

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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DPS: 2012-112

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Pam Stewart

**DATE:** September 28, 2012

**SUBJECT:** High School Athletics – *“Florida, Ahead of the Game”*

There have been several updates to the policies and procedures relating to high school athletics that we want to bring to your attention. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) updated their initial eligibility requirements for student athletes beginning August 1, 2016. In addition, two statutory changes specific to high school athletics in Florida occurred this legislative session. Information regarding each of the three updates is included below.

Updates from the NCAA regarding eligibility for Division I and Division II student athletes include the following:

- New initial eligibility standards for NCAA Division I and Division II college bound athletes. College bound student athletes first entering a Division I college or university on or after August 1, 2016, will need to meet new academic rules in order to receive athletic aid (scholarship), practice, or compete during their first year. This change will impact students entering ninth grade beginning in the 2012-2013 school year.
- Academic rules that will go into effect in 2016 are significantly more rigorous and will require a higher grade point average (GPA) with correlated standardized test scores.
- The addition of an academic redshirt component.

The following links are provided by the NCAA and contain more detailed information about the requirements to become a NCAA Division I student athlete.

- [NCAA Eligibility Website](#)
- [Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete](#)
- [Eligibility Quick Reference Sheet](#)

The chart below reflects the NCAA initial eligibility standards beginning August 1, 2016, in comparison to the Florida statutory requirements for high school graduation:

<b>NCAA Requirements for Full Qualifiers (beginning August 1, 2016)</b>	<b>Florida’s High School Graduation Requirements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 16 core courses                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ten of the 16 core courses must be completed before senior year.</li> <li>➤ Seven of the ten core courses must be English, Math, or Science.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have a minimum core course GPA of 2.300                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Grades earned in the ten required courses are “locked in” for purposes of GPA calculation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Meet the competition sliding scale requirement of GPA and ACT/SAT score (this is a new scale with increased GPA/test score requirements).</li> <li>• Graduate from high school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully complete a minimum of 24 credits to include the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Four credits in English.</li> <li>➤ Four credits in Mathematics (including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)</li> <li>➤ Three credits in Science (including Biology)</li> <li>➤ Three credits in Social Studies (including United States History, World History, Economics and United States Government)</li> <li>➤ One credit in Physical Education to include the integration of health</li> <li>➤ One credit in fine or performing arts</li> <li>➤ Eight electives</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The following legislative changes were included within [House Bill 291](#), effective July 1, 2012, which requires:

- Youth athletes and others involved in youth athletic programs to be informed about the nature and risk of concussion and head injury.
- The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) to adopt guidelines and policies related to educating stakeholders about the nature and risk of concussion and head injury.
- The FHSAA to adopt guidelines and policies related to the requirement for the parent/guardian of a student athlete to sign and return an informed consent that explains the nature and risk of concussion and head injury before athletic participation.
- The FHSAA to adopt guidelines and policies related to treatment of student athletes suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury.

The following legislative changes were included within [House Bill 1403](#), effective July 1, 2012, updating:

- Eligibility and transfer requirements for students participating in interscholastic athletics.
- FHSAA policies, procedures, and bylaws.
- Policies related to background screening exceptions for certain investigators for the FHSAA.

The FHSAA is a non-profit governing body that is responsible for overseeing all Florida high school athletic programs and events. The Department of Education does not have legislative authority over high school athletics or the FHSAA. If you would like to contact the FHSAA for information on their policies or procedures, we have included their contact information below:

Florida High School Athletic Association  
 801 NW 80th Boulevard  
 Gainesville, Florida 32606  
 Phone: (800) 461-7895  
 Website: <http://www.fhsaa.org/>