

CHAPTER 97-254

House Bill No. 1663

An act relating to interscholastic extracurricular student activities; amending s. 232.425, F.S., relating to student standards for participation in interscholastic extracurricular student activities; defining the term “extracurricular”; providing for the accessibility of such activities to home education students; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section 232.425, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, are amended to read:

232.425 Student standards for participation in interscholastic extracurricular student activities; regulation.—

(2) The Legislature recognizes the importance of interscholastic extracurricular student activities as a complement to the academic curriculum. Participation in a comprehensive extracurricular and academic program contributes to student development of the social and intellectual skills necessary to become a well-rounded adult. It is the intent of the Legislature to provide the mechanism for all students in Florida to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities. As used in this section, the term “extracurricular” means any school-authorized or education-related activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day.

(3)(a) To be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities, a student must maintain a grade point average of 1.5 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, and must pass five subjects for the grading period immediately preceding participation; except that student eligibility for the first grading period of each new school year shall be based on passing five subjects and maintaining the required grade point average the previous school year, including subjects completed during the interim summer school session.

(b) Any student who is exempt from attending a full school day under s. 228.041(13) must maintain a 1.5 grade point average and pass each class for which he or she is enrolled.

(c) An individual home education student shall be eligible to participate at a public school, and may develop an agreement to participate at a nonpublic school, in the interscholastic extracurricular activities of that school, provided the following conditions are met:

1. The home education student must meet the requirements of the home education program pursuant to s. 232.02(4).

2. During the period of participation at a school, the home education student must demonstrate educational progress as required in paragraph (b) in all subjects taken in the home education program by a method of

evaluation agreed upon by the parent and the principal which may include: review of the student's work by a certified teacher chosen by the parent; grades earned through correspondence; grades earned in courses taken at a community college, university, or trade school; standardized test scores above the 35th percentile; or any other method designated in s. 232.02(4).

3. The home education student must meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he or she participates.

4. The home education student must meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities.

5. The student must register with the school his or her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school prior to the beginning date of the season for the activity in which he or she wishes to participate. A home education student must be able to participate in curricular activities if that is a requirement for an extracurricular activity.

6. A student who transfers from a home education program to a public school prior to or during the first grading period of the school year shall be academically eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities during the first grading period provided the student has a successful evaluation from the previous school year, pursuant to subparagraph 2.

7. Any public school or nonpublic school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities shall be ineligible to participate in such activities as a home education student until such time as the student has successfully completed one grading period in home education pursuant to subparagraph 2. to become eligible to participate as a home education student.

(4) The student standards for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities ~~must shall~~ be applied beginning with the student's first semester of the 9th grade. Each student must meet such other requirements for participation as may be established by the school district; however, a school district may not establish requirements for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities which make participation in such activities less accessible to home education students than to other students. Except as set forth in paragraph (3)(c), evaluation processes or requirements that are placed on home education student participants may not go beyond those that apply under s. 232.02 to home education students generally.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997.

Became a law without the Governor's approval May 30, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1997.