

REGULATION MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: IKC-RA, IQA-RA, IQB-RA, IQD, IQD-RA, JEA-RA, JEE, JEE-RA

Responsible Offices: Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools; Office of the Chief of School Support and Well-being

Academic Eligibility for Middle School Students Who Participate in Interscholastic Athletics

I. PURPOSE

To set forth systemwide academic eligibility guidelines for middle school students who participate in interscholastic athletics or in any athletic stipend extracurricular activity, as listed in the *Negotiated Agreement Between Montgomery County Education Association and the Board of Education of Montgomery County*.

II. BACKGROUND

Montgomery County Board of Education Policy IQD, *Extracurricular Activities*, affirms that each student should maintain high academic standards, while also pursuing extracurricular activities that contribute to a well-rounded education. The Board supports having both extracurricular activities requiring academic eligibility and other extracurricular activities that do not have academic eligibility requirements.

A student's marking period average is one component of eligibility to participate in interscholastic sports. Other components include, but are not limited to, age, attendance, enrollment, and health requirements set forth by the director of Systemwide Athletics and the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Athletic Activities Requiring Academic Eligibility* are defined as those activities listed as eligible for athletic stipends in the *Negotiated Agreement Between Montgomery County Education Association and the Board of Education of Montgomery County*.
- B. *Eligibility Period* is the period of the time from the day that a report card is issued

until the day the next report card is issued.

- C. *Failing Grade* is any grade that indicates an unacceptable level of performance, including E and NC.
- D. *Marking period average* means the grade average for all classes in which a student was enrolled during a single grading period. It includes credit- and non-credit-bearing courses. It is not the student's overall Grade Point Average (GPA), which is not calculated for middle school students.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Academic Eligibility
 - 1. Students who have at least a 2.0 marking period average in the prior marking period, with no more than one failing grade, will be academically eligible to participate or practice during the next marking period.
 - a) Eligibility standards become effective as of a student's second marking period in middle school, as determined by their marking period average for the first marking period of middle school.
 - b) The student will be academically ineligible to play an interscholastic sport in the second marking period if the first period marking average for their first year of any MCPS middle school is below 2.0.
 - 2. When computing the marking period average, a multi-period course grade will be counted once for each period the course is offered (e.g., if the course is a three-period course, the grade should be counted three times in determining the prior marking period average).
 - a) The letter grade for a multi-period course will appear only once on the report card.
 - b) For the purposes of athletic eligibility, a failing course grade is counted only once per course per marking period, regardless of how many periods the course meets.
 - 3. Grades reported as incomplete as a result of legally excused absences shall be considered passing grades until changed. Incomplete grades that are not changed to passing grades within 10 school days after report cards are issued will be considered failing grades for eligibility purposes until they are changed.

4. Grades and credits for dropped courses will be computed in accordance with MCPS Regulation IKC-RA, *Grade Point Averages (GPA) and Weighted Grade Point Averages (WGPA)*.
5. When a student transfers from an MCPS middle school to a non-MCPS school and subsequently reenters MCPS, the grades from the non-MCPS school will be used to determine academic eligibility for the ensuing season, provided the student has attended the non-MCPS school for at least one entire marking period. If the student has not completed at least one marking period at the non-MCPS school, the grades from the last MCPS school the student attended will be used to determine eligibility.
6. On the day that the report card is issued, each athletic coordinator or coach will verify student eligibility.

B. Exceptions

1. Students who enter an MCPS middle school for the first time are automatically academically eligible for the marking period they enroll. Eligibility is determined at the conclusion of each marking period thereafter, as set forth in section IV.A.1.
2. An unsatisfactory evaluation in a non-graded course is not considered failing for student eligibility.
3. Students in middle school who are not academically eligible may petition the coach not less than two weeks after the distribution of report cards to be reinstated in an activity if they have shown evidence of progress toward meeting eligibility standards.
4. Middle school principals will make the final decisions regarding eligibility of middle school students.

C. Local School Responsibilities

1. School staff will communicate in writing to students and parents/guardians a list of opportunities for all students to participate in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics.
2. Schools will have a broad range of activities for staff to refer students to in order to help students retain or regain academic eligibility for interscholastic athletics, including contracts, tutoring programs, mentoring and monitoring

programs, academic support classes and counseling, study halls during or after school, outreach programs, and other programs.

3. School staff will evaluate the effectiveness of support programs.

Related Source: *Code of Maryland Regulations* §§13A.06.03.01 and .02

Regulation History: New Regulation, December 18, 1996; revised June 21, 2006; revised February 23, 2007; revised October 8, 2021; revised October 25, 2023.