

MINUTES OF THE ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 12, 2014

The IHSA Athletes with Disabilities Advisory Committee met at the IHSA Office, Bloomington, Illinois, on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were: Andy Berlinski, Princeton; Greg Hall, Urbana (H.S.); Jim Raabe, Jacksonville (Illinois School for the Visually Impaired); Ron Towner, Oak Forest; and Perry Wilhelm, Mundelein (H.S.) Also in attendance were Kurt Gibson, IHSA Associate Executive Director; and Nicole Schaeffbauer, IESA Associate Executive Director. Committee members not in attendance were: William Hook, Chicago (Agricultural Science); and Wes Olson, Mt. Vernon (H.S.).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends holding a wheelchair cross country road race in the fall of 2014 at a time/location to be determined by IHSA staff, a race in which participants could use any kind of wheelchair.

Rationale: After two years of failing to have any wheelchair cross country participants, the committee believes a new approach is warranted. The committee believes that allowing for an 'open' race that requires no qualification may be the impetus to help get this program off the ground. The committee believes that having the race not necessarily tied to the state finals may also create some additional interest/excitement: road race; date/time to be determined; explore options (location, etc.); no worry about the type of chair used.

Not Approved. Note: A recommendation was made to investigate other opportunities with regard to Athletes with Disabilities.

2. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends revamping the boys' and girls' bowling event for students with physical disabilities from a wheelchair event to a ramp division for students with physical disabilities.

Rationale: The committee believes that by classifying the event as a ramp division more students with physical disabilities will be able to participate. Using the ramp as the criterion in lieu of the wheelchair will enable more participation and keep with the integrity already established in the first two years of the event. Limiting the event to a wheelchair event denies other physically disabled students from participating in a worth-while event. All other qualifying requirements would remain the same from previous years.

To be acted on at the August Board meeting

3. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends doubling the amount of games rolled in the sectional and state finals from one-2 game block to two-2 game blocks. Final standings at the sectional and state finals will be determined on the participant's four game total score.

Rationale: The committee believes that the pacing of the bowling event is such that participants do have the time during the sectional and state finals to bowl more games. Doing so will also allow for the awards at the state finals to be handed out when the other awards are handed out.

To be acted on at the August Board meeting

4. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends continuing the boys' and girls' swimming programs in the same manner they have been conducted over the past two seasons.

Rationale: Swimming has been the event with the most participation of all those offered by the IHSA in the two years the association has offered these events for students with disabilities. As a result, the committee is pleased with the events and sees no need to alter the format or execution of the events.

To be acted on at the August Board meeting

5. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends continuing the boys' and girls' track and field programs, conducting the track events in the same manner as in years past and conducting the throwing events in a flight between the 1A and 2A semi-finals (if needed) and 1A and 2A finals.

Rationale: The committee believes the track and field event will continue to grow and favors conducting the throws between the 1A and 2A semi-finals (if needed) and finals to better spotlight the competitors and keep all competitors within their competition groups.

To be acted on at the August Board meeting

6. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends the following language be included in the Terms and Conditions for all sports for students with disabilities offered by the IHSA: All participants in the (name of sport) must participate in school-issued athletic apparel (no street clothes).

Rationale: The committee believes students should wear some school-issued (or at least school-colored) athletic clothing when competing, just like those students in a school's traditional programs.

To be acted on at the August Board meeting

7. **Recommendation:** The committee recommends approval of the revised Accommodations Policy and Accommodations Form.

Rationale: The committee believes the new policy and form are more user-friendly and better reflect the association's approach to providing accommodations for individuals.

Approved

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. The committee reviewed the minutes from its September meeting.
2. The committee heard a report from IHSA staff that outlined participation levels in the association's programs for students with disabilities this year.
3. The committee discussed the possibility of expanding programs to students with disabilities other than just physical in nature. The committee discussed unified sports, and how they might be someday an IHSA program offering.
4. The committee discussed the types of content to include on a FAQ page for schools that could be posted on the IHSA website.
5. The committee discussed ideas for a short video highlighting the association's programs for students with disabilities.
6. The committee thanked outgoing members Ron Towner from Oak Forest High School and Andy Berlinski from Princeton High School.