

BOCCIA



GUIDELINES

About Athletics for All

History

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education issued a Dear Colleague Letter on January 25, 2013 clarifying elementary, secondary, and postsecondary level schools' responsibilities under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act) to provide extracurricular athletic opportunities for students with disabilities. The guidance clarifies when and how schools should include students with disabilities in mainstream interscholastic athletic programs, defines what true equal treatment of student athletes with disabilities means, and urges schools to create adapted interscholastic athletic programs for students with disabilities.

The OCR Dear Colleague Letter helps clarify the existing regulations and statute under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act) to provide interscholastic, club, and intramural athletics for students with disabilities. The Rehab Act protects the rights of students with disabilities from discrimination in educational programs and activities in colleges and universities. The Rehab Act requires that students with disabilities be provided equal opportunity for participation in interscholastic, club, and intramural athletic programs offered by a school.

What the Athletics for All Task Force Offers

- Introductory sport guidelines and best practices for adapted sports considered easy to adapt to mainstream interscholastic sports.
- Facilitation of training for your coaches and officials with adaptive sports experts. Access to hundreds of community based adaptive sports organizations, resources and tools for specific sports.
- Decades of experience in disability sport training, sport adaptations and adaptive equipment.

Sports Are Important for Students with Disabilities

Benefits for students with disabilities who participate in sports are similar to students without disabilities:

- More likely to have better grades, school attendance and lower dropout rate
- Build discipline, self-esteem, confidence, and independence
- Learn team work, skill development and goal setting
- Promote healthy lifestyle
- Can be a predictor of later successes in college, career and community
- Students with disabilities do not receive the same amount of physical activity and athletic opportunities as students without disabilities
- According to the CDC, youth with disabilities are twice as likely to be physically inactive, resulting in obesity rates almost 40% higher than in youth without disabilities creating much higher risks for health-related diseases

Due to the resources available, it is possible to add adapted sports within school athletic programs without creating an undue administrative burden for State High School Associations or requiring the association to change existing rules for the athletes without disabilities.

Boccia (pronounced bahchee or bahtcha) is played on a specially marked court, on a gymnasium floor or any smooth, hard surface. The sport is similar to bocce ball, but is played indoors and with a soft leather ball. The object of the game is to throw or roll game balls so that they land as close as possible to a target ball called the jack. Boccia is designed so individuals with different physical disabilities can participate in an integrated, adaptive, or modified/unified format. Students of all ages, with or without disabilities can play together or separately.

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In this section you can find frequently asked questions about boccia and resources.



Contributing Resources:

BlazeSports

USA Boccia

US Paralympics

Paralympic Sport Coaching Guide

The content in this document is intended to provide guidelines for the sport and should not be used for legal purposes.

OVERVIEW

The object of the game is to throw or roll balls so they land as close as possible to a target ball called the jack.

COURT DIMENSIONS:

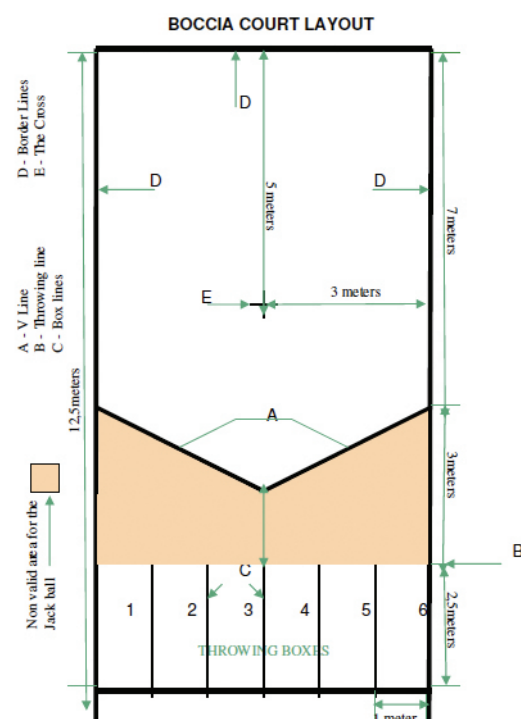
6m (19.6ft) X 12.5m (41ft) with playing boxes of 2.5m (8.2ft) X 1m (3.28ft) on one end

PRIMARY EQUIPMENT:

Boccia Balls- 6 red, 6 blue, 1 white (jack)

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY:

Easiest way to classify is to split athletes into two groups—those who throw the ball independently and those who require additional assistance.



TRAINING & EQUIPMENT



EQUIPMENT

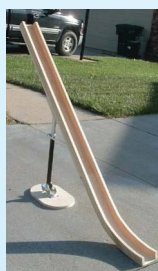
- Boccia Balls: 6 red, 6 blue, 1 white (jack)
- Measuring device
- Timing equipment
- Scoreboard
- Red/blue color indicator (*similar to a table tennis paddle, so teams can see who is to play*)
- Chutes (optional)/Ramps (optional)
- Assistive head stick (optional)
- Mouthstick or handstick aids (optional)

Figure A: Assistive Head stick

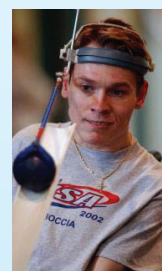
Figure B: Ramp

Figure C: Boccia Balls

A



B



C



Assistive devices or ramps are used by student athletes who have limited throwing ability due to reduced upper extremity range of motion or limited hand function. There are several different types of assistive devices or ramps ranging from simple PVC pipe or wooden ramps to the more elaborate fiberglass.

TRAINING DRILLS

Practice throwing/rolling/propelling

For throwers it would be good to develop several shots: overhand, underhand, soft, hard, and lob. These drills will determine “how” each athlete best propels the ball into the court. Each athlete has a unique throwing motion. Their grasp, throwing motion and release will need to be examined.

Ramp players need to practice with a consistent sport assistant (ramp holder) so that they can develop the athlete’s commands to have the ramp positioned and the ball placed in the ramp. The slope of the ramp determines long or short shots. Moving it to the left or right determines direction. Keep the ramp placed centered on the body for increased accuracy.

Initially, work on accuracy with athlete’s natural placement on the court (their ‘sweet spot’). Next help them develop accuracy in shorter shots and then deep court. Drill to practice their serve of the Jack (white ball) with a one ball follow up shot.

Training for the sport of boccia can be as easy as just playing the game or as complex as having players practice specific game scenarios. Adapt to the skill set and endurance of each athlete.



COMPETITION & RULES

RULES

- In boccia an “end” is when the white target ball and all the colored balls have been played.
- A game will consist of four “ends” for individual play and six “ends” for team play.
- In individual play, each player will have six balls. In pairs, each will have three balls, and in teams, each player will have two balls.
- The red team throws the jack (white) ball first, and then follows with the same player’s colored ball.
- The opponent throws next and continues to play until he or she puts a ball closer to the jack.
- This continues until all balls are thrown.
- After all balls are thrown, the end is scored.
- The player must remain in his or her playing box when throwing or rolling the ball.
- If the player using the ramp is playing with a sport assistant, the sport assistant may not look at the court.
- When a ball is released, the player must have at least one buttock in contact with the seat of the chair.
- If the jack ball is knocked out of the court, it is repositioned on the “Replaced Jack Cross”.
- The next end begins with blue serving Jack. The 3rd end is served by red and so forth.

SCORING

- The referee will score the end after all balls have been thrown by both sides.
- The side with the ball closest to the jack ball will score one point for each ball closer to the jack than the opponent’s closest ball.
- If two or more balls of different colors are equidistant from the jack and no other balls are closer, each side will receive one point per ball.
- At the completion of the ends, the points scored in each are added together and the side with the higher total score is the winner.
- In the event of a tie, one additional tie-breaker end is played.

STRATEGY

- Serve the Jack ball on your side of the court; this makes the angle and distance more difficult for your opponent.
- Follow your serve in front of the Jack blocking your opponent and as close to the Jack as possible; it puts your opponent on the defense.
- “Play the Circle” - you do not always have to hit the Jack to win. Find out what is the closest opponent and throw inside that circle.
- “Use the Whole Box” - Adjusting your chair to different places in the box changes the angle and opens up shots that were not there before.

GROUPINGS



The groupings presented here are suggested ways to create competition classes for athletes with disabilities. In order to not be confused with the national and international classification systems, we use the term groupings for school-based sport.

ROLE OF ATHLETES WITHOUT DISABILITIES

Programs may wish to consider a policy whereby athletes without disabilities may enter the adapted program temporarily while rehabilitating from an injury, so long as the injury present in such a way that the athlete might otherwise qualify someone with a permanent disability experiences the same physical limitations. For example, any injury or surgery where the physician has recommended the athlete stay off the limb for a period of time and where that time spans a full season of an adapted sport, the athlete might qualify to participate in adapted sports regularly.

How will a state determine who is eligible? There are several different models to determine eligibility and minimal disability criteria. When possible and appropriate, it is best to stay within the three categories: sitting (athletes who use wheelchairs), ambulatory, and visually impaired.

Athletes with a disability have an impairment that may lead to competitive disadvantage in sport. Classification is the process by which athletes are assessed relative to the impact of impairment on their ability to compete in a specific sport.

Within the classification system, criteria are put in place to ensure that winning is determined by skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability and mental focus, the same factors that account for success in sport for athletes without a disability.

Classification is sport specific. Each sport has established groups, called sport classes, to group athletes for competition based on activity limitation for that sport.

The International Paralympic Committee's (IPC) classification system for individual sports can be viewed online at: Paralympic.org/classification. Most IPC classification systems are not appropriate (too detailed) for a high school setting. It is suggested to modify to simplified / grouped classes such as sitting (athletes who use wheelchairs), visually impaired, and ambulatory.

SAFETY



Student athletes with disabilities do not represent a higher level of liability risk or risk management concern than student athletes without disabilities. With proper planning and contingencies, student athletes with disabilities can seamlessly integrate into the dynamics of an interscholastic team. Individualized assessments can help assess or identify any potential safety concerns.

Safety Resources

Ensuring athlete safety is a priority. Through education, resources, and training, members of the sport community can create a safe environment. Please refer to the following resources for more information.

Safety Resources	
What is SafeSport?	http://safesport.org/what-is-safesport/
Coaches Toolkit	http://safesport.org/toolkit/coaches/
SafeSport Trainings	http://safesport.org/take-the-training/



GLOSSARY

Assistive Device: is an aid used by athletes with more severe disabilities to play the game. Examples include a ramp or chute

Ball: one of the red or blue balls

Court: the playing area as enclosed by the boundary. This includes the throwing boxes

End: is one section of a match when the jack and all the balls have been played by two sides

Jack: the white target ball

Side: in individual boccia, a side is defined as one (1) single competitor. In team and pairs boccia, a side is defined as three (3) and two (2) members, respectively, of the team as a single unit

Match: a competition between two sides when a specified number of ends are played

Violation: is any action assumed by an athlete, side, substitute, sport assistant, or coach which is against the rules of the game

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there sport technical assistance if our school system is interested in starting a Boccia program?

Yes, organizations like BlazeSports has a Boccia Sport Technical Committee and access to a number of experienced coaches and officials that could be available to provide Boccia in-service trainings. BlazeSports can also offer a boccia webinar for teachers and coaches.

Do we have to follow the national/international classification system if we want to start a boccia program in our school?

No, boccia is a great sport to offer to students with or without disabilities.

Are there competition opportunities outside of school programs?

Yes, there are an increasing number of regional boccia competitions throughout the U.S. and an annual National Boccia Championship sanctioned by USA Boccia.

RESOURCES

Resources

USA Boccia	Full version of the rules Ramp blue prints Information on Coaching Certification Information on Classification Coaching games	www.usaboccia.org
Boccia International Sports Federation	Resources	http://bisfed.com/
International Paralympic Committee	Resources	http://www.paralympic.org/boccia
Flag House	Supplier	http://www.flaghouse.com
USA Handi Life Sport	Supplier	http://www.handilife.com
Gopher	Supplier	http://gophersport.com
Diebold Boccia Brothers	Wooden Ramps	1981stag@gmail.com or jdiebold2014@yahoo.com
US Paralympics	Boccia video Resources	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9-PAmsc-cm http://www.teamusa.org/Home/US%20Paralympics/Sports/Boccia.aspx

MISSION

The mission of the Athletics for All Task Force is to inform and provide the tools and guidelines by which coaches, athletic directors and school administrators can include students with physical disabilities in interscholastic sports.

VISION

It is the vision of the Athletics for All Task Force that students with disabilities will have access to athletic opportunities throughout the United States in an equal manner as students without disabilities. The Task Force envisions an educational system that provides equal opportunities for student-athletes to derive the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of interscholastic sports, enabling each to develop into healthy, well-adjusted, contributing members of their respective communities.

ATHLETICS FOR ALL TASK FORCE

Active Policy Solutions

<http://www.activepolicysolutions.com/>

Adaptive Sports USA (ASUSA)

<https://adaptivesportsusa.org>

American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AASP)

<http://www.adaptedsports.org/>

Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP)

<http://www.borp.org/>

BlazeSports America

<http://www.blazesports.org/>

Bridge II Sports

<http://www.bridge2sports.org/>

Competitive Edge Management

Move United

<http://www.moveunitedsport.org>

Great Lakes Adapted Sports Association (GLASA)

<http://glasa.org/>

Lakeshore Foundation

<http://www.lakeshore.org/>

Louisiana Games Uniting Mind and Body (GUMBO)

<https://sites.google.com/site/louisianagumboinc/home>

National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)

<http://www.nchpad.org/>

Special Olympics

<http://www.specialolympics.org/>

United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA)

<http://www.usaba.org/>

For more information, visit www.athleticsforall.net

