



Athlete/Parent
Handbook for
GHSA Sanctioned
Interscholastic
Athletic Activities
2016-17

**MEMBER SCHOOLS OF
THE GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

ALPHARETTA HIGH SCHOOL

BANNEKER HIGH SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL

CREEKSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

JOHNS CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

LANGSTON HUGHES HIGH SCHOOL

MILTON HIGH SCHOOL

NORTH SPRINGS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

NORTHVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

RIVERWOOD INTERNATIONAL CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

ROSWELL HIGH SCHOOL

TRI CITIES HIGH SCHOOL

WESTLAKE HIGH SCHOOL

Equal opportunity employer and service provider.
Reasonable accommodations and modifications made for the disabled.
470-254-4585 TTY 1-800-255-0135

TABLE OF CONTENTS
FOR
Athlete/Parent Handbook for GHSA
Sanctioned Interscholastic Athletic Activities

GHSA Member Schools of Fulton County Schools	1
Table of Contents	2
GHSA Sports Seasonal Calendar	3
Statement of Philosophy	4
Objectives	4
Governances	4
Fulton County Board of Education (FCBOE)	4
Georgia High School Association (GHSA)	4
The Georgia High School Association (GHSA) Regions	4
National Federation of High Schools (NFHS)	4
Requirements for Participation	5
Pre-Participation Physical Examination	5
Parent Consent for Athletic Participation and Transportation	5
Emergency Medical Authorization	5
Student/Parent Concussion Awareness	5
Student Insurance	5
Introductions	5
To the Parent/Guardian	5-6
Sportsmanship	6
Grievances and Complaints	6
To the Student-Athlete	7
Conditioning and Try Outs / Dead Week	7
Participation is a privilege	7
Athlete Playing Time	8
Varsity Teams	8
Student-Athletic Codes of Conduct	8-10
Basic Interscholastic Participation Policies	11-12
Student-Athlete Scholastic Eligibility [www.ghsa.net]	13-26
Athletic Interest	27
Appendix	28
Off-Season and Summer Training Tips	28
Concussions in Sports	28-29
Q & A for MRSA	29
Skin Lesions	30-31
Weather Conditions and Athletics	32-38
Fulton County Guidelines on Recruiting/Undue Influence	39
Forms	
Release of Liability for Bus Transportation/Designated Driver	40
Student Participation Application (required)	41
Verification of Insurance (required)	42
Pre-participation Physical Evaluation (required)	43-45
Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation Clearance Form	46
Student/Parent Concussion Form	47
Receipt Acknowledgement for Athlete/Parent Handbook for GHSA Sports	48
Student-Athlete Social Media Guidelines	49

This handbook is designed as minimum standards for the Fulton County Board of Education schools that are members of and participate in Georgia High School Association Interscholastic Athletic sanctioned athletic events. Participating schools may increase the standards for participation but are required to submit to the Fulton County Schools Director of Athletics and to print/distribute to parents/ distribute to parents/guardians and students any addenda for each section that exceeds the minimum standards set in the handbook.

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES FOR 2016-2017 *Revised 3/23/16*

ACTIVITY	DATE FOR FIRST PRACTICE	FIRST CONTEST	MAXIMUM GAMES/DATES	LAST PLAY DATE	AREA/REGION QUALIFIERS DETERMINED	GHSA STATE PLAYOFF DATES				
						First Round/Sectionals	Second Round	Quarterfinals	Semifinals	Finals
FOOTBALL	July 25 (Conditioning) Feb. 1 or later (Spring)	Aug. 19	10 (7 JV)	Nov. 5	Nov. 5	Nov. 11-12	Nov. 18-19	Nov. 25-26	Dec. 2-3	Dec. 9-10
CHEERLEADING	Aug. 1 Feb. 1 or later (Spring)	Aug. 6	6 (4 JV)	Nov. 4	Nov. 5	Nov. 5 (Class A & Coed)			Nov. 11 (Coed Finals)	Nov. 12
SOFTBALL	Aug. 1	Aug. 8	25 (18 JV)	Oct. 8	Oct. 8	Oct. 12-13	Oct. 19-20		Oct. 26-28	Oct. 29
VOLLEYBALL	Aug. 1	Aug. 5	18 (13 JV) Dates	Oct. 8	Oct. 8	Oct. 12, 13	Oct. 18(AA 1st Rnd)	Oct. 22	Oct. 26	Oct. 29
CROSS COUNTRY	Aug. 1	Aug. 8	10 (7 JV) Dates	Oct. 29	Oct. 29					Nov. 4-5
ONE ACT PLAYS	Aug. 1	Aug. 5	-	May 13	Oct. 29					Nov. 5 & Nov. 12
LITERARY	Aug. 1	Aug. 5	-	May 13	March 4					March 11
RIFLERY	Aug. 1	Oct. 3	-	May 13	March 18	March 25			April 1	April 15
SWIMMING	Oct. 17	Oct. 31	10 (7 JV)							Feb. 2-4
BASKETBALL	Oct. 31	Nov. 12	25 (18 JV)	Feb. 11	Feb. 11	Feb. 17-18	Feb. 24-25	March 2-3	March 4	March 8-11
WRESTLING	Oct. 24	Nov. 11	20 (14 JV) Dates	Jan. 26	Du - By Jan. 7 Tr - Jan. 27-28	Tr - Feb. 3-4				Du - Jan. 12-14 Tr - Feb. 9-11
GYMNASTICS	Jan. 9	Jan. 30	10 (7 JV)	April 13		April 15				April 22
TENNIS	Jan. 9	Jan. 30	18 (13 JV)	April 15	April 15	By April 20 (Class A Areas)	By April 25 (Class A 1st Round)	By April 29	By May 2	May 6
SOCCER	Jan. 16	Feb. 6	18 (13 JV)	April 22	April 22	April 25-28	May 2-3	May 5-6	May 9	May 11-13
TRACK - Girls TRACK - Boys	Jan. 16 Jan. 16	Feb. 6 Feb. 6	10 (7 JV) 10 (7 JV)	April 22 April 22	April 22 April 22	April 29 April 29				May 4-6 May 11-13
BASEBALL	Jan. 16	Feb. 13	26 (18 JV)	April 22	April 22	April 28-29	May 3-4	May 8-9	May 13, 15	May 19-20, 22
LACROSSE	Jan. 23	Feb. 13	18 (13 JV)	April 29	April 29	May 2-3		May 5-6	May 9-10	May 13
GOLF	Feb. 13	Feb. 18	12 (8 JV) Dates	April 29	April 21	May 1				May 15

NOTE: 2017 "DEAD" WEEK: Sunday, July 2 through Saturday, July 8, 2017

Interscholastic Athletic Competition Philosophy Statement of Philosophy – The Fulton County interscholastic athletic activity program will provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes that will prepare students for adult life in a democratic society. The interscholastic athletic activity program will be an integral part of the total school program as conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules and regulations and the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-laws. While the Board of Education encourages the highest level of performance, it discourages any and all pressures which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and/or good mental health.

Athletic Goal and Objectives

GOAL – The athlete participant shall become a more effective and productive citizen in a democratic society.

OBJECTIVES – The athlete participant shall learn:

1. To work with others – In a democratic society a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.
2. To be successful – Our society is very competitive. We do not always win but we succeed when we continually strive to do our best. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
3. To develop sportsmanship – To accept any defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best, we must learn to treat others the way we would have them treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
4. To improve – Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish goals and you must continually try to reach those goals. Try to better yourself in the skills involved and those characteristics set forth as being desirable in your chosen activity.
5. To enjoy participation – It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from participation, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
6. To develop desirable personal health habits – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

Governances

The Fulton County Board of Education (FCBOE) – One of the primary duties of the Board of Education is to enact policy. The Superintendent and staff enforce the policies and permit each student to have an equal opportunity for a quality education. The Board also fulfills those duties described in [LINK POLICY AAB].

The Georgia High School Association (GHSA) – All schools are voluntary members of the Georgia High School Association and compete only with member schools or out-of-state schools that are approved by the GHSA. As GHSA member schools, the high schools of the Fulton County School System agree to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations set forth by the HGSA. The primary role of the GHSA, which is empowered by the Georgia State Board of Education, is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the athletes and a balance with other educational 2016-2017 programs. The GHSA solicits input and is responsive to requests for modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. The GHSA attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

The Georgia High School Association (GHSA) Regions – Each Fulton County High School is a voluntary member of a GHSA Region. The Region was established for the purpose of promoting selected interscholastic athletic activities among member schools and the assurance of such advantages as may be gained by a union of effort. Region membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, conducting Region meets, tournaments, playoffs, and determining schools of similar size. Membership requires abiding by Region schedules, rules, and regulations. The GHSA Executive Committee determines each school's Region membership assignment.

The National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) – The National Federation consists of the fifty individual state high school athletic/activities associations. The purposes of the Federation are to serve, protect and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to the state associations; to assist in those activities of the state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications, and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

Requirements for Athlete Participation

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation – A yearly physical examination is required. The physical must be completed by a medical doctor and submitted to the coach prior to participation. The physical covers all sports for one calendar year. The form will be kept on file in the high school athletic office. The recommended pre-participation physical evaluation form is the form which was adopted by the GHSA. It consists of an athlete’s personal and family medical history and an athlete’s physical examination completed by a medical physician. (See Appendix)

Parental Consent for Athletic Participation and Transportation – All athletes and parent(s) / guardian(S) must realize the risk of serious injury which may be a result of athletic participation. Fulton County School System requires that a Parental Consent for Athletic Participation and Transportation Form is signed by the athlete and his/her parent(s) / guardian(s). Parent(s) / Guardian(s) may not alter or change this form. Parent(s) / Guardian(s) acknowledge that they have read and understand the “Athlete / Parent/ Guardian Handbook for HGSA Sanctioned Athletics Interscholastic Activities” when they sign this form. (See Appendix)

Emergency Medical Authorization – Each student-athlete’s parent(s) /guardian(s) shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) / guardian(s) are not available. The form will be kept by the school’s athletic department for use as needed during the emergency. (See Appendix). **Each sport should have an emergency action plan for every sport and this plan should be accessible by the head coaches and assistants at all times.**

Student/Parent Concussion Form-Each student and parent/guardian shall complete the GHSA Concussion Awareness Form. Please list all sports that the student athlete will compete in during the school year. (See Appendix)

Insurance – The school district provides an opportunity to purchase insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are required to sign a form stating that they have purchased either the necessary school insurance or possess a family insurance plan that covers athletic injury. If a family insurance plan is used, the family must provide the school with the name of the insurance company and the policy number on the appropriate form. Where possible, a scholarship fund should be set up to assist students who are in financial need as determined by the principal or his/her designee. Some method of discreet communication through a school contact person should be made available for students. There are **NO WAIVERS** for insurance; **ALL ATHLETES MUST HAVE INSURANCE.** (See Appendix) Policy EGB

Introductions to the Parent/Guardian/Student Athlete

Parent/Guardian/Student Athlete Awareness of Athletic Policies and Procedures – All student athletes/parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have access to this Handbook through the Fulton County Schools website. A hard copy of this handbook will be made available at student athlete/parent/guardian who requests a copy. Each parent(s)/guardian(s)/student athlete shall be expected to read all of the enclosed material and complete all required forms including but not limited to athletic participation and transportation, health insurance, and physical examination. This handbook is designed as minimum standards for the Fulton county Board of Education schools that are members of and participate in Georgia High School Association Interscholastic Athletic sanctioned athletic events. Participating schools may increase the standards for participation but should submit any participation standards which exceed those described in this handbook to the Director of Athletics and to parents/guardians and students.

To the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) – This material is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in GHSA Sanctioned Interscholastic Athletic Activities. The GHSA interscholastic athletic activities include baseball, basketball, competition cheerleading, cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming, track and field, tennis, volleyball, and wrestling. The Fulton County School System believes that participation in interscholastic athletic activities provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences which will assist students in personal growth and development.

We believe that a properly controlled, well-organized interscholastic athletic activity program meets with students’ needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and that will further each student’s educational maturity.

Interscholastic sports and athletic activities are exciting and often involve forceful contact with the ground, playing surface, and another player. Because of these conditions inherent to the sport or activity, participation in a school’s interscholastic athletic activity program exposes an athlete to many risks or injury. In an effort to make the sports and athletic activities safer, the coaching staff will instruct players in the rules and correct mechanics of skills. It is vital that parent/guardian should be aware that student-athletes should: participate in proper warm-up and stretching before strenuous activity takes place either during practice or at a contest; (2) check his/her equipment before use for each practice and contest; (3) perform only those skills and techniques instructed and/or supervised by his/her coach; (4) be aware of his/her surroundings, taking no unnecessary risks on either home or

away playing surfaces; (5) contact his/her coach immediately if an injury occurs, no matter how slight the injury might be; (6) read the National Federation of High School and Georgia High School Association information on supplements wans hot/cold weather training advisories; read and understand the section on eligibility, transportation, codes of conduct, and basic participation policies; and, read and understand the "Athlete/Parent/Guardian Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned interscholastic Athletic Activities 2015-2016".

A Student who elects to participate in the interscholastic athletic activity program is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial. These are the reasons we place such stress on good training habits. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct may mean exclusion from participation. This concept of self-discipline and self-denial is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights so the individual within the objectives of the team or activity. Staff will strive to:

- 1) to provide adequate equipment and facilities;
- 2) to provide well-trained coaches; and,
- 3) to provide full schedules with qualified officials as directed by the GHSA

Likewise, we feel that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. We would encourage you to join your school's Booster Club(s) to help provide the financial support essential to your school's interscholastic athletic activities program.

It is the role of the school system to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the schools. These rules need a broad basis of community support, which is achieved only through communication to the parent/guardian. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this publication.

Why should it be any different now that your child is an athlete? A parent's job is not to be the coach or the certified expert even if you are retired from a professional sports team. Parents are there so that they can share "the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" –together. In fact each athlete needs parental support more in defeat than in victory. Did you ever notice that strangers feel free to come out of the stands and congratulate the winner? But, in defeat, sometimes the athlete's own teammates and coaches ignore him/her and the fans do not come out to console or congratulate him/her on a good game or match. As a parent/guardian you have to be there to cushion setbacks with a positive "We'll get them next time!" Let the three "B's" be your guide:

- **Be there!** Parents can never hope to be an All-Star parent unless they show up at games. Regardless of the skill level of the athletes or the success of the team – go to the games. Be supportive. Don't be a fickle, fair-weather fan or an absent, to busy parent.
- **Be positive!** On the sidelines or in the stands, if parents can't say something positive, don't say anything at all. Nothing good comes from negative statements and nothing negative comes from positive ones. If parents can't say some positive and supportive during the contest at least be silent.
- **Be seated!** Even though it's good to be positive, it's not good to overdo it. Don stick out. Be an admirer not a cheerleader. Players should not confuse their parent's voice from the home stands with that of the public address system's announcers.

Sportsmanship – "The GHSA and its member schools have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by student/athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GHSA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site. Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area during warm-ups or while the contest is being conducted. Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at all of our schools' athletic events."

Grievances and Complaints – Athletics involvement is highly emotional and very time consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between athletes, coaches, and occasionally parents. When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they be addressed immediately, and as directly as possible, so that it can be resolved promptly. Parents/Guardians should use the following process as a guideline when seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between athlete and coach:

- **The First Step: Contacting the Coach** –The parent(s)/guardian(s) should present the conflict/issue to the coach as soon as possible. In order for the contact to be as productive as possible, times that should be avoided are: prior to, during or immediately following a contest; during an active practice session when other athletes or parents are present or when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place or when it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for complete discussion. This includes the time immediately before leaving for an away contest. Perhaps the best solution is to ask the coach, either over the phone or in person, if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may also leave a note for the coach in the athletic office.
- **The Second Step: Contacting the School's Athletic Coordinator** – If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should contact the school's Athletic Coordinator. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. Since athletic seasons are relatively short, there should be no delay in airing any and all concerns. It is important for all parent(s)/guardian(s) to know

that any comments, concerns or issues raised to the Athletic Coordinator will be addressed and communicated to the coach. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may also expect to hear from the Athletic Coordinator as to the disposition of their concerns. Although there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

- **The Third Step: Contacting the Principal** – If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may contact the high school Principal. The school's Athletic Coordinator should be informed that this contact is going to be made. In accordance with the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws 2.20 and 2.30 the high school shall operate all interscholastic contests and activities under direct and complete control of the school administration or designated school personnel. The grievances and complaints involving Title IX compliance, which are investigated according to the procedures outlined in Board Policy IDFA.

To the Student Athlete – Being a member of a Fulton County Schools interscholastic athletic activity is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great competitive tradition is not built overnight; it takes hard work from many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic activity team, you will be faced with either the task of maintaining an already successful tradition or the task of establishing a successful tradition. It is not easy to build a great tradition in interscholastic athletic activity competition. When you represent your school, we assume that you not only understand your school's goals and traditions, but also that you are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them.

Interscholastic sports and athletic activities are exciting and often involve forceful contact with the ground, playing surface, or another player. Because of these conditions inherent to the sport or activity, participation in a school's interscholastic athletic activity program exposes an athlete to many risks or injury. In an effort to make the sports and athletic activities as safe as they can, the coaching staff will instruct players in the rules and correct mechanics of skills. It is vital that athletes follow the coach's skill instructions, training rules, and team rules to decrease the possibility of serious injury. The athletes should: (1) participate in proper warm-up and stretching before strenuous activity takes place either during practice or at a contest; (2) check his/her equipment before use for each practice and contest; (3) perform only those skills and techniques instructed and/or supervised by his/her coach; (4) be aware of his/her surroundings, taking no unnecessary risks on either home or away playing surfaces; (5) contact his/her coach immediately if an injury occurs, no matter how slight the injury might be; (6) read the National Federation of High School and Georgia High School Association information on supplements and hot/cold weather training advisories as printed in this handbook; read and understand the section on eligibility, transportation, codes of conduct, and basic participation policies; and, reads and understands the "Athlete/Parent/Guardian Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned Interscholastic Athletic Activities. The GHSA and its member schools have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by student/athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GHSA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site.

Conditioning and tryouts for programs in and out of season are open to all FCS students providing they meet the standards of academic eligibility, parental permission; basic physical/health qualifications; and medical/health insurance.

DEAD WEEK: NO PRACTICES, WORK OUT SESSIONS, OR MEETINGS. During the summer (i.e., between the ending of one school year and the beginning of the next) the only restrictions on practices and competition are that all activities must be strictly voluntary, and the "Dead Week" must be observed, as follows: Schools are prohibited from participating in voluntary workouts, camps and/or clinics, weight training or competitions during the week (Sunday through Saturday) in which the Fourth of July falls each year. While athletes may work out on their own, they cannot do so at their school or any other Fulton County school site under the supervision of a coach or at any non-school site under the supervision of a coach.

Summer Conditioning Rule: No student is allowed to participate in any activity with the school or a team during the summer months unless they are an enrolled student in that school or a rising 9th grader from a feeder school. This includes summer conditioning and weight room sessions. Once the student is officially enrolled at the high school, the student can start participating in any and all activities. **The student must have a current physical packet on file with the high school.**

Participation in athletics is a privilege; athletes try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the athlete's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet these expectations. **No athlete is guaranteed a place on the team simply because of his or her grade level or past participation.** Athletes cut from a team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team and the final cuts have not been made. The athlete cut from a team may request a meeting with the coach during which the athlete will be informed as to the reason for the cut. Decisions made by the coaches will be explained to athletes at an appropriate time and an appropriate setting, usually in an athlete-requested meeting with the coach.

Athlete Playing Time – There are many factors that determine playing time, such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, effort and athletic ability. There are many decisions made on a regular basis by the coaching staff. It is the coach’s responsibility to decide which athletes should start a contest, which athlete should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after having observed the athlete in practice sessions, scrimmages and, at times, games.

Varsity Teams – The emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams. Our teams will compete against opponents at the highest level of execution and the goal is to win as many games as possible while constantly emphasizing fair play and sportsmanship. This emphasis may result in the major burden of the contest being carried by the most competitive, skilled team members and uneven playing time along the athletes, with some athletes not playing in every game. Once again, it is the coach who makes the decision on who starts, plays and for how long. However, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These players should be ready at all times to step up and take on the burden of competition when called upon. It is the hard work in practice each day that prepares the whole team for the upcoming games.

Athlete Codes of Conduct – A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the county and school. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program. The welfare of the athlete is our major consideration. Any conduct which results in dishonor to the athlete, the team, the school, or the community will not be tolerated. Notwithstanding the consequences discussed in this handbook, any act at school or away from school, which results in any discipline by school administration; or any act at school or away from school which, in the opinion of the Principal reflects in a negative manner on the school, athletic program, or activity may result in removal from the team or event or lessened participation opportunities. Behavioral expectations and prohibitions apply 365 days a years, 24 hours a day, in and out of the specific extracurricular season, and on or off school grounds. In addition to the individual penalties associated with this handbook, all athletes fall under the jurisdiction of local school rules and policies and the Fulton County Code of Conduct ([LINKS TO ALL PARTS OF OPERATING GUIDELINES JD \(Parts A, B, and C\)](#)).

Ethics Rule: Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to disruption of school, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, or violations of the law tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the program and will not be tolerated. Due to the serious nature of violations of the Ethics Rule, the appropriate coach, the athletic director and the principal shall establish procedures to determine the penalty according to the degree of the infraction.

Bullying and Hazing: The Fulton County School District expressly prohibits the bullying of any person by any means or method, at school, on school property, or at school-related functions. Policy JDB and Operating Guideline JD.

Training Rules/Regulations: The athlete who uses tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, or any type of mood altering substance found in legal over the counter products jeopardizes team morale, team reputation, and team success and does physical harm to himself/herself (Operating Guideline JD).

1. Use of Tobacco – Student athletes who uses tobacco at any time, during the season and/or off-season.
2. Use of Alcoholic Beverages – Student athletes shall not consume alcoholic beverages at any time, during the season and/or off-season.
3. Use of Illegal Drugs or Mood Altering Substances – Student athletes shall not use illegal drugs or mood altering substances at any time, during the season and/or off-season.

Chemical Use and Penalties for Violation of Training Rules with Alcohol or Drugs (Non-Felony)

A. Chemical Use

1. An athlete, regardless of quantity, shall not:
 - a. Buy, be in possession of, or use a beverage containing alcohol at any time;
 - b. Be in possession of, or use tobacco at any time;
 - c. Use, consume, possess, buy, sell, or distribute any controlled or other illegal or mood-altering substance at any time.
2. Athletes are responsible for their off-season and out of school behavior. These rules apply to an athlete’s entire high school career (**365 days/24 hours**).
3. It is not a violation for an athlete be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the student’s personal use by his/her doctor.
4. Athlete possession of substances containing alcohol under parent supervision for religious purposes will not be considered a violation of this policy.

B. Penalties for violation include:

Alcohol/Drugs:

1. First Violation:

After confirmation of the first violation, the student will lose a minimum of 20% of the current season or the next season that the athlete competes in. The penalty will be immediately assessed to the athlete's next competitions. If the offense happens prior to a season starting, the athlete may be permitted to try out for the sport but will then serve the suspension at the start of the season. The student can practice with the team if he coach/school permits him/her to practice during the suspension. Practicing during the suspension will be a local school decision. The student may not travel with the team during the suspension to competitions.

2. Second Violation:

If a second violation occurs, the athlete will be suspended from all practices/competitions for one calendar year, and the athlete may be prohibited from ever representing his/her school in inter-scholastic activities at any time in the future.

3. Third Violation:

The athlete will lose the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities for their remaining time in high school.

Tobacco:

1. First Violation:

After confirmation of the first violation, the student will lose a minimum of 10% of the current season or the next season that the athlete competes in. The penalty will be assessed to the athlete's next competitions. If the offense happens prior to the start of the season, the athlete may be permitted to try out for the sport and then will immediately serve the suspension at the start of the season. The student can practice with the team if the coach/school permits him/her to practice during the suspension. Practice during the suspension will be a local decision. The student may not travel with the team during the suspension to any competitions.

2. Second Violation:

After confirmation of the second violation, the student will lose a minimum of 50% of the current season or the next season that the athlete competes in. The penalty will be assessed in the athlete's next competitions. If the offense happens prior to the start of the season, the athlete may be permitted to try out for the sport and then will immediately serve the suspension at the start of the season. The student can practice with the team if the coach/school permits him/her to practice during the suspension. Practice during the suspension will be a local school decision. The student may not travel with the team during the suspension to any competitions.

3. Third Violation: After confirmation of the third violation, the student will be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year from extracurricular activities.

These rules and consequences are in addition to any other school discipline under the Code of Conduct. Because rules are consistently applied in all Fulton County Schools, an athlete may not regain eligibility by transferring to another Fulton County School.

Criminal Activity:

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or students must report any arrest of a student or behavior in which law enforcement is involved, to their high school administration or coach within two weeks (14 calendar days) of the arrest or behavior. The two week time frame includes weekends, school holidays and summer vacation. Failure to report arrest or behavior.

Felonies (Including Felonies Relating to Drugs and Alcohol):

A student who is arrested for, or charged with a felony or charged with an act that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult shall be automatically suspended from interscholastic GHSA activities. Students will not be permitted to participate in preseason activities. The student shall remain suspended until: (1) The charges are completely dismissed; (2) The charges are reduced to a misdemeanor in which case the student may be subject to penalties outlined for misdemeanors or alcohol/drugs; (3) The student is found not guilty; or (4) The student successfully completes the consequences assigned by the judge or agreed to by the student, including probation or diversion. Evidence that the probation period has expired, fines have been paid and/or community service has been completed as required.

If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged sealed, removed from a student's record, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (nolle prosequi), the student should present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter. These circumstances may not be sufficient to lift the student's consequences.

Misdemeanors Not Related to Drugs and Alcohol:

A student who is arrested for, charged with, or found guilty of a misdemeanor shall receive consequences as outlined below. However, any student who is accused of a misdemeanor alcohol/drug offense or a misdemeanor DUI will receive consequences as "Chemical Use and Penalties of Violation of Training Rules With Alcohol or Drugs" above.

1st of Subsequent Offenses: Minimum suspension from activities for one (1) school day up to a maximum of permanent suspension from extracurricular activities.

If the student produces proof that the charges are completely dismissed or the student is found not guilty, these consequences may be lifted. If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged, sealed, removed from a student's record, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (nolle Prosequi), that student should present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter. These circumstances may not be sufficient to lift the student's consequences.

Individual Coach's Rules:

Coaches may establish general rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director and principal for their respective activities. Coaches may also address unique situations and issue consequences to athletes in accordance with the circumstances involving the athlete and his/her membership on the team. These rules, pertaining to a particular activity, must be given by the coach in writing to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will be in writing and will be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules by coaches are on file in the local athletic office.

Basic Interscholastic Participation Policies
Extracurricular Activities are covered by District Procedure IDE and District Policy IDF

- A. **Participation:** An athlete may participate in only one sport per season unless two coaches/sponsors agree to the athlete's competing in both athletic activities, and priorities are set to settle conflicts before the season.
- B. **Fees:** Some sports carry an athletic participation fee. The maximum activity fee for student athletes is \$300 per sport. Fifty dollars from this total is a uniform and/or equipment deposit and will be refunded upon the return of uniforms and/or equipment in good condition, leaving a maximum total expenditure of \$250.00. Any expenses in excess of the \$300.00 will be funded through general fund raising and not by soliciting donations from students participating in the program or their parents. Athletes will not be denied the opportunity to participate if they cannot pay this fee. Where possible, a scholarship fund will be set up to assist students who are in financial need. Students who believe they cannot afford this fee should contact their local school Athletic Director for more information.
- C. **Dropping or transferring sports**
 - 1. An athlete that quits one sport may lose the privilege of participating in the interscholastic program. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:
 - (a) The athlete will consult with immediate coach and then the head coach. (b) The coach will report the situation to the athletic director. (c) The athlete will return all equipment issued to him or her.
 - 2. The athlete cannot begin a new sport until the season of the sport in which he/she quit has finished. If the team makes the post season, the local school will determine if the athlete must wait until the post season is completed as well.
- D. **Equipment:** School equipment issued to the athlete is the student's responsibility. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation, and failing to meet that obligation can result in the denial of participation in the program.
- E. **Missing practice:** An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with at the discretion of the coach.
- F. **College recruitment policy:** In the event that an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. It is important to inform the coach about the contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is available in the school's athletic office or counseling office.
- G. **Conflicts in extracurricular activities:** An individual athlete who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflict of obligations.
 - A. The school recognizes that each athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.
 - B. Athletes have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous of conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise.
 - C. When a conflict arises, the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the principal will make the decision based on the following:
 - a) The relative importance each event. b) The importance of each event to the student. c) The relative contribution the athlete can make. d) How long each event has been scheduled. E) Input from the parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - D. Once the decision has been made and the athlete has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either sponsor/coach. If it becomes obvious that an athlete cannot fulfill the obligations of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from the activity.
- H. **Attendance:** Students who miss over half of the school day due to illness will not be able to participate in a contest or practice on that day. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the principal. Students absent from school on the day prior to a non-school day will be eligible to participate the day after the absence.
- I. **In-School and Out-Of-School Suspension:** Students will not be allowed to participate in activities on the days they have been assigned to in-school suspension and until they have served their out-of-school suspension. There should be no adjustments made in the assignment of suspension days to allow a student to participate in any activities.
- J. **Release from Class:** It is the responsibility of the student to see his/her teacher(s) the day before he/she is to be released to participate in an interscholastic activity. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher. (Link to Policy JBD)
- K. **Team Selection:** In accordance with our philosophy of interscholastic activities and the desire to see as many students as possible participate in interscholastic programs while at our school, we encourage coaches to involve as many students as possible without compromising the integrity of the program. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective team size for any particular activity. Choosing the members of teams is the responsibility of the coaches or sponsors of those teams.

- L. **Reporting of Injury:** All injuries that occur while participating in interscholastic activities should be reported to the trainer/coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed by the trainer/coach. Once a student is treated by a doctor, written permission from the doctor is required to return to the activity.
- M. **Dismissal of a Student-Athlete from a Team:**
- A. When a coach makes a decision to dismiss a student-athlete from a team, the student-athlete should be informed verbally by the coach in a private setting. It is the responsibility of the coach to discuss the situation with the student-athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - B. The student-athlete may appeal the coach's decision for dismissal from the team to the Principal of the school. The appeal must be made within 48 hours of the notification of dismissal and the appeal must be made in writing by the student-athlete to the principal.
 - C. The student-athlete is denied participation on the team until the appeal process is completed.
 - D. The Principal should review the appeal and make a decision whether to uphold the dismissal from the team or to restore the student-athlete's membership to the team. *The Principal's decision should be made within 72 hours of receipt of the written appeal from the student-athlete.*
 - E. **The Principal's decision of the appeal made by the student-athlete is the final decision and represents the conclusion of the appeal process. There is no appeal beyond the appeal to the Principal.**
NOTE: a Principal can remove or suspend a student-athlete from any team. The Principal should inform the student-athlete of the decision and should also inform the student-athletes parent(s)/guardian(s). Participation on an interscholastic athletic team is a privilege and not a right. A student may also be removed from a team in other circumstances, such as when the student is expelled from school.
- N. **Transportation**
- A. Under normal circumstances Fulton County Schools provides transportation for all student-athletes, support, and coaching personnel of athletic teams in authorized school vehicles when the contest has been scheduled away from the high school site.
 - B. Team members may only ride with those individuals listed on the student's transportation release (see Appendix).
 1. A Transportation Release must be signed by the student-athlete's parent/guardian;
 2. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student must submit a written request for Travel Release to the team's coach 24 hours in advance of the trip to the contest. The coach will release the student-athlete to the parent(s)/guardian or designated adult upon presentation of the written Travel Release:
 3. Should a parent approach the coach at an away contest and request that his/her student-athlete ride home with him/her, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must still submit the request in writing to the coach, then and only then may the coach agree;
 4. A student-athlete will not be allowed to ride home with another student or another parent from any away athletic contest unless conditions are met under Section B,

Student-Athlete Eligibility

(Selections from the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-Laws)

These rules are current as of May 2016. Refer to: <http://www.ghsa.net> for further updates on student eligibility and other components of the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By Laws

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

The Georgia High School Association recognizes that local boards and/or governing bodies may place more stringent requirements as they deem appropriate. The Association encourages all boards of education and/or governing bodies to extend the same rules and regulations to all extra-curricular activities under their jurisdiction.

These rules establish the provisions governing student eligibility to participate in interscholastic activities.

A. The word "student" used in these By-Laws refers either to a boy or girl participant in interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, or literary activities. Therefore, according to correct grammatical usage, since the antecedent "student" can involve persons of both sexes, the masculine pronouns he, his, or him used throughout said By-Laws will refer to either male or female participants.

B. The word "principal" used in these By-Laws refers either to a male or female head of a secondary school. Therefore, according to correct grammatical usage, since the antecedent "principal" can involve or refer to persons of either or both sexes the masculine pronouns, he, him, or his, will refer to a male or female head of a secondary school.

C. The abbreviations GHSA used throughout these By-Laws refers to the Georgia High School Association.

BY-LAW 1.00 - STUDENT

1.10 - CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

1.11 **Students gain eligibility** to practice or compete for the school in which they are enrolled after they have been certified by the principal of that school, after the eligibility forms have been processed by the GHSA office, and after the students have met the standards of:

- (a) academic requirements
- (b) age
- (c) semesters in high school
- (d) residence in the school's service area
- (e) transfer rules

Note: Students establishing eligibility as entering 9th graders are automatically eligible for the first semester.

1.12 The **certification of eligibility** shall be submitted initially in each sport or activity no later than the date set by the GHSA for the first practice in that sport or activity.

- (a) This due date does not consider the date of the first contest scheduled.
- (b) EXCEPTION: Literary, One-Act Play and Riflery certification is due twenty (20) calendar days prior to the first scheduled contest.

1.13 If a student ruled ineligible by the GHSA, competes interscholastically due to the terms of a **court restraining order or injunction** against his/her school and/or the GHSA, and then has the court order vacated, stayed, reversed, or ruled unjustified; the Executive Director shall take one or more of the following actions against the school involved in the interest of restitution and fairness to the competing school(s):

- (a) Require that individual and/or team records and performances achieved during participation by the ineligible student be vacated or stricken.
- (b) Require that team victories be forfeited to the opponent(s).
- (c) Require that team awards earned by the school or individual awards earned by the ineligible student be returned to the GHSA.

1.20 - ENROLLMENT AND TEAM MEMBERSHIP

1.21 **To be eligible to participate and/or try-out** for a sport or activity, a student must be enrolled full time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.

- (a) Enrollment is defined as follows:
 - (1) Fall Semester: when the student participates in a practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.
 - (2) Spring Semester: when the student attends classes.
 - (3) A student may be enrolled in only one (1) high school at a time.

(b) The student must be in regular attendance.

(c) The student must be taking courses that total at least 2.5 Units that count toward graduation.

NOTE: If an eligible student transfers from a school on a block-schedule format to a school using a traditional format (or vice versa) and cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the semester the transfer occurs.

- (d) All or part of the course load of a student may be taken online through a virtual school as long as the student's grades are being kept at the school in which the student is enrolled. Grades from virtual school courses must be on file at the school by the first day of the new semester in order for the student to be eligible.

1.22 Students enrolled in **grade 9 in a middle or junior high school** which is a feeder school to the high school may participate in interscholastic activities for the parent school.

1.23 All-male schools may enlist female students from other schools to be on sideline cheerleading squads as long as the following conditions are met:

- (a) Each cheerleader must be eligible at the school at which she is enrolled, and must have a signed release from an administrator at that school.
- (b) Each cheerleader must have a GHSA Pre-participation Physical Evaluation Form on file at the school where she will be cheering as well as at the school at which she is enrolled.
- (c) Each cheerleader must have insurance coverage comparable to all other participants in GHSA activities.
- (d) Supervision must be provided by the all-male school for all practices and games.

1.30 – AGE

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic activities, a student must not have reached his 19th birthday prior to May 1st, preceding his year of participation.

1.40 - LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

1.41 Students must have a certificate of an **annual physical examination on file** at the school prior to participating in any athletic try-outs, practices, voluntary workouts or games that indicate the students are physically approved for participation.

- (a) Physical examinations will be good for twelve (12) months from the date of the exam. EXCEPTION: Any physical examination taken on or after April 1 in the preceding year will be accepted for the entire next GHSA school year.
- (b) The physical exam must be conducted by a licensed medical physician, doctor of Osteopathic medicine, nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant.
- (c) The exam must be signed by an M.D., D.O., or by a Physician's Assistant, or an Advance Practice Nurse who has been delegated that task by an M.D., or D.O.
- (d) The GHSA requires that member schools use the latest edition of the pre-participation physical evaluation form approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, et. al., found on the GHSA web site.

1.42 A student has **eight (8) consecutive semesters** or four (4) consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the ninth grade to be eligible for interscholastic competition.

- (a) A student is not considered to have entered the 9th grade when high school level courses are taken if the student is regularly enrolled in a school in a grade below the ninth grade.
- (b) Credits earned toward high school graduation which are taken below the ninth grade may be used when considering high school eligibility.
- (c) The provisions of the eight (8)-semester rule can only be waived in the case of an individual student by the State Executive Committee upon timely application by a member school for placement on the Spring or Fall agenda.

1.43 **Sub-varsity competitors** must meet all eligibility requirements with the exception of the migratory rule.

1.44 Students in grade 9 and higher may participate on **both the varsity and one (1) sub-varsity team** in the same sport with the following limitations:

- (a) Football – a player may not participate in interscholastic competitions more than six (6) quarters per week, beginning with the varsity game. Violations of this participation rule will result in a mandatory fine and an automatic forfeiture of the game in which the student exceeded the limit. Additional penalties may be imposed by the Executive Director in extreme circumstances.
- (b) Basketball – a player may not participate in interscholastic competition more than five (5) quarters per calendar day.
- (c) Soccer – a player may not participate in interscholastic competition more than three (3) halves per calendar day. (Note: Tournaments are exempt from this restriction.)
- (d) All other sports - the combination of games or play days (varsity and sub-varsity) in which the student participates may not be greater than the limit allotted to the varsity in that sport.

1.45 **Eighth grade students** may participate on a sub-varsity team of a high school provided they attend a feeder school of that high school.

- (a) Students in grade 8 are never eligible for a varsity event in any activity.
- (b) Eighth grade students who play on a high school team must meet all middle school requirements as put forth by the State Department of Education.
- (c) An eighth grade student who is declared ineligible at a middle school or retained for academic reasons, is considered to be ineligible for participation on a sub-varsity high school team.
- (d) Eighth grade students participating on a sub-varsity team may only participate in 60% of the number of

games allotted to the varsity team in that sport.

- (e) Students below the eighth grade are not eligible to participate on any high school team.
- (f) Students enrolled in grade 8 in a middle school or junior high school which is a feeder school to the member high school may participate in Spring football practice.
- (g) Students enrolled in grade 8 in a middle school or junior high school which is a feeder school to the member high school may **try out** for cheerleader at the high school. Eighth grade students at a non-feeder school that has no system high school may participate in cheerleader tryouts at the member high school serving the student's area of residence. Such a student must be pre-enrolled at that member high school, and once pre-enrolled, the student has established eligibility at that high school.
- (h) *All eighth grade students should be reported on Eligibility Form D. This form is available on the GHSA web site (www.ghsa.net).*

While the GHSA allows for eighth grade students to participate on sub-varsity teams at their local high school, it is the practice that Fulton County Schools does not permit eighth grade students to participate on sub-varsity teams at their local high school due to their participation in intramural and extramural activities at their middle school.

- 1.46 The number of contests, starting and ending dates, and the number of practice days allowed for each sport or activity can be found listed in a calendar at the front of this publication. (NOTE: The season ends for a team when that team is eliminated from the post-season competition or wins the State Championship in that sport.)
- 1.47 **A student's gender** is determined by the gender noted on his/her birth certificate. Girls may participate on boys' teams when there is no girls' team offered in that sport by the school. Boys are not allowed to play on girls' teams even when there is no corresponding boys' sport. NOTE: Cheerleading is a coed sport.
- 1.48 **Advisory Notice - Pregnant Students:** In response to the increasing number of pregnant students attending member schools, and the continued participation of these students in GHSA activities, the following advisory notice is being offered:
 - (a) During the first 18 weeks of pregnancy, students, with written consent from a physician, may be allowed to participate in athletic activities except those activities in which a fall or other rapid deceleration is likely to occur.
 - (b) Pregnant students are not be allowed to participate in any athletic activities after the 18th week of pregnancy.
- 1.49 Schools having students participate in athletic activities with artificial limbs must certify that the artificial limb is no more dangerous to participants than a natural limb.
 - (a) A permission form must be filed with the GHSA office.
 - (b) The form may be found in the Miscellaneous section on the GHSA web site.

1.50 - SCHOLASTIC STANDING / SCHOLARSHIP

- 1.51 To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that carry at least 2.5 Units counting toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation.
 - Exception 1: First semester ninth grade students.
 - Exception 2: A cheerleader who is academically ineligible for the spring semester may try out if she is passing ALL classes at the time of the tryout. The window of opportunity to try out under these conditions is available only during the ten (10) consecutive school days set aside for tryouts that the school chooses.
 - (a) Passing in all GHSA member schools is a grade of seventy (70).
 - (b) Students participating in junior varsity or "B" team competition must meet all scholastic requirements.
 - (c) If an eligible student transfers from a school that uses a block-schedule format to a school using a traditional format (or vice versa) and that student cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit in the semester of the transfer, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the first semester after the transfer occurs.
 - (d) For schools offering courses with yearlong grading, eligibility must be computed for each semester.
 - (1) At the end of the first semester, the school must determine that the student has a grade of 70% or higher in classes carrying at least 2.5 Units.
 - (2) The second semester grade will be the grade given for the entire course and shall include the end-of-course test grade.
 - (3) Remediation programs designed to bring the student's first semester grade up to 70% or higher may be used (in accordance with GHSA guidelines) if the school allows such programs for all students.
- 1.52 Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester. The first day of the Fall semester shall be interpreted as the first date of practice for the first sport.
 - (a) Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible the last day of summer school.
 - (1) Summer school is an extension of the previous semester and courses may be:
 - a. remedial in nature where a previously-taken course is repeated in its entirety with a new grade being given.
 - b. enrichment in nature where a new course is taken that results in new credit being earned.

- (2) A maximum of two (2) unit credits earned in summer school may be counted for eligibility purposes. NOTE: Additional credits may be earned in credit recovery programs or make-up programs after the start of the new semester.
- (3) Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under the rule shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (such as SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).
- (4) An independent study course taken in summer school must be regionally accredited and accepted by the school system for graduation credit.
 - (b) Courses completed after the beginning of a new semester may not be used to gain eligibility for that semester. Example: night school classes, correspondence courses, etc.
 - (c) Independent study courses taken during the school year must meet the criteria of 1.52 (a) 4.

1.53 Students must **accumulate units towards** graduation according to the following criteria:

- (a) **First-year students** (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester **first-year students** must have **passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** the previous semester in order to participate.
- (b) **Second-year students** must have **accumulated five (5) total units** in the first year, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.
- (c) **Third-year students** must have **accumulated eleven (11) units** in the first and second years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.
- (d) **Fourth-year students** must have **accumulated seventeen (17) units** in the first three years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.
- (e) Students may accumulate the required units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

ADVISORY NOTICE: CURRICULAR INNOVATIONS

A. BLOCK FOUR PROGRAMS:

- 1. The student takes four courses that are worth one (1) unit each and the classes meet twice the number of hours per week as in the standard curricular programs.
- 2. To be eligible, a student must earn at least 2.5 units.
- 3. Unit requirements are the same in all curricular programs.

B. BLOCK EIGHT PROGRAMS:

- 1. The student takes eight courses at some time during the term, and each course is worth one-half unit.
- 2. To be eligible, a student must earn at least 2.5 units during the term.
- 3. Unit requirements are the same in all curricular programs.

C. HYBRID SCHEDULING:

- 1. Definition: A student takes a combination of courses scheduled as block courses, yearlong courses and/or traditional courses.
- 2. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled in a combination of courses that carry at least 2.5 units.
- 3. To be eligible, a student must have passed a combination of courses the previous semester that carries at least 2.5 units.

1.54 A Dual Enrollment program is defined as a program in which a fulltime student at a GHSA member high school takes one or more courses from a state public or private postsecondary institution and receives credit at the high school (toward graduation) and at the postsecondary institution.

- (a) Dual enrolled students shall take courses that are approved by the Georgia Department of Education.
- (b) Courses may be taken in a variety of formats (including distance learning and virtual courses) as long as the courses are approved.
- (c) Postsecondary semester hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:
 - (1) 1-2 semester hours equates to .5 unit
 - (2) 3-5 semester hours equates to 1 unit
- (d) Postsecondary quarter hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:
 - (1) 1-3 quarter hours equates to .5 unit
 - (2) 4-8 quarter hours equates to 1 unit

1.55 Students involved in approved Dual Enrollment programs shall be eligible to participate in GHSA activities provided that academic eligibility is maintained.

- (a) Courses taken each semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units.
- (b) Courses passed the previous semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units
- (c) Students will gain or lose eligibility on the first day of each semester at the high school and a college calendar that differs from the high school calendar may cause problems.
- (d) Students who withdraw or are dropped from a Dual Enrollment program and are returned to the high school only, may encounter eligibility problems.
- (e) Students involved in Joint Enrollment programs, Early College programs, or Gateway to College programs may not be eligible at their respective high schools.

(f) A student who participates on an intercollegiate athletic team may not participate in any GHSA activity.

1.56 **Loss of Eligibility:** Students assigned to an **alternative school** or on **out-of-school suspension** for **disciplinary reasons, or adjudicated to YDC**, lose their eligibility. Suspension is considered to have ended when the student is physically readmitted to the classroom.

1.57 **Failure to Meet Academic Standards:** When a school administrator believes that the student has failed to meet the academic eligibility requirements due to conditions that were beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents, and such that none of them could have been expected reasonably to comply with the rule, he may request that the student's case be put on the agenda of the Hardship Committee.

(a) Ignorance of the rule(s) on the part of any individual is not sufficient cause to set aside the rule(s).

(b) Schools must supply all the materials requested on the Hardship Application Form on the GHSA website.

1.58 **Credit Recovery/Make-up Work:** Students who have academic deficiencies at the end of a semester may make up those deficiencies in programs that are available to any student in the school. NOTE: Programs allowing students to recover academic credit have a variety of names in various schools.

(a) Credit recovery programs are short-term programs that involve a course that has been completed and a grade given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.

(b) Make-up programs occur when a course has not been completed and an "Incomplete" grade has been given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.

(c) Credit recovery and make-up work must be completed within 15 school days after the start of the next semester. The student is ineligible until such time as the work is completed and the required passing grade has been recorded. Exception: If the end-of-course test is not offered within 15 school days of the beginning of the next semester, the student may be granted a reasonable extension by the GHSA.

(d) The GHSA Executive Director shall be authorized to approve credit recovery or make-up work completed later than fifteen (15) days after the start of the next semester if he finds that the:

(1) timeframe was not met due to circumstances outside the control of the student, his parent(s), and the school, AND

(2) work was completed as soon as reasonably possible, AND

(3) allowance for such a delay is offered on the same basis to all students in the school.

(e) Credit recovery programs operated during the summer or in intersessions shall be completed within fifteen (15) days of the beginning of the new semester. Students using those credits to gain eligibility are ineligible until the course is completed successfully. Credit recovery is used for remedial work only, and no new credit courses may be applied under this provision.

(f) Students using credit recovery or make-up programs must have their eligibility submitted to the GHSA office on a "Form C."

1.59 **Students with disabilities:**

(a) A student with disabilities who is enrolled in a special education program which is not physically located at the parent school (example: psycho-education center, regional occupation center, community-based instruction class, etc.) shall be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities at the parent school if IEP (Individual Education Program) requirements are met.

(b) Schools with students having to meet only IEP requirements for course credit must establish an accounting process for the number of courses passed each semester, and for the awarding of units. Requirements for the date of entry into the ninth grade and for age apply to students with IEPs without variation.

(c) Competitive interscholastic activities administered through local special education programs shall follow Georgia Department of Education guidelines and procedures for special education, and are exempt from GHSA requirements.

1.60 - SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS / TRANSFER / MIGRANT STUDENTS / MIGRATORY WAIVER

1.61 School **service areas** for member public schools are those attendance boundaries established by local boards of education from which a school normally draws its students. The school service area for a member private school is the county in which the private school is located. The school service area for a startup or converted charter school will be the same as the school from which the charter school draws its students.

1.62 A **transfer student** who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be **immediately eligible** at the new school if:

(a) The student moved simultaneously with the entire parental unit or persons he/she resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the service area of the new school. This is known as a "**bona fide move.**"

(1) The student may choose the public or private school serving that area.

(2) It must be apparent that the parent(s) or the persons residing with the student and the student have relinquished the residence in the former service area and have occupied a residence in the new service area.

(3) *The following factors, although not conclusive, may be evidence of relinquishment of the former residence: Selling the residence and vacating it; OR vacating the residence and listing it for sale at a fair market value; OR vacating the residence and leasing it to another (other than a relative) at fair*

market value; OR abandoning the residence and shutting off the unnecessary utilities. NOTE: When a family claims multiple residences, the residence for which they apply for a homestead exemption will be declared the primary residence provided the family spends the majority of their time at this residence.

- (4) The bona fide move is validated when the student's family maintains the new residence for at least one calendar year. A return to the previous service area within that year renders the student to be a migrant student. All hardship appeal processes are available.
- (b) The student was enrolled in a **private school or a magnet school** and has a bona fide move from one public school service area to another public school service area. A student in this situation may attend either the public school or a private school serving his area of residence. NOTE: Students who have a bona fide move within a service area that has multiple private schools must file a hardship to seek eligibility if they wish to enroll in a different private school.
- (c) *The student was enrolled in a **non-member private school** in Georgia and, without a bona fide move, transferred to a GHSA member school that serves his area of residence as long as:*
 - (1) *It is the initial move of the student from a non-member school to a member school serving his area of residence, AND*
 - (2) *The student was enrolled at the high school serving his area of residence in grades 9-12 before attending the non-member school, OR*
 - (3) *The student has not yet established eligibility at grades 9-12 at a member school serving his area of residence.*
 - (4) *A student who transfers from a GHSA member school to an independent school entering the GHSA in the next school year must be enrolled at the entering independent school by January 31 of the year preceding their becoming a GHSA member school in order to be eligible.*
NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers have control over the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.
- (d) The student transfers from a non-member home school and the receiving school grants credit so that the student has accumulated sufficient units. At the time such credit is given, the student must also have passed a minimum of at least 2.5 units the previous semester. The student becomes eligible when credit is awarded officially.
- (e) The student is involved in a **foreign exchange program** that is approved and published on the "Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs" published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). This list is found on the GHSA web site.
 - (1) The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year.
 - (2) The student shall not be a graduate of a secondary school in his home country.
 - (3) The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.
 - (4) *The foreign exchange program must randomly assign students to schools by a method that insures that no student, school, or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes. "Direct Placement" foreign exchange students must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.*
 - (5) All eligibility forms (Form B) for foreign exchange students must be accompanied by documentation from the CSIET-approved foreign exchange program showing that the student has been placed according to the normal procedures for that agency.
- (f) If one of his/her parents or the custodial parent is a certified teacher or administrator teaching at the receiving school. This opportunity is available one time only at any given school. (NOTE: Rules about joint custody transfers overrule the one-time transfer restriction in this by-law.)
- (g) *The student has one of the following family related circumstances which shall constitute a waiver of the "bona fide move" rule:*
 - (1) *There is a **Superior Court Final Order** changing permanent physical custody of the student from one parent to the other parent and the student moves to the residence of the parent receiving custody in a new service area and attends the member school serving that service area.*
 - (2) *There is a **Superior Court Final Order** awarding permanent joint physical custody to the parents and the student elects to move from the residence of one parent to the residence of the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence. Provided, however, that such an election can be made only once during a 12-month period beginning the date of the transfer and the Final Order must have specifically awarded the parents "joint physical custody" of the student. An award of "joint legal custody" shall not suffice for purposes of this paragraph.*
 - (3) *There is a death of the custodial parent with whom the student resided and the student moves to live with the other parent in a new service area and attends the member school serving that area of residence.*
 - (4) *There is a military transfer of one or both custodial parents that requires a change of residence of the student to a new service area and the student attends the member school serving that area of residence.*
(NOTE: Eligibility forms for transfer eligibility under paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above must be accompanied by certified copies of applicable Court Orders. Eligibility forms for transfer eligibility under paragraph (4) above must be accompanied by true and correct copies of verifiable deployment orders.)

NOTE: Fulton County Schools complies with the "Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children" (POLICY JG).

- (h) Students who are U.S. citizens and who have been enrolled and attended a high school in a foreign country, upon return to the U.S., shall be eligible to participate at a GHSA member school provided the student lives in the new school's service area and is otherwise eligible under GHSA age, eight-semester, academic and other eligibility rules.
- (i) Students who are transferred from one school attendance area to another school attendance area by a **mandate of the local board of education** maintain their eligibility.
- (j) **Married students** setting up a household (domicile) shall be eligible in the school of their residence provided they meet all other requirements of eligibility.
- (k) Students at the Atlanta School for the Deaf will be eligible at the school serving their area of residence provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.
- (l) The migratory rule (See 1.63) will be waived **one time** for **students entering the following boarding schools**: Ben Franklin Academy; Rabun Gap; Riverside Military Academy; Tallulah Falls.
Exception: Students from foreign countries not on an approved foreign exchange program are not eligible.
- (m) Students entering a school as an "unaccompanied youth" under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
- (n) *If approved by the local board of education, students enrolled in a **magnet school** shall be allowed to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities as a member of the school team for the school which they would ordinarily attend according to local board of education attendance policy. Provided, however, that:*
 - (1) *If the magnet school offers the only activity in which the student elects to participate, the student shall be required to participate as a member of the magnet school program in that activity.*
 - (2) *Students at magnet schools may not participate in GHSA extracurricular activities at both the magnet school and the school that the student would ordinarily attend. Those students must elect to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities at only one school per school year. For example, students could not play basketball at the magnet school and football at the home school.*
 - (3) *The election of the student to participate in GHSA extracurricular activities for either the magnet school or the school the student would ordinarily attend shall be binding for the current school year.*
 - (4) *Such students shall be required to comply with all GHSA eligibility and other rules. The member school shall be required to provide to the GHSA a copy of the local board of education approval of such participation.*
 - (5) *The receiving school will submit students on an MT Eligibility Form. This form is available on the GHSA web site (www.ghsa.net).*

1.63 A "migrant student" is a student who transfers into a GHSA school without a bona fide move or without one of the exceptions listed in by-law 1.62. The student may practice or compete at the sub-varsity level, but may not compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from the date of his entry into the new school.

1.64 A student who is not eligible because of GHSA rules at the former school, and then transfers to a new school, cannot regain eligibility by the transfer. Ineligible students cannot gain eligibility by being adjudicated to YDC and subsequently returning to their resident school with earned credit.

1.65 Students whose transfers from member school to member school have been approved by the GHSA office after the end of regular season play or during post-season play are not eligible for participation in GHSA sponsored tournaments and/or playoffs in that particular sport for the school year of transfer.

1.66 A student who is not eligible at one school because of suspension or expulsion and then transfers to a member school cannot regain eligibility by such a transfer, for the length of the suspension or one calendar year, whichever is less.

1.67 A permissive transfer is defined as an allowance by a local board of education for students and/or their parents to choose a school to attend without regard to the location of residence.

- (a) A student transferring from member school to member school on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
- (b) A student transferring to or from a school housing a system-wide, singular academic or vocation program or a magnet program on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
 - (1) The offering of an individual course or series of courses by one school in a system does not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
 - (2) Special options offered by a school system that allow students to attend a school outside their area of residence do not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
 - (3) Any such permissive transfer issue may be brought before the GHSA Hardship Committee.
- (c) Students transferring under the provisions of Federal or State academic accountability regulations must be processed through the normal hardship appeals process.
- (d) When a military base is located in two school districts, a student moving onto the base for the first time may choose to attend either school district, and that district will place the student appropriately. Any transfer after the initial placement will be subject to standard eligibility regulations.

- 1.68 Hardship Applications may be filed by an administrator at a member school when a student does not meet the standards of eligibility outlined in by-laws 1.50 (academic issues) and 1.60 (transfer issues).
- (a) The GHSA Constitution (Art. IV; Sec. 5; Subsection B4) specifies that the hardship issues must be beyond the reasonable control of the persons involved.
 - (b) The process of appealing a decision of the Hardship Committee is outlined in the GHSA Constitution (Art. IV, Sec. 9, Subsection C & D).
 - (c) In order for a hardship appeal based on a financial hardship to be approved, the new school must provide proof that the family attempted to address the financial problem at the previous school, and that the need-based financial aid was non-existent or insufficient to resolve the problem. Increases in tuition or other costs at a private school do not create an automatic reason to grant the appeal, because such fee increases are considered foreseeable and not unavoidable. Documentation of the financial problem is required.
- 1.69 When a new school opens, student eligibility shall be determined as follows:
- (a) When a school district mandates a service area for a new school for all grades enrolled at the new school, all students living within the mandated service area in those grades are immediately eligible. All students living outside the mandated service area who desire to attend the new school are considered migrant students and are ineligible for one year. Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.
 - (b) When a school district mandates some students to attend the new school, allows some students to stay at their present school, and permits some students to transfer to the new school, the school shall set a deadline for students living in the service area of the new school to decide whether they will move to the new school, or stay at the present school. The decisions exercised at the deadline date are binding. Subsequent changes render the student to be a migrant student with the one-year period of ineligibility. Students who are granted permissive transfers to enroll at the new school from other schools within the system are considered to be migrant students. Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.

1.70 - RECRUITING/UNDUE INFLUENCE

- 1.71 Recruiting and Undue Influence is defined as the use of influence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a GHSA school to induce a student of any age to transfer from one school to another, or to enter the ninth grade at a member school for athletic or literary competition purposes, whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of the GHSA.
- (a) The use of undue influence to secure OR retain a student for competitive purposes is prohibited, and shall lead to penalties being assessed against either school. NOTE: This violation may cause the student to forfeit eligibility for one year from the date of enrollment.
 - (b) Evidence of undue influence includes, but is not limited to:
 - (1) personal contact initiated by coaches, boosters, or other school personnel in an attempt to persuade transfer
 - (2) gifts of money, jobs, supplies or clothing
 - (3) free transportation
 - (4) free admission to contests
 - (5) an invitation to attend practices and/or games
 - (6) a social event (other than an official schoolwide Open House program) specifically geared for prospective athletes
 - (7) free tuition beyond the allowable standards found in by-law 1.82
 - (8) a coach asking a prospective student for contact information
 - (c) Complaints or reports of violations of this rule will be investigated and handled on a case-by-case basis. If coaches are found to be in violation of the recruiting rule, a copy of the investigation will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commission of the Department of Education.
 - (d) A school will be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate it could not reasonably be expected to be responsible for the actions of a booster who is found to have violated the recruiting/undue influence rules.
- 1.72 A student athlete transferring from one member school to another shall be ruled ineligible for one year because of "undue influence" if it is proven that:
- (a) The coach of the receiving school coached an out-of-school team or all-star team on which the athlete played prior to the transfer; OR
 - (b) The coach at the receiving school acted as a private athletic instructor for the transferring athlete, regardless of whether the coach was paid for his services and/or expertise; OR
 - (c) The student participated in a sports camp or clinic run by a member school and/or its coach(es).
 - (d) The player who played for a coach at a former GHSA school followed that coach when he/she moved to another GHSA school. (This is not applicable to dependent children of the coach.)
 - (e) The situations cited in this by-law are considered to be violations even if a bona fide move has occurred, and the hardship appeal procedures are available for the demonstration that undue influence has not occurred.
- 1.73 A booster shall be considered to be an extension of the school and must abide by all rules applied to coaches and other school personnel. The following persons or groups may be considered boosters: members of the school's Booster Club; alumni; parents; guardians; or relatives of a student or former student; financial donors; or donors of time and effort.

NOTE: Fulton County Athletic Guidelines Pertaining to Recruiting and Undue Influence are included in the Appendix.

1.80 - FINANCIAL AID

- 1.81 Any student who receives financial aid or non-GHSA approved gifts from any source and in any form (scholarships, tuition remission, cash, gifts, etc.) arising out of or received in connection with their participation in any sport or literary event shall be ruled ineligible. The duration of the ineligibility will last as long as the illegal benefits are being received. This prohibition shall not apply to awards under By-Law 1.90 or to other items approved by the GHSA.
- (a) If tuition is charged, it must be paid by a parent, legal guardian, or other family member with the exception of payments coming from need-based financial aid.
 - (b) It is not legal for donated funds to be designated for a specific student that are given by non-family members, businesses, churches or other organizations, except for programs specified by state law.
 - (c) Schools may not employ students to work off their tuition costs.
 - (d) The GHSA Executive Director will determine whether the financial aid or gift arose out of or in connection with participation in any sport or literary event.
 - (e) If a school allows a student who has received such financial aid or gifts to participate in competition, the Executive Director shall assess an appropriate penalty.
- 1.82 Financial aid in the form of free or reduced tuition or other aid must be need-based aid as determined by a national student aid service or financial aid based on institutional policies for academic performance (classroom record and/or test scores) that is administered by persons not in the athletic department.
- 1.83 Member schools who award financial aid shall issue a statement to the Executive Director signed by the principal or headmaster of the school giving the following information:
- (a) number of students enrolled in the school
 - (b) number of students receiving financial aid
 - (c) names of students (or a listing of student identification numbers) receiving financial aid who are involved in GHSA activities
 - (d) certification that the percentage of students who participate in activities and who receive financial aid is the same percentage as the number of students receiving financial aid who do not participate in activities (plus or minus 5%)

1.90 - AMATEUR STATUS/AWARDS

- 1.91 A student who represents a school in interscholastic athletic competition shall be an amateur in that activity.
- (a) An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived therefrom.
 - (b) Accepting nominal, standard fees or salary for instructing, supervising, or officiating in an organized youth sports program or recreation, playground or camp activity, shall not jeopardize an athlete's amateur status.
 - (c) Reasonable compensation derived from private lessons in a sport is permissible.
- 1.92 An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:
- (a) competing for money or other monetary compensations except for reasonable allowances for travel, meals, and lodging. NOTE: Accepting expense allowances authorized by the United States Olympic Committee for Olympic Development Programs is acceptable for GHSA students.
 - (b) receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the GHSA.
 - (c) capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts with monetary value except college scholarships.
 - (d) signing a professional playing contract in any sport, or hiring an agent to manage his/her athletic career.
- 1.93 Only awards approved by the GHSA may be accepted by a high school student-athlete as a result of participation in school or non-school competition in a sport recognized by the GHSA.
- 1.94 Symbolic awards (i.e. non-cash) presented for winning or placing in GHSA competitions are limited to \$250 per year, per student in the aggregate, paid by the local school. These are the only GHSA-approved awards for interscholastic competition. Beyond this, a student may receive one (1) school sweater or jacket presented by the school during his high school career.
- 1.95 Athletes competing in golf or tennis events are limited to awards as specified in the United States Golf Association Rules of Golf, and the United States Tennis Association Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations, which includes (but not limited to) the following:
- (a) No cash awards may be accepted.
 - (b) Merchandise awards in tennis may be accepted up to a retail value of \$250.00.
 - (c) Merchandise awards in golf may be accepted up to a retail value of \$750.00.
- 1.96 Players attending national camps or all-star events may keep reasonable benefits for housing, meals and

transportation. Players may keep only equipment that is commemorative in nature and/or used in the process of the event's workouts.

INTERPRETATIONS, 1.00 SECTION

BY-LAW 1.10 - CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

SITUATION: A student athlete and his parents move from the service area of School A to School B, and meet all eligibility requirements. When may he participate in interscholastic activities at School B?

INTERPRETATION: The student is eligible as soon as he is enrolled at School B and certified as being eligible by the GHSA. Academic eligibility must be certified before the student may try out or practice.

BY-LAW 1.20 - ENROLLMENT AND TEAM MEMBERSHIP

8TH GRADE PARTICIPATION

SITUATION: May eighth-grade students participate on sub-varsity teams at a member school?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Eighth-grade students in a feeder school for a member school may participate on one sub-varsity team, but never on a varsity team.

SITUATION: An eighth-grade student desires to try out in the Spring for the cheerleading team at a member school. Is this legal if the school the student is attending is a feeder school for the member school?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Also, an eighth grade student in a private school that does not offer classes at the ninth grade level and above may try out for cheerleading at the public or private school serving that student's area of residence. Such a tryout must be preceded by a pre-enrollment at that GHSA school. The tryout establishes the student's eligibility at that school. NOTE: This procedure also applies to participation in spring football practice.

TRYOUT REQUIREMENTS

SITUATION: A tenth-grade student who is on a cheerleading team at a member school anticipates moving to another part of the state over the Summer. May the student try out for the new school before the move is made?

INTERPRETATION: No. A student may not practice or try out at a member school until that student is properly enrolled at the new school. A student may be enrolled in only one school at a time.

BY-LAW 1.30 – AGE

SITUATION: A student becomes 19 years of age on April 30, prior to his fourth year in high school. May the student participate in the fourth year?

INTERPRETATION: No. May 1 is the cut-off date.

BY-LAW 1.40 - LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

EIGHT SEMESTER RULE

SITUATION: A student entered a member school eight (8) semesters ago. He was injured and missed one-half of the first semester of his senior year (7th semester). During the first six semesters, he has accumulated seventeen (17) units, and in the 8th semester he passed five courses and gained an additional 2.5 units. Is he eligible to participate the following Fall in his 9th semester?

INTERPRETATION: No. There are no provisions to allow for a student to participate beyond eight (8) semesters. His case could be presented to the GHSA Executive Committee for a request to waive the eight semester rule (By-Law 1.42) by Hardship application.

NON-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

SITUATION: A student is a member of a high school soccer team and a club soccer team whose seasons run concurrently. Is this permissible?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. There is no state regulation prohibiting "dual participation" on the part of a student. The high school coach may not be involved in the non-school program, however. A local school may impose a rule prohibiting dual participation.

GIRLS ON BOYS TEAMS

SITUATION: A girl wants to be on the high school wrestling team made up of boys. If she meets eligibility requirements, may she do so?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Girls may participate on boys teams when there is no girls team in that sport at that school.

SITUATION: A female student desires to try out for the boys' baseball team. May she do this?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, she is allowed to try out since there is no girls' baseball team.

SITUATION: A male student desires to play on a girls volleyball team. Is this legal?

INTERPRETATION: No. The Federal Title IX legislation and the Georgia Equity in Sports Act both specify that the traditionally represented gender in athletics (males) may not play on teams designed for the traditionally under-represented gender (females).

SUB-VARSITY AND VARSITY PARTICIPATION

SITUATION: A junior varsity basketball player participates in a JV game on Tuesday afternoon. May he also participate in the varsity game that night?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, but the student may not participate in more than five (5) quarters that day.

SITUATION: A junior varsity football player plays in a JV game on Thursday. May he also play in the varsity game on Friday?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, but the student may not participate in more than six (6) quarters in a calendar week. The schedule week (Sunday through Saturday) begins with the day of the varsity game.

QUESTION: In sports other than football, basketball, and soccer, what are the restrictions on students participating on both sub-varsity and varsity teams?

ANSWER: The total number of regular-season games and tournaments a student participates in on a sub-varsity team and the varsity team may not exceed the number of games and tournaments allotted to the varsity team in that sport. Example: A sport allows 18 varsity games plus two tournaments. A student could legally play in 10 JV games, 8 varsity games, 1 JV tournament, and 1 varsity tournament.

SITUATION: At an invitational cheerleading tournament, a AAAAA school enters its varsity team in the competition for its class, and its JV team in the competition for varsity teams of smaller schools? Is this legal?

RULING: No. Varsity teams must compete against varsity teams and non-varsity against non-varsity teams in all GHSA activities. The eligibility standards are different in the two levels of competition, and it is possible to manipulate the limits on competition by allowing this to occur. New schools and schools just beginning a sport may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule.

BY-LAW 1.50 - SCHOLASTIC STANDING/SCHOLARSHIP

DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

SITUATION: During the first semester of his senior year, a student is enrolled for three traditional courses (subjects) leading toward graduation at a member school, and one course for 5 hours of credit at a local college that will be accepted by his home school for graduation credit. If the student passes all the courses for which he is enrolled and has accumulated the proper number of units, is he eligible to participate in golf during the second semester?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. If the student is enrolled in a dual enrollment program, the student must be enrolled for at least 2.5 units and must pass courses giving at least 2.5 units.

ADVANCE PLACEMENT

SITUATION: May a student take a college or junior college class and receive credit for this work which may be counted toward scholastic eligibility?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Such a class may be counted toward academic eligibility, provided that the student's high school accepts the credit and counts it toward graduation. The student still must pass a minimum of 2.5 units at the end of the semester.

ELIGIBILITY ENDS

SITUATION: A student who is eligible at the beginning of basketball season only passes classes carrying two (2) units in the first semester which ends on December 17th. Is this student eligible to play in a basketball tournament December 20-23?

INTERPRETATION: The student loses eligibility on the first day of the second semester. If the tournament is played before the start of the new semester, he is eligible to play by GHSA standards.

ELIGIBILITY BEGINS

SITUATION: A student who is academically ineligible for the second semester passes all courses that semester and has accumulated the proper number of units. May this student participate in practices that occur before the beginning of classes in the Fall?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The student becomes eligible the first day of the fall semester. The beginning of the first semester is interpreted as the first day of the first sport or the first day of classes – whichever comes first.

SITUATION: A student passes four (4) courses the last semester of the eighth grade. Is this student eligible the first semester of the ninth-grade year?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Every student entering the ninth grade for the first time begins with a "clean slate."

SUMMER SCHOOL RULES

SITUATION: A student needs a science course for graduation purposes that is not taught during Summer school. The student and principal agree on an independent study course monitored by a coach. May this course be used for eligibility purposes?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, as long as the course is regionally accredited and accepted by the school district for

graduation credit.

SITUATION: How many units may a student earn in Summer School for the purpose of gaining academic eligibility for the Fall?

INTERPRETATION: A maximum of two (2) units of credit earned in Summer School may be counted for eligibility purposes.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL RULES

SITUATION: A student is assigned to attend an alternative school for the remainder of the semester for disciplinary reasons. May the student participate on the football team during the time he will be attending the alternative school?

INTERPRETATION: No. Students assigned to an alternative school for reasons of misconduct or who are in out-of-school suspension may not participate until they have returned physically to the regular classroom. The school may appeal to the Executive Director if a school holiday prevents the student from physically returning to the classroom at the end of the penalty.

OUT-OF-STATE RULES

SITUATION: A student transfers to a member school from another state where scholastic eligibility rules are less restrictive than Georgia. The student is academically eligible by the standards of the state from which he transfers, but lacks credits to be eligible by GHSA standards. As a transfer student, is he eligible academically?

INTERPRETATION: No.

ANNUAL GRADING

SITUATION: Since GHSA eligibility rules are written to apply to schools with semester grading, do schools that have yearlong classes with one grade given at the end of the year have to monitor eligibility for the first half of the year?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Schools must determine that each student-athlete has a grade of 70% or higher in courses carrying at least 2.5 units at the end of the first semester. Any student not meeting that standard is academically ineligible.

SITUATION: A student taking yearlong classes has a failing grade for the second semester, but the yearlong grade that includes end-of-course test results is above 70%. Will the student be eligible for the next semester?

INTERPRETATION: Yes - the grade reported to the GHSA for the spring semester will be the yearlong grade.

MULTI-UNIT COURSES

SITUATION: A student is enrolled for four (4) regular courses (carrying .5 units each), and one vocational course that carries the equivalent of two (2) units. If the student fails the vocational course, is the student eligible the next semester?

INTERPRETATION: No. Since the vocational course carries the equivalent of two (2) units and since the student passed courses totaling only 2 units, he would not be eligible for the next semester.

MAKE-UP WORK

SITUATION: A student taking five (5) subjects that carry .5 units each receives an "Incomplete" in one of those courses. When the student returns to class the first day of the next semester, is he eligible to practice or play?

INTERPRETATION: No. If the school allows make-up work for all students and the student makes up the "Incomplete" to a passing grade within fifteen (15) school days of the beginning of the new semester, the student could become eligible. The student is not eligible while the work is being made up.

TRYOUT ELIGIBILITY

SITUATION: Cheerleader tryouts for the following year are to be held in the Spring (second semester). A student who earned only two (2) units during the first semester would like to try out. Is this permissible?

INTERPRETATION: If the student is passing ALL courses at the time of the tryout, the student may participate.

ACCUMULATING UNITS

SITUATION: A 9th grade student passed courses totaling two units in the first semester and is ineligible for second semester. The student passed five courses in the second semester, giving him an accumulation of 4.5 units for the year. Is the student eligible at the beginning of the second year?

INTERPRETATION: No. The student must have accumulated at least five (5) units during the first year in order to be eligible in the second year.

SITUATION: At the beginning of the 11th-grade year (third year of eligibility), a student has only accumulated 8 units and is declared ineligible for the first semester. If the student passes all six (6) courses, and accumulates 3 units during the first semester, is the student eligible at the beginning of the second semester?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Since the student has accumulated 11 units at the beginning of the second semester of the third year of eligibility, he is eligible. A student may gain the units during the school year, and becomes eligible the first day of the next semester.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

SITUATION: A student is enrolled for three (3) Advanced Placement courses and two regular classes in the

first semester, and all courses carry .5 units. If the student fails one of the AP courses, is he eligible to participate second semester?

INTERPRETATION: No. There are no allowances made for course difficulty in the rule requiring the accumulation of 2.5 units the previous semester.

BLOCK-FOUR PROGRAMS

SITUATION: A member school has adopted the Block-Four Program in which students take four (4) courses each semester and receive one (1) unit for each course passed. How many units does a student have to accumulate each semester in order to be eligible?

INTERPRETATION: The students will have to accumulate at least 2.5 units each semester in order to be eligible.

SITUATION: A school is on the Block-Four Program and, additionally, requires a student to take a Physical Education course that earns .5 unit. A student passes two (2) courses in the Block-Four setup plus the PE class. Is the student eligible?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The two block courses provide a total of 2 units and the P.E. course provides a total of .5 units. This meets the GHSA requirement of at least 2.5 units.

SITUATION: A student in a Block-Four setting only passes one class in the Spring Semester. The student passes three (3) classes carrying .5 units each in Summer School. Is the student eligible for Fall participation?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The one block course provides one (1) unit and the three summer school courses provide 1.5 units, meeting the GHSA requirement of at least 2.5 units.

BLOCK-EIGHT PROGRAMS

SITUATION: A member school has adopted the Block-Eight Program in which students take eight courses over the semester and each one passed accumulates one-half unit. How many courses do students at this school have to pass in order to be eligible for interscholastic activities?

INTERPRETATION: The students will have to earn at least 2.5 units each semester to be eligible. The unit requirements remain the same as with any system of courses.

HYBRID SCHEDULING

SITUATION: A student is taking two yearlong courses, two Block 4 courses and one traditional course during the semester. If the student failed one of the Block 4 courses, is he academically eligible for the next semester?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The two yearlong courses and the one traditional course carry 1.5 units, and the Block 4 course he passed carried one (1) unit. This gives the student the 2.5 units he needs to be eligible.

BY-LAW 1.60 - SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS/TRANSFER STUDENTS/ MIGRANT STUDENTS/MIGRATORY RULE WAIVERS

SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS

QUESTION: What is a public school's service area?

ANSWER: A school service area is the geographic boundary established by local boards of education that determine the public school a student must attend. NOTE: The service area is also referred to in this book as the "attendance area" and "area of residence."

QUESTION: What is the service area designation for private schools?

ANSWER: The service area for a private school is the county in which the campus is physically located. This restriction only affects students who transfer into the school after beginning their high school careers at other schools.

SITUATION: A 10th grade student moves to a county that has four school service areas (A, B, C, and D), and a city school system (service area E). The student and his parents reside in the service area of School "A," but the student decides to enter School "E." Is the student eligible in the new school?

INTERPRETATION: No. When a student and his parents move to a new service area, the student established eligibility at the school that serves his area of residence. When the student and his parents "elected" to attend a school outside his area of residence, the student became a migrant student.

FIRST-TIME ENROLLMENT

SITUATION: A county has a school for students living in the county, and a separate school for students living in the city. The local boards of education allow students to choose whichever school they wish to attend (with or without tuition payments). A student and his parents live in the city, and the student is enrolled for the first time in ninth grade at the county school. Will he be able to participate in interscholastic activities?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. On a first-time entrance into the ninth grade, a student may enroll in the school of his choice if the local board of education gives approval. Once that choice is made, any other transfers must be accompanied by a corresponding move by the student and his parents. If the student transferred back to the school that serves his area of residence, the student would be ineligible for varsity competition for one year.

BONA FIDE MOVE DEFINED

QUESTION: What is meant by the term "bona fide move?"

ANSWER: A "bona fide move" is defined as the actual physical relocation of all immediate family members

residing in the previous residence, with the intent to reside indefinitely, and to relinquish the previous residence.

THE TRANSFER RULE

SITUATION: A student attends School "A" while living in that school's attendance area. He and his parents move into the service area of public School "B," and the student enrolls in School "B." Is the student eligible to participate in interscholastic activities?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. This is a classic example of a bona fide move.

SITUATION: A student and his parents reside in the service area for a county school. The student enters the ninth grade at a non-member private school. At the end of the ninth-grade year, the student wishes to transfer from the non-member school to the high school that serves his area of residence. Will the student be eligible at the member school?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. A student may transfer from a non-member school to a member school serving his area of residence one time in his high school career as long as all other eligibility criteria are met.

SITUATION: A student begins ninth grade at the school that serves his area of residence. With one month to go in the school year, the student transfers to a non-member private school. At the beginning of the tenth-grade year, the student enrolls at a member school that does not serve his area of residence. Is this student immediately eligible at the new school?

INTERPRETATION: No. The student is now a migrant student because he transferred to a school without living in that service area. If the student had transferred back to the member school at which he began the ninth-grade, he would have been eligible.

SITUATION: A student who attended ninth and tenth grade in a non-member home school enrolls at the public school that serves his area of residence. That school specifies that students from home schools must be tested in order for the course work to be accepted. May this student participate in athletics before the testing is done?

INTERPRETATION: No, because eligibility cannot be determined until the course work is accepted.

CHOICE OF PUBLIC OR PRIVATE MEMBER SCHOOLS

SITUATION: A tenth-grade student and his parents reside in the service area of School "A" and attends that school. The parents and the student have a bona fide move into the service area of public School "B" and private School "C." Does the student have a choice about which school he may attend and remain eligible?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. When a student (attending any member school) moves into a new service area, he may choose to attend the public school that serves his new area of residence, or a private school that has been assigned his new area of residence.

SITUATION: A tenth-grade student at member private School "C" resides in the service area of public School "A," and then moves into the service area of public School "B," which is still in the service area of School "C." Does the student have a choice in attending public School "B" or selecting a new private school that includes the service area of School "B" in its service area?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. When a student (attending any member school) moves into a new service area, he may choose to attend the public school that serves his new area of residence, or any private school that has been assigned his new area of residence.

SITUATION: A twelfth-grade student has been at a member school since entering the ninth-grade. When his parents move into the service area of another school, the student wants to stay at his original school. May he remain at the school and retain his eligibility?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. Once a student has established eligibility at a school, he retains eligibility at that school as long as he is allowed by the local board of education to attend that school, and as long as he meets academic requirements.

SITUATION: A school system grants a permissive transfer for a student to leave the school that serves his area of residence to go to a school that offers a course he cannot get at his home school. Is this a mandated transfer, and is the student eligible at the new school?

RULING: This is a permissive transfer and does not carry GHSA eligibility. The receiving school would have to file for a hardship in order for this student to have any chance of being eligible immediately.

SITUATION: A student begins ninth grade at a magnet school, and (a) does not make grades high enough to stay in the magnet program and returns to his home school, or (b) decides to return to a regular study program at the school that serves his area of residence. Is the student eligible?

RULING: In both cases, the student is not eligible. Decisions to enter into or exit from a magnet school involve personal choices and/or permissive transfers, and do not carry GHSA eligibility. The inability of the student to meet the achievement standard was under the control of the student.

SITUATION: A school district opens a new school and (a) mandates a service area for students going to the new school, or (b) gives students options on where they may attend. How does this affect eligibility for athletes?

RULING: In (a), students mandated to attend the new school are immediately eligible. In (b), the system should set up a deadline date for students to make their choices. Students may either stay or move to the mandated school and have eligibility if the deadline is met. Any decisions made after the deadline renders the

student to be a migrant student.

MIGRANT STUDENT RULE

SITUATION: A student enrolls in School "A," is certified eligible, and participates in athletic contests. Then it is discovered that the student's parents do not live in the service area of School "A." After the school forfeits all contests it won when the student played, what is the status of this student's eligibility if:

- (a) the student remains in School "A," and the parents do not move into the service area of School "A?"
- (b) The student remains in School "A," and the parents move into the service area of School "A?"
- (c) the student transfers to the school that serves his area of residence?

INTERPRETATION:

- (a) The student is ineligible for a period of one (1) year from the date of entry to School "A."
- (b) The student becomes eligible on the date the parents move into the service area of School "A."
- (c) The student is ineligible for one (1) year from the date of entry to the school of his service area.

SITUATION: A student who has been living with his mother in another state moves in with his grandparents and enters a member school. The grandparents go to a Probate Court and get a Letter of Temporary Guardianship. Will this student be eligible for interscholastic activities?

INTERPRETATION: No. This student is considered a migrant student. The student may practice and may play in sub-varsity contests if academic requirements are met, but he will be ineligible for varsity competition for one calendar year. Guardianship is not recognized for eligibility purposes.

SITUATION: A school system has a policy that the children of teachers may attend the school where the parent teaches regardless of where the family lives. The high school hired a teacher, who has a tenth-grade student, and the family lives outside the service area of that school. If the student attends the school where the parent teaches, will he be immediately eligible?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, as long as the parent is a certified teacher or administrator at the receiving school.

SITUATION: A ninth-grade student transfers from one member school to another member school without a bona fide move. May he participate on the JV basketball team if he has met all academic requirements?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The student is a migrant student and migrant students may practice and may play on a sub-varsity team during the year that he is ineligible for varsity competition.

SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED STUDENT

SITUATION: A student is expelled from a member private school for behavioral problems. The student and his parents move to a different service area and the student enrolls in a member public school. Is the student eligible to participate in interscholastic activities?

INTERPRETATION: No. The student will not be eligible until the time frame of the suspension at the first school is complete or one calendar year – whichever is shorter.

UNFINISHED HOME

SITUATION: A family has purchased a new home in a school district other than the one where the student has been attending school. However, the new home will not be available for occupancy until six weeks after the start of the semester. In the meantime, the new local board of education allows the student to begin attendance in anticipation of the move when the home is available. When will the student be eligible at the new school?

INTERPRETATION: The student will be eligible immediately upon the date the family physically occupies the residence in the new district.

SITUATION: A family has purchased a new home in a school district other than the one where the student has been attending school. However, the new home will not be available for occupancy until six weeks after the start of the semester. The parents desire the student to begin and complete the semester at the original school, before transferring to the new school. How will this affect the student's eligibility?

INTERPRETATION: The GHSA By-Laws permit students to complete the current semester in a given district if their parents move from that district after school has commenced. Therefore, the student in this case may remain in his original district for the remainder of the semester and be eligible in respect to residence. If the student continues to attend school in that district in the succeeding semesters, he will continue eligibility. If he begins the next semester and then decides to transfer to the school in his area of residence, he would be ineligible for varsity competition for one (1) year.

RECRUITING/UNDUE INFLUENCE

SITUATION: A member school schedules a social event for any eighth grade student and his/her family to showcase the school's athletic program and facilities. Is this legal?

INTERPRETATION: No, that would be a violation of the recruiting/undue influence rules.

QUESTION: Is it possible for a member school to be held responsible if someone in that school's community initiates a contact for a student to transfer for athletic purposes?

ANSWER: If the individual making the contact meets the definition of a "booster" as found in By-law 1.73, the member school may be held accountable.

SITUATION: A coach at a GHSA school: (a) coaches a club soccer team; (b) coaches in an all-star football

game; (c) gives personal softball pitching lessons. A student interacts with the coach in one of the settings listed above, and then transfers with a bona fide move to the school where the coach is employed. Is the student eligible?

INTERPRETATION: No. Each of these situations falls under the GHSA rules for recruiting/undue influence.

SITUATION: A coach leaves School A and takes a coaching position at School B. A student who played for the coach at School A transfers to School B with a bona fide move after the coach changes jobs. Is the student eligible?

INTERPRETATION: No. The situation falls under the GHSA rules for recruiting/undue influence.

AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS

SITUATION: A team wins the state championship and school and community people put on a banquet honoring this accomplishment. The athletes and their parents are provided the meal at no expense, and the following awards are given:

- (a) a gift certificate for a dinner at a local restaurant to be used by the individual player at his convenience
- (b) a jacket, sweater, and/or shoes in school colors with lettering that proclaims the state championship
- (c) a plaque commemorating the accomplishment

Is this legal?

INTERPRETATION: The free meal at the banquet is not a violation, nor is the plaque that was given. All other items must fit under the \$250 per student, per year allowance. NOTE: A school may provide one jacket to each athlete who letters in the student's high school career.

SITUATION: A school wins the state championship and desires for the players to have a commemorative award. May the school buy rings for the players?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, symbolic awards (i.e., non-cash) presented for winning or placing in GHSA competitions are limited to \$250.00 per year, per student in the aggregate, paid for by the local school.

SITUATION: A student who wins a non-GHSA tennis tournament is offered (a) a cash prize of \$100.00, or (b) a merchandise certificate worth \$250.00 in tennis equipment and/or apparel. How will these awards affect the student's amateur status?

RULING: The GHSA follows the rules of the United States Tennis Association. USTA rules forbid the acceptance of money but do allow the acceptance of merchandise not to exceed \$250.00.

SITUATION: A student wins her flight in a non-GHSA golf tournament and is offered (a) a cash prize of \$150.00, or (b) a set of irons valued at \$600.00. How will these awards affect the student's amateur status?

RULING: The GHSA follows the rules of the United States Golf Association. USGA rules forbid the acceptance of money, but do allow the acceptance of merchandise not to exceed \$750.00.

BY-LAW 2.00 - SCHOOL

2.10 - SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP TO GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

2.11 The GHSA is a voluntary association available to any Georgia high school, grades 9-12, that has been authorized to seek membership by the local board of education or similar governing body of control.

- (a) Member schools agree to conform to the Constitution and By-Laws of the GHSA.
- (b) Member schools agree to conform to the rules of the region organizations to which they are assigned.
- (c) Should a conflict arise between state rules and region rules, the state rules always take precedent.

2.12 Procedure for Membership:

- (a) The local board of education or similar governing body of control must adopt a resolution authorizing membership for the high school.
- (b) Membership is continued through the original resolution as long as the school is in good standing with the GHSA.
- (c) April 1 preceding the reclassification alignment process is the deadline date for new and existing private schools to join the GHSA for the next reclassification period. Newly established public schools will have a deadline date of April 1 to join the GHSA for the upcoming school year. No private school with an actual numerical enrollment of less than 150 students in grades 9-12 will be admitted to the GHSA.
- (d) Converted charter schools whose attendance zones and eligibility requirements do not change retain their membership in the GHSA. Converted charter schools or startup charter schools must apply for membership in the GHSA.

2.13 Dues for Membership:

- (a) The amount of the dues is set annually by the Executive Committee of the GHSA, and includes a portion of the cost of catastrophic insurance.
 - (1) Dues must be paid prior to October 15 of each year.
 - (2) Schools failing to meet the dues-payment deadline are not eligible to participate in any contest until membership dues are paid.
- (b) Dues are prorated according to the school's classification.

NOTE: Schools with a total enrollment of less than 50 students are assessed their insurance fees according to the actual number of participants.

(c) *The Dues schedule is as follows:*

CLASSIFICATION	PAID BY OCTOBER 15	PAID AFTER OCTOBER 15
7A	\$1,115.00	\$1,215.00
6A	\$990.00	\$1,090.00
5A	\$865.00	\$965.00
4A	\$740.00	\$840.00
3A	\$615.00	\$715.00
2A	\$490.00	\$590.00
A	\$365.00	\$465.00

- 2.14 If a school or school system initiates litigation against the association and the court rules in favor of the association, the school or school system shall be responsible for paying all court costs and attorneys' fees.
- 2.15 If the association conducts an investigation of a member school in reference to a possible violation of association rules and the member school is found to be in violation, the school shall be assessed the cost of the investigation in addition to any fines.
- 2.16 Playing a Non-Region Schedule: A school may choose to play a non-region schedule in football, basketball, and/or baseball, and this choice is in effect for the entire reclassification period.
 - (a) A school playing a non-region schedule may not participate in post-season competition.
 - (b) Results of games with a school playing a non-region schedule may not be used in region standings.
- 2.17 Region and Area Divisions: A classification in any sport will be considered Regionalized when a majority of the schools (with a minimum of 5) in all regions participate in that sport. In sports where all classifications are not regionalized, the classes may be divided into Area alignments, and two or more classifications, *or any portions thereof, may be combined at the discretion of the Executive Director. NOTE: Regions formed by the Reclassification Committee that consist of fewer than five (5) teams may be exempted from this rule.*

2.20 - ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.21 The administrative head of each school shall have on file in the school office:
 - (a) a certificate of an annual physical examination given by a licensed medical physician, a doctor of Osteopathic medicine, nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant indicating the student is approved for participation in athletic activities before that student may try-out, participate in practice, conditioning drills or summer activities, or participate in interscholastic contests (see By-Law 1.41).
 - (b) a written Emergency Action Plan for athletic practices and games. This plan must include responses to natural disasters, serious illnesses/injuries, and terroristic events, and must have the involvement of local law enforcement agencies, rescue agencies, medical doctors and hospital personnel.
- 2.22 The administrative head of each school shall operate all interscholastic contests and activities under direct and complete control of the school administration or designated school personnel. These responsibilities are not to be delegated by the board of education, superintendent, or principal to any person or persons who are not a part of the school's professional staff.
- 2.23 The administrative head of each school is expected to be a person who believes in fairness and honesty as evidenced by the strict adherence to all rules and regulations in regards to eligibility of contestants representing his/her school.
- 2.24 The administrative head of each school is expected to employ those persons who exemplify fairness and honesty. Any certificated person who violates rules in regard to student eligibility, or illegal practices, or knowingly misleads a member school and/or the GHSA will have a report of that behavior sent to the Professional Standards Commission.
- 2.25 The administrative head of each school may submit to the GHSA Executive Committee such recommendations for the improvement of the GHSA as he/she may deem necessary.
 - (a) These recommendations must be submitted to the GHSA Office at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the meeting of the Executive Committee.
 - (b) A proposal brought to the Executive Committee that is denied by either a subcommittee or the full Executive Committee may not be submitted for three (3) regularly-scheduled meetings after the previous submission unless a substantive change has been made to the proposal.
- 2.26 The member institution has a responsibility to educate student-athletes, coaches, and other appropriate persons on GHSA rules and procedures that could affect them. Further, the member school should monitor its compliance with State Association guidelines.
- 2.27 Member schools that fail to follow stated procedures and deadlines may be assessed a fine for each violation.

- 2.28 Schools that need to cancel appointments scheduled with the Hardship Committee or the Appeals Board must do so at least 24 hours before the appointment. Failure to cancel properly will result in a fine.
- 2.29 Member schools are expected to fulfill their responsibilities for a sports season once they have committed to play that sport.
- (a) If a school commits to play a sport at the region meeting that precedes the sport, or on April 1 for Area sports, and then drops out of competition before or during the season, the school will have to play a non-region schedule in that sport the next year.
 - (b) If a school enters the competitive structure that qualifies it to advance in postseason competition, that school is expected to advance if it qualifies. Schools that drop out of competition after qualifying may be penalized with fines or probation.
 - (c) Appeals for emergency circumstances may be filed with the Executive Director.

2.30 - ELIGIBILITY REPORTS FILED BY THE SCHOOL

- 2.31 Eligibility reports are required for all contestants prior to the calendar date for the first possible practice in any GHSA activity. (EXCEPTION: Eligibility reports for Literary, One-Act Play and Riflery competitions are due twenty (20) calendar days before the first contest.)
- (a) Students are not allowed to participate in academic, athletic or literary competitions until their eligibility reports have been received and processed by the GHSA Office.
 - (b) Failure to meet the eligibility deadline may lead the GHSA Executive Director to:
 - (1) Assess a fine to the school that is delinquent.
 - (2) Suspend the membership of a school that does not file eligibility reports.
 - (c) Reports not filed properly will be returned to the school for resubmission.
- 2.32 Schools playing interscholastic contests before filing an eligibility report on one or more participating students may be subject to one or more of the following penalties imposed by the GHSA Executive Director:
- (a) a fine per game or contest in which one or more participants had no eligibility report filed;
 - (b) forfeiture of any game in which one or more participants did not have eligibility report filed;
 - (c) restriction from competition in any sport if the fines assessed are not paid within fourteen (14) calendar days of notification.
- 2.33 Supplementary eligibility reports may be submitted at any time on transfer students, students coming out for the team after the initial report, and/or those students who gain eligibility at the beginning of a semester.
- 2.34 Once a student has been certified eligible by the school and has been processed by the GHSA, eligibility is assumed to be continuing, and no further eligibility report is necessary for that student during the school year unless situations occur that render the student ineligible.
- 2.35 If a student loses eligibility and regains it during the school year, a new eligibility report should be filed for that student.
- 2.36 Changes of Eligibility Records: When a school discovers that incorrect information has been given on an eligibility report, the following procedures shall be followed:
- (a) To change the date of ninth grade entry:
 - (1) Submit a new eligibility report form on which you have written "Corrected Copy" AND a certified Copy of the student's transcript.
 - (2) NOTE: a visiting examiner may be used to verify the data.
 - (b) To change the date of birth:
 - (1) Submit a new eligibility report form on which you have written "Corrected Copy" AND a certified Copy of the student's birth certificate.
 - (2) NOTE: a visiting examiner may be used to verify the data.
 - (c) To correct other errors:
 - (1) Submit a new eligibility report form on which you have written "Corrected Copy."
 - (2) Give the date of the original eligibility submission.
- 2.37 Requests to investigate a student's eligibility in regard to the transfer rule must be filed with the GHSA office at least twenty (20) calendar days before the end of the regular season in order for any penalties to be applied before the end of the playoffs.

2.40 - STUDENT RETENTION FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

- 2.41 Member schools shall prohibit participation in interscholastic activities by any student who was retained in the eighth grade for competitive purposes. The governing body of each school system shall develop a written policy showing that the system does not allow retention for competitive purposes.

2.50 - QUALIFICATIONS TO COACH

- 2.51 An athletic coach must be a professional teacher meeting the teaching requirements and be employed

by only one board of education or similar governing authority within the GHSA membership, regardless of whether or not they are paid for their coaching (Exception: when all boards of education or similar governing authorities and all principals/headmasters involved sign a consent form on an annual basis he/she may coach at another school system), AND:

- (a) be employed for 20 or more hours per week on a regular basis in a professional, contracted position and must hold a teaching certificate or leadership certificate issued by the State of Georgia, OR
- (b) be employed for 20 or more hours per week on a regular basis as a JROTC instructor in the school's JROTC program, OR
- (c) be assigned as a student intern in a practice teaching situation under the guidance of a college or university teacher training program, OR
- (d) be a retired teacher teaching or supervising (NOTE: coaching meets the supervising requirement of this by-law) less than one-half time (forty hours considered full time), OR
- (e) be a certified teacher or administrator at a member school on medical leave governed by the "Family Medical Leave Act" and/or the "Georgia Teacher Maternity Leave of Absence" policy (see the GHSA web site for the required form).
- (f) If a currently certified faculty-coach at a member school loses his/her teaching position because of a reduction in force action, that school may petition the Executive Director in writing for that individual to continue to coach without going through the community coach training.
- (g) A teacher at a non-member school who is hired to be a coach at a member school must complete the GHSA Community Coach Education program and may not be a head coach. A consent form between the two schools must be completed annually.
- (h) If a school is in a charter or strategic waiver (IE2) system, the coach (head coach or assistant) must meet the highly qualified requirements outlined in the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's guidelines.

2.52 Member schools may employ persons who are not professionally certificated teachers as assistant coaches in their athletic programs. These individuals are referred to as "community coaches."

- (a) Community Coach is defined as a person who does not have a professional-level certification, who relates in role and function to a professional and does a portion of the professional's job or tasks under the supervision of the professional, and whose decision-making authority is limited and regulated by the professional. Community coaches are not allowed to function without the immediate supervision of an educational professional and may not assume any of the duties of a varsity Head Coach or be named by the school as a varsity Head Coach.
- (b) Licensed para-professionals and full-time substitute teachers must complete the GHSA Coaches Education Program and testing program to be eligible to coach.
- (c) All community coaches should be signed to a written "agreement to coach."
 - (1) They may coach for only one board of education annually, regardless of whether or not they are paid for their services.
 - (2) Community coaches may not coach the same sport at more than one school even if there are multiple schools in the system.
- (d) All community coaches must complete the GHSA Coaches Education Training and Testing Program in "Sport First Aid" and "Principles for Coaches."
 - (1) Prospective coaches must be subject to a criminal background check before they are registered for the GHSA coaches education program.
 - (2) Courses are offered at various times each school year throughout the state.
 - (3) Prospective coaches are registered with the GHSA office by the school hiring them.
 - (4) No community coach may do any GHSA coaching until he/she has been notified that the GHSA Coaches Education Program had been completed successfully.
- (e) It is recommended that the following priority for employment be used:
 - (1) certified employees in the local system (secondary, middle, elementary, central office, etc.);
 - (2) retired certificated personnel;
 - (3) community coaches who have completed the GHSA Coaches Education Program.
- (f) All community coaches must attend a regular GHSA rules clinic each year for any sport in which they coach beginning with their first year of service or the school will be fined.

2.53 GHSA member schools must register all coaches in all GHSA governed activities according to the following:

- (a) An initial directory listing of administrators and coaches must be completed and filed with the State Office by August 1 of each year. Only professionally certificated personnel are to be included on the initial directory listings.
- (b) Qualified Community Coaches are to be reported on the "School Staff Roster" on the GHSA web site. Only those persons who have successfully completed the GHSA Coaches Education Program are to be listed. NOTE: Schools must verify the successful completion of the coaches education program BEFORE community coaches are submitted to the GHSA and BEFORE any coaching activities are allowed (forms on the GHSA web site).
- (c) After August 1, schools will have occasion to add members to their coaching staff. It is the responsibility of the member school to register these additions in a timely manner, using the School Staff Roster on the GHSA web site.
- (d) Failure to comply with these procedures could result in punitive actions including, but not limited to, fines, forfeitures and other penalties assessed to the member school.

- 2.54 Every faculty coach, community coach, and student-teaching intern at a GHSA member school must complete a GHSA-sponsored rules clinic if he/she coaches the following sports or activities: football, softball, volleyball, riflery, *literary*, cheerleading (spirit and/or competitive), basketball, lacrosse, wrestling, swimming and diving, track, baseball, golf, soccer and gymnastics. NOTE: A fine for each coach who does not complete a clinic *before the assigned deadline* will be assessed to the school.
- 2.55 A coach on the payroll of one school district, but under contract to another school district for the following year, may help with spring practice at the new school if arrangements are satisfactory with both systems.
- 2.56 A person who is an active official or an assignor of officials at the high school level may not be a head coach or an assistant coach at a GHSA school in the same sport.

2.60 - INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTESTS AND PRACTICES

- 2.61 All practices (team and individual) and all regular-season interscholastic contests for GHSA-member schools shall be conducted outside the school day of the participants' school.
- Regional, Sectional, and/or State playoffs are exempt from this rule.
 - The "school day" is defined as: that period of time between when students are required to report to school and the time of dismissal of the host school. EXCEPTION: When the host school is not in session on a given day, competitions may be scheduled earlier than normal dismissal time for that school. However, any school that is in session on that day may not compete in that event before the normal dismissal time of the host school.
 - A player who participates in a GHSA sport may not participate in practices that occur during the school day. Practice is defined as any activity that is school-initiated, organized, coordinated or supported.

Fulton County Athletic Guideline on Sunday Practices:

Fulton County currently does not allow schools to practice on Sundays on a regular basis. If there is a special circumstance that warrants a practice on Sunday, the school Athletic Director must gain approval for the practice from the Fulton County Athletic Director.

- 2.62 The GHSA shall provide rules and regulations for competition among member schools for those competitive activities listed in the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws.
- Member schools may be allowed to schedule and play GISA and GICAA member schools provided the principal or athletic director of each agrees in writing, utilizing the standard "GHSA Cross-Play Contract," available on the GHSA web site (www.ghsa.net).*
 - GISA and GICAA schools competing with GHSA schools must comply with all GHSA safety rules and requirements, and must be in compliance with Official Code of Georgia Sections 20-2-319.2 relating to pre-participation physical exams and 20-2-324.1 relating to concussion management protocols.*
 - Participants must be in compliance with all eligibility rules of their respective associations with the exception that only those participants in grades 9-12 shall be allowed to participate.*
 - Such competition shall not be counted nor the results considered toward GHSA post-season competition nor toward GHSA power ratings.*
 - In situations not covered by section (a), member schools shall compete, practice or scrimmage only against other member schools or against schools who are affiliated with the State Association in their respective states. When competing internationally, member schools may compete only against school teams in that nation that are composed of students of similar ages. International exhibition competitions or scrimmages are not allowed. NOTE: When member schools compete out of state, the host state's adaptations of NFHS playing rules will be enforced, and all GHSA by-laws regarding sportsmanship, eligibility and game times will be enforced.
 - Member schools are permitted to compete against non-member schools in activities not listed in the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws.
 - The GHSA Executive Director has the authority to approve competition between GHSA schools and private schools from states in which membership in the State Association is not allowed. These non-member schools must meet or exceed the State Association standards in order to compete with GHSA schools.
 - A member school shall have no more than one varsity, one junior varsity, and one 9th grade team.
 - Any sub-varsity team is limited to a maximum number of games equal to 70% of the varsity Allotment in that sport. EXCEPTION: New schools that have only 9th and 10 grades with JV teams only (no varsity) are allowed to play the number of games allowed for varsity teams.
 - Competition between sub-varsity and varsity teams and/or individuals at the same event is prohibited. An exception may be made by the Executive Director for schools just opening and for schools just starting a particular sport.
 - In the sports of Cross Country, Golf, Swimming, Tennis and Wrestling, a school may use a "split squad" at two regular season events on the same day at the varsity or sub-varsity levels. Both of the contests must be counted against the total number of contests allowed in that sport. Individual players may not exceed the total number of contests allowed at the varsity level of that sport.
 - Unattached Competitor: Individual athletes may participate in non-GHSA events in the sports of Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Riflery, Swimming, Tennis, Track and Wrestling as long as they

do not represent their school, do not wear the school uniform, and are not coached at the event, or transported to the event, by their high school coach. "House teams" made up of athletes from various schools competing in a GHSA event are not considered to be unattached competitors and are illegal.

- (5) No athlete will be allowed to compete in a GHSA game or contest (even in post-season play) unless accompanied by certified professional school personnel whose names have been submitted to the GHSA as coaches. Those students chaperoned by someone other than a certified professional will not be allowed to compete.
- (6) In any GHSA sport, there may be no "open" competitions or exhibition performances that extend participation beyond the three levels of competition (i.e., varsity, JV, 9th grade) mandated in this by-law. The only interscholastic contests in which results are disregarded are scrimmages as defined below.
- (7) *Drones shall not be permitted to fly during any GHSA sanctioned contest.*

(f) One interscholastic scrimmage (two teams meeting head-to-head) is allowed in the sports of Baseball, Basketball, Football, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball.

- (1) This scrimmage may be scheduled anytime between the beginning of practice as set by the GHSA and the first regular season game for each team.
- (2) This scrimmage is for varsity teams only, and shall be played with normal timing and/or scoring Rules except as noted in individual sports sections.
- (3) Officials registered with GHSA must be assigned, and the GHSA "Fee Chart" must be followed.
- (4) *A school may not scrimmage another school that is counting the scrimmage as a regular-season contest.*

2.63 Written contracts are required for all baseball, football, basketball, wrestling and *fastpitch softball* contests, and are strongly recommended in all other interscholastic contests that are scheduled between member schools.

- (a) Contract forms can be found on the GHSA web site.
- (b) Contracts are also recommended for all sub-varsity contests.
- (c) GHSA-member schools are expected to fulfill the conditions of any game contract that has been properly executed.
 - (1) Exceptions to the contract may be made with the agreement and consent of both schools.
 - (2) Member schools that fail to fulfill the requirements of a scheduled event may be required to make restitution to the competing school if that school is unable to secure an opponent. The offended school shall petition the Executive Director for the desired restitution.
 - (3) Schools failing to fulfill a game contract may be suspended in that sport for one (1) full calendar year or the corresponding date of the next calendar year, whichever is greater.
 - (4) EXCEPTION: The GHSA Executive Director may excuse the failure to fulfill a game contract if, in his opinion, the circumstances causing the failure were outside the control of the school officials.
- (d) All athletic events hosted by GHSA-member schools (except Cross Country, Golf, Riflery, Tennis and Track) shall be officiated at all levels of competition by officials who are members of associations that are approved by the GHSA. (Exception: situation noted in By-Law 2.95).
 - (1) Officials' associations and their assigned schools shall include the method of payment in their contract.
 - (2) It is recommended that the same number of officials be used in regular-season competitions as the number used in playoff competitions in that sport.
- (e) Forfeiture and Restitution Policy
 - (1) If a team does not arrive at the game site for any contest without notifying the host opponent of a late arrival, that contest will be forfeited 30 minutes after the scheduled game-time. If the second game or contest was to be played by a different team (EXAMPLE: girl/boy or JV/varsity combination events), then a decision to forfeit that game will be made 30 minutes after the scheduled beginning of the second game.
 - (2) If there are to be multiple games by the same team and the team does not arrive at the game site without notifying the host opponent of a late arrival, all games will be forfeited 30 minutes after the scheduled game-time of the first contest. EXAMPLE: softball or baseball doubleheaders
 - (3) If a school fails to show up for a game or cancels a game within four (4) hours of the scheduled starting time without an emergency condition or weather-related conditions, that school shall pay a forfeiture fee to the host school equivalent to the cost of the officials. NOTE: If the host school is the violating team, the fee will be paid directly to the officials association. The host school shall reimburse the visiting team(s) for mileage incurred by the visiting team(s) when this by-law is violated by the host team).
 - (4) If a school fails to show up for a game or cancels within four (4) hours of the scheduled game time without emergency reasons or weather-related reasons for a second time, that school must make restitution again and must show cause to the GHSA Executive Director as to why they should not be placed on probation by the GHSA.
- (f) The minimum penalty for allowing an ineligible athlete to participate in an interscholastic contest is forfeiture of the game(s). Fines or other penalties may also be imposed. NOTE: If it is determined by the Executive Director that the school has exercised every reasonable precaution and has been deceived regarding the student's data, any or all penalties may be set aside.
- (g) A team shall forfeit any team standing or points toward team honors when an ineligible student participates

in a contest. In sports where individual titles may be won (Cross Country, Literary, Swimming and Diving, Traditional Wrestling, Gymnastics, Golf and Track), eligible individuals will keep their placements and opportunities to advance toward individual honors even if a teammate participated while ineligible.

- 2.64 Tournaments or multiple-meets, other than the Region or State elimination series must be approved (sanctioned) by the GHSA Executive Director, subject to the special conditions for athletics and/or other activities.
- (a) A GHSA-member school shall not enter a tournament which requires sanctioning until that tournament has been approved by the GHSA Executive Director.
 - (1) The GHSA Executive Director may assess a fine and/or other penalties against a member school that violates the sanctioning rules.
 - (2) Member state championship teams receiving an invitation to nationally-recognized tournaments Held after the designated sports season has ended must apply to the Executive Director for approval. Such application must be signed by the principal of the school, must be submitted at least 14 calendar days prior to the beginning of the tournament and must include the following: contact information for the tournament organizer; proposed plans for the school to include manner and date of travel; number of hours of instruction to be missed and fees to participate. A decision not to approve may be appealed to the GHSA Board of Trustees, who shall review the information submitted to the Executive Director. No additional information or documentation shall be considered. The vote of The majority of the Trustees shall control.
 - (3) Tournament participation limits are set for each sport, and they are listed in the specific sport sections in this document.
 - (b) All applications for sanctioning must be submitted to the GHSA thirty calendar (30) days prior to the tournament by a GHSA-member school.

NOTE: Tournaments that require National Federation sanctioning are an exception to this rule.
 - (c) The host school for all sanctioned tournaments shall pay five percent (5%) of all gross gate receipts to the GHSA within fourteen (14) calendar days after the tournament.
 - (1) Total gate receipts before expenses are paid equals the gross receipts.
 - (2) A financial report of the event shall accompany the payment.
 - (d) GHSA approval for tournaments in contiguous states is needed when there are four or more schools participating.
 - (e) Approval for tournaments in Georgia is needed when:
 - (1) it is a tournament involving four or more schools OR
 - (2) it is a tournament in which awards are given.
 - (f) Tournaments that require approval from the National Federation are:
 - (1) any interstate tournament in which more than eight schools participate, and at least one participant is from a non-contiguous state OR
 - (2) any interstate tournament that involves schools from five (5) or more state High School Associations, and at least one of them does not border on the State of the sponsoring school OR
 - (3) any international tournament (except competition with Canadian and Mexican high schools) OR
 - (4) any interstate tournament involving two (2) or more schools which is co-sponsored by or titled in The name of an organization outside the high school community (e.g., a university, a theme park, an athletic company).
 - (g) The GHSA Executive Director has the authority to approve competition between GHSA schools and private schools from states in which membership in the State Association is not allowed. These non-member schools must meet or exceed the State Association standards in order to compete with GHSA schools.
 - (h) In all sports except Football, a team (subvarsity or varsity) may play multiple games on a single calendar day in a tournament setting. NOTE: In these instances, the special "quarter/half participation rules" in basketball and soccer are waived.
 - (i) For any one-day event in which more than two schools compete (i.e., a basketball showcase or some similar event), the following stipulations are in effect:
 - (1) A "host school" must be designated for each game even if the games are played at neutral sites.
 - (2) The host school must provide a Game Manager for that game.
 - (3) The host school must schedule game officials through the local association assigned to it.
 - (4) These special events will require sanctioning approval from the GHSA office.
- 2.65 Available Seating: Member schools shall provide a seat for each ticket sold to any contest regulated by the GHSA.
- (a) An available seat is defined as twenty-four (24) inches in width.
 - (b) Each school is required to make a determination of the available seats prior to the beginning of the contest.
 - (c) At outdoor events, "standing room" tickets may be sold as long as they are identified as such at the time of the purchase, and as long as there are no problems with safety and security with such an arrangement.
- 2.66 Weekday Contests: Only one day and/or night preceding a school day per week may be used for a contest or activity with a starting time of 6:00 p.m., or later.

- (a) Regional, Sectional, and/or State playoffs are exempt from this rule.
- (b) The GHSA Executive Director has the authority to set aside this rule upon request when there are extenuating circumstances.
- (c) Teams playing any regular season contest when there are classes the next day shall be limited to a travel distance of no more than 100 miles one way as determined using the maps program at www.Yahoo.com.
- (d) No contest shall be played beyond 11:30 p.m., unless exempted under By-Law 2.93 (c2b) or by procedures found in sections of the by-laws dealing with specific sports. A petition may be filed with the Executive Director to waive the 11:30 p.m., curfew for teams of different classifications or competitions with out-of-state teams when there are special circumstances.

2.67 Practice Policy for Heat and Humidity:

- (a) Schools must follow the statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts (this policy is year-round, including during the summer) in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians. The policy shall follow modified guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:
 - (1) The scheduling of practices at various heat/humidity levels.
 - (2) The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various heat/humidity levels.
 - (3) The heat/humidity levels that will result in practice being terminated.
- (b) A scientifically-approved instrument that measures the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature must be utilized at each practice to ensure that the written policy is being followed properly. WBGT readings should be taken every hour, beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice.

WBGT ACTIVITY GUIDELINES AND REST BREAK GUIDELINES

- **Under 82.0 Normal Activities - Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 minutes each during the workout.**
 - **82.0 - 86.9 Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully. Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.**
 - **87.0 - 89.9 Maximum practice time is 2 hours. For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice, and all protective equipment must be removed during conditioning activities. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts. For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.**
 - **90.0 - 92.0 Maximum practice time is 1 hour. For Football: no protective equipment may be worn During practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. For All Sports: There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.**
 - **Over 92.1 No outdoor workouts. Delay practice until a cooler WBGT level is reached.**
- (c) Practices are defined as: the period of time that a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school-approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the practice or workout area until players leave that area. If a practice is interrupted for a weather-related reason, the "clock" on that practice will stop and will begin again when the practice resumes.
 - (d) Conditioning activities include such things as weight training, wind-sprints, timed runs for distance, etc., and may be a part of the practice time or included in "voluntary workouts."
 - (e) A walk-through is not a part of the practice time regulation, and may last no longer than one hour. This activity may not include conditioning activities or contact drills. No protective equipment may be worn during a walk-through, and no full-speed drills may be held.
 - (f) Rest breaks may not be combined with any other type of activity and players must be given unlimited access to hydration. These breaks must be held in a "cool zone" where players are out of direct sunlight.

2.68 GHSA Concussion Policy: In accordance with Georgia law and national playing rules published by the NFHS, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include: licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management).

- (a) No athlete is allowed to return to a game or practice on the same day that a concussion (1) has been diagnosed OR (2) cannot be ruled out.
- (b) Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol shall be a part of the medical clearance.
- (c) It is mandatory that every coach in each GHSA sport (including Community Coaches, Student Teachers, and Interns) participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at www.nfhslearn.com at least every two years - beginning with the 2013-14 school year.
- (d) Each school will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course, and shall keep a record of those who participate.

- (e) Each school must distribute to every athlete and his/her parent/guardian an information sheet that includes: the dangers of concussion injuries, the signs/symptoms of concussion, and the concussion management protocol outlined in this by-law. This sheet must be signed by the parent/guardian of each athlete and a copy kept on file at the school.

2.69 Legal practice dates are established for each activity (see the calendar at the beginning of this publication), and schools shall not conduct or allow an illegal practice.

- (a) The beginning of each GHSA school year is designated as August 1st.
- (b) Illegal practices are defined as practices involving three or more students participating in any extracurricular activity in the presence of, or under the direct or indirect supervision of any coach of the school (including a community coach). At any given point in time, only one (1) coach in a sport may work with up to two (2) athletes in skill-building drills.
 - (1) Any practice occurring after the beginning of the school year and before the opening of the designated season is an illegal practice.
 - (2) Any practice occurring after the end of the season for that team and the end of the school year for students in that school is an illegal practice.
 - (3) During the summer (i.e., between the ending of one school year and the beginning of the next) the only restrictions on practices and competition are that all activities must be strictly voluntary, and the "Dead Week" must be observed, as follows: Schools are prohibited from participating in voluntary workouts, camps and/or clinics, weight training or competitions during the week (Sunday through Saturday) in which the Fourth of July falls each year.
 - (4) It is illegal for a team to go to a competitive or instructional camp or clinic during the school year other than in-season events designed for that team alone.
 - (a) If the event is held out of season, it would constitute an illegal practice.
 - (b) If the event is held in-season, it would involve illegal coaching.
 - (c) Boys and girls teams in the same sport are considered the same activity.
 - (d) This prohibition does not apply to the summer months.
 - (5) Neither coaches, former coaches (including community coaches), nor any other school personnel shall suggest, require, or otherwise attempt to influence students to participate in or practice for a sport outside the GHSA-designated season.
 - (6) The following activities are examples of illegal practices:
 - (a) interscholastic scrimmages or practice competitions not in compliance with By-Law 2.62e;
 - (b) practices involving alumni or students who presently are not eligible at the member school At any time in the school year;
 - (c) practices against a non-school team at any time in the school year;
 - (d) practices of any kind outside the season designated by the GHSA.NOTE: Free Style and Greco-Roman Wrestling are considered to be the same sport as Folk Style (high school) Wrestling and are subject to GHSA rules regulating illegal practices.
 - (7) Coaches are allowed to be spectators or "fellow competitors" at non-school events out of season as long as no coaching occurs.
 - (8) Schools found guilty of having illegal practices will be subject to penalties that may include a fine, warning, probation, and/or suspension by the GHSA Executive Director.
 - (b) A GHSA coach (certified teacher or community coach) may not coach a non-GHSA team in a Competitive setting during the school year that includes any player(s) who participate in the sport he/she coaches at the member school. EXCEPTION: In a situation in which the child or step-child of the coach is the only player on a non-school team from the coach's school, the coach would be exempted from this rule.

2.70 - SPORTSMANSHIP

2.71 GHSA-member schools are required to conduct all relationships with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship.

- (a) It shall be the responsibility of a member school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon faculty, students, team members, coaches, and spectators the values of sportsmanship in preparation for the management of interscholastic contests. Contest officials have the authority to have any and all individuals removed from the confines of the contest whose behavior has become a distraction and/or hindrance to the administration of the event. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal and visual gestures.
- (b) The Executive Director shall have the authority to assess penalties against schools and/or coaches for conduct unbecoming a professional educator or coach committed by coaches or other school personnel at GHSA events. Penalties against schools may include fines, probation or suspensions; and penalties against coaches and other school personnel may include suspension from GHSA events.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of the home or host school to take the following precautions at all interscholastic athletic events:
 - (1) Take proper steps and precautions to insure crowd and spectator control, including having an administrator (or designee) from the host school to function as "game manager" at all GHSA sanctioned events. EXCEPTIONS: Golf and Tennis.
 - (2) Take steps to insure the comfort and security of all players, coaches, and officials.
 - (3) Have in place sufficient security personnel to handle any crowd-control problems that might

reasonably be expected.

- (4) Security escorts must be provided to game officials by the host school at all GHSA sanctioned contests, before, during and following the contest - including to their vehicles.
- (5) Provide a safe and secure changing area for contest officials, free from traffic by school staff, Students and spectators.
- (d) Each school must develop a plan to handle fight situations that may occur during an athletic contest.
 - (1) Attention must be given to keeping substitutes in the bench areas throughout the fight, and to keeping spectators away from the competitive area.
 - (2) Schools whose substitutes leave the bench area to go to the area of a fight will be fined by the GHSA Executive Director.
 - (3) All players who are involved in a fight and any substitutes who leave the bench area during a fight or potential fight and are ejected from the current contest, will be subject to the sit-out rule.
- (e) Players and coaches are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship before and after a contest, even if the game officials do not have jurisdiction. Behaviors such as taunting, fighting, etc., are forbidden.
- (f) No coach may remove his/her team from competition before the end of the contest unless it is done in accordance with the playing rules of that sport.

2.72 Any player, coach, or team attendant who is ejected from a GHSA contest shall be suspended from all levels of competition (i.e., varsity or sub-varsity) in that sport or activity (regular season or playoffs) until the period of suspension has expired. NOTE: Ejection penalties must be served at the next contest regardless of whether or not the school has received notice from the GHSA office by that time.

- (a) Ejections are based on judgment calls by an official and are not reviewable or reversible.
- (b) A coach shall have no role nor be in attendance at pre-contest warm-ups or activities, and shall not be in attendance at contests until the period of suspension has expired.
- (c) A player or team attendant may not be on the competitive area nor in the team bench area during any contest until the period of suspension has expired.
- (d) The period of suspension resulting from an ejection will expire as follows:
 - (1) Football: after the individual has been withheld from the next-scheduled game at the level at which the ejection occurred (and all contests at any other level).
 - (2) Soccer:
 - (a) One-Game Sit-out:
 1. Two yellow cards in the same game
 2. Deliberate handball to prevent a goal
 3. Red card for a foul on a player moving toward his goal in a scoring situation
 - (b) Two-Game Sit-out with Red Card for any of the following: taunting, violent conduct, serious Foul play, spitting on another person, foul or abusive language, leaving the bench area for a Fight situation.
 - (3) Lacrosse players who are ejected or foul out will sit out as follows:
 - (a) BOYS: Any player who fouls out for the accumulation of personal foul penalty time will sit Out the next scheduled game. Any player or coach ejected for unsporting behavior or violent conduct will sit out the next two games.
 - (b) GIRLS: Any player who fouls out for accumulation of two (2) yellow cards in one game will Sit out the next scheduled game. Any player or coach given a red card for unsporting behavior or violent conduct will sit out two (2) games.
 - (4) Track and Field: after the individual has been withheld from the next scheduled contest. NOTE: All allegations of unsporting behavior must be referred to the "Jury of Appeals" for a final resolution on disqualification. A report must be submitted to the GHSA office in the event of a disqualification.
 - (5) All Other Activities: after the individual has been withheld from the next two (2) scheduled contests at the level at which the ejection occurred.
- (e) To satisfy the penalty of the sit-out game(s), those games must have been scheduled at the time of the ejection, and must be played to completion.
- (f) Penalties for ejections of a coach or player for unsporting acts shall be:
 - (1) First Ejection: Coach - \$250.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws. Player: Completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.
 - (2) Second Ejection: Coach - \$500.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; and suspension until completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online. Player: \$200 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws. NOTE: When a player, coach or team attendant has a second ejection in the same activity during a school year, that individual shall be withheld from competition for twice the time period of a normal suspension.
 - (3) Third Ejection: Coach - Season suspension plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; can not coach in any activity at any GHSA member school until successful completion of "GHSA Principles for Coaching." Player: Season suspension plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.
 - (4) The Executive Director shall have the authority to levy additional penalties for repeat offenders.
 - (5) Penalties imposed by the GHSA Executive Director may be appealed as described under Section 9 of Article IV, in the GHSA Constitution.
- (g) If the ejection occurs in the last game of the season, the penalty carries over to the first game of the next season. If the student is a senior, the penalty carries over to the next sport in which the student participates.
- (h) When a player or coach is ejected from a pre-season scrimmage (i.e., a practice game) in any sport, the

school shall be fined a minimum of \$250 and there will be no sit-out penalties imposed.

(i) Game Incident Reports are due within 24 hours of the contest, and are to be submitted via the GHSA electronic reporting program.

- 2.73 Any student who intentionally injures or intentionally attempts to injure another student, coach, official, spectator, or other person immediately before, during, or immediately after any GHSA-sponsored activity, may be declared ineligible to participate in future GHSA activities by the GHSA Executive Director. NOTE: The notice, hearing, and appellate procedures set forth in the GHSA Constitution shall be applicable to such rulings.
- 2.74 Coaches, administrators, contest officials or players are not to make comments to the media that are critical of officials and/or their calls in a game. Penalties that could be imposed by the GHSA Executive Director include fines and/or suspensions.
- 2.75 The use of fireworks at any GHSA-approved event shall be in strict compliance with the licensing and application procedures of Georgia law and under permit of the probate court in which the event is held.
- 2.76 Artificial noisemakers are allowed at outdoor events with the exception of air horns, whistles, or other similar devices that simulate the sounds of clock horns or officials' whistles. At any time that a national playing rule prohibits artificial noisemakers in a sport, that rule will supersede this by-law.
- 2.77 The officials' dressing area is "off limits" to school staff, students and spectators one hour prior to game time, during the duration of the contest, and until the contest officials depart the facility.
- 2.78 *Unsporting acts committed by players or coaches will be handled as follows:*
- a) If the inappropriate behavior occurs after the expiration of a contest, but while the officials still have jurisdiction as referenced in the NFHS rule book, the official may eject the player or coach and published penalties for ejections will apply.*
 - b) If the inappropriate behavior occurs after the officials' jurisdiction has ended, but the official(s) witness the behavior, a Game Report shall be filed with the GHSA office and administrative penalties will be assessed against the school of the guilty parties by the Executive Director.*
 - c) In the case of repeat offenders of unsporting acts, the Executive Director will be authorized to levy penalties against the school of the guilty parties regardless of whether or not an ejection has occurred.*

2.80 - MEDIA AND FILMING REGULATIONS

- 2.81 The host or home school has the right to determine whether or not its regular-season activities may be broadcast, televised, webcast, taped, filmed or photographed for any "commercial" or scouting purposes.
- (a) Either school involved in the event shall have the right to video tape the event and to copy said tape, but no third party shall have that right, not even the videographer.
 - (b) A visiting school desiring to bring broadcasting personnel must obtain permission to do so from the host school prior to the date of the activity or contest.
 - (c) The host school must execute a written contract with the broadcast entity that complies with the GHSA rules and regulations for broadcasting.
- 2.82 The region has the right to determine whether or not region tournament (post regular-season) events may be broadcast, televised, webcast, tape recorded, filmed or photographed for any "commercial" purposes.
- (a) The region should set and assess any fees charged for broadcasting or telecasting region tournament contests or events.
 - (b) The region must execute a written contract with the broadcast entity that complies with the GHSA rules and regulations for broadcasting.
- 2.83 The GHSA rules and regulations for Regular Season and Region Tournament broadcasting are as follows:
- (a) The host school shall have the right to approve the amount of space used and the placement of broadcast equipment.
 - (b) The host school (for regular-season events), or the region (for region tournaments) shall be entitled to all revenue from the sale of broadcasting rights unless the contract specifies otherwise.
 - (c) Advertising utilized during the broadcast shall not include alcohol or tobacco products.
 - (d) Commercial announcements shall not occur during playing time.
 - (e) Announcers shall not criticize coaches, officials, or schools, and shall be fair and impartial in their descriptions.
 - (f) The copyright privileges for Regular-Season events belong to and shall remain the property of the host school.
 - (g) The copyright privileges for Region Tournament events belong to and shall remain the property of the region.
- 2.84 GHSA Media rules and regulations for State Playoff events:
- (a) Broadcast rights and copyright privileges to all state playoff events (i.e., after region winners have been determined) belong to the Georgia High School Association, and the GHSA has the right to determine

if any of these events may be broadcast, televised, webcast, tape recorded, filmed or photographed for any "commercial" purposes. NOTE: Participating schools may NOT sell tapes of state playoff events or provide copies of tapes to third parties for resale without written consent from the GHSA office.

- (b) The GHSA shall grant media access at all state playoff events to properly identified representatives of newspapers, radio stations (with broadcast contract) and television outlets ONLY. Proper identification is interpreted to mean an identification card given by the media outlet, or written documentation on the letterhead of the media outlet specifying that the bearer is working for that outlet at the GHSA event.
- (c) Any media entity wishing to broadcast or telecast (including Internet reproduction) any state playoff event must execute a written contract with the GHSA for that event. Contact the GHSA office for a contract, which shall contain specific rules and requirements.
- (d) Broadcast fees are listed in a chart that follows. The fees are "per event" except for football, basketball and soccer, which are per game. NOTE: a baseball playoff series is one event; a softball tournament is one event.
- (e) Television and Video Webcast rights and fees must be negotiated with the GHSA office on a case-by-case basis, except for those stations or schools having long-term contracts with the GHSA.
- (f) Video production for authorized school "coach's shows" are exempt from these rules and fees. However, schools may only tape, photograph or film events in which their team is participating.

2.85 Radio, Audio Internet Broadcast Fees for State Playoff events: Fees are based on the size of the market. Levels are determined as follows - Level 3 = 50,000 population and higher; Level 2 = 25,000 to 49,999; Level 1 = Under 25,000 population. Fees for each level are listed below. NOTE: These fees are for radio and audio only Internet webcasts. Video webcast fees must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the GHSA office.

Market Size Football Basketball Baseball/Softball Other Events

Level 3	\$225/game	\$125/game	\$150/event	\$50/event
Level 2	\$175/game	\$100/game	\$100/event	\$50/event
Level 1	\$125/game	\$75/game	\$75/event	\$50/event

2.86 Television stations or other broadcast entities shall have the right to film portions of GHSA state playoff events in order to air selected highlights in any bona fide newscast. "Bona fide newscast" is defined as a half-hour or hour program that is regularly scheduled and includes news, weather and sports. Entertainment and commercial uses of highlights are not considered bona fide newscasts and are prohibited. Highlights may not exceed one minute per contest, or two minutes total running time in any single newscast without the consent of the GHSA. Highlights may be used, subject to the above guidelines, up to 72 hours after the event. NOTE: Members of the working press shall be allowed to use digital video cameras at GHSA state playoff events as long as such cameras are being used to obtain still images or video highlights as defined in this By-Law. Site administration shall have the authority to prevent use of such video equipment if it is determined that a video tape of a substantial portion of the event is being made.

2.87 FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY: Flash photography is prohibited at all indoor GHSA state playoff events unless permission is obtained from the GHSA office on a case-by-case basis. Flash photography at outdoor GHSA state playoff events is at the discretion of the onsite game officials.

2.88 Parents and/or fans connected with a member school will be allowed to use video or still cameras to tape or photograph GHSA state playoff events in which that member school is participating under the following conditions (EXCEPTION: One Act Play and Cheerleading restrictions will remain in place):

- (a) The cameras must be hand-held and their use cannot interfere with another fan's view of the event. Site administrators shall have the authority to halt photography if, in their opinion, this rule is being violated.
- (b) The tapes/photos must be for personal use only and cannot be used for scouting purposes, given to other schools for scouting purposes, used for any commercial purpose, or sold for profit. Violation of this rule by a member school will result in penalties from the Executive Director including a fine.
- (c) Anyone else filming or photographing GHSA state playoff events for commercial purposes must have approval of the Executive Director.

2.90 - REGULATIONS OF COMPETITIONS

2.91 Sunday Competition: Sunday competition is prohibited for GHSA regular season or playoff contests. Sunday practices are regulated by local school policy.

2.92 Contest Rules: All athletic and literary competitions are to be played according to the rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, using officially-dressed officials who are registered with the GHSA.

- (a) EXCEPTION: Tennis is played according to the rules of USTA, unless specified by GHSA rules.
- (b) EXCEPTION: Golf is played according to the rules of the USGA, unless specified by GHSA rules.
- (c) EXCEPTION: Riflery is conducted according to the "National Standard Three-Position Air Rifle Rules."
- (d) EXCEPTION: Girls Lacrosse is conducted according to the rules of US Lacrosse.
- (e) The National Federation prohibits the use of video tape to review an official's decision.
- (f) No protests are allowed in any GHSA sport or activity unless specified by NFHS rules.

- 2.93 Interrupted Games: Any GHSA competition may be interrupted due to human, mechanical, or natural causes when it is necessary to protect the safety of players and spectators. The Executive Director shall have the authority to postpone GHSA events and to direct the procedure for rescheduling when deemed necessary.
- (a) The GHSA requires lightning detectors at all outdoor athletic activities.
 - (1) When a lightning detector indicates a dangerous situation, the game manager will notify the head official. At that point, the official will suspend play and all participants and fans will go to a place of safety (NOTE: If officials spot lightning before being notified, they may suspend play).
 - (2) When the detector indicates that it is safe to resume play, the contest may resume in accordance with procedures published in the NFHS Rules Book.
 - (b) Postponed games are games that are terminated before they actually begin because of weather problems, emergency situations, or mechanical failures.
 - (1) The host school should notify the opposing team and officials as early as possible when a contest is postponed.
 - (2) The host school is responsible for determining whether an event is to be postponed until the time that game rules turn that responsibility over to game officials except when there is a written contract for that game. When there is a contract, there must be an agreement between the competing schools about the postponement.
 - (3) School personnel will agree on the rescheduling of the contest.
 - (c) Suspended and/or Terminated Games - When game officials suspend a game due to weather issues, the following procedures are in place:
 - (1) For all Baseball, Softball, Football, *Lacrosse* and Soccer contests involving teams of different classifications, there will be up to a two-hour delay (cumulative) before the contest will be terminated. (See the Baseball and Softball Sections to see the procedures involved with terminated games.)
 - (a) If the Football, *Lacrosse* or Soccer contest is terminated before it has reached the halfway point, the contest is declared a "no contest."
 - (b) If the Football, *Lacrosse* or Soccer contest is terminated after it has reached the halfway point, the score at the point of termination is final.
 - (2) For Football, *Lacrosse* and Soccer contests involving teams of the same classification, all contests will be played to completion.
 - (a) There will be no mandatory two-hour delay.
 - (b) The 11:30 curfew will be waived.
 - (c) Administrators from the competing schools may agree to postpone the contest and resume competition at the point of interruption at a later time.
 - (d) The team that is behind may choose not to resume the contest at a later date.
 - (3) Golf and Tennis procedures will be dictated by USGA and USTA rules.
 - (4) Cross Country and Track and Field will not use the two-hour delay rule.
 - (d) Paying Officials in shortened/postponed games:
 - (1) In the event a scheduled contest cannot be started due to weather-related conditions, officials who have arrived at the contest site will be paid one-half the contest fee in addition to the travel allowance.
 - (2) If a game is interrupted by weather or darkness before it becomes a completed game, the officials will be paid one-half the regular game fee.
 - (3) If a game is an official game at the point of interruption, the officials will be paid full fees.
 - (4) Beyond these conditions, no officials group(s) may hold the schools responsible for weather-related postponements.

2.94 All championship contests that end in a tie will have that tie resolved by means of the procedures that are used to resolve ties in preceding rounds of the playoffs.

2.95 Absence of Officials: In the unlikely event that game officials do not arrive for a contest, both schools should agree on one of the following procedures:

- (a) Delay the game until a new set of officials can arrive;
- (b) Agree to play the game on another date except a Sunday;
- (c) Use registered officials who might be in attendance at the contest;
- (d) Use coaches or school personnel from both schools;
- (e) Use formerly registered officials who might be in attendance at the contest.

2.96 All Star Teams:

- (a) In accordance with state law, member schools shall not permit their teams or players to participate in "Bowl" or "All Star" games during the GHSA regular season or during GHSA playoffs. Players selected to participate in out-of-season all-star games must adhere to GHSA amateur standing rules, and to NCAA regulations regarding all-star games.
- (b) The GHSA is not involved in either sanctioning All Star games or overseeing the selection process.

2.97 Admission Fees for State Playoff Contests are set by the GHSA and are published in the various sports sections of the by-laws.

- (a) "Babies in arms" are admitted free of charge to all events in the company of a ticket or pass holder.
- (b) Membership identification cards from the Georgia Athletic Officials Association will be honored like a

- GHSA pass at all GHSA events. A picture ID is also necessary to use this card.
- (c) There is no admission fee for Golf, Tennis, Riflery, Literary or One Act Play.
 - (d) College and University coaches may attend GHSA playoff contests free of charge with proper ID.

2.98 Auxiliary personnel such as ballboys/girls or batboy/girls at all State playoff games must be at least 12 years of age.

2.99 *All participant uniforms rules and restrictions shall be interpreted in accordance to Georgia law. The GHSA shall not enact or enforce any participant uniforms rule which prohibits religious expression of student athletes other than the rules of particular athletic events as adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations.*

INTERPRETATIONS, 2.00 SECTION

BY-LAW 2.40 - STUDENT RETENTION FOR ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

SITUATION: A student is retained in the 8th grade until January because; (a) he did not pass the promotion test until the fall semester, or (b) his parents did not feel he was ready for high school in August. How will affect the student's GHSA eligibility?

RULING: Students who are not admitted to the ninth grade in the fall because they did not pass a promotion test may have eligibility granted in January if the high school files a copy of the school system's promotion policy and a copy of the student's test scores. If the retention was for any other reason, the filing process is outlined in by-law 2.41. Regardless of the reason for the retention, the student's 8-semester calendar to participate in GHSA activities begins with the January entrance if the retention is approved by the GHSA.

BY-LAW 2.50 - QUALIFICATIONS TO COACH

SITUATION: Are GHSA Community Coaches subject to the same regulations in regard to out-of-season coaching as coaches who are certified teachers?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, all coaching regulations apply to both Community Coaches and coaches who are certified teachers.

SITUATION: Can an instructor at a cheerleading gym also be a Community Coach at the high school where the gym attendees are on the cheerleading team?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. However, as a Community Coach, the gym instructor must follow the same guidelines as a certified school coach in regard to out-of-season coaching.

SITUATION: Can a gym instructor, who is also a Community Coach, coach an all-star team during the school year that includes one or more of his high school team members?

INTERPRETATION: No. A GHSA coach, either a certified teacher or a Community Coach, may not coach a non-GHSA team in a competitive setting during the school year that includes any player(s) who participates in the sport he coaches at the member school.

SITUATION: Can the high school cheerleading team practice at the cheerleading gym where the Community Coach is an instructor during the cheerleading season?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The GHSA does not specify where practices may be held. However, only the GHSA Community Coach and the certified school coach may work with the team at the gym. It would be illegal coaching for any other instructor at the gym to work with the team.

SITUATION: A certified teacher is hired part-time in the local school. May he be hired to coach cheerleaders?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, if the certified person is employed for twenty (20) hours or more per week on a regular basis in a professionally contracted position, and holds a valid teaching certificate.

SITUATION: A certified teacher is employed by a public school system and desires to coach at a private school. Is this permissible?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, as long as the chief administrator from each school involved signs the appropriate form agreeing to such an arrangement.

SITUATION: A school system wants to use a community coach to coach Lacrosse at several schools in that system. Is this permissible?

INTERPRETATION: No. Community coaches may not coach the same sport at more than one school.

SITUATION: A licensed para-professional is hired to work full-time. May she be hired to: (a) be the head coach of the varsity cheerleading team, or (b) assist the varsity cheerleading coach?

INTERPRETATION: If the para-professional successfully completes the GHSA training program for a community coach, that individual may be an assistant coach, but never a head coach.

SITUATION: A coach for a member school takes a year off for maternity leave. May that coach continue to coach even though there are no teaching responsibilities?

INTERPRETATION: Yes.

SITUATION: A basketball official who also assigns basketball officials is hired by a school as a community coach in its basketball program. Is this permissible?

INTERPRETATION: No. A person who is an active official and/or assignor of officials at the high school level may not be a head coach or an assistant coach at a GHSA school in the same sport.

RETIRED TEACHER

SITUATION: A teacher-coach, who has been teaching thirty (30) years, retires and is re-hired by the local school board to supervise the athletic program half-time and coach. Is this acceptable?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The retired teacher/coach may be hired up to 49% of full-time and be eligible to coach. It is not necessary for the retiree to have duties other than coaching.

QUESTION: What is the definition of "retired?"

ANSWER: An individual who draws retirement funds each month from a teacher retirement fund administered by the state, local board of education, or an independent school is a retired person.

BY-LAW 2.60 - INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTESTS AND PRACTICES

SITUATION: When do out-of-season practice restrictions begin?

INTERPRETATION: The beginning of the GHSA school year is August 1st. On that date, all restrictions about camps, clinics, and participation of coaches go into effect.

SITUATION: A student participates in a Fall baseball league offered in the community (while school is in session), and the high school coaches assists with the practices of this team.

INTERPRETATION: This is a violation of GHSA rules for coaching out-of-season.

SITUATION: May a school open its gym during the school year for students to participate in basketball, volleyball, or wrestling outside the sport seasons for these activities, and may students on those school teams participate?

INTERPRETATION: The gym may be open for all students in the school, and students involved in the sports mentioned may participate, but no coach in that sport may be present during these times.

SITUATION: May a faculty member officiate basketball pick up games before or after school outside of the published basketball season?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, as long as the faculty member is not a basketball coach at that school.

SITUATION: May a coach in any extracurricular activity conduct voluntary, individual instruction with a student outside a team or competitive setting and outside the designated season for that activity?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, even if the instruction is in the activity that the coach coaches during the designated activity season as long as the instruction is voluntary and is outside a team or competitive setting. At any given point in time, only one coach in a particular sport may be working with one or two athletes in skill-building drills.

SITUATION: A cheerleading coach desires to bring in a representative of a national cheer organization to hold a clinic for the cheerleaders: (a) during the season, or (b) just after Spring try-outs. Is this legal?

INTERPRETATION: This is a violation in either case. In (a), the violation is for illegal coaching; in (b), the violation is for out-of-season practice. Such a clinic is legal during the Summer.

SITUATION: May a faculty member organize, but not require, a voluntary out-of-season weight-lifting program?

INTERPRETATION: Yes, but students must not be required to attend as a requirement for making the team. Coaches shall use caution not to suggest that participation in such a program is mandatory, or that their failure to participate could adversely affect their opportunity to make the school team. Such weight-lifting program must be open to all students in the school, and physical examinations for each participant must be on file at the school. The program shall not be sport-specific.

SITUATION: A softball coach is asked to coach a traveling team that plays its schedule in the Spring and Summer months. There is one player from the coach's school team on the traveling team. May the coach accept the duty without violating GHSA rules?

INTERPRETATION: If the coach coached the traveling team before school was out for the students, there would be a violation. There is no violation during the Summer.

SITUATION: A GHSA wrestling coach wants to take a group of his wrestlers to a "Free Style" tournament during the month of April, is this legal?

RULING: No. Wrestling is wrestling regardless of whether it is "folk style," "free style," or Greco-Roman style. GHSA out-of-season practice rules are in effect for all types of wrestling.

SITUATION: A certified teacher who coaches at a member school gives instruction and/or coaches in a non-school Summer program that continues into Fall semester. What are the restrictions on the coach?

INTERPRETATION: The Summer activity is unrestricted as long as the students' participation is voluntary. After the

GHSA school year begins in the Fall, the following conditions must be met:

- (a) If the students are in the school where the teacher coaches, no more than two can meet with the coach in skill-building drills at any point in time out of season.
- (b) If the student is from a school other than the one at which the teacher coaches, the student must voluntarily attend any instruction session or competition with the Summer activity without any direct or indirect influence from the school the student attends.
- (c) If any student transfers to the school where the teacher coaches, it would be prima facie evidence of undue influence and penalties could result. NOTE: This interpretation also applies to Community Coaches.

SITUATION: May a basketball team have a scrimmage game against a team of the alumni or of the faculty of that school for fund-raising purposes?

INTERPRETATION: No, all participants in a practice must be eligible students currently enrolled in the school. This would be a violation in-season or out-of-season.

SITUATION: May a school soccer team scrimmage a local recreation soccer team?

INTERPRETATION: No, all participants in a practice must be eligible students currently enrolled in the school. Interscholastic scrimmages are allowed in certain sports as long as both teams are properly sanctioned high school teams.

SITUATION: At an invitational golf tournament, the host school ends its school day at 3:15 p.m. Other schools participating end their school days at times ranging from 2:30 to 3:45. What is the earliest this tournament may begin?

INTERPRETATION: 3:15 – The GHSA rule is that regular season competitions may not begin before school is out for the host school.

SITUATION: A school has a teacher's workday on a Friday, and the students are not in school. May the school host a golf tournament that begins at 10:00 a.m., that day?

RULING: Yes. The golf tournament may be scheduled at that time, and any schools that are also not in session that day may participate. If a team's school is in session, they may not participate until the normal dismissal time of the host school.

SITUATION: A student takes three courses that earn three (3) units and is finished with those classes by 12:30 p.m., each day. His school declares its school day to run from 7:45 a.m., to 3:15 p.m. May the student go to personal golf lessons and/or practices at 1:00 p.m., during the school's golf season?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. As long as the practice session or lesson is NOT school-initiated, organized, coordinated or supported in any way, then the student is free to participate in an individual practice or lesson-taking session under By-Law 2.61 (c).

BY-LAW 2.70 - SPORTSMANSHIP

SITUATION: A baseball coach is ejected on Friday, and sits out the next scheduled game on Monday. The Monday game is called because of rain in the third inning. Does this game satisfy the "sit-out rule?"

INTERPRETATION: No, since the game was called before it was considered a completed game, the coach may not count it as a sit-out game.

SITUATION: A school has several players and most of its substitutes on its baseball team ejected for a fighting incident. At the time of the next scheduled game, the school does not have enough players to field a team, and they forfeit to their opponent. Does this satisfy one game of the sit-out rule?

INTERPRETATION: Yes. The acceptance of a loss in a forfeiture is equated to playing a game to its completion.

SITUATION: A football coach, who works with both the junior varsity and the varsity squads, is ejected from a JV game on Thursday afternoon. What are the conditions for his "sit-out" game?

INTERPRETATION: The coach must sit out the next game at the level at which he was ejected and any games in between. In this case, the coach could not coach at the varsity game on Friday nor at the next scheduled JV game.

BY-LAW 3.00 - REGION

3.10 - REGION AUTHORITY

Each region, either through its governing board or in general session, shall have the authority to:

3.11 Make rules, which do not violate GHSA regulations, in order to successfully operate the region organization.

3.12 Assess mandatory membership dues in order to operate the region organization.

3.13 Set deadline entry dates for all region contests.

- 3.14 Oversee the operation of region contests (post regular-season) by setting:
- (a) Sites for the contests.
 - (b) Admission fees for those contests.
 - (c) Procedures for trophies and medals.
 - (d) Contest structure for determining a region winner, including a written tie-breaker procedure.
 - (e) An appeals committee to handle appeals in region playoff competitions.
- NOTE: Decisions of the Region Appeals Committee may be appealed to the Executive Director when it is believed that region by-laws have been violated.
- 3.15 Set and assess fees for region contest entrants to pay expenses for the contest, and to pay the expenses of region representatives to the State contest.
- 3.16 The region, not the host school, has the copyright privileges to all region tournament (post regular-season) events, and the region should set and assess any fees charged for broadcasting or telecasting region tournament contests or events.
- 3.17 Pay its Secretary-Treasurer a stipend.

3.20 - REGION RESPONSIBILITIES TO STATE ASSOCIATION

Each region, through its Secretary, shall:

- 3.21 Certify the winners in all region meets and/or tournaments to the GHSA Executive Director within the time limits specified in the By-Laws for each event.
- 3.22 Furnish a copy of complete region results in every region meet and/or tournament to all region schools.
- 3.23 Elect a Region Sportsmanship Award winner each school year using criteria developed by the region or criteria developed by the GHSA Sportsmanship Committee.

3.30 - REGION FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS TO STATE ASSOCIATION

- 3.31 The host school of any tournament held within a region is obligated to pay five percent (5%) of the gross receipts to the GHSA Executive Director within seven (7) calendar days of the close of the tournament.
NOTE: Gross receipts are defined as total income before any charges such as stadium fees, officials, etc., have been deducted.
- 3.32 Regions (or Areas) that fail to follow stated procedures and deadlines may be assessed a fine for each violation.

BY-LAW 4.00 - STATE

4.10 - GHSA ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MEMBER SCHOOLS

- 4.11 The GHSA Executive Committee shall meet bi-annually to review By-Laws, policies and procedures of the Association, and to make additions, deletions, and modifications as necessary.
- (a) The GHSA Executive Committee meetings shall be conducted according to the latest edition of "Roberts Rules of Order" except:
 - (1) "Pass" votes are not considered "No" votes
 - (2) Any Committee member may request a roll-call vote on any question before the Committee without the requirement of a majority vote.
 - (3) Members of the Executive Committee may propose new or amended rules, by-laws or actions to be taken or considered by the Executive Committee during the new business portion of Executive Committee meetings only if such proposal has first been submitted to the Executive Director for inclusion on the agenda for the meeting not later than five calendar (5) days prior to the date of the Executive Committee meeting. Provided however, that if the Executive Director certifies any Proposal that has not been timely submitted to be of an emergency nature or to be necessary for the orderly transaction of the business or activities of the GHSA, then he shall have the authority to bring such proposal to the floor of the meeting for consideration of and action by the Executive Committee.
 - (b) The GHSA Executive Committee shall consider recommendations at its bi-annual meetings from member schools and/or region secretaries that are submitted in writing to the GHSA Office at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the meeting.
- 4.12 The GHSA Office shall maintain an official record for all dues and fees received from any source, and shall provide for an annual audit of finances by a firm of auditors or a certified public accountant.
- 4.13 The GHSA Office shall provide all necessary forms on the GHSA web site, including the following forms from which copies are to be made to satisfy the needs of the member schools:

- (a) Student eligibility forms.
- (b) Declarations of intent to enter GHSA activities.
- (c) Forms to secure sanctioning of events.
- (d) Contracts for events.
- (e) Financial statements for hosting GHSA events.

4.14 The GHSA Office shall provide an annual calendar that notes:

- (a) the beginning and end of the season for all activities;
- (b) dates for Region, Area and/or State Playoff contests and/or tournaments

4.20 - RECLASSIFICATION

4.21 Every *four (4) years*, member schools will be *assigned a "Reclassification Student Count"* and placed in classifications for competition by one of the following procedures:

- (a) *The Reclassification Student Count for Public schools will be based on the FTE count for students in Grades 9-12 provided by the Georgia Department of Education for the fall semester of the second year of the current reclassification cycle*
 - (1) A school will be considered a single-gender school if either gender composes less than 35% of the school population
 - (2) A single-gender school shall have its FTE numbers doubled for the purpose of reclassification
- (b) *The Reclassification Student Count for Private schools will be based on the actual head count of students in Grades 9-12 at member private schools as determined on September 15th of the second year of the current reclassification cycle.*
- (c) *The Reclassification Student Count will be based on projected enrollment numbers for all schools affected by the opening of a new school, the consolidation of existing schools or the redistribution of students within a school system that must be submitted by the system Superintendent no later than September 15 of the second year of the current reclassification cycle.*
 - (1) Projections must be filed for the next two school years and those numbers will be averaged to get the number by which the schools will be classified.
 - (2) In the event that a school's actual enrollment in the first semester of the new reclassification cycle exceeds the projection average by 10% or more, or an existing school exceeds the projection by 5% or more AND the additional students would have resulted in the school being in a higher classification, the school shall not be eligible for post-season play in any sport for the entirety of that reclassification cycle.
 - (3) Schools may appeal the loss of post-season competition to the Reclassification Committee and then to the full Executive Committee.
- (d) *The Reclassification Student Count or classification placement of isolated schools will be determined by the Reclassification Committee in accordance with the "Isolation Rule."*

4.22 The Reclassification Committee *may* utilize the following factors in reclassification decision:

- (a) Consideration of travel time and costs, plus time out of school for students.
- (b) Consideration of differences in the size of school populations.
- (c) Consideration of competitive balance of the schools.
- (d) Consideration of equitable access to playoff slots.
- (e) Consideration of rivalries and gate-receipt issues.

4.23 The membership of the Association shall be divided into *seven (7) classifications* as follows:

- (a) Schools will be placed in classifications (according to their *Reclassification Student Count*) as follows:
 - (1) *Class 7A: Largest 10% (approximately) of schools. Note: Schools may opt to play up into 7A, but no school may move down.*
 - (2) *Class A Public/Private: Smallest 20% (approximately) of schools. Note: Non-football playing schools will NOT be counted when calculating the schools being placed in Class A. They will be placed in appropriate regions later.*
 - (3) *The remaining schools (after 7A and Class A are populated) will be divided into five (5) Approximately equal classifications (2A through 6A) with 19-21% in each class at the discretion of the Reclassification Committee.*
 - (4) *When schools opt to move up in classification, a corresponding number of schools in the higher classification will be given the option by the Reclassification Committee to move down to offset the schools leaving a class. Exceptions: No school can move down from 7A; no school may move down into Class A; and there will be no corresponding movement down should a school opt to play up more than one class above its original classification.*
- (b) *Reclassification Attendance Zone Restriction: If the percentage of students attending a school from outside that school's reclassification attendance zone exceeds three (3) percent, that school shall be placed in the next highest classification. Exceptions: No school shall be moved up into Class 7A, or out of Class A, by this rule.*
 - (1) *The designated reclassification attendance zone for all GHSA member schools shall be the county in which the school is located. Note: If a school is located in two counties, that school must elect one of those counties to be its reclassification attendance zone. That election will be binding for the entire reclassification period.*

- (2) For the purposes of the three (3) percent Attendance Zone Restriction ONLY, single-gender schools will have their number based on the actual percentage of students enrolled in that school from outside the county (before their enrollment is doubled for reclassification placement). Note: This rule goes into effect for the 2018-19 school year.
- (3) If a school is found to be intentionally reporting incorrect numbers, that school will be banned from participating in the state playoffs for two (2) years and must pay a fine of \$2,500.
- (4) A school shall be allowed to appeal its classification placement to the Reclassification Committee by filing a written appeal with the Executive Director not later than seven (7) days after notification of its classification placement, setting forth in detail why it contends the placement is unfair or unjustified. The Reclassification Committee shall thereafter set a date for the hearing of such appeals. If the Reclassification Committee finds that the placement is unfair or unjustified, the school's placement may be modified by the Reclassification Committee. The decision of the Reclassification Committee may be appealed by the school to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will not consider objections from schools regarding contested classification placements unless those schools have filed timely appeals with the Reclassification Committee.
- (c) Each classification will have eight (8) regions unless otherwise determined by the Reclassification Committee or the Executive Committee.
- (d) The Reclassification Committee shall have the authority to assign a different Reclassification Student Count or classification placement for any school that is geographically isolated within its region in order to resolve difficulties in travel and time out of class. Note: Football may be exempted from the isolation policy.
 - (1) An individual school shall be considered to be isolated if the average distance from that school to all other schools in the region is 100 miles or more one way.
 - (2) The decision to place a school in a higher or lower classification will be based on a combination of factors that include travel distances and school population size.
 - (3) If two or three schools in a region are considered to be isolated (even if the average travel distance is less than 100 miles one way), the Reclassification Committee shall be authorized to place those schools in another classification based on travel distances and school population size.
 - (4) If four or more schools in a region are considered to be isolated (even if the average travel distance is less than 100 miles one way), the Reclassification Committee shall be authorized to form a subdivided region in which crossover games with the other subdivision will not be mandatory for region standing.

4.24 When the membership is divided into classifications as called for by the GHSA Constitution, the following process will be used:

- (a) Schools will be assigned a Reclassification Student Count by the GHSA office.
- (b) Member schools will be able to review and verify their assigned Reclassification Student Count on the GHSA web site. When there is a major discrepancy between the school's count and the count determined by the GHSA staff, the school may appeal to the Executive Director to reconsider the count. *The Executive Director's decision shall be final.*
- (c) When enrollment figures have been verified, schools will be placed in the proper classification and schools will have seven (7) calendar days to file a request to play at a higher classification.
 - (1) A request to move to a higher classification must be submitted over the signatures of the school's administrative authorities (i.e., the Principal and Superintendent).
 - (2) A school that transfers to a higher classification must remain in the higher classification until Schools are next reclassified on a statewide basis.
- (d) The Reclassification Committee will meet in the month of November to place schools in regions and subregions. The decisions will be sent to the member schools after that meeting.
 - (1) There will be a mandatory subdivision of each region containing ten (10) or more schools by the Reclassification Committee (Exception: Cheerleading).
 - (2) The Reclassification Committee may subdivide a region consisting of less than ten schools if there is an extremely large geographic area within that region.
 - (3) For football, the Reclassification Committee will require crossover games between teams in the subregions to guarantee a minimum of 70% of the season schedule unless there are isolation issues.
 - (4) For all other sports, subdivided regions must guarantee member schools a minimum number of contests within the region equal to 50% of the season schedule unless there are isolation issues.
 - (5) Any region subdivided because of geographic considerations may vote to play a full region schedule based on a two-thirds approval of all Principals in the region.
- (e) Member schools will have seven (7) calendar days after notification of assignment to request a lateral move to another region, by filing that request with the Executive Director.
 - (1) A request to have a lateral transfer must be submitted over the signatures of the school's administrative authorities (i.e., the Principal and Superintendent).
 - (2) The request will be heard in December and representatives from both regions shall be notified of the request, and may attend the meeting to voice their approval or state their concerns about such a move.
 - (3) A school that receives a lateral transfer must remain in that region until schools are next reclassified on a statewide basis.
 - (4) At a meeting in January, the Executive Committee shall hear any appeals regarding lateral transfers

by the Reclassification Committee. Representatives from both regions involved in the appeal shall be notified, and may voice their approval or state their concerns about the appeal.

(5) *Thereafter, the Executive Committee will approve, disapprove or modify the final reclassification and region alignment plan.*

- (f) Member schools may begin scheduling contests for the new reclassification cycle as soon as the final vote has been taken, the membership notified, and any region subdivisions finalized.
- (g) When a majority vote is used in a subdivided region to determine scheduling and the process for selecting teams for post-season play, one or more schools may file a "minority report" with the Executive Director if the approved procedure is alleged to be unfair to all schools in the region. If the Executive Director believes that there is unfairness with the chosen procedure, the Reclassification Committee will *meet and make a final decision on such matters. No further appeal will be allowed.*

4.25 The following scheduling policy will be in effect for public schools entering the GHSA at the beginning of the second year of the reclassification cycle:

- (a) In sports where the region has two-year scheduling, the new school will not be able to play a complete region schedule at the varsity level. In those sports, the school could play a varsity non-region schedule or a JV schedule.
- (b) In sports having year-to-year scheduling, the new school will have full membership once it has been assigned to the new region by the Reclassification Committee.
- (c) In sports that have a region tournament to advance to post-season play, the region may allow a new school to accept a low seed in the tournament even though it did not play a complete region schedule. That is a decision made by the region.

4.26 Charter schools that apply for membership after the reclassification process has been completed will be accepted as schools playing sub-varsity schedules and/or non-region varsity schedules for the next reclassification cycle.

4.30 - STATE ASSOCIATION CONTEST/EVENT RESPONSIBILITIES

4.31 The playoff format for Class A schools will be different from all other classifications:

- (a) Public and private schools will compete with each other in post-season play in the sports of Volleyball, Wrestling, Swimming & Diving, Soccer, Lacrosse, Riflery and Gymnastics.
- (b) Public and private schools will have separate championships in the sports of Football, Softball, Basketball and Baseball. The teams qualifying for post-season play out of their respective regions will be determined by the use of power ranking systems. *A total of 24 public and 24 private teams shall qualify for the playoffs in these sports.*
- (c) Public and private schools will have separate championships in the sports of Cross Country, Track & Field, Golf, Tennis, One Act Play and Literary. Teams will qualify out of Area competitions in these sports. NOTE: Each Area shall select an Area Coordinator to organize procedures.
- (d) Public and Private schools will have separate championships in Cheerleading, and all schools will be allowed to enter the Sectional competition that precedes the State Championship.

4.32 *In regions having fewer than five (5) schools, the number of teams going to the state playoffs in the sports of Football, Softball, Basketball and Baseball) will be one (1) fewer than the number of teams in the region. Example: A region with four (4) teams would get three (3) automatic playoff berths. The remaining playoff slot(s) would be awarded to the highest-rated non-playoff team(s) as determined by the Executive Director.*

4.33 The Executive Director shall determine the activities in which a State Tournament, Playoff, and/or Meet are to be held.

- (a) In order for a new sport to have a state competition to determine a state champion, the sport or activity must show significant growth and financial stability for a period of three (3) years.
- (b) The GHSA Executive Director will appoint a committee and a sport liaison to monitor the sport.
- (c) In order to have a State Championship in an Open Meet Event, there must be a minimum of sixteen (16) teams participating and this will be determined with the "Intent to Participate" form that is submitted to the GHSA office the preceeding school year (with the exception of coed cheerleading, which has a later deadline). Schools which submit this form and then withdraw from that sport will be fined.

4.34 The GHSA Executive Director shall determine and provide adequate sites for all State Tournaments, Playoffs, and/or Meets to successfully conduct the event.

- (a) Tournament sites will not be available to participating teams for practice prior to the tournaments.
- (b) The GHSA shall have full rights to the use of the GHSA logo at these events, and have full and complete rights to the sale of championship merchandise at the venue. The GHSA will also have the right to display signage of corporate partners and to restrict the use of goods in the competitive area that promote a competitor of GHSA corporate partners.

4.35 The GHSA shall provide team trophies for State Champions and Runners-Up, and individual medals for first and second place winners in all State activities.

- (a) The number of individual medals provided for team sports and activities is limited as follows:
 Baseball.....22 Football.....56 Softball.....22 Wrestling (Dual).....14
 Basketball.....18 Lacrosse.....27 Tennis..... 9
 Cheerleading.....20 Soccer.....27 Volleyball.....15
- (b) Schools may purchase additional medals if desired. The form to use to place an order for extra medals is found on the GHSA web site.

4.36 The GHSA shall assign field/court officials for all Area, Sectional, and State competitions (i.e., after the region winner has been determined), and the fees will be as shown in the chart in Appendix F.

- (a) Baseball - crew of 3
- (b) Basketball - crew of 3
- (c) Cheerleading - 5 scoring judges and 2 safety judges
- (d) Football - crew of 6
- (e) Lacrosse - crew of 3
- (f) Soccer - crew of 4
- (g) Softball - crew of 3
- (h) Swimming (TBA)
- (i) Volleyball - crew of 4
- (j) Wrestling (TBA)

4.37 The Executive Director is authorized to modify all competition dates, times, sites, officiating requirements and other practical and logistical matters.

4.38 For playoff events that are held at multiple, centralized sites, when venue expenses exceed 45% of the revenue for that day at that site, the GHSA will pay the excess expenses.

4.40 - STATE PASSES TO GHSA EVENTS

4.41 The GHSA shall issue passes for regular season and post-season events annually to:

- (a) Elected or appointed Board of Education members
- (b) The following school system personnel who work directly with interscholastic activities in grades 9-12:
 - (1) Superintendent
 - (2) Assistant Superintendents
 - (3) System-wide Athletic Directors and Assistant Athletic Directors
- (c) The following school personnel of grades 9-12:
 - (1) Principal and Assistant Principal(s)
 - (2) 1 Band Director
 - (3) 1 Literary Coordinator
 - (4) 1 One Act Play Coordinator
 - (5) Athletic Director(s)
 - (6) All athletic coaches, including Community Coaches who have successfully completed the GHSA Coaches Education Program and who are registered by a member school as being utilized as a high school coach.
 - (7) 2 Certified Trainers employed by the school system in grades 9-12 and recommended by the Principal
- (d) GHSA staff members

4.42 Lifetime Passes are available to retired persons of the teaching profession who served at least twenty (20) years in high school(s), at least the last ten (10) of which must have been served at GHSA member school(s), grades 9-12 as a:

- (a) Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent AND/OR
 - (b) Principal or Assistant Principal AND/OR
 - (c) Athletic Director AND/OR
 - (d) Coach of a sport listed in the GHSA by-laws.
 - (e) GHSA staff member with 20 years or more of service.
 - (f) A Lifetime pass will be issued by special application from the school system from which the individual retired.
 - (1) Application should include the individual's permanent address and verification of years of service.
 - (2) Application forms are available upon request from the GHSA Office.
 - (3) Years of service to the GHSA as a Region Secretary and/or Executive Committee member shall count towards the requirements to qualify for a GHSA Lifetime Pass.
- NOTE: Individuals who have retired from coaching, but not from teaching, and who have met all requirements for a Lifetime Pass, may apply for the pass before retiring from the school system.

4.43 GHSA passes are non-transferrable and may not be used by persons other than the individual to whom it was issued.

- (a) The individual's name shall be typed on the pass.
- (b) Picture Identification is required for the user of the pass at all GHSA post season events.

- (c) A pass that is used illegally is to be confiscated and the individual to whom the pass was issued forfeits the right to receive a pass in the future.
- (d) The spouse of a coach, coaching in a State Playoff event shall be admitted to that event upon presentation of their spouse's pass and proper identification.

4.44 In the event a pass is destroyed or lost, the school administrator should notify the GHSA Office in writing, and should include the payment of \$25.00 with a school check to have the pass replaced.

4.45 When a school staff member who was issued a GHSA pass leaves the position that entitles them to that pass, the pass should be voided and returned to the GHSA Office.

4.46 At any GHSA event, the host school must honor the GHSA pass that admits "the bearer and one other person." For GHSA state playoff events, the host school shall honor only the GHSA pass, GAOA membership cards, and valid media credentials.

4.47 School resource officers and other law enforcement personnel in uniform are to be granted free admission to all GHSA events.

4.50 - CERTIFICATION OF ATHLETIC OFFICIALS

4.51 A plan for the certification of athletic officials shall be established by the GHSA office and published in the GHSA Contest Officials Handbook and Accountability Manual which includes:

- (a) published procedures for registration of officials
- (b) published guidelines for training officials
- (c) a system for evaluating performances of officials
- (d) a system of recognition of years of service by officials

4.52 The following items constitute the Athletic Officials Associations Approval Plan for the GHSA:

- (a) The Executive Director of the GHSA shall determine the number of officials associations to be approved for each activity. The number of associations will be determined by:
 - (1) The demand for officials in that activity in that geographic area of the state.
 - (2) The number of associations already in existence in that activity in that area.
 - (3) The extent to which member schools' needs are being met by existing officials associations in that activity.
 - (4) The assignment of officiating associations for most GHSA activities shall be the responsibility of the GHSA office.
 - (5) Officials' associations must maintain minimum membership levels in order to be considered "active associations" by the GHSA in certain sports. Those numbers shall be: *Baseball (20), Softball (20), Football (30), and Basketball (30)*.
 - (6) New officiating associations may be established when it can be demonstrated that the needs of member schools will be met by adding an association.
- (b) The GHSA Executive Director may, at his discretion, approve additional associations utilizing the following criteria and procedure:
 - (1) Such associations shall make application to the GHSA requesting approval.
 - (2) The By-Laws of such an association shall be subject to the approval of the GHSA and must include provisions indicating that the association and its members will be subject to the rules and authority of the GHSA. A current copy of the association by-laws/constitution must be submitted to the GHSA office.
 - (3) An approved officials association must handle its finances through a central banking account, and should distribute IRS 1099 forms to all members. Every officiating association must have a Federal Tax Identification Number on file with the GHSA office.
 - (4) An approved association shall require all its members to be registered with the GHSA, and to comply with all requirements of the "GHSA Policies and Procedures Manual."
 - (5) All approved associations must comply with all GHSA policies, procedures and reporting deadlines or be subject to fines assessed to the association by the GHSA office.
 - (6) All chartered officiating associations must comply with the E-Verify program by July 1 of each calendar year.
 - (7) Contest officials are required to have completed a certified "background check" no later than July 1 of each calendar year. Each local association is required to keep records of the background checks. Associations assigning contest officials to GHSA sanctioned contests who have not completed this requirement are subject to a monetary fine and possible loss of charter.
- (c) The GHSA expects every officials association to operate in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, disability, religion, national origin or age.
- (d) Officials associations shall not charge member schools any administrative fees not authorized by the GHSA.
- (e) All Invoices for officiating fees in all sports should be paid within 30 days of the end of the season. Failure to do so will result in a 10% late fee being charged to the member school by the officials' association. Associations must send a final season invoice to schools within one week of the completion of the season. Schools are *prohibited* from paying officials at the game site.

- (f) Officials may register with only one (1) local association per sport during a school year, and officials are not allowed to officiate GHSA events until the registration process has been completed with the GHSA office.
- (g) In the event that a local association does not have a sufficient number of eligible officials to work on a specific day/night, officials may be requested from other GHSA-chartered associations. It is the responsibility of the local association assignor in need of additional officials to make the initial contact with the assignor of another association to work out details of the request.
- (h) All GHSA chartered associations and registered contest officials shall comply with the policies and standards referenced in the "GHSA Contest Officials Handbook and Accountability Manual."
- (i) Officials shall not be assigned in any GHSA sport or activity if they have had any connection in the past 10 years (attended, worked in the system, have children or other relatives in the system, etc.) with the schools they are officiating or judging.
- (j) *All GHSA contest officials shall adhere to the "Uniform Standards" as listed in the "GHSA Contest Officials Handbook."*

4.53 Contest officials and officials' associations are independent contractors and not employees of the GHSA or its member schools.

4.54 In the event that officials do not show for a scheduled event without notification or emergency situation, a fine shall be assessed to the officials association for twice the amount of the game fees and that amount be divided between the competing schools.

4.55 All decisions of the GHSA Executive Director in regards to officials shall be subject to the appellate procedures as set forth in the GHSA Constitution.

4.56 Universal contest fees shall be charged for all scheduled, regular-season interscholastic contests (including scrimmages). The universal fee schedule shall be as shown in the chart in Appendix F. Schools and officiating associations may not reduce or increase game fees from those listed in this section. Penalties may be imposed for those violating this rule.

4.57 Current year members of the GAOA (Georgia Athletic Officials Association) are entitled to free admittance to all GHSA sanctioned events only if they are currently registered with the GHSA office.

4.60 - SPECIAL GHSA POLICIES

4.61 Gender Equity: The Georgia High School Association shall comply with the requirements of subsections (a) through (f) of Code Section 20-2-314, as those requirements relate to the association's functions of organizing, sanctioning, scheduling, or rule making for events in which public high schools participate. The Georgia High School Association shall, no later than October 1, 2003, and every year thereafter, submit a report to the General Assembly regarding its compliance with paragraph (1) of this subsection. Such report shall address the number, type, and disposition of written requests for the association to organize and administer regional or state events for additional or different sports; written requests for information regarding the types of athletic events for public high school students that the association organizes and administers; and written inquiries and complaints received by the association with respect to gender discrimination in connection with public high school events. The report shall address all such written requests, inquiries, and complaints, regardless of whether such request, inquiry, or complaint is made by letter, e-mail, memorandum, or any other form of written communication. Each report shall cover the time period beginning on July 1 of the previous year and ending on June 30 of the year in which the report is due. In addition, the association shall have in effect a policy requiring notification to persons who make such requests, inquiries, or complaints verbally that such request, inquiry, or complaint will not be included in the association's reporting to the General Assembly regarding compliance with this Code section unless such request, inquiry, or complaint is made in writing.

4.62 Open Meeting/Open Records: The Georgia High School Association shall comply with the requirements of Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50, relating to the inspection of public records, and Chapter 14 of Title 50, relating to open and public meetings, to the extent that such records and meetings relate to the association's activities with respect to public high schools; provided, however, that such association shall not be required to comply with such statutes or to conduct open and public meetings or provide inspection of records where the sole subject of such meeting or record pertains to the academic records or performance of an individual student or the eligibility of an individual student to participate or to continue to participate in sponsored events or contests based on academics; provided. However, where a meeting or record of such association is devoted in part to matters excepted in the preceding proviso, any portion of the meeting or record not subject to such exception shall be open to the public.

4.63 Steroids/Performance Enhancing Drugs: The Georgia High School Association strongly opposes the use of anabolic steroids and other performance enhancing substances by high school student-athletes. The GHSA believes that such usage violates legal, ethical and competitive-equity standards and imposes unreasonable long-term health risks on the user. The GHSA encourages member schools to educate

students and coaches about the perils of steroid usage, and the GHSA will distribute educational materials about this issue to member schools.

4.64 Penalties for Violations: In accordance with the GHSA Constitution, the Executive Director is empowered to make a determination as to whether a violation of GHSA rules has occurred, and to assess the appropriate penalty which may include a fine and/or probation. A non-exhaustive list of violations and fines is published in Appendix P of the Constitution & By-Laws.

INTERPRETATIONS, 4.00 SECTION

SITUATION: A school that is hosting a GHSA playoff event wants free admission for all people who normally are given free admission at regular season events. Is this permissible?

RULING: No. At GHSA playoff events only those people holding GHSA passes, GAOA membership cards or valid media passes are allowed free admission.

For more GHSA Constitution and By-Law Information go to: www.ghsa.net

ATHLETIC INTEREST

The Fulton County School District values student participation in athletics. All sports offered at each school are listed on the District's Athletic webpage at www.fultonschools.org, or you can access each school's individual webpage.

Student Athletic Interest Survey for All High School and Eighth Grade Students

Are you a high school student or an eighth grade student? If YES, then please participate in a short athletic interest survey---your input is very important! Please access the interest survey on the District's Athletics webpage at www.fultonschools.org.

Suggestions or Changes

If you are a high school student, eighth grade student, parent/guardian, coach or other interested school personnel that has a specific suggestion or request about:

- The addition of a Georgia High School Association (GHSA) sanctioned sport not currently offered at your high school;
- Adding an additional level of competition for an existing GHSA sport at your high school (such as a freshman or junior varsity team);
- Getting your school's assistance in approaching GHSA about adding a sport to its list of sanctioned sports; or
- An idea on a way to increase participation in currently existing GHSA sports teams, then please complete the form that can be accessed on the District's Athletics webpage at www.fultonschools.org. Your feedback will be sent to the School District's Athletic Director and the relevant school, and may be shared with relevant coaches. Someone will contact you about your request of feedback within one week, but if you have not received a response or cannot access the form, please feel free to contact the District Athletic Director, Dr. Steven Craft, at crafts@fultonschools.org. In your email, please let Dr. Craft know the date you completed and send the form (if any), as well as your name, grade, and high school.

Additional FCS Athletic Guidelines

1. 8th Grade rule-- Fulton County Schools does not allow any 8th graders to participate on any JV teams at the high school that is in their feeder program. 8th graders are welcome to participate in any community teams or park and rec teams.
2. Seniors on Junior Varsity Teams—Junior Varsity teams are used to help prepare athletes to compete on varsity teams. They are developmental in nature. Seniors are not allowed to play in Junior Varsity competitions. Individual sports such as cross country and swimming do not apply. If you have any questions, please call the school Athletic Director.
3. Transgender Athletes—Fulton County Schools will abide by all GHSA and Georgia State Laws.
4. Feeder/Community Middle School Sports—Fulton County Schools do not offer middle school sports. The district does offer some intramural and extramural opportunities at the middle schools. Several schools do have feeder programs associated with their schools, but these organizations are separate community organized programs.
5. Injuries to athletes Protocol—If an athlete is injured in a contest or practice, the following protocols must be followed:
 - i. The coach must call or make contact with the parents/guardians
 - ii. Notify the school trainer if one is present on campus
 - iii. If there is a potential head injury, the concussion protocol must be followed
 - iv. When the athlete returns to practice, continuous supervision and monitoring must continue until the athlete is 100%

APPENDIX

Off-Season and Summer Training Tips

During the off-season and summer vacation, high school athletes may be tempted “to slack off” from the rigorous training regimen which they need to stay in shape. Whether the high school athlete aspires to be a college athlete, professional athlete, or play sports for fun, here are some tips for off-season training.

When participating in any athletic activity, especially during the hot, humid summer months, it is important to stay well hydrated. Proper hydration does not begin at game time; it’s the result of daily attention to the body’s needs. Most heat illnesses are preventable. Signs and symptoms of heat illness and dehydration include but are not limited to: decreased performance, muscle cramping, weakness, fatigue, intense thirst, profuse sweating, blurred vision and/or cool, pale clammy skin. Younger athletes have a lower sweating capacity and higher core temperature than adolescents and adults. The composition of children’s sweat is also different from adolescent and adult athletes, which means they do not benefit from electrolyte replacement drinks. Water is the fluid of choice for younger athletes. To diminish the risk of heat illness/dehydration. Follow these simple tips as suggested by the American College of Sports Medicine:

- **Drink 8-12 cups of water daily**
 - **Drink at least 16 oz. of fluid two hours prior to an event and then again 20 minutes before the event**
 - **Offer unlimited access to fluids during the game/practice.**
 - **Drink cool fluids containing less than 8 percent carbohydrate.**
 - **Drink beyond your thirst.**
 - **Avoid caffeine and carbonated beverages.**
 - **Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.**
 - **Take frequent breaks and rest when necessary.**
- Sports Nutrition – In addition to having enough water or sports drink on hand it is equally important to have nutritious snacks available. This becomes even more critical during a long day and/or weekend of tournament play where games may start at 7 a.m. and may not finish until after 5 p.m. Grabbing a piece of pizza from the concession stand works in a pinch, but it is not the energy food of choice. Eating the wrong type of foods can actually produce a negative energy effect, slowing down your game instead of providing that needed energy boost. Gastric irritability may also occur when poor food choices and combined strenuous physical activity. Having nutritious snacks, such as granola bars, fresh fruit and vegetables, bagels and some trail mixes can help keep young athletes performing well until there is adequate time for a complete and healthy meal. It is equally as important to replenish muscle energy sources at the end of the day as it is to “prep” them with a pre-game meal.
 - Avoid Peak Sun: Avoid rigorous workouts during the peak temperatures usually from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. or when predicted by the weather service for your geographic area.
 - Warm-Up: All athletes need to stretch their muscles before strenuous exercise. It is a way to prevent muscle injury. Proper stretching lengthens or “loosens” muscle tissue, making it less prone to trauma and tears.
 - Eat Balanced Meals: Proper nutrition is important to maintaining your body’s peak performance for endurance sports such as football, soccer, track and others. Eat plenty of carbohydrates such as bread, cereal and potatoes which turn into glucose and the energy you’ll need.
 - Get plenty of rest: We all know (or should!) that we get stronger NOT by training more, but rather from our adaptations to that training which we get from rest and recovery. Adequate sleep is essential as it is our time to regenerate and rebuild. Adequate sleep is also vital for alleviating stress.

Concussions in Sports

BY-LAW 2.68 GHSA CONCUSSION POLICY: In accordance with Georgia law and national playing rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include, licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.

- b) No athlete is allowed to return to a game or a practice on the same day that a concussion (a) has been diagnosed, OR (b) cannot be ruled out.

- c) Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol shall be a part of the medical clearance.
- d) It is mandatory that each coach in each GHSA sport participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at www.nfhslearn.com at least every two years – beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
- e) Each school will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course, and shall keep a record of those who participate.

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus [MRSA] Q&A

What is MRSA?

MRSA is the acronym for Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus, an antibiotic-resistant strain of the common Staphylococcus aureus bacteria (staph). Staph is one of the most common causes of skin infections in the United States. The common staph bacteria itself is not always dangerous, but the antibiotic-resistant MRSA strain is hard to treat with commonly-used antibiotic medications. Because of its antibiotic resistance, MRSA sometimes can lead to life threatening infections.

How common are MRSA infections?

Healthy people carry staph on their skin or in their noses. The majority of staph infections are minor; however, staph can cause more serious infections that require special antibiotic treatment. MRSA is almost always spread by direct, physical contact – such as openings in the skin (cuts or abrasions), crowded living conditions, and poor hygiene. Previously, MRSA infections were found almost exclusively in hospitals and nursing homes, but now they are becoming a rapidly growing problem in our communities, earning the name CA-MRSA – or Community-Acquired MRSA – because of how the bacteria spreads in public or community areas.

What is at risk:

Anyone who is in physical contact with other people on regular basis is at increased risk for acquiring MRSA and other potentially dangerous bacterial infections. It is estimated that 30-50% of the population carries CA MRSA bacteria on their bodies.

Why are athletes so susceptible to MRSA infections?

Athletes have to be particularly concerned about MRSA because it is easily spread from person-to-person due to close, physical contact in athletics. In addition, athletic facilities provide the ideal environment for bacteria to thrive, as they can be warm and humid. MRSA can be spread through touching objects such as towels, clothing, workout areas and sports equipment that have MRSA germs on them. MRSA can live in the skin and survive on objects and surfaces for more than 24 hours. Athletes are also thought to be more susceptible to staph infections because their immune system temporarily lowers after a hard workout.

What does MRSA infection look like?

MRSA can present itself in various forms of skin infections ranging from boils, blisters, rashes, pimples, or ingrown hairs. The often occur in the armpits, groin, neck, and buttocks. MRSA infection sometimes has the appearance of a spider bite, which can lead to misdiagnoses. Symptoms of MRSA infection may include redness, warmth at the site, swelling, pus, and pain. Unexplained fever, muscular pain and/or fatigue after a skin infection are symptoms that could be related to a MRSA infection. MRSA-infected skin lesions (sores) can change from Skin or surface irritations to abscesses or serious skin infections. If left untreated, MRSA can infect the blood, bones, and other organs.

What is the treatment for an MRSA infection?

Once a staph infection is suspected, a doctor can take a sample/culture of the infection and send it to a lab for testing. If the staph germs being tested cannot be treated or killed with standard antibiotics, then the infection is diagnosed as MRSA. Many MRSA infections can be treated by draining the abscess or boil and may not require antibiotics. To prevent serious complications, only healthcare providers/doctors should drain abscess or boil. Most MRSA infections are treatable with antibiotics. However, in severe cases a very strong antibiotic must be administered in a hospital.

How can MRSA infection be prevented?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), good personal hygiene will help prevent skin infections. This includes:

- (1) Showering and washing with soap and water immediately after practice, competition and training.
- (2) Not sharing personal care items such as bars of soap, towels and razors, uniforms, and sports equipment that directly touch the body.
- (3) Taking home practice clothes, towels, and other linens on a daily basis and returning clean practice clothes back to school.
- (4) Washing practice clothes, uniforms and other sports-related linens in hot water and laundry detergent. Using a hot dryer, rather than air drying also helps kill bacteria.
- (5) Wiping down athletic equipment and materials with sanitizer regularly.
- (6) Notifying coaches, athletic trainers and the school's clinic staff of any wounds that are potentially infected.
- (7) Keeping all wounds clean and covered and avoiding contact with others' open wounds, or anything that could possibly be contaminated by infection (boils, blisters, etc.).
- (8) Washing hands frequently with soap and water, especially after practice, competition and training.

What are Fulton County high schools doing about this problem?

- The above procedures are enforced in the Fulton County Schools high school athletic programs.
- Information also is shared with student athletes and their families.

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to be on alert for any signs and symptoms of skin infections in their children. If MRSA is suspected, please contact your healthcare provider or the Fulton County Schools' Office of Student Health Services at 470-254-2177.

Sports Related Skin Infections
Position Statement and Guidelines
National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Skin-related infections in both the community setting and the sports environment have increased considerably over the past several years. While the majority of these infections are transmitted through skin-to-skin contact, a significant number are due to shared equipment, towels, or poor hygiene in general. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) has put forth general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases (See NFHS General Guidelines for Sports Hygiene, Skin Infections and Communicable Diseases).

The NFHS SMAC recognizes that even if these guidelines are strictly adhered to, skin infection will continue to occur given the nature of certain sports. For example, the risk of transmission is much higher in sports with a great deal of direct skin-to-skin contact such as football and wrestling. Therefore, the NFHS SMAC has developed specific guidelines for the skin infections most commonly encountered in sports. The guidelines set for follow the principles of Universal Precautions and err in favor of protecting participants in situations where skin-to-skin contact may occur. Consideration may be given to the particular sport regarding risk of transmission, but these rules must be strictly adhered to in sports such as wrestling, football, and basketball where skin-to-skin contact is frequent and unavoidable.

Ringworm, Tinea Corporis

These fungal lesions are due to dermatophytes. As they are easily transmissible the athlete should be treated with an oral or topical antifungal medication for a minimum of 72 hours prior to participation. Once the lesion is considered to be no longer contagious it may be covered with a bio occlusive dressing.

Impetigo, Folliculitis, Carbuncle and Furuncle

While these infections may be secondary to a variety of bacteria, they should all be treated as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infections. The athlete should be removed from practices and competition and treated with oral antibiotics. Return to contact practices and competition may occur after 72 hours of treatment providing the infection is resolving. All lesions are considered infectious until each one has a well-adherent scab without any drainage or weeping fluids. Once a lesion is no longer considered infectious, it should be covered with a bio occlusive dressing until complete resolution. Since nasal colonization of these bacteria is common, treatment with intranasal topical mupirocin should be considered for recurrent episodes. All team members should be carefully screened for similar infections. If multiple athletes are infected, consideration should be given to obtaining nasal cultures of all teammates. This can identify carriers and allow for targeted treatment with intranasal mupirocin and daily body washes with chlorhexidine 4% solution for at least five days.

Shingles, Cold Sores

These are viral infections which are transmitted by skin-to-skin contact. Lesions on exposed areas of skin that are not covered by clothing, uniform, or equipment required the player to be withdrawn from any activity that may result in direct skin-to-skin contact with another participant. Covering infectious lesions with an occlusive dressing is not acceptable. Primary outbreaks of shingles and cold sores require 10-14 days of oral antiviral medications while recurrent outbreaks require five days of treatment as a minimum treatment time prior to returning to participation. To be considered "non-contagious," all lesions must be scabbed over with no oozing or discharge and no new lesions should have occurred in the preceding 48 hours.

Herpes Gladiatorum

This skin infection, primarily seen among wrestlers, is caused by Herpes Simplex Virus Type 1 (HSV-1). The spreading of this virus is strictly skin-to-skin with the preponderance of the outbreaks developing on the head, face and neck, reflecting the typical lock-up position. The initial outbreak is characterized by a raised rash with groupings of 6-10 vesicles (blisters). The skin findings are accompanied by sore throat, fever, malaise and swollen cervical lymph nodes. The infected individual should be removed from contact and treated with antiviral medications. They may return to contact only after all lesions are healed with well adherent scabs, no new vesicle formation and no swollen lymph nodes near the affected area. If antivirals are not used, the infected participant may return to contact only after all lesions are well healed with well adhered scabs, no new vesicle formation, and no swollen lymph nodes near the affected area. Even greater consideration should be given to prophylactic antivirals for the remainder of the current season and each subsequent season when a wrestler has suffered a recurrent outbreak.

As the HSV-1 may spread prior to vesicle formation, anyone in contact with the infected individual during the three days prior to the outbreak must be isolated from any contact activity for eight days and be examined daily for suspicious skin lesions. To be considered "non contagious," all lesions must be scabbed over with no oozing or discharge and no new lesions should have occurred in the preceding 48 hours.

Miscellaneous Viral Infections

Molluscum contagiosum and verruca are types of warts that are caused by viruses, but are not considered highly contagious. Therefore these lesions require no treatment or restrictions, but should be covered if prone to bleeding when abraded.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS HYGIENE, SKIN INFECTIONS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports:

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, and abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

Infectious Skin Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection.
- Coaches, officials, and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state and local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

Blood-borne Infectious Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash water.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.



Department of Interscholastic Athletics
 Procedures for Extreme Weather and Air Quality Conditions Affecting Outdoor Interscholastic Athletic
ALL EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS DIRECTIVES ISSUED BY THE FULTON COUNTY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF
 INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS MUST BE FOLLOWED

Weather Condition: HOT and HUMID

Fulton County Schools shall have, use and maintain a digital Wet Bulb Global Temperature (WBGT) device for measuring environmental factors which contribute to extreme weather conditions. The digital WBGT device is used to measure the Wet Bulb Global Temperature which is derived by evaluating the combined dry air temperature, humidity, ground radiated heat, and wind speed at that particular location. Conditions are subject to change during practice/activity; therefore, measurements at the practice site should be taken at regular intervals throughout the practice/activity.

Commencing with the 2012-2013 school year all outdoor interscholastic athletic activities will monitor and follow all procedures. Interscholastic football teams will be required to measure and document the Wet Bulb Global Temperature (WBGT) prior to outdoor practices through the months of August, during spring practices in May, and at other times when conditions warrant. Measurement and documentation can be performed by the school’s athletic coordinator, athletic trainer, or football coach. All on field coaches shall be first aid trained and be familiar with all heat related symptoms and corresponding treatments, be familiar with emergency and 911 procedures, and be familiar with the Wet Blub Global Temperature Chart and utilize the chart results when determining length of practice and rest periods.

The Fulton County Schools (FCS) and Georgia High School Association (GHS) Practice Policy for Heat and Humidity is statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians. The policy shall follow modified guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:

1. The scheduling of practices at various heat/humidity levels
2. The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various heat/humidity levels
3. The heat/humidity level that will result in practice being terminated

A scientifically approved instrument that measures Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) reading must be utilized at each practice to ensure that the written policy is being followed properly.

LEVEL	WBGT READINGS	ACTIVITY GUIDELINES AND REST BREAK GUIDELINES	LEVEL
Low Risk	Under 82.0	Normal activities—Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour of minimum duration of 3 minutes each during workout	As Desired
Low Moderate Risk	82.0 – 86.9	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully; Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes duration each	Cold Water
High Moderate Risk	87.0-89.9	Maximum practice time is two hours. For Football: players restricted to helmet shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities. For all sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four minutes each	Cold Water
Low High Risk	90.0-92.0	Maximum length of practice is one hour, no protective equipment may be worn during practice and there may be no conditioning activities. There must be 20-minutes of rest breaks provided during the hour of practice.	Cold Water
Very High Risk	Over 92.1	No outdoor workouts; Cancel exercise; Delay practices until a cooler WBGT reading occurs	Cold Water

GUIDELINES FOR HYDRATION AND REST BREAKS

1. Rest time should involve both unlimited hydration intake (water or electrolyte drinks) and rest without any activity involved
2. For football, helmets should be removed during rest time.
3. The site of the rest time should be a “cooling zone” and not in direct sunlight

4. When the WBGT reading is over 86:
 - a. Ice towels and spray bottles filled with ice water should be available at the “cooling zone”
 - b. Cold immersion tubs must be available for practices for the benefit of any player showing early signs of heat illness.

DEFINITIONS

1. Practice: the period of time that a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school-approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the field until they leave the field.
2. Walk Through: this period of time shall last no more than one hour, is not considered to be a part of the practice time regulation, and may not involve conditioning or weight-room activities. Players may not wear protective equipment.

PENALTIES: Schools violating heat policy shall be fined a minimum of \$500.00 and a maximum of \$1,000.00

Cautions and Consideration for Hot and Cold Conditions

Practices and games should be held early in the morning and later in the evening to avoid times when environment conditions are generally more severe. Hydration and fluid replacement is a daily process. Athletes should hydrate themselves before, during, and after practice. Meals should include an appropriate amount of fluid intake and addition to a healthy diet. An unlimited supply of cold water shall be available to participants during practices and games. Coaches/supervisors shall inform all athletes participating during practices or games that cold water is always available or accessible and athletes will be given permission to hydrate themselves at any time.

Athletes shall be gradually acclimatized to the heat. Research indicates 80% acclimatization may be achieved in 7-10 days, but could take up to 14 days. In some cases, it may take several weeks to become fully acclimatized. The length and intensity of practice should be adjusted according to the WBT until acclimatization occurs. Athletes should weight in before practice and weight out after practice in order to monitor water loss. Water loss can lead to symptoms of dehydration. Athletes should wear clothes that are light in weight or color. Adequate rest periods shall take place before practices sessions. Athletes shall remove appropriate equipment or clothing when possible. Removal of the appropriate equipment and clothing allows exposed skin to cool more efficiently. Football player shall remove their helmets during high risk conditions. Football shoulder pads shall be removed if conditions worsen.

Athletes who need careful monitoring include: overweight participants, participants with weight control problems fluctuation of weight), participants taking over-the counter and prescription medication, and participants who previously have done absolutely no exercise at all.

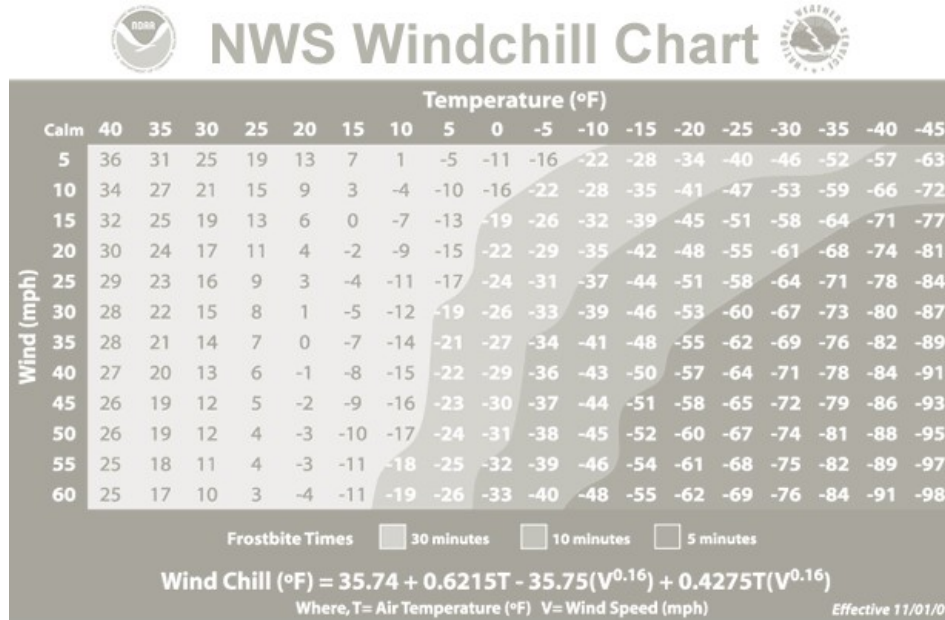
Heat Illness: Symptoms and Treatment

(As recommended by the National Athletic Trainers Association)

Heat illness is used to define several types of afflictions suffered when and individual experiences a rising body temperature and dehydration. The following are the different forms identified by the National Athletic Trainer Association.		
Heat Related Illness	Symptoms	Treatments
Heat Cramps	Muscle spasms caused by an imbalance if water and electrolytes in muscles; usually affects the legs and abdominal muscles	Rest in cool area; drink plenty f fluids; proper stretching and massaging; application of ice in some cases
Heat Exhaustion	Can be precursor to hear stroke; normal to high temperature; heavy sweating; skin is flushed or cool and pale; headaches, dizziness; rapid pulse, nausea, weakness; physical collapse may occur; can occur without prior symptoms such as cramps	Get to a cool place immediately and out of the heat; drink plenty of fluids; remove excess clothing; in some cases, immerse in cool water
Heat Stroke	Body's cooling system shuts down; increased core temperature of 104° F or greater; if untreated it can cause brain damage, internal organ damage; and even death; sweating stops; shallow breathing and rapid pulse; possible disorientation or loss of consciousness; possible irregular heartbeat and cardiac arrest	Call 911 immediately; cool bath with ice packs near large arteries such as neck, armpits, groin; replenish fluids by drinking or intravenously if needed
<p>Fluid Replacement</p> <p>Weight loss during workout and Fluid amount needed to refuel your body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 pounds (32 ounces) = 4 cups of water or one sports drink bottle • 4 Pounds (64 ounces) = 8 cups of water or four sports drink bottle • 6 pounds (96 ounces) = 12 cups of water or three sports drink bottle • 8 pounds (128 ounces) = 16 cups of water or four sports drink bottle <p>Guidelines for Hydration During Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink 16 – ounces of water or sports drink one to 2 hours before workout or competition • Drink 4-8 ounce of water or sports drink one to two hours before workout or competition • Drink before feeling thirsty. When a person is thirsty, needed fluids are already lost. 		

Weather Conditions: COLD and FREEZING TEMPERATURES

The NWS Wind Chill Temperature (WCT) index uses advances in science, technology, and computer modeling to provide an accurate understandable, and useful formula for calculating the dangers from winter winds and freezing temperatures. The wind chill temperature is how cold people and animals feel when outside. Wind chill is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by wind and cold. As the wind increases, it draws heat from the body, driving down skin temperature and eventually the internal body temperature. Therefore, the wind makes it FEEL much colder. If the temperature is 0 degrees Fahrenheit and the wind is blowing at 15 mph, the wind chill is -19 degrees Fahrenheit. At this wind chill temperature, exposed skin can freeze in 30 minutes.



There are several factors influencing one’s susceptibility or risk of cold related injury or illness. Those factors can be additive. This, it is essential to appreciate each of these factors, along with the associated signs and symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite. For example, exposure to 30°F-50°F temperatures under wet and windy conditions can be equivalent to sub-zero temperatures with no wind or moisture.

Risk Factors	Prevention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low air temperature – when cold exposure exceeds to overwhelms the boy’s ability to compensate for heat loss due to the external environment • Wind chill – Wind chill identifies the risks associated with the interaction of the wind speed and air temperature on the skin • Moisture – wet skin freezes at higher temperatures than dry skin • Exposed skin – heat loss occurs primarily through convection and radiation to the external environment, but may also include evaporation if the skin is moist. This is a concern for those exercising and sweating in cold environments. • Insulation – the amount of insulation from cold and moisture significantly affects thermoregulation • Dehydration – negatively influences metabolism and thermoregulation; Caffeine – acts as a diuretic causing water loss and dehydration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress in layers • Cover the head to prevent excessive heat loss from the head and neck • Stay dry by wearing a wicking fabric next to the body and a breathable, water repellant fabric outer layer • Stay adequately • Eat regular meals • Avoid caffeine • Educate athletes, coaches, officials, and administrators in recognition of cold related illness • Consider cancellation of athletic events if

LIGHTNING and TORNADO SAFETY RULES

All thunderstorms produce lightning, by definition. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck. Move inside. It doesn't have to be raining yet since lightning can strike 10 to 15 miles away from the rain portion of the storm. These lightning strokes come out of the upper portions of the thunderstorm cloud which extends 5 to 10 miles into the atmosphere.

In general, lightning will travel the easiest route from the cloud to ground which means that it often strikes the tallest object. Therefore, a simple rule is to not make yourself the tallest object or stand near the tallest object in your immediate surroundings. For instance, do not stand in an open field, on a beach, or on a hilltop. Do not stand under an isolated or large tree or near a pole, and do not stay out on a boat. If you are in a forest, you should seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. If you are in a group of people, spread out keeping several yards apart from each other.

Stay away from metal objects such as fences, poles, equipment, pipes, etc. Get rid of metal objects on your body such as coins, money clips, hair pins, jewelry, etc. Stay away from water. Inside, stay away from electrical appliances, televisions, and telephones. Only use the phone in an emergency.

If you feel your hair stand on end, you are in immediate danger of being struck. Unless you can instantly jump inside a shelter, drop to a crouching position, bending forward and keeping your feet close together with your hands on your knees. The object is to be as low to the ground as possible, but with as little of your body surface touching the ground.

Persons struck by lightning carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely. Lightning often has a paralyzing effect that is temporary. Even though a person appears dead, he or she may be resuscitated. If a victim is not breathing, immediately start mouth to mouth resuscitation every 5 seconds for adults and children. If a person is not breathing **AND** there is no pulse, cardiopulmonary resuscitation or CPR, must be administered. This is a combination of mouth to mouth resuscitation and external cardiac compression, and should only be undertaken by persons with proper training.

WHAT TERMS ARE USED TO ALERT YOU?

WATCH: A Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued by the National Weather Service whenever conditions exist for severe weather to develop. Watches are usually for large areas of Georgia and are usually two to six hours long. Watches give you time to plan and prepare. Make sure your family and friends are aware of the watch and are informed about what to do if a tornado is sighted. Keep an eye on the sky and listen for further statements and warnings.

WARNING: a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued whenever a tornado or severe thunderstorm has actually been sighted or strongly indicated by radar. Warnings are for smaller areas, such as a county, and are usually 30 minutes to 1 hour long. You must act immediately when you first hear the warning. If the severe weather is reported near you, seek shelter immediately. If not, keep a constant lookout for severe weather and stay near shelter.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A WATCH OR WARNING?

1. Monitor weather information by tuning your radio or your television, or NOAA Weather Radio at 162.400 (VHF).
2. Listen for weather sirens and know what their signals mean.
3. Notify friends and relatives and locate children or handicapped individuals who may not be able to seek shelter quickly.
4. Make sure your shelter is ready (check flashlight batteries, etc.)

WHAT SHOULD YOU AVOID DOING?

1. Do Not Panic!
2. Do not call Emergency Services for information as your call may hold up information vital to all the county.
3. Use telephones only in case of Emergency. Lightning strikes are more common than tornadoes.
4. Do not attempt to leave a building during the approach of a tornado but rather seek the best cover in the building you are presently in. Sit in a hallway without windows with your back to the wall. Stay away from windows and doors.

WHERE SHOULD YOU SEEK SHELTER?

As a general rule the further into the interior of a building you can get and the closer to below ground level you can get the better.

AT SCHOOL:

Follow advance plans to move interior hallways or small rooms on the lowest floor. Avoid areas with glass and wide, free span roofs. Schools, factories and office buildings should designate someone to watch for severe weather and initiate an alarm.

IF DRIVING A VEHICLE OR CAUGHT IN OPEN COUNTRY:

Get into a sturdy building if possible, or lie flat in a ditch or depression and hold onto something on the ground if possible. Do not try to outrun the storm or ride out your vehicle.

Weather Conditions: Air Quality

Millions of people live in areas where air pollution can cause serious health problems. Local air quality can affect our daily lives. Like the weather, it can change from day to day. EPA developed the Air Quality Index, or AQI, to make information available about the health effects of the five most common air pollutants, and how to avoid those effects. In the booklet, *Air Quality Index a Guide to Air Quality and Your Health*, you will find information about these common pollutants and the AQI.

Ground-level ozone and airborne particles are the two pollutants that pose the greatest threat to human health in this country. You can find information about these pollutants in the documents listed below. Ozone, also known as smog, can irritate your respiratory system, causing coughing, irritation in your throat or a burning sensation in your airways. It can reduce lung function, so that you may have feelings of chest tightness, wheezing, or shortness of breath. Ozone can aggravate asthma and trigger asthma attacks. People at greater risk from ground-level ozone are people with lung diseases, such as asthma, and children and adults who are active outdoors.

Particle pollution, also known as particulate matter, is composed of microscopic solids or liquid droplets that are so small that can get deep into the lungs and cause serious health problems. When exposed to these small particles, people with heart or lung diseases and older adults are more at risk of hospital and emergency room visits or, in some cases, even death from heart or lung disease. Even if you are healthy, you may experience temporary symptoms from exposure to elevated levels of particles. Symptoms may include: irritation of the eyes, nose and throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; and shortness of breath. At greatest risk from particle pollution are people with heart or lung disease, older adults (possibly because they may undiagnosed heart or lung disease), and children.

The [Air Quality Index \(AQI\)](#) is a uniform way of reporting ambient concentrations of the major air pollutants (criteria pollutants) regulated by the Clean Air Act. The Air Quality Index converts pollutant concentrations to a common scale, so that they may be compared more easily. An Air Quality Index value of 100 or less indicates a pollutant concentration that should not cause adverse health effects for most people. An index value above 100 indicates a pollutant concentration that may cause adverse health effects. Air Quality Index values are calculated for each day for a county or metropolitan statistical area is the highest value calculated for the day among equivalent to that 500 value. Rarely, a concentration is reported that exceeds the 500-equivalent level. In those instances, the Air Quality Index chart shows the index value as 501, which means “higher than 500.”

A **daily** Air Quality Index chart shows daily index values for a county or metropolitan statistical area, and identifies the main pollutant each day. The chart also displays qualitative health risk categories (good, moderate, unhealthy, etc.) that are associated with ranges of Air Quality Index values.

A **summary** Air Quality Index chart for a county or metropolitan statistical area shows how many days each pollutant was the main pollutant (bar chart), how many days were in each health risk category (bar chart), and percentiles of daily index values (boxplot). The EPA has assigned a specific color to each AQI category to make it easier for people to understand quickly whether air pollution is reaching unhealthy levels in their communities. For example, the color orange means that conditions are “unhealthy for sensitive groups,” while red means that conditions may be “unhealthy for everyone,” and so on.

Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern	Numerical Value	Meaning
Good	0 to 50	Air quality considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk
Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable, however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.
Unhealthy	151 to 200	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.

Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert; everyone may experience more serious health effects
Hazardous	301 to 500	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.

WHAT IF YOU ARE A VICTIM?

Do your best to protect yourself, your family and your neighbors from further danger. Notify authorities. Photograph the damage to your property. Do not sign contracts for repair work or debris removal without consulting authorities and your insurance company.

WHAT IF A TORNADO TOUCHES DOWN NEARBY?

Do not go to the tornado scene. The area must be kept clear and secure for the victims and for emergency personnel.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER NATURAL DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH THUNDERSTORMS?

LIGHTNING is actually more common than tornadoes. When a thunderstorm threatens, get inside a home or building as quickly as you can.

HAIL also can be dangerous if you are out in the open. The larger the hail size the bigger and more destructive the storm is going to be.

FLOODING is also a product of thunderstorms. Torrential rainfall often accompanies severe storms and can quickly flood low lying areas, rivers and streams. Take extra precautions if you are in a flood prone area.

Fulton County Athletic Guidelines Pertaining to Recruitment and Undue Influence

It is the responsibility of the school leader and coach to become thoroughly familiarized with all rules/regulations pertaining to recruitment and undue influence. School leaders and coaches are encouraged to ask questions and to contact the District Athletic interacting with students who are not yet enrolled in your school:

Allowed:

1. Sell your school
2. Sell your community
3. Sell your athletic programs
4. Conduct a tour by selected staff (AD, Principal, or guidance department)
5. Refer the student/parent to the guidance department
6. Inform the family that they will be welcomed into your school if they make a bona-fide move into your district. A **bona-fide** move constitutes a move from one school district to another school district by the entire family residing in the previous residence.

Once the parent leaves your school, you should not have any further contact unless it is simple follow up questions initiated by the parent.

Not Allowed:

1. Discussion about playing time or roles in your program
2. Inviting students to attend a practice/game
3. Assessing an athlete's ability
4. Initiating follow up phone calls (It is ok to respond to simple questions but not allowed to build relationships)
5. Initiating follow up emails (It is ok to respond to simple questions but not allowed to build relationships)
6. Building a relationship with the student or family
7. Handing out housing information
8. Holding tryouts for students who are not enrolled in your school
9. Allowing the non-enrolled students to participate in workouts

Fulton County Board Policies can be found by accessing the Fulton County Website (www.fultonschools.org)

1. Click on School Board tab
2. Click on Board Policy
3. Click on Policies
4. Type in Policy letters

Fulton County School Transportation Release 2016-17

Since your student will be transported between school sites, events, activities during and after the school day, please complete and sign the following form, and return it to your coach.

_____ I wish for my student to be transported by Fulton County bus transportation ONLY.

_____ I wish to designate additional person(s) who may transport my student (see below).

I agree to hold Fulton County Board of Education harmless in the event of injury to _____ (student's name), including any property damage while the student is driving or being driven to or from a school site and/or to school-related events, activities, or sites after school hours in a vehicle other than that provided by Fulton County Board of Education.

In addition, I agree not to assert against the Fulton County Board of Education, all current, former and future members of the School Board of the Fulton County Board of Education, all current, former and future employees and/or volunteers of the Fulton County Board of Education, and their heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns, in any court of law, any claim or claims that the student and/or parent or legal guardian had, now have, or may have in the future, whether known or unknown, based on any injuries sustained by the student while being so transported.

I have read the above agreement, and voluntarily sign the release and waiver of liability, and further agree that no oral representations, statements or inducements apart from the foregoing written agreement have been made.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

Designated Driver (if applicable): All designated drivers must be over 18 years of age or an immediate family relative.

(Student's Name) _____ has my permission to be transported

to and from school sites during the school day and/or to school-related events, activities, or sites after school hours as a participant on the _____ School _____ Team. Either

I or my designated driver, _____ will be transporting the student to and/or from the event or activity. Either I or my designated driver will present himself or herself to the head coach and/or assistant coach after the event or activity has been completed in order to verify the intent to transport the above mentioned student.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Driver: _____ Date: _____

(FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY)

Received by: _____ on _____
(print full name) (print date)

Signature of receiving party: _____

PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN ANY CONDITIONING, TRYOUT, PRACTICE SESSION, OR PLAY IN ANY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITY, THE STUDENT ATHLETE MUST SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE COACH OF THE ACTIVITY. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM WILL DELAY THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE TO JOIN THE TEAM.

FULTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

STUDENT'S APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS AND VERIFICATION OF INSURANCE

Sport: _____ Date of first practice: _____, 2016/2017

Student Name: _____ Male ___ or Female ___
(Last name) (First name) (MI)

Date of Birth: _____ Age _____ years old
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Address: _____
(#and Street Name) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Home Telephone #: _____ Emergency Telephone #: _____

Cellular Telephone #: _____

This application to represent my school in interscholastic activities is entirely voluntary on my part and is made with the understanding that I have studied and understood the Eligibility Standards that I must meet to represent my school and that I have not violated any of these standards. I understand that not meeting the standards set by the school or being ejected from an interscholastic contest because of an unsportsmanlike act, could result in my not being allowed to participate in the next contest or suspension from the team either temporarily or permanently. I understand that if I transfer to another school my eligibility may be affected under the Georgia High School Association's eligibility standards.

Student Signature: _____
(Signature) (School) (Date)

I hereby consent for the above student to represent his/her school in interscholastic activities. I have received a Student/Parent Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned Interscholastic Activities 2016-2017. I understand that I am responsible for reading the contents of this publication and that questions related to this publication can be addressed to the Fulton County Athletic Director at 470-254-6892. If I, the parent(s)/guardian(s), cannot be reached in the event of a medical emergency, I do give consent for the school to obtain emergency transportation to the physician or hospital of its choice, and such medical care as is reasonably necessary for the welfare of the student if he/she is injured in the course of participation in interscholastic activities. I give permission for the above student to participate in school-sponsored trips, including overnight trips, associated with Fulton County School's interscholastic athletic competitions. In the event that transportation is not provided by the Fulton County School System, transportation will be the student's or the parent's /guardian's responsibility. In addition, I agree not to assert against the Fulton County Board of Education, all current, former and future members of the School Board of the Fulton County Board of Education, all current, former and future employees and/or volunteers of the Fulton County Board of Education, and their heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns, in any court of law, any claim or claims that the student and/or parent or legal guardian had, now have, or may have in the future, whether known or unknown, arising out of, during, or in conjunction with the student's participation in the activity, any trip, or transportation associated with the activity, or the rendering or emergency medical procedures or treatment, if any.

All parents and guardians must sign and date this form

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN ANY CONDITIONING, TRYOUT, PRACTICE SESSION, OR PLAY IN ANY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITY, THE STUDENT-ATHLETE MUST SUBMIT THIS FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS TO THE COACH OF THE ACTIVITY. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM WILL DELAY THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE TO JOIN THE TEAM.

FULTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

VERIFICATION OF INSURANCE COVERAGE

Effective for School Year 2016-2017

I have waived the medical/health insurance coverage that has been approved by the Fulton County School System and offered to my child, _____ Date of Birth: _____ (Name of Child)

The medical/ health insurance that I am using for my child for the current school year at _____ is provided by _____ and (School Name) (Name of Insurance Company)

the insurance policy number is _____ This insurance policy (Insurance Policy Number)

is in effect from: _____ to _____ (Date) (Date)

Attach a copy of Medical/Health Insurance Certificate to this form to verify information listed above. Thank you.

The above medical/health insurance coverage provides for the following interscholastic athletics activities:

- 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

We/I understand that per The Georgia High School Association a Pre-participation Physical evaluation must be performed by a physician to medically screen each student who participates in the interscholastic athletic programs of the Fulton County School District. We/I understand that a basic medical screening (the required physical exam) is general in nature and limited in scope and does not indicate or assure me/us that my/our child is completely free from impairments. If I/we wish for a more detailed physical exam to be performed upon my/our child then it is my/our responsibility to arrange and to pay for such an exam. If this more detailed exam is performed, it is my/our responsibility to notify the Fulton County School District, and it's appropriate employees, of any potential medical problems uncovered by any physical exam given to my/our child other than the general physical required by the school system for athletic participation. I agree to fully waive any and all claims of whatever nature, fully and finally, now and forever, for my/our child, for myself, my estate, my heirs, my administrators, my executors, my assignees, my agents, my successors, and for all members of my family, and to indemnify, release, defend, exonerate, discharge and hold harmless all current, former and future members of the School Board of the Fulton County Board of Education, all current, former and future employees of the Fulton County Board of Education, their schools, their trustees, officers, Board of Education, agents, coaches, athletic trainers, physicians, volunteers, and any other practitioner of the healing arts (an "Indemnified Party") from any and all liability, personal or property damages, claims, causes of action or demands brought against the Fulton County School District or indemnified party arising out of any injuries to my/our child or to his or her property or losses of any kind which may result from or in connection with his or her participation in any activity related to the interscholastic athletic programs provided by the Fulton County School District.

My signature below attests that I have read, understood and concur with the information on this form, and that I give consent for my child to participate in the athletic programs as stated above.

ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS/ MUST SIGN BELOW AND DATE

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian : _____ Date: _____

Signature of student: _____ Date: _____

PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN ANY CONDITIONING, TRYOUT, PRACTICE SESSION, OR PLAY IN ANY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITY, THE STUDENT-ATHLETE MUST SUBMIT THIS FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS TO THE COACH OF THE ACTIVITY. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THIS FORM WILL DELAY THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE TO JOIN THE TEAM

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation-To Be Retained By Physician HISTORY FORM

(Note: This form is to be filled out by the patient and parent prior to seeing the physician. The physician should keep this form in the chart.)

Date of Exam: _____
 Name: _____ Date of Birth _____
 Sex _____ Age _____ Grade _____ School _____ Sport(s) _____

Medicines and Allergies: Please list all of the prescription and over-the-counter medicines and supplements (herbal and nutritional) that you are currently taking:
 Do you have any allergies? Yes No If yes, please identify specific allergy below.

Medicines Pollens Food Stinging Insects

Explain "Yes" answers below. Circle questions you don't know the answers to.

GENERAL QUESTIONS	Yes	No
1. Has a doctor ever denied or restricted your participation in sports for any reason?		
2. Do you have any ongoing medical conditions? If so, please identify below: <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma <input type="checkbox"/> Anemia <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes <input type="checkbox"/> Infections Other: _____		
3. Have you ever spent the night in the hospital?		
4. Have you ever had surgery?		
HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU	Yes	No
5. Have you ever passed out or nearly passed out DURING or AFTER exercise?		
6. Have you ever had discomfort, pain, tightness, or pressure in your chest during exercise?		
7. Does your heart ever race or skip beats (irregular beats) during exercise?		
8. Has a doctor ever told you that you have any heart problems? If so, check all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure <input type="checkbox"/> A heart murmur <input type="checkbox"/> High cholesterol <input type="checkbox"/> A heart infection <input type="checkbox"/> Kawasaki disease Other: _____		
9. Has a doctor ever ordered a test for your heart? (For example, ECG/EKG, echocardiogram)		
10. Do you get lightheaded or feel more short of breath than expected during exercise?		
11. Have you ever had an unexplained seizure?		
12. Do you get more tired or short of breath more quickly than your friends during exercise?		
HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY	Yes	No
13. Has any family member or relative died of heart problems or had an unexpected or unexplained sudden death before age 50 (including drowning, unexplained car accident, or sudden infant death syndrome)?		
14. Does anyone in your family have hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, Marfan syndrome, arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, short QT syndrome, Brugada syndrome, or catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia?		
15. Does anyone in your family have a heart problem, pacemaker, or implanted defibrillator?		
16. Has anyone in your family had unexplained fainting, unexplained seizures, or near drowning?		
BONE AND JOINT QUESTIONS	Yes	No
17. Have you ever had an injury to a bone, muscle, ligament, or tendon that caused you to miss a practice or a game?		
18. Have you ever had any broken or fractured bones or dislocated joints?		
19. Have you ever had an injury that required x-rays, MRI, CT scan, injections, therapy, a brace, a cast, or crutches?		
20. Have you ever had a stress fracture?		
21. Have you ever been told that you have or have you had an x-ray for neck instability or atlantoaxial instability? (Down syndrome or dwarfism)		
22. Do you regularly use a brace, orthotics, or other assistive device?		
23. Do you have a bone, muscle, or joint injury that bothers you?		
24. Do any of your joints become painful, swollen, feel warm, or look red?		
25. Do you have any history of juvenile arthritis or connective tissue disease?		

MEDICAL QUESTIONS	Yes	No
26. Do you cough, wheeze, or have difficulty breathing during or after exercise?		
27. Have you ever used an inhaler or taken asthma medicine?		
28. Is there anyone in your family who has asthma?		
29. Were you born without or are you missing a kidney, an eye, a testicle (males), your spleen, or any other organ?		
30. Do you have groin pain or a painful bulge or hernia in the groin area?		
31. Have you had infectious mononucleosis (mono) within the last month?		
32. Do you have any rashes, pressure sores, or other skin problems?		
33. Have you had a herpes or MRSA skin infection?		
34. Have you ever had a head injury or concussion?		
35. Have you ever had a hit or blow to the head that caused confusion, prolonged headache, or memory problems?		
36. Do you have a history of seizure disorder?		
37. Do you have headaches with exercise?		
38. Have you ever had numbness, tingling, or weakness in your arms or legs after being hit or falling?		
39. Have you ever been unable to move your arms or legs after being hit or falling?		
40. Have you ever become ill while exercising in the heat?		
41. Do you get frequent muscle cramps when exercising?		
42. Do you or someone in your family have sickle cell trait or disease?		
43. Have you had any problems with your eyes or vision?		
44. Have you had any eye injuries?		
45. Do you wear glasses or contact lenses?		
46. Do you wear protective eyewear, such as goggles or a face shield?		
47. Do you worry about your weight?		
48. Are you trying to or has anyone recommended that you gain or lose weight?		
49. Are you on a special diet or do you avoid certain types of foods?		
50. Have you ever had an eating disorder?		
51. Do you have any concerns that you would like to discuss with a doctor?		
FEMALES ONLY		
52. Have you ever had a menstrual period?		
53. How old were you when you had your first menstrual period?		
54. How many periods have you had in the last 12 months?		

Explain "yes" answers here

I hereby state that, to the best of my knowledge, my answers to the above questions are complete and correct.

Signature of athlete _____ Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date _____

©2010 American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Sports Medicine, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, and American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine. Permission is granted to reprint for noncommercial, educational purposes with acknowledgment.

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation To Be Retained By Physician

THE ATHLETE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: SUPPLEMENTAL HISTORY FORM

Date of Exam: _____
 Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
 Sex _____ Age _____ Grade _____ School _____ Sport(s) _____

1. Type of disability		
2. Date of disability		
3. Classification (if available)		
4. Cause of disability (birth, disease, accident/trauma, other)		
5. List the sports you are interested in playing		
	Yes	No
6. Do you regularly use a brace, assistive device, or prosthetic?		
7. Do you use any special brace or assistive device for sports?		
8. Do you have any rashes, pressure sores, or any other skin problems?		
9. Do you have a hearing loss? Do you use a hearing aid?		
10. Do you have a visual impairment?		
11. Do you use any special devices for bowel or bladder function?		
12. Do you have burning or discomfort when urinating?		
13. Have you had autonomic dysreflexia?		
14. Have you ever been diagnosed with a heat-related (hyperthermia) or cold-related (hypothermia) illness?		
15. Do you have muscle spasticity?		
16. Do you have frequent seizures that cannot be controlled by medication?		

Explain "yes" answers here

Please indicate if you have ever had any of the following.

	Yes	No
Atlantoaxial instability		
X-ray evaluation for atlantoaxial instability		
Dislocated joints (more than one)		
Easy bleeding		
Enlarged spleen		
Hepatitis		
Osteopenia or osteoporosis		
Difficulty controlling bowel		
Difficulty controlling bladder		
Numbness or tingling in arms or hands		
Numbness or tingling in legs or feet		
Weakness in arms or hands		
Weakness in legs or feet		
Recent change in coordination		
Recent change in ability to walk		
Spina bifida		
Latex allergy		

Explain "yes" answers here

I hereby state that, to the best of my knowledge, my answers to the above questions are complete and correct.

Signature of athlete _____ Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date _____

©2010 American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Sports Medicine, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, and American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine. Permission is granted to reprint for noncommercial, educational purposes with acknowledgment.

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation- To Be Retained By Physician

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORM

Name _____ Date of birth: _____

PHYSICIAN REMINDERS

- Consider additional questions on more sensitive issues
 - Do you feel stressed out or under a lot of pressure?
 - Do you ever feel sad, hopeless, depressed, or anxious?
 - Do you feel safe at your home or residence?
 - Have you ever tried cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?
 - During the past 30 days, did you use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?
 - Do you drink alcohol or use any other drugs?
 - Have you ever taken anabolic steroids or used any other performance supplement?
 - Have you ever taken any supplements to help you gain or lose weight or improve your performance?
 - Do you wear a seat belt, use a helmet, and use condoms?
- Consider reviewing questions on cardiovascular symptoms (questions 5–14).

EXAMINATION			
Height _____	Weight _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
BP _____ / _____ (_____ / _____)	Pulse _____	Vision R 20/ _____	L 20/ _____
		Corrected <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
MEDICAL	NORMAL	ABNORMAL FINDINGS	
Appearance • Marfan stigmata (kyphoscoliosis, high-arched palate, pectus excavatum, arachnodactyly, arm span > height, hyperlaxity, myopia, MVP, aortic insufficiency)			
Eyes/ears/nose/throat • Pupils equal • Hearing			
Lymph nodes			
Heart ^a • Murmurs (auscultation standing, supine, +/- Valsalva) • Location of point of maximal impulse (PMI)			
Pulses • Simultaneous femoral and radial pulses			
Lungs			
Abdomen			
Genitourinary (males only) ^b			
Skin • HSV, lesions suggestive of MRSA, tinea corporis			
Neurologic ^c			
MUSCULOSKELETAL			
Neck			
Back			
Shoulder/arm			
Elbow/forearm			
Wrist/hand/fingers			
Hip/thigh			
Knee			
Leg/ankle			
Foot/toes			
Functional • Duck-walk, single leg hop			

^aConsider ECG, echocardiogram, and referral to cardiology for abnormal cardiac history or exam.
^bConsider GU exam if in private setting. Having third party present is recommended.
^cConsider cognitive evaluation or baseline neuropsychiatric testing if a history of significant concussion.

- Cleared for all sports without restriction
- Cleared for all sports without restriction with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment for _____

Not cleared

Pending further evaluation

For any sports

For certain sports _____

Reason: _____

Recommendations: _____

I have examined the above-named student and completed the pre-participation physical evaluation. The athlete does not present apparent clinical contraindications to practice and participate in the sport(s) as outlined above. A copy of the physical exam is on record in my office and can be made available to the school at the request of the parents. If conditions arise after the athlete has been cleared for participation, the physician may rescind the clearance until the problem is resolved and the potential consequences are completely explained to the athlete (and parents/guardians).

Name of physician (print/type) _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Signature of physician _____, MD or DO

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation **CLEARANCE FORM**

TO BE GIVEN TO COACH OF SPORT IN WHICH THE STUDENT ATHLETE WILL PARTICIPATE and KEPT ON FILE AT THE SCHOOL

Note: Copies of other Pre-Participation Evaluation forms may be obtained by the school only if parents/guardians sign a release of records form at the physician's office.

Name _____ Sex M F Age _____ Date of birth _____

- Cleared for all sports without restriction
- Cleared for all sports without restriction with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment for _____

- Not cleared
- Pending further evaluation
- For any sports
- For certain sports _____

Reason Recommendations _____

I have examined the above-named student and completed the pre-participation physical evaluation. The athlete does not present apparent clinical contraindications to practice and participate in the sport(s) as outlined above. A copy of the physical exam is on record in my office and can be made available to the school at the request of the parents. If conditions arise after the athlete has been cleared for participation, the physician may rescind the clearance until the problem is resolved and the potential consequences are completely explained to the athlete (and parents/guardians).

Name of physician (print/type) _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Signature of physician: _____, MD or DO

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Allergies _____

Other information _____

<hr/> LAST NAME	<hr/> FIRST NAME	
<hr/> SPORT (list all sports)	<hr/> GRADE	<hr/> SCHOOL

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ MI _____ SPORT (s) _____ GRADE _____

STUDENT/PARENT CONCUSSION AWARENESS FORM 2016-17

DANGERS OF CONCUSSION

Concussions at all levels of sports have received a great deal of attention and a state law has been passed to address this issue. Adolescent athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. Once considered little more than a minor “ding” to the head, it is now understood that a concussion has the potential to result in death, or changes in brain function (either short-term or long-term). A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. Continued participation in any sport following a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, as well as increased risk for further injury to the brain, and even death.

Player and parental education in this area is crucial – that is the reason for this document. Refer to it regularly. This form must be signed by a parent or guardian of each student who wishes to participate in GHSA athletics (**one form for each sport is required**). One copy needs to be returned to the school, and one retained at home.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

Headache, dizziness, poor balance, moves clumsily, reduced energy level/tiredness

Nausea or vomiting

Blurred vision, sensitivity to light and sounds

Fogginess of memory, difficulty concentrating, slowed thought processes, confused about surroundings or game assignments

Unexplained changes in behavior and personality

Loss of consciousness (NOTE: This does not occur in all concussion episodes.)

BY-LAW 2.68: GHSA CONCUSSION POLICY: In accordance with Georgia law and national playing rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest and shall not return to play until an appropriate health care professional has determined that no concussion has occurred. (NOTE: An appropriate health care professional may include licensed physician (MD/DO) or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.

- a) No athlete is allowed to return to a game or a practice on the same day that a concussion (a) has been diagnosed, OR (b) cannot be ruled out.
- b) Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be cleared medically by an appropriate health care professional prior to resuming participation in any future practice or contest. The formulation of a gradual return to play protocol shall be a part of the medical clearance.
- c) It is mandatory that every coach in each GHSA sport participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at www.nfhslearn.com at least every two years – beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
- d) Each school will be responsible for monitoring the participation of its coaches in the concussion management course, and shall keep a record of those who participate.

I HAVE READ THIS FORM AND I UNDERSTAND THE FACTS PRESENTED IN IT.

STUDENT NAME (PRINT) _____ **DATE:** ____/____/____

SIGNATURE: _____ (Student) _____ (Parent or Guardian)

Receipt Acknowledgement for Athlete/Parent

**Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned Interscholastic Athletic Activities
2016-2017**

Student Name: _____ School: _____

I understand that I am responsible for reading and understanding the information in the Athlete/Parent Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned Interscholastic Athletic Activities (the "handbook). Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their students understand this information.

I understand I am responsible for downloading or accessing a copy of the handbook from the school's website or from the District Athletic Office website, found at www.fultonschools.org. If I cannot access the handbook, I will ask for a copy from the coach, or the front office of the school.

I understand that this handbook contains required forms, and rules and behavioral expectations for student participants that students are expected to follow at school as well as off campus and in the community. I understand that failure to follow these rules may result in suspension from a team or activity, reduction in participation, and removal from a team or activity, as well as other school sanctions. I understand that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right, and student participants are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior and leadership skills at school and in the community, or that privilege will be removed.

I understand that the most up to date GHSA rules and information is available at www.ghsa.net.

I understand and agree that student directory information, as discussed in the Directory Information Statement in the Code of Conduct & Discipline Handbook which I received upon enrollment and each school year, may be released as discussed in the Directory Information Statement for purposes related to GHSA Interscholastic Athletic Activities.

If you disagree with this release, please contact _____ directly, but please note that activity participation may require public performances and public acknowledgement of student and his/her identity.

If I have any questions about information contained in this handbook, I will ask a school administrator or coach to discuss those questions with me. Failure to sign and return this form does not relieve me from complying with and understanding the information enclosed in the handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

AND

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student-Athlete Social Media Guidelines

Purpose: The athletic departments in Fulton County Schools will continue to utilize social media to disseminate information, promote programs, and organize activities. There is a responsibility attached to the schools, coaches, and players when using these tools. At no time should a student be the designee for any official team web-pages, twitter accounts, or any other social media platforms. FCS athletics encourages the use of applications that send information out to the athletes without giving them the ability to reply (For example: Remind 101). Applications that allow the students to reply should not be used by school employees to convey information to the students

Due to the accessibility and use of social media in today's society, Fulton County High School's Athletic Departments are implementing guidelines to assist our athletes in developing the skills needed to make positive decisions while using social media outlets. The need to understand what is social media appropriate and what is not a paramount, as many employers and colleges now view potential candidate's social media activities before asking them to join their organization. This is specifically evident in collegiate athletics where students have had scholarships revoked, served suspensions and are occasionally removed from teams.

The below guidelines should be used to assist student athletes with deciding what to post on social media outlets. They provide a set of parameters to stay within when deciding to post statements and photos. Coaches will assist by being a resource the athletes can turn to for advice.

Coaches Responsibility:

1. Ensure their team members are aware of the guidelines
2. Explain potential consequences for inappropriate social media use.
3. Address any social media concerns brought to their attention.

Guidelines:

1. Social Media use should not violate the FCS Code of Conduct for students.
2. Post should not be demeaning or disrespectful to teammates, coaches, peers or other institutions.
3. Post should not contain profane, vulgar, obscene, racial/ethnic, or offensive language.
4. Photos should not contain nudity, be vulgar, obscene or offensive in nature.
5. Post should not cast a negative image or negative perception of the athlete, team, or school.

Consequences: Provided are a set of possible consequences for not adhering to the FCS Athletic Social Media Guidelines. Ultimately, the coaches/AD/School will determine consequence for their team(s). It is expected the consequences will be progressive if behavior is not improved through previous attempts

Potential Consequences:

1. Conference between the athlete and coach. The coach may or may not include the parent in the conference.
2. Extra practice time.
3. Game suspension.
4. Expulsion from the team.