

To: Dr. Tammy Davis, Superintendent

From: Dr. Ronna Cadarette, WRHS Principal
Jeff Cloos, WRSD Athletic Director

Date: December 3, 2010

Re: *Eligibility Committee Recommendation*

History:

Upon the request of the Board's concern for inconsistencies between middle and high school participation requirements for athletics and extra curricular activities, a committee was established to include parents, teachers, coaches, students, and Board members. The Eligibility Committee has met six times between August 31st and November 30th, as outlined in our initial report.

Process:

We spent the first two meetings gathering and discussing eligibility information from area schools as well as the pros and cons of our current eligibility format. See below:

SCHOOL	SCHEDULE	ELIGIBILITY	PROBATION	OTHER INFO
Belmont	Block 4 X 4	Pass 2	PROBATION - If only passing one class principal can put them on probation and make them eligible.	
Gilford	Block 5 (Tri)	70% average	PROBATION -If average below a 70 they have two weeks to bring their average to a minimum of 70% average.	4 Core (not incl. Drivers ed)
Interlakes	Block 4 X 4	Pass 3	PROBATION -If an individual teacher feels that the student is not making satisfactory performance in class can be placed on probation per the teacher. (teacher defines the length of probation and notifies parents)	Freshman Academy Students must be passing 4 out of the five classes (history, science, English/PE, Math/PE, elective
Merrimack Valley	Block 4 X 4	Pass 3	PROBATION -If an individual teacher feels that the student is not making satisfactory performance in class can be placed on probation per the teacher. (teacher defines the length of probation and notifies coaches first)	
Winnisquam	7 periods	Pass 4	NO PROBATION	
Laconia	Block 4 X 4	Pass 3	PROBATION -If only passing two classes principal can put them on probation and make them eligible.	
Franklin	7 periods	Pass 4	NO PROBATION	

At the second meeting Pat Corbin, the Executive Director of the NHIAA, was invited to speak to the group. He outlined eligibility from the NHIAA perspective as well as from his experience as a Principal at Salem High School and Nashua South High School. The two major points the committee took away from his discussion were:

- 1) The NHIAA does not micro-manage eligibility for member schools. It is up to the school and its administration to have the final say for a student-athlete. Because of the many ways students can earn grades (online, credit recovery, etc) the NHIAA puts trust in the Principal to make decisions in the best interest of the student-athlete and the school. The NHIAA does have a few basic rules put in place to monitor eligibility. One of which is a major factor in why WRHS can not have an NPL similar to the middle school. Eligibility must be based on a minimum of a six (6) week marking term.
- 2) Having an eligibility standard at the high school similar to WRMS NPL would be extremely difficult to manage and in his experience he has never heard of such an eligibility standard for high school athletics. He expressed his concern that the middle school had such a tough policy. He believes middle school should be a time when students are participating in as much as possible with few limitations. When the middle school students get to the high school it is then time to enact a more strict policy for eligibility.

The next three meetings were “work sessions” in which the committee discussed many different scenarios related to eligibility. We all agreed that the present eligibility requirements needed to be modified to “raise the bar” of academic expectations. We discussed several different models of eligibility.

Eligibility Committee Recommendations:

- 1) Students must have an overall 70% average in all classes combined on prior report card.
- 2) At mid-terms grades will be examined. If a student is below the overall 70% average he/she will be put on two-week probation (maximum 14 days). The student will print off MMS grade report for teacher signature verification when the necessary grade has been achieved to reach an overall 70% average. If he/she does not bring up the average in two weeks he/she becomes ineligible for the rest of the quarter. If the student brings up the average in less than two weeks, he/she is off probation until the end of the quarter.
- 3) Students can participate in athletic practices, games, and/or co-curricular meetings and events during times of probation. Once students are deemed ineligible they cannot participate in games or co-curricular events during a period of ineligibility. Once they have achieved eligibility status they may participate in games and/or events at the coach/advisor’s discretion. If a student chooses not to practice or attend meetings/events during time of ineligibility/probation he/she will not be allowed to return to the team/group when he/she becomes eligible.
- 4) The policy for NHSBA JJA-R addendum should be changed as reflected in the attachment to this document.

Important Points:

- 1) The committee explored how implementing an overall 70% average would affect the athletes presently participating in 2010 fall sports. A total of eight (8) student-athletes that were eligible for this fall season would NOT have been eligible based on the 70% rule. In examining each of the eight students, seven failed one class “miserably” which brought their overall average to below a 70%.
- 2) The committee strongly believes that these new academic eligibility requirements should be for all co-curricular groups as well as athletics.
- 3) The committee believes that academic accountability must be strengthened, but it must be done gradually and systematically with advance notice for students to adapt their academic performance. If approved by the School Board, students will be notified of the new standards prior to Semester 2 of 2010-2011. Implementation will begin fall of 2011, with grades calculated at Quarter 1 mid-terms.

Students must maintain an overall 70% average in all classes combined on prior report card and at mid-term. Students who do not meet this will be placed on a two-week probation.

- If he/she does not bring up the average in two weeks he/she becomes ineligible for the rest of the quarter.
- If the student brings up the average in less than two weeks, he/she is off probation until the end of the quarter, but may participate in games and/or events at the coach/advisor’s discretion.
- Students can participate in athletic practices, games, and/or co-curricular meetings and events during times of probation.
- Once students are deemed ineligible they cannot participate in games or co-curricular events during a period of ineligibility. If a student chooses not to practice or attend meetings/events during time of ineligibility/probation he/she will not be allowed to return to the team/group when he/she becomes eligible.