

.02 Athletic Eligibility

A. Scholarship

1. Students are ineligible if:
 - a. They have less than a 2.0 grade point average with no more than one failing, incomplete, or medical grade in the marking period prior to the start of the season of participation. This provision does not apply to incoming 9th grade students for fall eligibility.
 - i. First, second, third, and fourth marking period will be used for determining scholastic eligibility for winter, spring, and fall.
 - ii. The ending dates for marking periods shall be designated on the BCPS approved school calendar.
 - b. They re-enter school after withdrawing and their work or conduct at the time of withdrawal was such that they would not have been eligible in the marking period.
 - c. They did not attend school the marking period prior to the intended participation.
 - d. They are failing a class at the time of withdrawal in addition to another failure. The students shall be penalized for the withdrawal failure for one marking period only. Any first semester course or full year course dropped prior to November 15 will not be counted in determining eligibility. The date for dropping a second semester course is prior to April 15.
2. A multi-hour course is counted as multiple courses when determining whether a student has maintained a 2.0 average, but is counted as one course when determining the number of failed classes.
3. A student who is eligible during a marking period who does not maintain a 2.0 average with no more than one failing grade at the close of that marking period becomes ineligible to play on **the day report cards are distributed**.
4. A student who is ineligible in a marking period can become eligible to play no earlier than **day report cards are distributed**. However, this student can become eligible to practice on the day designated as the end of that marking period in which the ineligibility occurred.
 - a. The return of an ineligible player is at the discretion of the athletic director and principal.

B. Enrollment in the School

1. Any student entering a Baltimore County high school after September 30 and before November 15 shall be ineligible to represent the school in inter-high school athletic competition during the first semester unless such late entrance shall be by transfer from a school which the student has attended regularly during the current school year. Cases involving students who enter after November 15 will be decided by the Principal and Coordinator of the Office of Athletics.
2. If a student transfers during a sport season and the transfer is not the result of a parental change of address or pursuant to law, the student is not eligible to participate in the same sport in which

he/she participated at the previous school for the remainder of that sport season. (Note: Participation in a sport begins with the first day of team try-outs.)

3. Any student who attends a school outside the district in which a student resides without the special permission of the Superintendent's office of the Baltimore County Public Schools is ineligible.
4. The use of undue influence by anyone to cause a student to transfer from one school to another for an athletic purpose shall render the student ineligible for a period of one year from the official date of transfer.
5. A student who qualifies for a waiver of the four year full-time enrollment may participate in extracurricular activities and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a full-time student of the school, providing the student is currently enrolled.

C. Varsity - Junior Varsity Designations

1. Grade 9 students may play on a varsity team if the parents, principal, and coach unanimously agree that the student is physically and mentally mature enough for varsity competition.
2. Eleventh and Twelfth grade students cannot participate on a junior varsity team.
3. Ninth and tenth grade athletes are eligible for participation in either JV or varsity games, with the athletic director's approval, as long as it does not exceed the maximum number of games per week.

D. Intramural Participation

1. A varsity or junior varsity team member of the previous year may not participate in any intramurals or school-sponsored athletic program in the same sport which may be conducted prior to the starting date of that sport's season.
2. Once a student has participated in a varsity or junior varsity game in a particular sport, the student may not thereafter participate on a team in an organized intramural program in the same sport and in the same season unless the student has been dropped from the squad for the remainder of the season.

E. Citizenship

1. The principal and athletic director should study the circumstances surrounding the tardiness or absence, partial or whole, of a team member on the date when the team is scheduled to play and determine if said student shall be allowed to play on that date.
2. A principal and athletic director should exclude any contestant who, because of bad habits or improper conduct, would not represent the school in a becoming manner, and also exclude any contestant who has suffered serious illness or injury until that contestant is pronounced physically fit by the school athletic trainer or their primary care physician.
3. When a student is willfully non-proficient in class work or is guilty of poor citizenship, the student is ineligible.

4. A player or coach who is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct (which includes use of tobacco or tobacco-like products; see Board Policy, page 30) or fighting will not be allowed to participate in the next game. A substitute who leaves the team box and enters the playing area during a fight will be ejected.
 - a. An ejection or disqualification prevents a player or coach from attending the next regularly scheduled contest site (this includes bus, locker room, sidelines, bench, stands, or anywhere on the contest site).
 - b. When the ejection or disqualification takes place during the last game of the season, the penalty will be served at the start of the next season in that sport. If the penalty cannot be served because of resignation or graduation the school's administration must take appropriate action and provide written documentation of such to the Office of Athletics.
5. Any player or coach who physically assaults an official, coach, player or spectator shall be immediately dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season.
6. Once a player or coach has been disqualified, appeals from a coach, player, official, or other party will not be honored.
7. Should a student-athlete or coach be disqualified for a second time in the same sport or any other sport during the school year, the penalty shall be doubled. Any coach disqualified for a second time during a school year or any coach who has three or more players disqualified during a school year is required to appear before the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics.
8. A third disqualification of a student-athlete or coach in the same sport or any other sport during the school year shall result in immediate dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season. The offending student-athlete or coach shall be prohibited from any further participation in the interscholastic program for the remainder of the school year. Interscholastic participation by such individuals in subsequent school years may be jeopardized and will be judged on a case by case basis.
9. Failure of the school to enforce these policies for any reason shall prohibit that school from participating in any county, region, or state post-season play.
10. A student-athlete must complete the season in good standing in order to qualify for any post season awards.

F. **Health and Safety**

1. Each student is required to have accident insurance coverage (school insurance, Blue Cross, Blue Shield, or any commercial accident policy) before being permitted to practice for inter-school competition.
2. A student who has not filed all required forms is ineligible. These forms shall be provided by the school and signed by the parent or legal guardian.
3. A student must practice for a minimum of 10 calendar days prior to participation in a scrimmage or contest. (Golf is the exception).

G. Participation on One Team Per Season

A student is permitted to participate in only one interscholastic sport during each season. However, a student who is waived or resigns from a team prior to the first game may try out for another team in the same season. The Principal and Athletic Director shall approve such a change.

H. Eligibility Report Forms

The Athletic Director must submit a complete, accurate, and legible **eligibility report form** to the Office of Athletics one week prior to the published MPSSAA first play date of each season. **IF THE REPORT IS NOT TURNED IN BY THE DUE DATE, THAT TEAM MAY NOT PRACTICE OR COMPETE UNTIL THE REPORT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL AND SUBMITTED TO THE OFFICE OF ATHLETICS.**

I. Penalties

1. The use of any ineligible player in any interscholastic game, meet, or match, whether deliberate or inadvertent, shall make the forfeiture of the game, meet or match automatic and mandatory.
2. A student is considered a member of a high school squad at the date of the first officially scheduled contest (including scrimmages).
3. A student shall become ineligible at the time the violation was committed, whereupon the student shall no longer be a member of the school squad. All games in which the student participated after becoming ineligible will be forfeited. Any one or a combination of the following penalties will be imposed against the ineligible student:
 - a. Declare the student to be ineligible for the next 60 school days following the latest violation. These 60 school days may carry over into the next school year if such violation occurred during the second semester.
 - b. Declare the student ineligible to compete in the sport in which the violation occurred during the subsequent season.
 - c. Declare the student ineligible for any sport for an appropriate period of time.
4. If one school has information that an eligibility rule is being violated, a statement of facts pertinent to the violation shall be submitted in writing immediately upon discovery to the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics, who shall render an interpretation and notify all schools within three days. If one or more schools do not accept this interpretation, the case must then be heard by the MPSSAA Appeal Committee for a final decision.
5. After a decision has been made by the MPSSAA Appeal Committee, a written statement will be sent to all parties regarding the outcome with an explanation of all circumstances leading to the decision.

.03 Board of Education Policy Regarding Use of Tobacco Products

POLICY 2372

ADMINISTRATION: Administrative Operations

Tobacco-Free and Smoke-Free School Environment

I. Policy Statement

A. The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) is committed to providing a tobacco-free and smoke-free school/work environment for its students, employees, and the general public. The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety, and environmental hazard.

B. The Board further recognizes its obligation to promote healthy learning and work environments.

Legal References: Annotated Code of Maryland, Health General Article §§24-501 to 24-511,
Clean Indoor Air Act
COMAR 13A.02.04, Tobacco-Free School Environment
COMAR13A.08.01.08, Substance Use or Distribution

RULE 2372

I. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 2372 by establishing procedures regarding the tobacco-free and smoke-free school environment policy.

II. Definitions

A. Board Property – Any Board-owned, controlled, or leased property or vehicle regardless of whether students are present, or bus stops.

B. Electronic Cigarettes – Any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia, and/or other substance, and the use of inhalation of which simulates smoking. The term shall include any such devices, whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under any other product name or description.

C. School Buildings – Any Board-owned or leased buildings, including but not limited to schools, central offices, warehouses, garages, or other buildings belonging to the school system regardless of whether or not students are present.

D. School-sponsored Activity – An activity that is sponsored, approved, conducted, planned, and/or supervised by school personnel regardless of whether the activity takes place on or off school property or occurs during regular instructional hours.

E. Tobacco – Any product derived from the tobacco plant that is smoked, chewed, sniffed, or otherwise consumed in any manner, except in nicotine replacement therapy.

III. Guidelines

In accordance with Board Policy 2372, the Board prohibits the sale or use of tobacco products and tobacco-related devices, imitation tobacco products, lighters, and electronic cigarettes by any person on Board property or while participating in or attending a school-sponsored event.

IV. Procedures

A. During new hire orientation, the Department of Human Resources shall provide to each new employee a copy of the Board's tobacco-free and smoke-free school environment policy and this implementing rule.

B. Annually, the Office of School Safety shall provide notice of Board Policy and Superintendent's Rule 2372 to all employees and to parents and students.

C. The Office of Health Services will:

1. Supply signs to be posted on all school buildings reminding all staff, visitors, and students of the tobacco-free environment.
2. Make smoking cessation information available for all employees through the employee wellness program.

D. The Department of Physical Facilities will advise groups requesting the use of a school facility of the Board's tobacco-free school environment policy through the rules and procedures on the Application for Use of School Facilities. Groups that lease school buildings or offices will be informed that their use of facilities agreement will be subject to cancellation and/or non-renewal if their invitees do not comply with Board Policy 2372.

V. Compliance

A. All employees, students, and visitors shall comply with Board Policy 2372 and this Rule.

B. School principals and supervisors are responsible for enforcing Policy 2372 and ensuring that school personnel, students, and visitors comply with its requirements.

VI. Violations

A. Employees found to have violated Board Policy 2372 shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action:

1. First violation – be given a verbal warning and counseling involving a review of policy by the supervisor.
2. Second violation – meet with the supervisor who will review the tobacco-free environment policy and who may recommend further remedial action by referring the employee to the Employee Assistance Program for counseling and for referral to tobacco use cessation programs.
3. Third violation – be given a letter of reprimand.
4. Fourth violation – will result in further disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

B. Students found to have violated Board Policy 2372 shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Board Policy 5550, Disruptive Behavior and Board Policy 5530, Student Use and Possession of Tobacco.

C. Visitors found to have violated Policy 2372 shall be subject to the following:

1. First violation – given a verbal warning and review of policy.
2. Continued or second violation – asked to leave premises.
3. Continued or third violation – issued a no trespass letter.

Legal References: Annotated Code of Maryland, Health General Article §§24-501 to 24-511,
Clean Indoor Air Act
COMAR 13A.02.04, Tobacco-Free School Environment
COMAR13A.08.01.08, Substance Use of Distribution

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1300, Use of School Facilities
Board of Education Policy 3128, Board-Owned Vehicles
Board of Education Policy 4100, Employee Conduct and Responsibilities
Board of Education Policy 5530, Student Use and Possession of Tobacco
Board of Education Policy 5550, Disruptive Behavior

.04 Practice Sessions

All practice sessions must be under the supervision of a faculty member or officially assigned coach who, in the judgment of the principal and athletic director, is competent to coach the team. All interscholastic practice sessions shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

A. Location of Practices

1. No team may practice except under the supervision of a faculty member or officially assigned coach who, in the judgment of the Principal and Athletic Director is competent to coach the team.
2. **Practice** shall take place at the **local high school only**. Any circumstances contrary to this rule shall be approved by the Principal with the advice of the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics.

B. Time of Practices

1. The maximum time for physical activity during practice sessions is two hours. On school days, where physical facilities restrict practice, the sessions must begin immediately at the end of the school day and two practice sessions may be run consecutively.
2. Teams may not practice or play games on days when school is dismissed early because of inclement weather (snow, ice, and flooding).

C. Holiday Practices

When winter and spring holiday practices or scrimmages are scheduled, they must adhere to the following conditions:

1. No vacation practice shall be scheduled on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, or Sundays.
2. Each will be for a maximum of two hours duration.
3. Practices during vacation periods shall be voluntary for teams, coaches, or individual members.

.05 Scrimmages

Any practice session with or against outside opponents, at home or away, shall be considered a scrimmage and must meet the following requirements:

1. A minimum of 10 calendar days must precede the first scrimmage. In fall sports where two practices per day are conducted, especially football, a scrimmage may be held during the tenth practice.
2. Scrimmages must be held during the regular practice time.
3. No publicity will be issued.
4. No scores will be kept.
5. No class time will be lost. However, if bus transportation is not available at the normal dismissal time, students may be excused from class with the permission of the principal.
6. No scrimmage will be held during a week when two contests are scheduled for basketball, field hockey, soccer, lacrosse, wrestling, and volleyball, or one game for football.
7. The number of scrimmages may not exceed the allowable number of contests per week. In addition, football may have one joint practice between the first scrimmage date and the first play date.

.06 Transportation Regulations

Transportation arrangements shall be regulated by the Athletic Director. Consideration shall be given to the scheduling of buses from the Baltimore County Department of Transportation in order to reduce transportation costs. All teams shall abide by the following regulations when traveling:

1. All teams must travel in bonded carriers.
2. The principal, coach, or an authorized representative must accompany the team to all away contests.
3. All team members must travel as a group to and from all athletic contests. If approved by the local school principal in advance, a team member may be released to the custody of a parent at the conclusion of an away contest. Approval must be requested in written form prior to the specified event and signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. The principal or principal's designee shall sign all authorized requests. Athletic Directors and coaches shall be informed of all approved requests. Any other exceptions to this mode of travel must be approved, in advance, by the local school principal. The local school principal may outline more stringent travel policies for team members. The additional travel requirements must be included with the athletic parent permission materials.
4. Principals must request authorization from the Executive Director or Coordinator of Athletics to deal with the unusual problems of participant transportation to practice and contests.
5. Only bonafide members of a squad may be excused from classes to travel on the team bus. Cheerleaders may also be excused from class to accompany teams on the regular bus to certain contests away from the home school in accordance with the following policy:
 - a. The cheerleader coach and the team coach should decide whether space on the bus is available. Additional buses should not be provided for the transportation of cheerleaders.
 - b. The cheerleader coach or a faculty representative must accompany the cheerleaders to and from the contest and be responsible for them during their stay at the away school. If the faculty representative is to be the coach of the athletic team, this should be mutually agreed upon in advance and the coach should be aware of the additional responsibilities being assumed.
 - c. Cheerleaders may be required to travel on the team bus if there is sufficient room or to travel on a common carrier if such has been obtained to transport spectators.
6. Should a particular team be involved in a county, district, regional, or state championship game, the corresponding varsity or junior varsity team members in that sport may be excused from classes and travel on the team bus to attend the contest.
7. Approval of the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics is required for scheduling contest with schools which are more than 50 miles distant.
8. When determining travel time, forty-five minutes should be allowed for dressing and warming up in addition to traveling time for all sports except football. Football requires one hour for dressing and warm-up.

9. The maximum number of players on a team refers to the maximum number of players who can dress and/or travel on a game day.

.07 Game Scheduling and Play-Offs

A. Scheduling

1. Games must be played on dates scheduled unless approval for changes is granted by the Office of Athletics.
2. Any proposed change or addition in a county interscholastic athletic schedule must be submitted to the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics and, if approved, forwarded to the principal of each school named in the change for approval prior to acceptance of the official schedule.
3. The regular spring schedule must be completed by the start of the MPSSAA spring tournaments.
4. With the agreement of participating school principals, athletic directors, and coaches, games, contests, matches, or meets may be scheduled during the spring vacation period or any legal holiday when schools are closed. No games, contests, matches, or meets may be scheduled on December 24, December 25, December 31, January 1, Good Friday, Sundays, or any holiday or religious observance that is published as a non-play day in the countywide athletic schedules.
5. **Postponed games, meets, or matches shall be played in the sequence designated by the schedule.**

B. Location

1. Games or scrimmages shall be played at participating schools or at a site approved by the Office of Athletics and principals of competing schools.
2. Baltimore County championship games may be played at sites other than a Baltimore County school. These sites must be approved by the Coordinator of the Office of Athletics.

C. Tournament

1. Basketball teams may elect to play a maximum of three games in one designated optional tournament and play nineteen regular season games.
2. Wrestling teams may participate in one designated optional tournament.
3. Baseball and softball teams may elect to play a maximum of three games as part of a designated optional tournament and play 17 regular season games. The total number of games may not exceed 18 plus 2.
4. Lacrosse teams may elect to play a maximum of two games as part of a holiday tournament.
5. Designated optional tournaments may be held in a Baltimore County Public School with the approval of the principal.

D. Championships

1. All play-off games deciding divisional or league championships shall be played as follows:
 - a. On neutral or participating school site.
 - b. The supervision for all such games will be the dual responsibility of the administrators of the schools involved.

.08 Game Protest

Protests will be accepted concerning the management of a game or an official's interpretation of a rule. An official's judgment call is not subject to protest. Protests can be filed in the following manner:

1. Protests concerning management and officiating of games must be submitted, in writing, to the Office of Athletics and the schools involved not later than three school days after the date of the contest. Protests shall be signed by both the principal and the coach of the school making the protest.
2. No school may refuse to continue a contest because of a protest and must finish the contest as scheduled. Failure to continue automatically forfeits the game.
3. A decision concerning the protest will be rendered after the consultation with the involved officials and coaches. Notification will be sent to the schools when a decision is rendered.
4. National Federation rules shall prevail when determining the acceptance of a protest.