

MHSAA International Student Eligibility Summary – Exception 4

See 2020-21 *Handbook* P. 41 for the Rule & P. 47-48 for Interpretations 81, 83-89

***For J-1 or F-1 visa students enrolling for the first time in an MHSAA School**

To be immediately eligible an International Student, present in the US on either a J-1 or F-1 visa, including incoming 9th graders, must meet one of two conditions:

1. Meet a residency exception under the MHSAA transfer rule (1,2,3,5,8,12 or 13) **R – the more common occurrence -**
2. Be placed with a host family in a school district through an **Approved International Student Program (AISP)**. AISP programs generally include those, which are CSIET approved, and a small number of schools who are also approved by the MHSAA after application is made. See MHSAA.com, >Schools, > Administrators. See In-services Education, Programming.

An AISP student is eligible at the public school of their residence or the closest nonpublic or charter school **for one year and then ineligible for a subsequent year (play one, wait one – no eligibility at any level)**. An AISP student who does not enroll at their school of residence or closest nonpublic or charter school has sub varsity eligibility only for their entire tenure after being ineligible for 90 scheduled school days. Incoming 9th grade international students **do not** have immediate eligibility unless they meet condition 1 or 2 above.

**Note:* An international student who was in the US last year in a traditional school or a home school would not be eligible this year under “play one, wait one” – whether from an AISP program or not and whether or not the student participated in sports. After the year off under “play one, wait one” an AISP student could have eligibility remaining at any level in any sport if they do not change schools.

An AISP student who changes schools would be subject to the Sport Specific Transfer Rule based upon their participation during the “play one year.” These transfer students would be not be eligible in sports played during that year, but would, after the “wait one year” be eligible in sports not played in the “play one year.” An AISP student who **does not change schools** has eligibility in the years following the “wait one year” in any sport. Non AISP students have subvarsity eligibility for their entire tenure.

An International Student, including an incoming 9th grade student, who did not meet condition 1 or 2 above – not from an Approved Program or not meeting an Exception - is not eligible for varsity competition for up to 4 years. A school may choose to allow an International Student eligibility at the **sub varsity level** after having sat out until the 91st school day.

General Conclusion: AISP students have immediate eligibility at any level for one year (play one, wait one) then no sports, any level for the next year. **Non-AISP** students may only have subvarsity eligibility for all their tenure once sitting out the first half year.

International Students must be eligible in all other ways including the 8 semester maximum rule, being an undergraduate and having a sport physical dated after April 15 of the previous school year.

Note: International students who, when they first enroll in any secondary school in the U.S. and are not required by law to have a J-1 or F-1 visa are subject to the transfer rule just as are all other students (Interpretation 85). If an International Student’s status changes in a subsequent year, their eligibility is based upon their status when they first enroll. This is a summary; see the exact *Handbook regulation and interpretations and consult school athletic director or MHSAA Staff.*

NOT ALL EXCHANGE OR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE IMMEDIATELY ELIGIBLE...

1. Is the international student on a J1 or F1 Visa?..... YES NO
2. Is this the 1st year for the student at YOUR school?..... YES NO
3. Is this the student’s 1st year in the U.S.?..... YES NO
4. The student has NOT graduated/received a diploma?..... YES NO
(even from their school in their home country)?
5. Is the student placed by an APPROVED program?..... YES NO
- Check CSIET approval list: www.mhsaa.com → schools & schedules → administrators → AISP Listings
6. Does the host family live in your school district YES NO
or the closest non-public or charter school?

If you answered “NO” to ANY of the above questions, contact the MHSAA immediately before the international/exchange student is allowed to participate in ANY scrimmage or contest, as it could result in the forfeiture of any contest the student participates in.