

Sect. 20: Schools Using Ineligible Contestants & Coaches

Schools using *ineligible coaches or contestants shall forfeit all games and contests in which the ineligible coach or student participates. In self reporting the school may request a hearing with the Executive Director and/or Eligibility Committee to explain the circumstances of the situation. The Executive Director in consultation with the Eligibility Committee may modify the consequences in the case of an unintentional violation of this rule. Likewise, intentional use of ineligible contestants or failing to report a known violation may result in additional consequences to include sanctions and fines. Other questions of forfeiture such as cancellation and other unusual circumstances shall be referred to the appropriate committee, through the Executive Director, for a decision.

*Eligible coach means that the individual has met the criteria outlined in By-Law Article I, Sect. 32, Coaches Eligibility. If no “eligible” coach is present the contest will be stopped. (Exception – refer to By-Law Article I, Sect. 10, School Representatives at Post Season Activities.)

Sect. 21: Policy Statement and School Recommendation Regarding Transgender Participation

The NHIAA is committed to providing transgender student-athletes with equal opportunities to participate in NHIAA athletic programs consistent with their gender identity. Hence, this policy addresses eligibility determinations for students who have a gender identity that is different from the gender listed on their official birth certificates.

The NHIAA has concluded that it would be fundamentally unjust and contrary to applicable State and Federal Law to preclude a student from participation on a gender specific sports team that is consistent with the public gender identity of that student for all other purposes. Therefore, for purposes of sports participation, the NHIAA shall defer to the determination of the student and his or her local school regarding gender identification. In this regard, the school district shall determine a student’s eligibility to participate in a NHIAA gender specific sports team based on the gender identification of that student in current school records and daily life activities in the school and community at the time that sports eligibility is determined for a particular season. Accordingly, when a school district submits a roster to the NHIAA, it is verifying that it has determined that the students listed on a gender-specific sports team are entitled to participate on that team due to their gender identity, and that the school district has determined that the expression of the student’s gender identity is bona fide and not for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage in competitive athletics.

Students who wish to participate on a NHIAA gender-specific sports team that is different from the gender identity listed on the student’s current school records are advised to address the gender identification issue with the local school district well in advance of the deadline for athletic eligibility determinations for a current sports season. Students should not be permitted to participate in practices or to try out for gender specific sports teams that are different from their publicly identified gender identity at that time or to try out simultaneously for NHIAA sports teams of both genders.

Nothing in this policy shall be read to entitle a student to selection to any particular team or to permit a student to transfer from one gender specific team to a team of a different gender during a sports season. In addition, the NHIAA shall expect that, as a general matter, after the issue of gender identity has been explicitly addressed by the student and the school district, the determination shall remain consistent for the remainder of the student’s high school sports eligibility. The NHIAA has concluded that this policy adequately addresses the concerns that a student might claim a particular gender identity for the purpose of gaining a perceived advantage in athletic competition, but does not unfairly discriminate against transgendered student athletes.