

Article V ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES

Section 1

A student, to be eligible for participation in the interscholastic athletic program of a member school, must be enrolled in that school and must meet all the eligibility requirements of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations, of the NJSIAA.

CL 1: Students being home-schooled (by parents or other parties) may be eligible if the local Board of Education has approved their participation and the requirements of the Homeschool Guidelines have been satisfied. Properly enrolled students on Home Instruction provided by the Board of Education are eligible if the student satisfies Section 4E. (Refer to NJSIAA Guidelines, Policies and Procedures).

Section 2

Amateur-Athlete – An amateur-athlete is one who participates in athletics solely for the physical, mental, social and educational benefits derived from such participation.

The following is a list of principles student-athletes must abide by to retain their amateur status, and thus, their NJSIAA eligibility:

A. A student-athlete may not participate in any athletic activity under an assumed name.

B. Professional Athletics. A student-athlete may participate as an individual, or as a member of a team against professional athletes, or as a member of a team on which there are some professionals who are not currently under contract with a professional team and are not receiving money for their participation. However, a student-athlete may not (1) sign a contract to play professional athletics (whether for a money consideration or not); or (2) receive a salary or any other form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization.

C. Outside Work. Student-athletes are permitted to receive payments for coaching and providing athletic instruction, however student-athletes may not play on the teams that they coach. The student-athlete's compensation must be commensurate with the work performed.

D. Name, Image and Likeness. A student-athlete may profit off of the use of their own name, image and likeness (NIL). Such permissible activities include commercial endorsements, promotional activities, social media presence, product or service advertisements, and non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

No school or anyone employed by a member school, including coaches and administrators, may be involved with a student-athlete's use of their NIL. No one associated with or acting at the direction of a member school, such as booster clubs, alumni, or collectives, may use the promise of NIL opportunities to entice student-athletes to transfer to or attend their school.

Student-athletes are prohibited from making any reference to a member school or the NJSIAA when engaging in any NIL activity. Student-athletes may not endorse or promote any third-party entities, goods or services during team activities. Student-athletes may not wear the apparel or display the logo, insignia, or identifying mark of an NIL partner during any team activities.

Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in any NIL activities involving the following categories of products and services:

- (1) Adult entertainment products and services;

- (2) Alcohol products;
- (3) Tobacco and nicotine-related products;
- (4) Cannabis products;
- (5) Controlled dangerous substances;
- (6) Prescription pharmaceuticals;
- (7) Casinos and gambling, including sports betting, the lottery, and betting in connection with video games, on-line games and mobile devices; and
- (8) Weapons, firearms and ammunition.

E. Awards. A student-athlete may only accept individual interscholastic awards and similar mementos if the award is approved by the local Board of Education or school governing body, in keeping with traditional high school requirements which are basically symbolic in nature, i.e., letters, sweaters, jackets, pins, trophies, rings and watches. No other award of monetary value may be granted to any student-athlete without prior approval by the local Board of Education or school governing body and the NJSIAA. Also, a student-athlete may accept a monetary award under the United States Olympic Committee's "Operation Gold" program without compromising his/her eligibility for NJSIAA competition. Operation Gold awards athletes for top-place finishes in a sport's most competitive international competition of the year.

F. Participation in Non-NJSIAA Events. A student-athlete who participates in non-NJSIAA events may receive reasonable travel, meal and lodging expenses. Beyond reasonable, travel, meal and lodging expenses, a student-athlete may accept sports-related paraphernalia with a monetary value not to exceed \$500.00.

Note – Compliance with this provision does not ensure maintenance of eligibility under the eligibility standards of other athletic organizations, such as, but not limited to, the NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc. Student-athletes are encouraged to communicate with those organizations to ensure any activity complies with those eligibility standards.

Section 3

Reinstatement of Amateur Eligibility – The Executive Committee of the NJSIAA is the only body that may reinstate a Student-Athlete of a member school to eligibility status under the provisions of the organization's Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations. In cases where the Executive Committee has determined that a Student-Athlete inadvertently participated in an activity that has caused his/her loss of eligibility, the Executive Committee may reinstate said athlete after a period of not less than one year. An application for reinstatement must be made in writing by the high school Principal to the Executive Committee and shall include all data pertinent to the case.

Section 4

Eligibility Requirements – Eligibility rules herewith stated shall apply to all freshman, sophomore, junior varsity, and varsity teams involved in interscholastic athletic competition.

Ineligibility Lists – Member schools must submit an affidavit of ineligible students to the Executive Director of the NJSIAA annually for each of the three seasons prior to the beginning of those seasons. This form, signed by the Principal, will certify that any and all students listed do not meet the eligibility requirements of the NJSIAA. This affidavit should be based on carefully compiled lists of ineligible student/athletes for all sports in that season which are on file in each member school and in the event of any questions, are available upon request by other member schools and/or appropriate NJSIAA officials. Schools may use their own form as long as all the information is provided on that form.

CL: This record must be compiled prior to the student's participation in the first interschool scrimmage or game in that sport and kept on file in the Principal's office. Schools are reminded that determining eligibility or ineligibility must be based on the following: (a) name of the student/athletes, (b) date of birth, (c) documentary proof of age (birth certificate, baptismal certificate, insurance policy or school record), (d) date of first enrollment in 9th grade, and (e)

school from which student transferred, if such transfer was effected during the current or just past school year, (f) credits passed previous year (first semester eligibility) or previous semester (second semester eligibility), and (g) participation prior to entry into the 9th grade.

- A. **Eligibility Certification** – Upon the request of the Executive Director, schools must furnish him/her with lists of ineligible student/athletes for their various teams, containing such information as he may deem necessary.
- B. **Eligibility Responsibility** – The Principal of a school is responsible for the observance of the eligibility rules contained in this Article and for the entire program of his/her member school.

CL: It is local option for schools to permit ineligible students to practice or compete in interscholastic scrimmages while ineligible for regular or post-season games. [Scrimmages refer to pre-season scrimmages only and not scrimmages during the regular season or post-season for those sports that allow such.] Such practices will count to satisfy the six (6) days practice rule. The above is applicable provided the school meets the medical examination and parental permission as required by the State Board of Education.

- C. **Age** – An athlete becomes ineligible for high school athletics if he/she attains the age of nineteen prior to September 1. However, any athlete attaining age nineteen (19) on or after September 1 shall be eligible for the ensuing school year. A birth certificate, issued at the time of birth, is the normal proof of age; in the absence of this, other proofs may be used. The records used will be baptismal records or the earliest school records.

CL 1: The following evidence of proof of age can be used when the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state of birth reports no records exist:

- a. Birth certificate.
- b. Affidavit of attending physician.
- c. Documentary evidence, such as family record of birth in Bible, certificate of arrival in the United States, or a passport.
- d. Public school records, school, state or national census records.
- e. Baptismal certificate.

CL 2: This requirement will not be waived for the sole reason that a student was born day(s), week(s), or month(s) just prior to September 1.

CL 3: In order to assure the opportunity for eight consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility, member schools may request waivers to permit students who are enrolled in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades and who are otherwise academically eligible, to participate on the junior varsity or varsity teams where such students will be sixteen (16) years of age or older upon entrance into the 9th grade prior to September 1st. Guidance Departments/School Administrators of elementary schools should provide the Athletic Director with ages of all students so they can be assured of four (4) years of eligibility prior to becoming ineligible at age nineteen.

- D. **Athletic Recruitment** – This subsection prohibits the recruiting of high school students. For the purposes of this subsection, a student becomes a “high school student” on the first day the student attends ninth grade, or the first day the student attends fall sports practice prior to the student’s ninth grade year, whichever is earlier.

CL 1: Paragraphs 2(c) and 5 below are applicable to students of all grade levels, not just high school students.

1. Athletic recruitment is contrary to the purposes and objectives of high school sports. Prohibiting athletic recruitment helps to keep athletics in its proper place and subordinate to academics; protects student-athletes from those having interests that might not be consistent with the interests of the student-athletes; and maintains competitive equity on a level playing field among member schools.
2. Athletic recruitment is defined as any effort to, proselytize, pressure, urge or entice a student to transfer to a school for athletic purposes. It is a violation for a member school to engage in athletic recruitment or for a student-athlete to transfer to a school as a result of athletic recruitment. Athletic recruitment includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Using mail, letters, brochures, or news media to compare high schools and to solely point out the athletic assets of the sender;
 - b. Engaging in proselytizing interviews or communications, initiated by school personnel or associates;
 - c. Offering athletic scholarships, free tuition or other monetary assistance, either from the school directly or indirectly through some affiliated body or individual, to induce a student to attend the school for athletic reasons.
3. A member school shall be responsible for athletic recruitment by anyone associated with the school or acting at the direction of the school, including but not limited to administration, staff, coaches, students, parents, booster clubs, or any organization having a connection with the school.
4. Any evidence of recruiting by a member school shall subject the school to a hearing before the Controversies Committee. A school that is found to have violated the athletic recruitment rule shall be subject to the penalties set forth in Article X.
5. Any evidence that a student has moved to a residence associated with, leased, or provided by anyone associated with the school or acting at the direction of the school, including but not limited to administration, staff, coaches, students, parents, booster clubs, or any organization having a connection with the school, shall be considered prima facie evidence of recruiting.

CL 1: Boarding at a boarding school shall not be considered prima facie evidence of recruiting. A boarding school is defined as a school which has an enrolled boarding school population in grades 9 through 12 of at least 25 students or five percent of the full student enrollment, whichever is larger. Boarding students must spend at least an average of five days per week living and boarding on campus while school is in session.

E. Credits

1. To be eligible for athletic competition during the first semester (September 1 to January 31) a pupil must have passed 25% of the credits (30) required by the State of New Jersey for graduation (120), during the immediately preceding academic year.
2. To be eligible for athletic competition during the second semester (Feb. 1 to June 30), a pupil must have passed the equivalent of 12¹/₂% of the credits (15) required by New Jersey for graduation (120) at the close of the preceding semester (Jan. 31). Full-year courses shall be equated as one-half of the total credits to be gained for the full year to determine credits passed during the immediately preceding semester.

CL 1: The NJSIAA does not establish grading policies or standards for granting credits. The local school's Board of Education has the exclusive authority to address such matters within the parameters of the State Board of Education guidelines. Therefore, the NJSIAA will not waive, either the standards set by a member school or the minimum standards set forth in Article V, Section 4.E except as provided in Section 4.F (1).

CL 2: The credit status of a transferred student, determined by the previous school, may not be changed by the present school.

CL 3: There is no provision for make-up work for credits for second semester.

CL 4: Waivers will not be considered for a senior who does not attain 15 credits and who fails a subject in his/her first semester, unless that senior is passing all subjects in the subsequent marking period. The student must be on track for graduation and passing all classes during the third marking period.

CL 5: An athlete who is ineligible under Article V, Section 4.E(2) may become eligible for the remainder of the spring sports season on May 1, if he/she meets the requirements of Article V, Section 4E(2) as of that date.

Note: In order for a 9th, 10th, or 11th grader to become eligible per CL 5, the student must be passing all courses taken during the 3rd marking period and accumulated 22.50 credits when grades are averaged for marking periods 1, 2, and 3. 22.50 credits after three (3) marking periods puts the student-athlete on track to obtain the required 30 credits at the end of the school year.

3. The above paragraph 1 shall not apply to incoming students from grammar school (8th grade).
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Paragraph 1 and 2 above, a pupil who is eligible at the beginning of a sports season shall be allowed to finish that season.

CL 1: According to regulations of the New Jersey State Board of Education, credit must be assigned equally to all secondary school courses. Thus, courses which at one time were considered "minor,"

e.g. Physical education, art, music, industrial arts, etc., must be included in the determination of academic requirements.

CL 2: Graduation Requirements – The provisions of Article V, Section 4.E (1) and (2) of the Bylaws will not be waived even though a school allows a student to carry only those courses necessary to meet minimal graduation diploma credit requirements.

- a. If a student has received a diploma, he/she is ineligible. However, he/she may continue to represent his/her school until the official end of that semester—either January 31 or June 30.*
- b. If a student has left school, but re-enrolls, he/she will be eligible thirty (30) calendar days from the date of re-enrollment.*
- c. If a student has continued enrollment while absent from school, he/she will be eligible provided he/she is enrolled in and attends at least one course.*

CL 3: It is recognized that students may accelerate their academic programs during their first three years of secondary schooling. Consequently, such students may be eligible in the second semester of their senior year even when they carry less than 12¹/₂% of the State minimum (15 credits) during the first semester provided they are meeting their school district's graduation

requirements and are passing all courses in which they are enrolled at the start of the first semester. Seniors who withdraw from courses with a passing grade (WP) will be eligible provided they are carrying sufficient credits for graduation purposes.

CL 4: When a student does not fail a course and/or withdraws passing and is unable to pass the required credits for reasons not under the control of the student, or the school, a waiver shall be granted. A student who enters from an out-of-state school or a foreign country that has passed all courses in which the student is enrolled, meets the requirements of this Section.

CL 5: Students receiving credits for courses at their previous school may use those credits to satisfy the credit requirements for athletic eligibility even though the present school does not grant credit for same. Such a situation is acceptable only on an immediate basis at the time of the transfer. The student subsequently becomes subject to the requirements of the present school.

CL 6: An athlete, whose education is interrupted after his/her entrance into the 9th grade (4 or 6 yr. high school) or 10th grade (3 yr. high school) and who does not pass the required courses as provided for in Article V, Section 4.E (1) and (2) of the Bylaws at the end of the semester, upon being readmitted at the beginning of the next semester, is ineligible for failure to meet the requirements of this section.

Exceptions to this rule are returned servicemen/servicewomen who have been honorably discharged and cases of unavoidable absence due to illness. Substance abuse is not considered as unavoidable absence due to illness; when illegal substance is the reason for not passing the required credits, a waiver will not be granted.

CL 7: An athlete who is ineligible under Article V, Section 4.E (1), may become eligible for the remainder of the winter sports season on February 1 if he/she meets the requirements of Article V, Section 4.E (2).

CL 8: Any summer work for makeup purposes for failed courses, completed and approved by the school before the sixth school day, in the Fall semester, may be used for eligibility purposes.

CL 9: A student eligible to represent his/her school in Winter Sports may continue to do so until the end of that season.

CL 10: A passing grade for a semester can only be used once for eligibility purposes. A student who has a semester's passing grade in a subject may not repeat that subject during a later semester and use it for eligibility purposes.

F. Handicapped/Classified Students

1. Course Waiver – All handicapped/classified students, as defined by the New Jersey State Department of Education, defined as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act-(IDEA), shall comply with the athletic eligibility rules and regulations of the NJSIAA (with the exception of Section 4.E of this Article V re: Credits), and in addition the student must have evidence of the following:

- a. Parents, or guardians, must give consent for such competitive experience.
- b. The Child Study Team must certify that the student successfully completed the I.E.P. in the previous year/semester commensurate with the student's ability. Final approval for participation must be given by the Principal.

CL 1: A student who is initially classified after failing to have satisfied the provisions of Section 4.E Credits (30 or 15) cannot regain eligibility until the Child Study Team has monitored that classified student for a semester/90 school days.

CL 2: Courses cannot be waived for ADA or 504 students.

- c. The medical inspector of the school district must certify that the youth has physical ability to compete equally with other participants.
2. Definition – Since handicapped or “disabled” children (as defined in this section) are not subject to Section 4.E of this Article V, the academic credit rule, it is important that schools understand what children may be eligible.
 - a. Any handicapped child must be in a program approved by the State Department of Education for handicapped children.
 - b. Any handicapped child must be classified as such by an examiner approved by the State Department of Education.
 - c. Any handicapped child must be approved by the local Child Study Team to attend regular high school classes, home instruction, or he/she must be a member of a class in which he/she spends the greater part of each school day with other children under a teacher holding a certificate to teach.
 - d. All handicapped students, assigned to another school by the Board of Education, Division of Child Protection and Permanency and the courts and classified by the Child Study Team, will be eligible to compete on the interscholastic athletic teams of the school district in which the student resides, providing such receiving school does not sponsor an interscholastic athletic program in that sport, and so long as such students meet all other applicable NJSIAA eligibility requirements.

CL 1: Exception: In County Special Services School Districts, e.g., Bergen County where the district is not an adjunct school of the local public school district and where all schools are under the authority of the same Superintendent of Schools, all students are eligible to participate in the interscholastic athletic programs of that County’s vocational high school(s) unless they are approved to participate at the public high school where they reside and are processed as provided for in Section 4.F (2)e. and 4.G–CL 3.

- e. A handicapped student is permitted to participate in the interscholastic program of the school where the student is enrolled or the school where the student resides, when extenuating circumstances are present. A waiver shall be granted, upon review by the NJSIAA Executive Director or designee when agreed to by the principals of the involved schools.

G. Enrollment

1. Late Enrollment – A student who enters school after the first Monday in October shall not be eligible to represent that school until after the lapse of thirty (30) calendar days from date of his/her first entrance.

Note: The term “entrance” as used in this section and elsewhere in these Bylaws, means registration plus actual attendance at a school.

CL 1: Late enrollment refers to a student who does not enroll at any school at the beginning of the school year.

CL 2: A short period enrollment at any school will not be treated as entrance to that school and/or subsequent transfer will be recognized as uninterrupted enrollment at the original school absent any appeal from the previous school.

2. Initial Enrollment – At the beginning of his/her secondary school career a student is free to

choose any secondary school he/she may legally attend, (9th grade in a 4- or 6-year high school or 10th grade in a 3-year high school).

Note: After this initial enrollment a student is subject to the transfer provision as provided for in Section 4.K (2) of this Article.

CL 1: A high school student is a regularly enrolled student as defined by the Department of Education.

CL 2: Vo-Tech/Public Academy Shared Time – When a student is carried on the Official Register and attends some classes at a school, but also attends additional classes at another school, he/she is eligible for interscholastic athletics at the school where he/she is carried on the Official Register. If a student is carried on both Official Registers, the student may choose the school at which he/she wishes to participate in all sports on a full school-year basis.

CL 3: Vo-Tech/Public Academy Full Time – If a Vocational/Technical High School/Public Academy does not offer the particular sport in which one of its full-time students desires to participate, that student may participate in that sport at his/her sending school upon agreement of both Principals, regardless of the number of sports programs offered at the Vocational/Technical High School/Public Academy.

CL 4: Vo-Tech/Public Academy – When a student-athlete transfers to or from a Vocational/Technical High School to or from the district school where the student resides the student is eligible immediately provided such assignment is by the Board of Education of the district where the student resides and the student satisfies all other eligibility regulations.

CL 5: Charter School – If a secondary Charter School does not offer the particular sport in which one of its full-time students wishes to participate, that student may participate in that sport at his/her school of residence upon agreement of both principals, regardless of the number of sports programs offered at the Charter School.

CL 6: Choice School – A choice student who attends a Choice School, pursuant to regulations adopted by the New Jersey Department of Education, shall be subject to the transfer restrictions contained in Article V, Section 4.K (1) and (2).

CL 7: Disabled Students: A pupil who is disabled and who is placed by the parents or guardians at their own expense in a non-public school for treatment of the disability shall be eligible to participate in the interscholastic athletic program of the student's resident school district, provided the student otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the program and the student's participation has written approval of the board of education of the school district where the program is located.

CL 8: Vo-Tech/Academy/Public Sending District- When a student enrolls in an academy program through a Vo-Tech school (School A) which is housed at another District's High School (School B) which is different from the student's home sending district's high school (School C), he/she is eligible for interscholastic athletics where he or she is carried on the Official Register from School A or School B. If a student is carried on both School A and School B's registers, the student may choose the school at which he/she wishes to participate in all sports on a full school-year basis. The student is not eligible for interscholastic sports from his/her home sending district (School C) regardless of what sports are offered at School A and School B.

H. **Post-Graduates** – No post-graduate student shall be eligible for high school competition. When a student graduates from a school (days or weeks) before the official end of the semester that student

may continue to represent his/her school until the official end of that semester – either January 31 or June

30. A student becomes ineligible for high school athletics when the class in which he/she originally enrolled is graduated.

CL: A League/Conference or County may grant a waiver (as provided for in the Rules & Regulations, Rule 2, Specific Sport Regulations, Note 3) to permit teams or individuals from the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools to participate if such Student-Athletes are in the first year of post-high school matriculation.

- I. **Pre-High School Students** – Students in any 9th grade are eligible for teams in the Senior High School in that district at the discretion of the administrators and the Board of Education in that district. Students in any 6th, 7th, or 8th grades of any school (Jr. High or Sr. High) who play on 9th grade or so-called freshman or sophomore, junior varsity and varsity teams will be ineligible at the conclusion of eight consecutive semesters of such participation. Junior High School 9th grade teams may play against 9th grade teams from 4-year or 6-year high schools.

CL 1: Article V, Section 4.I is applicable to all 9th grades including those which are under the supervision and control of an administrative head (Principal) separate and apart from the administrative head (Principal) of the Senior High School. All 9th grade students in an 8-4, 6-6 or 6-3-3, or other administrative plan may participate on a junior varsity or varsity team without jeopardizing their eligibility to participate on a 9th grade team in that sport; however, when 9th grade students are under a separate administrative head than that of the Senior High School such agreement must be affirmed, in writing, to the NJSIAA over the signature of both administrative heads.

Any 9th grade Student-Athlete who participates on a junior varsity or varsity team or any team at the high school level will be subject to the eligibility provisions of the Bylaws, Article V, 4.G (2). This means that such 9th grade students will be subject to the transfer provisions of Article V, Section 4.K.

CL 2: Students below the 9th grade are not permitted to practice with students of grade nine (9) through twelve (12), neither may they “suit up” with those teams for games or scrimmages involving grades nine (9) through twelve (12) unless a waiver has been granted (to ensure eight (8) consecutive semesters of participation). Student will be considered to have begun his/her eight semesters of eligibility on a sport specific basis pursuant to Article V, Section 4.I.

CL 3: All games in which 6th, 7th and 8th grade students participate will cause forfeiture of said games under this Section unless a waiver has been granted.

CL 4: Students in 6th, 7th or 8th grades who will reach age sixteen (16) prior to September 1 while properly enrolled in a member school may request a waiver of the Bylaws, Article V, Section 4.I, Pre-High School Student, to have an opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics for four (4) years prior to becoming ineligible.

J. **Semester of Eligibility:**

1. No student shall be eligible for high school athletics after the expiration of eight consecutive semesters following his/her entrance into the 9th grade. A student becomes ineligible for high school athletics when the class in which he/she was originally enrolled has graduated.
2. This rule shall not apply to classified students who are ungraded. Classified students who are ungraded will have eight consecutive semesters of eligibility beginning with the first semester of participation in interscholastic athletics at the freshman, junior varsity, or varsity level.
3. This rule shall not apply to an honorably discharged serviceman/servicewoman, in which case

- the Executive Committee may make any adjustments of this rule as it may deem equitable.
4. Students below the 9th grade who participate on a high school team will be ineligible at the conclusion of eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's initial pre-9th grade participation. If a student's pre-high school participation in high school sports occurred in a state other than New Jersey, the student's eight consecutive semesters of eligibility shall begin when the student enters high school, provided that (a) the student has transferred into New Jersey via a change of residence; (b) a Transfer Form has been completed; and (c) the student meets all other eligibility requirements, including academic requirements.

CL 1: In order to assure the opportunity for eight consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility, member schools may request waivers to permit students who are enrolled in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades and who are otherwise academically eligible, to participate on the junior varsity or varsity teams where such students will be sixteen (16) years of age or older upon entrance into the 9th grade prior to September 1st. Guidance Departments/School Administrators of elementary schools should provide the Athletic Director with ages of all students that qualify under this Clarification so they can be assured of four (4) years of eligibility prior to becoming ineligible at age nineteen.

CL 2: Guidance Departments should provide the Athletic Director with ages of all classified students so they can be assured of four (4) years of eligibility prior to becoming ineligible at age nineteen.

K. Transfers

1. Purpose:

NJSIAA's mission is to administer education-based interscholastic athletics, which support academic achievement, good citizenship, and fair and equitable opportunities. Transfers for athletic reasons undermine the stability of sports programs, elevate athletics over academics, lead to disparities in competitiveness, and erode the level playing field that the NJSIAA seeks to foster. Multiple transfers within a high school career disrupt a student's education. Transfers after a sports season has started not only disrupts the team, but also the competitive balance among schools.

This rule is designed to discourage transfers for athletic reasons, multiple transfers, and transfers after a sports season has begun, by imposing short but predictable periods of ineligibility for those transfers while providing one penalty-free transfer under certain conditions.

Because the periods of ineligibility set forth in this rule are among the shortest in the nation, and the purpose of the rule is designed to deter inappropriate transfers, there shall be no waivers of this rule.

2. Definitions:

Transfer: A "transfer" occurs when a student who has previously enrolled in a secondary school leaves that school and enrolls in a new one. The date of transfer shall be the earlier of the first day of class or the first day of sports participation at the new school.

CL1: It is considered a transfer if a homeschooled student moves from homeschooling to a high school or from a high school to homeschooling. If the student's home district has a Board of Education policy that permits homeschooled students to participate in sports, the student will be exempt from the penalty sit when transferring from homeschooling to the home district or from the home district to homeschooling.

CL 2: A transfer student is eligible to participate in sports at the new high school when (1)

the student has enrolled at the new school and (2) the student has either withdrawn from the former school, or the school year has concluded at the former school. Acceptance or admission alone does not constitute enrollment. This clarification is applicable to the school year and summer recess period.

Senior Transfer: A “Senior Transfer” is a student-athlete whose first transfer occurs during or after their third season of eligibility in a particular sport in which they participated in during the 12 months preceding the transfer.

Start of Practice Date: “The Start of Practice Date” is the first day of practice for each sport as set forth annually in the Program Regulations, Section 6.

Competition Start Date: The “Competition Start Date” is the first day of competition for each sport as set forth annually in the Program Regulations, Section 8. For football, the Week 1 Competition Start Date will be used.

HIB Transfer: Under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, a state law that public schools are required to follow and non-public schools are encouraged to follow, harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) are matters that are investigated and addressed by the school. The NJSIAA does not hold hearings to determine whether a student was bullied. A “HIB transfer” will exist when a school, after investigating a HIB complaint, determines that the proper action to remediate the complaint is an alternative placement or a school transfer.

Maximum Number of Contests: The “Maximum Number of Contests” for each sport are as set forth in the Program Regulations, Section 15. For football, the Maximum Number of Contests is nine. For wrestling and other sports without a maximum number of contests listed in the Program Regulations, the period of ineligibility shall be the number of days specified in each section Below.

3. A student’s first transfer:
Students are entitled to one penalty-free transfer during the first six semesters after their initial high school enrollment, provided that the transfer occurs on or before the Start of Practice Date of the sports season in which the transfer occurs.
4. Transfers occurring after the Start of Practice:
Students who transfer after the Start of Practice Date will be subject to a 30-day period of ineligibility (or ½ the Maximum Number of Contests in that sport, whichever is less).
5. Transfers occurring after the Competition Start Date:
In addition to the period of ineligibility set forth in Section 4 above, any student who transfers after the Competition Start Date will not be eligible for NJSIAA postseason competition in that sport.
6. A student’s second or subsequent transfer:
Students who transfer a second or subsequent time will be subject to a 30-day period of ineligibility (or ½ the Maximum Number of Contests, whichever is less) for all NJSIAA sanctioned sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer.
7. Senior transfers:
Senior transfers, as defined above, are subject to a 22-day period of ineligibility (or 1/3 the Maximum Number of Contests, whichever is less) in each sport in which they participated during or after their third season of eligibility, during the 12 months preceding the transfer.

8. General application:

- a. This Transfer Rule applies to all athletes at all levels of participation (not just varsity athletes) and is applicable to all NJSIAA-sanctioned sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer. Transferring students may participate in a new sport without penalty.
- b. The period of ineligibility will begin on the Competition Start Date of each sport. For students who transfer after the Competition Start Date, the period of ineligibility will begin on the date of enrollment.
- c. When calculating the period of ineligibility using the Maximum Number of Contests, NJSIAA will round down to the nearest whole number if the number of contests is not divided evenly. For example, if the Maximum Number of Contests were 14, then the calculation for a Senior Transfer (14 divided by 3) would be 5.67 and rounded down to a 5 contest sit.

9. Exceptions:

Immediate eligibility, without penalty, will be granted for transfers resulting from DCP&P placement, HIB transfers, and military transfers.

10. Enforcement:

The NJSIAA monitors transfers with the cooperation of the member schools. To that end, the NJSIAA maintains an online Transfer Portal. For each transferring student, the sending school and the receiving school must enter the required information into the Transfer Portal.

All Bylaws, rules and regulations in conflict with this new section shall be declared void.

- L. **Administrative Responsibility** – The Association must rely upon the voluntary compliance by its member schools in enforcing the eligibility standards set forth in this article. Toward that end, the Principal in each member school has the affirmative obligation to report to the NJSIAA any violations of these standards. The fact that a school has disclosed that there has been an eligibility violation will not relieve the affected school of sanctions that may be imposed against it, pursuant to Article X of these By-Laws, including the forfeiture of games or events. However, the failure to disclose an eligibility violation may be grounds for imposing additional sanctions upon the offending school.

CL 1: Although the penalty of forfeiture for the use of an ineligible player is mandatory and not appealable to the Executive Committee, the school may appeal the determination of eligibility provided such request for waiver occurs prior to the participation by the Student-Athlete.

CL 2: Participation by an ineligible player in any game during the regular season results in forfeiture of said game. If such forfeit(s) would have caused the school's failure to qualify for the tournament or if an ineligible player participates in a tournament game, said SCHOOL will be disqualified from the tournament immediately, unless the championship has been concluded, and their last opponent will advance in their place. Schools eliminated prior to the last opponent will not re-enter tournament competition.

M. **International Students, Foreign Students, and Other Students from Foreign Countries**

1: International Student Defined: An International Student is a student:

- a. who is in the United States on a U.S. Department of State-issued J-1 or F-1 visa; and
- b. who has moved to the United States without their parent or guardian; and
- c. whose parents/guardians are domiciled in a foreign country; and
- d. who is enrolled, as a full-time student, at an NJSIAA member school; and
- e. who has not graduated from the secondary school system in their home country (or that country's high school equivalent); and

- f. who is participating in a Council on Standards for International Students (CSIET) approved program.

2: International Student Eligibility Requirements:

- a. An International Student is eligible for one season of varsity athletics and unlimited seasons of sub-varsity athletics, per sport, if all of the following conditions are met:
 - i. The student satisfies the requirements to be considered an International Student, as listed above; and
 - ii. The student has been assigned to a host family without any prior contact or influence from the student, the student's parents, the school, or any other interested parties before the placement.; and
 - iii. The student was not selected or placed on any basis relating to the student's athletic abilities/interests; and
 - iv. The student does not reside with district staff members, boosters, or coaching staff (paid or voluntary); and
 - v. The student and school have completed the NJSIAA International Student Eligibility Form, and it has been approved by the NJSIAA; and
 - vi. The student has not been previously enrolled in another U.S. school, or participated on a U.S. athletic team (club, school, or otherwise); and
 - vii. The student meets all eligibility requirements in Article V of NJSIAA Bylaws.
- b. Notwithstanding any provision of Article V, a student who receives eligibility under this section shall thereafter be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that or any other NJSIAA member school.
- c. Sections 1 and 2 are not applicable to students who move to the United States with their parent/guardian as defined in Section 8.
- d. Schools are limited to one international student per varsity team during a given season. There is no limit on the number of international students participating at the sub-varsity level.

3: Foreign Student Defined: A foreign student is a student who has moved to the United States from a foreign country, and whose parents/guardians are domiciled in a foreign country, but who does not qualify as an International Student pursuant to Section 1 above, and/ or does not meet the eligibility requirements for International Students outlined in Section 2 above. A foreign student is not eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at NJSIAA member schools.

4: American Dependencies: Students from American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and other dependencies of the United States, are neither Foreign Students nor International Students. Said students are eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

5: Refugees: Any student who is considered a refugee, or has been granted asylum, or whose parents are considered refugees or have been granted asylum, by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

6: Parolees: Any student who has enrolled in a NJSIAA member school and is approved as a parolee, or whose parents have gained parole status, through USCIS shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

7: Moving with Parent/Guardian: Any student who has moved to the United States from a

foreign country with a parent/guardian, or who has moved to the United States from a foreign country to live with a person who has a biological relationship with the student, shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

8: Boarding Schools: Any student who boards at a NJSIAA member school that offers on-site boarding shall be eligible to participate in high school sports in New Jersey upon meeting the eligibility requirements of Article V.

9: Effective Date: The effective date of this Bylaw is September 1, 2024. This Bylaw shall apply to students enrolling at NJSIAA member schools after that date. For clarification purposes, this Bylaw applies to any student who starts classes after the first day of the 2024-2025 school year.