

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS
The 74th Annual Meeting
June 2026

CHANGE TO THE CIAC BYLAWS

Article IX (Rules of Eligibility), Section I (Scholarship)
(Appendix B of the CIAC Handbook)

Explanation of Proposed Change:

The proposed revision to Article IX, Section I, has two phases. The first phase, effective July 1, 2026, modernizes and clarifies the CIAC scholarship/eligibility rule while aligning it with recent changes in Connecticut law. The proposed language replaces the outdated term “Carnegie Units” with “credits,” reflecting current educational terminology. In addition, language stating that schools may establish more rigorous academic eligibility standards than the CIAC minimum standard will be removed. This change is necessary to comply with Connecticut Public Act No. 26-139, which requires that, by July 1, 2027, local and regional boards of education may not impose academic eligibility standards for interscholastic athletics that exceed those established by the CIAC.

The second phase of the proposal, effective July 1, 2027, increases the number of credits required for interscholastic athletic academic eligibility from four (4) to five (5). This adjustment aligns athletic eligibility expectations more closely with the academic requirements placed on Connecticut high school students and reinforces the importance of maintaining meaningful academic progress while participating in interscholastic athletics.

IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION: For the 2026-2027 school year, schools may continue to utilize their current local athletic academic eligibility policies. However, if this change is approved by the membership, students will be required to earn a minimum of five (5) credits toward graduation during the 2026-2027 school year to be eligible for participation in Fall 2027.

PROPOSED ADDITIONS IN RED / PROPOSED DELETIONS IN STRIKETHROUGH

In effect beginning July 1, 2026

ARTICLE IX

I. SCHOLARSHIP

For purpose of this rule the term “credit” has the meanings prescribed in Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a. ~~the term “unit” refers to the traditional Carnegie Unit. A Carnegie Unit is herein defined as “200 minutes of recitation during a period of five consecutive school days for an entire school year.” Principals may equate any course offering with the Carnegie Unit, no matter what the scheduling pattern, by referring to the following: if a course is scheduled a minimum of 200 minutes during a period of five consecutive school days for a traditional nine week marking period and awards at least ¼ credit for that period, including independent study, that course should be considered one-quarter of a~~

Carnegie Unit of work; mini-courses, tri-semester courses, alternative school programs, shared time programs, D.E., D.W.E., and other cooperative community programs must meet the minimum time and credit requirements above to be considered a quarter of a Carnegie Unit of work.

A. To be eligible for fall sports, a student must have received **four (4) credits toward graduation at the close of the preceding school year for which the student has not previously received credit.** ~~credit toward graduation at the close of the school year preceding the contest in at least four (4) Carnegie Units of work or its equivalent for which he or she has not previously received credit.~~ "Equivalent" is any number of courses that are equal to one Carnegie Unit. Credit must be earned during the same academic year.

Through the PPT process or Section 504 meeting, the principal will determine what constitutes an identified student's equivalent of ~~four (4) Carnegie Units,~~ or four (4) credits for athletic purposes. To this end, the principal shall rely on the student's most recent IEP or Section 504 Plan to make the determination. A student enrolling in ninth grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of their previous academic achievement. Thereafter, to be eligible, a student in grades 9-12 must meet the requirements set forth in Rule I.B.

B. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless taking at least four (4) **credits** ~~Carnegie Units~~ of work or its equivalent. During the school year, a student must have received a passing mark in at least four (4) quarter **credits** ~~Carnegie Units~~ of work or its equivalent at the end of the regular marking period preceding the contest. Student eligibility will be determined on the date official grades are posted for all students (whole-school eligibility) or on the fourteenth calendar day following the end of the marking period, whichever comes first. The means by which official grades are distributed to all students will be determined by the school. No credit or equivalent for which the student has already received credit shall be included in those required by this rule.

C. If computer, arena, or hand scheduling assigns an athlete less than four (4) quarter **credits** ~~Carnegie Units~~ or equivalent of work in a marking period, that student is ineligible unless additional courses needed are added to the schedule.

D. Scholastic failures cannot be made up for eligibility purposes in any manner until the next report, except that credits earned during the summer by any regularly approved board of education procedure will be accepted for the purpose of determining the eligibility of students desiring to participate in the athletic program of the school in September. Scholastic incompletes must be made up within ten (10) school days following the date that student eligibility was determined for the respective marking period as defined above. Incomplete grades are not to be considered as passing grades.

~~It should be understood that the above regulations are minimal and do not prohibit a school from establishing more rigid eligibility standards.~~

Marking period grades (not semester grades) are to be used in determining scholastic eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics during any given marking period.

The final academic grade average determines fall eligibility. Semester courses or mini courses completed earlier in the school year may be counted toward the four (4) ~~units~~ **credits** used to determine eligibility for the fall season. Year-end failures may be made up by successfully completing LEA-approved summer schoolwork in the failed courses.

In effect beginning July 1, 2027

Article IX, Section I (SCHOLARSHIP)

For purpose of this rule, the term "credit" has the meaning prescribed in Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a.

A. To be eligible for fall sports, a student must have received **five (5)** ~~four (4)~~ credits toward graduation at the close of the preceding school year, for which the student has not previously received credit. Credit must be earned during the same academic year.

Through the PPT process or Section 504 meeting, the principal will decide on what constitutes an identified student's equivalent of **five (5) ~~four (4)~~** credits for athletic purposes. To this end, the principal shall rely on the student's most recent IEP or Section 504 Plan to make the determination. A student enrolling in ninth grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of their previous academic achievement. Thereafter, to be eligible, a student in grades 9-12 must meet the requirements set forth in Rule I.B.

B. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless taking at least **five (5) ~~four (4)~~** credits of work or its equivalent. During the school year, a student must have received a passing mark in at least **five (5) ~~four (4)~~** quarter credits of work or its equivalent at the end of the regular marking period preceding the contest. Student eligibility will be determined on the date official grades are posted for all students (whole-school eligibility) or on the fourteenth calendar day following the end of the marking period, whichever comes first. The means by which official grades are distributed to all students will be determined by the school. No credit or equivalent for which the student has already received credit shall be included in those required by this rule.

C. If computers, arena, or hand scheduling assigns an athlete less than **five (5) ~~four (4)~~** quarter credits or equivalent of work in a marking period, that student is ineligible unless additional courses needed are added to the schedule.

D. Scholastic failures cannot be made up for eligibility purposes in any manner until the next report, except that credits earned during the summer by any regularly approved board of education procedure will be accepted for the purpose of determining the eligibility of students desiring to participate in the athletic program of the school in September. Scholastic incompletes must be made up within ten (10) school days following the date that student eligibility was determined for the respective marking period as defined above. Incomplete grades are not to be considered as passing grades.

Marking period grades (not semester grades) are to be used in determining scholastic eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics during any given marking period.

The final academic grade average determines fall eligibility. Semester courses or mini courses completed earlier in the school year may be counted toward the **five (5) ~~four (4)~~** credits used to determine eligibility for the fall season. Year-end failures may be made up by successfully completing LEA-approved summer schoolwork in the failed courses.

In alignment with Public Act No. 26-139, not later than July 1, 2027, no local or regional board of education shall require students in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, who participate in any interscholastic athletics to meet or exceed academic eligibility standards that are higher than the academic eligibility standards established by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.