

Minutes of the Athletes with Disabilities Advisory Committee
September 20, 2023

The IHSA Athletes with Disabilities Advisory Committee met virtually on Wednesday, September 20, 2023. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. Voting Committee members present were: John Woods, Athletic Director, Libertyville; Kevin McKeown, Activities Director, Tinley Park (Andrew); Brian Clausen, Athletic Director, Bartonville (Limestone); Heather Greer, Principal, Pleasant Plains; Todd Hannaford, Athletic Director, Bethalto (Civic Memorial). Other guests and non-voting members were: Jen Kelso, Special Olympics; Kraig Garber; IHSA Asst. Executive Director.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:

No Recommendations were made at this time.

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

The committee had the opportunity to view all items submitted to Kraig Garber. Listed below are the topics that received discussion from members of the committee.

1. IHSA administrator, Kraig Garber, provided a summary of the participation in the disabled division for all sports in which one exists.
2. Special Olympics Administrator, Jen Kelso, provided an overview of Unified Sports offered in partnership with the IHSA as well as other Unified Sports offered by Special Olympics.
 - a. Unified E-Sports is on the horizon.
 - b. Unified Dance remains as exhibition activity at the IHSA State Finals for Dance. Special Olympics is working to build more interest.
 - c. Unified Basketball continues to grow and may be reaching a point of having to conduct a sectional round.
 - d. Unified Bass Fishing numbers continue to ebb and flow from year to year, but interest continues to remain consistent in the activity.
 - e. Unified Track and Field is the fastest growing Unified sport. Special Olympics is looking to increase from 5-8 regionals in 2025.
3. Special Olympics of Illinois is looking to hire someone to manage and promote Unified growth and E-Sports.
4. Special Olympics of Illinois has been working on revamping their webpage. The committee was informed that it should be done this year. The page will be linked to the IHSA sports and activities tab on the IHSA website to provide for ease of access as well as promote Unified Sports and Activities.
5. The committee discussed whether or not there were difficulties in having Unified Basketball teams stay overnight at the Unified Basketball State Finals. Jen Kelso had expressed that she wasn't aware of schools expressing this concern, but that she would seek some more feedback in this regard.
6. IHSA Administrator, Kraig Garber, gave a general overview of the IHSA Accommodation Requests from the 2022-23 school year (i.e. number and types of requests) as well as the process for making a request. The committee agreed to leave the process as is for now.
7. Kraig Garber provided an update on the status and action plans of the IHSA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.