

3.5 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

3.5.1 **Cheerleading:** Cheerleading is an activity that comes under the jurisdiction of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association in two areas – eligibility and health and safety guidelines (including Return to Play form, etc.). Head Cheerleading coaches are required to attend the annual rules meeting.

- (a) All information pertaining to cheerleading should be found in this section of the Handbook and/or online.
- (b) All NCHSAA member schools that sponsor cheerleading are required to follow NFHS Spirit Rules.
- (c) NFHS Spirit rulebooks are sent to athletic directors.
- (d) The head cheerleading coach is required to maintain safety certification through the NFHS and USA Cheer's "Cheer and Dance Safety Certification" course once every four years. Fundamentals of Coaching is not required.
- (e) Cheerleaders, both junior varsity and varsity, must have their eligibility certified in the same manner as other interscholastic athletes.
- (f) The Head Coach must attend one of the NCHSAA clinics (See 2.1.7, See 3.3.2.f.9 for non-compliance penalties).
- (g) It is strongly recommended that, before a cheerleading squad uses NFHS spirit rules, that the coach or advisor for the cheerleaders consider their application with the training, experience and athletic ability of the students under supervision.
- (h) Please be aware that the local LEA may have more restrictive guidelines and regulations.
- (i) Students who want to participate in cheerleading are not subject to the Transfer Policy, however, all current eligibility requirements remain applicable. If a student desires to participate in another sport, NCHSAA Transfer Rules may apply.

**NCHSAA Cheerleading Invitational: Saturday, December 4, 2021
Raleigh Convention Center, Raleigh**

3.5.2 **Philosophy of Cheerleading:** Cheerleaders serve as a support group for the different interscholastic athletic teams within their schools.

- (a) Cheerleaders should always strive to improve student morale, boost team spirit, and help a school achieve the most worthwhile objectives in its interscholastic program.
- (b) Positive crowd and student body involvement, directed by the cheerleading squad in support of the school team, should be a major goal.

3.5.3 **Scholar-Athlete (Team):** Definition - A group of persons sanctioned by and participating in an NCHSAA sponsored athletic activity that is composed of at least five (5) or more individual student athletes. A team is composed of the student-athletes in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 noted on the NCHSAA Master Eligibility List and certified for game/meet/match participation. The student-athletes must participate on the team at the high school Varsity level. The student-athlete must remain a member of the athletic team for the full/total designated sport season.

- (a) Any varsity team with an unweighted 3.100 or higher composite grade average for the designated semester would be eligible to receive a team academic award.
- (b) A team certificate will be awarded to each eligible school (for each of its eligible teams) and a team recognition certificate will be awarded to each member of an eligible team.
- (c) In each sport approved by the NCHSAA, a team plaque will be awarded to the team (from those applications that are turned into the NCHSAA) in the state which has the highest team grade point average for the designated semester.
- (d) Cheerleading, although not officially recognized as a "sport," is eligible for this program since eligibility must be certified and other requirements met. Cheerleaders will be part of the FALL semester and submitted for grades earned during that semester.
- (e) For each team (men's and women's are considered separate teams) nomination, a separate team application form must be filled out. If four different teams from a school are nominated, then four different forms must be filled out. (The team GPA must be listed on the application.)
- (f) All members of the team must be listed and their grade point average indicated, carried to three places, to be considered. Numerical grades (95.177, for example may not be used.)
- (g) Please note the deadline. Applications for team awards which come in after the deadline will not be considered.
- (h) Fall and winter sports awards will be based on grades earned for the first semester of the school year. Spring sports awards will be based on grades earned for the second semester of the school year. *Examples:* fall and winter include football, volleyball, and women's tennis, women's golf, cross country, men's soccer, basketball, indoor track, swimming, wrestling, and cheerleading. Spring includes baseball, softball, women's soccer, men's golf, men's and women's track, and men's tennis.

3.5.4 **Scholar-Athlete (Individual):** Definition - A student-athlete, participating as an individual representing their school.