

ELIGIBILITY

(From ASBOA Constitution and the AAA Handbook)

A. ELIGIBILITY FORMS

1. Each participating school will be required to submit a form certifying the eligibility of all participants. The forms shall be submitted to the Region Chairman once each semester. The Region Chairman shall be responsible for the eligibility of students, for each event in his/her region.
2. Eligibility Forms must be received by the Region Chair on September 30 (or before the first interscholastic event) and January 31 – Not Postmarked by those dates. (ABA 2019)

B. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

1. Any high school, junior high, middle or grade school band/orchestra that is a member of the Arkansas Activities Association shall be eligible for membership in ASBOA upon payment of annual participation fees. (See Constitution, Article III, Section A).
2. A school band, orchestra, soloist, or ensemble may enter a region or state event provided they comply with the following requirements:
 - (a) Must be a member of ASBOA
 - (b) Must have paid participation fees by the specified time.
 - (c) Must have paid necessary entry fees by the specified time.
3. Individuals participating in region and/or state events sponsored by the ASBOA MUST BE BONA FIDE STUDENTS IN A PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION (THIS INCLUDES SOLOS, ENSEMBLES, AUDITIONS, AND CLINICS). (ABA 2024) BLOCK SCHEDULING: Students earning a full year credit in one semester are considered eligible for participation with the group in activities throughout the school year. (Revised 1997) Students enrolled in split classes with the same standards shall be considered bona fide students in the participating ensemble. (i.e. Instrumental music (orchestra or band) that meets in multiple class periods throughout the day but performs as one group.) (ABA 2023)
4. The SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL division consists of pupils in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades. NINTH GRADE STUDENTS may participate in all high school activities EXCEPT senior high school clinics and All-State Bands or Orchestras, provided the principals of both schools agree. (Students in the 7th and 8th grades may participate in the high school band/orchestra, in marching and concert assessment ONLY, PROVIDED THE SCHOOL IS ONE BUILDING-ONE ADMINISTRATION GRADES 7-12, AND THEY ARE REGULARLY ENROLLED AS MEMBERS OF THAT ORGANIZATION).
5. The JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL division shall consist of only pupils in the 7th, 8th and 9th grades.
6. Students in the sixth grade, or lower, may neither audition for, nor participate in ASBOA Clinics. They may participate in solo-ensemble assessments.

C. BONA FIDE STUDENT

A student participating in an interscholastic activity must be a bona fide student of a school: A bona fide student is one who has not been graduated from a high school and who is currently enrolled in, and attending regularly, at least four full-credit courses recognized by the State Department of Education. NOTE: A local school may make an exception for a student the last semester of his/her senior year, provided he/she is enrolled in and attending regularly at least one full-credit course, and is meeting all requirements for graduation. (See "Scholarship" - below)

For the purposes of ASBOA, in addition to the AAA requirements, a bona fide student must be enrolled in a regularly scheduled instrumental music course. (ABA 2024)

D. AGE

A junior high school student whose 16th birthday is on or before September 1 may not be registered for, nor allowed to participate in, an interscholastic event. NOTE: The year that a student in junior high school becomes too old for junior high school participation, he/she shall be allowed to participate in a senior high school activity, provided the principals of both schools agree. A senior high school student whose 19th birthday is on, or before, September 1 MAY NOT BE ALLOWED to participate in an interscholastic event. Revised 1992, Approved AAA

E. SCHOLARSHIP

A. JUNIOR HIGH – A student promoted from the sixth to the seventh grade automatically meets the academic eligibility (scholarship) requirements. A student promoted from the seventh to the eighth grade automatically meets the academic eligibility requirements for the first semester. The second semester eighth grade student and the first semester ninth grade student meet the academic eligibility requirements for junior high by successfully passing four (4) academic courses the previous semester. First semester ninth grade students must pass four academic classes to be eligible second semester of the ninth grade. Ninth grade students must meet senior high academic eligibility by the end of second semester in order to be eligible to participate the fall of their tenth-grade year.

B. SENIOR HIGH – The requirement for senior high (10-12) eligibility shall include:

- Passing four academic courses; and
- A minimum GPA of 2.0, based on the previous semester.

The student must have passed four academic courses in the previous semester. Any of these four courses for which concurrent high school credit is earned may be from an institution of higher learning recognized by the Arkansas Department of Education. (AAA Handbook 2009)

NOTE: The student must still meet the bona fide student rule.

Academic courses are defined as those courses that meet the following criteria:

- (a) Is identified in the ADE STANDARDS for accreditation as one of the 38 course offerings, (or)
- (b) Is a definable course for which class time is scheduled and which can be credited to meet minimum requirements for graduation; is taught by a teacher required to have state certification, endorsement or approval in the course, and has a Course Content Guide approved by the Arkansas Department of Education.

F. SEMESTERS

A student shall be limited to twelve semesters of opportunity for eligibility in grades 7 through 12.

JUNIOR HIGH - a maximum of six semesters in junior high beginning with his/her first enrollment in the seventh grade.

SENIOR HIGH - a maximum of eight consecutive semesters in senior high beginning with the ninth grade. A student repeating either the 7th or 8th grade shall not have the opportunity to be eligible at all during the year that is repeated due to failing.

NOTE: The ninth grade (5th and 6th semesters) are charged against both junior and senior high limitations. Enrollment in academic classes in college does not affect eligibility as long as the student is a bona fide student of a high school.

G. HOME SCHOOL STUDENTS

ASBOA will comply with AAA eligibility and participation rules and regulations regarding home school students.

INTERPRETATION OF "SEMESTERS"

A student who has failed either the 7th or 8th grade may be eligible in the 9th grade for junior high. A student who has failed either the 7th or 8th grade but has made normal progress since entering the 9th grade may be eligible in the 12th grade.

PARTICIPATION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Participation in competitive interscholastic activities as a part of a school's educational program is a privilege and not a right. The eligibility rules of this association are designed to promote the educational values derived from participation in interscholastic activities, prevent exploitation of youth by special interest groups, and to ensure that interscholastic activities shall remain an integral part of the educational program.

The ADA and Section 504 require that accommodations be provided to individuals with disabilities when certain conditions are satisfied. Each case will be decided on its own merits. In reaching its decisions, the ASBOA Executive Advisory will follow applicable law and consider the following:

- whether the requested accommodation(s) is "reasonable";
- whether the requested accommodation(s) is "necessary,"; and
- whether the requested accommodation(s) would "fundamentally alter the nature of" the competition, either because it would alter an "essential aspect of the game" or activity or give the student an "advantage over others and, for that reason, fundamentally alter the character" of the competition.

MARCHING BAND ACTIVITY RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. STUDENT PHYSICALS

To be in compliance with Arkansas Activities Association's policies concerning physical activities (AAA Handbook: Article III, Section 1, Rule 16 and Article III, Section 2, Rule 2) students involved in marching band will provide verification of a physical examination prior to beginning marching band practices for the school year to be an eligible participant. Using an ineligible student will result in disqualification. Students involved in auxiliary unit auditions (drum major, color guard, majorette, etc.) will have on file record of a current physical examination. The yearly physical shall be reasonably expected to be within 12-15 months. (Example – physical taken in May will be considered current for the following school year.)

ASBOA & AAA ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (From AAA Handbook)

SECTION 2. NON-ATHLETIC COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES

Rule 1. BONA FIDE STUDENT. (Same as athletic Rule 4.)

Rule 2. SCHOLARSHIP. (Same as athletic Rule 10.)

Rule 3. SEMESTERS. (Same as athletic Rule 6.)

Rule 4. AGE. (Senior High same as athletic Rule 7, Junior High none.)

Rule 4. BONA FIDE STUDENT

A. A student participating in interscholastic activities must be a bona fide student of the school; a bona fide student is one who has not graduated from a high school and who is enrolled in and regularly attending at least four academic courses in the high school. These courses shall be from those identified in the Arkansas Department of Education Standards of Accreditation.

B. Concurrent college courses may be used to meet the bona fide student rule.

C. A local school may make an exception for a student in the last semester of the senior year provided the student is enrolled in and attending regularly at least one academic course and is meeting all requirements for graduation.

D. The Arkansas Activities Association in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Education makes an exception to the bona fide student rule for students in the Arkansas School for Math, Science and Arts. Because the ASMSA is an ADE accredited school, is a boarding school located in the Hot Springs School District, and is a member of the Arkansas Activities Association, students from ASMSA may participate at Hot Springs High School in those sports or activities not offered by the Arkansas School for Math, Science and Arts.

Rule 5. DROPOUTS. A student dropping out of or leaving school, suspended with no credit, or expelled from school at any time during a semester must re-establish eligibility by returning to an Arkansas Activities Association member school and meeting the scholarship requirements for one full semester. If, however, the last semester attended was completed, eligibility shall be based on that semester.

Rule 10. SCHOLARSHIP (ACADEMICS)

A. Junior High.

-A student promoted from the sixth to the seventh grade automatically meets the academic eligibility (scholarship) requirements.

-A student promoted from the seventh to the eighth grade automatically meets the academic eligibility requirements for the first semester.

-The second semester eighth grade student and the first semester ninth grade student meet the academic eligibility requirements for junior high by successfully passing four (4) academic courses the previous semester. (2016)

-First semester ninth grade students must pass four academic classes to be eligible second semester of the ninth grade.

-Ninth grade students must meet senior high academic eligibility by the end of second semester in order to be eligible to participate the fall of their tenth-grade year.

B. Senior High. The requirement for senior high (10-12) eligibility shall include:

- Passing four academic courses; and

- A minimum GPA of 2.0, based on the previous semester. The student must have passed four academic courses in the previous semester. Any of these four courses for which concurrent high school credit is earned may be from an institution of higher learning recognized by the Arkansas Department of Education.

1. Supplemental Instruction Program

a. To participate in interscholastic competition, students passing four academic courses but failing to meet the 2.0 GPA requirement must be enrolled in and attending 100 minutes per week a Supplemental Instruction Program meeting established criteria and approved by the AAA.

b. If a student's GPA drops below 2.0 at the end of any semester the student must immediately enroll in and attend the SIP. If a student fails to enroll in the SIP at this time the student must attain a 2.0 GPA to regain eligibility.

c. In the first semester of SIP the student must meet the stated requirement (2.0) at the end of that semester in order to become fully eligible again OR meet the requirement to remain in the SIP one additional semester.

d. To maintain eligibility under the Supplemental Instruction Program and be eligible to continue for a second semester, the student must show improvement of at least one tenth of one point in his/her GPA after the first semester of participation in the supplemental program. To continue to participate following the second semester in the SIP, the student must have reached the 2.0 GPA as well as passing four academic courses.

e. Maximum participation in the SIP is two consecutive semesters. If the student does not achieve a 2.0 GPA within this period, the student will remain ineligible until a 2.0 GPA is achieved. A student who has been in SIP and regained eligibility by achieving a 2.0 GPA would be eligible to enter the SIP again later if passing four courses but not earning a 2.0 GPA.

Rule 6. SEMESTERS

A. Junior High – A student has six semesters of opportunity for eligibility. A student repeating either the seventh or eighth grade for any reason shall not have the opportunity for eligibility during the complete year that is repeated.

B. Senior High - A student is limited to eight consecutive semesters of opportunity for eligibility beginning with the student's first enrollment in the ninth grade (or earlier as defined in Rule 7. Age, Note).

Note 1: A ninth grade student may compete for the junior high or for the senior high in the same member school district with separate campuses with permission from the involved principals. (Refer to Bylaws, Art. II, Section 7, Rule 1 - Classification of Students.)

Note 2: A student first entering an AAA member school at the beginning of the tenth grade shall have six consecutive semesters of opportunity for eligibility; at the beginning of the 11th grade shall have four consecutive semesters of eligibility; and, at the beginning of the 12th grade shall have two consecutive semesters of opportunity for eligibility.

1. If a ninth-grade student competes for the junior high, the student may then compete at the senior high level after the completion of that junior high sport season except for Class 7A as stated in Article II, Section 7, Rule 1. A ninth-grade student may not compete for the senior high and return later to compete for the junior high in the same sport.

2. Semesters are applied toward the limitations regardless of the following:

- a. if the school doesn't offer a sport; or
- b. if the student doesn't participate, or
- c. if the student isn't eligible; or
- d. if the student's earlier enrollment was in a different school system.

NOTE: The fifth and sixth semesters (normally the 9th grade) are applied toward both the junior and senior high limitations. This is due to the rule allowing the school's administration to permit a 9th grade student to participate at either level. (Refer to Bylaws, Art. II, Rule 1 of Section 7 - Classification of Students).

3. A 7th or 8th grade student who is ineligible for junior high athletics due only to the age rule may be eligible to participate in senior high. (Refer to Bylaws, Art. II, Rule 3 of Section 7 - Classification of Students.) 4. A student is limited to a total of 12 semesters of opportunity for eligibility upon entering the seventh grade. The final eight semesters shall be consecutive.

Rule 7. AGE

A. Junior High. A junior high student is not eligible for junior high competition if the student's 16th birthday is on or before September 1.

NOTE: In the year a student in junior high school becomes too old for junior high participation, the student may be If, however, the last semester attended was completed, eligibility shall be based on that semester.