***AREA 30 SPECIAL OLYMPICS***

**GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDANCE**

**AT STATE TOURNAMENTS**

Following are a list of guidelines for selecting athletes to attend state tournaments (i.e. basketball, soccer, track, softball, etc):

**1. PRACTICE**

To qualify for a state tournament, the athlete must attend a minimum of six (6) practices. All of our sport seasons consist of at least an 8-week training program. It is only fair to take an athlete to the state meet who participated in the training and competition versus an athlete who has not. Our philosophy is that an athlete who is not trained will not be ready for sports competition.

**2. FREQUENCY**

This means how many times an athlete attends a state tournament. Generally, athletes that have never been to a state meet or have not attended one within the past year will be selected. However, there are exceptions. For example, it is the swimming coach's discretion to choose the swimmers; many of our swimmers have been in the program for years, and they may be continuously selected to attend the state swimming tournament. If an athlete participates in all the Special Olympics sport events (i.e. soccer, basketball, softball, etc), *generally* they are not chosen to attend the summer games. WE TRY TO BE AS FAIR AS POSSIBLE. WE WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE THEIR TURN; HOWEVER, THEY MUST FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES TO BE CONSIDERED.

**3. INDEPENDENT**

The athlete must be fairly independent. The chaperones have responsibility for four (4) athletes and cannot be expected to devote their full attention to just 1 athlete. We do not and will not have time to "pamper" them; one must not stifle the ability an athlete has if allowed to show it. THIS IS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR THE ATHLETE. Let's not ruin it by suffocating the athlete.

**4. BEHAVIOR**

The athlete must display good behavior. They must be able to take DIRECT ORDERS from the chaperones. They must behave appropriately. We will tolerate misbehavior at times; however, we will not endure misbehavior constantly from anyone.

*NOTE: Misbehavior consists of the following: bad attitude, unwilling to listen or cooperate, stealing, unexplained absences, excessive foul language, overly aggressive behavior, running away, etc.*

**5. ATTITUDE**

If an athlete refuses a ribbon or medal at a state tournament, they will not be allowed to attend that specific tournament of a period of 1 year.

**6. UPDATED FORMS**

In order for an athlete to participate, their Special Olympics Health Appraisal Form must be updated. This form includes a medical portion, which needs to be signed and dated by a doctor, and the legal guardian section which needs to be signed and dated by the athlete's legal guardian. If an athlete is their own guardian, they may sign that portion.

1/18/23