Athlete Eligibility Confirmation Policy

Purpose

To uphold fairness, safety, and compliance with Alberta's Fairness and Safety in Sport Act ("the Act") and its Regulation ("the Regulation") by establishing clear eligibility criteria for student athletes participating in amateur competitive sports at Renert School, especially in female-only divisions, and procedures for confirming eligibility, challenges, and appeals.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, coaches, and school administrators overseeing extracurricular or school-sponsored competitive sports.
- All student athletes and their parents/guardians (as applicable) participating in in-scope amateur competitive sports under the school's oversight.
- All female-only (biological female) divisions, classes, or leagues in which the school or affiliated sports bodies participate (i.e. "relevant sports") as required under the legislation.

Guiding Principles

- Renert School respects its legal obligations under the Fairness and Safety in Sport Act to preserve the integrity of female-only athletic competitions while supporting meaningful participation opportunities for all students.
- The policy aims to be clear, consistent, transparent, and respectful of privacy.
- Where numbers warrant, the school supports mixed-sex/co-ed /open divisions or alternative arrangements so that no student is simply excluded from sport opportunities.
- The policy balances the requirement for verification with safeguards against frivolous or malicious challenges.

Definitions

- **Relevant Sport**: A sport or competition offered or sanctioned by the school (or in which the school participates) that is subject to the Act (i.e. “female-only” divisions as defined).

- **Female-Only Division**: A league, class, or division that is designated for “biological females” under the Act. (Only athletes whose **sex recorded at birth** is female may compete in such divisions).

- **Sex Recorded at Birth**: The sex (female or male) indicated on the individual’s official birth registration record or equivalent.

- **Athlete (Student Athlete)**: A student who participates in a relevant sport under the school’s jurisdiction.

- **Applicant/Challenger**: A person (student athlete or their parent/guardian, or a school official) who submits a challenge to another athlete’s eligibility under this policy.

- **In-Scope Entity**: Under the Act, school authorities and schools are considered in-scope entities required to adopt eligibility policies.

Eligibility Requirement for Female-Only Divisions

- For any female-only league, class, or division, participation is restricted to those whose sex recorded at birth is female.

- This requirement applies to students aged 12 years and older, in line with the Act’s scope.

- Students who do not meet that criterion may still participate in co-ed/mixed/open divisions if offered.

- Note: This eligibility requirement is only for female-only divisions. There is no prohibition (under the Act) on participation in male or open/mixed divisions by those who do not meet female-only criteria.

Procedures

Confirmation at Registration

- At registration for a relevant sport (especially female-only divisions), every athlete (or parent/guardian if the athlete is a minor) must sign a written confirmation of eligibility stating that they understand and meet the requirements under the Act and Regulation.

- If this confirmation is not provided, the student athlete is ineligible to compete in the female-only division.

Confidential Challenges

- Any individual with reasonable grounds may submit a confidential challenge to an athlete's eligibility.

- Challenges must be in writing (on the official form) and include:
  - Name of the applicant
  - Name of the student athlete alleged to be ineligible
  - Sport, team, division or league involved
  - Supporting information or evidence (as known)

- Challenges must be submitted to the Vice Principal, Alice Humeny, at alice.humeny@renertschool.ca.

Review/Verification Process

- The school will acknowledge receipt of the challenge promptly (within a short timeframe).

- The school may (if applicable or required by regulation) notify the provincial Ministry (i.e. Ministry of Tourism and Sport) in anonymous form (no personal identifiers) that a challenge has been filed, per legislative rules.

- If the challenge appears to lack reasonable basis (insufficient evidence), it may be dismissed. The applicant and athlete will be notified. The school may apply sanctions if the challenge is determined to be made in bad faith.

- If the challenge is accepted for processing:
  - The athlete (or parent/guardian) must provide valid birth registration documentation or equivalent proof of sex recorded at birth.
  - Failure to provide such documentation leads to ineligibility for female-only divisions.
  - The school will make a determination (upheld or dismissed) in a timely manner and notify both parties in writing.

Outcome and Enforcement

- If eligibility is upheld (i.e. the athlete is found not eligible), the student will be permanently ineligible to participate in female-only divisions under school oversight.

- If the challenge is dismissed, that athlete will remain eligible.

- The school will notify the Ministry (without personal identifiers) of final decisions, in compliance with reporting obligations under the Act.

- The athlete may be permitted to participate in other divisions (male, mixed, open) as applicable.

Bad-Faith or Invalid Challenges

- A challenge may be deemed invalid or dismissed without full review if:
  - It was previously resolved for the same athlete;
  - It lacks sufficient information or evidence;
  - The applicant lacks standing;
  - The challenge is determined to be made in bad faith.

- Sanctions may include: written warning, restriction from filing further challenges, or disciplinary action under school policies.

Appeals

- The applicant or athlete may file an appeal to the Principal if dissatisfied with the Vice Principal's decision.

- The appeal process will be fair, timely, and transparent (with opportunity for both sides to present arguments).

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Data Protection

- All personal information, documents, and proceedings will be handled in compliance with applicable privacy laws.

- Only those with a legitimate need will access documents.

- Personal identifiers will not be included in reports to external bodies (e.g. Ministry).

- The school will securely store eligibility documentation and challenge records.

Implementation, Compliance & Review

- The school will ensure coaches, administrators, and staff are trained in this policy and in the legal obligations under the Act.

- The school will align internal sports bylaws, team regulations, and third-party partner agreements with this policy.

- This policy will be reviewed annually (or more frequently if regulations or ministerial guidance change).

- In case of conflict between this policy and the Act, Regulation, or Ministerial orders, the higher authority prevails.