

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

VOL. 105

NUMBER 1

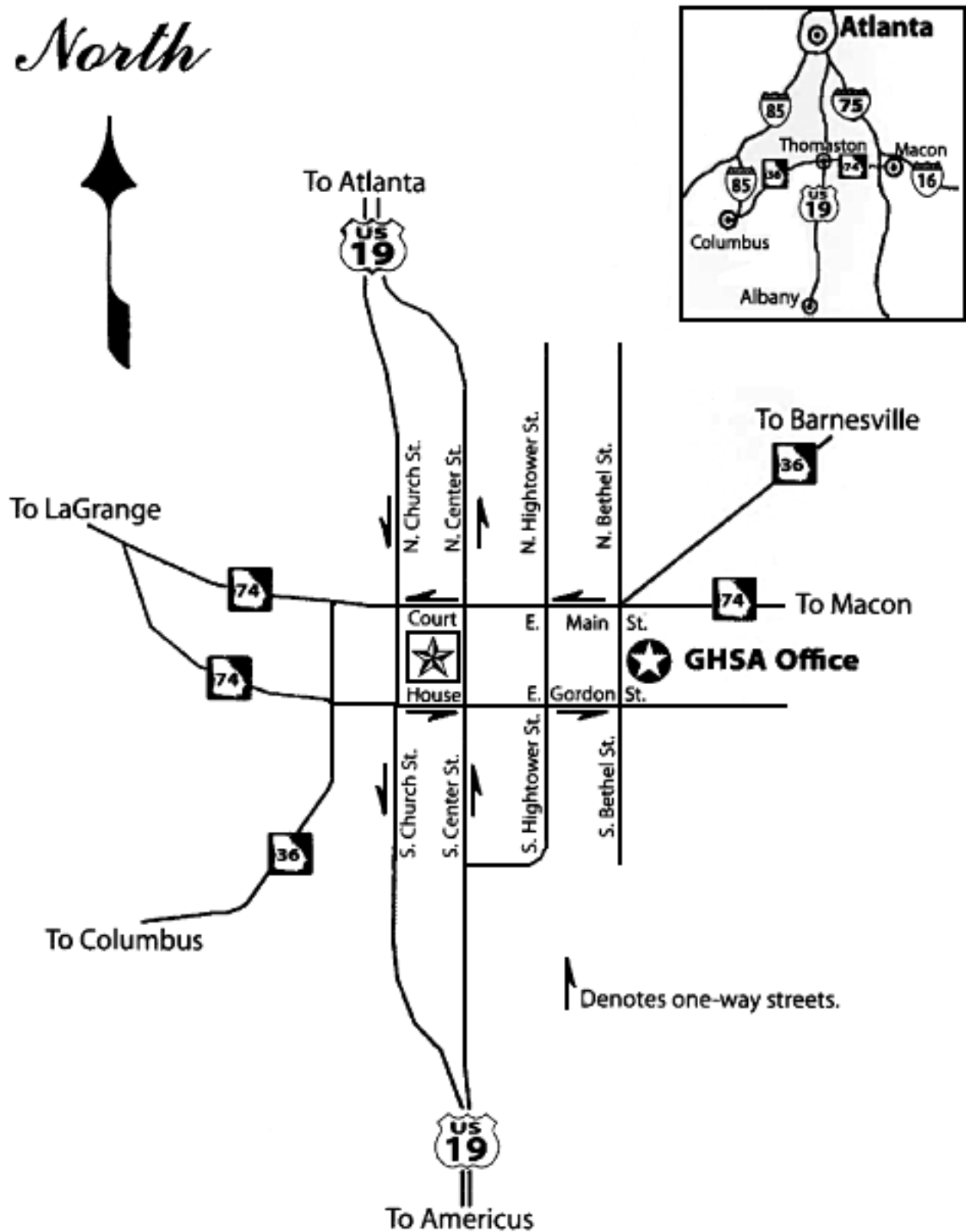
CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS 2011-2012

*A Member of the National Federation of
State High School Associations*



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North



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**GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES FOR 2011-12**

Activity	First Practice Date	First Play Date	Maximum Games/ Dates	Last Play Date	Area/ Region Qualifiers	State Playoff Dates				
						1st Round	2nd Round	Quarters	Semifinals	Finals
FOOTBALL	Aug. 1 (see FB section for details)	Aug. 26	10 (7 JV)	Nov. 5	Nov. 5	Nov. 11-12	Nov. 18-19	Nov. 25-26	Dec. 2-3	Dec. 9-10
CHEERLEADING	Aug. 1	Aug. 13	6 (4 JV)	Nov. 4	Nov. 5	Nov. 11				Nov. 12
SOFTBALL	Aug. 1	Aug. 8	16 (11 JV)	Oct. 8	Oct. 8	Oct. 12-13	Oct. 19-20		Oct. 27-28	Oct. 29
VOLLEYBALL	Aug. 1	Aug. 12	15 (11 JV) Dates	Oct. 8	Oct. 8	Oct. 12, 13	Oct. 18	Oct. 22	Oct. 26	Oct. 29
CROSSCOUNTRY	Aug. 1	Aug. 15	10 (7 JV)	Oct. 29	Oct. 29					Nov. 5
ONEACTPLAY	Aug. 8	Aug. 8	_	May 12	Oct. 29					Nov. 5
LITERARY	Aug. 8	Aug. 8	_	May 12	March 10					March 17
RIFLERY	Aug. 8	Oct. 3	_	May 12	March 17	March 26			March 31	April 14
SWIMMING	Oct. 17	Nov. 7	10 (7 JV)							Feb. 10-11
BASKETBALL	Oct. 24	Nov. 12	25 (18 JV)	Feb. 18	Feb. 18	Feb. 24-25	Feb. 28-29	March 2-3	March 7-9	March 9-10
WRESTLING Dual Traditional	Oct. 31	Nov. 18	20 (14 JV) Dates	Feb. 1	Jan. 6-7 Feb. 3-4	Feb. 10-11				Jan. 13-14 Feb. 16-18
GYMNASTICS	Jan. 16	Feb. 6	10 (7 JV)	April 19	April 20-21					April 27
TENNIS	Jan. 16	Feb. 6	18 (13 JV)	April 21	April 21	By April 27	By May 2	By May 8	May 11-12	May 11-12
GOLF	Jan. 30	Feb. 13	12 (8 JV) Dates	April 27	April 27					May 7
SOCCER	Jan. 23	Feb. 13	18 (13 JV)	April 25	April 25	May 1-4	May 8-9	May 11-12	May 15-16	May 18-19
LACROSSE	Jan. 30	Feb. 20	18 (13 JV)	May 4	May 4	May 8-9		May 11-12	May 15-16	May 19
TRACK - Girls	Jan. 23	Feb. 13	10 (7 JV)	April 21	April 21	April 28				May 3-5
TRACK - Boys	Jan. 23	Feb. 13	10 (7 JV)	April 21	April 21	April 28				May 10-12
BASEBALL	Jan. 30	Feb. 20	26 (18 JV)	April 28	April 28	May 4-5	May 9-10	May 15-16	May 21-22	May 26, 28

GHSA DEADLINE DATES - 2011-12

<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Material to be Submitted</u>	<u>Sent To</u>
August 1, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Football	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Softball	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Volleyball	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Cheerleading	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Cross Country	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Information sheet for Passes, Directory	GHSA
August 1, 2011	Community Coach List Due	GHSA
September 26, 2011	Notification of Entry - Cross Country	Region Secretary
October 1, 2011	Notice of Entry - Cheerleading (Post Rosters Electronically)	GHSA/Reg. Sec.
October 1, 2011	Notification of Entry - One Act Play	Region Secretary
October 17, 2011	Contestants List - Cross Country (Post Electronically)	Meet Director
October 17, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Swimming	GHSA
October 24, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Basketball	GHSA
October 31, 2011	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Wrestling	GHSA
By Area Deadline	Wrestling Entry Forms Due	Host Site
January 16, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Gymnastics	GHSA
January 16, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Tennis	GHSA
January 23, 2012	Swim & Diving Entry Form (2012 State Meet)	Host Site
January 23, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Boys & Girls Track	GHSA
January 23, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Soccer	GHSA
January 30, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Golf	GHSA
January 30, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Lacrosse	GHSA
January 30, 2012	Initial Eligibility Report Due - Baseball	GHSA
February 1, 2012	Contestants List for Literary Competition	Region Secretary
February 1, 2012	Basketball Rosters Due	gasports.com
March 1, 2012	Football Schedules Due	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Gymnastics (2012-13)	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Lacrosse (2012-13)	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Riflery (2012-13)	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Class AA/A Soccer (2012-13)	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Volleyball (2012-13)	GHSA
April 1, 2012	Notice of Intent to Enter Wrestling (2012-13)	GHSA
April 17, 2012	Golf Rosters Due (Boys and Girls) (Post Electronically)	Region Secretary
April 11, 2012	Contestants List - Boys & Girls Track	Region Secretary
End Regular Season	Team Tennis Roster	Region Secretary

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NOTE: Text printed in *italic* throughout this publication is **new** material for this year.

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be known as the Georgia High School Association.

ARTICLE II - OBJECT OF THE ORGANIZATION

The objective of the organization shall be the promotion of education in Georgia from a mental, physical, and moral viewpoint, to standardize and encourage participation in athletics, to promote sportsmanship and an appreciation for and study of music, speech, and other fine arts through Region and State competitions.

ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 SCHOOLS ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Georgia High School Association shall consist of public and private high schools in the state of Georgia.

SECTION 2 CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS

- A. The Reclassification Committee of the GHSA Executive Committee shall place member schools in classifications and regions based on student F.T.E. figures and geographic proximity, respectively.
- B. Member schools will be realigned every two years.
- C. The number of classifications and the number of regions will be determined by the Reclassification Committee at the time of each realignment.
- D. The realignment plan of the Reclassification Committee shall be ratified by a simple majority vote of the full Executive Committee.

SECTION 3 STRUCTURE OF REGIONS

- A. After reclassification, all regions will meet and submit to the State Office, after the final reclassification vote, a plan for structure of the regions. These plans must spell out subdivisions, if any, for all activities. All regions must have been approved before any scheduling may be finalized.
- B. In the event that any member school has a complaint with the structure of a region, it shall so advise the Executive Director and all other schools in the subject region of such complaint in writing within five (5) days after the region meeting following the final reclassification vote. The Executive Director shall then convene a meeting of the Reclassification Committee to review the present and proposed region structure and to attempt to arbitrate the differences and, failing that, to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

All schools in the subject region shall be advised of the meeting of the Reclassification Committee by the Executive Director and shall have the right to present evidence to the Committee. Any member of the Committee which is a member of the subject region shall be disqualified from participation on the Committee.

- C. The Executive Committee shall have full authority to require all or any portion of a subregion to play cross-over games and to align or realign the subject region into new subregions.

**SECTION 4
MEMBERSHIP IN ANOTHER ASSOCIATION**

A school is not eligible for membership in the Georgia High School Association if it is or becomes a member of an association whose Constitution and/or By-Laws are in conflict with the Constitution and/or By-Laws of the Georgia High School Association.

ARTICLE IV - GOVERNANCE

**SECTION 1
STATE OFFICERS**

The State Officers of this Association shall consist of a President, a Vice President, and an Executive Director.

**SECTION 2
STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- A. Membership of the State Executive Committee shall be composed of the State Officers, the State Superintendent of Schools or his/her representative, and one member elected from each region in each classification, plus one member each appointed by the Georgia School Boards Association, the Georgia School Superintendents' Association, the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals, the Georgia Athletic Directors Association, and the Executive Secretary of the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association. Membership shall also include two female members appointed by the Executive Committee upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees from nominees submitted by each region. Each member shall have the right to vote on all matters pertaining to the operation of the Association.
- B. Terms of office for members of the State Executive Committee elected by regions shall coincide with the length of each reclassification cycle.
- C. When a member of the State Executive Committee is unable to attend a State Executive Committee meeting, the President of the region shall have power to appoint an eligible member of the region concerned to represent the region at that meeting.

**SECTION 3
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

- A. Membership of the Board of Trustees shall be composed of the President, Vice President, and Executive Director, plus one member from each classification and one at-large member elected by the Executive Committee. The term of office for members of the Executive Committee serving on the Board of Trustees shall be for two (2) years.
- B. The Board of Trustees shall receive and hold title to all real and personal property of said Association in trust for the benefit of said Association and shall have general custody and administration of such property with power and authority to lease, sell and convey said property of said Association; provided however, said Board of Trustees shall not sell or convey any real property so held by them in trust for said Association without first being authorized to do so by a majority vote of the State Executive Committee of said Association at a meeting duly called for such purpose.
- C. The Board of Trustees reviews pertinent issues relative to the successful operation of the organization. The Board of Trustees reviews the recommendation by the Executive Director concerning the budget, recommends committee appointments, and recommends length of contract for the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees recommends the two at-large female representatives to the Executive Committee.

**SECTION 4
STATE APPEAL BOARD**

- A. The State Appeal Board shall be composed of members selected from the full State Executive Committee on a rotating basis.

- B. The duties of the State Appeal Board as set forth in Sec. 9 shall be performed by four (4) members of the Board sitting on an alternating basis as selected and notified by the Executive Director.
- C. Eligibility appeals in regard to the eight-semester rule may be referred by the Executive Director to the State Executive Committee for a final ruling.
- D. There shall be no appeal of eligibility related to age restrictions set forth in the by-laws.

**SECTION 5
HARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

- A. 1. The Hardship Committee shall be composed of members selected from the full State Executive Committee on a rotating basis.
- 2. The duties of the Hardship Committee shall be performed by four (4) members of the Executive Committee sitting on an alternating basis as selected and notified by the Executive Director.
- B. The Hardship Committee shall have the authority to set aside the effect of the migratory rule, the courses passed rule, and the accumulation of credits rule upon an individual student when in its opinion the rule works an undue hardship upon that student. The Hardship Committee does not hear cases regarding normal semesters, four years of participation, or appeals arising under the By-Laws.
 - 1. The Hardship Committee shall meet at a location and on dates established by the Executive Director and published in the GHSA Calendar. Requests will be considered to have a rule or rules set aside for benefit of individual students and shall consider such requests at the meetings held for that purpose, but not at any other meetings of the committee. If conditions upon which a request is based develop after April 1, the Executive Director is authorized to set a date for a special meeting to be held at the State Office to consider such case or cases.
 - 2. The principals of all member schools who have filed requests to have the effect of a rule set aside for individual students shall be notified of the time of the meeting at which such requests will be considered not less than five working days before such meeting.
 - 3. A request will be considered at a meeting only if complete information concerning the case is filed in writing with the Executive Director at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting and if a representative of the school, along with the student, is present at the meeting to furnish the Hardship Committee with information. Complete information includes a transcript.
 - 4. The conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements must have been beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents, and such that none of them could reasonably have been expected to comply with the rule. Ignorance of the rule on the part of any or all of them shall not be considered sufficient cause for setting aside its effects.
 - 5. The decision of the Hardship Committee must be unanimous to set aside the effects of the rule in each individual case, and such decision shall not be considered as setting a precedent for other cases of a somewhat similar nature.
 - 6. The decision of the Hardship Committee shall be appealable to the Appeals Board by compliance with Sec. 9C. of the Constitution and then to the State Executive Committee by compliance with Sec. 9F. of the Constitution.
- C. 1. The Executive Director shall have the authority upon receiving an application by a member school to set aside the effect of any eligibility rule upon an individual student within the jurisdiction of the Hardship Committee and to grant the same without necessity of the appearance of the student or a representative of the school before the Hardship Committee when, in the judgement of the Executive Director, the circumstances regarding the application are such that:
 - (a) The conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements are beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents and such that none of them could reasonably have been expected to comply with the rule; and,
 - (b) The conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements work an unjust, unfair, and unforeseeable hardship upon the student; and
 - (c) The facts are clear, undisputed, and supported by appropriate documentation.

2. The Executive Director shall not have the authority to deny an application for hardship status and shall be required to either grant the application or to schedule the application for hearing by the Hardship Committee.
- D. 1. The Executive Director shall have the discretion upon receiving an application by a member school to set aside the effect of any academic eligibility or eight semester rule upon individual students when, in the judgement of the Executive Director, the following criteria are met:
 - (a) The conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements are beyond the control of the school, the student and his parents, and such that none of them could reasonably have been expected to comply with the rule; and
 - (b) The conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements work an unjust, unfair and unforeseeable hardship upon the student; and
 - (c) The facts are clear, undisputed and supported by appropriate documentation and evidence; and
 - (d) The setting aside of the subject rule would not result in an unfair advantage to the school or student nor compromise the safety of any other student.
 2. The decision of the Executive Director shall be appealable under the provisions of Section 9 of the GHSA Constitution and By-Laws.

SECTION 6 REGION OFFICERS

- A. Each Region of each Classification shall elect a President, a Vice President, a Secretary-Treasurer, and from one to three committee members. No two of the above shall be from the same school unless the two are President and the Secretary-Treasurer. These officers, together with any member of the State Executive Committee from the region, shall compose the Executive Committee in their region.
- B. A member of the State Executive Committee who is not an elected member of his Region Executive Committee shall be an added member of his respective Region Executive Committee. This provision that only one (1) member of the Region Executive Committee may come from the same school will apply only to the members elected by the region, and will not apply when the State Executive Committee member in the region is from the same school as an elected member.
- C. The treasurer of each region is required to make an itemized statement of the income and expenditures of all funds to the region. When a new treasurer is elected, any balance must be turned over to the new officer immediately.

SECTION 7 DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The duties of the various officers and committees shall be those usually devolving upon such officers and committees. It is specifically the duty of the State Executive Committee and the Region Executive Committees to seek at all times to educate the school officials under their jurisdiction, and at the same time, to check vigorously any practice or violation of the rules by exercising the full penalty for such violations if it is deemed necessary.

SECTION 8 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. A President and a Vice President shall be elected as State Association officers at the spring meeting of the Georgia High School Association.
- B. The election and term of office of the Executive Director shall be for a term of one to five years at the discretion of the State Executive Committee and the President and Vice President of the Georgia High School Association and shall be authorized to execute a contract in the name of and for the Georgia High School Association.
- C. Only members of the State Executive Committee shall be entitled to vote in elections.
- D. Should the President become disqualified by death, resignation, or otherwise, the Vice President shall assume the office immediately and shall act as President until the vacancy is filled.

- E. Any vacancy which may occur in the office of President or Vice President shall be filled at the next meeting of the State Executive Committee.
- F. Each region in each Classification shall elect at any region meeting, a President, a Vice President, a Secretary-Treasurer, and from one to three region committee members as region officers.

Terms of office shall be for two (2) years, and elections shall be held at the beginning of each reclassification cycle. Any vacancy occurring on a Region Committee shall be filled by the Region Committee until the next meeting of the region.

- G. The State Executive Committee member from each region shall be elected at any Region meeting when there is a vacancy to be filled. The term of office shall be for a period of two (2) years. Any vacancy occurring on the State Executive Committee shall be filled by the Region Committee until the next meeting of the region concerned.

SECTION 9 AUTHORITY OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPELLATE PROCEDURE

- A. The State Executive Director shall be authorized to interpret the rules of the Georgia High School Association and to impose the proper penalty for their violation. The Assistant Executive Director shall, upon the absence or at the direction of the Executive Director, have all the powers and responsibilities of the Executive Director as provided under this Constitution and the By-Laws of the GHSA. The State Executive Director shall make all arrangements for holding and conducting the State Meets and Tournaments.
- B. All questions pertaining to eligibility or any other matters under the rules of the Georgia High School Association must first be submitted to the State Executive Director. If the question concerns a violation of any of the rules of the Georgia High School Association, the State Executive Director shall notify the member schools involved and advise them of the charges and advise them of their right to submit evidence and their right to request a hearing. The State Executive Director, after hearing or examining the evidence of the party or parties concerned, shall render a decision.
- C. Should any member school not be satisfied with the decision, appeal may then be made to the State Appeal Board by filing a written notice of appeal to the State Appeal Board through the State Executive Director within five (5) days of the date of the decision, which notice of appeal shall clearly state the decision appealed and the reasons for such appeal. The State Executive Director shall notify the State Appeal Board and all other parties of the appeal. Provided however, that if the only issue under appeal is to request modification of the penalty imposed by the Executive Director, then the member school may appeal directly to the Executive Committee.
- D. Appeal Board meetings shall be set on dates established by the Executive Director and published in the GHSA Calendar.
1. Any request to the Appeal Board must be in the hands of the Executive Director five (5) days before the scheduled meeting date.
 2. Any other appeal requested (other than regularly scheduled dates) must be accompanied by a check sufficient to pay the entire estimated expenses of the Appeal Board to defray the cost of bringing the Appeal Board into session.
 3. All requests for appeals must be in writing with the stated reasons for an appeal, and signed by the administrative head of the individual school.
 - (a) *An appeal of an eligibility decision must be based on one or more of the following reasons:*
 - (1) *There is substantial new information to be submitted that was not heard by the previous group making the decision that is being appealed.*
 - (2) *There is an allegation that a GHSA rule was misapplied in that ruling.*
 - (3) *There is an allegation that due process was not given in previous considerations.*
 - (b) *An appeal of a decision by the Executive Director must be based on one of the following reasons:*
 - (1) *There is an allegation that a GHSA rule was misinterpreted.*
 - (2) *There is an allegation that the Executive Director did not afford due process to the school.*
 - (c) *All appeals shall set forth the basis for the appeal and the facts supporting the same, and shall be screened by the Executive Director for compliance with this rule prior to scheduling a hearing.*

- E. The State Appeal Board, after hearing or examining the evidence submitted by the party or parties, may affirm or reverse the decision of the Executive Director. In order to sustain an appeal, the vote of the Appeal Board shall be unanimous.
- F. Should any member school not be satisfied with the decision of the State Appeal Board, they may appeal to the State Executive Committee by filing a written notice of appeal to the State Executive Committee through the State Executive Director within five (5) days of the date of the decision. The notice of appeal shall clearly state the decision being appealed and the reasons for such appeal. Such notice of appeal shall be accompanied by a check sufficient to pay the entire expenses of the State Executive Committee when such appeal is required to be heard at a time other than regularly scheduled meetings of the State Executive Committee.
- G. The State Executive Committee, after hearing or examining the evidence submitted by the party or parties concerned, shall render a decision to affirm, reverse, or modify the decision under appeal.
- H. No other method of appeal shall be held valid and any appeal must begin with the first step outlined and not eliminate any step until reaching the final court of appeal, the State Executive Committee. When the decision by the State Executive Committee is in favor of the appealing party or parties, the State Executive Committee may charge the expense of the meeting to the Georgia High School Association and reimburse the appealing party or parties. Members of the Hardship Committee and the Appeal Board will not be eligible to vote (those members who have heard a specific case) as a member of the Executive Committee when an appeal goes before the full Executive Committee.

SECTION 10 VOTE

Each school shall have one (1) vote in a Region meeting and each member of the State Executive Committee shall have one (1) vote in the State Executive Committee meeting.

SECTION 11 AMEND CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- A. To amend the Constitution, it shall take a two-thirds vote of the members of the Executive Committee who are present at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present. Blank ballots, abstentions and pass votes are excluded.
- B. To amend the By-Laws, it shall take a majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee who are present at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present. Blank ballots, abstentions and pass votes are excluded.
- C. The effective date of any changes in the Constitution & By-Laws will be the next school year unless otherwise provided by the change.
- D. Proposed changes to the Constitution must be adopted at two separate meetings of the Executive Committee to be held not less than 30 days apart.

SECTION 12 SEMIANNUAL MEETINGS

- A. The State Executive Committee of the Georgia High School Association shall meet in the fall and spring of each year on such dates as may be designated by the State Executive Director.
- B. In addition to these meetings, special meetings may be called by the State President or the Executive Director at any time or place upon giving reasonable notice to the members of the Committee.
- C. The Executive Director is required to present an itemized statement of the income and expenditures of all funds to the State Executive Committee.

**SECTION 13
VIOLATION OF RULES**

- A. Each school is required to abide by all rules of the Georgia High School Association as promulgated by the State Executive Committee and interpreted by the Executive Director.
- B. The Executive Director is authorized to make such investigation as may be necessary and to judge whether or not a school has violated a rule. When a school is adjudged guilty, the Executive Director is authorized to direct the penalty or penalties.
- C. A school violating any rule, whether it be due to carelessness, willfulness, ignorance or any other cause, may be subject to a fine of not more than two thousand-five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for each offense, and/or probation in the sports(s) in which the violation has been made, and/or suspension from the Association up to a full calendar year, and/or forfeiture of games and/or contests involved. (NOTE: See Appendix "P" at the end of this publication for a detailed schedule of fines)
- D. PROBATION - placing a school on probation permits a school to compete in regular season games and/or contests, but bars that school from competing for any championship during the period of probation.
- E. A school which, after investigation, is adjudged guilty of violating the rules of the Georgia High School Association shall pay the costs incidental to such investigation; such cost to be in addition to fines or penalties assessed. Failure to pay the cost shall result in suspension or in lengthening the period of suspension.

**SECTION 14
CODE OF ETHICS**

The Georgia High School Association recognizes its responsibility with respect to the promotion of honesty, truthfulness, and accuracy in record-keeping and reporting. Therefore, the professional personnel of the member schools are charged with upholding the Code of Ethics adopted by the Professional Standards Commission as accepted and approved by the State Board of Education.

ARTICLE V — GENERAL PROVISIONS

**SECTION 1
CONTESTS**

- A. Each region may hold annual contests in literary, athletics, and other forms of contests designed to promote the cause of education and authorized by the State Executive Committee.
- B. Such contests must be held on dates to be announced in this Constitution and By-Laws under the rules governing State and Regional meets.
- C. Schools shall compete in their own classifications in State and Regional meets.
- D. Winners in regional meets may be sent to the State Meet in both athletic and literary events.

**SECTION 2
ORGANIZATION PURPOSE**

- A. The purpose for which the Georgia High School Association is organized is exclusively educational within the meaning of IRC 501 (c) (3) or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.
- B. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the Georgia High School Association shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal income tax under IRC 501 (c) (3) or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.
- C. In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to one or more organizations which themselves are exempt as organizations described in sections 501 (c) (3) and 170 (c) (2) of the Code or corresponding sections of any prior or future Internal Revenue Code, or to the Federal, State, or local government for exclusive public purpose.

BY-LAWS

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

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

- A. The word “student” used in these By-Laws refers either to a boy or girl participant in interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, or literary activities. Therefore, according to correct grammatical usage, since the antecedent “student” can involve persons of both sexes, the masculine pronouns he, his, or him used throughout said By-Laws will refer to either male or female participants.
- B. The word “principal” used in these By-Laws refers either to a male or female head of a secondary school. Therefore, according to correct grammatical usage, since the antecedent “principal” can involve or refer to persons of either or both sexes the masculine pronouns, he, him, or his, will refer to a male or female head of a secondary school.
- C. The abbreviations GHSA used throughout these By-Laws refers to the Georgia High School Association.

BY-LAW 1.00 - STUDENT

1.10 - CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

- 1.11 **Students gain eligibility** to practice or compete for the school in which they are enrolled after they have been certified by the principal of that school, after the eligibility forms have been processed by the GHSA office, and after the students have met the standards of:
 - (a) academic requirements
 - (b) age
 - (c) semesters in high school
 - (d) residence in the school's service area
 - (e) transfer rules
 Note: Students establishing eligibility as entering 9th graders are automatically eligible for the first semester.
- 1.12 The **certification of eligibility** shall be submitted initially in each sport or activity no later than the date set by the GHSA for the first *practice* in that sport or activity.
 - (a) This due date does not consider the date of the first contest scheduled.
 - (b) EXCEPTION: Literary, One-Act Play and Riflery certification is due twenty (20) days prior to the first scheduled contest.
- 1.13 If a student ruled ineligible by the GHSA, competes interscholastically due to the terms of a **court restraining order or injunction** against his/her school and/or the GHSA, and then has the court order vacated, stayed, reversed, or ruled unjustified; the Executive Director shall take one or more of the following actions against the school involved in the interest of restitution and fairness to the competing school(s):
 - (a) Require that individual and/or team records and performances achieved during participation by the ineligible student be vacated or stricken.
 - (b) Require that team victories be forfeited to the opponent(s).
 - (c) Require that team awards earned by the school or individual awards earned by the ineligible student be returned to the GHSA.

1.20 - ENROLLMENT AND TEAM MEMBERSHIP

- 1.21 **To be eligible to participate and/or try-out** for a sport or activity, a student must be enrolled full time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.
 - (a) Enrollment is defined as follows:
 - (1) Fall Semester: when the student participates in a practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.
 - (2) Spring Semester: when the student attends classes.
 - (3) A student may be enrolled in only one (1) high school at a time.
 - (b) The student must be in regular attendance.
 - (c) The student must be taking courses that total at least 2.5 Carnegie Units that count toward graduation.
 NOTE: If an eligible student transfers from a school that uses a block-schedule format to a school using

a traditional format (or vice versa) and that student cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the semester the transfer occurs.

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

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

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

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

1.30 - AGE

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

1.40 - LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

- (a) A student is not considered to have entered the 9th grade when a 9th grade course is taken if:
 - (1) the student is regularly enrolled in a member's feeder school in a grade below the ninth, **AND**
 - (2) the course is taken as an advanced course, **AND**
 - (3) the principal of the school attended by the student certifies to the GHSA that the subject and course(s) meet the criteria set forth above.
- (b) Credits earned toward high school graduation which are taken below the ninth grade may be used when considering high school eligibility.

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

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

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

- 1.45 **Eighth grade students** may participate on a sub-varsity team of a high school provided they attend a feeder school of that high school.
- (a) Students in grade 8 are never eligible for a varsity event in any activity.
 - (b) Eighth grade students who play on a high school team must meet all middle school requirements as put forth by the State Department of Education.
 - (c) An eighth grade student who is declared ineligible at a middle school or retained for academic reasons, is considered to be ineligible for participation on a sub-varsity high school team.
 - (d) Eighth grade students participating on a sub-varsity team may only participate in 60% of the number of games allotted to the varsity team in that sport.
 - (e) Students below the eighth grade are not eligible to participate on any high school team.
 - (f) Students enrolled in grade 8 in a middle school or junior high school which is a feeder school to the member high school may participate in Spring football practice. These students must be pre-enrolled at that member high school, and once pre-enrolled, the student has established eligibility at that high school.
 - (g) Students enrolled in grade 8 in a middle school or junior high school which is a feeder school to the member high school may try out for cheerleader at the high school. Eighth grade students at a non-feeder school that has no system high school may participate in cheerleader tryouts at the member high school serving the student's area of residence. Such a student must be pre-enrolled at that member high school, and once pre-enrolled, the student has established eligibility at that high school.
- 1.46 The number of contests, starting and ending dates, and the number of practice days allowed for each sport or activity can be found listed in a calendar at the front of this publication.
- 1.47 **Girls** may participate **on boys' teams** when there is no girls' team offered in that sport by the school. Boys are not allowed to play on girls' teams even when there is no corresponding boys' sport. NOTE: Cheerleading is a co-ed sport.
- 1.48 **Advisory Notice - Pregnant Students:** In response to the increasing number of pregnant students attending member schools, and the continued participation of these students in GHSA activities, the following advisory notice is being offered:
- (a) During the first 18 weeks of pregnancy, students, with written consent from a physician, may be allowed to participate in athletic activities except those activities in which a fall or other rapid deceleration is likely to occur.
 - (b) Pregnant students should not be allowed to participate in any athletic activities after the 18th week of pregnancy.
- 1.49 Schools having students participate in athletic activities with **artificial limbs** must certify that the artificial limb is no more dangerous to participants than a natural limb.
- (a) A permission form must be filed with the GHSA office.
 - (b) The form may be found in the Miscellaneous section on the GHSA web site.

1.50 - SCHOLASTIC STANDING / SCHOLARSHIP

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

- 1.52 Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester. The first day of the Fall semester shall be interpreted as the first date of practice for the first sport.
- (a) Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible the last day of summer school.
- (1) Summer school is an extension of the previous semester and courses may be:
- a. remedial in nature where a previously-taken course is repeated in its entirety with a new grade being given.
- b. enrichment in nature where a new course is taken that results in new credit being earned.
- (2) A maximum of two (2) Carnegie unit credits earned in summer school may be counted for eligibility purposes. NOTE: Additional credits may be earned in credit recovery programs or make-up programs.
- (3) Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under the rule shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (such as SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).
- (4) An independent study course taken in summer school must be regionally accredited and accepted by the school system for graduation credit.
- (b) Courses completed after the beginning of a new semester may not be used to gain eligibility for that semester. Example: night school classes, correspondence courses, etc.
- (c) Independent study courses taken during the school year must meet the criteria of 1.52 (a) 4.
- 1.53 Students must **accumulate Carnegie units towards** graduation according to the following criteria:
- (a) **First-year students** (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester **first-year students** must have **passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** the previous semester in order to participate.
- (b) **Second-year students** must have **accumulated five (5) total Carnegie units** in the first year, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.
- (c) **Third-year students** must have **accumulated eleven (11) Carnegie units** in the first and second years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.
- (d) **Fourth-year students** must have **accumulated seventeen (17) Carnegie units** in the first three years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.
- (e) Students may accumulate the required Carnegie units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

ADVISORY NOTICE: CURRICULAR INNOVATIONS

A. BLOCK FOUR PROGRAMS:

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

B. BLOCK EIGHT PROGRAMS:

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

C. HYBRID SCHEDULING:

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

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- 1.54 A Dual Enrollment program is defined as a program in which a fulltime student at a GHSA member high school takes one or more courses from a state public or private postsecondary institution and receives credit at the high school (toward graduation) and at the postsecondary institution.
- (a) Dual enrolled students shall take courses that are approved by the Georgia Department of Education.

- (b) Courses may be taken in a variety of formats (including distance learning and virtual courses) as long as the courses are approved.
 - (c) Postsecondary semester hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:
 - (1) 1-2 semester hours equates to .5 unit
 - (2) 3-5 semester hours equates to 1 unit
 - (d) Postsecondary quarter hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:
 - (1) 1-3 quarter hours equates to .5 unit
 - (2) 4-8 quarter hours equates to 1 unit
- 1.55 Students involved in approved Dual Enrollment programs shall be eligible to participate in GHSA activities provided that academic eligibility is maintained.
- (a) Courses taken each semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units.
 - (b) Courses passed the previous semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units
 - (c) Students will gain or lose eligibility on the first day of each semester at the high school and a college calendar that differs from the high school calendar may cause problems.
 - (d) Students who withdraw or are dropped from a Dual Enrollment program and are returned to the high school only, may encounter eligibility problems.
 - (e) Students involved in Joint Enrollment programs, Early College programs, or Gateway to College programs may not be eligible at their respective high schools.
 - (f) A student who participates on an intercollegiate athletic team may not participate in any GHSA activity.
- 1.56 **Loss of Eligibility:** Students assigned to an **alternative school** or on **out-of-school suspension for disciplinary reasons, or adjudicated to YDC**, lose their eligibility. Suspension is considered to have ended when the student is physically readmitted to the classroom.
- 1.57 **Failure to Meet Academic Standards:** When a school administrator believes that the student has failed to meet the academic eligibility requirements due to conditions that were beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents, and such that none of them could have been expected reasonably to comply with the rule, he may request that the student's case be put on the agenda of the **Hardship Committee**.
- (a) Ignorance of the rule(s) on the part of any individual is not sufficient cause to set aside the rule(s).
 - (b) Schools must supply all the materials requested on the Hardship Application Form on the GHSA web site.
- 1.58 **Credit Recovery/Make-up Work:** Students who have academic deficiencies at the end of a semester may make up those deficiencies in programs that are available to any student in the school.
- (a) Credit recovery programs are short-term programs that involve a course that has been completed and a grade given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.
 - (b) Make-up programs occur when a course has not been completed and an "Incomplete" grade has been given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.
 - (c) Credit recovery and make-up work must be completed within fourteen (14) school days after the start of the next semester. The student is ineligible until such time as the work is completed and the required passing grade has been recorded. Exception: If the end-of-course test is not offered within 14 days of the beginning of the next semester, the student may be granted a reasonable extension by the GHSA.
 - (d) The GHSA Executive Director shall be authorized to approve credit recovery or make-up work completed later than fourteen days after the start of the next semester if he finds that the:
 - (1) timeframe was not met due to circumstances outside the control of the student, his parent(s), and the school, AND
 - (2) work was completed as soon as reasonably possible, AND
 - (3) allowance for such a delay is offered on the same basis to all students in the school.
 - (e) Credit recovery programs operated during the summer or in intersessions shall be completed within fourteen days of the beginning of the new semester. Students using those credits to gain eligibility are ineligible until the course is completed successfully. Credit recovery is used for remedial work only, and no new credit courses may be applied under this provision.
 - (f) Students using credit recovery or make-up programs must have their eligibility submitted to the GHSA office on a "Form C."
- 1.59 **Students with disabilities:**
- (a) A student with disabilities who is enrolled in a special education program which is not physically located at the parent school (example: psycho-education center, regional occupation center, community-based instruction class, etc.) shall be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities at the parent school if IEP (Individual Education Program) requirements are met.

- (b) Schools with students having to meet only IEP requirements for course credit must establish an accounting process for the number of courses passed each semester, and for the awarding of Carnegie units. Requirements for the date of entry into the ninth grade and for age apply to students with IEPs without variation.
- (c) Competitive interscholastic activities administered through local **special education programs** shall follow Georgia Department of Education guidelines and procedures for special education, and are exempt from GHSA requirements.

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

- 1.61 School **service areas** for member public schools are those attendance boundaries established by local boards of education from which a school normally draws its students. The school service area for a member private school is the county in which the private school is located. The school service area for a startup or converted charter school will be the same as the school from which the charter school draws its students.
- 1.62 A **transfer student** who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be **immediately eligible** at the new school if:
- (a) The student moved simultaneously with the entire parental unit or persons he/she resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the service area of the new school. This is known as a **“bona fide move.”**
 - (1) The student may choose the public or private school serving that area.
 - (2) It must be apparent that the parent(s) or the persons residing with the student and the student have relinquished the residence in the former service area and have occupied a residence in the new service area.
 - (3) Relinquishment of the former residence may be met by one of the following procedures: selling the residence; having the residence listed with a real estate agent for sale at a fair market value; having a contract with a buyer; having a lease agreement at a fair market value; or abandoning the house and shutting off unnecessary utilities. When a family claims multiple residences, the residence for which they apply for a homestead exemption will be declared the primary residence.
 - (4) The bona fide move is validated when the student's family maintains the new residence for at least one calendar year. A return to the previous residence within that year renders the student to be a migrant student. All hardship appeal processes are available.
 - (b) The student was enrolled in a **private school or a magnet school** and has a bona fide move from one public school service area to another public school service area. A student in this situation may attend either the public school or a private school serving his area of residence.
 - (c) The student was enrolled in a **non-member private school in Georgia or was boarded at a school out of state** and, without a bona fide move, transferred to a GHSA-member school that serves his area of residence as long as:
 - (1) The student was enrolled at the high school serving his/her area of residence in grades 9-12 before attending the non-member school, OR
 - (2) The student has not yet established eligibility at grades 9-12 at a member school serving his area of residence, OR
 - (3) the student has previously established his attendance at a school other than the school serving his area of residence, and chooses to return to that school, AND
 - (4) it is the initial move of the student from a non-member school to a member school serving his area of residence.
 - (d) The student transfers from a non-member home school and the receiving school grants credit so that the student has accumulated sufficient Carnegie units. At the time such credit is given, the student must also have passed a minimum of five (5) courses the previous semester. The student becomes eligible when credit is awarded officially.
 - (e) The student is involved in a **foreign exchange program** that is approved and published on the “Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs” published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). This list is found on the GHSA web site.
 - (1) The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year.
 - (2) The student shall not be a graduate of a secondary school in his home country.
 - (3) The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.
 - (4) The foreign exchange program must assign students to schools by a method that insures that no student, school, or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes.
 - (f) If one of his/her parents or the custodial parent is a certified teacher or administrator teaching at the receiving school. This opportunity is available one time only at any given school.
 - (g) The student has one of the following family-related situations that produces a **waiver of the bona fide move rule**:
 - (1) There is a Superior Court or Juvenile Court awarded **change of permanent custody** and the student

- moves to the residence of the parent receiving custody.
- (a) The student must attend the member school serving that area of residence.
 - (b) A copy of the court order must accompany the eligibility forms.
 - (c) NOTE: Temporary guardianship papers issued by a Probate Court are not valid for eligibility.
- (2) There is a Superior Court or Juvenile Court final order awarding permanent **joint custody** to the parents and the student moves to a residence of his or her parent outside the service area of the previous school.
 - (a) This waiver may be made one time during a calendar year.
 - (b) A copy of the court order must accompany the eligibility forms.
 - (3) There is a **death of a custodial parent** and the student moves to live with the other natural parent in a new school service area.

NOTE: A copy of the death certificate shall be submitted with the eligibility papers.
 - (4) There is a military transfer of one or both custodial parents that creates a change of residence that is not a bona fide move. NOTE: A copy of the deployment order shall be submitted with the eligibility form.
- (h) Students who are U.S. citizens **returning from a foreign country** shall be eligible as long as they meet all other requirements of eligibility.
 - (i) Students who are transferred from one school attendance area to another school attendance area by a **mandate of the local board of education** maintain their eligibility.
 - (j) **Married students** setting up a household (domicile) shall be eligible in the school of their residence provided they meet all other requirements of eligibility.
 - (k) Students at the Atlanta School for the Deaf will be eligible at the school serving their area of residence provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.
 - (l) The migratory rule (See 1.63) will be waived one time for **students entering the following boarding schools**:

Ben Franklin Academy	Rabun Gap School	Riverside Military Academy
Tallulah Falls School		

Exception: Students from foreign countries not on an approved foreign exchange program are not eligible.
 - (m) Students entering a school as an “unaccompanied youth” under the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act must go through the hardship appeal process to become eligible.
- 1.63 A “**migrant student**” is a student who transfers into a GHSA school without a bona fide move or without one of the exceptions listed in by-law 1.62. The student may practice or compete at the sub-varsity level, but may not compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from the date of his entry into the new school.
- 1.64 A student who is not eligible because of GHSA rules at the former school, and then transfers to a new school, cannot regain eligibility by the transfer. Ineligible students cannot gain eligibility by being adjudicated to YDC and subsequently returning to their resident school with earned credit.
- 1.65 Students whose transfers from member school to member school have been approved by the GHSA office after the end of regular season play or during post-season play are not eligible for participation in GHSA sponsored tournaments and/or playoffs in that particular sport for the school year of transfer.
- 1.66 A student who is not eligible at one school because of **suspension or expulsion** and then transfers to a member school cannot regain eligibility by such a transfer, for the length of the suspension or one calendar year, whichever is less.
- 1.67 A **permissive transfer** is defined as an allowance by a local board of education for students and/or their parents to choose a school to attend without regard to the location of residence.
- (a) A student transferring from member school to member school on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
 - (b) A student transferring to or from a school housing a system-wide, singular academic or vocation program or a magnet program on a permissive transfer is considered a migrant student.
 - (1) The offering of an individual course or series of courses by one school in a system does not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
 - (2) Special options offered by a school system that allow students to attend a school outside their area of residence do not provide inherent justification to grant GHSA eligibility.
 - (3) Any such permissive transfer issue may be brought before the GHSA Hardship Committee.
 - (c) Students transferring under the provisions of “No Child Left Behind” and the failure to make “Adequate Yearly Progress” must be processed through the normal Hardship Appeal procedures. Such students must demonstrate that they have been materially affected by the issue(s) that caused the former school to be placed on the “Need to Improve” list.

- (d) When a military base is located in two school districts, a student moving onto the base for the first time may choose to attend either school district, and that district will place the student appropriately. Any transfer after the initial move will be subject to standard eligibility regulations.

1.68 **Hardship Applications** may be filed to attempt to establish eligibility in the following situations:

- (a) A student who changes schools because of a **temporary custody transfer** from a parent to a guardian, or from one guardian to another (See Article IV, Section 5, in the GHSA Constitution).
- (b) A student whose transfer is based upon his being **emancipated**, homeless, a child from a broken home, a **ward of the DFACS**, or a **ward of a Court** (See Article IV, Section 5, in the GHSA Constitution).
- (c) *In order for a hardship appeal based on a financial hardship to be approved, the new school must provide proof that the family attempted to address the financial problem at the previous school, and that the need-based financial aid was non-existent or insufficient to resolve the problem. Increases in tuition or other costs at a private school do not create an automatic reason to grant the appeal, because such fee increases are considered foreseeable and not unavoidable. Documentation of the financial problem is required.*

1.69 When a new school opens, student eligibility shall be determined as follows:

- (a) When a school district mandates an attendance area for a new school for all grades enrolled at the new school, all students living within the mandated attendance area in those grades are immediately eligible. All students living outside the mandated attendance area who desire to attend the new school are considered migrant students and are ineligible for one year. Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.
- (b) When a school district mandates some students to attend the new school, allows some students to stay at their present school, and permits some students to transfer to the new school, the school shall set a deadline for students living in the attendance area of the new school to decide whether they will move to the new school, or stay at the present school. The decisions exercised at the deadline date are binding. Subsequent changes render the student to be a migrant student with the one-year period of ineligibility. Students who are granted permissive transfers to enroll at the new school from other schools within the system are considered to be migrant students. Hardship appeals may be filed if conditions warrant.

1.70 - RECRUITING/UNDUE INFLUENCE

1.71 **Recruiting and Undue Influence** is **defined** as the use of influence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a GHSA school to induce a student of any age **to transfer** from one school to another, or **to enter** the ninth grade at a member school for athletic or literary competition purposes, whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of the GHSA.

- (a) The use of undue influence to secure OR retain a student for competitive purposes is prohibited, and shall lead to penalties being assessed against **either school**. NOTE: This violation may cause the student to forfeit eligibility for one year from the date of enrollment.
- (b) *Evidence of undue influence includes, but is not limited to:*
- (1) *personal contact initiated by coaches, boosters, or other school personnel in an attempt to persuade transfer*
 - (2) *gifts of money, jobs, supplies or clothing*
 - (3) *free transportation*
 - (4) *free admission to contests*
 - (5) *an invitation to attend practices and/or games*
 - (6) *a social event (other than an official schoolwide Open House program) specifically geared for prospective athletes*
 - (7) *free tuition beyond the allowable standards found in by-law 1.82*
 - (8) *a coach asking a prospective student for contact information*
- (c) Complaints or reports of violations of this rule will be investigated and handled on a case-by-case basis. If **coaches** are found to be in violation of the recruiting rule, a copy of the investigation will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commission of the Department of Education.
- (d) *A school will be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate it could not reasonably be expected to be responsible for the actions of a booster who is found to have violated the recruiting/undue influence rules.*

1.72 A student athlete transferring from one member school to another shall be ruled ineligible for one year because of "undue influence" if it is proven that:

- (a) The coach of the receiving school coached an out-of-school team on which the athlete played prior to the transfer; OR
- (b) The coach at the receiving school acted as a private athletic instructor for the transferring athlete, regardless of whether the coach was paid for his services and/or expertise; OR

- (c) *The player who played for a coach at a former GHSA school followed that coach when he/she moved to another GHSA school. (This is not applicable to dependent children of the coach.)*
- (d) *The situations cited in this by-law are considered to be violations even if a bona fide move has occurred, and the hardship appeal procedures are available for the demonstration that undue influence has not occurred.*

1.73 *A booster shall be considered to be an extension of the school and must abide by all rules applied to coaches and other school personnel. The following persons or groups may be considered boosters: members of the school's Booster Club; alumni; parents; guardians; or relatives of a student or former student; financial donors; or donors of time and effort.*

1.80 - FINANCIAL AID

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

1.90 - AMATEUR STATUS/AWARDS

- 1.91 A student who represents a school in interscholastic athletic competition shall be an **amateur** in that activity.
- (a) An **amateur athlete** is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived therefrom.
 - (b) Accepting nominal, standard fees or salary for instructing, supervising, or officiating in an organized youth sports program or recreation, playground or camp activity, shall not jeopardize an athlete's amateur status.
 - (c) Reasonable compensation derived from private lessons in a sport is permissible.
- 1.92 An athlete **forfeits amateur status** in a sport by:
- (a) competing for money or other monetary compensations except for reasonable allowances for travel, meals, and lodging. NOTE: Accepting expense allowances authorized by the United States Olympic Committee for Olympic Development Programs is acceptable for GHSA students.
 - (b) receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the GHSA.
 - (c) capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts with monetary value except college scholarships.
 - (d) signing a professional playing contract in any sport, or hiring an agent to manage his/her athletic career.
- 1.93 Only **awards** approved by the GHSA may be accepted by a high school student-athlete as a result of participation in school or non-school competition in a sport recognized by the GHSA.

- 1.94 **Symbolic awards** (i.e. non-cash) presented for winning or placing in GHSA competitions are limited to \$250 per year, per student in the aggregate, paid by the local school. These are the only GHSA-approved awards for interscholastic competition. Beyond this, a student may receive one (1) school sweater or jacket presented by the school during his high school career.
- 1.95 Athletes competing in golf or tennis events are limited to awards as specified in the United States Golf Association Rules of Golf, and the United States Tennis Association Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations, which includes (but not limited to) the following:
- (a) No cash awards may be accepted.
 - (b) Merchandise awards in tennis may be accepted up to a retail value of \$250.00.
 - (c) Merchandise awards in golf may be accepted up to a retail value of \$750.00.

INTERPRETATIONS, 1.00 SECTION

BY-LAW 1.10 - CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

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

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

BY-LAW 1.20 - ENROLLMENT AND TEAM MEMBERSHIP

8TH GRADE PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

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

TRYOUT REQUIREMENTS

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

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

BY-LAW 1.30 - AGE

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

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

BY-LAW 1.40 - LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

EIGHT SEMESTER RULE

- **SITUATION:** A student entered a member school eight (8) semesters ago. He was injured and missed one-half of the first semester of his senior year (7th semester). During the first six semesters, he has accumulated

seventeen (17) units, and in the 8th semester he passed five courses and gained an additional 2.5 units. Is he eligible to participate the following Fall in his 9th semester?

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

NON-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

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

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

GIRLS ON BOYS TEAMS

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUB-VARSITY AND VARSITY PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RULING: No. Varsity teams must compete against varsity teams and non-varsity against non-varsity teams in all GHSA activities. The eligibility standards are different in the two levels of competition, and it is possible

to manipulate the limits on competition by allowing this to occur. New schools and schools just beginning a sport may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule.

BY-LAW 1.50 - SCHOLASTIC STANDING/SCHOLARSHIP

DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

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

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

ADVANCE PLACEMENT

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

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

ELIGIBILITY ENDS

- **SITUATION:** A student who is eligible at the beginning of basketball season only passes four (4) traditional classes (carrying 2 Carnegie units) in the first semester which ends on December 17th. Is this student eligible to play in a basketball tournament December 20-23?

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

ELIGIBILITY BEGINS

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

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

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

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

SUMMER SCHOOL RULES

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

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

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

