Caddo Parish sets grade requirements

SHREVEPORT (UPI) — Caddo Parish school officials have decided to "quit playing games" with students and will require them to maintain a D-plus academic average in order to participate in extracurricular activities.

The board voted 12-4 to require that students maintain a 1.5 grade point average to take part in athletics and programs such as marching band and pep squad.

The required minimum grade point average will increase to 2.0, or a C, in the 1985-86 school year.

"Let's quit playing games with these boys and girls," said School Board member Jerry Tim Brooks. "Education is first, and all this other stuff is second. Not only will you help that youngster stay in high school, but you will keep him in college.

A school district spokesman said Wednesday that under the 1.5 standard about one-third of Caddo's public school students would have been barred from extracurricular activities last year.

"This is certainly not designed to penalize anyone," said board President Gerald Nelson. "But participation in extracurricular activities should be a privilege earned, not something that's freely granted."

Under the policy, students in grades 1-12 who fall short of a 1.5 average at the close of the first nine weeks of school will be placed on probation. If the student fails to bring up his average at the end of the next nine weeks, he will become ineligible for extracurricular functions.

Board member K.F. Worley argued for stricter academic standards.

"At some time you're going to have to get off the fence and decide if you're for academic excellence or not," he said. "I look at this as an incentive. To let students participate in these activities without making the grades is a disincentive."

But other board members criticized the plan as being hastily drawn up and not adequately studied.