



**Best Practices on
Including
STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES
Into your Athletic
Program**



ABOUT THE **PRESENTERS**

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Definitions:

- **Mainstream/Traditional athletic program** – “Mainstream/Traditional athletic program” means intramural or interscholastic athletic activity that is developed and offered to students in accordance with criteria established by the National Federation and State Associations.
- **Inclusion** – Term used to describe a student with a disability participating in a mainstream athletic program.
- **Adapted program** – “Adapted program” means a program that is developed for a student with a disability.
- **Allied sports or unified program** – “Allied sports or unified program” means a program that is specifically designed to combine groups of students with and without disabilities together in a team activity.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Eligible in one of
14 categories

Accommodations
Modifications

IEP

Specially
Designed
instruction

Direct Services

Accommodation
Plan

Physical/Mental
Impairment

Section 504

Evidence of a
disability

A major life activity is
substantially limited

ACCESS TO EDUCATION



14 Eligibility Categories

Multiple Disabilities

Deaf-Blindness

Deaf (Hearing Impaired)

Visual Impairments

Speech Language Impairment

Orthopedic Impairment

Emotional Disturbance

Intellectual Disability

Specific Learning Disability

Autism

Other Health Impairment

(Minor/Major)

Traumatic Brain Injury

Developmental Delay

(PreK to age 8)



EACH AND EVERY IEP

IEP Individualized Education Program

Princeton City Schools

CHILD'S NAME: AAAAA AAAAA ID NUMBER: 999999 DATE OF BIRTH: _____

9. NONACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In what ways will the child have the opportunity to participate in nonacademic/extracurricular activities with their nondisabled peers?
Describe

_____ will have the same opportunity to participate in nonacademic/extracurricular activities as his/her nondisabled peers.

_____ is encouraged to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities of his/her choosing, as long as s/he meets the necessary requirements with reasonable mutually agreed accommodations.

_____ will have the same opportunities as his/her non-disabled peers to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities provide that s/he meets the requirements.

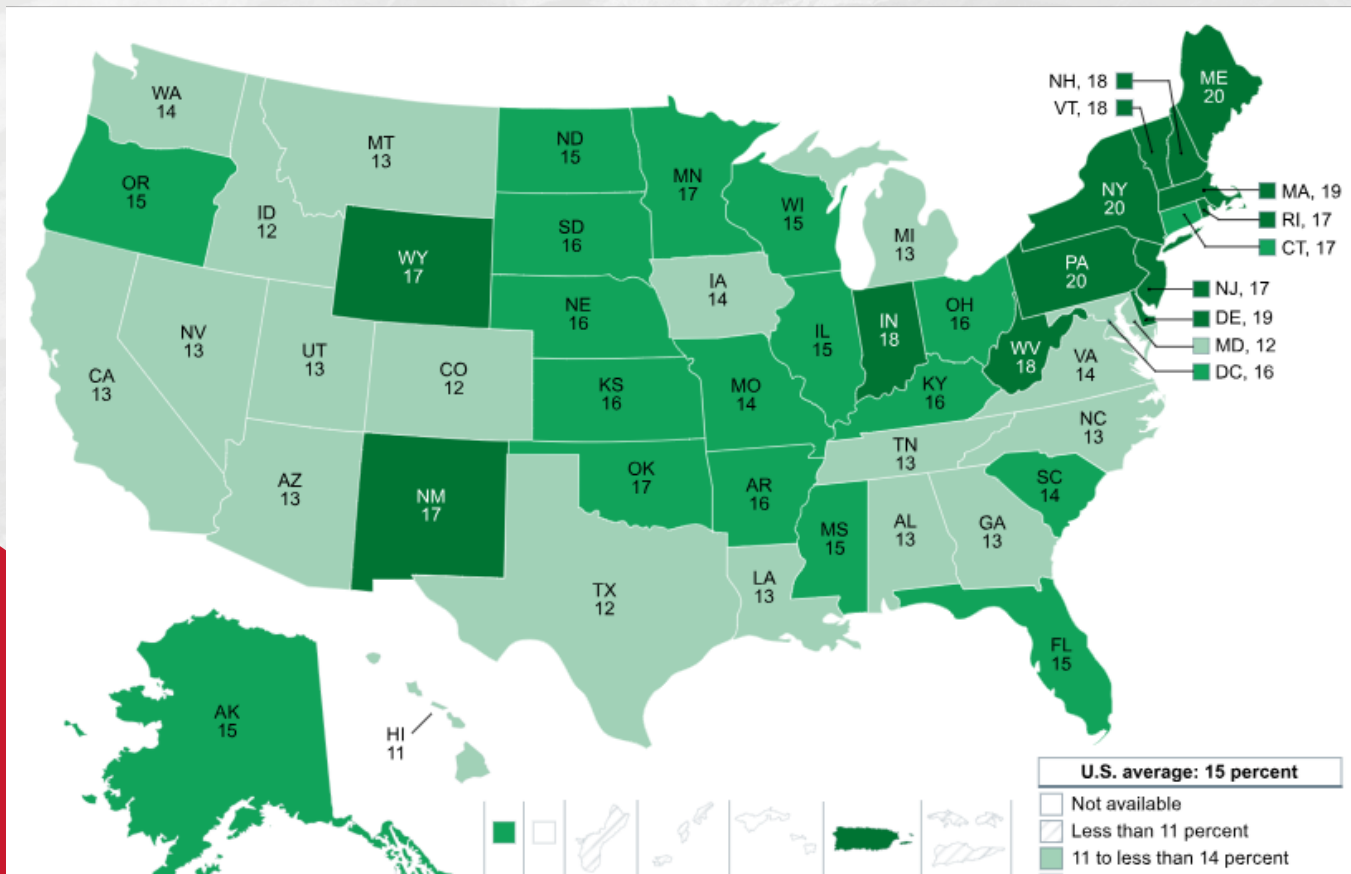
_____ will have access to all school sponsored activities that are offered as long as s/he meets the necessary requirements for participation.

If the child will not participate in non-academic/extracurricular activities, explain.

Check when complete

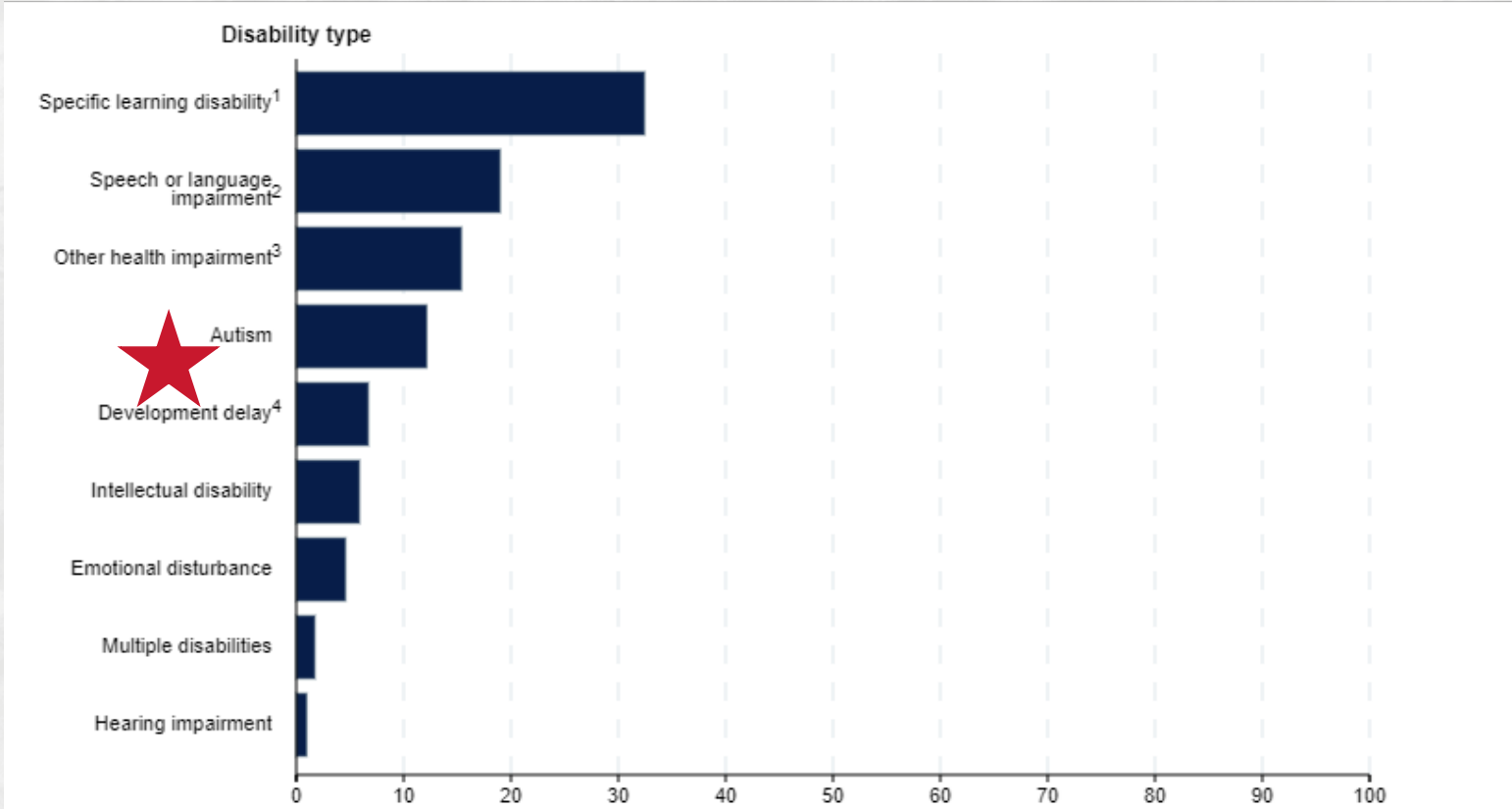
IEP NUMBERS Nationwide

Figure 1. Students ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as a percentage of public school enrollment, by state and jurisdiction: School year 2021–22



DISABILITY BY CATEGORY (NATIONWIDE)

Figure 2. Percentage distribution of students ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), by selected disability type: School year 2021–22





Equal Opportunity for Participation

- **504/IEP does not require that every child with a disability be the starting quarterback.**
 - Tryouts are okay (with reasonable accommodations)
 - Merit-based playing time is okay
 - There is no requirement to fundamentally alter the essential parts of the activity
 - Reasonable accommodations should not give an unfair advantage
 - Safety should not be compromised
- **Consider the individual needs of the child - as a team (with the parent)**

Who could be involved?

Take a team approach!

What is required of all participants?
(Tryouts, attendance, participation, essential skills/abilities, equipment)

- Parents
- Student
- Intervention Specialist
- Principal
- School Psychologist
- Related Service Provider (OT/PT/Speech)
- School Counselor
- Paraprofessional
- Coordinator (IEP/504)
- Director of Student Services/Special Education


Does the child's disability present any barriers to these requirements?

Maybe consider - DDS Caseworker, Community Coach, Advocate



Does the child's disability present any barriers to these requirements?

- **If the child's disability present barriers, would accommodations address those barriers?**
- **Are the accommodations reasonable?**
 - Do they fundamentally alter the activity?
 - Do the the accommodations compromise safety?
 - Do the accommodations provide an unfair advantage?
 - Does their cost create an undue burden?



**Thinking
outside the
box/team**





Food for thought ...

- **Non-cut activities**
 - Consider requiring all non-cut activities to have a requirement to demonstrate basic skills/competencies to participate
- **Basic Requirements**
 - By identifying the basic requirements to participate the team can then focus on creating reasonable accommodations
- **Objective Tools**
 - Assist coaches in creating relatively objective tools for assessing student performance

What Can We Do To **SUPPORT** Coaches, Parents, and the Student-Athlete



- **Embrace the Opportunity**
 - Teams and students gain new experiences
 - Coaches Focus on the Positive
- **Treat the Athlete as and Athlete**
 - Focus on the person not the disability
 - Show them you want them on the team
- **Find Opportunities for the athlete to be a leader**
 - Allow them to choose a drill, select a relay, lead the team cheer
 - Give the student confidence and shows they are an integral part of the team
- **Collaborate with the student to modify sport techniques**
 - Adapt drills if necessary
 - Be creative



What Can We Do To **SUPPORT** Coaches, Parents, and the Student-Athlete



- **Learn accommodations based on the rules of the sport**
 - Stay in the know if the changes to help support the student and the team success
- **Have similar expectations**
 - Remember student-athletes
- **Foster Independence**
 - Promote expectations
 - Pick-Up Equipment
 - Locker Room Clean
- **Seek Advice**
 - We are all in this together
 - Communicate the good and the struggle
 - Resource: National Center on Physical Activity and Disability



SITUATIONS

FOOTBALL

Outplaced students



BOWLING

Communication

TENNIS

Shifting mindsets

BAND/BOWLING/DEBAT

...SCHOOL PLAY/CHOIR

All the things and \$\$\$

INSPIRED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES



COULD YOU PLEASE SHOVEL THE RAMP?

ALL THESE OTHER KIDS ARE WAITING TO USE THE STAIRS. WHEN I GET THROUGH SHOVELING THEM OFF, THEN I WILL CLEAR THE RAMP FOR YOU.

BUT IF YOU SHOVEL THE RAMP, WE CAN ALL GET IN!

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CLEARING A PATH FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CLEARS THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!

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ARTICLES **RESOURCES**

- [OCR Guidance on Accommodating Students With Disabilities in Athletics](#)
- [Disabilities Law Applied to Scholastic Athletics Programs](#)
- [Students with Disabilities in Extracurricular Athletics](#)
- [Making School Sports Accessible](#)
- [Sports Eligibility: SPORTS ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDENT WITH IEP](#)
- [Section 504, IEPs and Sports | Extra-Curricular Activities | What to Know for Inclusion](#)
- [The Case for Coaches Attending Their Student-Athlete IEPs](#)



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