



MODEL INTERSCHOLASTIC
ATHLETIC PROGRAM FOR
STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Eligibility to Try Out

- All students meeting eligibility criteria

Allow Use of Modifications to Try Out

Increased Risk or Fundamental Alteration of Programs



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Pathway to Play Committee

This Committee may include:

- Special Education Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Athletic Director
- Athletics Supervisor
- Coaches) of relevant sports
- School Principal or Assistant Principal
- Student Advocate, someone who knows the student or sport may also be a part of this committee.
- Inclusion Specialist



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Maximizing Individual Opportunities

Upon the request of a student, teacher, parent, or coach any student with an IEP or 504 Plan who wishes to participate in the mainstream athletic program is referred to the Committee who will consider the eligibility of each student on a case by case basis. The Committee will conduct a review of the student and the sport, consult with the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA), and determine the accommodations and or modifications necessary to enable the individual student's participation.



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Four Part Criteria

- a. Fundamentally alter the sport?
- b. Provide a competitive advantage to the student?
- c. Competitively disadvantage other participants?
- d. Significantly increase the risk of injury for the student and other athletes?



Pathway to Play Process

- The student is able to participate in mainstream athletics with accommodations.
The accommodations do not:
 - Fundamentally alter the sport
 - Provide the student an advantage
 - Disadvantage other athletes
 - Significantly increase the safety risk



- The student is able to participate against or alongside other athletes in mainstream individual events with allowable accommodations or modifications. The accommodations and/or modifications do not:
 - Fundamental alter the sport
 - Provide the student an advantage
 - Disadvantage other athletes
 - Significantly increase the safety risk



- The student is unable to participate in mainstream individual or team sports because the needed accommodations or modifications:
 - Fundamentally alter the sport
 - Provide the student an advantage
 - Disadvantage other students
 - Significantly increase the safety risk
 - The school will provide an alternate athletic program



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Allied or Unified Interscholastic

- Baltimore County Model
- COMAR Eligibility
- Individual School Teams
- Coaches, uniforms, transportation
- Competition between schools in prescribed season



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Obstacles to Participation in Allied Interscholastic Program

- Some students exceed 19 year old limit
- Some students exceed 4 years of participation
- Some students cannot meet academic criteria
- Interscholastic regulations do not apply below grade
- Combining athletes from several schools
- Expense of adding interscholastic teams
 - a. Coaches salary
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Officials
 - d. Uniforms, etc.



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Corollary Sports

New COMAR chapter loosens interscholastic restriction by using intramural model



Model Athletic Policy for Students with Disabilities

Parallel Plans

Interscholastic

COMAR 13A.06.03 (MPSSAA)

Adherence to Standard

Athletic Regulations for all teams operating under programs of MPSSAA

Corollary Athletic Programs

13A.06.04

Flexibility to Structure

Programs that offer greater athletic accommodations for students with disabilities



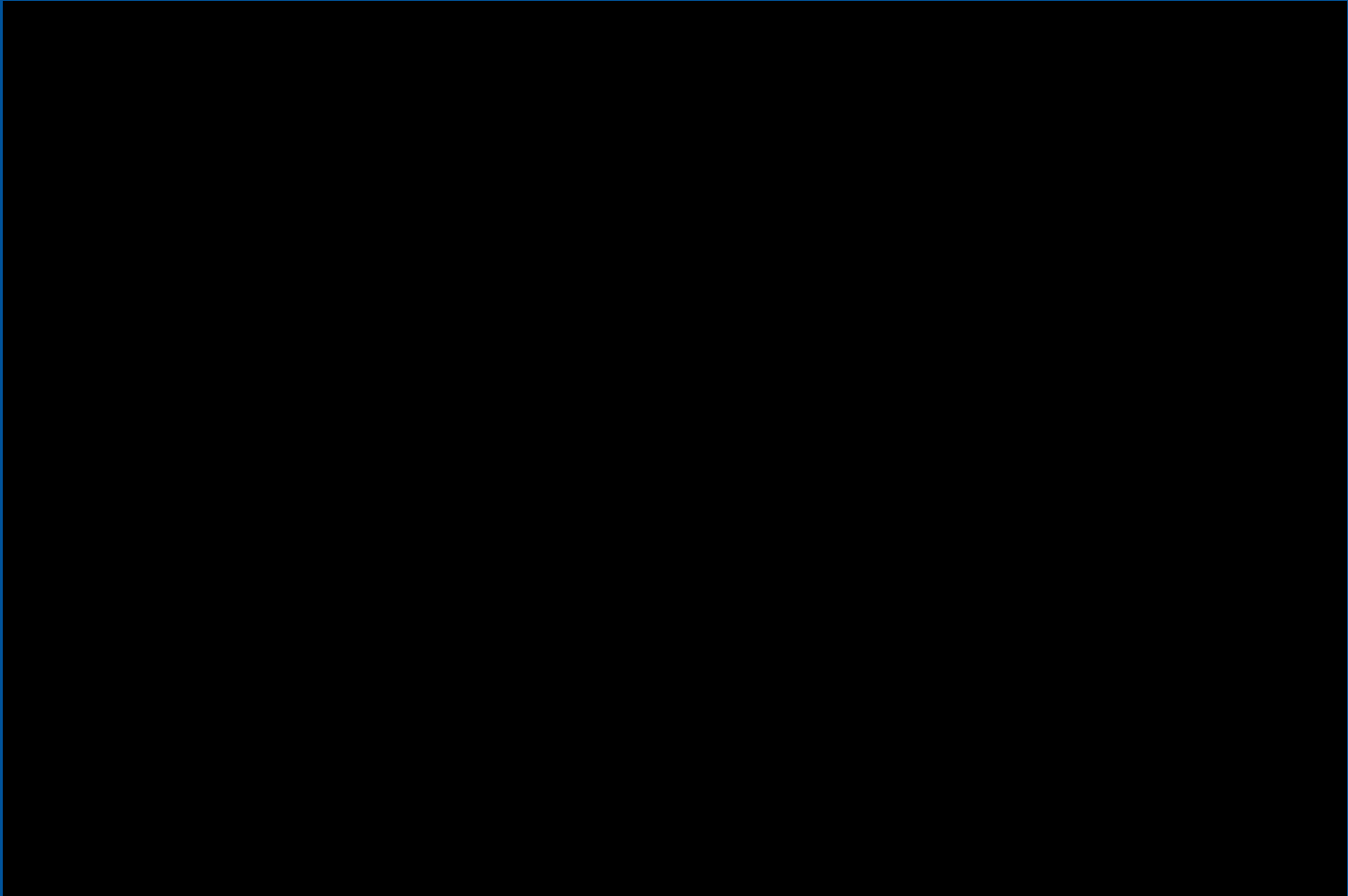
What is Allied Sports?

- Modeled after the Special Olympics' *Unified Sports Program*.
 - A totally inclusive program that affords students with all types of disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports alongside their non-disabled peers.
 - None of these students have previously participated on a varsity or junior varsity team.



What is Allied Sports?

- A program designed for students who are interested in playing a sport, but do not necessarily possess the skill or desire to play on a varsity or junior varsity team.
- Three sports are offered, one per season: Soccer (Fall), Bowling (Winter), and Softball (Spring).
- All team activities are co-ed with appropriate rules modifications to ensure a safe and successful experience for all students, regardless of ability.





Program Goals

- Similar to the goals of the standard interscholastic athletic program:
 - ✓ Learn skills of good sportsmanship and citizenship.
 - ✓ Improve level of physical fitness.
 - ✓ Acquire new sport-specific skills.
 - ✓ Build positive self-esteem.
 - ✓ Enhance interpersonal skills and foster new friendships.
 - ✓ Develop the concept of teamwork.
 - ✓ Have FUN!!!



Eligibility Requirements

- Are the same as for any other student-athlete in the interscholastic athletic program. All county and state rules are applied, including the age 19 rule.



Video Clip

- BCPS News story from our Allied Soccer Pumpkin bowl





Keys to Program Success

- One-on-one communication with parents of students with special needs who express an interest in the program.
- Activities that this segment of the student population will have an interest in and have the physical stamina to participate in.
- Modification of rules and equipment in order to be inclusive of all students, regardless of ability or disability.



Keys to Program Success

- New uniforms and new equipment to start program. First class treatment elevates stature of the program in the eyes of the participants as well as in the eyes of any observers.
- “Sameness” -- Allied athletes earn varsity letters, participate in pep rallies, attend and get recognition at awards banquets, have team pictures taken for the yearbook and other school publications, and have articles in the school paper like any other athletic team in the school.



Roadblocks to Program Success

- Fear of the “unknown” ...by teachers, coaches, parents, and administrators.
- Additional workload for athletic directors and/or school administrators.
- Additional financial burden of costs incurred with a new athletic offering each season.
- The perceptions and misconceptions of athletic participation by the parents of students with special needs.



Program Outcomes

- Improvement in level of student fitness and degree of participation in activity.
- Improvement in student interpersonal skills.
- Student understanding of specific sports rules, skills, and routines.
 - Improvement in student self-image, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
 - Assimilation into the high school setting.



Program Outcomes

- Sincere appreciation and support by parents as they witness, first hand, the positive impact that participation in the program has on their child.
- The proverbial “warm fuzzy” – a feather in the school’s cap for providing this opportunity for students with disabilities.
- Students gaining the confidence to leave the safe confines of the Allied program and try out for a varsity or junior varsity team (and make it).

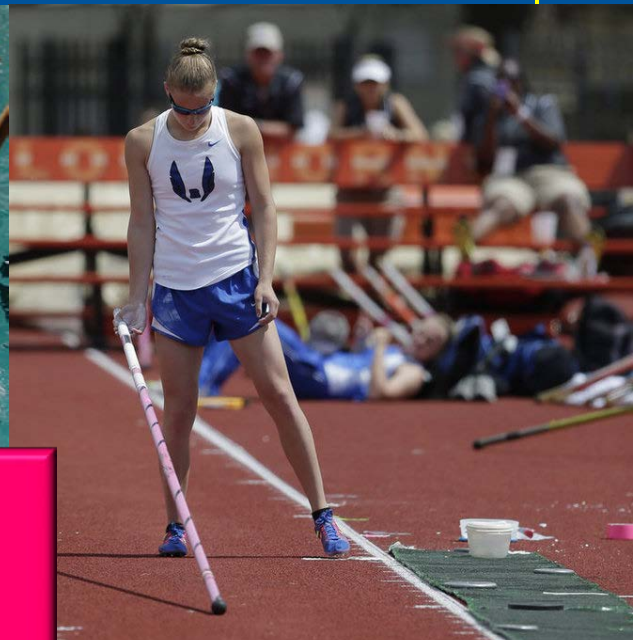


Final Thoughts

- Do it because it's the right thing to do...not because the courts tell you that you HAVE to.
- If a member of your family had a disability, wouldn't you want them to have the opportunity to have a "typical" high school experience by playing on a team?
- There are not too many things a high school student likes better than representing their school, wearing a uniform in school colors, and having the school name emblazoned across their chests!



We Are About Participation!



“If I can inspire people by doing what I think is easy, that’s awesome!” - Charlotte Brown, Blind Pole

Vaulter/Runner, Texas





Questions ?????

Thank you for your attention!!



Contact Information

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Current Issue

Providing Athletic Program

for

Students with Disabilities

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Model Athletic Plans to Provide Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

Introduction

As a result of the recent U.S. Department of Education communication and clarification of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, each school system is required to include disabled students in school extra-curricular athletic programs. The Rehabilitation Act is based on the principle that education based athletic programs provides students with opportunities to enhance their academic experiences with lessons on values and citizenship. While participation in school athletic programs remain high there has been a segment of students that have been unable to participate. Students with disabilities have not always enjoyed access to school athletic programs, and as a result were unable to benefit from these activities.

The information and model plan provide a guide for school systems to implement opportunities for disabled students to participate at the fullest extent of their capabilities.

Model Athletic Policies for School Systems to Fulfill the Requirements

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Interscholastic Athletics

Student Eligibility Determination

1. All students who meet state and local eligibility criteria are permitted the opportunity to try out for the school team. Among those criteria would be: enrolled student status, age, academic eligibility, medical approval and parent permission.
2. Students should not be excluded from the tryout unless the coach, based on skill and experience, determines that the student's participation in the tryout would be dangerous for that student or dangerous for other students who are also trying out to compete in the sport. For example, team sport tryouts in interscholastic football or basketball, by their nature, may raise more safety concerns than a tryout to throw the shot put or play on the golf team.
3. During the tryout, a student with disabilities should be allowed to use whatever modifications or aids he/she usually use to play the sport. Such modifications might include racing wheelchairs, artificial limbs, and interpreters for deaf students, special rules, changes in position, special equipment, etc. A student should not be excluded from trying out merely for needing modifications or aids.
4. To maximize opportunities as well as provide guidance for coaches each local school system should convene a Pathway to Play Committee prior to the start of the season. The Committee will recommend the athletic placement in which the student could enjoy the greatest possibility for success.

This Committee may include:

- Special Education Teacher
- Adapted Physical Education Teacher
- Athletic Director
- Athletics Supervisor
- Coach(es) of relevant sports
- School Principal or Assistant Principal
- Student Advocate, someone who knows the student or sport may also be a part of this committee
- Inclusion Specialist

Upon the request of a student, teacher, parent, or coach, any student with an IEP or 504 Plan who wishes to participate in the mainstream athletic program is referred to the Committee who will consider the eligibility of each student on a case by case basis. The Committee will conduct a review of the student and the sport, consult with the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA), and determine the accommodations and/or modifications necessary to enable the individual student's participation.

To make its determination, the Committee should apply the following Four Point Criteria:

Do the accommodations or modifications:

- a. Fundamentally alter the sport?
- b. Provide a competitive advantage to the students?
- c. Competitively disadvantage other participants?
- d. Significantly increase the risk of injury for the student and other athletes?

The answers to these questions will help determine the participation of the student in the school sponsored athletic program. The enclosed chart demonstrates the Pathway to Play Committee's process.

5. The head coach determines the final roster for his or her team. That determination is made as a result of skills testing, competitive demeanor, and the student's ability to function within a team environment. A coach may exclude students whose participation would cause a safety risk to himself, herself or others, or if their participation would fundamentally alter the sport.

Pathway to Play Process

Step 1
The student self-refers or is referred to the Pathway to Play Committee by a coach, teacher, or parent.



Step 2
Pathway to Play Committee conducts a review of the student and sport, consults with MPSSAA and applies the Four Point Criteria.



Step 3: Pathway to Play Committee recommends the maximum participation opportunities available to the student.

A: Determination	B: Determination	C: Determination
<p>The student is able to participate in mainstream athletics with accommodations*. The accommodations do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fundamentally alter the sport •Provide the student an advantage •Disadvantage other athletes •Significantly increase the safety risk to the student or other athletes. 	<p>The student is able to participate against or alongside other athletes in mainstream individual events with allowable accommodations or modifications** where the accommodations and/or modifications do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fundamentally alter the sport •Provide the student an advantage •Disadvantage other athletes •Significantly increase the safety risk to the student or other athletes. 	<p>The student is able to participate in mainstream individual or team sports because the necessary accommodations or modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fundamentally alter the sport •Provide the student an advantage •Disadvantage other athletes •Significantly increase the safety risk to the student or other athletes •The school system shall provide an alternate athletic program.***
<p>*NFHS rules provide for accommodations that are permitted and LSS should make every effort to allow those accommodations for students with disabilities. Examples of permitted accommodations include artificial limbs, braces, and hearing enhancing equipment.</p> <p>**NFHS rules allow for competition against or alongside other students in selected sports. An example would be a student who uses a wheelchair can compete alongside or against other athletes in Badminton, Bowling, Tennis, Golf, and Track and Field.</p> <p>***An Interscholastic or Intramural Allied Sports Program is a model of this program option. Others would be Unified sports programs structured for inclusion of all students.</p>		

Disabled Students Athletic Opportunities

A. Allied Interscholastic Sports.

1. An Allied or Unified Interscholastic Sports Program that embraces participation for all students will ensure athletic opportunities for those students unable to participate in traditional school athletics. Currently, Baltimore County Schools provide an Allied Interscholastic Sports Program with offerings of soccer in the fall, bowling in the winter, and softball in the spring. This program was designed for students who are interested in playing a sport, but do not necessarily possess the skill or desire to play on a varsity or junior varsity team. All team activities are coed with the appropriate rule modifications to ensure a safe and successful experience for all students, regardless of ability.

The goals of the Allied Sports Program and those of the mainstream interscholastic athletic program are similar. Both programs strive to teach students good sportsmanship, to building positive self-esteem, to acquire new sport-specific skills, to improve physical fitness, to foster new friendships, and to develop the concept of teamwork.

This program has helped athletes of all ability levels to participate in competitive athletic activities. Athletes with and without disabilities have come to appreciate the value and strengths of each other as individuals. Allied Sports fosters a greater understanding, respect, and acceptance of individuals with disabilities through open lines of communication and forming bonds of friendship.

2. The Allied Sports Program as structured in the current model provides:
 - Coed teams with a recommended ratio of 50% students with disabilities to 50% students without disabilities;
 - A committee that will develop rules, guidelines, and modifications for each Allied Sport to ensure greater student participation and success within the program;
 - Interaction and cooperation with other schools to provide assistance in implementing Allied Sports Programs in other high schools;
 - The opportunity to participate in soccer, bowling, and softball;
 - Transportation for teams to travel in order to compete against other schools;
 - Team uniforms for each participant
 - Support and acceptance of the Allied Sports Program within each school and community;
 - Volunteer assistants from the school, the community, and the colleges for students requiring one-on-one instruction.
3. The Allied Sports Program will provide the opportunity for participants to:
 - Participate in competitive sports in a fun, comfortable, and safe environment;
 - Develop new friendships by increasing interaction and communication among students in the school through a common interest in athletics;
 - Participate in school events, such as team picture day, pep rallies, and sports awards banquets;
 - Meet and compete against students from other schools that provide an Allied Sports Program;
 - Participate in their school's interscholastic athletic program;
 - Develop a feeling of self-worth and importance through working together as a team;
 - Represent their school in a positive manner by demonstrating their understanding of good sportsmanship and citizenship;
 - Develop an understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to participate on a sports team;
 - Practice and apply previously learned knowledge and skills in a season's end culminating activity;
 - Provide a positive physical and emotional outlet for improving the level of personal physical fitness;
 - Attain and develop an interest in activities that have the potential for lifetime sports participation.

B. Allied Intramural Sports

1. A second alternative allied or unified model would reflect an intramural format to emphasize participation and not be subject to restrictions placed on competitive interscholastic programs. It would not mirror the current athletic model, but rather provide more flexibility so opportunities may be expanded. A broader participation criterion could be realized by allowing consolidation of students from several schools, relaxing age and academic restrictions and limits on years of participation. In addition, an intramural mode can help provide an alternative for middle school programs.

To provide for the intramural alternative as well as address the complaint component of the law a new chapter in the Education article would be proposed. The new regulations would contain:

- Purpose of Program
- Baseline criteria for participation in intramural programs
- Structured parameters
- Complaint procedures and remedies for corrective action
- Report Component

CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COROLLARY ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The Program

The Corollary Program is modeled after the Baltimore County “Allied Sports” and the Special Olympics “Unified Sports” programs. The Corollary Athletic Program is a totally integrated program where all students, with and without disabilities, male and female, have an opportunity to participate on competitive sports teams together.

The program is designed for students who are interested in playing a sport, but do not have the skill or desire to play on a varsity or junior varsity team.

There are three sports offered, one sport for each season: Floor Hockey in the Fall, Bowling in the Winter, and Indoor Softball in the Spring.

All team activities are co-ed with appropriate modifications to ensure a safe and successful experience for all students, regardless of ability.

The Corollary Sports Program and the Interscholastic Athletic Program are similar in the philosophy that these activities are basic to sound educational principals of secondary education. Both programs strive to reinforce responsible social processes. These program strive to have students build positive self-esteem, acquire skills, improve physical fitness, foster good sportsmanship, teamwork, and new friendship.

It is believed that participation in a Corollary Athletic Program that students with and without disabilities will come to appreciate the value of each other as individuals. Athletic activities foster a greater understanding, respect, and acceptance of individuals with disabilities through open lines of communication and forming bonds of friendship.

Practices will be held after school with days and times to be decided by the coach. Students must provide their own transportation home from school following all practices and games.

In order to be eligible for Corollary sports:

- Be a secondary student in grades 9-12, or post secondary special education
- Officially register and attend a CCPS
- Meet all high school eligibility requirements regarding academics, attendance, and conduct
- Turn in a Parent Permission Form, Medical Approval Form, and Emergency Information Form prior to practice
- Making satisfactory progress toward graduation with a Maryland high school diploma or school completion with a Maryland high school certificate or program completion
- Have not participated as a member of a Varsity or Junior Varsity Interscholastic Athletic Team in the same sports. If a student acquires a disability during his/her years of participation in interscholastic sports, an exception could be made.

The Corollary Sports Program in Carroll County Public Schools will provide:

- A committee that will provide rules, guidelines, and modifications for each sport to ensure greater student participation and success within the program
- Co-ed teams with a recommended ratio of 50% students with disabilities to 50% students without disabilities
- Corollary athletic team coaches
- Team uniforms and game equipment
- Transportation for teams to travel in order to compete, if appropriate
- The opportunity to participate in Hockey, Bowling, and Indoor Softball
- Support and acceptance within each school and community.
- Opportunities for volunteer assistants from the school, colleges, and community
- Supplementary aids and supports, as necessary

Participants in the Corollary Sports Program in CCPS will be provided the opportunity to:

- Participate in competitive sports in a fun, comfortable, and safe environment
- Develop new friendships by increasing interaction and communication among students in the school through a common interest in athletics
- Participate in school events, such as team pictures, pep rallies, and sports awards programs
- Meet and compete with other CCPS teams, when available
- Develop a feeling of self-worth and importance through working together as a team
- Represent their school in a positive manner by demonstrating their understanding of good sportsmanship and citizenship
- Develop an understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to participate on a sports team
- Practice and apply previously learned knowledge and skills in a season's end culminating activity
- Provide a positive physical and emotional outlet for improving the level of personal physical fitness
- Attain and develop an interest in activities that have the potential for lifetime sports participation
- Develop an understanding, appreciate, and acceptance of individual abilities and differences.

REFERENCES

Maryland State Department of Education, *Model Athletic Programs to Provide Opportunities for Students with Disabilities*, December 2008

Carroll County Public Schools, Maryland, Corollary Athletic Program, Coaches Handbook, 2010-2011

Dear Colleague Letter, United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights

Q & A Disability in Sport Dear Colleague Letter



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

January 25, 2013

Dear Colleague:

Extracurricular athletics—which include club, intramural, or interscholastic (*e.g.*, freshman, junior varsity, varsity) athletics at all education levels—are an important component of an overall education program. The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) published a report that underscored that access to, and participation in, extracurricular athletic opportunities provide important health and social benefits to all students, particularly those with disabilities.¹ These benefits can include socialization, improved teamwork and leadership skills, and fitness. Unfortunately, the GAO found that students with disabilities are not being afforded an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular athletics in public elementary and secondary schools.²

To ensure that students with disabilities consistently have opportunities to participate in extracurricular athletics equal to those of other students, the GAO recommended that the United States Department of Education (Department) clarify and communicate schools' responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) regarding the provision of extracurricular athletics. The Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for enforcing Section 504, which is a Federal law

¹ United States Government Accountability Office, *Students with Disabilities: More Information and Guidance Could Improve Opportunities in Physical Education and Athletics*, No. GAO-10-519, at 1, 31 (June 2010), available at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/310/305770.pdf>.

² *Id.* at 20-22, 25-26.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities (including traditional public schools and charter schools) that receive Federal financial assistance.³

In response to the GAO's recommendation, this guidance provides an overview of the obligations of public elementary and secondary schools under Section 504 and the Department's Section 504 regulations, cautions against making decisions based on presumptions and stereotypes, details the specific Section 504 regulations that require students with disabilities to have an equal opportunity for participation in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, and discusses the provision of separate or different athletic opportunities. The specific details of the illustrative examples offered in this guidance are focused on the elementary and secondary school context. Nonetheless, students with disabilities at the postsecondary level must also be provided an equal opportunity to participate in athletics, including intercollegiate, club, and intramural athletics.⁴

³ 29 U.S.C. § 794(a), (b). Pursuant to a delegation by the Attorney General of the United States, OCR shares in the enforcement of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which is a Federal law prohibiting disability discrimination in the services, programs, and activities of state and local governments (including public school districts), regardless of whether they receive Federal financial assistance. 42 U.S.C. § 12132. Violations of Section 504 that result from school districts' failure to meet the obligations identified in this letter also constitute violations of Title II. 42 U.S.C. § 12201(a). To the extent that Title II provides greater protection than Section 504, covered entities must comply with Title II's substantive requirements.

OCR also enforces Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs that receive Federal financial assistance. 20 U.S.C. § 1681. For more information about the application of Title IX in athletics, see OCR's "Reading Room," "Documents – Title IX," at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/publications.html#TitleIX-Docs>.

⁴ 34 C.F.R. §§ 104.4, 104.47. The U.S. Department of Education has determined that this document is a "significant guidance document" under the Office of Management and Budget's Final Bulletin for Agency Good Guidance Practices, 72 Fed. Reg. 3432 (Jan. 25, 2007). OCR issues this and other policy guidance to provide recipients with information to assist them in meeting their obligations, and to provide members of the public with information about their rights under the civil rights laws and implementing regulations that we enforce. OCR's legal authority is based on those laws and regulations. This letter does not add requirements to applicable law, but provides information and examples to inform recipients about how OCR evaluates whether covered entities are complying with their legal obligations. If you are interested in commenting on this guidance, please send an e-mail with your comments to OCR@ed.gov, or write to us at the following address: Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

I. Overview of Section 504 Requirements

To better understand the obligations of school districts with respect to extracurricular athletics for students with disabilities, it is helpful to review Section 504’s requirements.

Under the Department’s Section 504 regulations, a school district is required to provide a qualified student with a disability an opportunity to benefit from the school district’s program equal to that of students without disabilities. For purposes of Section 504, a person with a disability is one who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.⁵ With respect to public elementary and secondary educational services, “qualified” means a person (i) of an age during which persons without disabilities are provided such services, (ii) of any age during which it is mandatory under state law to provide such services to persons with disabilities, or (iii) to whom a state is required to provide a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).⁶

Of course, simply because a student is a “qualified” student with a disability does not mean that the student must be allowed to participate in any selective or competitive program offered by a school district; school districts may require a level of skill or ability of a student in order for that student to participate in a selective or competitive program or activity, so long as the selection or competition criteria are not discriminatory.

Among other things, the Department’s Section 504 regulations prohibit school districts from:

- denying a qualified student with a disability the opportunity to participate in or benefit from an aid, benefit, or service;
- affording a qualified student with a disability an opportunity to participate in or benefit from an aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to that afforded others;

⁵ 29 U.S.C. § 705(9)(B), (20)(B) (as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008); 34 C.F.R. § 104.3(j). For additional information on the broadened meaning of disability after the effective date of the 2008 Amendments Act, see OCR’s 2012 Dear Colleague Letter and Frequently Asked Questions document, available at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201109.html>, and <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/dcl-504faq-201109.html>.

⁶ 34 C.F.R. § 104.3(l)(2).

- providing a qualified student with a disability with an aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective as that provided to others and does not afford that student with an equal opportunity to obtain the same result, gain the same benefit, or reach the same level of achievement in the most integrated setting appropriate to the student's needs;
- providing different or separate aid, benefits, or services to students with disabilities or to any class of students with disabilities unless such action is necessary to provide a qualified student with a disability with aid, benefits, or services that are as effective as those provided to others; and
- otherwise limiting a qualified individual with a disability in the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others receiving an aid, benefit, or service.⁷

The Department's Section 504 regulations also require school districts to provide a free appropriate public education (Section 504 FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability.⁸

⁷ 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1)(i)-(iv), (vii), (2), (3). Among the many specific applications of these general requirements, Section 504 prohibits harassment on the basis of disability, including harassment that occurs during extracurricular athletic activities. OCR issued a Dear Colleague letter dated October 26, 2010, that addresses harassment, including disability harassment, in educational settings. See Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, available at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>. For additional information on disability-based harassment, see OCR's Dear Colleague Letter: Prohibited Disability Harassment (July 25, 2000), available at <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html>.

⁸ 34 C.F.R. § 104.33(a). Section 504 FAPE may include services a student requires in order to ensure that he or she has an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities. One way to meet the Section 504 FAPE obligation is to implement an individualized education program (IEP) developed in accordance with the IDEA. 34 C.F.R. § 104.33(b)(2). Because the IDEA is not enforced by OCR, this document is not intended as an explanation of IDEA requirements or implementing regulations, which include the requirement that a student's IEP address the special education, related services, supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and supports for school personnel to be provided to enable the student to, among other things, participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities. 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(a)(4)(ii). In general, OCR would view a school district's failure to address participation or requests for participation in extracurricular athletics for a qualified student with a disability with an IEP in a manner consistent with IDEA requirements as a failure to ensure Section 504 FAPE and an equal opportunity for participation.

A school district must also adopt grievance procedures that incorporate appropriate due process standards and that provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging violations of the Section 504 regulations.⁹

A school district's legal obligation to comply with Section 504 and the Department's regulations supersedes any rule of any association, organization, club, or league that would render a student ineligible to participate, or limit the eligibility of a student to participate, in any aid, benefit, or service on the basis of disability.¹⁰ Indeed, it would violate a school district's obligations under Section 504 to provide significant assistance to any association, organization, club, league, or other third party that discriminates on the basis of disability in providing any aid, benefit, or service to the school district's students.¹¹ To avoid violating their Section 504 obligations in the context of extracurricular athletics, school districts should work with their athletic associations to ensure that students with disabilities are not denied an equal opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics.¹²

II. **Do Not Act On Generalizations and Stereotypes**

A school district may not operate its program or activity on the basis of generalizations, assumptions, prejudices, or stereotypes about disability generally, or specific disabilities in particular. A school district also may not rely on generalizations about what students with a type of disability are capable of—one student with a certain type of disability may not be able to play a certain type of sport, but another student with the same disability may be able to play that sport.

Example 1: A student has a learning disability and is a person with a disability as defined by Section 504. While in middle school, this student enjoyed participating in her school's lacrosse club. As she enters the ninth grade in high school, she tries out and is

⁹ 34 C.F.R. § 104.7(b).

¹⁰ 34 C.F.R. § 104.10(a), 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1).

¹¹ 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1)(v); 34 C.F.R. pt. 104, App. A § 104.4 at 367 (2012).

¹² OCR would find that an interscholastic athletic association is subject to Section 504 if it receives Federal financial assistance or its members are recipients of Federal financial assistance who have ceded to the association controlling authority over portions of their athletic program. *Cf. Cmty. for Equity v. Mich. High Sch. Athletic Ass'n, Inc.*, 80 F.Supp.2d 729, 733-35 (W.D. Mich. 2000) (at urging of the United States, court finding that an entity with controlling authority over a program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance is subject to Title IX's anti-discrimination rule). Where an athletic association is covered by Section 504, OCR would find that the school district's obligations set out in this letter would apply with equal force to the covered athletic association.

selected as a member of the high school's lacrosse team. The coach is aware of this student's learning disability and believes that all students with the student's particular learning disability would be unable to play successfully under the time constraints and pressures of an actual game. Based on this assumption, the coach decides never to play this student during games. In his opinion, participating fully in all the team practice sessions is good enough.

Analysis: OCR would find that the coach's decision violates Section 504. The coach denied this student an equal opportunity to participate on the team by relying solely on characteristics he believed to be associated with her disability. A school district, including its athletic staff, must not operate on generalizations or assumptions about disability or how a particular disability limits any particular student. Rather, the coach should have permitted this student an equal opportunity to participate in this athletic activity, which includes the opportunity to participate in the games as well as the practices. The student, of course, does not have a right to participate in the games; but the coach's decision on whether the student gets to participate in games must be based on the same criteria the coach uses for all other players (such as performance reflected during practice sessions).

III. **Ensure Equal Opportunity for Participation**

A school district that offers extracurricular athletics must do so in such manner as is necessary to afford qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation.¹³ This means making reasonable modifications and providing those aids and services that are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate, unless the school district can show that doing so would be a fundamental alteration to its program.¹⁴ Of course, a school district may adopt bona fide safety standards needed to implement its extracurricular athletic program or activity. A school district, however, must consider whether safe participation by any particular student with a disability can be assured through reasonable modifications or the provision of aids and services.¹⁵

¹³ 34 C.F.R. § 104.37(a), (c).

¹⁴ See *Alexander v. Choate*, 469 U.S. 287, 300-01 (1985) (Section 504 may require reasonable modifications to a program or benefit to assure meaningful access to qualified persons with disabilities); *Southeastern Cmty. Coll. v. Davis*, 442 U.S. 397 (1979) (Section 504 does not prohibit a college from excluding a person with a serious hearing impairment as not qualified where accommodating the impairment would require a fundamental alteration in the college's program).

¹⁵ 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1).

Schools may require a level of skill or ability for participation in a competitive program or activity; equal opportunity does not mean, for example, that every student with a disability is guaranteed a spot on an athletic team for which other students must try out. A school district must, however, afford qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular athletics in an integrated manner to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student.¹⁶ This means that a school district must make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, or procedures whenever such modifications are necessary to ensure equal opportunity, unless the school district can demonstrate that the requested modification would constitute a fundamental alteration of the nature of the extracurricular athletic activity.

In considering whether a reasonable modification is legally required, the school district must first engage in an individualized inquiry to determine whether the modification is necessary. If the modification is necessary, the school district must allow it unless doing so would result in a fundamental alteration of the nature of the extracurricular athletic activity. A modification might constitute a fundamental alteration if it alters such an essential aspect of the activity or game that it would be unacceptable even if it affected all competitors equally (such as adding an extra base in baseball). Alternatively, a change that has only a peripheral impact on the activity or game itself might nevertheless give a particular player with a disability an unfair advantage over others and, for that reason, fundamentally alter the character of the competition. Even if a specific modification would constitute a fundamental alteration, the school district would still be required to determine if other modifications might be available that would permit the student's participation.

¹⁶ 34 C.F.R. § 104.37(a), (c); 34 C.F.R. § 104.34(b); 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1)(ii).

To comply with its obligations under Section 504, a school district must also provide a qualified student with a disability with needed aids and services, if the failure to do so would deny that student an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular activities in an integrated manner to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student.¹⁷

Example 2: A high school student has a disability as defined by Section 504 due to a hearing impairment. The student is interested in running track for the school team. He is especially interested in the sprinting events such as the 100 and 200 meter dashes. At the tryouts for the track team, the start of each race was signaled by the coach's assistant using a visual cue, and the student's speed was fast enough to qualify him for the team in those events. After the student makes the team, the coach also signals the start of races during practice with the same visual cue. Before the first scheduled meet, the student asks the district that a visual cue be used at the meet simultaneously when the starter pistol sounds to alert him to the start of the race. Two neighboring districts use a visual cue as an alternative start in their track and field meets. Those districts report that their runners easily adjusted to the visual cue and did not complain about being distracted by the use of the visual cue.

After conducting an individualized inquiry and determining that the modification is necessary for the student to compete at meets, the district nevertheless refuses the student's request because the district is concerned that the use of a visual cue may distract other runners and trigger complaints once the track season begins. The coach tells the student that although he may practice with the team, he will not be allowed to participate in meets.

¹⁷ 34 C.F.R. § 104.37(a), (c); 34 C.F.R. § 104.34(b); 34 C.F.R. § 104.4(b)(1)(ii). Although a school district may also raise the defense that a needed modification or aid or service would constitute an undue burden to its program, based on OCR's experience, such a defense would rarely, if ever, prevail in the context of extracurricular athletics; for this reason, to the extent the examples in this letter touch on applicable defenses, the discussion focuses on the fundamental alteration defense. To be clear, however, neither the fundamental alteration nor undue burden defense is available in the context of a school district's obligation to provide a FAPE under the IDEA or Section 504. See 20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1); 34 C.F.R. § 104.33. Moreover, whenever the IDEA would impose a duty to provide aids and services needed for participation in extracurricular athletics (as discussed in footnote 8 above), OCR would likewise rarely, if ever, find that providing the same needed aids and services for extracurricular athletics constitutes a fundamental alteration under Section 504 for students not eligible under the IDEA.

Analysis: OCR would find that the school district’s decision violates Section 504.

While a school district is entitled to set its requirements as to skill, ability, and other benchmarks, it must provide a reasonable modification if necessary, unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the activity. Here, the student met the benchmark requirements as to speed and skill in the 100 and 200 meter dashes to make the team. Once the school district determined that the requested modification was necessary, the school district was then obligated to provide the visual cue unless it determined that providing it would constitute a fundamental alteration of the activity.

In this example, OCR would find that the evidence demonstrated that the use of a visual cue does not alter an essential aspect of the activity or give this student an unfair advantage over others. The school district should have permitted the use of a visual cue and allowed the student to compete.

Example 3: A high school student was born with only one hand and is a student with a disability as defined by Section 504. This student would like to participate on the school’s swim team. The requirements for joining the swim team include having a certain level of swimming ability and being able to compete at meets. The student has the required swimming ability and wishes to compete. She asks the school district to waive the “two-hand touch” finish it requires of all swimmers in swim meets, and to permit her to finish with a “one-hand touch.” The school district refuses the request because it determines that permitting the student to finish with a “one-hand touch” would give the student an unfair advantage over the other swimmers.

Analysis: A school district must conduct an individualized assessment to determine whether the requested modification is necessary for the student’s participation, and must determine whether permitting it would fundamentally alter the nature of the activity. Here, modification of the two-hand touch is necessary for the student to participate. In determining whether making the necessary modification – eliminating the two-hand touch rule – would fundamentally alter the nature of the swim competition, the school district must evaluate whether the requested modification alters an essential aspect of the activity or would give this student an unfair advantage over other swimmers.

OCR would find a one-hand touch does not alter an essential aspect of the activity. If, however, the evidence demonstrated that the school district's judgment was correct that she would gain an unfair advantage over others who are judged on the touching of both hands, then a complete waiver of the rule would constitute a fundamental alteration and not be required.

In such circumstances, the school district would still be required to determine if other modifications were available that would permit her participation. In this situation, for example, the school district might determine that it would not constitute an unfair advantage over other swimmers to judge the student to have finished when she touched the wall with one hand and her other arm was simultaneously stretched forward. If so, the school district should have permitted this modification of this rule and allowed the student to compete.

Example 4: An elementary school student with diabetes is determined not eligible for services under the IDEA. Under the school district's Section 504 procedures, however, he is determined to have a disability. In order to participate in the regular classroom setting, the student is provided services under Section 504 that include assistance with glucose testing and insulin administration from trained school personnel. Later in the year, this student wants to join the school-sponsored gymnastics club that meets after school. The only eligibility requirement is that all gymnastics club members must attend that school. When the parent asks the school to provide the glucose testing and insulin administration that the student needs to participate in the gymnastics club, school personnel agree that it is necessary but respond that they are not required to provide him with such assistance because gymnastics club is an extracurricular activity.

Analysis: OCR would find that the school's decision violates Section 504. The student needs assistance in glucose testing and insulin administration in order to participate in activities during and after school. To meet the requirements of Section 504 FAPE, the school district must provide this needed assistance during the school day.

In addition, the school district must provide this assistance after school under Section 504 so that the student can participate in the gymnastics club, unless doing so would be a fundamental alteration of the district's education program. Because the school district always has a legal obligation under IDEA to provide aids or services in its education program to enable any IDEA-eligible students to participate in extracurricular

activities,¹⁸ providing these aids or services after school to a student with a disability not eligible under the IDEA would rarely, if ever, be a fundamental alteration of its education program. This remains true even if there are currently no IDEA-eligible students in the district who need these aids or services.

In this example, OCR would find that the school district must provide glucose testing and insulin administration for this student during the gymnastics club in order to comply with its Section 504 obligations. The student needs this assistance in order to participate in the gymnastics club, and because this assistance is available under the IDEA for extracurricular activities, providing this assistance to this student would not constitute a fundamental alteration of the district's education program.¹⁹

IV. Offering Separate or Different Athletic Opportunities

As stated above, in providing or arranging for the provision of extracurricular athletics, a school district must ensure that a student with a disability participates with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that student with a disability.²⁰ The provision of *unnecessarily* separate or different services is discriminatory.²¹ OCR thus encourages school districts to work with their community and athletic associations to develop broad opportunities to include students with disabilities in all extracurricular athletic activities.

Students with disabilities who cannot participate in the school district's existing extracurricular athletics program – even with reasonable modifications or aids and services – should still have an equal opportunity to receive the benefits of extracurricular athletics. When the interests and abilities of some students with disabilities cannot be as fully and effectively met by the school district's existing extracurricular athletic program, the school district should create additional opportunities for those students with disabilities.

¹⁸ 20 U.S.C. §§ 1412(a)(1), 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(IV)(bb); 34 CFR §§ 300.320(a)(4)(ii), 300.107, 300.117; *see also* footnotes 8 & 17, above.

¹⁹ 34 C.F.R. § 104.37.

²⁰ 34 C.F.R. § 104.34(b).

²¹ 34 C.F.R. pt. 104, App. A § 104.4 at 367 (2012); 34 C.F.R. pt. 104, App. A § 104.37 at 376 (2012).

In those circumstances, a school district should offer students with disabilities opportunities for athletic activities that are separate or different from those offered to students without disabilities. These athletic opportunities provided by school districts should be supported equally, as with a school district's other athletic activities. School districts must be flexible as they develop programs that consider the unmet interests of students with disabilities. For example, an ever-increasing number of school districts across the country are creating disability-specific teams for sports such as wheelchair tennis or wheelchair basketball. When the number of students with disabilities at an individual school is insufficient to field a team, school districts can also: (1) develop district-wide or regional teams for students with disabilities as opposed to a school-based team in order to provide competitive experiences; (2) mix male and female students with disabilities on teams together; or (3) offer "allied" or "unified" sports teams on which students with disabilities participate with students without disabilities.²² OCR urges school districts, in coordination with students, families, community and advocacy organizations, athletic associations, and other interested parties, to support these and other creative ways to expand such opportunities for students with disabilities.²³

V. Conclusion

OCR is committed to working with schools, students, families, community and advocacy organizations, athletic associations, and other interested parties to ensure that students with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular athletics. Individuals who believe they have been subjected to discrimination may also file a complaint with OCR or in court.²⁴

²² The Department's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services issued a guidance document that, among other things, includes suggestions on ways to increase opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in physical education and athletic activities. That guidance, *Creating Equal Opportunities for Children and Youth with Disabilities to Participate in Physical Education and Extracurricular Athletics*, dated August 2011, is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/equal-pe.pdf>.

²³ It bears repeating, however, that a qualified student with a disability who would be able to participate in the school district's existing extracurricular athletics program, with or without reasonable modifications or the provision of aids and services that would not fundamentally alter the program, may neither be denied that opportunity nor be limited to opportunities to participate in athletic activities that are separate or different. 34 C.F.R. § 104.37(c)(2).

²⁴ 34 C.F.R. § 104.61 (incorporating 34 C.F.R. § 100.7(b)); *Barnes v. Gorman*, 536 U.S. 181, 185 (2002).

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For the OCR regional office serving your area, please visit:

<http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>, or call OCR's Customer Service Team at 1-800-421-3481 (TDD 1-877-521-2172).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide assistance in your efforts to address this issue or if you have other civil rights concerns. I look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that students with disabilities receive an equal opportunity to participate in a school district's education program.

Sincerely,

/s/

Seth M. Galanter
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Q and A: Disability in Sport Dear Colleague Letter

Executive Summary

On January 24, 2013 the Office for Civil Rights issued a Dear Colleague Letter clarifying schools' obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to provide extracurricular athletic opportunities for students with disabilities. This Dear Colleague Letter provides a clear roadmap for interpreting the guidance so that schools can better integrate students with disabilities into mainstream athletic programs---and create adapted programs for students with disabilities.

I. Benefits of Participation

1. Why should schools offer athletic programs to students with disabilities?

The benefits of athletic and physical education programs are equally important for students with disabilities as they are for all students. Physical activity is key in addressing the obesity epidemic that is especially problematic for individuals with disabilities, as 50% of people with disabilities do not engage in any physical activity. Participating in physical activity helps reduce obesity and prevent health problems, such as heart disease, breast cancer and debilitating stress-related illnesses like depression. Individuals with disabilities who participate in sports have higher self-esteem, better body images and higher rates of academic success; and are more likely to graduate from high school and matriculate in college; and experience greater career success and more options.

II. The Guidance

2. Does this guidance apply to high schools and colleges?

Yes. Section 504 applies to all educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance. That includes all levels of education—from elementary schools to high schools to colleges and universities. While the examples written in the recent Dear Colleague Letter are focused on the secondary schools, the key principles also hold true for the intercollegiate level as well.

3. Does this guidance also include private schools?

Potentially. The Rehab Act applies to all educational institutions, both **public** and **private**, that receive federal funds. Private high schools and colleges must comply with the Rehab Act (and accordingly this Dear Colleague Letter) when they receive some form of federal funding.

4. Does this Dear Colleague Letter create a new policy or law for schools?

No. The Dear Colleague Letter does not create any new policies, but merely serves to give further clarification to the existing regulations and policies set forth under Section 504. For years, regulations

have existed that require schools provide “equal opportunity for participation” for students with disabilities in interscholastic, club and intramural athletics. (34 C.F.R. § 104.34 (a)) The guidance simply provides schools with examples and further explanations of what an equal opportunity for students with disabilities looks like.

5. Does this guidance apply to individuals with both physical and intellectual disabilities?

Yes. This guidance defines an individual with a disability as a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. This includes students with cognitive as well as physical impairments.

III. Legal Obligations

6. Do schools have an obligation to provide equal extracurricular athletic opportunities for students with disabilities?

Yes. Schools are required to provide students with disabilities equal opportunities to participate in school’s extracurricular activities—including club, varsity and intramural sports programs.

7. What does it mean for schools to provide an equal opportunity for participation?

The legal definition of equal opportunity means that schools must conduct an individualized assessment of a student with disability to determine how to provide them with reasonable accommodations to include them to the fullest extent possible in athletic programs. A reasonable accommodation means that school systems must modify existing policies, practices or rules in order to include a student with a disability.

8. What qualifies as an individualized assessment of a student with disability?

An individualized assessment means that school systems must be able to evaluate a student with a disability based on the specific nature of their disability and the specific accommodations they need to participate in the athletic program. Essentially, it requires schools to be able to evaluate and adapt to students and programs on a case by case basis.

9. What determines whether an accommodation that the student with disability requests is reasonable?

A reasonable accommodation is one that does not fundamentally alter the nature of the services to provide the requested modification. A fundamental alteration of a sport competition rule occurs when a modification changes the essential competition and nature of the sport or gives the person with a disability a competitive advantage over non-disabled competitors.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include modifying the general rule that disqualifies swimmers who fail to use a two-handed touch when they approach the pool wall to finish a race in breast stroke in order to permit a one-handed student to qualify with a one-handed touch or modifying the rule in wrestling to require constant contact between the opponents so that a blind athlete can compete. For example, consider Jim Abbott, who played professional baseball and had a 3.92 earned run average in his rookie year. Abbott was born with one hand, and Major League Baseball made an accommodation to its general rule that all ball players had to wear specific,

league-approved gloves.

10. Must students with disabilities be allowed to participate in any athletic program offered by a school?

No. Students with disabilities, like any other student, must be qualified to participate in the athletic program or activity. School districts can require a level of skill or ability for a student to participate in sports, so long as the selection criteria are not discriminatory.

For example, if a deaf student needs to have a sign language interpreter in order to participate on a basketball team, that accommodation should be provided so the student has a chance to play. However, if the deaf student gets this accommodation and is cut from the team because she doesn't demonstrate the same level of ability as hearing players who make the team, the school is not discriminating against the student with a disability. If a visually impaired student needs a modification of a rule, such as requiring constant contact during a wrestling match, and the student cannot effectively compete even with this accommodation, the school has not discriminated in cutting the student from the team. A student with a prosthetic device may or may not have the skills needed to be goalie on his high school team, but she must have the opportunity to try out for the position.

11. Can schools refer students with disabilities to community-based adapted sports programs as a way to meet their obligations under the law?

No. Community-based adapted sports programs do not fulfill a school's obligation to provide individuals with disabilities with equal opportunities to participate in school athletic programs. Individuals with disabilities have the right to participate in both school-based and community-based athletics and recreation programs. Federal disability rights laws recognize these as distinct settings and require equal access to both.

IV. Devising Programs

12. Should schools create adapted teams or programs for individuals with disabilities?

Yes. Schools should create adapted programs for students with disabilities who cannot participate in the existing athletics programs even with reasonable accommodations.

Examples of adapted athletic programs include wheelchair basketball, wheelchair team handball, wheelchair football, wheelchair tennis, power soccer and beep baseball. However, even if an adapted sports team is developed for students with disabilities, an individual student with a disability must be allowed to participate in mainstream programs for students without disabilities. For example, if a school system offered a golf program as part of its mainstream athletic program and also offered an adapted golf program, an individual student with a disability must be permitted the opportunity to participate in the mainstream program and must be offered reasonable accommodations.

13. How do school systems know how to provide adapted or mainstream physical activity programs for students with disabilities?

School systems have the flexibility to devise programs to accommodate their students with disabilities that consider the specific needs, accommodations and abilities of the students in their communities.

Before creating such programs, school systems should review the numbers, ages and types of students with disabilities they serve, conduct outreach to these students and their families, and develop opportunities for participation. Numerous organizations and trained educators exist who can help schools design programs to accommodate students with disabilities.

For example, the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs has been leading the way in the development of inclusive programs for students with disabilities in the secondary school level for years and will be leading a national effort to devise expanded programs in response to the new OCR guidance. www.adaptedsports.org.

14. How can schools create adapted teams when the numbers of students with disabilities at an individual school are insufficient to field a team?

Schools must be flexible as they develop programs that consider the interests of students with disabilities. When the number of students with disabilities at an individual school is insufficient to field a team, school systems may:

- (1) develop district-wide teams as opposed to a school-based team in order to provide competitive experiences,
- (2) allow all players to compete in a wheelchair to help level the playing field which allows for more students with disabilities to engage in athletic programming,
- (3) mix male and female students on teams together,
- (4) combine elementary through high school age students on one team, where factors determining divisional placement are based on the functional ability of the players and not their age or grade level.
- (5) offer “allied sports” teams on which students with disabilities participate with students without disabilities, when there are not enough students with disabilities to field a team.

All of these options have been used by numerous school systems such as in Georgia, Maryland, and Minnesota.

15. How do schools deal with the issue of mixed sex teams?

If there are enough students to allow for it, distinct sex teams should be provided; however, the formation of adapted athletic teams must rely on the pool of available students. Rules governing adapted athletic programs allow for mixed-sex participation to ensure enough students.

16. With already limited funds and resources available for athletic programming, how can schools afford to expand opportunities for students with disabilities?

Schools have the flexibility to design programs and make accommodations to include students with disabilities in manners that take into account their existing facilities and resources.

For example, if a school sponsors a wheelchair division within its track and field program, it can reduce costs because the wheelchair team would use the same track as the mainstream program. Additionally, mainstreaming students with disabilities into preexisting programs also helps keep programming affordable. For example, track and field, tennis and swimming teams would provide new opportunities with minimal budget impact. Coordinating sport/team offerings district-wide and/or statewide will create efficiencies in team travel, equipment acquisition, coaching expertise, uniforms, facilities, etc. Additionally, equipment, such as sports wheelchairs can be used for multiple sports. Students who use a wheelchair for daily mobility may use their wheelchair to participate.

17. Can schools deny individuals with disabilities the right to use competition and training facilities due to concerns about equipment (wheelchair, prostheses) damaging playing surfaces?

No. Schools cannot deny access to competition and training facilities to students who use wheelchairs or prostheses based on misconceived notions of damaging playing surfaces.

Universities with athletics programs for students with disabilities report no unusual damage or wear to competition and training surfaces by wheelchairs or prostheses. In fact, the most common wear on track surfaces is caused by runners using lane one more than any other lane. Sprinting spikes are also known to cause wear and tear on track surfaces.

V. Participation

18. What types of participation opportunities are available for students with disabilities?

To allow students with disabilities to participate in athletics to the greatest extent possible, schools can provide the following participation opportunities:

- Mainstream programs—school-based activities that are developed and offered to all students. For example, providing visual cues for a deaf runner that is unable to hear the starting gun.
- Adapted athletic programs—programs that are specifically developed for students with disabilities. For example, wheelchair basketball teams.
- Allied or unified sports—programs that are specifically designed to combine groups of students with and without disabilities together in physical activity

19. Given the myriad disabilities and interests of people with disabilities, is it in fact fair to assume that students with disabilities are not as interested in sports participation as students without disabilities?

No. Students with disabilities are just as interested in sports participation as other students, and courts have repeatedly rejected the discriminatory reasoning that they are inherently less interested in playing sports.

One needs to look no further than to the dramatic increase in girls' and women's participation in sport since Title IX was passed in 1972 (by 456 percent at the college level and 904 percent in high schools) to understand that it was lack of opportunity—not lack of interest—that kept females out of high school and college athletics for so many years. As courts have noted, "interest and ability rarely develop in a vacuum; they evolve as a function of opportunity and experience."¹ The same reasoning applies for students with disabilities. The single factor depressing sports participation for students with disabilities is the failure of schools to add more adapted or mainstream opportunities for students with disabilities—not the lack of interest of those students to participate.

20. Would creating opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in athletics take away opportunities for students without disabilities?

¹ 101 F.3d 155, 178 (1st Cir. 1996) (holding that Brown University violated Title IX's effective accommodation requirement by eliminating women's varsity gymnastics and volleyball.)

No. Athletics is not a zero-sum environment in which the participation of students with disabilities comes at the expense of a loss of participation for students without disabilities. Opening teams to students with disabilities should not be viewed as a loss of participation for the mainstream teams, but a broadening of opportunities for students to compete that will only serve to expand the participation and growth of students in sports.

Furthermore, allowing a student with a disability to try out for the mainstream team breeds competition. Her/his participation should be viewed no differently than if another student joined the program and competed against the rest of the squad for a slot on the team. In the arena of sports, the most talented athlete gets to play; students with disabilities have just as much of a right to demonstrate their ability to fill that spot as students without disabilities.

21. Can schools automatically deny individuals with disabilities the right to participate in mainstream programs based on safety concerns?

No. School systems cannot assume that sports and physical activity participation with and against students with disabilities by students without disabilities is unsafe or make generalizations that students with disabilities cannot safely participate in physical education or athletics.

For example, in competition, recreation or teaching situations involving students without disabilities, a student in a wheelchair can generally participate in racing on the school track during gym class, intramural or interscholastic sports; a student who has only one leg can participate in wrestling; a student who is deaf or hard of hearing can participate in basketball; a student with diabetes may wear an insulin pump during football games.

If students with disabilities are excluded from participation in an athletic activity, it must be based on an individualized assessment that inclusion of the student presents an objective risk of harm. If, for example, a student using a wheelchair is not able to remain in her or his lane during a track event, the student could be excluded from track meets based on the demonstrated safety risk she or he creates for others in the race. However, when the student can demonstrate that she or he is able to control the wheelchair enough to negate the risk of harm, the student should be allowed to participate in the program.

22. Do the standard rules governing athletic participant eligibility (i.e., GPA, age) apply to students with disabilities?

Yes. However, where a student does not meet athletic eligibility standards due to their disability, an individualized assessment must be conducted to determine whether a reasonable accommodation (i.e. a waiver of the rule) can be made in order to include them in the program.

For example, rules governing adapted programs allow for participation of students in general and special education. Students receiving special education must be on track with their IEP goals.

VI. Grievances

23. Do schools have obligations to resolve grievances regarding inclusion in school based athletic programs?

Yes. A school district must adopt grievance procedures that provide for prompt and fair resolution of complaints regarding violations of Section 504. Appropriate due process standards must be integrated into these processes.

24. Do parents or students have other remedies available to them if they are unsatisfied with the school's resolution of their grievance?

Yes. Individuals have the right under Section 504 to file a complaint with the regional Office for Civil Rights (800-421-3481) or they may file a lawsuit with their own attorney or contact the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (www.AAASP.org) for further assistance.

VII. Misc. Questions

Note: These answers are derived from experts in disability sports policy, as they were not addressed in the guidance specifically.

A. In individual sports, should events for individuals with disabilities be awarded points in the same manner as events for individuals without disabilities?

Yes. Events for individuals with disabilities should be awarded points in the similar manner as events for individuals without disabilities.

For example, wheelchair track and field competitors who are on their high school track and field team, compete within the wheelchair division in the girls and boys meets and at the state level. Team points are awarded within that division. A school who wins the wheelchair division is also awarded a state championship title.

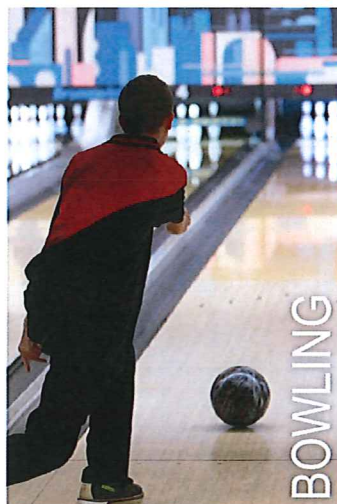
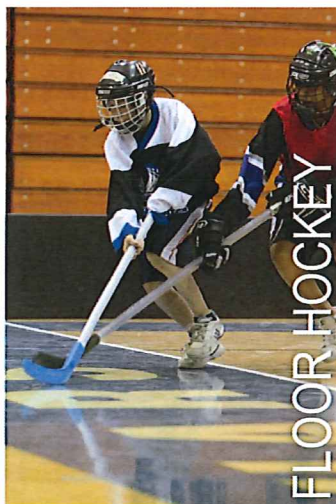
B. Do prostheses provide an unfair advantage in competition?

No. Having a missing limb and replacing that body part with a prosthetic does not give the athlete with a disability an advantage.

Contrary to popular thought, prostheses do not contain technological mechanisms that make the replacement part better than a real limb. For example, an athlete running with a prosthetic limb cannot correct for a foot hitting the ground at the wrong angle like an athlete running with feet and ankles. The athlete using a prosthetic lacks feet and ankle muscles and cartilage to absorb shock, which travels through her or his amputated legs and into the knees, hips and backs. Athletes with legs don't have swollen stumps or stumps that hurt and bleed due to their prostheses. In addition, in unilateral amputee studies, results indicate that the human ankle is three times more powerful than a carbon foot, and a unilateral amputee needs to generate more than twice as much power at the hips than a person without an amputation. The amputee with a prosthetic has to expend dramatically more energy than a non-amputee to run the same distance. These prosthetics are passive devices that do not generate any powered movement; they only return a percentage of what the athlete puts into them. As technology advances, sport governing bodies need to work with the athletes to determine fair parameters for mixed competition, i.e., runners without prostheses competing alongside amputee runners.



ADAPTED ATHLETIC PROGRAMS



ATHLETES ARE ATHLETES NO MATTER HOW THEY PARTICIPATE

Some of the rules are different. Some of the players may wheel themselves around the court, but the competition is just as intense—the thrill of the game the same—as for athletes anywhere. These student-athletes just happen to have health impairments that restrict them from participating in typical school sports.

In 1992 the Minnesota State High School League accepted a proposal from the Minnesota Association for Adapted Athletics to become the first high school activity association in the nation to sponsor adapted athletics for students with disabilities.

The Competition

The adapted athletic programs sanctioned by the League include soccer, floor hockey, bowling, and softball. These varsity level sports are played in two divisions: CI Division for students with a cognitive impairment and PI Division for those with a physical impairment. Soccer is played in the fall, floor hockey in winter, and softball and bowling in the spring.

Both CI and PI divisions play within the rules the National Federation of State High School Associations has established for soccer, hockey, and softball. However, these rules have been modified to meet the abilities of the students playing these sports.

Eligibility

Students who are under 22 years of age and fully enrolled in grades 7 through 12 can play in any of the adapted sports the League sponsors. Students in an ungraded setting are first eligible when they or their peers are in the seventh grade. They are then eligible for a maximum of 12 consecutive semesters, starting when they or their same-age peers are first enrolled in the seventh grade.

Rule Modifications

Modification to the competition rules for adapted athletics moves softball, soccer and hockey games from traditional open fields and ice arenas to large gymnasiums, which allows students with mobility impairments to participate.

Examples of rule modifications, which coaches and officials annually review for fairness and equity for all students, include the use of:

- felt-covered soccer balls
- double bases at every base position
- whiffle balls and hollow Safe-T-Play bats
- felt hockey pucks and plastic sticks

The Teams

Most school districts that participate in the adapted athletics program field cooperative coed teams of boys and girls from schools throughout the district. Teams play a full schedule of games over an 8 to 10 week season. School teams in the PI Division compete against other schools that have PI teams. CI Division school teams compete against others in the CI Division.

Recognition

During the regular sport season, teams compete for conference championships, individual conference honors, and other appropriate recognition such as Prep Athlete of the Week. Schools also recognize student athletes at pepfests, in the school newspaper; and athletes may be eligible for athletic letters, letter jackets, and membership in athletic letter clubs.

State Tournaments

Post-season play includes the state tournaments the Minnesota State High School League sponsors in each of the four sports. Every adapted athletic team is eligible to compete in the tournaments either in the PI Division or in the CI Division.

Teams receive certificates, medals, and trophies for their performances at the state tournaments. They may also earn all-tournament team honors.

Q: What is an Adapted Athletic Program?

A: An Adapted Athletic Program is an interscholastic sport program that's modified for students with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Q: How are Adapted Athletics Programs funded?

A: Many programs are funded through the local school's athletic department. Others receive funding from special education, community education, or a combination of all three funding sources.

Q: How does a school district start an Adapted Athletics Program?

A: Contact the local athletic director and make known your interest to begin an adapted athletic program in your district. Work with the special education department to identify students who are eligible to participate in the program. Find a knowledgeable and experienced person to coach the team(s).

Q: What is a cooperative adapted athletics program?

A: An athletic program comprised of two or more schools to form a team.

OFFICIAL PROGRAM \$5.00

M I N N E S O T A



2012

November
16-17

*Adapted
Soccer
2012*



Adapted
SOCCER

State Tournament

Stillwater Area High School

**WELLS
FARGO**

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

OFFICIAL PROGRAM \$5.00

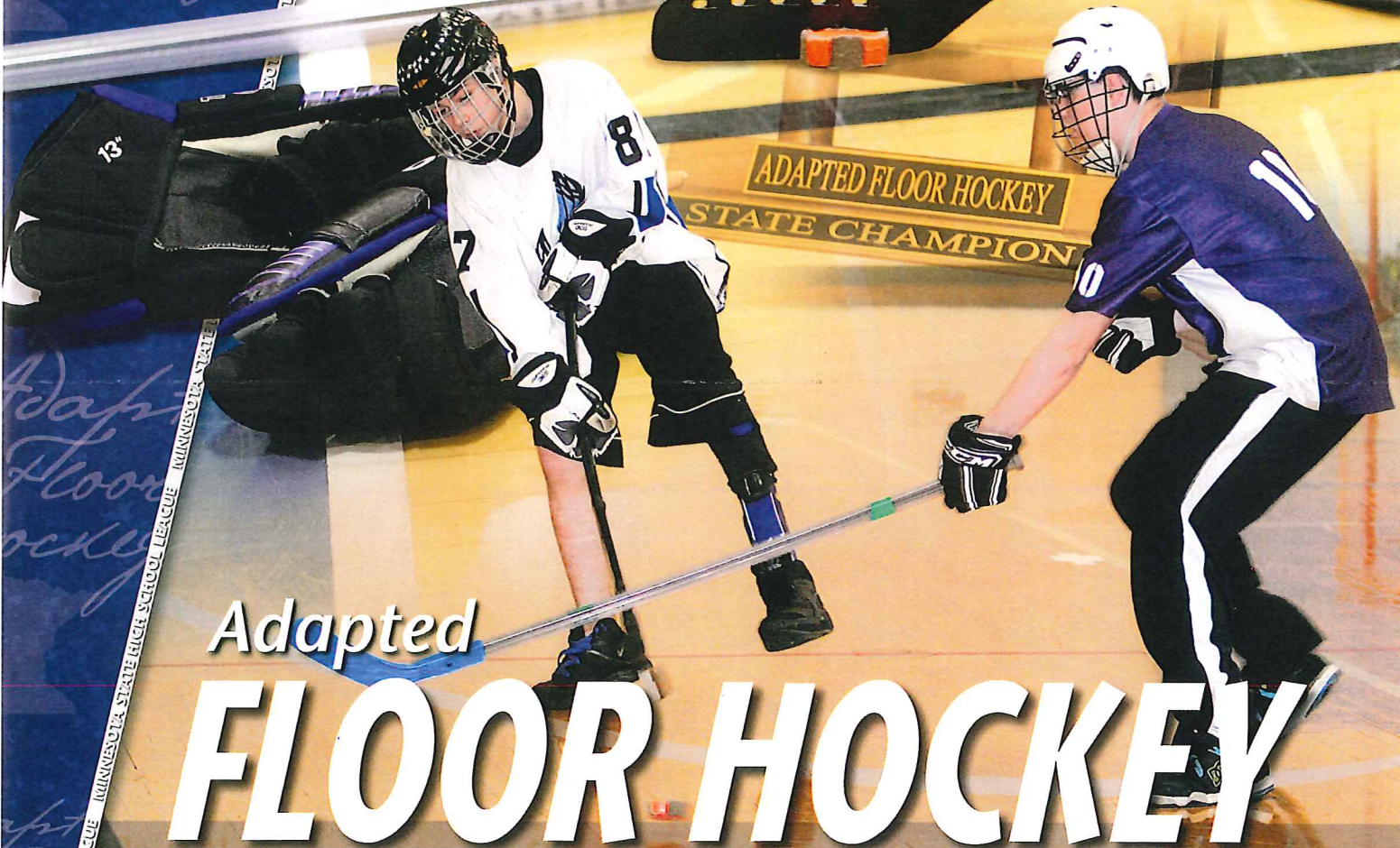
M I N N E S O T A



2013

March
15-16

*Floor
Hockey
2013*



Adapted

FLOOR HOCKEY

State Tournament

Bloomington Jefferson High School



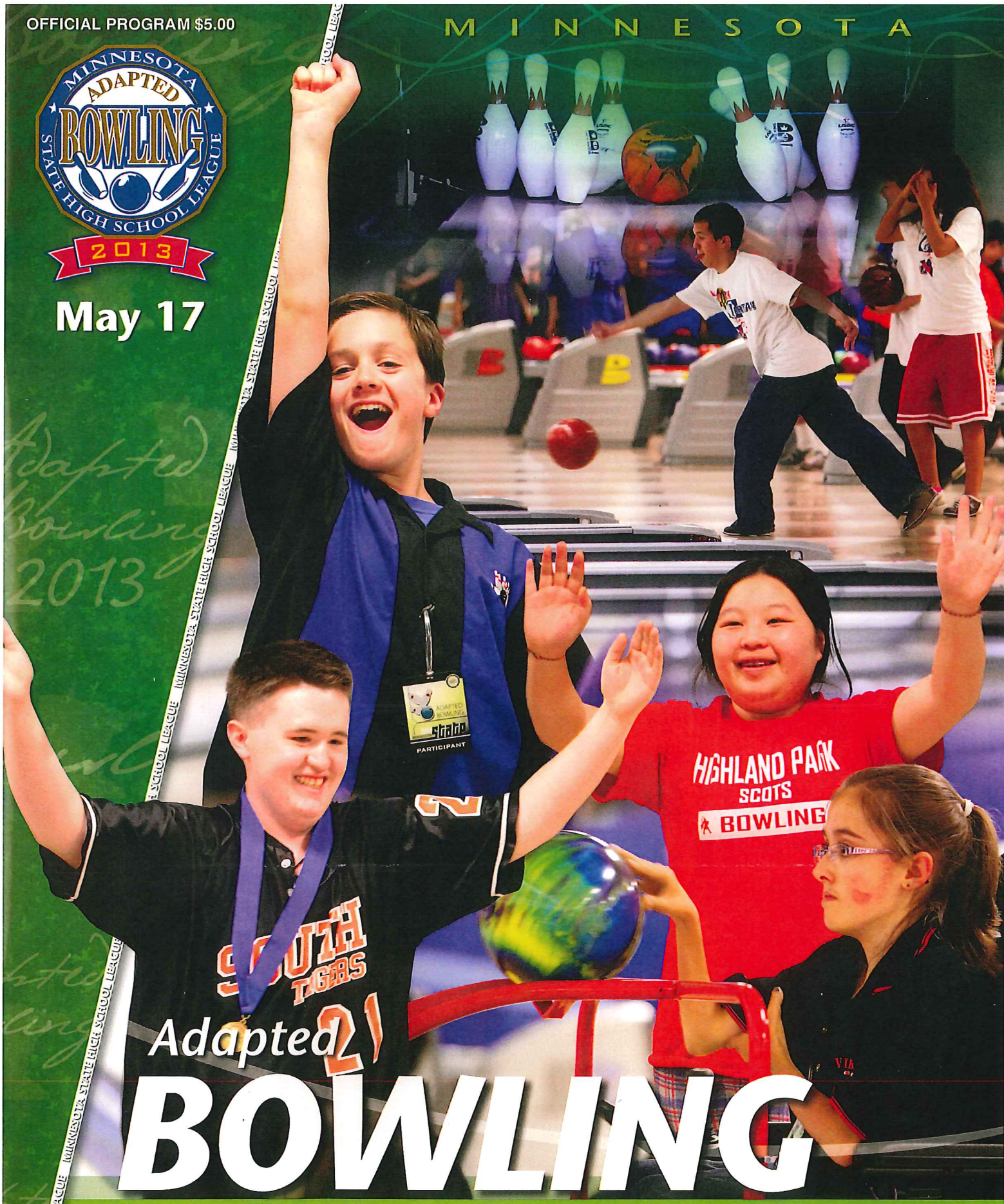
OFFICIAL PROGRAM \$5.00

MINNESOTA



2013

May 17



Adapted

BOWLING

State Tournament

Brunswick Zone, Brooklyn Park

WELLS FARGO

OFFICIAL PROGRAM \$5.00

M I N N E S O T A



May 31,
June 1



Adapted
SOFTBALL

State Tournament

Coon Rapids High School



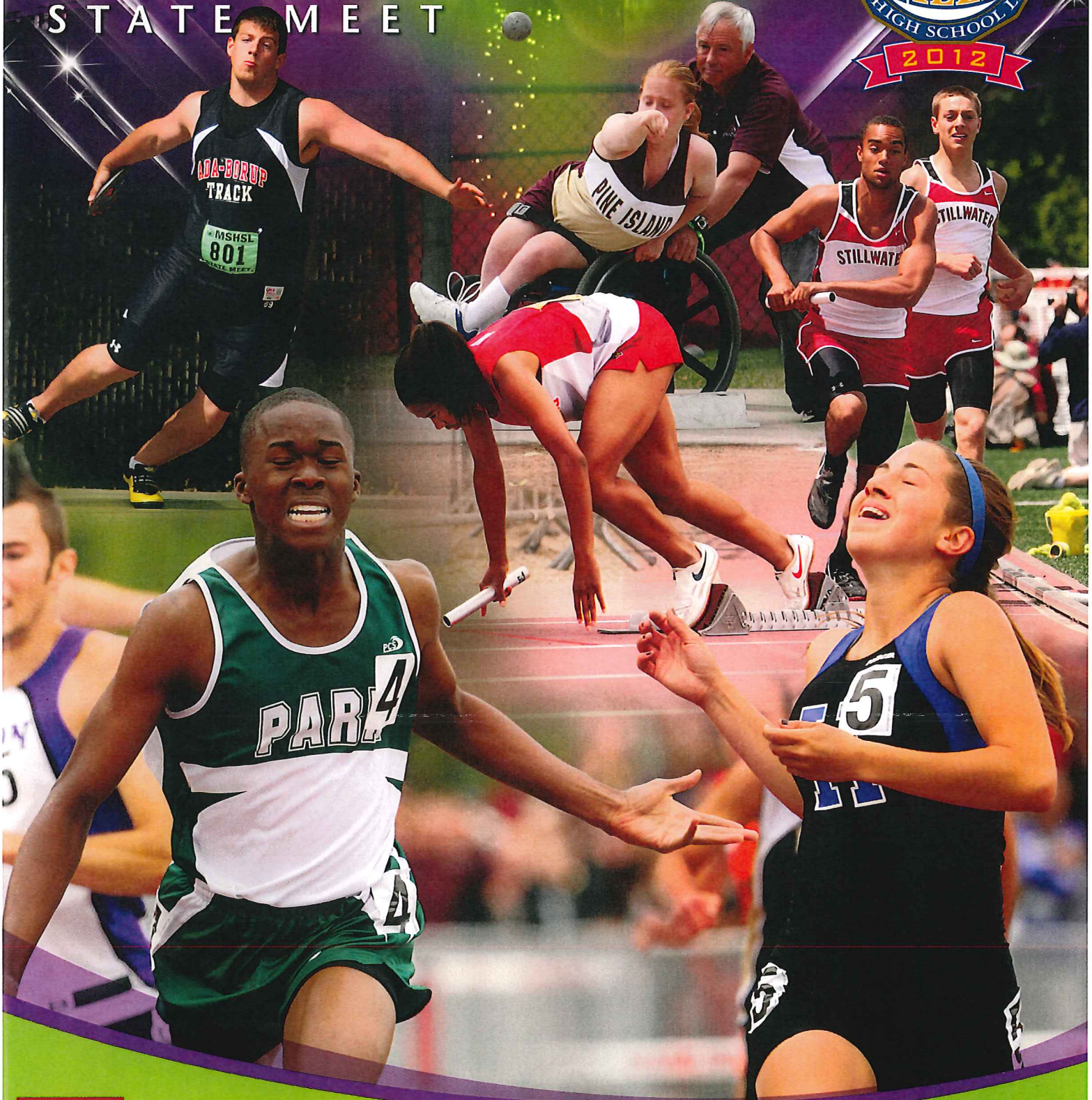
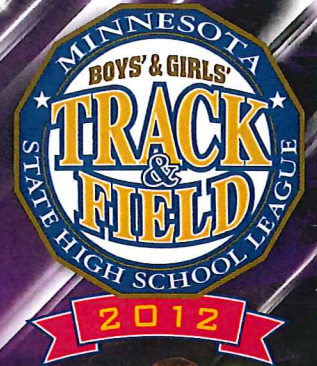
BOYS' & GIRLS'



OFFICIAL PROGRAM \$5.00

Track & Field

STATE MEET



WELLS
FARGO

June 8-9
Hamline University, St. Paul

Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka captures fourth consecutive PI crown; Anoka-Hennepin claims second consecutive CI title

By Steve Hurt & Ellen Rajkowski

The Robins of Robbinsdale/Hopkins/ Mound Westonka claimed their fourth consecutive PI crown and their sixth overall at the 2011 State Adapted Soccer Tournament. They defeated Anoka-Hennepin 3-0 in the championship game.

In the CI Division, the Mustangs of Anoka-Hennepin earned their second consecutive title after defeating St. Cloud Area 3-2. The victory also gave the Mustangs their third CI crown overall.

The tournament is divided into two divisions. The CI Division is for athletes with cognitive impairments, and the PI Division is for athletes with physical or other impairments.

CI Division

Anoka-Hennepin (12-0) capped a perfect season by winning its second consecutive CI crown and its third overall with a 3-2 victory over St. Cloud Area (10-2). The Mustangs, who won their first title in 1993, entered the tournament as the top seed in the North Division. The St. Cloud Area Thunder were the No. 2 seed in the North Division.

Senior Tyler Kurkowski scored the first two goals for Anoka-Hennepin and sophomore Rodney Crawford netted the game-winner. Junior keeper Jeff Shogren earned the victory for the Mustangs, stopping 11 shots. Senior Marcelli Kombo scored both goals for St. Cloud Area and senior keeper Sergio Rodriguez turned away 28 shots to keep the Thunder in the game.

For the second consecutive year, Anoka-Hennepin began its title trek with a dominating win over Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeville. The Mustangs defeated the Blazing Cats 13-2 in 2010 and 11-4 this year. Senior Zach Theroux led the way with six goals for the Mustangs and Rodney Crawford added three goals and one assist.

Senior Jake Wilson scored three goals and junior Brendan Wong added one goal for the Blazing Cats. Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeville's ninth-grade goalie Michael Burns made 36 saves, many of them outstanding, but the defending champs were relentless.

Theroux once again led his squad in scoring, putting four goals in the net, as Anoka-Hennepin defeated Park Center 7-3 in the semifinals. The game was a rematch of 2010 championship tilt, which the Mustangs won 5-4. Kurkowski netted the remaining three goals for the Mustangs and seventh-grader Cole Denny added two assists. Senior Jack Dougba led Park

2011 REVIEW

Center with two goals and one assist and junior Augie Wodrich added one goal and one assist.

St. Cloud Area overwhelmed South Suburban 12-4 in the quarterfinals. Marcelli Kombo set a new state tournament record with 10 goals and eighth-graders Doug Smith and Brianna Court added one goal apiece for the Thunder. Smith also earned the win in the net, making 30 saves. Junior Rory Gaston scored all four goals for the Jets.

In the semifinals, St. Cloud Area squeaked by Mounds View/Irondale/Roseville with a 1-0 victory. Kombo scored the lone goal of the game with just under seven minutes to play and Sergio Rodriguez made 25 saves to preserve the shutout.

Park Center rebounded to take third-place honors after defeating Mounds View/Irondale/Roseville 5-2. Augie Wodrich and senior Alpha Johnson each netted a pair of goals for the Pirates and Jack Dougba scored the fifth. Senior Chris Clelland scored both goals for the Rams

while junior Bruce Matusovic, junior John Paulsen, and senior Corey Geske teamed up to stop 31 shots.

The Hawks of Dakota United earned consolation honors for a third consecutive year with a 12-4 win over South Suburban. Junior Joe Sandey scored four goals and senior Quintin Nicolay, junior Ricky Arends, and senior Austin Harmon, added two goals apiece in the victory. Sophomore keeper Ben Harmon stopped 11 shots for Dakota United. Rory Gaston led the Jets with three goals and junior keeper Sam Cashin made 21 saves.

PI Division

The Robins of Robbinsdale/Hopkins/ Mound Westonka (10-0-1) capped their season with a 3-0 victory over Anoka-Hennepin (7-5) and their fourth consecutive PI championship. This year, the Robins were the top seed in the North Division and the Mustangs were the No. 4 seed in the North Division.

This was the sixth overall PI championship for the Robins. They won as Robbinsdale in 1995 and under their current name in 2005, 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Continued on page 27



An unidentified Anoka-Hennepin player heads the ball to Cole Denny (4) as Josef VonMende (68) looks on during the CI championship. The Anoka-Hennepin Mustangs captured their second consecutive title with a 3-2 victory over St. Cloud Area.

MINNESOTA PREP PHOTO / MinPrepPhoto.com

Background on the Minnesota Association for Adapted Athletics

HISTORY

The Minnesota Association for Adapted Athletics (MAAA) was initially organized for physical and other health impaired (PI) students.

Indoor floor hockey competition began in 1975 with a three-team league, all from the Minneapolis area: two teams from Marshall-University High School; and one team from Courage Center with players from several suburban schools. The league has since grown to include students from 62 schools from the Twin Cities metropolitan and suburban area, and as far reaching as Winona & Rochester to Brainerd in greater Minnesota.

In the fall of 1990, the mentally handicapped (C I) division was established, with teams competing from Anoka, St. Paul, Mounds View, Bloomington/Edina, Eden Prairie, Richfield and Robbinsdale.

MISSION

The mission of the Minnesota Association for Adapted Athletics is to provide youth with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to enjoy the benefits of a quality high school sports program.

GOAL

The MAAA program is modeled after the Minnesota State High School League, to enable

students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to enjoy the benefits of a quality sports program. In November 1992, the MAAA program was adopted by the Minnesota State High School League, which will guide its development.

BENEFITS

The MAAA program provides physical, social and psychological development to students with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. Through experience in sports, the athlete gains confidence and builds a positive self-image associated with success, which carries over into the classroom, home, job, and community.

ELIGIBILITY

The MAAA has two divisions: P I Division and C I Division. Students fully enrolled in and attending school, grades 7 through 12, are eligible to be placed on the roster. Students in an ungraded setting are first eligible when they or their peers are in the seventh grade. They are eligible for a maximum of 8 consecutive semesters (four years), beginning when they or their same age peers enter into the ninth grade.

C I DIVISION – Cognitively Impaired

P I DIVISION – Physically Impaired

Go to the MSHSL Web Site at www.mshsl.org for a complete definition of eligibility requirements.

COMPETITION

Interscholastic "Round Robin" schedule with students competing in Indoor Soccer, Floor Hockey and Indoor Softball are provided in both divisions (P I & C I). The Minnesota State High School League will continue to sponsor State tournaments in the above activities, as well as a Bowling tournament which began in the spring of 2000.

Student-athletes with varying disabilities compete co-educationally representing their school or representing school districts playing on blended teams.

Student-athletes play a full schedule of games over an 8-to-10 week period with team awards earned for the conference championship, as well as for individual All Conference athlete awards.

Student-athletes are recognized by their schools at pepfests, in the school newspaper, and may be eligible for the same athletic letters awarded to able-bodied athletes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Write: Adapted Athletics, MSHSL
2100 Freeway Blvd.
Brooklyn Center MN 55430-1735
Phone: Rich Matter, Tournament Director,
MSHSL, 763-560-2262

2011 REVIEW *(Continued from page 5)*

Seventh-grader Chaun Johnson captured a pass from ninth-grader Jeremy Jost with just under four minutes to play in the first half, and the Robins took a 1-0 advantage into the break. Junior Mike Madson and Jost scored goals early in the second half and junior goalie Charlie Wittmer made 16 saves to preserve the win.

Robbinsdale / Hopkins / Mound Westonka opened the tournament with a 17-3 romp over Minneapolis South. Madson led the way with five goals and sophomore Tyler Sarff and senior Alex Charlton added two apiece. Seniors Andy Madson and Joseph Besner also had two assists each for the Robins. Junior Karl Haight scored all three goals for the Tigers.

In a rematch of the 2010 championship, the Robins again slipped past Dakota United. In 2010, the Robins won 8-1; this year, the score was 5-2. Mike Madson scored four goals for the Robins and Chaun Johnson added one. Dakota United was led by eighth-grader Grayson Nicolay and junior Lance Estep with one goal each.

Senior Alyssa Lilledahl and junior Corey Gieske each scored one goal apiece as the Anoka-Hennepin Mustangs defeated the South Suburban Flyers in the quarterfinals. Senior Karen Kreidler tallied the lone goal for the Flyers.

Gieske and Lilledahl paced Anoka-Hennepin again in the semifinals. Gieske netted three goals and Lilledahl added one as the Mustangs defeated Park Center 4-2. Junior Jake



ALL-TIME RECORD-SETTER

MICHAEL BURNS

*Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeville
Most Saves One Game – 36 (tie)

Heater and ninth-grader Nathan Liter scored the only goals for Park Center.

Dakota United came back to earn third-place honors after defeating Park Center 4-3 in overtime. Grayson Nicolay scored his second goal of the game with 43 seconds left in the extra period to secure the Hawks' victory. Park Center's Nathan Liter scored his third goal of the game with one second remaining in regulation to send the game to overtime.

In the consolation championship, South



ALL-TIME RECORD-SETTER

MARCELLI KOMBO

*St. Cloud Area
Most Goals One Game – 10

Suburban defeated Mounds View/Irondale/Roseville 8-3. Karen Kreidler and junior Dequan Williams each scored three goals in the victory and senior goalie Nick Nieson made 13 saves. Senior Mark Braun tallied two goals for the Rams and eighth-grader Luke Pfeifer added one more.

The 2011 State Adapted Soccer Tournament was held at Stillwater Area High School on November 18-19. Paid attendance was 1,023.

2013-2014 MSHSL Rules and Policies

Official Bylaws for Adapted Soccer

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 501](#) for information regarding:

- Maximum Number of Contests

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 502](#) for information regarding:

- Daily and Season Player Participation Limitations

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 514](#) for information regarding:

- Adapted Athletics Eligibility Requirements
- Contests
- Equipment Issued
- Last Date to Join a Team
- Practice Sessions before First Contest
- Season Begins

ELIGIBILITY DURING MSHSL TOURNAMENTS (sub-section, section and state) (Refer to Bylaw 206): A student must be fully eligible under all local school district policies and MSHSL bylaws to be in uniform, occupy the bench or playing area, participate and receive individual and/or team awards, including all-tournament honors, in the awards ceremony.

CONTEST RULES (Refer to Bylaw 402): Except as modified by the League, the National Federation of High School Association rules for the current year shall be the official game rules for all interscholastic contests in which League members participate. See the [Supplemental Rules](#) for more information.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN LEAGUE-SPONSORED TOURNAMENTS (Refer to Bylaw 405): A member school must schedule a minimum of three interscholastic varsity games, meets or matches to qualify for League-sponsored tournament participation in that sport.

END OF SEASON (Refer to Bylaw 411)

A. Student Participation on a Non-School Team While the Season is Still in Progress:

- 1) The season shall end when the student or the student's team has been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series.
- 2) Students who have been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series may participate as an individual or as a member of a non-school team in that sport.

B. School Team Practice and Competition:

The "end of season" shall be defined to be the last date of the state tournament in that sport.

- 1) Schools may continue to conduct practice and training for all squad members, including the students who have been eliminated from further individual competition in a League-sponsored series, until completion of the state tournament conducted by the League in that activity.
- 2) Dual contests may be scheduled after the start of the official League tournament series providing the school does not exceed the maximum number of games/matches/meets permitted in that activity.

C. No school may engage in any meet or meets, practice, training or other activities between the end of the season and the opening of the next season.

D. During the Summer Vacation Period (Bylaw 208 3 Non-School Competition and Training—Team and Individual Sports) members of a high school team may participate on a non-school team and they may receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport provided the school has approved a summer coaching waiver for the coach or coaches of that sport.

GENERAL INFORMATION

See **General Section** of the Athletic Rules and Policies Manual for information regarding the following:

- Athletic Director's Checklist
- Coaches Responsibility; Student Eligibility Checklist
- Multiple Level Teams at Sub-Varsity Levels
- Official Squad Size
- Revenue Sharing
- Substitution in League Tournaments
- Weather Conditions (heat, cold, lightning)

RULE MODIFICATIONS

See the [Supplemental Rules on MSHSL website](#) for more information.

GAME MISCONDUCT PENALTY: A game misconduct penalty is an ejection under League policies. The player or coach will be removed from that game for its duration and is ejected for the next game (s) according to the MSHSL Policy for Student/Coach Ejection from a contest.

GAME DISQUALIFICATION: A game disqualification penalty is an ejection under League policies.

OFFICIAL MSHSL POLICIES FOR THE CONDUCT OF ADAPTED SOCCER

VIDEO TAPING ANOTHER SCHOOL'S GAME It shall be an ethical violation to tape another school's game, meet or contest without their permission. Further it may be a violation of the laws governing copyrights. Each school owns the copyrights to their games, meets and contests. Taping another schools game without permission could constitute a violation of the copyright law.

SUSPENDED GAMES: Games that have been suspended before the completion of the first half, or are tied at the point of suspension, shall be replayed from the start.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR STATE ADAPTED SOCCER TOURNAMENT

[SEE MSHSL WEBSITE FOR STATE TOURNAMENT PROGRAM INFORMATION DEADLINES](#)

STATE TOURNAMENT DATES AND SITE: November 15-16, 2013; Stillwater Area High School.

STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFYING: The top eight teams based on season records will advance to the state tournament.

OFFICIAL SQUAD

- A. 22 players
- B. 2 Student Managers
- C. 3 Coaches

AWARDS

STATE

- A. Certificates of Participation: To each student member of the official squad.
- B. Certificates of Recognition: To the head coach and the assistant coach(es) of each team.
- C. Medals: To all members of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams.
- D. Medals: To the head coach and assistant coach(es) of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.
- E. Trophies: To champion, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place teams and winner of consolation.
- F. Plaques: To the 6th, 7th and 8th place teams.

It is a violation of MSHSL Policy for a member school or a representative of a member school to establish, distribute or accept any awards not provided by the MSHSL for section or state tournaments.

STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFYING SCHOOL INFORMATION

Specific information for qualifying schools is available on the MSHSL Administrative Web site under Tournament Information.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECTATOR CONDUCT (8/9/05)

In order to elevate standards of sportsmanship and encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students, member schools, fans and school personnel, the MSHSL held a Sportsmanship Summit and asked student participants to identify behavior expectations they felt should be in place at every school event.

These minimum behavior expectations provide a foundation upon which member schools, conferences, administrative regions and the League's Board of Directors can build specific guidelines for activities under their control.

MSHSL Bylaw 409, **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING TEAMS, STUDENTS AND SPECTATORS**, speaks to this issue directly, and Bylaw 409-2 specifically states that, "School officials shall be held responsible for the proper conduct of teams, team members, students and home spectators regardless of where the contest is being held."

In all MSHSL activities, each participating school shall designate a person or persons from that school to serve as crowd control supervisors or chaperones. MSHSL tournament staff may require school administrators to contact the tournament manager prior to the start of the tournament game so that they can be immediately contacted to respond to behavioral issues regarding their team members, students and/or spectators at the tournament site. Each supervisor or chaperone should be immediately identifiable to the students and to the tournament site ushers and other security personnel. This will help to coordinate crowd control between school supervisors and tournament site personnel.

MSHSL MINIMAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR REGULAR AND POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT COMPETITIONS:

- Respect the American flag and the National Anthem.
- Spectators must wear clothing that covers the entire torso. Those who do not comply or who wear clothing that is vulgar, obscene or that in some other way inappropriate, as determined by school/tournament personnel, will be removed from the arena/stadium if they do not cooperate with this behavior expectation.
- The use of appropriate language is expected at all times. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable and must be immediately addressed by school and/or tournament administrators.
- Respect the game/contest. Under no condition shall anyone other than the members of the official squad enter the playing surface. No one may interfere with the contest in any way.
- Hand held signs, which do not obstruct the view of others, will be permitted provided they are in good taste. Signs, message boards, "white" boards or other similar items contest/tournament officials deem to be in poor taste will be removed.
- Signs on sticks, balloons, or any other type of artificial, celebratory items are not permitted.
- Artificial noise makers (i.e. megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, and other similar items) are not allowed.
- Laser lights are strictly prohibited.

THANK YOU for supporting your student athletes and fine arts participants and for providing a positive environment in which educational activities are conducted.

To: School Administrators/Coaches of MSHSL Adapted Athletic Teams
 From: Rich Matter, MSHSL Adapted Athletics
 Date: July 2004
 Subject: **Eligibility Requirement Clarifications**

ADAPTED ATHLETICS – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

The MSHSL has two competitive interscholastic divisions: Physically Impaired (PI) and Cognitively Impaired (CI). Participation in the interscholastic program of a high school is limited to students in grades 7 through 12. Students in an ungraded setting are first eligible when their age peers are in the 7th grade. Student will be eligible for 8 consecutive semester (4 years), beginning with their or their peers initial entrance into the 9th grade.

The MSHSL requires a sports qualifying exam every three (3) years for participants in competitive athletics. The MSHSL acknowledges that some students with disabilities, like some students without disabilities, will be unable to participate in adapted athletics due to the competitive nature of the programs and for reasons unrelated to their disability. Like other students who do not "make the team", these students should be directed to alternative programs which are less competitive and more recreational in nature.

Students may not participate in both PI and CI divisions. If a student participates in both divisions the penalty for the use of an ineligible player will be enforced and result in an automatic forfeiture of the game.

A. PI Division – The MSHSL Adapted Athletics PI Division program is specifically intended for students with physical impairments who have medical clearance to compete in competitive athletics. A student is eligible to compete in the PI Division with one of the following criteria.

The student must have a diagnosed and documented impairment specified from one of the two sections below: (Must be diagnosed and documented by a Physician and/or Physicians Assistant):

- 1) Neuromuscular, postural/skeletal, traumatic, growth, or neurological impairment that affects motor function, modifies gait patterns, or requires the use of a prosthesis or a mobility device including but not limited to, canes, crutches, or wheelchairs.
- 2) Cardio/respiratory impairment that is deemed safe for competitive athletics but limits the intensity and duration of physical exertion such that sustained activity for over five minutes at 60% of maximum heart rate for age results in physical distress in spite of appropriate management of the health condition.

Note: A condition that can be appropriately managed with appropriate medications, which eliminate physical or health endurance limitations, will NOT be considered to be eligible for adapted athletics.

Specific exclusions to PI competition:

The following health conditions **without coexisting physical impairments as outlined above** do not qualify the student to participate in the PI Division even though some of the conditions below may be considered Health Impairments by an individual's physician, student's school, or a government agency. This list is not all-inclusive and the conditions are examples of non-qualifying health conditions; other health impairments that are not listed below may also be non-qualifying for participation in the PI Division.

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)
- Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders (including Asperger's Syndrome)
- Tourette's Syndrome
- Neurofibromatosis
- Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)
- Blindness
- Deafness
- Obesity
- Depression
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- Asthma
- Reactive Airway Disease (RAD)
- Seizure Disorder
- Other Similar Disorders

B. CI Division – The MSHSL Adapted Athletics CI Division program is specifically intended for students with cognitive impairments who have medical clearance to compete in competitive athletics. A student is eligible to compete in the CI Division with the following criteria.

The student must have a diagnosed and documented cognitive impairment. Cognitively impaired refers to students with sub-average intellectual function defined by a **Full Scale** intelligence quotient of 70 or below, using a standardized, nationally-normed, technically adequate, and individually administered intelligence test.

Specific exclusions from CI competition:

A student becomes ineligible to participate in Adapted Athletics when they have attained a level of cognitive performance that exceeds the eligibility requirements. A student whose Full Scale IQ score increased above 70 after the start of a season will be permitted to complete that sports season.

Challenges to a student's eligibility to participate in PI and CI adapted athletics:

A school may file a written challenge regarding a student's eligibility to participate in Adapted Athletics based on the qualifications stated above. Challenges must be submitted within 24 hours of the end of the game in which an alleged ineligible player participated. A challenge submitted after the deadline will not be honored. The student shall remain eligible during the review process. The committee's findings will be final and follow the student through the remaining years of eligibility unless there is a change in physical or cognitive status.

Upon receipt of a written challenge the MSHSL will activate the following review process:

- A. Request of a brief statement from the school/coach supporting the eligibility of the athlete.
- B. Review of the school's/coach's submission and the school's supporting data (testing, medical history, school documentation) by one reviewer who will submit a brief written statement regarding the eligibility status.
- C. Appeal Process: If the initial finding is appealed, a panel of three (3) reviewers will be convened. Two (2) of these reviewers must be from different disciplines (MD, Adapted PE teacher, PT, etc). The school/coach will be asked to submit a video of the player during a game or during PE class that will best demonstrate the disability. The video will be at the schools expense.

November 16, 2005

To: Adapted Athletic Coaches, Athletic Directors, and Schools

From: Rich Matter, MSHSL Adapted Athletics

Re: Participating on Special Olympics Poly Hockey Teams and MSHSL Adapted Floor Hockey Teams during the high school season is a violation of MSHSL Bylaw 208

The League office, with the recommendation of the Metro Association for Adapted Athletics Board of Directors, will enforce MSHSL Bylaw 208 for Adapted Floor Hockey teams. Bylaw 208 states in summary: **“A student who is a member of a high school team may not participate as an individual competitor or as a member of a non-school team in the same sport during the high school season”.**

The League reviewed the Special Olympics Poly Hockey program and has determined that it would be a violation of Bylaw 208 for a student of the high school team to participate on a Special Olympics Poly Hockey team during the Floor Hockey season.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Rich Matter at 763-569-0497 or rmatter@mshsl.org.



Minnesota State High School League

2100 Freeway Boulevard, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430-1735 (763) 560-2262



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Competitive Section Assignments

The following is a list of new competitive sections for the 2013-2014 school year.

This list can be viewed by sport or by school or a combination of both. Select from the appropriate pull-down menu to find your information.

Section Assignments are determined by [School Enrollments](#) and [Activity Classifications](#), using the following [Method to Determine Classification](#).

Activity	School
Adapted Soccer, CI	All Schools
View Competitive Section Assignments	

Adapted Soccer, CI
 Class: 0
 Section: 1
 20 teams in this section
[0 Map](#)
 Administered by Region State

- Minneapolis Edison High School
- St. Paul Humboldt High School
- White Bear Lake Area High School
- Coop: 52 "Anoka-Hennepin Mustangs"
 Andover High School
 Anoka High School
 Blaine High School (HOST)
 Champlin Park High School
 Coon Rapids High School
- Coop: 55 "South Suburban Jets"
 Bloomington Jefferson High School (HOST)
 Bloomington Kennedy High School
 Eden Prairie High School
 Edina High School
 Richfield High School
- Coop: 82 "North Suburban"
 Centennial High School (HOST)
 Spring Lake Park High School
- Coop: 86 "Chaska/Chanhassen/Prior Lake/Shakopee"
 Chanhassen High School
 Chaska High School (HOST)
 Prior Lake High School
 Shakopee High School
- Coop: 104 "Columbia Heights - St. Anthony Village"
 Columbia Heights High School (HOST)
 St. Anthony Village High School
- Coop: 227 "Mounds View/Irondale/Roseville"
 Irondale High School (HOST)
 Mounds View High School
 Roseville Area High School
- Coop: 294 "Minneapolis Roosevelt"
 Minneapolis North Community H.S.
 Minneapolis Patrick Henry H. S.
 Minneapolis Roosevelt High School (HOST)
 Minneapolis South High School
 Minneapolis Southwest High School
 Minneapolis Washburn High School
- Coop: 327 "North/Tartan"
 North High School (HOST)
 Tartan High School
- Coop: 345 "Park Center Pirates"
 Maple Grove High School
 Osseo High School
 Park Center High School (HOST)
- Coop: 375 "Robbinsdale/Hopkins/MoundWest"
 Hopkins High School
 Mound Westonka High School
 Robbinsdale Armstrong High School
 Robbinsdale Cooper High School (HOST)
- Coop: 382 "Dakota United Hawks"
 Apple Valley High School
 Eagan High School
 Eastview High School
 Hastings High School
 Henry Sibley High School
 Rosemount High School (HOST)
 Simley High School
 South Saint Paul High School
- Coop: 394 "St. Cloud Area Thunder"
 Sartell-Saint Stephen High School
 Sauk Rapids-Rice High School
 St. Cloud Apollo High School (HOST)
 St. Cloud Tech High School
- Coop: 409 "Saint Paul Johnson Governors"
 St. Paul Central High School
 St. Paul Como Park H.S.
 St. Paul Harding High School
 St. Paul Highland Park
 St. Paul Johnson High School (HOST)
- Coop: 440 "Stillwater Area/St. Croix Prep"
 St. Croix Preparatory Academy
 Stillwater Area High School (HOST)
- Coop: 478 "Wayzata/Minnetonka Lakers"
 Minnetonka High School
 Wayzata High School (HOST)

Coop: 753 "Burnsville/Farm/Lakeville"
Burnsville High School
Farmington High School
Lakeville North High School
Lakeville South High School (HOST)
Coop: 837 "So Washington Cty Thunderbolts"
East Ridge High School (HOST)
Park High School
Woodbury High School



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