

GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION FILING ELIGIBILITY REPORTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Begin by thoroughly reading the Georgia High School Association By-Laws, especially focusing on By-Laws 1.10 - 1.69 and By-Laws 2.30 - 2.36. Also, please look at the Eligibility Seminar found on ghsa.net.
2. The reports submitted to the GHSA office become permanent records. Care should be given to have the information fully correct and complete. An error could seriously affect the eligibility of a student, and could lead to a penalty being imposed against the school.
3. The signature of the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Superintendent plus the signature of the report preparer is required on both **Form A, B** and **Form C** eligibility certificates. That signature certifies that all data is correct and accurate.
4. Boys and girls may be listed on the same **Form A**, and more than one activity may be listed on the same **Form A**.
5. Once a student has been certified eligible in a given school year, it is not necessary to re-file that student in subsequent activities. It is acceptable to file every student in the school at the beginning of the school year. The GHSA office maintains that once a student has been reported and declared eligible for the school year, no further report is necessary for that student during the school year UNLESS his/her eligibility has been interrupted. It is not necessary to submit a **Form B** for a previously-cleared transfer student. Transfer students are never listed on a **Form A**.
6. An initial eligibility report must be filed by the calendar date for the first date for practices in any activity. Supplemental filings may be made throughout the season. [EXCEPTION: eligibility reports for Literary competition, One-Act Play, and Riflery competition are due twenty (20) days before the first contest.]

PENALTIES: Eligibility reports that are filed later than the appropriate deadline should be accompanied by a self-report letter to the GHSA. If a school competes in an activity before the eligibility reports are filed, there may be a fine and/or forfeitures for any use of ineligible athletes.

7. Because of the volume of reports filed with the GHSA office, schools should expect a 3-4 day turn-around time in the processing of eligibility reports. Schools filing last-minute forms should not expect immediate responses from the GHSA. For example, do not fax materials into the office at 2:00 and then call back at 2:30 to check the results. Plan ahead! The GHSA office will **NOT** fax back the cleared eligibility forms.
8. When filing an eligibility report, use only current GHSA-approved forms. A compatible computer format of the eligibility reports from member schools will be acceptable as long as the information is in the exact format as shown on the GHSA forms.
9. Once the form has been reviewed in the GHSA office, the original will be sent back to the filing school and one copy retained at the GHSA office.

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COMPLETING FORM A:

1. Form A **must be typewritten or computer generated** No certificates will be accepted that are handwritten.
2. **NAME:** List students in alphabetical order by date student entered ninth grade. Give the full name with the last name listed first.
3. **DATE OF BIRTH:** Give the month, day, and year of the student's birth. A student, whose 19th birthday was prior to May 1 of the preceding school year, is overage and not eligible to participate. You will be assisting the student if you require a birth certificate to be presented to you for verification of age.
4. **DATE STUDENT ENTERED 9TH GRADE:** Complete the month, day, and year the student entered the 9th grade. This is not necessarily the date the student first entered your school. A student will not be eligible for participation for more than eight (8) semesters from the date the student entered ninth grade.
5. **CARNEGIE UNITS ACCUMULATED THE PREVIOUS SEMESTER:** Show the number of Carnegie units the student earned the previous semester. In order to be eligible (beginning with the second semester of 9th grade), the student must have passed 2.5 Carnegie units or their equivalent the semester immediately preceding participation. Place an "E" in the Units Passed column for Entering ninth graders.
6. **TOTAL UNITS ACCUMULATED:** Show the total number of Carnegie Units the student has accumulated thus far in his/her high school career. To be eligible, the student must have accumulated Carnegie units counting toward graduation as follows:

END OF FIRST YEAR:	5 Units	(for students entering 2008-09)
END OF SECOND YEAR:	11 Units	
END OF THIRD YEAR:	17 Units	

Students who lose eligibility for not meeting these requirements at the beginning of the year may regain eligibility during the school year by accumulating the units required at the end of a semester and by earning the required number of units the previous semester. **Remember:** Eligibility is lost or regained on the first day of the new semester. The first day of the Fall semester is the first date of practice for the first sport or the first day of classes for a school, whichever comes first.

7. **ELIGIBILITY STATUS:** This column is for GHSA use only. Eligibility notations will be made.

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COMPLETING FORM B:

1. **TRANSFER STUDENTS:** Form B **must be typewritten or computer generated** If a student has transferred to your school during the past twelve (12) months after entering 9th grade (and has not been cleared previously) complete and submit a **Form B** for that student. If the transfer student has been in your school one full calendar year, do not file a **Form B** (use Form A). NOTE: Transfer students, who do not meet eligibility guidelines for migrant students are eligible to participate at the non-varsity level **ONLY**, provided they meet academic standards.
2. **ACADEMIC DATA:** This is the same information that is required for non-transfer students on **Form A**.
3. **YEARS ATTENDED:** List all previous schools the students attended beginning with the 9th grade.
4. **ADDRESS [PRESENT/PREVIOUS]:** Give full street addresses and do NOT use post office box numbers.
5. **LIVES WITH/LIVED WITH:** Use the full name(s) of the parents, step-parents, guardians, etc. With blended families it is sometimes confusing when complete names are not given.
6. **DATE STUDENT FIRST ATTENDED CLASS AT YOUR SCHOOL:** Be precise as to the date the student entered your school. Note: Do not confuse this with the actual date the student entered the ninth grade.
7. **BONA FIDE CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** In order for a student to have a bona fide move, the student must have moved with the person(s) he/she lived with previously and must have moved from another service area to your school's service area. Answer "Yes" or "No".
8. **EXCEPTIONS:** Certain situations allow a student to be eligible without a bona fide change of address.

(A) A student who transfers from a non-GHSA school to the GHSA school in whose service area he/she lives could be immediately eligible one time in the student's high school career. (See By-Law 1.62-c) **NOTE:** The issue here is not private to public (or vice-versa), but rather non-member to member. Also, only one move back to the home school from a non-member school carries immediate eligibility. Subsequent moves or moves to a GHSA school other than the original school are covered under the migratory rule.

(B) A student transferring from a home school situation is treated as transferring from a non-member school. Each school is responsible for verifying the academic eligibility (units passed per semester and units accumulated) of students coming from the home school situation before the student participates.

(C) A student involved in an approved Foreign Exchange program (as determined by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel) is exempt from the migratory rule and may participate for one year only. Each school is responsible for verifying the academic eligibility (units passed previous semester and units accumulated) of students in these programs.

(D) An American citizen returning from residence in a foreign country may be except from the migratory rule even if parents, step-parents, or guardians do not make the move also (see by-law 1.62-h for further details).

(E) If there is a death of the custodial parent, the student may move to live with the other natural parent, relative, or guardian. A copy of the death certificate must be submitted with the eligibility form.

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COMPLETING FORM B (continued):

(F) In a situation in which both natural parents have been given permanent joint custody by a Superior Court judge, a student may elect to move from one custodial parent to the other once during each school calendar year. The student must remain with the custodial parent for one calendar year in order to maintain eligibility. A copy of the Superior Court records must be submitted with the eligibility report.

9. **PARENT TEACHES AT RECEIVING SCHOOL:** A transfer student maintains eligibility (one time move only) if one of his/her parents or the custodial parent is a certified teacher or administrator at the receiving school (grades 9-12).
10. **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION:** Determine if the transfer student had a disciplinary problem at the previous school. A student may not gain eligibility through a transfer.
11. **APPROVED FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROGRAM:** List the name of the agency that placed this student at your school as a foreign exchange student.
12. In case of a transfer due to divorce or change of permanent custody from one natural parent to another natural parent, a copy of the Superior Court or Juvenile Court documentation (including a statement of custody and the signature of the judge) must accompany the eligibility reports. NOTE: Probate Court changes in guardianship DO NOT alter the student's status as a migrant.
13. Permissive transfers by the local school system do NOT carry athletic eligibility. These types of transfers may result from penalties for misconduct or other special contingencies that arise on the local level.

FILING FOR HARDSHIP CONSIDERATION

1. The GHSA realizes that situations arise due to conditions that are **beyond the control** of the school, the student, and/or parents in which compliance with eligibility rules could not have been expected. Therefore, mechanisms are in place to evaluate individually such circumstances that could warrant waiving certain eligibility requirements.
 - (A) Anytime a student is declared ineligible for issues related to the Migratory Student Rule, and the Principal of the school believes that the conditions cited above do exist; the Principal may file for hardship consideration. This process is begun with the submission of the "Hardship Application" and the inclusion of ALL materials demanded on that form.
 - (B) Any time a student is declared ineligible for academic reasons and the Principal of that school believes that the conditions cited above do exist; the Principal may file for an appearance before the GHSA Hardship Committee. This process is begun with the submission of the "Hardship Application" and the inclusion of ALL materials demanded on that form.
 - (C) Any appeal for a student who has been in school longer than eight (8) semesters must be filed by the Principal by submitting the "Hardship Application". The appeal will be heard by the State Executive Committee at one of their two semi-annual meetings, either in August or March.
2. Application for Hardship will be evaluated by the Executive Director of the Georgia High School Association and the Director may award eligibility or may pass it on to the monthly meeting of the GHSA Hardship Committee. Please submit a separate Form A (or B) for each hardship application for academic reasons.
3. The student and a representative of the school must attend the Hardship Committee hearing at the GHSA office, and other persons with relevant knowledge of the case may attend. The Hardship Committee will either grant eligibility or deny it at that hearing.

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COMPLETING FORM C:

1. **STUDENTS WITH INTERRUPTED ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY:** Form C **must be typewritten or computer generated**. This form is needed if a student ends a semester with a grade of “Incomplete” in one or more courses, or if a student is enrolled in a credit-recovery program for classes failed the previous semester.

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-terms programs that involve a course that has been completed and a grade is 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) 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.

See By-Law 1.58 for additional information.

2. **ELIGIBILITY DEADLINE:** Students needing additional time to complete course work satisfactorily under the conditions outlined in the previous paragraph have the first fourteen (14) school days in the new semester to meet those conditions. If the inability to complete the coursework in the previous semester renders the student ineligible on the first day of the new semester, that student may not practice or compete during that 14-day period.

3. **FILING PROCEDURES:**

- a. The upper half of the Form C is to be completed just like a Form A. The numbers in the “Units Accumulated Last Semester” column and the “Total Units Accumulated” column should reflect the progress made in the 14-day period.
- b. The lower half of the Form C is to be completed according to the particular issue for the student. One portion is completed if the student was making up “Incompletes”, and the other is completed if the student was involved in a “Credit Recovery Program”.
- c. If the course work is not made up in the allotted 14-day period, the student is ineligible for that semester. The Principal still has the option of filing a “Hardship Application” if there are special circumstances that prevented the completion of the coursework in the 14-day period.
- d. Note: If end-of-course test is not offered within 14 days of the new semester, the student may be granted a reasonable extension by the GHSA.

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RULES FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS – “BONA FIDE MOVE” GUIDELINES

BASIC ELIGIBILITY PRINCIPLES:

1. An entering ninth grader is eligible at any school if the school will allow the student to enroll.
2. After entering ninth grade, a student who transfers to a new school must meet requirements that are noted in the document. The most basic requirement is the “bona fide” move.

DEFINITION OF BONA FIDE MOVE:

The student must move 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 must live in the service area of the new school [By-Law #1.62(a)].

1. It is important to note that everyone in the immediate family must move from the old residence to the new residence. The new residence must be the full-time (7 days a week) residence of the family unit.
2. It is also important to note that the family must have relinquished the old residence and the new residence must be in the attendance area of the new school.
3. When a student has a bona fide move, he may choose to enter either the public school that serves his area of residence or a private school that serves his area of residence.

RELINQUISHING THE FORMER RESIDENCE:

Conditions that meet the requirement for relinquishing a residence may be as follows:

1. sell the former residence
2. have a sales contract pending on the former residence
3. possess a contract with a realtor to have the former residence on the market for sale at a fair market value
4. possess a lease agreement to rent the former residence at a fair rate of payment
5. abandon the house and have unnecessary utilities shut off (note: If any utilities are left on, the individual must furnish the reason for the need to leave them on.)

If the family claims two residences, the residence on which the family files for their homestead exemption is considered the official residence.

“MIGRANT STUDENT” RULE:

A student that has a “bona fide” move is immediately eligible. A student who transfers schools without a bona fide move is considered to be a “migrant student”, and is ineligible for varsity competition for one calendar year. That student may practice and may compete on a sub-varsity team while a migrant student. A migrant student may become eligible if one of the following conditions applies:

1. If the student attended a non-member school in Georgia or transferred from an out-of-state boarding school, he may make one free move to the school that serves his area of residence. If the student left a GHSA school to enter the non-member school, he is eligible only if he returns to the original GHSA school.
2. If the student is in a foreign exchange program that is approved on the Advisory List of the Council for International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs (CSIET). The student is immediately eligible, but is only eligible for one year.
3. If the student has one or both parents who is a certified teacher or administrator at the new school (grades 9-12) (one time move only).
4. If there is a Superior Court or Juvenile Court awarded custody change and the student is moving to the residence of the new custodial parent. The court decree containing the judge’s signature must be submitted with the eligibility forms. (Note: Guardianship awards by a Probate Court are not valid for GHSA eligibility.)
5. If there is a Court awarded joint custody situation, the student may move from one custodial parent to the other custodial parent one time each calendar year and still maintain eligibility. The court decree containing the judge’s signature must be submitted with the eligibility forms.

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“Bona Fide Move” Guidelines Continued

6. If there is a death of the custodial parent and the student moves to live with the other natural parent, relative, or guardian. A copy of the death certificate must be submitted with the eligibility form.
7. If there is a military transfer of a parent that necessitates the relocation of the student, the student will retain eligibility. A copy of the deployment papers must be submitted with the eligibility form.
8. If a U.S. citizen returns from living in a foreign country, the student retains eligibility.
9. If the student marries and sets up a first-time residence, the student retains eligibility.
10. If the student enters one of the following boarding schools in Georgia, the student is granted eligibility: Ben Franklin Academy, Rabun Gap School, Riverside Military, Tallulah Falls School.

When a student enters a new school, officials at the school may ask for proof that the residence is located in the new school’s service area. Possible sources of evidence could be:

1. An electric or gas bill showing the family’s name and the new address. Note: Telephone records are not acceptable.
2. U.S. Post Office change of address form
3. Sales agreement or lease agreement for the mortgage holder or landlord
4. Voter registration record or government issued identification record
5. An on-site visit by a school administrator, resource office, visiting teacher, school social worker, etc., may be made at a time when residents would be expected to be at home.