



Frequently Asked Question (FAQ's) for Nonpublic (NP) – Home school (HS)

1. Can nonpublic or home school students participate in MHS member school extra-curricular activities? **Yes, if they meet the requirements of 20-5-109 – those requirements are listed at the end of this document.**
2. Does that include HS students having to register with the County Superintendent? **Yes, 20-5-209, #5**
3. Have any additional requirements been added for registration? – **Yes, in 2025-26 school year the following language was add by the Montana Legislature - For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHS sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.**
4. Does that include providing an organized course of study that includes instruction in the subjects required of public schools and provide the minimum aggregate hour of pupil instruction? **Yes, 20-5-109, #3 and # 4 – pursuant to 20-7-111 Also, see question #9.**
5. Are NP and HS participants families required to live in the attendance area of the school? **Yes, the student's entire family must live in your school's attendance area – the nonpublic and/or home school student's entire family must live in the attendance area of the school they participate at. Administrators must verify that the entire family lives in their attendance area. Exception: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school and the homeschool or nonpublic student changes to another school in the district, the MHS Transfer Rule applies.**
6. Can NP or HS students transfer to a different school in a different attendance area? **No, they are only eligible at the school in their family's attendance area. The entire family could move to a different attendance area and the students are then eligible as NP or HS students are only eligible in the district in which they reside. Also, NP**

or HS students are allowed to transfer in school districts with multiple schools as mentioned in #5 above.

7. Does the transfer rule apply when transferring from a member school to homeschool for the first time withing the same school attendance area? **Yes, new in 2026-27 - Any student — including eighth graders who are permitted to participate in high school activities — who transfers from one member school, homeschool, or non-member school to another member, homeschool, or non-public school becomes ineligible for varsity competition. The period of ineligibility is equal to half the number of P.I. days in the current school year. This period begins on the student's first day of enrollment and attendance at the new school. This rule upholds the academic integrity of MHSA eligibility standards by addressing the growing number of students transferring from member schools to homeschooling after failing courses in an effort to regain eligibility.**
8. Are incoming ninth grade NP or HS students eligible at any school they start at like regularly enrolled students? **No, NP or HS students are only eligible at the school in their family's attendance area (see Exception in Question #5).**
9. How is academic eligibility established for NP? **The students' academic eligibility must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school.**
10. How is academic eligibility established for HS? **Academic eligibility must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal.**
11. What academic achievement must NP and HS participants meet to be academically eligible? **A home school and/or nonpublic school student must demonstrate they have passed four half credit classes in the previous semester (90 school day period). This is meeting the same standard as regularly enrolled students.**
12. Are the same grading periods used for NP and HS participants? **Yes:**
 - **Grading Period – one semester (one half of a school year – approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days).**
 - **A participant must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty hours of prepared class or work or its equivalent in the last previous semester in which he/she is enrolled.**

13. Can NP and HS participants who are academically ineligible participate in any Association contest? **No, just like regularly enrolled students they cannot participate in an Association Contest (varsity or sub varsity) for a period of one semester. They can practice if the school allows but they cannot suit up or participate in any games at any level of competition.**
14. Do NP and HS participants have to demonstrate they are academically on schedule to graduate? **Yes, the nonpublic school administrator or home school educator must demonstrate the student is on course to graduate complying with the MHSA semester and age rules.**
15. Is there an age rule for NP and HS participants? **Yes - A student who turns 19 after midnight August 31st is age eligible. A student who has become 19 on or before midnight, August 31 of a given year is ineligible.**
16. Is there a semester rule for NP and HS participants? **Yes - Students are eligible for eight consecutive semesters and the semesters start to accrue after beginning coursework for the ninth grade. The principal will verify when the student began high school coursework which will begin his/her semester accrual. (Eight consecutive semesters once they start ninth grade coursework and semester accrue whether they are attending school or not).**
17. How does dual participation work for NP and HS participants? **A homeschool or nonpublic school student who participates at a MHSA member school is not eligible to concurrently participate in the same sport/activity that he/she participates in at the member school in any other league (nonpublic or home school). This provision protects member schools and nonpublic and home school leagues regarding dual participation.**
18. Can a NP or HS student participate in basketball at the member school they are eligible and at the same time participate in basketball in the home school or private league? **No, they cannot participate concurrently in the same sport.**
19. Can a NP or HS student participate in basketball at the member school they are eligible and then participate in basketball for the home school or private league at a different time than MHSA basketball? **Yes, as long as it is not concurrent.**

20. Can a NP or HS student participate in volleyball at the member school they are eligible and then participate in another sport besides volleyball in a home school or nonpublic league at the same time. **Yes, as long as it is not the same sport concurrently.**

21. if a NP or HS student graduates (receives enough credits to complete the high school coursework) are they eligible? ***Any student who meets any of the following criteria shall be ineligible to participate in any Association Activity:***

- a) ***The student is a graduate of a regular four-year high school.***
- b) ***The student is a graduate of a secondary school which has the same requirements for graduation as a regular four-year high school.***
- c) ***The student has earned enough credits to entitle him/her to be graduated from the high school and has completed eight semesters of high school.***
- d) ***The student has received a high school equivalency diploma (GED or HiSET)***

Interpretations

- a) ***A student who graduates the first semester is ineligible the second semester.***
- b) ***A student who has earned enough credits to graduate the first semester but remains enrolled and graduates on the regular date remains eligible to participate.***
- c) ***Senior students who are currently eligible in their eighth semester (4th spring) will continue to be eligible for all interscholastic activities even though graduation exercises precede the completion of interscholastic activities for that specific year. If a student has earned a GED or HiSET he/she is considered a high school graduate and is not eligible to compete in any MHSAA sanctioned activity.***

21. Are NP and HS participants required to have a physical exam before competing in MHSAA sanctioned sports? **Yes, Physical exams are required for students participating in MHSAA sanctioned sports. The exam is valid for one school year and the MHSAA form must be used. This examination must be certified by a licensed medical professional acting within the scope and limitations of his/ her practice. Physicals performed before May 1st are not valid for the next school year.**

22. Are NP and HS participants required to complete concussion education each year? **Yes, parents and participants must complete the forms provided by the school before their first practice.**

23. Are NP and HS participants required to pay any participation, white fees, etc. that are required of regularly enrolled participants? **Yes**
24. Can schools charge NP or HS participants any additional fees that are not required of all participants? **No**
25. Are NP and HS participants required to follow other school and team rules and policies (training rules, additional academic rules, practice attendance, drug testing permissions etc.)? Yes, as long as they do not pertain to enrollment.
26. Can HS or NP eighth grade students participate in MHSA sports/activities? **Yes, only if the school allows 8th grade participation and the family lives in the high school attendance area.**
27. Can HS or NP students participate in summer organized practices / open gym-fields etc.? **Yes, after July 1 as long as their entire family lives in your school attendance area and they verbally commit to the school administration in their attendance area for the activity they are planning to participate.**

20-5-109. Nonpublic and home school requirements for compulsory enrollment exemption.

(1) To qualify its students for exemption from compulsory enrollment under [20-5-102](#), a nonpublic school:

- a) shall maintain records on pupil attendance and disease immunization and make the records available to the county superintendent of schools on request;
- b) shall provide at least the minimum aggregate hours of pupil instruction in accordance with [20-1-301](#) and [20-1-302](#);
- c) must be housed in a building that complies with applicable local health and safety regulations; and
- d) shall provide an organized course of study that includes instruction in the subjects required of public schools as a basic instructional program pursuant to [20-7-111](#).

(2) To qualify its students for exemption from compulsory enrollment under [20-5-102](#), a home school:

- a) shall notify the county superintendent of schools of the county in which the home school is located in each school fiscal year of the student's attendance at the school;
- b) shall maintain records on pupil attendance and make the records available to the county superintendent on request;
- c) shall provide at least the minimum aggregate hours of pupil instruction in accordance with [20-1-301](#) and [20-1-302](#); and
- d) shall provide an organized course of study that includes instruction in the subjects required of public schools as a basic instructional program pursuant to [20-7-111](#).

The same standards (MHSA and Local School Policies) must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (exception- enrollment in the school).