Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) to support playing rules modifications, where appropriate, to accommodate students with disabilities so that they are able to participate in the interscholastic athletics programs sponsored by the member schools. To that end, the OHSAA shall receive requests for modifications to the interscholastic athletics programs in the 26 sports sponsored by the Association for students with disabilities, including those with hearing, visual and physical disabilities. The OHSAA commends and supports these students who wish to compete in the sports that are sponsored by the OHSAA, and sincerely desires to work with the member schools to enable students with disabilities to enjoy participation opportunities.

The following procedures have been developed by the OHSAA to examine each individual case to ensure that a request for modification does not give the student with the disability an advantage in the competition or put other competitors at a disadvantage or at risk. The OHSAA must consider the needs of all students involved in the competition.

Evaluation Guidelines
The OHSAA will evaluate each modification request using the following guidelines:

1. Would the modification fundamentally alter the nature of the event?
2. Is the requested modification reasonable under the circumstances?
3. Is the requested modification necessary for the student to compete?
4. Can the student compete at the same time as the other participants?
5. Would the requested modification give the student an advantage over other competitors?
6. Would the requested modification cause the other participants to be at a disadvantage or at risk?
7. Would the requested modification pose a safety risk to the students and/or any other participants in the event?
8. Would additional costs be involved, and if so, how would those costs be met?

Requesting a Modification
A member school administrator shall contact the OHSAA if a student desires to compete in an OHSAA-sponsored sport. Please make your request in writing on official school letterhead as far in advance as possible (minimum of two weeks prior to the event). Please identify the exact nature of the requested modification in as much detail as possible. The OHSAA will not accept requests via the telephone but will accept electronic submissions on school letterhead signed by an administrator.

Address the evaluation guidelines giving sufficient documentation regarding the disability and the need for the requested modification(s). Identify the modification(s) requested for the event and any modification(s) that the school makes for the student daily.

If the OHSAA approves a modification, it is the coach’s responsibility to provide a copy of the OHSAA approval notification to all affected schools competing in the event and to the head contest official. Only one response letter from the OHSAA is necessary for the modification to be permitted for all interscholastic contests in that sport or event for the current school year. If the student advances to Regional or State tournament competition, it is the responsibility of the member school to notify the OHSAA immediately.

**Please direct your request to the administrator who is the OHSAA liaison for the sport in which the student is seeking the modification.** See the document “Who to Contact” on the OHSAA web site at www.ohsaa.org for a reference.

Spectators with Disabilities
Please refer to OHSAA Policy here [https://ohsaa.org/Portals/0/SchoolResources/ServiceDogs.pdf](https://ohsaa.org/Portals/0/SchoolResources/ServiceDogs.pdf) for guidance on admittance to events sponsored by the member schools of the OHSAA.