

QUICK CHECK

Team and Player Registration: ALL Member School teams and students competing in BCSS-approved sports MUST be registered on a team in accordance with the BCSS rules prior to competing in all Restricted competition.

Student Eligibility:

General Rule 1—Students can only compete for the school at which they are registered.

General Rule 2—There is a maximum age allowed for each level of competition.

General Rule 3—Students are athletically eligible for five years, from entry into grade 8.

General Rule 4— A transfer of schools after the start of the 1st year of eligibility may limit athletic eligibility at the new school.

General Rule 5—Students cannot have graduated from secondary school.

General Rule 6—Students must be fulltime.

BC SCHOOL SPORTS

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2011-2012 Athletic Eligibility

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2011-2012 Eligibility Overview

BC SCHOOL SPORTS is a registered Society, and is the governing body for extra-curricular inter-school sport in British Columbia. BCSS is a membership organization of 443+ Middle, Junior and Senior Secondary schools in British Columbia. Membership is voluntary, but through membership, schools are agreeing that students, coaches and other participants will comply with the policies and rules & regulations established by the organization. All Operating and Competitive Policies, including the Athletic Eligibility Rules, have been approved at a General Meeting by representatives of the BCSS Member Schools.

Official Rules: For a complete copy of the BCSS Eligibility Regulations, please go to the BCSS website at www.bcschoolsports.ca

Team and Player Registration: All Member School teams and students (grade 8-12) competing in BCSS-approved sports **MUST** be registered on-line with BCSS. Failure to properly register a team or an individual student will result in that team or student being ineligible for further competition. (see rules for [School Team Eligibility](#))

Rationale For Competitive Rules: All BCSS eligibility rules are in place to ensure fair and equitable competition among Member Schools. This same rationale is the basis for many other BCSS competitive policies, such as having specific “seasons of play”, having multiple tiers based on school enrollment, and having a strong policy against recruiting student-athletes.

Student Eligibility: There are SIX basic eligibility rules for students participating in BCSS competition. Students must comply with all eligibility rules to be able to participate in “restricted competition”, and must be age-eligible, play for their own school and not have graduated to be eligible for “unrestricted competition”.

“Restricted Competition” refers to league, play-offs and championship competition. “Unrestricted Competition” refers to exhibition or invitational play.

General Rule 1—Students can only compete for the school at which they are registered.

Students play for their own school. There are four exceptions to this rule.

- A) Students at a Middle or Junior school can “play up” to the senior school that the student will eventually attend, as long as both schools agree.
- B) If a Francophone School (SD #93) is physically housed at another school (“holding school”), and there is not a new transfer involved, students can participate for the “holding school”.
- C) Students attending a District Alternate School can continue to participate for the secondary school at which they were most recently enrolled.
- D) Students enrolled at a Distance Education School can participate for the secondary school at which they were most recently enrolled.
- E) Student – athletes deemed eligible to compete for a jointly sponsored team are exempt from D2.1

These exceptions are due to the variety of school configurations in B.C. as well as the BCSS purpose -to encourage participation—especially in the more rural and remote communities where smaller schools have had a history of not being able to field teams. Other than the above, students cannot play for another school. The goal is and continues to be on maintaining a competitive balance.

General Rule 2—There is a maximum student age for each level of competition.

To encourage participation, proper athletic development, and equitable competition, many BCSS sports are organized in age-group competition. There is a maximum age allowed at each level of competition, as well as a limited number of years for which a student can be eligible for a particular level of age-group competition. **(see rule D6)**

Grade 8 Competition— students must be under 15 years of age as of December 31, 2011 and be in their 1st year of eligibility.

Grade 9 Competition— students must be under 16 years of age as of December 31, 2011 and be in no more than their 2nd year of eligibility.

Junior Competition— students must be under 17 years of age as of December 31, 2011 and be in no more than their 3rd year of eligibility.

Senior Competition— students must be under 19 years of age as of December 31, 2011 and be in no more than their 5th year of eligibility.

General Rule 3—Students have a maximum of five years of athletic eligibility.

To encourage athletic opportunities throughout the normal five years of high school and in support of equitable competition, students are limited to athletic eligibility for a five year period, starting with initial entry to grade 8. **(see rule D7.1)**

The eligibility calendar continues to run regardless of a student's actual participation on a team. If a student doesn't try out for a team, doesn't make the team, withdraws from school, is asked to leave school, or the school doesn't offer a particular sport during a time period, that school year or portion still counts toward the student's five year period of eligibility. Job action in a School District or school does not extend eligibility dates.

There is one automatic exception to the "5 year rule".

A student who has been out of BC on a BCSS-approved Exchange Program and meets conditions in **rule D7.1.5** may have up to one year of eligibility restored.

Member Schools are encouraged to file an eligibility appeal for students who have not completed their academic requirements in a five year period due to a serious accident or illness. The key to rule D7.1.3 *Eligibility Extension Due to Loss of School for Medical Reasons* is that the student has been unable to academically progress during the specific period of time directly due to the severity of the medical condition. Medical documentation and school absentee records are required as part of the appeal. Information regarding a student's involvement in a school or School District's "hospital / homebound" program should also be submitted.

General Rule 4— A transfer of schools after the start of the 1st year of eligibility may limit athletic eligibility at the new school.

In support of the goal of equitable competition, students are eligible for the school at which they are registered on the first day of his/her 1st year of eligibility. This is a student's "home school". Any transfer to another school after that day may affect athletic eligibility at the new school for a 12 month period. **(see rule D12)**

A student who has transferred into a new school and participates on a team at the new school affects the competitive balance of the team and therefore the competitive balance of the league or regional competition. Students already at the school may lose their opportunity to participate.

The transfer restrictions do not assume or imply that any recruiting or "shopping around" has taken place. It is simply to protect the competitive balance inherent between schools' existing student populations.

There are many school transfers that the BCSS Membership have deemed to be appropriate in the context of athletic eligibility. Students who transfer schools and meet the conditions outlined in any of **rule D12.3.1—D12.3.3** retain their athletic eligibility.

- 1) Students advancing to a more senior school
- 2) New school constructed and/or District reorganized
- 3) Parental / Legal Guardian change of principal Residence.
- 4) Parent to Parent move
- 5) District Academic Program
- 6) Alternate Program / Schools
- 7) Student transfers from an Alternate School or Distance Education School
- 8) Short Term Transfer & Return to Home School
- 9) Incoming Exchange Student
- 10 & 11) Incoming International Students
- 12) Ward of the Province
- 13) Transfer in during the month of September

General Rule 5—Students cannot have graduated from secondary school.

Students cannot have completed BC Ministry of Education graduation requirements in the preceding school year, nor can they have accepted a Senior Secondary Certificate of Standing in the current school year and be athletically eligible.

A student may complete graduation requirements during 2011-2012, continue to take courses, and remain eligible as long as they don't accept the Certificate of Standing and they stay at their home school. **(see rule D2.4)**

General Rule 6—Students must be fulltime.

It is required that students must be enrolled in the equivalent of a 75% course load during the 2011-2012 school year to remain eligible. **(see rule D2.2)**

Eligibility Appeal Process (see **D13** of the *Eligibility Rules*) BC SCHOOL SPORTS has a **two-level** appeal process available to Member Schools if the school believes that there are **extraordinary circumstances** regarding the ineligibility status of a student.

The Eligibility Officer (contractor) -1st level, and the Eligibility Appeal Committee—2nd level (comprised of 6 experienced volunteers from the BCSS membership,) are all well-versed in the BCSS Eligibility Rules and the intent

and spirit of those rules. The Eligibility Officer will accept appeals from August 15 through until June 1 each year.

The Eligibility Appeals Committee will meet 6 times in 2011-2012. Appeal meeting dates are:

- Saturday September 17, 2011
- Saturday October 1, 2011
- Saturday December 3, 2011
- Saturday January 21, 2012
- Saturday March 31, 2012
- Saturday June 2, 2012

(All new additional information MUST be submitted to the BCSS office at least one week prior to the scheduled meetings. No late applications will be accepted. At this time member schools may request an appointment to talk with the Eligibility Appeals committee as well.

Over the years of province-wide Eligibility Rules, decisions made have established numerous but specific precedents. Appeals that appear to be similar on their surface, may in fact be very different in detail, and may result in different decisions being made by the committees.

If an appeal is denied by the Eligibility Officer and there is either new information or there has been a technical error made by the Eligibility Officer, the Member School may submit a 2nd level appeal to the Eligibility Appeals Committee, who meet 6 times per year as noted above.

Eligibility Appeals can only be filed by a Member School, and must include permission from the student or parent (guardian) for the release of the student's personal records and academic information.

Appeals must be submitted on the 2011-2012 Eligibility Application Form, and include all required documentation. There is a \$50 administrative fee for each appeal. Appeals are to be directed to the Eligibility Officer for review. Decisions will be made within a week.