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October 23-24, 2026
Richmond, BC

Eligibility Made Easy: Navigating the Rules with Confidence

Presenters

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What You'll Walk Away With

By the end of this session, Athletic Directors will be able to:

- Identify key BCSS eligibility rules
- Understand when transfer rules apply.
- Navigate the BCSS Handbook and Quick Guide.
- Recognize when a form, application, or appeal is needed.
- Approach eligibility questions with greater confidence.
- Build processes to share with your admissions teams to help students and families understand how these rules may affect their situations

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Who Is In the Room

Everyone raise your hand please!

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Eligibility vs. Transfer Rules?

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Core Eligibility Requirements (Section 800)

- Student-athletes compete for the member school they attend (**813**) as a full-time student (**815**)
- Age Eligible, meeting both age and grade 8 entry date. (**816 & 819**)
- Residency Requirement (**821.1**)
  - Residing with parent(s) in BC; reside with legal guardian (in place for 12 months)
- A Home School is established wherever the student starts their first day of Grade 9 (**911**)

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Key Eligibility Questions To Ask

- Does the student meet eligibility requirements? (Age/Grade 8 Entry/Residency)
- Has the student attended my school for the last 12-months?
- If your answer to the first two questions are yes, you should be able to add to STARS (if a new student) and add to the appropriate team rosters.

- If your answer to either of the first two questions is no, lets ask why.

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Transfers: The Starting Point

A student who is transferring schools after establishing a Home School (first day of Grade 9) is subject to transfer rules. The starting point for every transfer is:

- A student-athlete is ineligible for 12 months from the date of transfer in sports played in the 12 months prior to the date of transfer.

- This should be the expectation for all students and families transferring schools after the first day of Grade 9.

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Transfers: The Next Steps (Section 900)

- So let’s ask the question. What is the reason the student doesn’t meet the Core Eligibility Requirements?

- Sections 920- 934 outlines the accepted reasons for exemption
- Exemptions means the 12-month ineligibility period can be waived
- The most common are:
  - Change of Principal Residence
  - Parent to Parent Move
  - Bonafide Academic
  - Financial Hardship
  - Bullying

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Transfers: Change of Principal Residence (923.1)

- The original residence must be abandoned as a residence; (i.e. sold, rented or disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as a residence by another member of the family);
- The entire family must make the change and take with them their household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstance;
- The change must be made with the intent that it is permanent.

- What the Eligibility Officer (EO) is looking for:
  - Proof that the previous residence has been disposed of
  - A unique lease or rental agreement for the new address.

- The EO may always ask for more documentation that ties the family to the new address. The best examples are a Hydro or Internet Bill.

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Transfers: Parent to Parent Move (923.2)

- A parent-to-parent is defined as a student-athlete moving to reside with the parent with whom they have not been living and as a result of the move is required to transfer schools.
  - Only two (2) transfers to move from parent-to-parent are allowed after the first (1st) day of the student-athletes first (1st) year of eligibility.
- The residence of the student shall be that of the parent to whom custody has been awarded by a court of competent jurisdiction. If no custody order has been entered, the residence shall be that of the parent who has custody immediately upon separation.

- What the EO is looking for:
  - Hydro/Service Bill attaching the Parent to the new address, or,
  - Copy of the Parents Driver's License/Services Card

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Transfers: Bona Fide Academic (931)

- “Bona fide academic reason” is defined as a minimum of twelve (12) credits (generally equates to three (3) full time courses) in a **related program of study** in which the student is **registered in the current academic year**, and the program of study is **not available to the student-athlete at their previous school**.
- Examples that have been approved recently:
  - IB Program
  - Hairdressing Program
  - Langley School District STEPS Program

- What the EO is looking for:
  - Student’s Time Table that shows the 12 credits/3 related courses
  - Letter(s) of support from school district outlining the nature of the program

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Transfers: Financial Hardship (932)

- “Financial hardship” is defined as when a student-athlete or their family is willing but unable to meet their obligations because of unexpected events or unforeseen changes that impacts their financial viability (i.e. Changes in income or expenditure. Changes in employment status, such as losing a job or having hours reduced).

- What the EO is looking for:
  - Letter from the family explaining their circumstances and how they were unforeseen
  - Financial record’s substantiating the circumstances as outlined by the family

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Transfers: Bullying (933)

- "Bullying" is defined as unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include; an imbalance of power where kids who bully use their power-such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity-to control or harm others.

- What the EO is looking for:
  - The leaving school must acknowledge in writing the student was subject to actions that meet the standards above while attending their school and believe the transfer to be in the best interest of the student's overall health and well being.

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Process:

- Gather the info from student/family and assess the likelihood it has meeting the standard of the exemption policy.
- Complete the appropriate eligibility form.
- Work with the family to secure as much documentation to support the situation you are applying under.
- Eligibility Officer reviews and makes a ruling based on the intent of policy

- What to do if you think it wont meet the standard of any policy?
  - You still should apply under closest exemption, you need a denied ruling to be able to submit an appeal

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Which Form Do I Need?

Let's look together: www.bcschoolsports.ca

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Let's Work Through It

- Scenario A: A student changes schools for the first day of Grade 9.
- Scenario B: A student changes schools after Grade 9, but the family has not moved.
- Scenario C: A student changes schools because their family has moved to a new principal residence.

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Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Assuming a transfer automatically makes an athlete eligible or ineligible.
- Treating a school change as proof of a family move.
- Using an outdated form or handbook.
- Submitting incomplete supporting documentation.
- Waiting until just before a championship or deadline to seek or clarify eligibility.
- Making assumptions when the rules require a formal review.

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Questions?

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