

2023



Unified Track & Field Manual





NSAA MISSION STATEMENT

The public and non-public high schools of Nebraska voluntarily agreed to form the Nebraska School Activities Association for the following purposes:

- To formulate and make policies which will cultivate high ideals of citizenship, fair competition, sportsmanship, and teamwork which will complement the member schools' curriculum programs;
- To foster uniformity of standards in interscholastic activity competitions;
- To organize, develop, direct and regulate an interscholastic activity program which is equitable and will protect and promote the health and physical welfare of all participants.

The 2023 Nebraska School Activities Association Unified Sports, Track & Field manual is prepared for school administrators and coaches. All coaches and athletic directors are urged to study this document. A reminder, not every eligibility rule is covered in this Manual. Schools are responsible for knowing the rules covered in the NSAA Constitution and Bylaws. All contests shall be conducted under the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) rules in conjunction with Special Olympics, Track & Field rules (link: [Special Olympics, Track & Field](#)). We also encourage schools to view the Unified Sports® Special Olympics Handbook that may be found here: [Unified Sports® Handbook](#).

Purpose of Unified Sports®

Dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences, Unified Sports® joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. Having sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.

Dan Masters is the NSAA staff member who coordinates Unified Sports, Track & Field. If schools have questions regarding this activity, please contact Dan at dmasters@nsaahome.org or Cindy Callaway, Office Manager, ccallaway@nsaahome.org.

Internet Information

The Nebraska School Activities Association's home page on the internet is found at the following address:
<http://www.nsaahome.org>

Here are some Unified Sports, Track & Field topics on our webpage: resources, current year classifications; district assignments; state championship schedule, pairings, and results.

NSAA Approved Rule Changes/Points of Emphasis

- **Regular season rules, page 5**
- **Dual participation rules, page 5**
- **Meet limitation rule, page 6**
- **Shot Put, pages 9-10**
- **State Qualifier Tie-Breaker, page 12**

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS & APPROVED RULINGS GOVERNING UNIFIED SPORTS, TRACK & FIELD

3.11.13 UNIFIED SPORTS

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is an inclusive activities program that combines an approximately equal number of Special Olympics individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals without intellectual disabilities on teams for competition and inclusive activities fostering an environment of social inclusion.

- 3.11.13.1 Students must be a bona fide member of an NSAA member school.
- 3.11.13.2 Students must have a recognized disability defined within 42 U.S.C. Section 12102 (ADA).
- 3.11.13.3 Students must have the appropriate adapted pre-participation forms completed and on file at the member school of which they are to participate.
- 3.11.13.4 Students will follow the guidelines set forth in their individual education plans and/or local school eligibility requirements.
- 3.11.13.5 Classification of unified programs will be placed in one class.
- 3.11.13.6 Schools from member high schools may be combined for unified programs to field a common participating group with an agreement made jointly by the boards of education of the involved member schools.

APPROVED RULING AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.11.13

1. *Unified Sports is an inclusive program that focuses on students with intellectual disabilities partnering with students without intellectual disabilities. The only recognized disability for Unified Sports athletes is intellectual disabilities. All students without intellectual disabilities, even though they may have other disabilities, may participate as partners with the students with intellectual disabilities.*
2. *An age rule exception is extended for non-contact Unified Sports for a student identified under NDE Rule 51 as an individual with intellectual disabilities (See Approved Ruling 2.3.1). Unified Sport athletes who become twenty-one years of age on or after August 1 shall be eligible on the basis of age in non-contact Unified Sports until the end of the current school year. The eight-semester rule shall be waived for such students; however, such students shall not be permitted to participate in more than four seasons of any one activity at the high school level (Bylaw 2.2.3).*

2.3 AGE

- 2.3.1 **Age Limitation.** No student shall be eligible for interschool competition who has attained the age of nineteen years except as follows: A student who becomes nineteen years of age on or after August 1 shall be eligible on the basis of age until the end of the current school year.

Exception: if the student is a bona fide student with a disability as defined at 42 U.S.C. Section 12102 (ADA) and the regulations promulgated there under, and the student's specific disability has contributed significantly to the student's inability to meet the requirements of this Bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director through the hardship application process, on a case-by-case the Executive Director determines that:

- a. The student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b. The student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or activity maturity over the other participants; and
- c. The student's participation does not affect the principles of competitive equity; and
- d. There is no evidence of "red-shirting" or other indicia of academic dishonesty. Students granted this exception will be limited to 4 years (8 semesters) of participation at the varsity level. Students granted this exception must adhere to all applicable NSAA Bylaws and Approved rulings.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.3.1

1. Students who have become ineligible because of age are ineligible for all interscholastic contests including non-varsity team competition.
2. The oldest age given on any annual report shall be accepted as the student's age unless a birth certificate certified by the Bureau of Vital Statistics, State Capitol, Lincoln, or the Bureau of Vital Statistics of any other state, can be produced to the contrary.
3. The Age Limitation Bylaw 2.3.1 is an objective standard; a student must meet the age limitation set forth in Bylaw 2.3.1 to be eligible for participation and competition. The only consideration for a waiver of the age eligibility rule shall be to determine if a discrepancy exists in the student's reported Date of Birth that, upon further examination and evidence, would result in the establishment of the correct Date of Birth. [See, Pottgen v. MSHSAA, 40 F. 3d. 926 (8th Cir. 1994).]
4. In light of NDE Title 92, Chapter 51, (003.49) (hereinafter "Rule 51") that states, "School age programs shall mean special education programs and related services designed to serve children with verified disabilities from age five through the school year in which the student reaches age twenty-one," an age rule exception is extended for Unified Sports activities and events to students who are identified under Rule 51 competing as students with intellectual disabilities. Unified Sport athletes who become twenty-one years of age on or after August 1 shall be eligible on the basis of age in non-contact Unified Sports until the end of the current school year.

NSAA SPORTSMANSHIP BYLAWS & APPROVED RULINGS

2.11 Penalties

- 2.11.3 Participant Ejections from Athletic Contests.** Any participant ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.11.3

Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. Any participant ejected a third time shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.

2.11.4 Coach Ejections from Athletic Contests. Any coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible to coach the next athletic contest at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to the other penalties the NSAA or the school may assess.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.11.4

1. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” for ejections from high school contests for unsportsmanlike conduct is a responsibility of the member school. Failure to properly enforce this rule could result in other sanctions by the NSAA.
2. Administrators will be expected to promptly file a report with the NSAA whenever a participant or coach from their school has been ejected from any high school contest. Such filing must be done online under the AD login section of the NSAA webpage.
3. A participant or coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim.
4. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” is expected to begin immediately, regardless whether it is regular-season or tournament play.
5. Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
6. Any participant ejected a third time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
7. During the time of their “sit-out” suspension, athletes who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not suit up or participate, but it is the school’s discretion whether such athlete is able to travel with the team or sit on the team bench.
8. Coaches who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not coach in any contest or be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Coaches who are ejected will also be required to successfully complete an NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations, in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course before being able to coach the following season or year.
9. Coaches who are ejected a second time in a season will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim. Coaches may not be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Any coach ejected a second time will also be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online coaching course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations, in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online coaching course before being able to coach the following season or year.
10. If the ejection takes place in the final game of the season, the suspension will carry over to the following season of the same sport.
11. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.
12. Officials will be expected to file with the NSAA an ejection report for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest online. Any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest should also be reported.
13. Prompt reporting to the NSAA office by the official is necessary. Officials are asked to submit their electronic report or call the NSAA office by the day following the ejection.
14. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) will also be required to perform this reporting function.
15. There is no appeal process for ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct.
16. The Executive Director shall reserve the right to consider the length of suspensions when some levels of competition are scheduled on an irregular basis (e.g., three weeks between regularly scheduled non-varsity contests).

3.3 General Regulations Governing Competition

3.3.11 Conduct and Sportsmanship. Member schools shall maintain proper crowd control and enforce the principles of good sportsmanship and ethics during all interscholastic contests. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the school to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.1 Conduct of Coaches and Athletes. Coaches and athletes shall conduct themselves in accordance with the playing rules of the sport contest and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct during interscholastic competition. Failure to fulfill this obligation will subject the individual(s) to the penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.

3.3.11.2 Definition of Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, inappropriate comments or actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, profanity, obscene gestures, flagrant and violent fouls, taunting, trash talk, baiting, cheating, throwing or abusing equipment, inappropriate posters, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of a team bench area.

3.5.2 Individual Instruction. During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take instruction from a person other than the high school coach at times other than scheduled high school practice sessions, but such instructions shall not interfere with, nor be substituted for the high school coaching, practice sessions, or contests.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.5.2

During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take instruction from a person other than the high school coach. Group instruction, practices with outside teams, and tryouts for outside teams other than as part of a college or university recruiting visit, however, are not permitted.

GENERAL RULES

Participation:

The NSAA has one competitive interscholastic division. Participation in the interscholastic program of a high school is limited to students in grades 9-12. Student athletes will follow existing participation bylaws as outlined in Article 2 of the NSAA Bylaws.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.5.1:

13. NSAA Bylaw 3.1.1.2 specifies that no student shall participate in more than one sport per season. An exception would be that such dual participation would be approved for students participating in Unified Sports®. Students in NSAA member schools that participate in Unified Sports® may also participate on an interscholastic athletic team during the Unified Sports season. This does NOT apply to other NSAA sports.
14. Outside participation is approved for students participating in Unified Sports®. As an example, students in NSAA member schools that participate in Unified Sports® may also participate on their "club" bowling team during the NSAA Unified Sports®, Bowling season. (exception to Bylaw 3.5.1) This does NOT apply to other NSAA sports.

NSAA Unified Sports, Track & Field teams can compete only with other teams that are registered with the NSAA during the Unified Sports, Track & Field season.

Regular Season:

Member schools may incorporate Unified Sports, Track & Field events into their existing track meets throughout the season. Participants shall meet all necessary eligibility requirements as outlined in the NSAA Constitution and Bylaws and be placed on the member schools' Track & Field eligibility list.

Unified Sports, Track & Field events shall be run and scored in their own, in a separate division and take place outside any existing Track & Field event. A Unified Sports, Track & Field 100 M heat should not be combined and ran with the existing Track & Field 100 M heat. The partner heat/flight should always precede the athlete heat/flight.

Dual Participation:

Participants may compete in both Unified Sports, Track & Field and existing Track & Field during the season. However, participants shall not be entered into events in both divisions in any one individual track meet/invite. Participants are limited to one meet/invite per day.

Meet Limitation:

NSAA Track & Field rules limit participants to a total of nine meets involving four or more teams (not including district or state competition). The nine-meet total includes Varsity and Sub-Varsity contests in existing Track & Field along with any Unified Sports, Track & Field contest (with four or more teams). Not nine of each.

(Athlete) Eligibility:

1. To be eligible for participation in Unified Sports, an outgrowth of Special Olympics, a competitor must agree to observe and abide by guidelines and rules set forth by the NSAA.
2. Unified Sports and its parent-arm, Special Olympics, were created and developed to give individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to train and compete in sports activities.
3. Eligibility for participation in Unified Sports:
 - a. General Statement of Eligibility: Every person with intellectual disabilities who meets NSAA eligibility requirements outlined in the Constitution & Bylaws shall be eligible to compete.
 - b. Age Requirements: Students must be in high school and meet the age requirements as shown in Approved Ruling and Interpretations 2.3.1 and 3.11.13
 - c. Degree of Disability: Participation in Unified Sports training and competition is open to all persons with intellectual disabilities who meet the age requirement of this Section regardless of the level or degree of that person's disability, and whether or not that person also has other mental or physical disabilities, so long as that person registers to participate in Unified Sports as required by these general rules.
 - d. Identifying Persons with Intellectual Disabilities: A person is considered to have intellectual disabilities for purposes to determining his or her eligibility to participate in Unified Sports if that person satisfies any one of the following requirements:
 - i. The person has been appropriately determined by an agency or professional as having intellectual disabilities as determined by such professionals (Individualized Education Program); or
 - ii. The person has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measure such as intelligent quotient or "IQ" testing or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community in that Accredited Program's nation as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or
 - iii. The person has a closely related developmental disability. A "closely related developmental disability" means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and in adaptive skills (such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care). However, persons whose functional limitations are based solely on physical, behavioral, or emotional disability, or a specific learning or sensory disability, are not eligible to participate as athletes, but may be eligible as a partner.

The NSAA does not determine whether or not a person has an intellectual disability, but determines eligibility based on identification made by an agency, professional, and/or local school.

4. NOTIFICATION FROM NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND UNIFIED SPORTS®

Unified Sports® and Special Education

The IDEA requires that each child with a disability participate with nondisabled children in programs and activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that child. Physical education services, specially designed if necessary, must be made available to every child with a disability receiving a free appropriate public education, unless the school district does not provide physical education to children without disabilities in the same grades. Additionally, each school district must take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including athletics, in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities. For students served under IDEA, the student's IEP must include, among other things, a statement of the special education and related services, and supplementary aids, services, and other supports that are needed to meet each child's unique needs in order for the child to: (1) advance appropriately towards attaining the annual goals; (2) be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and (3) be educated and participate in such activities with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children.

Participation in Unified Sports® may be considered a special education service if the child's IEP team determined that the activity was necessary to provide the child with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and to afford the child with a disability an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities. If participation in Unified Sports® is included on the child's IEP, a portion of the costs could be reimbursed to the school district from state and /or federal special education sources. Reimbursable costs may include:

- Salaries for certified instructional staff holding an Adaptive PE Education Endorsement or other special education categorical endorsement as outlined in 92 NAC 51-010.061D;
- Special education transportation costs associated with the activity;
- Any assistive technology device(s) or service(s) as determined appropriate and necessary for the child to participate in the nonacademic setting; and
- Paraprofessional(s) who are appropriately trained and supervised by qualified special education personnel and are assisting in the provision of the service included on the child's IEP.

(Partner) Eligibility:

Though Unified Sports, Track & Field allows for partners with disabilities other than intellectual disabilities, Unified Sports® was developed to provide Special Olympics athletes with the choice of a sports program that brings about meaningful inclusion with their non-disabled peers. The desired objectives of a Unified Sports® experience are best fulfilled when partners on a team are individuals without disabilities. Even though an individual with a disability may make an appropriate partner, schools should focus on forming teams that are not composed solely of people with disabilities.

Coaches:

Unified Sports® coaches will follow the certification standards as outlined in Bylaw 2.12. All coaches and volunteers are required to complete the NFHS *Concussion In Sports, Heat Illness Prevention* and *Sudden Cardiac Arrest* courses at least once every three years (www.nfhslearn.com/courses). First-year head coaches are required to view the NFHS course: *Coaching Unified Sports*.

All head coaches are required to attend an NSAA Rules Meeting or complete an NSAA Rules Meeting online annually. Failure to do so will result in possible late fees and suspension penalties.

Online rules meetings are initially offered at no cost to coaches, followed by a period with a \$25 “Basic” Fee, followed by a period with a \$50 “Late” Fee. The following sanctions and fees are applicable to those coaches who fail to complete the rules meeting by the expiration of the “Delinquent” Fee period.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ONLINE RULES MEETING by March 8th will result in the following sanctions:

First Offense in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in any competition in that activity until:

- (1) *The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA’S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$100; and*
- (2) *The head coach successfully completes the open book (Part I) test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school’s administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.*

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Second and Subsequent Offenses in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and state competition).

- (1) *The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA’S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$200; and*
- (2) *The head coach successfully completes the open book (Part I) test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school’s administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.*

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Online Unified Sports, Track & Field Rules Meetings

February 10 to February 26 - No charge
February 27 to March 5 - “Basic” Fee of \$25
March 6 to March 7 - “Late” Fee of \$50

Local school districts shall determine their coaching staff needs and any additional training.

NSAA POLICY ON COMMENTS AND NEGATIVE ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICIALS AND JUDGES

The National Federation of State High School Associations has devised Code of Ethics guidelines for high school coaches. The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The coach or sponsor shall respect and support contest officials and judges. The coach or sponsor shall not indulge in conduct that would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials, judges or players is unethical.

The Nebraska School Activities Association has embraced that Coaches Code of Ethics and has established policies and standards that will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship, professionalism and conduct. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals directly associated with the interscholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and professional manner.

The high school coach or director is a representative of the school at interscholastic activity events. It is the responsibility of all coaches and directors to serve as role models for students and the public.

It is the expectation that all coaches, directors, administrators and student participants shall refrain from negative criticism of NSAA member institutions, officials, adjudicators, judges, etc. in public statements before, during or after interscholastic events. The appropriate public response to media questions at all venues regarding officiating/judging is “per NSAA policy, I am unable to comment.” Any other response is a violation of this board policy and is subject to penalty.

It would be considered a violation of this NSAA policy to include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Making degrading and/or critical remarks about officials or adjudicators or the officiating or judging before, during or after an event either on or off-site, via social media, or through any public means.
- b. Detaining the officials/adjudicators/judges during or following the event to request a ruling or explanation of actions or evaluation by the official(s)/adjudicator(s)/judges.
- c. Entering the officials dressing area following the contest.

Negative actions by an individual directly associated with the program shall be reported to the NSAA office by the school and/or by the head contest official, adjudicator, judge, or manager. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate. The NSAA Executive Director shall determine the appropriate penalties for violation of this board policy.

Season:

The length of the Unified Sports, Track & Field season shall run in accordance to existing schedules. The number of practices, practice times, contest specifics, and other details will be decided locally by the school district.

Year	<u>Future Dates</u>		
	First Practice	First Contest	State Championship
2023	February 27	March 16	May 18
2024	February 26	March 14	May 16
2025	March 3	March 20	May 22

The season starts the first day of practice. The first date for practice is Monday of Week 35 of the NFHS Standardized Calendar. The first date for a contest is Thursday of Week 37 of the Standardized Calendar. The season ends with the State Championship.

Rescheduled Meets:

Rescheduling regular meets after district or state competition begins is prohibited.

Team Composition:

Schools may choose how many participants they would like to have on their Unified Sports, Track & Field team. Schools may also determine, locally, how many entries competing schools will be allowed in each event.

Shot Put, Long Jump and 100 M Dash entries must be comprised of equal 1 athlete / 1 partner. Entries in the 4 * 100 M Relay must be comprised of equal 2 athletes / 2 partners. Entries may be all boys, girls, or co-ed all competing against each other in the Unified Sports, Track & Field division.

Events/Team Composition:

100 M Dash: One athlete and one partner compete as a Unified Team. Athletes will be heated/compete against each other, the same for partners.

4*100 M Relay: Two athletes and two partners compete as a Unified Team. The order in competition is as follows: partner 1, athlete 1, partner 2 and athlete 2.

Long Jump: One athlete and one partner compete as a Unified Team. Athletes will be flighted/compete against each other, the same for partners. Each athlete and partner will get three long jump attempts.

Shot Put: One athlete and one partner compete as a Unified Team. Athletes will be flighted/compete against each other, the same for partners. Each athlete and partner will get three shot put attempts.

Shot Put Specifications:

- **Athletes**
 - **Girls: 3 kg / 6.6 lbs.**

- Boys: 4 kg / 8.8 lbs.
- **Partners**
 - Girls: 4 kg / 8.8 lbs.
 - Boys: 5.4 / 12 lbs.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. In order to determine if the NSAA can authorize such an accommodation, the school administration should contact the NSAA to request an accommodation hearing ([Request for Accommodation](#)).

Supervision:

The superintendent, principal or an authorized representative of the faculty shall accompany and supervise the team for its competition. NSAA Bylaw 3.3.10 pertains to all competition during the season, as well as throughout the entire district and state championship series.

Administrative Responsibility, Bylaw 2.1.2:

The superintendent or his/her designate of each member school shall be responsible for the activities program of the school and accountable to the Association for the conduct of such programs. It shall be the duty of this person to administer and enforce all eligibility rules. Included in these responsibilities are the following:

- a. To administer and enforce all eligibility rules.
- b. Educate and guide the school’s staff who are associated with activities and the students who participate in activities in the rules of eligibility which govern members of the Association.
- c. For the failure to discharge such responsibilities, member schools shall be subject to penalties as set out in Paragraph 2.11 of the NSAA Bylaws.

Approved Ruling 2.1.2 (Medical Personnel at Regular Season Games)

Severe injuries, sudden illnesses and other critical incidents do not often occur during school activities, but it is important for every school to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for administrators, faculty, coaches and staff members to follow should emergencies occur. Due to lack of universal availability of medical coverage and other logistical reasons, NSAA does not require that schools have a physician, trainer or ambulance on-site at regular season activities; however, each school should have a plan in place should there be an emergency involving athletes, coaches, officials or spectators requiring medical attention.

Rules:

All meets shall be conducted under the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) rules in conjunction with Special Olympics, Track & Field rules and the rules in this manual (link: [Special Olympics, Track & Field](#)). In such case, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Track & Field shall apply or those approved by that organization with modifications approved by the Nebraska School Activities Association.

Last Date of Competition:

All scheduled and postponed regular season meets must be completed prior to the start of the State Championship.

Music Licenses:

Generally, music used for contests (warm-up, half-time, “walk-up” music, etc.) needs to be licensed. Some music may be in public domain; however, most music is not and will require a license. This season, take the necessary time to verify your music is licensed through the proper entities. Visit www.nfhslearn.com for additional resources.

MEDIA-RADIO, TELEVISION & PHOTOGRAPHY

All media operations (admission, access and accommodations) for regular season contests are at the Host School discretion.

The NSAA Media Manual outlines policies for Media Credentials, Student Media, Broadcasting Policies and other specifics surrounding NSAA post-season contests. Post-season contests include: Districts, Sub-Districts, Sub-State, Playoffs and State Championships.

The Media Manual is posted on the NSAA website's Media Page. <http://nsaahome.org/media-info/>

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION (Subject to Change)

Date:

Thursday, May 18th, 2023 - Omaha Burke High School, Omaha, NE.

Classification of Schools:

All registered Unified Sports, Track & Field teams will be placed into one class for competition.

Schedule:

1:30 PM: Long Jump / **Shot Put**

*2:10 PM: 4 x 100 M Relay

*3:25 PM: 100 M Dash

5:30 PM (Appx.): Awards

* Final heat of this event

Qualifying Information:

Member schools may submit individual "Unified Teams" from their school to participate in the NSAA State Track & Field Championships on Thursday, May 18, 2023. See the information below, in "Events," about qualifying. Times, jumps, and marks must be verifiable from any regular season track meet. The submitted state entry for each athlete and partner must be from the same meet, from the same day, and from the Unified Sports, Track & Field division (as a "Unified Team.") Practice times and jumps cannot be used. All competition submissions must be sent to the NSAA using the attached document (page 14). Entries are due to the NSAA office by Thursday, May 11, 2023.

Schools may submit one relay team and a maximum of two entries for the **Shot Put**, Long Jump and 100 M Dash.

Official: The administrator in charge during regular season events and district competition will serve as the head official regarding any disputes. During state competition, the NSAA will have personnel in place.

Substitutions:

Substitutions to a qualifying State Championship "Unified Team" may only be made if a participant is injured or physically ill. The same persons that qualify should compete at the State Championship.

Events:

100 M Dash: The eight fastest, combined times (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two heats. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

4*100 M Relay: The eight fastest relay teams (2 athletes / 2 partners) will qualify to participate at State. One heat.

Long Jump: The eight best, combined teams (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two flights. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

Shot Put: The eight best, combined teams (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two flights. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

Qualifying Tie Breaker: The following steps will be used to break any tie for the final qualifying entry:

1. **100 M Dash/Long Jump/Shot Put:** The athlete with the best submitted time, jump, or mark on their state entry will qualify their “Unified Team” for the State Championship.
2. **4*100 M Relay:** The team with the next best relay time will qualify for the State Championship.
2. In the event of a tie after step one, or in any situation where a tie cannot be broken, a coin flip will be used to break the tie(s).

Awards:

Medals will be awarded to the top eight finishers (“Unified Teams”) in each of the State Championship events.

Reimbursements:

There will be no reimbursements to member schools for the 2023 Unified Sports, Track & Field State Championship.

Suspension of Play:

Should play during the State Championships be suspended, play will resume where it was when it stopped.

Postponement of Play:

Should inclement weather threaten the Championship, the decision to postpone play will be made by the Championship Directors. The revised schedule will be worked out and the coaches will be notified during a meeting with Championship officials.

Team Pass Gate:

No player or coaches’ passes will be issued for this year’s state championship. Players and coaches must enter through the team pass gate. Only participants and coaches listed on the official team roster, as submitted to the NSAA on Thursday, May 11th will be allowed access to the state championship site free of charge through the team pass gate.

Expected Behaviors at Awards Ceremonies:

Education-based activities give students the ability to train, participate and compete in a structured setting. With that, students often learn lessons that are sometimes not taught in the traditional academic classroom. Some of those lessons include learning to win and lose with dignity and grace. As such, the following guidelines have been developed for awards ceremonies at the conclusion of sub-district, district and state contests.

Only one team can win a district or state championship, yet the NSAA provides trophies, plaques and medals to the losing teams in many of the postseason activities. It shall be the expectation that both teams shall accept their medals and trophies in a sporting and willing manner. Some losing teams have been reluctant to step forward and accept their awards, and coaches and administrators need to assure sporting behaviors for their student athletes. It is natural to be disappointed in losing the contest, but stepping forward at this time of disappointment is a life lesson that helps mold proper and sporting behaviors. It is the expectation!

The executive director or the NSAA Board of Directors shall determine the type and severity of sanctions to schools that do not comply with these expectations.

2023 Unified Sports, Track & Field State Championship Qualifier Entry Form

Schools may submit entries throughout the Unified Track & Field season. Times, jumps, and marks must be verifiable from any regular season track meet. **The submitted times/jumps/marks for each athlete and partner must be from the same meet, from the same day & from the Unified Sports, Track & Field division (as a "Unified Team")**. Times shall be submitted in FAT. Manual times must be converted ($MT + .24 = FAT$). Entry forms shall be emailed to Dan Masters (dmasters@nsaahome.org). **Entry forms are due to the NSAA office by Thursday, May 11, 2023.**

School: _____

100 M Dash: The eight fastest, combined times (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two heats. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

ATHLETE NAME: _____ ATHLETE TIME: _____

PARTNER NAME: _____ PARTNER TIME: _____

COMBINED TIME: _____

VERIFIABLE TRACK MEET/INVITE: _____

DATE: _____

4*100 M Relay: The eight fastest relay teams (2 athletes / 2 partners) will qualify to participate at State. One heat.

ATHLETE NAMES: _____

PARTNER NAMES: _____

TIME: _____

VERIFIABLE TRACK MEET/INVITE: _____

DATE: _____

Long Jump: The eight best, combined teams (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two flights. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

ATHLETE NAME: _____ ATHLETE BEST JUMP: _____

PARTNER NAME: _____ PARTNER BEST JUMP: _____

COMBINED JUMP: _____

VERIFIABLE TRACK MEET/INVITE: _____

DATE: _____

Shot Put: The eight best, combined teams (1 athlete / 1 partner) will qualify to participate at State. Two flights. Partners competing first, followed by athletes.

ATHLETE NAME: _____ ATHLETE BEST MARK: _____

PARTNER NAME: _____ PARTNER BEST MARK: _____

COMBINED MARK: _____

VERIFIABLE TRACK MEET/INVITE: _____

DATE: _____