A. Eligible Students
   1. General Policy
      Any student in grades 9-12 who is assigned to a school based upon the residence of his/her parent or legal custodian is eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at that school provided that the student-athlete adheres to all North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) and Cleveland County Schools (CCS) athletic eligibility policies and regulations. In the event the parents are separated or divorced, the residence of the student shall be that of the parent or other adult to whom primary physical custody has been awarded by a court of competent jurisdiction. If no custody order has been entered, the residence shall be deemed to be that of the parent with whom the student spends the majority of nights during the school calendar year.

   2. Change of Domicile
      Any student who changes domicile (moves) and has an approved Cleveland County Board of Education (Board) transfer will be eligible to remain in the school of origin and be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics if properly enrolled prior to change in domicile. Students that have been declared homeless by federal McKinney Vento standards may be eligible for athletics as described by NCHSSA.

   3. Feeder School and/or Two Semester
      A student is eligible at his/her assigned school if he/she has attended the school or feeder school within that administrative unit the two previous semesters and has a transfer approved by the Board.

B. Ineligible Students
   1. Transfers to Schools Within Cleveland County Schools
      Students in grades 9-12 who are domiciled inside of Cleveland County and who transfer into a Cleveland County school, and absent a bona fide move, will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 days from the date of enrollment in the new school. This applies for students not already declared eligible in section A (Eligible Students).

   2. Transfers From Outside Cleveland County Schools
      Ninth grade students on a renewal transfer issued after attending grade 8 in CCS will be eligible to participate in athletics as described above. Other ninth grade students and students in grades 10-12 who are domiciled outside Cleveland County and who transfer into a Cleveland County school, and absent a bona fide move, will be ineligible to participate in athletics for 365 days from the date of transferring into the new school unless approved through the NCHSAA policy and CCS policy.

C. Waivers
   An athlete who has been deemed ineligible due to the above-defined statement may request a waiver by the County Athletic Director in limited circumstances. A waiver
request form will be available in the office of the County Athletic Director. The County Athletic Director will notify the student and the parent(s) of the decision. If the waiver is approved by the County Athletic Director, the student will be eligible for interscholastic athletics.

1. **Feeder School Transfer**
A student may be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics in a high school based on his/her transfer, given that student attended the feeder middle school for at least the previous two semesters.

2. **Medical/Health Related**
A student with a serious physical or mental illness, handicap, or disability may be reassigned to a school which meets his or her needs. The student's physician, psychiatrist or psychologist shall provide appropriate documentation describing the nature of the student's medical difficulty. The County Athletic Director will determine, after necessary consultation with the student's physician and appropriate school personnel, the necessity of the transfer before making a decision.

3. **Specified Requirement of Social Services or the Court System**
A student whose custody has been established by court order at the request of Social Services or by the court on its own motion may request a waiver. (This does not include custody orders entered into by agreement of the parties). The Student Support Services Coordinator and County Athletic Director will validate any such information.

4. **Student Protection**
In the event there is a documented need to protect a student, the Student Support Services Coordinator and County Athletic Director will work together to provide the necessary school, court, or other documents and will consider the information in the waiver process.

5. **Siblings**
Siblings of students who have transferred from one high school to another high school may request a waiver to that same school as long as there remains one eligible sibling in the school.

6. **Hardship/Special or Unique Circumstances**
In the event of unusual hardship/special or unique circumstances, the County Athletic Director will consider these circumstances in the waiver process.

D. **Appeals**
A student may appeal the denial of a waiver by the County Athletic Director to the Board. The original waiver request form shall be reviewed by the Board along with any other evidence or pertinent testimony the student or parent(s) believe to be important in their appeal. The Superintendent's office will notify the student and parent(s) of the time, place, and date of the hearing. The hearing will be informal and closed in accordance with N.C.G.S. 143-318.11.
E. **GOVERNANCE**

In addition to Board policies, administrative regulations and local school rules, interscholastic athletics at the high school level are also subject to the rules and regulations established by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the NCHSAA.

Any statement concerning eligibility in this policy references a student athlete's residence and transfer assignment. To participate in interscholastic athletics, the student athlete must also be eligible in all other areas.

Adopted: December 14, 2018

Replaces: Board policy 4060, Assignment and Reassignment of Students (in part)