



NORTH CAROLINA  
**Healthy Schools**

NCDPI

2018 – 19 Middle School Athletics  
Player Eligibility

# Eligibility (pg. 8)

- Only students in grades six through eight may participate in middle school (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades) interscholastic athletic competition. Only students in grades seven through nine may participate in junior high school (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades) interscholastic athletic competition, provided ninth grade is housed in the same building with seventh and eighth grades.

Note: Sixth grade students are ineligible to participate in football.

# Eligibility (pg. 8)

Eligibility begins for all students with initial entry into the sixth grade regardless of:

- the school organization pattern
- the decision of the LEA/Charter as to whether or not to allow 6<sup>th</sup> grade participation

# Eligibility (pg. 10)

## Eligibility for 2017-2018 and beyond

A student who is promoted from the fifth grade to the sixth grade automatically meets the courses passed requirement for the first semester of the sixth grade.

All other students must meet eligibility requirements.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students must meet eligibility requirements to participate in football.

# Academics (pg. 8)

1. In grades six, seven and eight, the student must pass at least one less course than the number of required core courses each semester and meet promotion standards established by the LEA/Charter School.
2. If an athlete is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester.
3. It is the responsibility of the school principal to check the academic status of each student/athlete enrolled in school at the beginning and close of a semester.

**NOTE: An athlete becomes eligible or ineligible on the first day of the new semester.**

# Age (pg. 8)

1. The principal must have evidence of the legal birth date of the student.
2. A student shall not participate on a sixth, seventh or eighth grade team if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.

# Attendance (pg. 9)

1. A player must have attended school at least 85% of the previous semester.
2. A student **must**, at any time of any game in which he or she participates, **be a regularly enrolled** member of the school's student body, according to local policy.
  - a. If there is no local policy, "regularly enrolled" is defined as enrolled for at least one-half of the "minimum load."
3. It is recommended the student be in school the day of the contest.

# Eligibility Lists (pg. 9)

1. Eligibility lists shall be certified with the signature of the principal and filed with the local superintendent (or his/her designee) prior to the first game or contest in that sport.
2. One copy shall be kept on file in the office of the principal.
3. All eligible students shall be included and all information must be complete and accurate when certified by the principal.
4. It is recommended to keep these lists on file for at least three years.



# Felony Policy (pg. 9)

Any student who is subject to the Middle School six semester rule who:

1. is convicted of a crime classified as a felony under North Carolina or federal law; or
2. is adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult, is not eligible to participate in the North Carolina Middle School Athletic sports program.
3. Such ineligibility shall be immediate and shall prohibit participation in the NC Middle School sports program from the date of conviction or adjudication of delinquency through the end of the student's middle school career.

# Gfeller Waller (pg. 10)

In order to be eligible for practice or participation in any interscholastic athletic contests:

1. Student-athletes will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
2. Students shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before beginning participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.

# Gfeller Waller (pg. 10)

3. Parent/Legal Guardians will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
4. Parent/Legal Guardians shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.

# Gfeller Waller (pg. 10)

5. School Representatives  
(parent/coach/volunteer/school nurse/athletic directors/ first responders) will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet.
6. All above adults shall read, initial and return the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.

# Gfeller Waller



GFELLER-WALLER LAW

EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

EAP & POSTCONCUSSION COMPONENTS

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS

## Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act

Implications and Considerations for Schools

- <http://gfellerwallerlaw.unc.edu/GfellerWallerLaw/gwlaw.html>
- <http://nchsaa.org/health-and-safety/gfeller-waller-concussion-awareness-act>

# Promotion (pg. 10)

Promotion is defined as progressing to the next grade.

1. In grades six, seven and eight, the student must meet state and local promotion standards each semester. This includes the academic requirement listed in the manual. (pg. 8)
2. Regardless of the school organization pattern, a student who is promoted from the fifth grade to the sixth grade automatically meets the courses passed requirement for the first semester of the seventh grade.

# Residence (pg. 10)

The student must meet the residence criteria of G.S. 115C-366(a).

1. The student may participate only at the school to which the student is assigned by the LEA.
2. Transfers within the same administrative unit may be governed by the local Board of Education policy.

# Residence

- School assignment is based on the residence of the parent or legal custodian (Court ordered custody, not guardian) within the administrative unit.
- Student must live with the parents or legal custodian.
- A **“Legal Custodian”** is a person or agency awarded legal, court ordered custody of a child.
- A student may not have two residences for eligibility purposes. “Residence” as used for athletic purposes is defined as the equivalent of the term “domicile” as applied by the courts of North Carolina.



# Semester Rule (pg.11)

1. No student may be eligible to participate at the middle school level for a period lasting longer than six (6) consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's entry into sixth grade.
2. The principal shall have evidence of the date of each player's entry into the sixth grade and monitor the six (6) consecutive semesters.

# Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form (pg. 11)

1. In order to be eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletic contests, the student must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S.90-9, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2.
2. The recommended Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form can be found at:  
<http://nchsaa.org/annual-forms-forms-needed-schools-every-year>

# Students with Identified Disabilities

(pg. 11)

Students with identified disabilities are eligible for participation in athletic programs at the middle/junior high school level.

1. Ninth graders participating in high school athletics are governed by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

# Students with Identified Disabilities

(pg. 11)

2. Participation in athletic team tryouts may not be denied a student with a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan when accommodations or modifications are necessary to provide the student with an equal opportunity to benefit. For example, a deaf student would require an interpreter for the deaf.
3. A student with a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan must meet all requirements that apply to the regular education student.

# Hardship (pg. 12)

The local board of education, or the conference of which the school is a member shall have the authority, in response to a request of the principal of the school, to set aside the effect of any (**other than the age and 6<sup>th</sup> grade participation in football**) eligibility rule upon the individual student when, in its opinion, the rule fails to accomplish the purpose for which the rule is intended or when the rule works undue hardship upon the student.

1. Decisions of local boards of education or conferences regarding hardship are final.

# Hardship (pg. 12)

**It is to be understood that ordinary cases in ineligibility shall not be considered as coming under the hardship category, and that the conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements, must have been beyond the control of the school, the student and/or his/her parents. Injuries, illnesses, or accidents which cause the student to fail to meet one of the basic requirements are possible causes for hardship consideration.**

# Questions

**Burt Jenkins**

**Middle School Athletics**

**[Burt.Jenkins@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Burt.Jenkins@dpi.nc.gov)**

**919-807-3637**

