



Miami-Dade County Public Schools Sports Program for Students with Disabilities



Track and Field Manual

The Sports Program for Students with Disabilities

The Miami-Dade county Public Schools Sports Program for students with Disabilities is an extension of the basic Adaptive Physical Education instructional program. It is designed to maximize opportunities for school and student participation. Any student who has a physical, visual or hearing impairment should be encouraged to participate.

Experience has shown that being physically active enables the disabled person to build self esteem. For the young disabled athlete, the sports program may provide the first opportunity for the family to see their child as an individual, functioning independently, and enjoying the same types of activities as their peers. Sports participation also serves as the motivating factor encouraging the child to continue in activities which develop strength and endurance necessary for independent living skills. While the general philosophy of the physical education program deemphasizes competition below the middle grades, the fact that sedentary lifestyles develop at such an early age among the disabled as well as the need to develop a positive self image negates this usual delimitation. However, it is important to insure that the early introductions to competitive sports are done in a positive manner. In the Sports Program for Students with Disabilities emphasis is placed on activities that contribute to the growth and development of all students involved. The promotion of positive physical, social, and ethical values is a major objective of the Sports Program for Students with Disabilities.

The Sports Program for Students with Disabilities' philosophy is that quality training of both coaches and athletes is crucial to success in sports participation. Seasonal meetings and clinics for coaching and officiating will help coaches develop and improve the athlete's overall fitness and ability.

For more information on the Sports Program for Students with Disabilities please call the Adaptive Physical Education office.

305-995-1967

ATHLETE SAFETY

Providing a safe environment to practice and participate in sports must be a prime concern for all coaches.

Visually Impaired

Proper Assistance- Coaches and sighted athletes should be familiar with proper sighted-guide techniques. It is imperative that everyone remember that there are athletes present who are unable to react to visual stimuli alone and who will need special assistance to move from one point to the next.

Orientation- At both practice and meets take time to orient blind and low vision athletes to the area. Help them identify and establish points of reference, particularly around potential injury areas.

Remove and Replace- Particularly during practice sessions, be sure to keep equipment out of established paths of travel, place anything not being used in an identified storage area. The greatest hazard to coaches, officials, and other team members occurs when implements from the field events are used. If safety is stressed during practice, it will generally be followed during competition. Stress the following steps with your visually impaired athletes.

Establish Safety Rules- State the rule, explain its importance, and make sure the athlete understands concept of the rule. Demonstrate and manipulate until you are sure the athlete understands the rule. Have the athlete demonstrate and practice the rule.

Use Voice Cues- This helps remind the athlete that someone is in the immediate area.

Remember Self Protection- When manipulating an athlete or guiding an action during instruction, Keep at least one hand firmly on the implement or the arm such as holding the back of the hand and the shot put at the same time. This allows you to stop and control or direct any action initiated by the athlete.

Stress Safety- It is important to constantly remind visually impaired athletes that even though they are unable to see or hear someone, they cannot assume the area is clear.

Physically Impaired

Some physically impaired students will compete in wheelchairs while others will use crutches, walkers, braces, or prosthesis, and still others may participate in sports using no assistive devices. For all of these athletes there is a common safety procedure that should be practiced; allow students to compete at the most effective level and seed dictated by the degree of disability. Athletes should be encouraged to improve both in skill and speed but the coach must remember that these are not affected by the degree of physical involvement.

Some other points to remember are:

Effects of Heat- While this is an important consideration with all athletes, it is even more important when working with physically impaired athletes. Some physically disabling conditions are more prone to seizures which may be induced by excessive exposure to heat. Athletes whose physical disability is caused by a spinal lesion will generally not perspire below the level of the lesion. This reduces the ability of the body to dissipate heat and increases the chance of heatstroke. It is important to consider the use of hats, keeping the athlete in as much shade as possible and drinking liquids to cool the body.

Loss of Feeling Below the Spinal Cord Lesion- This is a particularly important factor in racing. If any part of the body below the level of lost feeling comes in contact with a moving part of the chair, such as the tire, rim, wheels, or spokes, or if a foot dislodges from the footrest and drags on the surface of the track, severe friction burns or injury may result.

Ambulatory Physically Impaired Athletes- When ambulatory physically impaired students take part in sports, it is important to emphasize the need to compensate for balance problems. For those using assistive devices, view the assistive device as an extension of the user. Before the beginning of a race, always inspect the tips of crutches and walkers to insure that non-skid coverings are in place and in good condition.

HELPFUL TRACK AND FIELD INFORMATION

TRACK EVENTS

- 60M, 100M, 200M, and 400M are run in lanes; athletes must stay within lane boundaries during the race.
- Please have athletes go to the staging area at least 4 heats before their scheduled race.
- Wheelchairs go first then all other ambulatory followed by blind and visually impaired, and lastly deaf and hard of hearing.
- 60M Weave may take place on the other side of the track during the 60M run.
- Students need to be reminded that they are racing against the clock, and not necessarily the other students in the heat, heats will be grouped according to abilities/age as much as possible, but different exceptionalities may be in the same heat.
- Only power wheelchairs may enter the 60M Weave.

FIELD EVENTS

- Softball throw is for less than 13 years of age only.
- Shot Put and Discus are for 13 and over only.
- Students should be coached PRIOR to participation in the field events. The field event staff is not responsible to teach the students the proper form, students not prepared to participate will not be allowed to throw.
- All soft shot events are for CP 1 and CP2 only.
- Track events take precedence over the field events, if a student misses their race heat because of a field event they will not be put into another heat.

ATHLETE CARE

Coaches should insure that arrangements have been made to provide for the health and safety of their athletes.

Sun and Heat- Apply sunscreen before the athletes leave the school, and reapply often. Provide plenty of liquids, and make sure athletes are drinking even if they do not feel thirsty. Encourage athletes to wear some kind of hat that will provide shade.

Lunch- Make sure adequate preparations have been made for athlete's lunches; most venues do not have places to purchase food. Talk to school site cafeteria staff in advance about providing bag lunches for athletes.

Sanitation- Locate bathroom facilities, and be sure someone is assigned to help those athletes that may need assistance. Be aware of where your athletes have to be and arrange bathroom breaks around their schedule; don't allow them to miss events.

Physical Restrictions- Exercise care not to enter athletes in events that are beyond their endurance levels. Ensure that all athletes receive proper coaching and adequate practice time for each event they are entered in.

FACILITY USE

The Sports Program for Students with Disabilities uses school facilities as well as parks and other facilities. Continued use of these facilities is dependent on the condition in which they are left after our use. Each school group must assume responsibility for picking up all trash and garbage after each event; it is helpful if each coach would bring trash bags to assist with this.

Completing the New Track and Field Registration Sheets

Please PRINT all information

- Enter the name of the school
- Each athlete may enter up to 5 events. 3 events in track. and 2 events in field
- Only CPI,CP2,LAI, LA2 may enter the Soft Shot and Soft Discus events
- Only power/electric wheelchairs may enter the 60 meter weave
- Softball throw is for **under 13 years old only**
- Shot Put and Discus is for **13 and over only**
- Track events take priority over the field events, track races will not be held up for athletes participating in the field events

FILLING OUT THE FORMS

Under the Sex column enter **M** for male **F** for female.

Under the Sport Group enter

SL	for spinal Lesion
AMPUTEE	for amputees
LA	for Les Autres, "the other"
DWARF	for Dwarfs
CP	for Cerebral Palsy and closed head injury
VI	for Blind or Visually Impaired
HI	for Deaf or Hearing Impaired

Under the Sport Class enter

SL SPINAL LESION Wheelchair Classification

- 1 Any spinal cord lesion causing complete or incomplete quadriplegia; no intrinsic hand function and generalized trunk weakness.
- 2 Spinal cord lesion below T1 and to include T10 (below the neck and through the chest area); complete or incomplete paraplegic; some sitting balance, but not normal.
- 3 Spinal cord lesion below T10 (below the lower chest region)

AMPUTEE (based on congenital and acquired amputations)

- 1 Double above or through the knee joint
- 2 Single above the knee
- 3 Double below the knee
- 4 Single below the knee
- 5 Double above the elbow
- 6 Single above the elbow
- 7 Double below the elbow
- 8 Single below the elbow
- 9 Combined lower plus upper limb amputation

LA LES AUTRES "the others classification"

- 1 Reduced functional muscle strength and/or severe involvement of upper extremities; poor sitting balance
- 2 Uses manual wheelchair in daily activities; able to propel wheelchair but does not fit NW AA or NASCP classification
- 3 Ambulatory but has upper extremity impairment
- 4 Ambulatory but has lower extremity impairment
- 5 All other physical impairments not included in other classification

DWARF

- 0 For all Dwarf classes

CP CEREBRAL PALSY CLASSIFICATION

- 1 Severe involvement in all four limbs; poor functional strength in upper torso necessitating use of electric wheelchair; limited grasping abilities. NOTE: list all students using electric wheelchairs or who should use electric wheelchairs as CP1
- 2 Moderate to severe involvement in all four limbs; normally uses a wheelchair; cannot ambulate without extreme difficulty; has poor functional strength and severe control problems in the upper torso; pushes wheelchair with feet
- 3 Moderate involvement in three or four limbs; fair functional strength and moderate control problems in the upper extremities and torso; uses wheelchair for regular daily activities but may ambulate with assistive devices but may compete in a wheelchair
- 4 Good functional strength and minimal control problems in the upper extremities and torso; (lower limbs have moderate to severe spasticity; may be able to walk short distances with the use of aids, but needs wheelchair for regular daily activities)
- 5 Both lower limbs have moderate spasticity causing difficulty in walking; may walk with or without aids, but must use assistive devices during competition; good functional strength and minimal control problems in upper extremities
- 6 Moderate to severe control problems in three or all four limbs; usually walks without assistive devices during daily activities but displays obvious coordination difficulties
- 7 Moderate to minimal hemiplegia; walks without assistive devices, but may walk/run with a limp; usually good functional ability in non-affected side
- 8 Minimally affected; able to run and jump freely; may have minimal coordination problems

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