



**WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE**

NATALIE E. TENNANT

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW DIVISION

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5/14/2015 10:35:41 AM

OFFICE OF
WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE

**FORM 1 -- NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING OR COMMENT PERIOD ON A PROPOSED RULE
(Page 1)**

AGENCY **Secondary School Activities Commission**
RULE TYPE **Legislative Exempt AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE Yes** TITLE-SERIES **127-**
RULE NAME **ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY** **02**

CITE AUTHORITY **W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)**

COMMENTS LIMITED TO
Written

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

DATE WRITTEN COMMENT PERIOD ENDS
Monday, June 15, 2015 4:00 PM

WRITTEN COMMENTS MAY BE MAILED TO
**Gary Ray
Executive Director
WV Secondary School Activities Commission
2875 Staunton Turnpike
Parkersburg, West Virginia 26104**

BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Yes
Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



Title-Series: 127-02



Rule Id: 9753



Document: 26673



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FORM 11 -- FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES (Page 1)

AGENCY Secondary School Activities Commission
RULE TYPE Legislative Exempt AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE Yes TITLE-SERIES 127-
RULE NAME ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY 02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

PRIMARY CONTACT

Gary Ray
ADDRESS LINE 1
ADDRESS LINE 2
CITY, STATE ZIP

SECONDARY CONTACT

Virginia Harris
ADDRESS LINE 1 SECONDARY
ADDRESS LINE 2 SECONDARY
CITY SECONDARY, STATE SECONDARY ZIP SECONDARY

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



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FORM 11 -- FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES (Page 1)

AGENCY	Secondary School Activities Commission		
RULE TYPE	Legislative Exempt	AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE	Yes
RULE NAME	ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY		TITLE-SERIES 127-02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

SUMMARIZE IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE MANNER WHAT IMPACT THIS MEASURE WILL HAVE ON COSTS AND REVENUES OF STATE GOVERNMENT.

No state costs or revenues will be impacted by the proposed amendment of W. Va. 127CSR2.

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



Title-Series: 127-02



Rule Id: 9753



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FORM 11 -- FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES (Page 2)

AGENCY Secondary School Activities Commission
RULE TYPE Legislative Exempt AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE Yes TITLE-SERIES 127-
RULE NAME ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY 02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

FISCAL NOTE DETAIL -- SHOW OVER-ALL EFFECT IN ITEM 1 AND 2 AND, IN ITEM 3, GIVE AN EXPLANATION OF BREAKDOWN BY FISCAL YEAR, INCLUDING LONG-RANGE EFFECT.

Effect Of Proposal	Current Increase/Decrease (use ' - ')	Next Increase/Decrease (use ' - ')	Fiscal Year (Upon Full Implementation)
ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	0	0	0
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0
CURRENT EXPENSES	0	0	0
REPAIRS AND ALTERATIONS	0	0	0
ASSETS	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0
ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUES	0	0	0

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



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FORM 11 -- FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES (Page 3)

AGENCY	Secondary School Activities Commission		
RULE TYPE	Legislative Exempt	AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE	Yes
RULE NAME	ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY		TITLE-SERIES 127-02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

3. EXPLANATION OF ABOVE ESTIMATES (INCLUDING LONG-RANGE EFFECT). PLEASE INCLUDE ANY INCREASE OR DECREASE IN FEES IN YOUR ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUES.

No state costs or revenues will be impacted by the proposed amendment of W. Va. 127CSR2.

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



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FORM 11 -- FISCAL NOTE FOR PROPOSED RULES (Page 4)

AGENCY	Secondary School Activities Commission		
RULE TYPE	Legislative Exempt	AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE	Yes
RULE NAME	ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY		TITLE-SERIES 127-02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY AREAS OF VAGUENESS, TECHNICAL DEFECTS, REASONS THE PROPOSED RULE WOULD NOT HAVE A FISCAL IMPACT, AND OR ANY SPECIAL ISSUES NOT CAPTURED ELSEWHERE ON THIS FORM.

No state costs or revenues will be impacted by the proposed amendment of W. Va. 127CSR2.

BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



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FORM 12 -- BRIEF SUMMARY AND STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES (Page 1)

AGENCY	Secondary School Activities Commission		
RULE TYPE	Legislative Exempt	AMENDMENT TO EXISTING RULE	Yes TITLE-SERIES 127-
RULE NAME	ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY		02

CITE AUTHORITY W. Va. Code §§29A-3B-1, et seq.; W. Va. Board of Education v. Hechler, 180 W. Va. 451; 376 S.E.2d 839 (1988)

SUMMARIZE IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE MANNER CONTENTS OF CHANGES IN RULE AND STATEMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING THE RULE.

The majority of public and most private schools in West Virginia belong to the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. Each year, the principals of member schools submit revisions to the rules and regulations. The submitted proposals are presented and voted upon at the annual Board of Control meeting. Any approved changes are then submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education for its review and approval.

Following is a brief summary of proposed amendments to Series 2: 1) to allow schools to maintain a freshman team, but play a junior varsity football team without losing eligibility; 2) to limit participation to a bona fide move of at least one county away to help limit the number of transfers based solely upon athletic participation; and, 3) to clarify current rule.

BY CHOOSING 'YES', I ATTEST THAT THE PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Yes

Charles K Heinlein -- By my signature, I certify that I am the person authorized to file legislative rules, in accordance with West Virginia Code §29A-3-11 and §39A-3-2.



Title-Series: 127-02



Rule Id: 9753



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Series 2, Athletics, Provisions Governing Eligibility
Series 3, Provisions Governing Contests
Series 4, Provisions Governing Conduct
West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission
Proposed Changes in Rules and Regulations

BACKGROUND

The majority of public and most private schools in West Virginia belong to the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. Each year, the principals of member schools submit revisions to the rules and regulations. The submitted proposals are presented and voted upon at the annual Board of Control meeting. Any approved changes are then submitted to the West Virginia State Board of Education for its review and approval.

PURPOSE

These amendments are brought forth to keep the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission current and updated on changes, trends and issues in the band and athletic programs.

These proposals were distributed for public comment in May and June. The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission will present to the Board the comments received for its review at the June meeting.

The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission staff, Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and Board of Control respectfully request that the proposed rule changes to the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Rules and Regulations Handbook be approved.

CONTENT

Seven proposals are being submitted to the State Board by the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. Each rule change is presented with the whole rule being included. This will help the State Board members understand the significance of the rule change.

The following is a brief summary of the effect of each proposal:

1. To allow schools to maintain a freshman team, but play a junior varsity football team without losing eligibility. (Vote: Yes-107 No-3)
2. To limit participation to a bona fide move of at least one county away to help limit the number of transfers based solely upon athletic participation. (Vote: Yes-64 No-43)
3. To clarify current rule. (Vote: Yes-99 No-8)

4. To enhance the development of athletes within the state of WV by allowing certified high school and middle school coaches work with them year round. (Vote: Yes-54 No-53)
5. To align rule 127-3-9.6.c with current testing procedure. (Vote: Yes-118 No-0)
6. To allow schools to maintain a freshman team, but play a junior varsity football team without losing eligibility. (Vote: Yes-110 No-0)
7. To clarify current rules and bring in line with a West Virginia Supreme Court decision. (Vote: Yes-118 No-0)

IMPACT

Instruction

None

Leadership

None

Financial

None

Administrative

None

ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS, AND COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS WILL NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE CHANGES IN ORDER TO ADMINISTER THEIR SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CURRENT RULES. THERE IS NO MAJOR CHANGE THAT WOULD IMPACT ADMINISTRATION NEGATIVELY.

WVSSAC
Rules and Regulations Handbook
2015-16 Proposed Rule Changes

Proposal 1 (Passed 107 – 3)

Amend §127-2-3. Enrollment and Team Membership. (Pg. 16) as follows:

3.2.d. Students enrolled in the ninth grade of a four, five or six year high school may participate on the high school team. Also, ninth graders of a feeder school may participate on their high school team and sixth grade students of a K-6 elementary feeder school may participate on their middle school/9th grade team if granted permission by the county board of education or governing body of a private/parochial school and the school principals involved. Once a ninth grade student becomes a member of the high school team said student will be ineligible for the middle school/9th grade team in that sport. Members of a 9th grade team may be grouped for practice with members of the varsity/~~jv~~ team. However, if a 9th grade student participates, ~~which would include but not limited to dressing~~, in a varsity/~~jv~~ scrimmage or game that student becomes ineligible for the 9th grade team. Participation is defined as dressing and being available to play in a game, regardless if said player enters the game.

Rick Jones, Principal, John Marshall High School
Amy Minch, Principal, Wheeling Park High School

Rationale:

This would allow schools to maintain a freshman team, but choose to play a junior varsity football team without losing eligibility. It would also allow teams to move up a freshman to junior varsity and back down without losing eligibility. This would help keep teams from cancelling junior varsity games. The quarter rule would still be in effect.

Proposal 2 (Passed 64 - 43)

Amend §127-2-7. Residence- Transfer. (Pg. 19) by adding the following:

7.1.f. A student whose parents have resided in the school zone for a minimum of one academic year at which the student has been in attendance for a minimum of one academic year and whose parents make a bona fide change of residence to a new school zone during the school term may:

7.1.f.1. Retain eligibility as long as said student retains continuous enrollment and attendance or:

7.1.f.2. Transfer at time of change of residence to the school in the attendance zone in which the parents are now residing and be eligible in that school or:

7.1.f.3. Transfer at any time prior to the start of the next school year to the school in the attendance zone in which his parents are residing and be eligible for interscholastic activities at the receiving school.

7.1.f.4. However, a student who has started participation in a sport, which would include practice or contest, that they were participating in at a WVSSAC member school, may not participate in that sport for that sport season at the WVSSAC member school to where they transferred, so long as that transfer was within one contiguous county of their former member school.

David Nuzum, Principal
East Fairmont High School

Rationale:

Limiting participation to a bona fide move of at least one county away will help limit the number of transfers based solely upon athletic participation or disagreements with coaching staffs.

Proposal 3 (Passed 99 – 8)

Amend §127-2-8. Adoption/Guardianship. (Pg. 22) as follows:

8.3. Notwithstanding any other provision of the WVSSAC rules and regulations, any student residing with a guardian/custodian other than a testamentary guardian may not compete for a school in any sport on the varsity level but may compete at the junior varsity level. If a student elects to participate at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule, the student may not participate at the varsity level even after being enrolled at the school for 365 days. However, if a student elects to participate at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule, and then commences to reside with a custodial parent, the student may participate at the varsity level notwithstanding the fact that the student had previously participated at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule.

Constitution and Bylaws

Rationale:

To clarify current rules.

Proposal 4 (Passed 54 – 53)

Amend §127-3-7. Out-of-Season Coaching. (Pg. 35) as follows:

7.2. School organized out-of-season practice or related activities shall ~~only~~ be permitted with principal approval during ~~Weeks 50, 51 and 52 of the National Federation Standardized Calendar the year, with the exception of 2 “dead periods” per sport, and Saturdays or Sundays. These periods are during week 52 (Fourth of July week) and one week before the opening of each specific sports season.~~ During the Dead Periods, there will be no coaching, observing, practice, open facilities, leagues, or school sponsored clinics or camps. The sessions each day should not exceed two hours in length. Participation by students must be open to all students, voluntary, and not required directly or indirectly for membership on a school team. Participation by students during these weeks practices does not meet Practice Rule 127-2-13.4.

7.2.a Saturday or Sunday activities that are part of a camp or league shall be permitted with Principal approval.

7.2.b The use of protective equipment, pads, shields or blocking dummies is not permitted during these workouts. Helmets can be used for safety purposes during 7 on 7 competitions or leagues.

Trent Sherman, Principal
Martinsburg High School

Rationale:

1. This rule change enhances the development of athletes within the state of West Virginia by allowing certified high school and middle school coaches to work with them year round.
2. This rule combats the negative influence that some AAU programs have on students who participate in those leagues.
 - a. Prevents situations created by well-meaning parents taking over local summer leagues and creating the negative, pressurized environment that our philosophy is against. As coaches, we see athletes developing bad habits during local leagues and now we will spend time during regular season changing patterns that should never have been taught to our student athletes.
3. This evens the playing field for our student athletes who must compete against schools from other states who are allowed to practice year round.
 - a. Pennsylvania – Allows unrestricted out of season coaching year round; no dead periods.
 - b. Virginia – allows unrestricted out of season coaching year round; 10 day prior to season start dead period & week of July 4 dead period.

- c. Maryland – Allows coaching of teams in leagues from last spring championship until start of fall practice & coaching of teams from start of fall practice until last spring championship at 80% of starting lineup.
- d. Ohio – Just approved out of season coaching with a player to coach ratio of 4 to 1.
- e. Kentucky – Does not govern summer months & allows out of season coaching with some restrictions during the school year.

Proposal 5 (Passed 118 – 0)

Amend §127-3-9. Game Officials. (Pg. 37) as follows:

9.6.c. Take Part I and Part II National Federation Rules Examinations in the sports where specified. ~~Failure to comply will result in suspension for the current year~~ take Part I will result in a 5 point deduction for the purpose of classification at the end of that sport season. Failure to take Part II Exam will result in suspension the following year.

Constitution and Bylaws

Rationale:

To align rule 127-3-9.6.c with current testing procedure.

Proposal 6 (Passed 110 – 0)

Amend §127-3-23. Football. (Pg. 47) as follows: Vote on only if Proposal 1 passes.

23.6.b. Any member of a freshman team in a 4-year high school that plays in a ~~junior varsity~~ or varsity contest (scrimmage, grid-o-rama or game) is ineligible to return to the freshman team.

Rick Jones, Principal, John Marshall High School
Amy Minch, Principal, Wheeling Park High School

Rationale:

This would allow schools to maintain a freshman team, but choose to play a junior varsity football team without losing eligibility. It would also allow teams to move up a freshman to junior varsity and back down without losing eligibility. This would help keep teams from cancelling junior varsity games. The quarter rule would still be in effect.

Proposal 7 (Passed 118 – 0)

Amend §127-4-3. Code for Interscholastic Athletics. (Pg. 58) as follows:

3.7.c. Any coach, student, or bench personnel ejected by an official will be suspended for the remainder of the game, match, meet or contest. ~~They will also face suspension in additional contest(s);~~ The coach, student, or bench personnel ejected by an official will also be suspended in additional contest(s); the suspension will be assessed based upon ten (10) percent of the allowed regular season contests or post season progression in a playoff tournament for each sport. Any tenth of a percentage from .1 to .4 will be a suspension equal to the whole number of the percent. Any tenth from .5 to .9 will be an additional contest added to the whole number. The suspension will include the number of indicated contests in that sport and at that level and all other sport contests in the interim at any level. A second ejection will result in the doubling of the suspension assessed for the first ejection. ~~If they are an individual is~~ an individual is ejected for a third time during the same sport season, the individual will be suspended from participating or coaching for 365 calendar days from the date of ejection. In accordance with rule 127-3-15.3, an individual ejected by an official may not appeal that ejection, or any subsequent suspension that is a consequence of the ejection by an official.

3.9.d. *Fine*. A fine may be levied by the Executive Director. ~~It may be levied in addition to a warning, probation, or suspension.~~

3.9.e. Each of these sanctions (Warning, Probation, suspension and Fine) may be imposed or levied separately, or in a combination of one or more sanctions.

3.10. *Appeals*. All cases involving disciplinary action against member schools, coaches, students, team attendants, or officials may be protested in accordance with §127-6. However, disciplinary action imposed by an official, including disciplinary action that is a consequence of a decision by an official, such as a suspension for an additional game or games as a consequence of an ejection, is governed by rule 127-3-15.3 and is not subject to appeal.

3.11. Review of Ejections. Disciplinary action imposed by a contest official, including disciplinary action that results in a suspension for an additional game or games as a consequence of an ejection, is not subject to appeal pursuant to Rule §127-6. However, if the individual ejected believes the ejection was improper, he/she may request a review of the ejection by his/her principal. If the principal believes there is merit in the requested review, the principal shall complete and submit the WVSSAC Ejection Review Form within 24 hours or the next business day of the ejection to the Executive Director of the WVSSAC. If a review is properly requested, the WVSSAC will review the officials' special report, the WVSSAC School Ejection Review Form, and such other information as the WVSSAC deems appropriate. Upon review, the WVSSAC Executive Director or the designated Assistant Director will either sustain the ejection and any consequent suspension(s), or will determine the ejection was improper and void any consequent suspension(s). A decision by the WVSSAC upon reviewing an ejection is not subject to appeal pursuant to Rule §127-6.

Constitution and Bylaws

Rationale:

To clarify current rules.

127CSR2

TITLE 127
LEGISLATIVE RULE
WEST VIRGINIA SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES COMMISSION

SERIES 2
ATHLETICS, PROVISIONS GOVERNING ELIGIBILITY

§127-2-1. General.

1.1. Scope. - These rules establish the provisions governing student eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics.

1.2. Authority. - W. Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2 and W. Va. Code §18-2-25.

1.3. Filing Date. - ~~July 11, 2014.~~

1.4. Effective Date. - ~~September 9, 2014.~~

1.5 Repeal of Former Rule. - This legislative rule amends W. Va. 127CSR2, West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Series 2, Athletics, Provisions Governing Eligibility, filed ~~January 8, 2014~~ July 11, 2014, and effective ~~March 10, 2014~~ September 9, 2014.

§127-2-2. Waivers.

2.1. The Board of Directors is authorized to grant a waiver to a rule when it determines the rule fails to accomplish the purpose for which it is intended or when the rule works extreme and undue hardship upon the student.

2.2. Speculative loss of college scholarship is not considered a basis for granting a waiver to these rules.

§127-2-3. Enrollment and Team Membership.

3.1. To be eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics, a student must be enrolled full-time in a member school as described in Rule 127-2-6 on or before the eleventh instructional day of the school year. Enrollment must be continuous after the student has officially enrolled in the school.

3.2. Students can participate only in schools in which they are enrolled; however, an exception may be granted by the Board of Directors as follows:

3.2.a. if a feeder school does not afford students the opportunity to participate and they are otherwise eligible.

3.2.b. for students from the WV Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSD&B) to participate at Hampshire High School or Romney Middle School (only in sports not available at WVSD&B).

3.2.c. if member schools containing grades 6 and/or 7 and/or 8 may combine students from two or more schools within the county to form one interscholastic team in a sport. Requests for permission to combine students from two or more schools in the same non-public or public school system must be submitted annually to the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (WVSSAC) in writing

by the superintendent of the non-public or public school system. Schools which are combining to form one team must be feeder schools for the same high school and at least one school does not have sufficient numbers for a team. If more than two schools are involved, principals are to evaluate the number of available participants in each school and shall combine schools to provide as many teams that sufficient numbers will allow. Sufficient numbers will be defined as the number of a starting line-up plus 50% (for odd number line-ups, round up).

3.2.d. Students enrolled in the ninth grade of a four, five or six year high school may participate on the high school team. Also, ninth graders of a feeder school may participate on their high school team and sixth grade students of a K-6 elementary feeder school may participate on their middle school/9th grade team if granted permission by the county board of education or governing body of a private/parochial school and the school principals involved. Once a ninth grade student becomes a member of the high school team said student will be ineligible for the middle school/9th grade team in that sport. Members of a 9th grade team may be grouped for practice with members of the varsity/~~jv~~ team. However, if a 9th grade student participates, ~~which would include but not limited to dressing,~~ in a varsity/~~jv~~ scrimmage or game that student becomes ineligible for the 9th grade team. Participation is defined as dressing and being available to play in a game, regardless if said player enters the game.

3.2.e. Students at a middle feeder school who are not provided the opportunity to participate because of age may move up to their high school if granted permission by the county board of education or governing body of a private/parochial school and the school principals involved.

3.3. A student academically ineligible by rule may begin practicing 15 school days immediately prior to the dates of regaining full eligibility provided all other eligibility requirements are met.

3.4. Students enrolled in the following grades in member schools will be eligible for freshman/middle school participation.

3.4.a. Middle School - 6, 7 and 8 may compete with and against schools/teams of the same configuration.

3.4.b. Stand alone freshman programs may compete with and against schools/teams of the same grade configuration. An 8th grade student not provided the opportunity to participate at their member school because the sport is not offered may choose to participate on a stand-alone freshman team at their feeder high school, provided the student is otherwise eligible.

3.5. Sixth grade students may be eligible to participate in interscholastic sport teams in the middle school in which they are enrolled. Beginning school year 2009-2010 sixth grade students may be eligible to participate in all interscholastic sport teams, including football, in the middle school in which they are enrolled.

3.6. Students who are enrolled in a grade below the ninth are not eligible for a high school team. Students enrolled in a grade below the sixth will not be eligible for a middle school team.

3.7. Senior students will be eligible for spring sports until the close of the school's season.

3.8. Schools may sponsor separate teams for members of each sex where selection for such teams is based upon competitive skill. If a school sponsors a team in a particular sport for members of one sex but sponsors no such team for members of the other sex, and athletic opportunities for members of that sex previously have been limited, members of the excluded sex must be allowed to try out for the team offered. For example, because overall athletic opportunities for females have previously been limited,

females will be allowed to try out for baseball, but males will not be allowed to try out for volleyball or softball.

3.9. Students enrolled at WV School for the Deaf will be allowed to participate in sports at the WV School for the Blind. Students from the WV School for the Blind will be allowed to participate in sports at the WV School for the Deaf.

3.10. Boarding students at member schools, with the exception of students at the WV Schools for the Deaf and Blind, are not eligible. (Definition: A boarding student is one who receives room and board that is provided by said school unless such residence is based on Court Order or State Action.)

§127-2-4. Age.

4.1. A student in high school who becomes 19 and a student in junior high school who becomes 16 before August 1 shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition.

4.2. A student in high school who becomes 19 and a student in junior high school who becomes 16 on or after August 1 shall remain eligible for the entire year.

4.3. A student in a middle school (eighth grade being the highest grade) who becomes 15 before August 1 shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition at that level.

4.4. A student in a middle school (eighth grade being the highest grade) who becomes 15 on or after August 1 shall remain eligible for the entire school year at that level.

§127-2-5. Semester and Season.

5.1. A student may have the privilege to participate in the interscholastic program for four consecutive years (eight consecutive semesters or equivalent) after entering the ninth grade of a four year high school.

5.2. A student shall not participate in more than three seasons while in grades 6-7-8 in any interscholastic activity.

5.4. Ten days of attendance or enrollment shall constitute a semester. Said ten days includes the day of enrollment, the last day of attendance and the elapsed time between, provided that they are days when school was actually in session.

5.4. The number of semesters of athletic eligibility of a student is determined by semesters of enrollment and attendance and not by semesters of participation. (This applies for students in grades 9-12 only).

5.5. A student whose eligibility expires with the end of a semester shall not become ineligible until report cards are issued or five school days into the next semester, whichever is less. The student will be considered eligible any days between the two semesters.

5.6. Any part of a contest or interscholastic event in which a student competes shall be counted as a season for that sport in grades 6-12 and a semester of participation in grades 9-12.

5.7. The Board of Directors is authorized to grant a waiver to the Semester and Season Rule when it feels the rule fails to accomplish the purpose for which it is intended and when the rule works extreme and undue hardship upon the student. Waivers may be granted in the following circumstances:

5.7.a. The Board is authorized to consider cases in which a student entering high school (explained in Rule 5.1) did not stay in continuous enrollment because of personal illness, or no school was available, or because of other undue hardship reasons ascertained through investigation.

5.7.b. The Board may provide release from the continuous enrollment restriction provided no participation had occurred during the semester(s) in question.

5.7.c. In no event may a student be allowed to participate in more than four (4) seasons in any one sport in grades 9-12.

5.8. The Board may also assess appropriate penalties to the student or to the school if said Board determines through its investigation that said student or said school did try to evade the rule by subterfuge.

§127-2-6. Scholarship.

6.1. A student is required to be enrolled in the equivalent of at least 20 periods (four subjects with full credit toward graduation) per week.

6.1.a. A semester course that constitutes 8100 minutes of instruction (block schedule) will count as two subjects.

6.1.b. The student may select four full credits from any area of the curriculum offered by the school.

6.1.c. If a student is taking a multiple period subject, such as block or vocational courses for a full morning or afternoon, it may be counted as more than one subject. The number of subjects counted will be equal to the units of full credits given.

6.1.d. If a student has been declared ineligible according to the standards outlined above, the student may attend summer school and have eligibility reinstated if the student meets the standards at the conclusion of summer school.

6.1.e. If a student has been declared ineligible according to the standards outlined above, the student may have eligibility reinstated at midsemester if the student is meeting the standards at that time.

6.2. *Note:* Full credit is defined as one-half credit for a semester or 4050 minutes as provided by West Virginia Board of Education §126-42-1 et seq., “Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs” (Policy 2510).

6.3. Schools providing for planned programs of independent learning during the regular school term may wish not to require all students to attend classes for 4050 minutes during a semester. In such instances, full credit may be awarded for satisfactory performance provided that it meets standards established by the county and West Virginia Department of Education.

6.4. Full credit may be awarded for subjects in addition to those offered by the school as well as experimental programs developed by the school itself provided that it meets standards established by the county and West Virginia Department of Education.

6.5. A student not attempting four (4) full credit subjects during a semester must complete one 9 weeks of school work to regain consideration for eligibility.

6.6. Any student who withdraws from school and does not re-enroll within 10 school days of that withdrawal date will lose eligibility for the remainder of that semester.

6.7. Credit deficiencies cannot be made up after the last day of the semester, except in a case where a student whose final examinations and course credit are delayed due to illness which can be verified by a physician or as established by local Board of Education Policy.

6.8. The official school transcript will be used to determine a student's eligibility and will be regarded as final.

6.9. In accordance with §126CSR26 West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2436.10, Participation in Extracurricular Activities (C-Rule), students must maintain a 2.0 average to participate in interscholastic athletics.

§127-2-7. Residence-Transfer.

7.1. Part A - Residence - This residence rule applies to all students enrolled in grades 6-12 in both public and non-public member schools.

7.1.a. A student shall be eligible in the school located in the attendance zone in which the student's parents reside. Public secondary school attendance zones shall be established by official action by each county Board of Education. The attendance zones of a non-public member school shall be identical with the attendance zone of the public school in which the non-public member school is located. In the event of overlapping attendance zones, a student shall be eligible at the school in which the student first chooses to enroll upon entering the ninth grade.

7.1.b. When a town or city is located in two counties and only one public secondary school is located in the town or city, students living in the town or city may attend this secondary school if mutually agreed upon by the two county boards of education and approved by the Board of Directors. A student shall be eligible at the school in which the student first chooses to enroll upon entering 9th grade.

7.1.c. A student who is in the care of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics as a member of the athletic teams of the secondary school in the zone in which said West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources places the student in a home, provided the student is otherwise eligible.

7.1.d. A student entering a school as an "unaccompanied youth" under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act may be granted eligibility for interscholastic competition by the Board of Directors in accordance with Rule 127-2-2.

7.1.e. A student may be eligible outside the specified zone of attendance if the student has been in attendance in that zone the immediate preceding year (365 days). There can be no change of residence involving change of attendance zone during the immediate preceding year (365 days).

7.1.f. A student whose parents have resided in the school zone for a minimum of one academic year at which the student has been in attendance for a minimum of one academic year and whose parents make a bona fide change of residence to a new school zone during the school term may:

7.1.f.1. Retain eligibility as long as said student retains continuous enrollment and attendance or:

7.1.f.2. Transfer at time of change of residence to the school in the attendance zone in which the parents are now residing and be eligible in that school or:

7.1.f.3. Transfer at any time prior to the start of the next school year to the school in the attendance zone in which his parents are residing and be eligible for interscholastic activities at the receiving school.

7.1.f.4. However, a student who has started participation in a sport, which would include practice or contest, that they were participating in at a WVSSAC member school, may not participate in that sport for that sport season at the WVSSAC member school to where they transferred, so long as that transfer was within one contiguous county of their former member school.

7.1.g. A student whose parents have resided in the school zone for less than one academic year at which the student has been in attendance for less than one academic year and whose parents make a bona fide change of residence to a new school zone during the school term may:

7.1.g.1. Retain eligibility for the balance of the academic year, provided the said student retains continuous enrollment and attendance or:

7.1.g.2. Transfer at time of change of residence to the school in the attendance zone in which the parents are now residing and be eligible in that school or:

7.1.g.3. If a student chooses to remain enrolled at the school outside the attendance zone in which his/her parents reside at the conclusion of the academic year the student will be ineligible for the next academic year.

7.1.h. Foreign exchange students, attending a member school under the auspices of a Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) student exchange program, shall be considered eligible regarding residence for a maximum period of one calendar year. Said foreign exchange student may not be a graduate of the secondary school of the home country and must maintain eligibility in a member school. A foreign exchange program must assign students to schools by a method which insures that no student, school, or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes.

7.1.i. A student returning from an approved foreign exchange program may resume interscholastic competition in a member school at the point of interruption provided the student does not fulfill graduation requirements while participating in the exchange program and provided the student meets all requirements relative to age and semesters of eligibility.

7.2. Part B - Transfer.

7.2.a. If a student transfers during the school year from one secondary school to another secondary school, said student shall be ineligible for 365 days from date of enrollment, absent a bona fide change of residence. Determination of a bona fide change of residence depends upon the facts of each case and is defined as, but not limited to:

7.2.a.1. The original residence must be abandoned as a residence; that is sold, rented, or disposed of as a residence and must not be used as a residence by the immediate family;

7.2.a.2. The change is being made with the intent that the move is permanent;

7.1.a.3. The entire family must make the change;

7.1.a.4. Documentation of connection of utilities to the residence; power, water, waste, sewer

7.1.a.5. Change of voter's registration, driver's license, mailing address, etc.

7.2.b. If the transfer is from a non-member school to a member school in the zone where the student's parents reside, a student is eligible providing; (1) the student is enrolling in a member school for the first time and (2) the principals of both non-member and member schools involved concur that undue influence is not involved with the transfer.

7.2.c. A student may be transferred from one-attendance zone to another zone within the same county by a county board of education and maintain eligibility. The transfer must be initiated by county board of education personnel to fulfill certain special education programs(s) not available in the attendance zone from which the student is transferred. Upon the completion of the special program, the student must return to the attendance zone of the student's residence.

7.2.d. For the purpose of athletic eligibility, the Commission does not recognize emancipated status as relates to transfer except as might occur in marriage and relocation to another school zone.

7.2.e. Notwithstanding any other provisions of WVSSAC rules and regulations, if a student transfers for athletic reasons, the student will be ineligible for 365 days from the date of enrollment. A transfer for athletic reasons depends upon the facts of each case and is defined as, but not limited to:

7.2.e.1. Seeking a superior athletic team:

7.2.e.2. Seeking a team consistent with the student's ability.

7.2.e.3. Seeking relief from conflict with the philosophy or action of an administrator, teacher or coach relating to athletics;

7.2.e.4. Seeking a means to nullify punitive action by the previous school.

7.2.f. If a student is released and accepted by formal actions of county boards of education or similar governing bodies of a non-public school which have verified that such transfer is not for athletic purposes, said student will be granted immediate eligibility provided all other rules are met. The transfer must occur at the beginning of the 9th grade school year with the student enrolled on or before the eleventh instructional day of the beginning of the school year and provided that said student is residing with the parents. Once a student has been a member of a team that has participated in a scrimmage or contest, the student has established eligibility at that school.

7.2.g. TRANSFER BACK. During the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grades, a student shall be entitled to one transfer back into the member school located within the attendance zone where the student's parents reside. Any student transferring under the provisions of this rule will not become eligible until the completion of the school year in which said transfer occurs. Eligibility will begin with the succeeding fall

sports season, or immediately if the transfer back is completed on or before the eleventh instructional day of the beginning of the school year. Once a student has been a member of a team that has participated in a scrimmage or contest, the student has established eligibility at that school.

7.2.h. If a member middle school student is released and accepted by formal actions of county board of education or similar governing bodies of a non-public school which have verified that such transfer is not for athletic purposes, said student will be granted immediate eligibility provided all other rules are met. The transfer must occur at the beginning of the school year with the student enrolled on or before the eleventh instructional day of the beginning of the school year and provided that said student is residing with the parents. Once a student has been a member of a team that has participated in a scrimmage or contest, the student has established eligibility at that school.

7.2.i The eligibility of a student whose parents are divorced or legally separated is determined by court decree establishing residency with one parent.

7.2.j After establishing initial residency with one parent, all subsequent transfers will require a period of ineligibility for 365 days from date of enrollment unless a change of residency is decreed by the court.

§127-2-8. Adoption/Guardianship.

8.1. A student shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics only if (1) residing with one or both of the parents; (2) residing with a testamentary guardian following the death of the parents; or (3) residing in a location where the student was placed by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources pursuant to WVSSAC Rule 127-2-7.1.5.

8.2. The residence of a testamentary guardian shall constitute the residence of the ward when, and only when, (1) such testamentary guardian has been duly appointed by the last will and testament of the student's last surviving parent; (2) said testamentary guardian has duly qualified as such before the proper tribunal in West Virginia; and (3) the student is actually residing in the household of the testamentary guardian at the time of the student's sport participation.

8.3. Notwithstanding any other provision of the WVSSAC rules and regulations, any student residing with a guardian/custodian other than a testamentary guardian may not compete for a school in any sport on the varsity level but may compete at the junior varsity level. If a student elects to participate at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule, the student may not participate at the varsity level even after being enrolled at the school for 365 days. However, if a student elects to participate at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule, and then commences to reside with a custodial parent, the student may participate at the varsity level notwithstanding the fact that the student had previously participated at the junior varsity level pursuant to this rule.

8.4. Notwithstanding any other provisions of WVSSAC rules and regulations, legal guardian/custodian may not be changed for athletic reasons. A transfer for athletic reasons is defined as, but not limited to:

8.4.a. Seeking a superior athletic team;

8.4.b. Seeking a team consistent with the student's ability;

8.4.c. Seeking relief from conflict with the philosophy or action of an administrator, teacher or coach relating to athletics;

8.4.d. Seeking a means to nullify punitive action by the previous school.

§127-2-9. Undue Influence - Recruiting.

9.1. The use of influence by a person or group connected or not connected with the school to secure or retain a student for athletic participation is not permitted and may cause the student to be ineligible and may cause certain sanctions to be placed against the member school.

9.2. An employee of the school system shall not initiate any communication regarding athletic participation or enrollment with a student, parent of a student, guardian or family member, in person or through a third party prior to enrollment. This does not include the introduction of athletic programs to students at feeder schools.

9.3. A student, parent of a student, or guardian shall not be offered for the purpose of encouraging enrollment in a school or participation in an athletic program any inducement, such as free tuition, jobs, supplies, uniforms, other than that which is provided for all students.

§127-2-10. Non-school Participation.

10.1. During the school year and while a member of a school team, a student shall neither participate, which would include, but not limited to, fund-raising activities, team picture, tryouts, etc., on any formally organized non-school team in the same sport, nor shall the student compete as an individual unattached in non-school formally organized competition in the same sport. The following sports are exempted from the provisions of this rule: cross country, golf, swimming, tennis, track, and wrestling, providing:

10.1.a. participation is approved by the student's principal.

10.1.b. the student misses no school-sponsored athletic contest involving a team in that sport.

10.2. A student may participate as a member of a national team (and the actual, direct tryouts thereof) which is defined as:

10.2.a. one selected by the national governing body of the sport,

10.2.b. while representing the National Federation in an International Schoolsport Federation, or

10.2.c. as a representative of the United States in recognized national or international events.

10.2.d. a qualifier for the West Virginia Golf Association's Amateur Championship or the United States Golf Association's United States Amateur Championship.

10.3. A student who has participated on a non-school team or as an individual unattached in non-school formally organized competition after the beginning practice date of that sport will be ineligible for participation on that school team for that season in that particular sport except as provided by Rules §12-2-10.1 and 10.2.

§127-2-11. Amateur.

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11.1. A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived therefrom. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:

11.1.a. competing for money or other monetary compensation (allowable travel, meals and lodging expenses may be accepted);

11.1.b. receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the WVSSAC;

11.1.c. capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of monetary value (scholarships to institutions of higher learning are specifically exempted);

11.1.d. signing a professional playing contract in that sport.

11.2. Accepting a nominal, standard fee or salary for instructing, supervising or officiating in organized youth sports program or recreation, playground or camp activities shall not jeopardize amateur status. "Organized youth sports program" includes both school and non-school programs. Compensation for giving private lessons is permissible if approved by the WVSSAC.

11.3. A student who loses amateur status may apply to the WVSSAC for reinstatement in the interscholastic program after a waiting period of one complete high school season (starting practice date through state tournament or end of season) for that sport.

11.4. A senior student may participate in a professional tryout either during or after the season of that sport provided

11.4.a. that it does not occur on the day of a school contest of that sport, or

11.4.b. that it meets with the principal's approval.

§127-2-12. Participation as an Ineligible.

12.1. Any student who participates in an interscholastic athletic contest as an ineligible, either knowingly or inadvertently, shall be ineligible for a period not to exceed 365 days as determined by the Executive Director.

§127-2-13. Practice.

13.1. Only students enrolled and eligible to be listed on the eligibility certificate for that sport in the specific member school are allowed to participate in that school's practices. Exceptions - Rules 127-2-3.2, 127-2-3.5 and 127-2-13.6.

13.2. The frequency and length of practice is at the discretion of each member school.

13.3. Member schools of the WVSSAC may practice on any day of the year with the exception of Sunday practice. Rule 127-3-14.2 further clarifies Sunday practice.

13.4. Individual players of a team must have practiced

13.4.a. on 7 SEPARATE days before participating in an interscholastic scrimmage.

13.4.b. on 14 SEPARATE days, exclusive of the day of a contest, before participating in an interscholastic contest. The following sport(s) is exempted from the provisions of this rule: golf.

13.4.c. A student athlete who is absent from practice with their team for non-medical reasons, not under a doctor care, for more than fourteen (14) consecutive days must have the required full fourteen (14) practice days before resuming participation in a contest. Students participating in football must follow the practice progression as set forth in Rule 127-3-23.

13.5. A student shall not be permitted to engage in interscholastic practice until that student has filed with the principal a completed Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physician's Certificate Form. Rule 127-3-3 further explains this required form.

13.6. A student academically ineligible may begin practicing 15 school days immediately prior to the date of regaining full eligibility. (All other ineligible students may not practice.)

13.7. If a student has established eligibility in a sport requiring 14 separate days of practice and is continuing to participate in that sport or no school days have lapsed from one sport to another sport in a same season, the student may participate in another sport of the season after completing seven separate days of sport specific practice in the second sport.

13.8. Students participating in a sport(s) in one season must have practiced 14 separate days, exclusive of the day of a contest, to be eligible to participate in a sport in the next season with the following exception: the student has continued to practice or participate in tournament play without an interruption of school days. The student must complete seven separate days of sport specific practice in the second sport.

§127-2-14. Concussion.

14.1. Member schools are to provide information in the format approved by the WVSSAC Board of Directors to appropriate school administrators, coaches, interscholastic athletes and their parents or guardians describing the nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including the risks of continuing to play or practice after a concussion or head injury. Annually, all interscholastic athletes and their parents are required to sign and return a statement that they have read the information provided to them prior to the interscholastic athlete beginning practice or competition for that scholastic year. (See, WVSSAC, Sports Medicine tab, Sports Medicine Packet: Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physician's Certificate Form (Physical Exam Form), A Parent's Guide to Concussions (Information to parents), available on the WVSSAC website at <http://www.wvssac.org>.)

14.2. Each head coach of member schools is required annually to complete a concussion and head injury recognition and return-to-play protocol course approved by the WVSSAC. (See, WVSSAC, Sports Medicine tab, Sports Medicine Packet: Coach's Course, available on the WVSSAC website at <http://www.wvssac.org>.)

14.3. An interscholastic athlete suspected of a concussion or head injury by a licensed health care professional or by the head coach or athletic trainer shall be removed from play or practice may not return-to-play or practice until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and receives written clearance to return-to-play and practice from the licensed health care professional. (See, WVSSAC, Sports Medicine tab, Sports Medicine Packet: available on the WVSSAC website at <http://www.wvssac.org>.)

14.4. Any of the following who have appropriate training in the evaluation and management of head injuries shall be considered as the licensed health care professional enumerated in this rule:

14.4.a. Medical Doctor (MD)

14.4.b. Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)

14.4.c. Doctor of Chiropractic (DC)

14.4.d. Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP)

14.4.e. Physician Assistant (PA-C)

14.4.f. Registered Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC/R).

14.5. Member schools must submit the concussion report form to the WVSSAC within 30 days of an interscholastic athlete suffering or being suspected of suffering a concussion or head injury in a practice or game. (See, WVSSAC, Sports Medicine tab, Sports Medicine Packet, available on the WVSSAC website at <http://www.wvssac.org>.)

14.6. The West Virginia Board of Education shall be notified if any of the documents referred to in this section of the rule are revised, amended, or altered as to form or content. The documents shall include but not be limited to: Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physician's Certificate Form (Physical Exam Form); A Parent's Guide to Concussions (Information to Parents), Coach's Course, Return to Play Protocol, Concussion Report form. All forms are found in the WVSSAC Sports Medicine Packet and are available under the Sports Medicine tab, Sports Medicine Packet on the WVSSAC website at <http://www.wvssac.org>.

**West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (WVSSAC)
Series 2: Athletics, Provisions Governing Eligibility**

COMMENT PERIOD ENDS: June 15, 2015

COMMENT RESPONSE FORM

NOTICE: Comments, as submitted, shall be filed with the West Virginia Secretary of State's Office and open for public inspection and copying for a period of not less than five years.

The following form is provided to assist those who choose to comment on WVSSAC Series 2: Athletics, Provisions Governing Eligibility. Additional sheets may be attached, if necessary.

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Title: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Please check the box below that best describes your role.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School System Superintendent | <input type="checkbox"/> School System Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Industry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Support Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member |

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS
§127-2-3.2.d. Enrollment and Team Membership
§127-2-7.1.f.4. Residence - Transfer.
§127-2-8.3. Adoption/Guardianship.

Please direct all comments to:

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