

## **Policy Code: 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations**

The board recognizes the value of interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities in promoting leadership and team skills, practicing democratic principles, and encouraging the lifelong learning process. Students are encouraged to participate in opportunities available at the school, including interscholastic athletics and student organizations. All activities are open to all students attending that school unless a restriction is justified and has been approved by the principal. The principal shall ensure that students and parents are notified of the various opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities and shall establish rules, as necessary, to govern such activities.

### **A. Requirements for Participation in Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in extracurricular activities, including student organizations and interscholastic athletics, is a privilege, not a right, and may be reserved for students in good academic standing who meet behavior standards established by the board, the superintendent, or the school. Before participating in an extracurricular activity, a student must be properly enrolled in the New Hanover County Schools as a full-time student. In order for students to be properly enrolled in the school system, they must be assigned to a school. The student support services department may make exceptions to the requirement of being a full-time student in order to participate in an extracurricular activity as long as the student is counted in the school system's average daily membership.

In order to be academically eligible for participation in extracurricular activities in the next semester, students must have passed three out of four subjects on the block schedule (or five subjects on the traditional schedule) in the previous semester with a 2.0 grade point average or a 70% or better. There are two exceptions to this rule: (1) students, who fail to achieve at least a 2.0 grade point average or a 70% in the spring semester but whose average of that year's fall and spring semesters is a 2.0 grade point average or 70% or better, may participate in the next fall semester so long as they passed enough courses in the spring and (2) students, who attend summer school and achieve a "C" in the subject or subjects failed, will be deemed eligible for participation the next semester if those subjects passed in summer school bring the overall grade point average to a 2.0 or 70% or better.

Participation in extracurricular activities also may be restricted if a student (1) is not performing at grade level as provided in policy 3400, Evaluation of Student Progress; (2) has exceeded the number of absences allowed by policy 4400, Attendance; (3) has violated the student conduct standards found in the 4300 series of policies; (4) has violated school rules for conduct; or (5) has violated the standards set forth in the Code of Ethics for Athletes and Student Representatives, which must be signed by the student and student's parent or guardian prior to the student's participation in extracurricular activities. All fines and fees owed by the student to the school system or school must be paid before a student may participate in extracurricular activities. School administrators choosing to exercise the authority to restrict participation shall provide this policy and any additional rules developed by the superintendent or the principal to all parents, guardians, and students.

### **B. Additional Rules for Specific Activities**

#### **1. Interscholastic Athletics**

In addition to meeting the general requirements listed above, to be eligible for interscholastic athletics participation, students must have the written permission of their parent or guardian and must meet all applicable eligibility standards of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association and/or the North Carolina Department of Public

Instruction and any other locally established participation requirements.

To participate in an interscholastic athletic contest, a student athlete must be in attendance on the day of the contest if school is in session.

A student may not participate in the same sport during the same sports season for two different schools within the school system. A student is deemed to have participated for this purpose if the student dresses for a game or contest and sits or stands with the team during the game or scrimmage.

Students in the sixth grade are eligible to participate in all interscholastic athletics except football.

A student participating in middle school athletics can participate on the team consistent with their gender identity. Athletic participation consistent with a student's gender identity in middle school does not guarantee high school interscholastic athletic participation based on the student's gender identity.

A student participating in high school interscholastic athletics may participate only on the team consistent with the gender on the student's birth certificate unless otherwise permitted under North Carolina High School Athletic Association rules and regulations.

## 2. School Clubs and Organizations

Student clubs and organizations will be recognized as authorized school clubs and organizations if they: (1) are approved by the principal; (2) are sponsored by school personnel and composed completely of current student body members; (3) hold the majority of their meetings at school; (4) have an approved plan for the selection of members; (5) establish aims which are educational or of school or community interest; and (6) abide by all rules set by the principal, superintendent, or board. The principal shall maintain a file on each school club or organization containing information such as the purpose of the club or organization, the name of its staff adviser, its plan for selection of members, and its approved activities. The file should be updated annually with current information.

School clubs and organizations may collect fees from their members in accordance with policy 4600, Student Fees. All funds collected through a school club or organization shall be delivered promptly to the school treasurer for deposit and managed through the school's accounting system.

School clubs and organizations may not use the school name or participate in activities outside the normal realm of the school community unless prior permission has been granted by the principal or the superintendent or designee.

## 3. Student-Initiated, Noncurriculum-Related Student Groups at the Secondary Level

Student-initiated, noncurriculum-related, secondary school student groups will be permitted to conduct voluntary meetings on school grounds during noninstructional time, regardless of the size of the group or the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at the meetings, provided that the meetings do not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the educational activities of the school. The principal shall establish viewpoint neutral rules governing such meetings, including restrictions on when and where meetings may occur.

School employees may not promote, lead, or participate in student-initiated meetings but may be present at meetings to maintain order and discipline, to protect the well-being of the students and faculty, and to assure that attendance of students at the meetings is voluntary. School employees may not influence the form or content of any prayer or other religious activity or require any person to participate in prayer or other religious activity. In addition, non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the activities of the groups.

No public funds will be expended on behalf of the student-initiated, noncurriculum-related student groups except for the incidental cost of providing space for the group meetings.

Student-initiated, noncurriculum-related groups will have the same access to communication channels for publicizing their meetings as is allowed to all other noncurriculum-related student groups. However, school officials may indicate in such communications that the meetings are not sponsored by the school. Any distribution or display of non-school-sponsored materials must be in accordance with the requirements of policy 5210, Distribution and Display of Non-School Material.

For purposes of this section, a noncurriculum-related student group is one that is not directly related to the curriculum. A student group will be considered curriculum-related only if (1) the group's subject matter is taught in a regularly offered course or relates to the curriculum as a whole; (2) participation in the group is required as part of a course; or (3) participation in the group results in course credit.

## **C. Special Circumstances**

### **1. Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities must be accorded the legal rights required by federal and state law.

### **2. Military Children**

School administrators shall facilitate the inclusion and participation in extracurricular activities of military children transferring into the school, to the extent they are otherwise qualified, by:

- a. providing information about extracurricular activities to incoming military children; and
- b. waiving application deadlines.

## **D. Appeals Process**

The grievance procedure provided in policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, may be utilized by parents or students who believe that a student has been aggrieved by a decision made pursuant to this policy.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, [42 U.S.C. 12132](#), [28 C.F.R. pt. 35](#); Equal Access Act, [20 U.S.C. 4071-4074](#); Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, [20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.](#), [34 C.F.R. pt. 300](#); Rehabilitation Act of 1973, [29 U.S.C. 705\(20\)](#), [794](#), [34 C.F.R. pt. 104](#); [G.S. 115C art. 9, 115C-47\(4\)](#), [-390.2](#), [-407.5](#); [16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0204](#); State Board of Education Policy [ATHL-001](#); *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy [EXCP-000](#); N.C. High School Athletic Association Handbook, available at <https://www.nchsaa.org/students->

[and-parents/rules-and-regulations](#); Middle/Junior High School Athletic Manual (NCDPI), available at <https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/nchealthyschools/athletics>

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 1310/4002), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Evaluation of Student Progress (policy 3400), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Domicile or Residence Requirements (policy 4120), Homeless Students (policy 4125), School Assignment (policy 4150), North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program (policy 4250/5075/7316), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Attendance (policy 4400), Community Use of Facilities (policy 5030), Distribution and Display of Non-School Material (policy 5210)

Adopted: June 8, 2021

Revised: November 1, 2022

### **New Hanover County Public Schools**

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