

Eligibility

Applicability- MRN Events are exclusively for MRN-eligible HomeSchool Student-Athletes unless explicitly stated otherwise for specific events.

Registration Requirements- All teams participating in MRN-run or MRN-sanctioned events shall ensure that: (a) All parents of participating student-athletes complete the official MRN Player Registration Form. (b) All coaches (head and assistant) complete the official MRN Coaches Registration Form. These requirements ensure a comprehensive understanding and acknowledgment of these MRN Eligibility Guidelines by all parents, coaches, and leaders within each program.

Purpose of Eligibility Guidelines- These MRN Eligibility Guidelines are designed to **safeguard the reputation of HomeSchool Athletics**, ensure a consistent and fair post-season experience, and protect the integrity of the league.

Importance of Eligibility – The MRN recognizes the detrimental impact of ineligible teams on the experiences of parents, players, coaches, and fans. Eligibility is the foremost commitment to maintaining a consistent and fair application of these guidelines.

The rules outlined herein are designed to ensure that every participant in MRN events is primarily a **HomeSchool Student and secondarily an athlete**. These rules aim to prevent MRN tournaments from resembling AAU/Club or all-star teams, thereby maintaining a level playing field.

MRN Events – These rules apply to all MRN-run events.

Year-Round Eligibility Compliance- All organizations that register teams or are Association Members must exclusively use players who meet MRN Eligibility Guidelines for all games throughout the year. Failure to adhere to this requirement shall require self-reporting & is subject to result in MRN disciplinary action.

Self-Reporting of Ineligible Players- In the event that an ineligible player is inadvertently used in competition, it is the duty of the involved program to **self-report the infraction** and self-impose appropriate sanctions.

Team Status and Restrictions:

- Designation:** The team shall be denoted by **“(USA)”** after their name at MRN-sanctioned events.
- Competition Restriction:** Provisional teams cannot eliminate a team from the top bracket of the division in which they are placed, nor can they compete for or eliminate a team from trophy contention.

In elimination brackets, the opening game at an MRN event will result in the **(USA)** designated team moving to the left/consolation side of the brackets, regardless of the final score. The only exception is during pool play, where the **(USA)** designated team will advance as the last-place finisher.

Furthermore, in events where trophies or awards are given in consolation rounds (even after teams lose), the **(USA)** designated team will continue to move left in the brackets, regardless of the score, until there are no more awards to eliminate teams from.

- Transparency:** Provisional teams must inform other MRN Member Organizations that their team is using an ineligible player.

MRN Eligibility In Writing Policy- The MRN only handles eligibility exemptions or questions in writing. We do not handle these questions on the phone. Coaches, Athletic Directors, Parents, and Players, if you have questions about an eligibility situation in your program and you have been told a player has been granted an exemption, **ask to see it in writing**. All eligibility issues must be dealt with in writing, with no exceptions.

Definition of a HomeSchool Student-Athlete

Core Definition “Homeschooling” is defined by MRN Member Organizations as parent-directed education conducted at home.

Parental Responsibility The parents or legal guardian (pre-approved by the MRN) shall be directly involved in the student's education, fulfilling the role of headmaster by **(a)** Selecting the curriculum. **(b)** Selecting and/or approving course materials and study schedules. **(c)** Selecting tutors, co-op classes, teachers, dual enrollment options, and/or other educational resources.

Online At Home Policy **(a)** The MRN does not endorse or reject any specific curriculum. **(b)** The choice of curriculum is at the discretion of the parent, provided the education is conducted at home, and the parent retains the right to modify the curriculum. **(c)** Students enrolled in their local school district who are pursuing online education through that district are ineligible as this program does not meet the definition of "Homeschooling" and is considered institutional schooling.

Basic MRN Eligibility Rules

to ensure that all participating players maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) throughout the active season.

Continuous Homeschooling: Students who begin the academic year in a traditional school setting are considered ineligible and **must** apply for a Hardship Exemption for eligibility consideration.

Age and Gender Eligibility

Age Cut-Off Date: A student-athlete's age for MRN eligibility shall be determined by their age on **August 1st**. A player must be the specified age of the division **OR YOUNGER** on August 1st to be eligible for that age group for the entire season.

) Age Division Limits:

Division	Maximum Age (Must be this age or younger on August 1st)
18U (Varsity)	18
16U	16
14U	14
12U	12
10U	10

•Clarified Example:

Playing 'Up': Players are permitted to participate in one or more higher (older) age groups if desired.

Playing 'Down': Players are **not** permitted to participate in a younger age group for which they are age-ineligible on the August 1st cut-off date. **No exceptions will be made** for players attempting to play down due to skill level, team need, or family logistics.

Multiple Age Groups at Events: Players may participate on multiple teams in different age groups at MRN events, provided they meet the age eligibility requirement for each team they play on.

Gender Requirements: A player's eligibility is restricted to the gender division corresponding to their sex as recorded on their original birth certificate. **Co-ed teams are not permitted** at Nationals or MRN-run postseason events. No exceptions will be made.

Proof of Age: Organizations are responsible for verifying the age of their players. Documentation verifying a player's age (e.g., birth certificate) may be required by the MRN for any player at any time.

Year-Round MRN Player Compliance: All organizations that register for the MRN or are Association Members must exclusively use eligible players who meet MRN Eligibility Guidelines for all games throughout the year. **Sport**

Specific- Non-compliance by any affiliated team or player will result in the disqualification of the entire program/organization.

Dual Rostering Within the Organization- This section governs a player's ability to be listed on multiple teams *within the same MRN member organization*.

- **Permitted:** Players can be listed on the rosters of multiple age groups (e.g., 14U and 16U) within the same organization.

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- **Restricted at MRN Events:** A player is limited to competing on **only one team per age group** at MRN events.

Dual Rostering with Different Organizations- This section governs a player's ability to be listed on teams from two different schools, including homeschool and traditional schools.

- **Prohibited (Same Sport):** Players are **not** allowed to participate on teams from two different schools/teams (homeschool, charter, public, private, etc.) in the same sport during the same season.

Intent: This rule is designed to **uphold the integrity of the MRN's member organizations**, ensuring we are **distinctly separate from club, AAU, or recreational leagues**. It requires that a player's commitment during the competitive season be **exclusive and verifiable** to one MRN-member, homeschool organization, or school team of record. Dual rostering is **prohibited** because it compromises both commitment and the integrity of a team's certification.

Clarification on Non-School Teams

- The MRN does not consider AAU, Club, or recreational teams (such as MAYB, YMCA, church leagues, iSports, etc.) to be "School teams."
- Therefore, participation on these types of teams during the MRN season does **not** negatively impact an athlete's eligibility within the MRN.

In-Season Transfers- 1st Game Policy: Players must have begun playing with their team prior to the team's first scheduled game of the season. Players seeking to join a team after the first game must apply for a Hardship Exemption.

Graduation Ceremony Participation: A player who has participated in a graduation ceremony is not eligible to participate in MRN events. **(b) Coop Ceremony Participation:** Student-athletes participating in ceremonies celebrating the completion of coop classes but not graduating may wear a cap and gown if it is announced during the ceremony and in the program that they are receiving a "Certificate of Completion." The student's anticipated graduation year should be announced. Social media posts should clarify that the student is not graduating at this time. Pre-approval is no longer required if all posted requirements are met. If a player is reported as a graduate with proof, they will be required to sit out while the family and coach are contacted. Pre-approval can still be requested by emailing nchbchomeschoolnationals@gmail.com.

The Role of Outside Institutions

Brick & Mortar Schools (including, but not limited to, Public, Private, Christian, Charter Schools, etc.). Full-time enrollment in a traditional school (public, charter, private, Christian, etc.) is not recognized by the MRN as homeschooling, as the student's education is not parent-directed. Students attending any type of school full-time are ineligible. Part-time students at such schools must receive at least 51% of their education from classes meeting the definition of homeschooling, and must

Coop and Umbrella Schools Participation in cooperative and/or umbrella schools is permitted under the following circumstances: **(a)** In states where "HomeSchool students" are legally required to attend a private school, and cooperative or umbrella schools are formed for this purpose, approval is automatic, provided the schooling involves significant and direct parental involvement, and the student-athlete meets the definition of Homeschooling. **(b)** In states with more homeschool-friendly laws, cooperative, umbrella, or similar educational

arrangements are permitted if they are characterized by significant and direct parental involvement and if the student-athlete meets the definition of a Homeschooling Student.

Vocational Classes HomeSchool students may take classes at vocational schools, provided that at least 51% of their education comes from classes that meet the homeschooling definition. Dual credit/enrollment classes are not counted against this 51% requirement.

The 51% Founders Rule – Governing Principle: Eligibility for the MRN requires that the student-athlete must be home-educated and that their parent must retain the role of **Head Master** and curricular director for **51% or more** of the student's core education. Full-time enrollment in a traditional public or private school is not considered home-based education because the child's educational direction in such schools is not parent-directed. *Note: Dual enrollment/credit courses are excluded from this calculation.*

Dual Credit/Enrollment Clause (a) Freshman, Sophomore, and Junior HomeSchool Student-Athletes participating in Dual Credit/Enrollment Programs must take a minimum of three (3) high school courses per semester. **(b)** Senior HomeSchool Student-Athletes in Dual Credit/Enrollment Programs must take a minimum of two (2) high school courses per semester. **(c)** High school courses can include electives and can be taken through Co-ops or any other eligible parent-directed educational method.

Transfers Under Disciplinary Action Any student transferring from a public school, Christian/Private School, or another HomeSchool team while under disciplinary action(s) is ineligible unless they undergo the Hardship Exemption process OR wait one (1) year before becoming eligible to participate.

NCHBC Tebow Rule. Many states have adopted the **Tebow Rule**, which allows homeschool students to play on public school teams. The MRN has the following guidelines for players participating under this provision:

transferring to a Homeschool Team: Players who are homeschooled but playing on a school team via the Tebow Rule may transfer to a basketball or spring sports homeschool team up to December 31st. Fall Sports require the transfer to be made by August 31st.

- Prohibition on Dual Participation:** Within the same sport, students are not permitted to play both a school (public, private, Christian, charter, etc.) team and a homeschool team during the year.

Eligibility for Homeschool Team Transfer: Fall Sports transfers must be made by August 31st. Spring Sports &/or Basketball- To join a homeschool team, players must have been home-educated for the entire first semester and must join the homeschool team on or before December 31st. Basketball Players must also meet all other guidelines.

- Applicable Age Groups:** The Tebow Rule guidelines apply to all age groups, from High School down to 10u.

Clarification: Students Playing on Multiple School Teams During the Same Year

Students are not permitted to play on multiple school (public, private, Christian, charter, homeschool, etc.) teams during the same season.

Additional Non-Educational Requirements

Marriage A player who is married is not eligible to participate in MRN events.

Attended School as a Senior An upperclassman transfer who attended school as a senior is automatically ineligible. Refer to Article VII for additional guidelines regarding upperclassmen transfers.

Continuous Homeschooling (Reiteration) Student-athletes must have been continuously Homeschooled from the start of the school year. Students who began the year in a traditional school setting must apply for a Hardship Exemption.

Mile Radius A player must reside within a 100-mile radius of the team's primary practice facility.

Player Registration (Reiteration) All players participating in an MRN Event must have their parent or legal guardian complete the official MRBN player registration.

Living at Home A player must live at home with their parent or court-appointed legal guardian. In cases involving foster children or other family hardships, the organization may seek MRN Pre-Approval* from the legally responsible person by first submitting a Hardship Request.

Basketball ONLY- NCHBC Upperclassmen Transfer Policy

HomeSchool Athlete HomeSchool Transfers (2025-26 Season) No mandatory waiting period if a team has five (5) or fewer combined upperclassmen homeschool transfers who were participants in MRN 2025. This policy applies to players who have been continuously homeschooled for the entire 2025-2026 season, regardless of their class or the team they previously played for. All players must meet all other eligibility requirements and must have transferred before the start of the season.

Transfer From School or 2025 HomeSchool team: Incoming Juniors (a) An incoming junior who attended a previous school as a sophomore is ineligible to compete in games until December 1, provided they transferred to a HomeSchool team before the team's first regular-season game. These players are permitted to practice and scrimmage with their program during the waiting period. If HomeSchooled for two consecutive years or more leading up to this season, see above to see if they qualify for the waiting period waiver request

Transfer From School to 2025 HomeSchool team: Incoming Seniors (a) An incoming senior who attended a previous school as a junior is ineligible to compete in games until January 1st, provided they transferred to a HomeSchool team before the team's first regular-season game. These players are permitted to practice and scrimmage with their program during the waiting period. **(b)**If HomeSchooled for two consecutive years or more leading up to this season, see above to see if they qualify for a waiting period waiver request

Senior at Brick & Mortar School Any player who attended school as a senior is automatically ineligible to compete in games within HomeSchool Athletics.

In-Season Upperclassmen Transfers (Zero-Tolerance Policy) Any upperclassman (Junior or Senior) who transfers from a traditional institutional school (public, private, charter, etc.) and joins a team after that team's first game of the season **will result in an automatic denial of eligibility.** T

Transfer Classification Clarification A student-athlete's transfer classification is determined by their grade level at the school or team they are transferring from. For example, a student who was a junior at their previous school/team will be considered an incoming senior for the purposes of these transfer rules, regardless of any subsequent reclassification. These rules apply to off-season transfers.

16u Eligibility During Waiting Period A player who is 16 years of age or younger is eligible to play on the program's 16u team while serving a transfer waiting period.

Group Transfers- These policies are designed to prevent teams from recruiting a large number of players from private and public schools all at once.

- If a team has more than three upperclassmen transfers (who were not homeschooled the previous year), the **MRN Committee** can enforce waiting periods for freshmen and sophomore transfers, and could increase the waiting period for juniors, with seniors being required to sit out their whole waiting period.
- If a team has more than five combined upperclassmen transfers (not part of their team the previous year), MRN can enforce waiting periods for freshmen and sophomore transfers, and could increase the waiting period for juniors, with seniors being required to sit out their whole waiting period.
- All rulings by the MRN committee are final.