

POLICIES & GUIDELINES

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Please refer to the following policies and guidelines for all IGHSAU-sanctioned sports.

Anonymous Correspondence

Anonymous communication received by the IGHSAU shall be forwarded to the school administrator of the school in question by the IGHSAU staff, with no further action taken unless a violation is reported by the member school. Anonymous callers shall be informed that the IGHSAU staff has no authority to act upon anonymous calls, emails or letters.

Forfeitures

It is the expectation of the Board of Directors that each school, coach and participant fully complete any contest, match or game sanctioned by the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. Any school, coach or participant who compromises this expectation by failing to complete play, withdrawing or otherwise forfeiting prior to the completion of a competition shall be subject to sanction, including suspension for up to one calendar year.

Holiday Participation

Interscholastic competition is prohibited between December 25 and January 1. Practices and scrimmages are permitted during this time.

Membership Dues Policy

IGHSAU By-Laws: Article I: Membership and Dues

Section 1. All senior and junior high schools in the state desiring membership or associate membership in the IGHSAU may make application to the Board of Directors. Application for membership is subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The annual dues of the Union shall be \$50.00 for member schools. Membership dues shall be paid in advance and shall be for the year July 1 to June 30. Membership expires at midnight of June 30 of each year. Following is the procedure that will be utilized by the IGHSAU each school year:

May 1

An email blast will be sent to the superintendent, principal, and athletic director of each school indicating the process and protocol to be used in filing for IGHSAU membership. Schools will be encouraged to pay high school and junior high membership dues at the same time. An electronic form/invoice will be attached.

May 1

A letter and membership form/invoice will be mailed to the superintendent of every school for that given school year. Schools will be encouraged to pay high school and junior high membership dues at the same time. The purpose of membership and the advantages of such will be included in the letter.

June 1

A reminder will be sent electronically to the superintendent, principal, and athletic director of all schools who have failed to file the required membership dues. A form/invoice will be attached to the e-mail.

July 1

Any school that has failed to file membership dues is now delinquent. A \$25.00 penalty will be assessed; total membership dues are now \$75.00. The superintendent will be notified of such via e-mail. Within the e-mail a reminder will be issued that if dues are not received by the first competition date, the team(s) will be ineligible to participate in regular season competitions until the state office has received such. A form/invoice will be attached to the e-mail.

August 1

Another reminder will be issued the superintendent via telephone call from IGHSAU management. An additional \$25.00 penalty fee will be assessed; total membership dues are now \$100.00. A reminder will be given that if membership dues are not received by the first competition date, the team(s) will be ineligible to participate in regular season competitions until the state office has received such. A form/invoice will be provided. This same procedure will be followed for junior high school membership.

Open Enrollment - Bullying & Harassment

281.36.15(4) Open enrollment transfer rule. A student in grades 9 through 12 whose transfer of schools had occurred due to a request for open enrollment by the student's parent or guardian is ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics, during the first 90 school days of transfer except that a student may participate immediately if the student is entering grade 9 for the first time and did not participate in an interscholastic athletic competition for another school during the summer immediately following eighth grade. The period of ineligibility applies only to varsity level contests and competitions. ("Varsity" means the highest level of competition offered by one school or school district against the highest level of competition offered by an opposing school or school district.) The student will become eligible at 4:00 PM on the 90th day. This period of ineligibility does not apply if the student:

"j. if the district of residence determines that the pupil was previously subject to a founded incident of harassment or bullying as defined in section 280.28 while attending school in the district of residence."

Non-public school students are not provided relief under this exception since the law only pertains to students who open enroll from the resident public school to another public school district.

IGHSAU management requests that the Board of Directors grant the Executive Director of the IGHSAU the authority to use discretion to recommend that students entering or leaving a private school have immediate eligibility under 36.15(3) a. 9 of the General Transfer Rule in cases when there is a founded case of bullying and harassment.

Situations involving the General Transfer Rule when there is a case of founded bullying and harassment may be handled between the Executive Director and Board via email to streamline the process. All other cases under this exception would continue to be heard by the Board as appeals.

Practice Policy

The Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union Board of Directors approved a policy change at its November 14, 2015, meeting to allow boys to participate in a girls' practice in all sanctioned sports. This is totally subject to each local school district approval. Each school district can establish their own procedure and protocol of whether to allow or not allow. This policy change is effective at all 7-12 grade levels.

The initial concern centered around the sports of cross country, swimming and diving, bowling, track and field, tennis, and golf where practice facilities were shared, and many times the school had the same coach for both boys and girls. The other four sports (volleyball, basketball, softball and soccer) were of greater concern with regard to participation and risk of injury.

The general feeling was that this should be decided locally. Each district will need to determine whether they choose to allow boys to be involved in the girls' practice and if any limitations will be included. Topics of eligibility, good conduct, academic checks, etc. will need to be addressed. The IGHSAU is requiring a physical be on file with the local school in order to participate.

It is important to recognize that the boys will not be considered as a part of the team roster. They may only be utilized in a practice setting, never allowed to formally compete or scrimmage against any opposing team or player.

Scrimmages

Scrimmages between member schools shall be permitted between the date of first legal practice and the final day of State Tournament play. Teams may travel up to and including 100 miles from the home high school base for scrimmages, providing such is effected without loss of school time. On a non-school day, a team may exceed this 100 mile limit with local school administration approval. Iowa teams may scrimmage a high school team from another contiguous state (plus Kansas), provided that the school is a member institution of that state's activity association and that it falls within the 100-mile scrimmage radius.

If a school is scrimmaging at an out-of-state school, the scrimmage rules of that state shall apply. Iowa scrimmage rules will apply for scrimmages held in Iowa. A scrimmage shall be defined as that which takes place between member schools at one site on one calendar day, as well as established definition relating to the mandatory absence of scorekeeping and spectator charge. In order for a player to be charged with a scrimmage, she must have participated in the scrimmage.

Transgender Statement

Iowa Code Section 216.9 clearly delineates unfair practices and discriminatory acts in education by stating in relevant part:

1. It is an unfair or discriminatory practice for any educational institution to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability in any program or Such discrimination practices shall include but not be limited to the following practices:
 - a. Exclusion of a person or persons from participation in, denial of the benefits of, or subjection to discrimination in any academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other program or activity **except athletic programs;**
 - b. Denial of comparable opportunity in intramural and interscholastic programs;
 - c. Discrimination among persons in employment and the conditions of employment;
 - d. On the basis of sex, the application of any rule concerning the actual or potential parental, family, or marital status of a person, or the exclusion of any person from any program or activity or employment because of pregnancy or related conditions dependent upon the physician's diagnosis and
2. For the purpose of this section, "educational institution" includes any preschool, elementary, or secondary schools, community college, area education agency, or postsecondary college or university and their governing boards. This section does not prohibit an educational institution from maintaining separate toilet facilities, locker rooms, or living facilities for the different sexes so long as comparable facilities are Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting any bona fide religious institution from imposing qualifications based on religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity when such qualifications are related to a bona fide religious purpose or any institution from admitting students of only one sex.

Iowa Code Section 216.2 clearly defines "gender identity" as "gender-related identity of a person, regardless of a person's assigned sex at birth."

Being fully aware of the unfair and discriminatory practices and definition of "gender identity," the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union presents suggestions for abiding by the Code of Iowa in regards to transgender student-athletes.

Suggestions for Inclusion and Respectful Treatment of Transgender Student-Athletes

Gender Identity

The transgender student at an Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union member school who identifies as a female despite having been born with male genitals shall be allowed to fully compete as a female as long as she consistently identifies as a female at school, home and socially – subject to item "a."

Communications and Publications: Pronouns and Name Changes

The preference for the use of feminine or gender-neutral pronouns should be the choice of the student-athlete. Coaches, administrators and student-athletes should abide by a transgender student-athlete's name and pronoun preferences, demonstrating respect for the individual and validating the transgender student-athlete's gender identity and expression.

Access to Locker Rooms and Bathrooms

Every student-athlete should have access to a locker room, bathroom and shower facilities in a safe, comfortable and convenient environment.

When the transgender student-athlete uses a separate locker room space, it is recommended to not use the common locker room as a team meeting space or the only location that important team information is shared. Coaches and team members are strongly encouraged to identify other spaces to conduct team meetings.

When member schools are playing in facilities other than at their home school, the school representatives of the student-athlete should identify safe spaces for transgender student-athletes to have their needs met with regard to changing clothes, restroom accommodations and meeting spaces.

Overnight Accommodations

If a member school requires overnight accommodations, all student-athletes should be assigned rooming accommodations based upon a safe, comfortable and convenient environment.

Apparel and Dress Codes

All team members should have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport. Participants are expected to be in compliance with the uniform regulations of the National Federation of High School Associations.


In cases where the coaches of member schools set dress codes or expectations, coaches are recommended to set a gender-neutral dress code that is comfortable for all members of the team.


Confidentiality

The privacy of transgender student-athletes is a priority for member schools and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. All medical information must be kept confidential.

Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union's Authority

The IGHSAU will not make decisions or offer input into specific situations occurring at local school districts. All authority and obligation to abide by and implement Iowa Code Chapter 216 with respect to transgender student-athletes will remain with the local school district. Eligibility of a transgender student-athlete will be presumed. However, if there arises at the local level a documented eligibility controversy, the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union shall have the authority under the applicable Iowa Administrative Code to determine eligibility.

 2019-20 Constitution

 2019-20 By-Laws

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The IGHSAU thanks its official partners for their continued support of the Iowa Girl. Their investments allow the IGHSAU to provide the very best championship experience for student-athletes across the state while continuing the vision and mission established by longtime Executive Director E. Wayne Cooley.

OUR SPONSORS





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OUR MISSION

To govern fair, safe and sportsmanlike interscholastic competition in a manner which emphasizes the educational enhancement of all participants.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN