

**Minutes of the Athletes with Disabilities Advisory Committee**  
**April 2, 2025**

The IHSA Athletes with Disabilities Advisory Committee met virtually on Wednesday, April 2, 2025. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. Voting Committee members present were: Kevin McKeown, Athletic Director, Tinley Park (Andrew); Todd Hannaford, Athletic Director, Bethalto (Civic Memorial); Tom White, Athletic Director, Chicago (De La Salle); Peggy Bueker, Principal, Altamont. Other guests and non-voting members were: Jordan Feldman, Special Olympics; Kraig Garber; IHSA Asst. Executive Director.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Swimming & Diving - I.B.5 – Classification of Students with Physical & Visual Disabilities**

**Recommendation:** After the last paragraph in the section that details requirements for a provisional classification for Athletes with Physical and Visual Disabilities, add the following:

*Note: At the State Final Meet, an athlete competing in the Athletes with Physical and Visual Disabilities division under a provisional classification can set an IHSA state record, which will be recognized at the time. However, if the athlete is later denied formal classification by U.S. Paralympics (as outlined in #3 and #4 of this section), their record will be rescinded, and the previous record will be reinstated.*

**Rationale:** This policy ensures that state records reflect officially classified athletes, maintaining competitive integrity within the division. It also highlights the importance of athletes obtaining a formal Paralympic classification, reinforcing the standardization and legitimacy of adaptive swimming in IHSA competition.

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation:** Entry deadlines for all IHSA Sports for Athletes with Disabilities will be moved up to match the entry deadline for the same non-disabled sport.

**Rationale:** Aligning the entry deadlines for Athletes with Disabilities (AWD) events with those of the corresponding non-disabled sports will provide several key benefits that enhance the overall organization and execution of these events. Earlier deadlines allow for a more thorough review of entries, ensuring that all athlete details, classifications, and event logistics are properly coordinated in advance. With entry details confirmed earlier, awards specific to AWD events can be ordered and received on time, preventing last-minute delays or substitutions. Lastly, event hosts can receive more advanced notice of any venue modifications or accommodations (such as accessible warm-up areas, specialized equipment, etc.), ensuring that facilities are properly prepared.

**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, Jordan Feldman, provided an overview of Unified Sports offered in partnership with the IHSA as well as other Unified Sports offered by Special Olympics.
3. Special Olympics of Illinois has revamped their webpage. Jordan Feldman, expressed that he believes that the page is likely ready to be linked to the IHSA sports and activities tab on the IHSA website to provide for ease of access for IHSA member schools as well as promote Unified Sports and Activities. He will follow up with the IHSA on this.

4. Jordan Feldman of SOILL expressed that one Unified Sport that could be gaining momentum is Unified Soccer. Kraig Garber expressed that this can be discussed at the IHSA/SOILL partnership meeting this summer.
5. A committee member expressed interest in creating divisional play for girls in Unified Basketball and Unified Track and Field as opposed to co-ed. Kraig Garber expressed that the feasibility of this can also be discussed at the IHSA/SOILL partnership meeting this summer.
6. A committee member inquired about the potential to create more Paralympic Swimming Classification events in Illinois. Kraig Garber said that he can look into seeing if this is possible.
7. IHSA Administrator, Kraig Garber, gave a general overview of the IHSA Accommodation Requests from the previous school year (i.e. number and types of requests) as well as the process for making a request. The committee discussed potential for making the request process completely digital similar to that of eligibility requests.