



## OHSAA relaxes academic eligibility requirements for fall athletics

June 22, 2020

On May 29, 2020, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) provided a member school update regarding fall sports eligibility. In the update, the OHSAA office announced that it exercised its authority to temporarily suspend strict compliance with OHSAA bylaws to declare all students entering grades 7-12 eligible for fall athletics insofar as academic eligibility is concerned. This announcement temporarily suspends the eligibility requirement in OHSAA bylaw 4-4-1, which requires student athletes to receive passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses, or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation, in the “immediately preceding grading period.” Many board of education policies align with minimum passing credit requirements in OHSAA by-law 4-4-1. Accordingly, districts may want to consider amending their policies to take advantage of the OHSAA’s relaxed academic eligibility standards for the fall. If board policy is not temporarily amended, districts will likely have more stringent academic eligibility requirements than what the OHSAA requires for fall eligibility.

This serves as a timely reminder that the OHSAA by-laws contain no minimum GPA requirement for academic eligibility. Therefore, districts will want to consider how their self-imposed minimum GPA requirement (if they have them) fits with any temporary suspension of minimum passing credit requirements.

Districts should be conscious of policy requirements for minimum passing credits and minimum GPA which may also apply to non-athletic extracurricular activities. Districts should carefully review their policies to determine how any policy change may affect eligibility for those activities.

Finally, with the fall athletic season rapidly approaching, districts may want to temporarily amend the relevant portions of their policy sooner rather than later. They should be mindful that many board policies only allow for action to amend board policy to

occur after the amendment is proposed at a previous board meeting. Thus, changes to any eligibility requirements in board policy should adhere to those requirements, unless the board seeks to impose amendments to board policy immediately. In this case, legal counsel should be consulted.

OHSAA's May 29, 2020, member update can be found in its entirety [here](#).

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