

# Questions and Answers Regarding Association Rules and Regulations

1. **A boy attends school 20 days in the fall and is injured in a football game. He has to stay out of school until the beginning of the second semester. He earned no high school credits the first semester. Can he play basketball during the spring semester?**

Answer: No. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Sections (2) and (8).

2. **A student drops out of school one month before the end of the semester, but having attended 20 or more days, fails in his/her subjects. He/she enters 20 days before the end of the next semester to make up the work. How many semesters of athletics are charged against him/her?**

Answer: Two. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (2) and (8).

3. **May a student pitch for an independent baseball team or compete in rodeo and remain eligible?**

Answer: Yes, *the MHSA has no jurisdiction over nonsanctioned activities.*  
Reference: Non-sanctioned Activities Section.

4. **At the end of the spring semester a student fails in two subjects. His/her father files a complaint with the MHSA Executive Board stating that the grades are unfair. What action would the Board take?**

Answer: *The Board would not consider the case. On a question of scholarship, the principal's decision is final.* Reference: By-Laws, Article III.

5. **A student was not passing in twenty periods of prepared work at the close of the spring semester. During the fall he/she went to the principal and was given makeup work in one of his/her subjects. He/she did this makeup work in addition to his/her regular work. Could he/she play football as soon as the makeup work was completed?**

Answer: No, *he/she can become eligible only on the Monday morning following the week in which that first semester ends provided he/she meets all eligibility requirements. Scholastic deficiencies may not be made up in any way.* Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (2).

6. **A student drops out of the parochial high school and enters the public high school in the same city at the close of the first semester. Is he/she ineligible for the rest of the year?**

Answer: Yes, *he/she is ineligible for varsity competition for 90 P.I. days.*  
Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (10) B.

7. **A student withdrew in the spring 20 days before school was out to work on the farm. He/she entered and attended 20 days before the fall semester closed to make up the work. He/she got four credits at the end of the fall semester. Is he/she eligible for basketball during the spring semester?**

Answer: Yes, *but there will be a spring and fall semester of athletic participation charged against him/her.* Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Sections (2) and (8).

8. **A student enrolls in a high school and attends 20 days before the end of the spring semester to make up some work. This is after the winter sports' seasons are over. Is one spring semester of participation in basketball charged against him/her?**

Answer: Yes. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (8).

9. **A certain boy cannot play football during the fall because he is ineligible. Is a season of football charged against him?**

Answer: Yes. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (8).

10. **Can an ineligible student play on a nonvarsity team in a game against another high school?**

Answer: No. Unless the student is ineligible only because of transfer, then he/she may compete on a non-varsity team against a non-varsity team only. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (10), Interpretation (1).

11. **Are ineligible students barred from practice sessions and intramural games?**

Answer: No. However, a principal may bar such students by local rules if he/she chooses. Reference: By-Laws, Article III.

12. **A student changes high schools 33 days after the fall semester begins without a change of residence of his/her parents. When does he/she become eligible in the new school?**

Answer: After he/she has been regularly enrolled for 90 P.I. days. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (10) A, paragraph 1.

13. **Must a Montana high school use only eligible students in games against a school outside of the state?**

Answer: Yes. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Sections (1) - (18).

14. **A student attends 15 days at the beginning of the fall semester and then drops out for balance of semester. He/she plays one game of football during that time. What is charged against him/her?**

Answer: One fall semester of athletics. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (8).

15. **A coach is suspicious that a player from a neighboring town is ineligible. Records in possession of the Executive Board furnish no evidence to sustain this suspicion. The coach is still suspicious but files no protest. Who is at fault?**

Answer: The suspicious coach who makes no effort to clarify the situation through the proper channels. Reference: By-Laws, Article VII.

16. **Several school staff members are strongly inclined to believe that certain players are ineligible. These same people while inclined to give credit to such rumors file no protest and allow the football season to close without furnishing any evidence to support rumors. Records in the files of the Association do not substantiate these rumors. Who is to blame and what can be done about it?**

Answer: The parties that do not substantiate their opinions and beliefs. While the Board investigates on its own initiative and upon request of members of the Association, it is not expected or obligatory for the Board to act upon mere suspicion and rumors.

Reference: By-Laws, Article VII.

17. **A coach is dissatisfied with the work of the referee after the contest begins. He/she protests several decisions then withdraws his/her team. The referee awards the game to the other team and announces his/her decision. What recourse has the withdrawn team?**

Answer: *The Board cannot undertake to review decisions of officials properly appointed. The unsporting act of withdrawing a team will be addressed by the Executive Director/Executive Board.*

18. **Two schools agree upon an official for a football game. During the game arguments arise but the game is played to its conclusion. Later the losing team discovers that, had the referee ruled differently in a specific instance, their team might have won. They appeal to the Executive Board from the decision of the referee. What is the result?**

Answer: *Same as number 17. The Executive Board will not review decisions made by officials on the field or on the floor.*

19. **May a high school team play against independent teams without penalty?**

Answer: *Yes, but games played must be counted as part of season game limitation. Reference: Game limits in each sports' section and Article II, Section (1).*

20. **In a certain game the home school provides only two officials in a football game. The visiting team takes the field and plays the game without challenge. After the game is over, the visiting team tries to have the game nullified because not a full complement of officials was used. What can be done about it?**

Answer: *Violation of MHSAA rules by both teams. Reference: MOA Section, Assignment, XXV.*

21. **A student regularly enrolls in school at the beginning of the school semester. He/she is properly enrolled and up to grade in at least four subjects and doing passing work in the same. For some good reason, he/she quits school after having attended at least 20 days during the semester but without fully completing these subjects. What is his/her status when he/she attempts to re-enroll?**

Answer: *The student will be ineligible for one full semester when he/she again re-enrolls. The fact that he/she was up to grade at the time he/she quit school is immaterial and he/she will have four failures charged against him/her as far as eligibility is concerned since he/she did not complete his/her work and did not receive credit at the end of the term for which he/she was enrolled. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (2).*

22. **Does the fact that the Montana High School Association is a member of the National Federation affect interstate games played by Montana high schools?**

Answer: *Yes. All Montana high schools scheduling interstate games must use eligible players according to our rules when they play a school from another state which is also a member of the National Federation. Ineligible players CANNOT BE USED at any time in interscholastic competition without being in violation of MHSAA rules and subject to penalties. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Sections (1) - (18).*

23. **A student with one, or both parents living, regularly makes a home with his/her brother/sister who is a teacher in a given school. After attending one year in a given school he/she moves with his/her brother/sister to another high school location. When will he/she become eligible?**

Answer: This is strictly a transfer case clearly covered in the rules. He/she will be ineligible for 90 P.I. days in the new school every time he/she moves with his/her brother/sister into a new high school location. The fact that he/she regularly makes his/her home with his/her brother/sister, uncle grandmother, or any other relative is entirely immaterial if either parent is living and legally competent. Reference: By-Laws, Section (10), Interpretation 5.

- 24. A student whose parents are living in another state comes into Montana alone. His/her parents do not come with him/her. He/she lives with a relative in Montana. What is his/her status?**

Answer: This is strictly a transfer case. He/she will be ineligible for 90 P.I. days. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Section (10), A, 1.

- 25. Must non-varsity teams use eligible players when competing against another school?**

Answer: Yes. The rules of the Association cover all interscholastic sports and coaches do not have the right, by agreement, to waive them. Reference: By-Laws, Article II, Sections (1) - (18).

- 26. The parents of a student who has been regularly enrolled in a high school move from the district. The student remains and continues in high school. Is he/she eligible.**

Answer: Yes. Student is not a transfer. Reference: By-Laws, Article II.

- 27. Can students of School A play a basketball (team sport) contest against students of School B after the regular season ends?**

Answer: Yes, but the students' coach(es) cannot coach except from the June 1-July 31, the school cannot sponsor the contest, and students cannot represent their school. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

- 28. Does MHSA catastrophic insurance cover our students while they practice out-of-season?**

Answer: No, the catastrophic plan through the Association does not cover these activities. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (16).

- 29. Can some of School A's juniors play with seniors in a basketball tournament sponsored by local merchants on April 4th?**

Answer: Yes. Underclassmen are not prohibited from playing in post-season contests/tournaments. Restrictions are on coaches and schools. The wearing of school uniforms is legal. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

- 30. Can a football or volleyball coach from June 7-14 work at a team camp at one of Montana's colleges or universities and coach students from his/her school?**

Answer: Yes, students are allowed to practice/play together as a team and their coach(es) can coach them as long as the camp is between June 1 – July 31. However, students cannot be required to attend. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

- 31. Can a football coach issue his/her school's helmets and shoulder pads to students and practice for two weeks in June?**

Answer: The coach can issue individual football equipment, and the wearing of school uniforms is legal. Any policy governing the use of individual school equipment during the period from June 1 - July 31 or at individualized camps outside this period is the

decision of each local school district. Balls, nets, bats, blocking dummies, rackets, clubs etc. are not considered individual equipment. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6). Interpretation 7.

32. **Can the tennis coach in the month of August supervise and coach students from one's school in a local tennis tournament?**

Answer: Yes, individual sports are not affected by the coaching rule. A coach of an individual sport can coach during the season and out of season without penalty. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

33. **Can a softball coach continue to coach his/her team after the July 31<sup>st</sup> ending date?**

Answer: No, unless the team has qualified for another level of competition, such as a regional or national competition. NOTE: the coach or school must notify the MHSAA of this occurrence. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6), F (4).

34. **Can a school sponsor one of its teams to travel out of state to a national competition between June 1-July 31?**

Answer: No, schools are prohibited from sponsoring in any way contests/competitions between any schools, anywhere outside the regular season. Reference: Starting and ending dates, each sports' section.

35. **Can students from a school participate in a national tournament during the school year?**

Answer: Yes. However, the coach(es) cannot coach and the school cannot sponsor the students in any way, unless the event is during the regular sport season, sanctioned by the host state, and the National Federation and approved by the Montana High School Association Executive Board. Reference: Starting and ending dates, each sports' section, and Rules and Regulations, (6).

36. **Can students from School A compete against students from School B between June 1 and July 31 and be coached by the school's coaches, and use the gym of School A?**

Answer: Yes. However, the students or coach must pay a fee for the use of the facility. This fee must be the regular fee established by the school/school district for any user. NOTE: The MHSAA catastrophic insurance plan does not cover your students. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

37. **Can any number of students play together during the year on local independent, church or YMCA leagues?**

Answer: Yes, if the school where the students are enrolled is not affiliated in any way with the contest. Restrictions are on coaches and schools. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (6).

38. **Can students with the help of parents conduct a bake sale or something similar to raise money to send students to a team camp?**

Answer: No. Reference: Rules and Regulations, (8).

39. **What is the definition of "practice"?**

Answer: Ordinarily, "practice" is defined as two or more potential players, reporting to the practice field or court, with or without uniforms, under the supervision of a coach, and receiving coaching in game skills and techniques. Reference: Rules and

Regulations, (6), A.

- 40. Can students wear school issued uniforms for out-of-season competitions?**

Answer: Yes, if the school allows it. Individual schools set their own policy about out-of-season use of uniforms.

- 41. A student-athlete is ejected for unsporting conduct at the divisional/seeding wrestling tournament. Is the student-athlete disqualified from the state wrestling tournament?**

Answer: Yes. The divisional/seeding tournament (by NFHS rules) is considered part of the state tournament. In effect they are both considered the same event. The student-athlete is disqualified for the remainder of the divisional/seeding tournament and the state tournament. Reference: By-Laws, Article VIII, Section 2.6.

- 42. A school administrator forgets to submit the MHSAs compliance report for the MHSAs Coaches Education Program. Is this a violation?**

Answer: Yes. The Coaches' Education Policy states that school administrators are responsible for reporting to the MHSAs annually that all their coaches have completed the program. Reference: Rules and Regulations, Section (7).

- 43. After losing a close contest, the head coach criticizes the performance of the officials to a local sports writer. The next day an article appears in the local paper quoting the coach as saying, "The officials had a lot to do with us losing the game. They just didn't hustle or get in good position." Does this constitute a violation?**

Answer: Yes. It is a serious violation of the MHSAs Code of Conduct and penalties will apply. Reference: Rules and Regulations, Section (33), B.