

REGULATION MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: IQA-RA, IQB-RA, IQD, IQD-RB, JEE

Responsible Office: Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools

Academic Eligibility for High School Students Who Participate in Interscholastic Athletics

I. PURPOSE

To delineate systemwide academic eligibility guidelines for students who participate in interscholastic athletics

II. BACKGROUND

This regulation will standardize academic eligibility procedures to be used by high school students who choose to participate in any athletic stipend extracurricular activity as listed in the *Negotiated Agreement Between the Montgomery County Education Association and the Board of Education of Montgomery County*. Additionally, there is an expectation that there will be other non-athletic activities with open enrollment in all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) high schools, thereby creating opportunities for participation for all students regardless of academic eligibility.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Athletic Activities Requiring Academic Eligibility* are defined as those listed as eligible for athletic stipends in the *Negotiated Agreement Between the Montgomery County Education Association and the Board of Education of Montgomery County*.
- B. *2.0 Average* is the minimum grade average for all classes in which the student was scheduled during the previous grading period. It is not a student's overall Grade Point Average (GPA).
- C. *Failing Grade* is any grade that indicates an unacceptable level of performance, including E and NC.
- D. *No Credit (NC)* means the student's level of performance is unacceptable (applicable to CR-NC courses only).
- E. *Multihour Course* is a course that is more than one hour in length for which students receive more than ½ credit per semester. Examples include internships, career development programs, and double period Advanced Placement (AP)

courses.

- F. *Eligibility Period* is the period for eligibility from the day that a report card is issued and is sustained until the day the next report card is issued.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility

1. Students who have a 2.0 average with no more than one failing grade in the previous marking period will be academically eligible to participate or practice during the next marking period. Eligibility standards become effective as of a student's second year in any high school, as initially determined by their marking period average in the fourth quarter of their first year of high school.

A multi-hour course is considered one subject. When computing the marking period grade average, the multi-hour course grade will be counted once for each hour the course is offered; e.g., if the course is a three-period course the grade should be counted three times in determining the marking period grade average. However, the letter grade for a multi-hour course will appear only once on the report card.

2. Grades reported as incomplete as a result of legally excused absences shall be considered passing grades until changed. Incomplete grades that are not changed to a passing grade within 10 school days after report cards are issued will be considered failing grades for eligibility purposes until they are changed.
3. Student Withdrawal from Courses
 - a) A student may withdraw 25 days or fewer into a course without penalty or record.
 - b) A student may not drop more than one course after the 25-day drop/add deadline, regardless of grades, for purposes of academic eligibility.
 - c) When a student withdraws from a course after day 25, the student will be given the grade at the time of withdrawal from the course, and that grade will be factored into the marking period grade average for the purpose of academic eligibility only.
4. When a student withdraws from an MCPS high school after 25 days of a marking period, the grades the student has earned at the time of withdrawal will be used to determine academic eligibility for the ensuing sport season.

5. When a student transfers from an MCPS high school to a non-MCPS high school and subsequently re-enters MCPS, the grades from the non-MCPS high school will be used to determine academic eligibility, provided the student has attended the non-MCPS high school for at least one entire marking period. If the student has not completed at least one marking period at the non-MCPS school, the grades from the last MCPS high school the student attended will be used to determine eligibility.
6. On the day that the report card is issued, each athletics specialist or coach will verify student eligibility.
7. Students taking only one or two courses must pass each course and maintain a 2.0 average to be eligible.
8. High school students who do not maintain a 2.0 average with no more than one failing grade during the final (fourth) marking period of their first year of any high school will not be eligible in the fall. Students have the opportunity to replace only one fourth marking period grade in which they received a “D” or failing grade by repeating the course in summer school. If none of the fourth marking period courses in which the student received a “D” or failing grade are offered in summer school, the student will be allowed to take another course in the same subject area. If a course in the same subject area is not available, then the student and the student’s counselor may decide on an appropriate alternative course. The summer session grade from the appropriate alternative course will replace the lowest course grade from the fourth marking period and will be applied to determine the student’s eligibility status. This alternative course will replace the grade for eligibility purposes only; credit earned will be applied according to the course taken.

B. Exceptions

1. Students who enter an MCPS high school for the first time are automatically academically eligible upon enrollment, and for the duration of the first year of high school. Eligibility is determined at the conclusion of each marking period thereafter as set forth in section IV.A.1.
2. High school students who receive an approved Change of School Assignment (COSA) out of their current feeder pattern are subject to additional eligibility criteria set forth in Montgomery County Board of Education Policy JEE, *Student Transfers*.
3. An unsatisfactory evaluation in a noncredit-bearing course is not considered failing for student eligibility.

C. Local School Responsibilities

1. Schools should communicate in writing to students and parents/guardians a list of opportunities for all students to participate in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics.
2. Schools should have a broad range of activities to refer students to in order to help students retain or regain academic eligibility interscholastic athletics including contracts, tutoring programs, mentoring and monitoring programs, academic support classes and counseling, study halls during or after school, outreach programs, and/or other programs.
3. Schools should develop mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of support programs.

Related Source: *Code of Maryland Regulations* §§13A.06.03.01 and .02

Regulation History: New Regulation, August 1986, revised December 1986; revised April 5, 1991; revised October 21, 1993; revised December 18, 1996; revised June 20, 2006; revised May 12, 2010; revised October 8, 2021.