



Credit Flexibility and the OHSAA



The Ohio High School Athletic Association

- Private, not-for-profit organization of member schools
- Membership is voluntary
- Rules are promulgated by a vote of the member school principals and interpreted by the Commissioner's office
- Membership authorized annually by each BOE or governing board
- The OHSAA operates independently of the Ohio Department of Education but seeks to work cooperatively with all groups involved in the education of secondary students in Ohio



Athletic Eligibility

- Is a privilege
- Is governed by rules expressed in Bylaw 4
- Member schools, via their principals and other administrators, must convey these standards to parents and students well in advance of participation
- OHSAA provides resources to assist schools in this communication
- Parents and students must sign off that they have read, understand and have had a chance to review these standards with the school administrator



Ohio Credit Flexibility Policy

- Students may earn credit in three ways
 - Traditional Coursework
 - Testing out or demonstrating mastery
 - Educational Options
 - Distance learning
 - Educational travel
 - Independent study
 - Internship
 - Community service



Bylaw 4-4-1 - Scholarship

- currently enrolled
- enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period.
- received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses or the equivalent each of which counts toward graduation during the preceding grading period



How will Credit Flex impact eligibility under 4-4-1

- Student must be currently enrolled
- In the preceding grading period the student must be enrolled in and passing course work that will receive the equivalent of five one-credit courses
- The OHSAA intends to handle Credit Flex course work in much the same way as it currently handles PSEO and other educational options



How to handle Credit Flex and other educational options

- **Insure that the student and parents understand** the nature of this type of option and discuss OHSAA eligibility requirements with a **school administrator** prior to development of the student's plan
- **Make arrangements** for the faculty member or other individual who is overseeing the student's experience to **provide the school with grades or a progress report** when the school's grading period is over
- **Realize that the experience may not be completed** when the grading period is over but that the work done to date will be used to provide a letter grade or an evaluation of pass/no pass



How to handle Credit Flex and other educational options

- **Make certain** that the students and their parents know that if no work has been completed or if the work is not of a level to receive a “Pass,” the course cannot be used as part of the five credit requirement found in 4-4-1.



Other matters to consider

- It is expected that eligibility will not be negatively impacted by either traditional coursework or educational options under the Credit Flex scenario
- Testing out or demonstrating mastery **may not** fit into the process due to the student not being academically engaged during a preceding grading period.
- Summer experiences cannot be used for scholastic eligibility



OHSAA Resources

- OHSAA Handbook
- OHSAA Eligibility Guide for Students and Parents
http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/eligbulletin_09.pdf
- Eligibility Guide for Guidance Counselors
<http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/EligibilityGuide.pdf>



The NCAA

- Although asked frequently, OHSAA staff cannot interpret the rules of the NCAA
- Contact a compliance administrator at an NCAA institution
- Go to the NCAA Eligibility Center at http://eligibilitycenter.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html



Individual Learning Plan

- **Student initiates a request** to take a course via Credit Flex
- School counselor or **faculty rep meets with the student** to develop the plan
- **Plan is signed** by student, school officials and the parents
- If the student is an athlete, **the athletic or school administrator must be included** so that the eligibility compliance can be stipulated in the plan



Use of Credit Flex for Transfer to Gain an Athletic Advantage

- Concern about the use of credit flex to “transfer” to schools or programs to gain an athletic advantage.
- We are currently proposing a change to the transfer bylaw to close a “loophole” that might be used to participate in a “sports school” and use the Credit Flex option to preserve eligibility and gain an advantage
- This is not hypothetical
- The OHSAA has already had one inquiry from a member school about such an option



Prospective Transfer Exception

- Would permit a return to the same high school from a “domestic” program (whether credit flex is attempted or not) provided:
 - Program exists primarily for academic and educational experiences
 - Student receives credit toward graduation while involved in the program
 - The student will not be denied athletic opportunity; however, if he/she does participate it must be secondary to the academic and educational experience.



Prospective Transfer, cont.

- The domestic program has a structured beginning and ending to the program
- The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Commissioner's office



Credit Flex Goals

- When Credit Flexibility options are used to support a student's interest in future work or study, provide an individualized plan and a pace that fits the student's needs while earning HS credits, the program will be successful
- If the Credit Flexibility Option is envisioned as a means to gain an interscholastic athletics advantage, the student may be deprived of the privilege of participation under current and/or future OHSAA rules



Contact Us!

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