



Oregon School Activities Association

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TO: Superintendents, Principals, and Athletic Directors

FROM: Peter Weber, Executive Director
Kris Welch, Assistant Executive Director

SUBJECT: Inclusion Committee – January 10 Meeting Minutes

The OSAA Inclusion Committee met for the first time this school year in a closed work session on Thursday, January 10 at the OSAA office in Wilsonville. In person attendees included Ted Yates (Gladstone HS), Heidi Hermansen (Central Linn HS), Bill Masei (Dallas HS), Carly Schmidt (City of Eugene) along with OSAA Staff members Peter Weber, Kris Welch, K.T. Emerson and Kelly Foster.

We welcomed our newest Committee member, Bill Masei, Dallas HS Track & Field Coach and began with a recap of the June 2018 meeting, along with recent action taken by the Executive Board regarding swimming. In December, the OSAA Executive Board approved adding the 100-yard Backstroke to the offerings at the 2019 Swimming State Championships with the note that para-athletes can participate in two of the three events offered (50-Free, 100-Free, and 100-Back) if they meet the qualifying standards.

The primary focus for this meeting was to brainstorm potential resources and ideas to help increase the number of para-athletes participating in our member schools. We also discussed ways to increase awareness among schools and the general public and determine the best options for administration of para-athlete events at this spring's Track & Field Championships.

The group discussed potential resources and who they can make connections with to increase awareness of the opportunities for para-athletes. Discussion focused on increasing the number of Committee members to reach more para-athletes and the ultimate goal of increasing participation numbers. We plan to reach out to Eve Hampton, new Sports & Recreation Programming Manager at Adaptive Sports Northwest, Bryan Huddle, para-athlete trainer and retired track coach in Washington, and the Northwest Association for Blind Athletes. Additionally, we will be contacting ESDs and school districts for occupational and physical therapists, plus special education teachers, that may be interested in joining the committee.

The Committee then turned to ideas to improve the awareness within school communities. Some of the ideas suggested included utilizing OSAA today to send out videos of past para-athlete events; posting videos on social media; attending the statewide Oregon Athletic Directors Conference again this year; exploring putting on a workshop at the OACA Coaches Symposium in August; and possibly have a para-athlete speak at the Delegate Assembly meeting in April. The OSAA staff will work closely with World Wheelchair Sports, Adaptive Sports Northwest and the NFHS to obtain, post and promote information that pertains to recruiting and coaching para-athletes in their Swimming and/or Track and Field programs. The Committee feels that communication to schools will be critical to increasing the number of para-athletes participating in events.

The Committee discussed potential options for administration of para-athlete events at the 2019 Track & Field Championships. Since Hayward Field is under construction, this year's championships will be split up with the 2A, 1A taking place at Western Oregon University and the 4A, 3A at Mt. Hood Community College, both on May 17-18. The 6A,

5A will take place at Mt. Hood Community College on May 24-25. After lengthy discussion of potential options, the Committee determined that the best course of action for this year is to recommend that para-athletes compete with their school at their own district meets and bring all para-athlete qualifiers to the 6A, 5A Championships on May 24-25. At this time, there aren't enough para-athlete participants to have events at each site both weekends and 6A, 5A para-athlete qualifiers will be competing in district meets when the 4A, 3A and 2A, 1A championships are being held. The group discussed ways to promote these para-athlete events during the first weekend of championships, including listing para-athletes in the digital program/rosters/heat sheets and making public address announcements promoting the para-athlete events to be held the following weekend.

The Committee continues to support that para-athletes need to be academically eligible and participate with their team throughout the regular season.

The Committee will hold their next meeting on May 30, 2019 at 9am at the OSAA office in Wilsonville. The meeting will be open to the public.

All written communication received will be forwarded to all members of the Inclusion Committee for their review. Contact Peter Weber (peterw@osaa.org) or Kris Welch (krisw@osaa.org) at the OSAA if you have any questions.