least one calendar year. If the household makes a bona fide change of residence into another school zone at any time, the student shall be ruled immediately eligible at an LHSAA school in that zone if he/she moves with the household.
- 1.13.5** If a student has been ruled ineligible under the residence and school transfers rule by the Executive Director, the LHSAA shall not honor a bona fide change of residence for immediate eligibility purposes by the student's parents or a household with whom the student has been living for at least the past one calendar year during the same school year.
- 1.13.6** **Bona Fide Move Investigation:** The principal of the receiving school may request that the Executive Director conduct an investigation to determine if the change of residence meets the requirements of this rule. Requests shall be made in writing before an investigation can be conducted. The LHSAA shall conduct only one investigation of a bona fide change of residence for a student upon the request of the receiving school. If the investigation reveals that a bona fide change of residence has not been made, the student shall be ruled ineligible until he/she has been in attendance at the school for one calendar year. A change of residence shall not be considered a bona fide change of residence if false information is given to the LHSAA investigator conducting the investigation. The LHSAA shall not honor a bona fide change of residence investigation request until the student has been officially enrolled in and attended classes for at least 11 school days at the school requesting the investigation and has officially withdrawn from his/her former school. In conducting the investigation, the LHSAA shall not honor a bona fide change of residence for the purpose of immediate interscholastic athletic eligibility if:
1. It is claimed that the change of residence was made because the receiving school is academically superior or provides a safer environment than the sending LHSAA school and/or the LHSAA school physically located in the student's home attendance zone.
  2. A student's parents are living separate and apart for marital reasons unless one of the student's parents has filed a petition of divorce in a court of law.
  3. A student who has been expelled from another LHSAA school for the length of the expulsion.
  4. A student's parent(s) is/are retained as a non-faculty coach at the school.
- 1.14** **CUSTODY WHEN PARENTS LIVE SEPARATE AND APART** - If a student's parents (*including step-parents*) live separate and apart, the student's eligibility, under the Residence and School Transfers rule, shall be determined by the following rules. This section shall also apply to parents who have never been legally married. Verification or proof that the individuals are the natural father and mother shall be required.
- 1.14.1** If permanent legal custody by a court of law has not been granted, the student shall remain eligible only in the zone in which the student's parents have been residing prior to their separation. If both of the student's parents move to a residence outside of the attendance zone in which the student has been attending an LHSAA school, the student shall be eligible in the attendance zone of the parent's residence he/she first resides with when the parents initially separate. After that time, the student shall not be eligible with the other parent unless the other parent is awarded legal custody of the student through a court of law.
- 1.14.2** If permanent legal custody by a court of law has been granted, the student shall be eligible in the athletic attendance zone of the parent's residence who has been awarded legal custody. For purposes of this rule, a notarial change of custody does not constitute a legal change of custody.

- 1.14.3** If joint custody has been granted, the student's eligibility shall be determined as follows:
1. In the athletic attendance zone of the parent's residence who has been named the domiciliary parent or in the athletic attendance zone of the parent whose residence has been declared by the court as the student's domicile residence.
  2. If neither parent has been named the domiciliary parent nor if the domicile residence of the student has not been declared in the custody plan and one parent remains in the athletic attendance zone where the student has been attending school, the student's eligibility shall be with the parent who did not move. If neither parent has been named the domiciliary parent or the domicile residence of the student has not been declared in the custody plan and both parents of the student move to a residence outside of the athletic attendance zone in which the student has been attending a member school, the student may be ruled eligible in the athletic attendance zone of the parent's residence he/she first resides with when the parents initially separate.
  3. After that time, the student shall not be eligible with the other parent unless the other parent is awarded legal domicile custody of the student through a court of law. If this happens, Rule 1.14.4 shall apply
- 1.14.4** The granting of any type legal custody or any change of legal custody shall not be effective under the Residence and School Transfers Rule until a period of 45 calendar days from the date the awarding of custody has been signed by a judge.
- 1.14.5** A student who turns 18 years of age while living with one parent, when his/her parents are living separate and apart, and is eligible in the zone where that parent resides, changes his/her residence to that of the other parent shall be eligible. These circumstances would have required a change of custody by court order if the student had been below 18 years of age. The student shall be eligible in the zone he/she now resides with the parent who would have obtained a change of custody by court order, if the student had been below the age of 18. The Executive Director's office shall have the power to investigate such a move to verify it was made under circumstances that would have required a change of custody by court order if the student had been below the age of 18. Only one such change of residence, after reaching the age of 18, shall be allowed. The student shall be ineligible in any new district after the second or subsequent change of residence. Proof of the date of change of custody must be provided to the school and the student shall become eligible 45 days from the date of change of custody.
- 1.15** **COURT ORDERS** - For eligibility purposes under the transfer rule, the LHSAA shall not honor legal custody or guardianship granted to a person who is not the student's parent(s) unless both parents are deceased. Adoption of a student shall not be honored for eligibility purposes under the School Transfers Rule until one year after the adoption.
- 1.15.1** A student whose chain of attendance has been negated by a court order may, upon the withdrawal of the court order, return to the school at which he/she was eligible prior to the court order. The student shall retain his/her eligibility at the school provided he/she has not attended another school after the court order became final and was presented to the student's parent(s)/guardian.
- 1.16** **EMANCIPATION** - Under the Residence and School Transfers rule, a student who is emancipated by age or marriage or by the court shall be considered as having the same residence as his/her parents.
- 1.17** **BOARDING SCHOOLS** - A student attending a boarding school which is housed in an LHSAA member school may become immediately eligible, thereby waiving the Residence and Transfers Rule, under the following:
1. The boarding school must be recognized as such in its own literature and verified by the LDE and/or a nationally recognized accreditation agency such as AdvancED (formerly SACS) or the Independent School Association of the Southwest (ISAS).
  2. The boarding school must have been in existence for no fewer than ten years.
  3. The boarding school must have appropriate dormitory facilities to house, feed, and provide general living accommodations for the boarding students.

4. The boarding school must employ properly trained supervisory personnel who are on duty at all times, including nights, weekends, and holidays.
5. A boarding student, to qualify for the exception, must spend at least an average of four (4) nights per week living and boarding on campus while school is in session.
6. Only those schools that qualify as boarding schools as defined herein may provide any assistance for room and board to students who participate in interscholastic athletics and only if such assistance is based on financial need.
7. In no other schools may room and board expense be included in the determination of school expenses and financial need.

**1.18** **SPECIAL SCHOOLS** - All eligibility rules, except the age rule, shall be waived in the case of Louisiana State School for the Deaf and State School for the Visually Impaired of Baton Rouge.

**1.19** **MAGNET, DUAL CURRICULUM, AND RECOVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT (RSD) PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS**

- 1.19.1** A student who transfers to a magnet high school, the magnet curriculum of a dual curriculum high school, or to an RSD public high school with school board, court approval and/or state statutes shall be eligible to represent the magnet high school or RSD public high school in athletic competition immediately if the transfer is at the beginning of the school year at the lowest grade level offered by the school. If entry occurs grade level above the lowest grade level offered in the school or after the beginning of the school year, the student shall be ineligible at the magnet school or the RSD public high school for one calendar year. Interpretation: The lowest level of entry offered by a school refers to the first opportunity the student has to attend the magnet school, the dual curriculum school's magnet component, or the RSD public high school at the beginning of the school year or upon transferring into the school system if this occurs after the start of the school year.
- 1.19.2** A student who transfers from a magnet high school, dual-curriculum high school, or RSD public high school may return to the first high school he/she attended in his/her home zone and shall become eligible immediately. In the event the student has not attended a high school in his/her home zone, he/she shall become eligible at the first high school he/she attends in his/her home zone.
- 1.19.3** If, at any time, a student drops the magnet program in a school outside his/her home attendance zone, he/she shall become ineligible immediately at the magnet school for one calendar year. If, at any time, a student attending a dual-curriculum high school outside his/her home attendance zone changes from the magnet curriculum to the regular curriculum, he/she shall become ineligible immediately at the dual-curriculum high school for one calendar year.
- 1.19.4** It shall be a violation of the recruiting rule for any individual connected with a magnet school or RSD public high school to contact a student for athletic purposes.
- 1.19.5** It shall be a violation of the recruiting rule for any individual connected with a dual curriculum (magnet) school to contact a student who does not reside in the school's traditional attendance zone for athletic purposes.
- 1.19.6** Each school year, the principal of a dual-curriculum magnet school shall be required to provide the LHSAA with the following information:
1. The name(s) of the school system approved magnet component(s).
  2. The names of the magnet component subjects that students are required to take each year to be officially enrolled in the magnet component.
  3. A list of all student-athletes (form provided by the LHSAA) who reside outside of the school's traditional attendance zone with their grade level and the magnet subjects each student is enrolled in and taking for the school year.



4. The principal shall immediately report the name(s) of any student(s) residing outside of the school's traditional attendance zone who withdraws from the magnet program but remains at the school and taking only traditional subjects. The principal shall also immediately prohibit the student(s) from participating in interscholastic athletic competition for one calendar year from the magnet program. This shall also apply to any student(s) that fail(s) to meet any requirement of the magnet program.
5. This information shall be filed with the LHSAA prior to the first regular season contest of each sports season in which at least one of these applicable students participate.

**1.20** **ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION OF HOME-SCHOOL STUDENTS** - A student who is enrolled in a home-school program approved by BESE in accordance with R.S.17:236.1 shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities at a member school provided:

1. The home-school student shall meet all other standards and requirements applicable to a student participating in the athletic activity, including but not limited to tryouts, practice time, codes of conduct and student discipline, physical exams, proof of age, permission forms, waivers, required paperwork, fees, and transportation arrangements excluding requirement for enrollment and attendance at the member school.
2. A home-school student shall be subject to the same residency or attendance zone requirements as other students participating in the athletic activity.
3. The student's parent or legal guardian shall make a written request for the student to participate in interscholastic athletic activities to the principal of the school providing the activity. Such request shall be made no later than the first 11 days of the school year. A home-school student, who is a member of a school team, shall be included in the schools October 1 enrollment count for the purposes of and as it applies to athletics.
4. The principal of the school providing the athletic activity shall approve or disapprove such written request within 30 days after receipt by the principal of all information and documentation requested by the principal from the student or the student's parent or legal guardian, or both. A request for information and documentation by the principal shall be limited to information and documentation that is required of other students relative to participation in the athletic activity. The decision by the principal to approve or disapprove the written request for the student to participate shall be final. No person, individually or on behalf of any other person, shall have a cause of action arising from a denial by a principal of participation by a home-school student in interscholastic athletics at the school.
5. After a decision is made by the principal to approve a request for the student to participate, the student then shall participate in any tryouts for such activity at the same time and in the same manner as other students who want to participate in the same activity. Participation shall be defined as the opportunity to try out for a position on the team as with any other student at the school, even if eligible, no student is guaranteed participation, only the opportunity to try out for a position on the team.
6. The student shall submit documentation from BESE that the student is in an approved home-school program.
7. The student shall meet academic standards required of other students to participate in the athletic activity. A student shall not be allowed to receive scholastic academic credit as a home-school student at the same time he/she is earning Carnegie units while attending an LHSAA member school. The student shall submit a copy of his/her transcript showing units of study completed or in progress, the grades earned for such study, and his/her cumulative grade point average. The means used to determine that the home-school student meets such standards shall be agreed to by the principal of the school offering the sport and the parent or other person responsible by law for the school attendance of the home-school student. Such means may include those provided for in R.S. 17.236.1(D). The agreement shall occur prior to the home-school student being permitted to participant in the sport, and scholastic eligibility (GPA, grades) shall be verified by the member school's principal at the same time all other students are verified for athletic participation.

8. The student shall meet conditions applicable to students at the school relative to having any required insurance coverage either by participating, if otherwise eligible, in insurance programs offered through the school or school system or by providing for such insurance coverage in another manner.
9. A home-school student's participation at a state-approved non-public school shall be at the sole discretion of the governing authority of the non-public school. If participation is permitted, the governing authority shall determine the terms and conditions of any such participation at the school.
10. A student who has been enrolled in a public or non-public school during the school year in which the student begins home-school shall not be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities during the remainder of that school year nor during the following school year.
11. Any home-school student who provides or on whose behalf others provide any false representation, documentation or verification of the student's qualifications for the purpose of meeting eligibility requirements to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be ruled ineligible to participate and shall be subject to the same penalties as other students as provided by the association.
12. A school determined to be knowledgeable of any false representation, documentation, or verification of a home-school student's qualifications for the purpose of meeting eligibility requirements to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be subject to penalties as established by the LHSAA for use of an ineligible student-athlete.
13. A Code of Conduct/Discipline Agreement must be signed by the home-school student, the student's parents, and the principal of the school. A copy of the agreement shall be kept on file at the school. The home-school student shall adhere to the same standards of acceptance, behavior and performance as required of the students at the member school in which the home-school student is participating.

- 1.20.1 A home-school student who is ruled ineligible shall not be allowed to appeal his/her ineligibility through the LHSAA Hardship Program.
- 1.20.2 Home-school students shall be registered on the LHSAA Members' Only website by the member school only once during the school year and shall be registered as soon as the acceptance process is completed but not later than October 1 each year. The student's registration shall be updated for each additional sport in which the student participates. Failure to timely register the home-school student(s) online shall result in the school being penalized in the following manner:
  1. If the violation is reported by the offending school, the school shall be fined \$100 for each contest in which the unregistered student participated up to a maximum of \$1,000 per student.
  2. If the violation is not reported by the offending school, the school shall be fined \$200 for each contest in which the unregistered student participated up to a maximum of \$2,000 per student.
  3. The offending school shall be placed on administrative probation for up to one calendar year from the date of the penalty ruling.
  4. In the case of multiple violations in a sport, the school shall be subject to being placed on restrictive probation and ruled ineligible for district and/or state championship honors in which the unregistered student(s) participated.
  5. The school may receive other penalties to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.

## 1.21 **REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS RENDERED ELIGIBLE BY ACT 465**

- 1.21.1 Before a student, who would otherwise be ineligible, is allowed to participate in an LHSAA interscholastic athletic contest at any level of play (varsity or sub-varsity) in any LHSAA sport because of ACT 465 that conflicts with an LHSAA eligibility rule, the school shall register this student online with the LHSAA. Only when your school receives notification from the LHSAA that the Superintendent of the Diocese has declared the student eligible under ACT 465 shall the student be allowed to participate in any interscholastic competition. A school shall be required to register the student online only once during the school year but shall be added and/or updated to the online sports roster for each additional sport in which the student participates. Interpretation: A student declared eligible

under ACT 465 may be eligible provided he/she attends the entire *terminal grade (last grade offered at a school)* at a non-public school operated by the same organization/federation as the high school the student chooses to attend in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and provided he/she enrolls and attends class the first day of school in his/her 9<sup>th</sup> grade year.

- 1.21.2** Failure to timely register the student(s) online shall result in the school being penalized in the following manner:
1. If the violation is reported by the offending school, the school shall be fined \$100 for each contest in which the unregistered student participated up to a maximum of \$1,000 per student.
  2. If the violation is not reported by the offending school, the school shall be fined \$200 for each contest in which the unregistered student participated up to a maximum of \$2,000 per student.
  3. The offending school shall be placed on administrative probation for up to one calendar year from the date of the penalty ruling.
  4. In the case of multiple violations in a sport, the school shall be subject to being placed on restrictive probation and ruled ineligible for district and/or state championship honors in which the unregistered student(s) participated.
  5. The school may receive other penalties to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.
- 1.21.3** A student who is eligible under ACT 465 shall be required to meet all other LHSAA eligibility rules.
- 1.21.4** A student who is ineligible under ACT 465 shall not be allowed to process his/her ineligibility status through the LHSAA's Hardship Program.
- 1.21.5** After the student's 9<sup>th</sup> grade school year, the school shall be required to certify the student's eligibility status and update him/her on the school's online eligibility registration.
- 1.22** **STUDENTS IN 7th and/or 8th GRADES** - A member school shall not allow a student in the 7th and/or 8th grade to practice or play with any of its school teams at any level in any sport unless that grade is under the official jurisdiction of the principal of the member high school as recognized by the State Department of Education. Under no circumstances shall any student below grade 7 participate in any LHSAA sanctioned sport at any level (varsity or sub-varsity).
- 1.22.1** A student in 7th and/or 8th grade who participates on a high school team shall meet the same eligibility requirements as a high school student, excluding the scholastic rule.
1. Seventh (7th) grade students who qualify to participate in LHSAA sanctioned athletics shall be eligible for competition on high school athletic teams during the ensuing twelve (12) consecutive semesters or terms of 90 days.
  2. Eighth (8th) grade students who qualify to participate in LHSAA sanctioned athletics shall be eligible for competition on high school athletic teams during the ensuing ten (10) consecutive semesters or terms of 90 days.
  3. Once a seventh (7th) and/or eighth (8th) grade student is registered and submitted on the Members' Only website, the student shall have established eligibility at that member school and has made his/her school of first choice and shall not get another choice upon entering high school and a subsequent transfer to another member school without a corresponding bona fide move shall cause the student to become ineligible until he/she has been in attendance at the school for one calendar year. The school shall have on file a written statement signed by one or both parents that the above rule has been read and explained to them.

*\*\*NOTE: Any 7th and/or 8th grade student who is registered and submitted by a member school on the Members' Only website for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years shall be included in the school's 2016 classification enrollment numbers.*

- 1.22.2 Promotion from the 6th grade into the 7th grade or the 7th grade into the 8th grade for the first time shall fulfill the scholastic requirements rule. Promotion into the subsequent grade shall be in accordance with the approved local Pupil Progression Plan.
- 1.22.3 For a student to be ruled eligible for the second semester of the school year, he/she must pass at least three-fourths of the subjects taken during the first semester.
- 1.22.4 First-year 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who take and complete the necessary requirements as outlined by the State Department of Education to receive Carnegie units of credit toward graduation prior to entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade shall not have their eight consecutive semesters of high school eligibility affected if they proceed to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade the succeeding semester or school year. First-year 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who take and complete Carnegie unit subjects which count toward high school graduation will begin their ensuing eight consecutive semester of eligibility if they repeat the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 1.22.5 Second-year 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who did not take and earn Carnegie units toward high school graduation during their first year in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade shall begin their ensuing eight consecutive semesters of eligibility if they repeat the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and take and complete Carnegie unit subjects which count toward high school graduation.
- 1.22.6 *A "hold-back student" is a student who has successfully completed the academic and attendance requirements (as defined by the Louisiana State Department of Education) that have been established for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and who is held back in one or more of these grades prior to entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.*
- A student who successfully completes all requirements of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and who does not enroll in and attend a high school the next school year after completing the 8<sup>th</sup> grade shall be classified as a "hold-back student."*
- When a "hold-back student" enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time, he/she shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics in the LHSAA for only the next ensuing six consecutive semesters or terms of 90 days.*
- 1.22.7 Encouraging students or establishing an academic program that facilitates students who have successfully completed the academic requirements set fourth for passing the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade level to repeat one or more of these grades for athletic purposes by a school administrator, an athletic director, a coach or anyone connected with the athletic program of an LHSAA member school shall be prohibited. It shall be a violation of this rule for a student-athlete who has successfully completed the established academic requirements for passing the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade to be encouraged or assisted in any manner to repeat one or more of these grades for athletic purposes. A school, student, school administrator, athletic director and/or coach found to be in violation of this rule shall be subject to disciplinary action depending upon the severity of the violation as provided in the by-laws.
- 1.22.8 The penalties for schools in violation of encouraging or assisting a student who has successfully completed the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade to repeat one or more of these grades for athletic reasons:
1. The school may be placed on restrictive probation and ruled ineligible for championship honors in the sport(s) in which the violation occurred.
  2. The school shall be fined \$1,000 and billed for the cost of any investigation related to the violation.
  3. The student may be ruled ineligible in all LHSAA sports for one calendar year when he/she first enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
  4. The coach shall be penalized under Rule 5.12.
  5. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.

- 1.23** **SUSPENSION** - A student suspended/expelled from one school shall be ineligible for athletic competition at another school until he/she presents written clearance from the school he/she has been suspended/expelled. A suspended/expelled student shall not participate in athletic contests during the length of the suspension/expulsion. *Interpretation: If a student has been suspended/expelled from school for disciplinary reasons, he/she shall be ineligible to participate or dress out with his/her school team while he/she is under suspension/expulsion.*
- 1.24** **GENDER EQUITY IN COMPETITION** - Interscholastic competition shall be permitted in all LHSAA recognized boys' and girls' sports. Boys and girls shall meet the same eligibility requirements to compete in interscholastic athletic events. In order to promote as many athletic opportunities as possible for members of the female gender, if a school offers a boys' interscholastic athletic team but does not offer a girls' interscholastic team in a sport, girls in that school may play on the boys' team in that sport.
- 1.24.1** Whenever a school provides a girls' team in a particular sport but not a boys' team in that sport, the boys shall not play on the girls' team unless athletic opportunities in the total sports program for boys in that school have been limited in comparison to the athletic opportunities in the total sports program for girls in that school.
1. In order for a boy to play on a girls' team under these circumstances, permission must be secured from the Executive Director of the LHSAA, and the name of the boy playing on the girls' team along with clear and convincing evidence that athletic opportunities for boys in the total sports program in that school have been limited in comparison to athletic opportunities in the total sports program for girls in that school shall be submitted to the Executive Director's office prior to the boy playing on the girls' team.
  2. If a girl plays on a boys' team and there is a girls' team in that sport at that particular school, she is considered an ineligible player and the penalties for playing an ineligible player shall apply to the boys' team in the school and, in addition, the school shall forfeit participating in the girls' playoffs in that same sport.
  3. Boys' rules shall be used when girls play on boys' teams. Girls' rules shall be used when boys play on girls' teams where permission has been granted by the Executive Director in accordance with this rule.
- 1.25** **MAINTAINING AMATEUR STATUS** - An amateur athlete is one who takes part in one or more branches of athletics for the sake of the sport alone, without receiving or expecting to receive any financial remuneration of any form. No student shall, at any time, receive any salary or financial compensation, except actual expenses. A student who signs an athletic contract for any kind of pay shall be ineligible for further high school athletic participation in the LHSAA. Acceptance of a college grant-in-aid is acceptable and not a violation of this rule. The following acts shall be considered violations of the amateur rule:
1. Competition or exercise in any sport under an assumed name.
  2. Directly or indirectly receiving pay or financial benefit in consideration of, or as a reward for, participating in any sport, in any public competition or exhibition, or disposing of prizes for personal gain.
  3. Directly or indirectly receiving pay or financial benefit in consideration of, or as reward for, appearing in person at any competition, exhibition, or exercise in sports, other than officiating or instructing in a recognized recreation program.
  4. Participation by a student, during the school year, in any public competition or exhibition as a team member or against a team consisting of one or more members who are professionals or former professionals in some sport, without having obtained consent, in writing, from the principal of the school he/she attends before participating.
- 1.25.1** Students may officiate or serve as instructors in recreational sports as part of regular recreation programs and receive financial remuneration for these services during the entire year. Students may receive pay as lifeguards at swimming pools during the summer months.



- 1.25.2** If a student violates the amateur rule and returns any financial remuneration that he/she received to the applicable source prior to a penalty ruling being issued to his/her school and can document its return to the Executive Director's satisfaction, the student's eligibility shall be reinstated. Once a penalty ruling is issued to the school, the above rule shall not be applicable.
- 1.25.3** The penalties for a student in violation of the amateur rule:
1. The school may be placed on administrative, disciplinary, or restrictive probation not to exceed one calendar year.
  2. The school shall be fined not to exceed \$500.
  3. The school shall be required to forfeit any contest(s) in which the student participated after the violation.
  4. The student shall be suspended from all LHSAA sports for at least one calendar year.
  5. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.
- 1.26** **HARDSHIP PROGRAM** - Prior to July 1 each year, the President shall appoint a sub-committee of six member and two alternates from the LHSAA Executive Committee to review and rule on the potential hardship situations of students ruled ineligible by the Executive Director. After the Executive Director considers requests for hardship rulings, this Hardship Committee shall serve as the appeal board to review the Executive Director's decision(s) made in the original rulings on these special requests. The committee shall hear and consider each case on an individual or class action basis and shall render a decision based on the merits of each separate case. No case shall have precedential value. The purpose of the hardship rule shall be to provide due process. The decisions of the Hardship Committee shall be final and, effective July 1, 2011, there shall be no further appeal to the Executive Committee. If a school seeks review of the decision of the Hardship Committee on a student's eligibility to a third-party arbitrator, the procedure for applying for third-party arbitration from the Hardship Committee shall be the same as provided for applying for third-party arbitration on an issue of eligibility from the Executive Committee as provided in Constitutional Rules 4.4.6 and 4.4.7 and By-laws 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. New information shall not be permitted to be introduced to the arbitrator that was not presented to the Hardship Committee at the time of their decision. The only issue to be submitted to the arbitrator is whether the Hardship Committee correctly followed LHSAA's rules for granting a hardship exception to LHSAA's eligibility rules. If there is no application for third party arbitration, the decision of the Hardship Committee is final, and there shall be no further appeal to the Executive Committee.
- 1.26.1** The condition(s) causing a student not to meet the eligibility requirement(s) shall be involuntary, unforeseeable, uncorrectable, and create a unique situation concerning the student's educational, emotional, or physical status that exists and is beyond the control of the school, the school system, the student, and/or his parent(s) or guardian(s). The condition(s) shall create a situation that the school, student, or parent(s) could not have reasonably been expected to comply with the eligibility rule involved and is not specifically addressed by a written expectation to the basic eligibility rule(s) in question. When reviewing requests for hardship consideration, race, gender, or religion shall not be a factor in granting an exception to the eligibility rule in question.
- 1.26.2** The Executive Director and/or Hardship Committee shall have the authority to set aside the effect of any eligibility rule on a student-athlete when, in his or the Committee's opinion, the rule fails to accomplish the purpose for which it was intended or when the rule causes an undue hardship on the student with the exception of the eligibility rules regarding the age rule, proof-of-age rule, undue influence rule, amateur rule, independent teams rule, medical examination, and/or interscholastic competition for boys and girls rule which shall only be appealable to the Executive Committee. Ordinary cases of ineligibility shall not be considered as being a reason for hardship. Injury, illness, or accidents which cause the student to fail to meet one of the basic eligibility requirements may be a possible cause for hardship consideration. Inability to participate due to illness, injury, or other medical reasons shall not be considered hardship conditions except in those cases where ineligibility exists because the student was unable to attend or prohibited from attending school for a prolonged length of time due to medical treatment. Lack of

knowledge of any eligibility rule on the part of the school, the student, and/or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall not be considered sufficient cause for setting aside the effects of a rule.

- 1.26.3** In no case shall the Hardship Committee review any ineligibility imposed upon a student who is under penalty for participating as an ineligible student or who is under penalty due to a ruling made by the Executive Director or by an LHSAA sportsmanship committee because of an unsportsmanlike act he/she committed. Such a request shall be made to the Executive Committee.
- 1.26.4** In reaching a decision on a request for relief under the hardship rule, the Executive Director and/or the Hardship Committee shall operate under the following guidelines:
1. Loss of eligibility in itself shall not be considered a hardship situation. Hardship conditions causing ineligibility shall be the basis on which the waiver of the rule is considered.
  2. To be considered a hardship condition, the student's situation shall be totally different from those which exist for the majority of the students who are confronted with similar situations and choices.
  3. Academic or athletic deficiencies in a school's curriculum or extracurricular athletic program shall not create hardship conditions.
- 1.26.5** Requests shall be considered by the Hardship Committee three times a school year without cost to the school. The dates of the Hardship Committee meetings shall be published in the LHSAA Handbook and Calendar. The meeting dates for the current school year shall be:
- 1. Wednesday of the 7th calendar week (August 23, 2017)*
  - 2. Wednesday of the 15th calendar week (October 4, 2017)*
  - 3. Wednesday of the 33rd calendar week (February 14, 2018)*
4. The President shall be authorized to order one additional hearing to be conducted during the school year.
- 1.26.6** All meetings of the Hardship Committee shall be closed to the media and public unless the Executive Committee or the Hardship Committee vote to open the meeting.
- 1.26.7** Application for hardship consideration shall be made in writing using the official LHSAA Hardship Application, signed by the school principal, and contain all of the facts pertaining to the case, including sufficient data, information, and documentation making it possible to reach a decision without further investigation. Consideration shall not be given to any application that is not accompanied by the required/requested documentation. The application shall contain a letter from the school principal and a letter from the parent(s) or guardian(s), each explaining in detail the reason(s) for requesting consideration of a waiver of an eligibility rule(s) under the hardship rule. The application shall be either hand-delivered to the LHSAA office or emailed to the LHSAA and must be received in the LHSAA office at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates. A copy of the application and all accompanying documentation shall be kept on file by the applying school. The inclusion of false information/documentation with the application may result in severe penalty to the school.
- 1.26.8** In cases involving medical questions, the request for exception shall be accompanied by the statement(s) of two or more qualified medical experts explaining in detail the medical aspects of the case. When requesting an additional semester(s) of eligibility due to medical reason (illness/injury), the student shall be required to prove that he/she did everything possible to comply with the scholastic rule to progress toward graduation from high school at the rate expected of other students in his/her class.
- 1.26.9** In cases involving legal questions, copies of official records of court action shall be attached.
- 1.26.10** Any hardship application seeking waiver of a rule based on a claim that the student athlete is disabled within the meaning of the Americans with Disability Act and is entitled to an accommodation under the Act which would require the waiver of an eligibility rule shall state the specific disability and why the student athlete is entitled to a waiver of

the rule. Before the 1st hardship committee meeting of each year, the Executive Director shall prepare a list of medical doctors and other health care professionals to serve as a panel of experts. The expert may or may not be a psychiatrist or psychologist, but all experts on the panel shall have experience in evaluating disability within the meaning of Americans with Disability Act. When a particular hardship application for a waiver due to an entitlement of accommodation under ADA is made, the Executive Director shall choose from the list one or more of the experts to submit the documentation supporting a claim of disability and the application to the expert(s) for an opinion on whether the student-athlete is disabled within the meaning of ADA and whether he meets the requirements for accommodation and whether such an accommodation would include waiver of the eligibility rule in question. In considering the hardship application, the Executive Director and the hardship committee shall give great weight to the expert's opinions.

- 1.26.11** In cases involving the Residence and School Transfers Rule, the principal of the sending school may write a letter in support of the request, and the principal of the receiving school shall write a letter explaining the transfer and citing other important information that may be taken into consideration by the Executive Director and/or Hardship Committee; there shall be no evidence of recruiting for athletic purposes.
- 1.26.12** In cases involving the scholastic rule, a current, official copy of the student's cumulative folder showing all scholastic and attendance data since entry into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time shall be attached to the appeal. Requests for exceptions to the scholastic rule, since it is also affected by state law, shall also be subject to the approval of BESE.
- 1.26.13** In cases involving the eight consecutive semesters rule, a current, official copy of the student's cumulative folder showing all scholastic and attendance data since entry into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time shall be attached to the appeal. A request for an additional semester(s) of eligibility because of academic remediation improvement and/or achievement alone shall not be a basis for waiving the eight consecutive semesters rule. When the eight consecutive semester rule is in question, the hardship application must be made within the eight semesters when the hardship situation is discovered and not after he/she has completed eight consecutive semesters. In the case of appeals for an exception to the eight consecutive semester rule, the student in question must personally appear before the Hardship Committee to represent his/her appeal and must present the LHSAA with acceptable proof of age. Consideration shall not be given to any application involving the eight consecutive semester rule when the student requesting the waiver actually participated in four athletic seasons of any sport. In cases involving financial hardship, documented proof of a significant loss of income and/or a significant increase in expenses shall be required. Loss of financial aid exclusively does not constitute a financial hardship. Documentation shall include a written description outlining the circumstances that led to the financial hardship and appropriate documentation which may include but is not limited to the following:
1. Evidence of loss of income or change in financial obligations (not self-imposed)
  2. Family W-2 forms and pay stubs showing year-to-date earnings
  3. Notarized statement from parent(s)
  4. Statement from employer, attorney, accountant, social services or other professional with knowledge of the circumstances
  5. Tax returns for past two years
- 1.26.14** In cases involving federal desegregation, a student ruled ineligible shall not have his/her case appealed through the hardship program until he/she can provide the Executive Director with written documentation to verify that he/she has exhausted his/her remedy of relief through the school/local school system and/or the federal court system.

- 1.26.15** In all cases, the principal of the school shall be present at the hardship hearing to present the case. Other school system personnel shall also be allowed to appear before the committee. It is strongly recommended that the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) be present at the hearing. Persons representing appeals shall be business like in their presentations and shall refrain from socializing with members of the committee. Any party that wishes to bring an attorney to an LHSAA hardship hearing is required to notify the LHSAA office 48 hours in advance if any legal counsel will be accompanying the family or school at a hearing. This notification is necessary so that legal counsel for the LHSAA can also be present at the hearing. If the hardship is denied, the school shall be billed for the cost of the LHSAA attorney to attend the hearing. As advisory officer to the Executive Committee, the Executive Director shall be present at all Hardship Committee appeal hearings and shall be afforded an opportunity to explain his/her ruling and provide the committee with information relative to the case. Each group appearing before the Hardship Committee shall be afforded a maximum of 20 minutes for appeals involving the eight consecutive semesters rule and 10 minutes for all other appeals to verbally submit their case. Committee members shall have the right to ask questions of individuals appearing. The principal and school system personnel shall also be allowed to appear before the committee. Appeals from individuals from the same school involving the same rule(s) may be considered "class action" and may be heard at the same time by the Hardship Committee.
- 1.26.16** A simple majority of the members assigned to the Hardship Committee shall be present at the hearing in order to constitute a quorum. No member shall serve on the committee when a case involving a student from his/her school or parish is being heard. All decisions made by the Hardship Committee shall require a majority vote. An appeal to the Hardship Committee shall result in an automatic motion to waive the eligibility rule(s) in question.
- 1.26.17** Once a student is granted a hardship ruling to a member school, that school shall become the student's school of eligibility and a subsequent transfer to another LHSAA member school without a corresponding bona-fide move shall cause the student to become ineligible for a period of one calendar year from the date of his/her enrollment in the school.