
MEMORANDUM

TO: ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, ADMINISTRATORS
FROM: JORDAN ABNEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT SCHOOL ACADEMY POLICY
DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2025
CC: BCSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the May 2024 BCSS Annual General Meeting, the Legislative Assembly passed a Notice of Motion to create policy restricting participation of students enrolled in a sports academy program, not at their catchment school. The motion was passed for implementation in September 2025, to ensure a year for affected schools and students to make informed decisions on their program of study, academic and athletic goals.

At the time, there was discussion around the motion, noting that it was only enforceable to public schools, given the motion specified catchment areas, of which independent member schools do not have. It was thought at the time, there was limited opportunity for an independent member school to start an academy, and as a result the motion was passed with overwhelming support and came into effect this year.

However, we have had two independent schools start academy programs this year. Given the discrepancy between how this is handled between independent and public schools, the BCSS Board of Directors, has utilized its authority to enact a special emergency policy, effective immediately. As per BCSS policy, this motion is in effect but will go to the Legislative Assembly for ratification at the APM in November, where we it is expected to receive support.

The motion, as created and passed by the Board last week, attempts to align the independent schools with the policy already in existence for public schools, effectively restricting students who enroll at an academy or sport specific program at an independent school, from being eligible in that sport for BCSS competition. This ensures a relatively equal approach to academy enrollees, regardless of whether enrolled in a public or independent school.

The policy reads as follows:

Student-athletes enrolled at an academy program (more than 4-credits of a sport performance or similar/related courses at an independent school are ineligible to participate in the sport of the academy program for the duration of their enrollment at the school, even if they cease enrollment within the Academy program.

Courses or academies of the same sport, even if a different discipline will be considered to be sport specific training (i.e. Beach Volleyball to Volleyball, 3x3 Basketball to Basketball or Rugby 7s to Rugby XVVs)



A student athlete enrolled at the school at the time that the program becomes public knowledge remain eligible in the Sport of the Academy.

All student-athletes are still subject to normal transfer rules as found in Section 900.

BCSS is aware that some of these academies will form teams with their academy athletes. These academy “teams” are not considered school teams, and it is critical for member schools to understand that per BCSS policy, member schools cannot compete against these teams in any capacity (exhibition game, scrimmage etc.)

Some member schools with academies will also form BCSS teams with the students in their building that are not enrolled in an academy. These teams, remain eligible for competition provided that none of the Academy athletes participate.

Schools are urged to exercise caution, and ensure whether attending tournaments, or scheduling exhibition contests, that it is the non-academy team, with only eligible athletes participating. Failure to do so, could result in sanctions, or removal from post-season eligibility. BCSS will be working with the member schools with academies to help provide clarity on the athletes and teams involved.

Should there be any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our office.