

Inclusive Sports for Ohio Youth with Disabilities

Statewide Needs Assessment

September 2023



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Funding and Acknowledgements

Funding



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About the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (<https://ddc.ohio.gov/>) operates under the authority of federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. The Council conducts activities that improve Ohio's capacity for delivering services to people with developmental disabilities. The Council funds grant projects that are designed to ensure that self-advocates and their families have a voice in issues involving their services, supports, and projects intended to streamline the quality and efficiency of services that people with developmental disabilities need. The mission of the Council is to create change that improves independence, productivity, and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities and their families in community life.



About the Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government Resource Center

In 2008, The Ohio Council of Medical School Deans founded the Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government Resource Center (GRC) (<http://grc.osu.edu/>). Housed at The Ohio State University, GRC is a public university-based center for applied health policy research and technical assistance. GRC engages expert faculty and staff at Ohio's Colleges of Medicine and partners with state health and human services policymakers to improve the health and health systems for all Ohioans. GRC promotes health system transformation by: 1) linking expert

faculty and staff with health and human services policymakers, 2) providing health and health service research, evaluation, and quality improvement management, 3) performing data system management, data analytics, and training in analysis of administrative data, 4) consulting in survey design, management, and evaluation, and 5) offering project development, management, and fiscal administration.

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Suggested Citation

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Summary

Why did we do a needs assessment?

- To better understand current inclusive sport options in schools for Ohio youth with disabilities.

How did we collect information?

- Sent a survey to athletes with disabilities, family members of athletes with disabilities, and school professionals.
- Talked to experts across Ohio about inclusive and adaptive sports.
- Talked to athletes with disabilities and their families about inclusive sports in Ohio.

What did we find?

- Participants said that:
 - Most of the time school sports are not accessible;
 - Many youth with disabilities experience bias when playing sports and feel unwelcome, and;
 - Coaches and school staff need more training around school sports.
- We learned that there are many community-based inclusive and adaptive sports and dance programs that are working well outside of schools in Ohio.
- We also learned that successful inclusive/adaptive programs have strong partnerships, buy-in from leaders, are led by people with disabilities, and are universally designed.
- Most school professionals said that they have not had training on inclusive sports, but they want this training and think school districts would be supportive of the training.
- Athletes, families, and school professionals said that they want more opportunities for inclusive sports in schools for youth with disabilities.
- A good place to start to include more youth with disabilities in school sports is in individual-based sports such as swimming and diving, track and field, and dance. There are many examples of school districts that are already doing this well and it might be easy for other school districts to do the same.

What will we do now?

- We will work with a team of experts to develop a training for school professionals on inclusive sports, based on what participants said needs to be improved, and connect schools with good resources and programs that already exist in Ohio.

Introduction

It is well documented in the literature that people with disabilities experience worse health outcomes than people without disabilities (WHO, 2022). One contributing factor to these negative health outcomes is a lack of physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities that are designed to meet their needs. The most recent Ohio State Health Improvement Plan (2020) cited that approximately 44% of Ohioans with disabilities report having no leisure time spent in physical activity. It is therefore important that youth with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in physical activity programs such as sport activities, however, there are many barriers to participation. DePaux and Gavron (2005) cite that typical barriers to participation in sport include 1) a lack of knowledge and awareness of people without disabilities on how to involve people with disabilities in sports teams, 2) opportunities and programs for training and competition are lacking, 3) training facilities are inaccessible, and 4) there is limited information and access to resources to include people with disabilities in sport.

Including youth with disabilities into the community in places that they already share with peers without disabilities and making our society universally designed, inclusive, and accessible needs to be a priority. According to the CDC (CDC Healthy Schools, 2020), all students, regardless of disability status, should get the recommended daily level of physical activity and schools can help all students meet this recommendation through providing equal access and opportunities for physical activity for students with disabilities. Furthermore, approaches that work towards the highest levels of inclusion for sport (Stevenson and Black, 1999) should seek to allow for ways for sport activities to occur in heterogeneous teams (inclusive sport) without segregating youth with disabilities (Kiuppis, 2016). Projects that target the inclusion of youth with disabilities in existing sport programs within Ohio schools are likely to have a significant impact on expanding the sport opportunities and options for youth with disabilities (as there are currently many excellent existing adaptive sports organizations tailored to athletes with disabilities). The expansion of fully inclusive sports options where athletes with disabilities can participate alongside athletes without disabilities in Ohio schools will also assist with achieving full community inclusion of youth with disabilities and improving their overall health outcomes.

In order to expand sport, dance, and physical activity opportunities for youth with disabilities in Ohio schools, the Inclusive Sports Project, will (1) conduct a needs assessment to determine the current needs, assets, and status of inclusive sports in Ohio schools, (2) develop a training with associated tools and resources based on the identified needs and opportunities from the assessment that leverages existing capacity, partnerships, and structures, (3) partner with the Athens County Creating Healthy Communities program to pilot the training in Athens County, and (4) spread and evaluate the impact of the developed training across Ohio and share lessons learned.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the statewide needs and asset assessment conducted about the status of access to inclusive sport, dance, and physical activity opportunities for youth with disabilities in Ohio schools and to summarize an action plan for the development of a training based on the results of this assessment.

Methods

PRECEDE-PROCEED Health Promotion Planning Model

In collaboration with an advisory committee, The Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government Resource Center (GRC) planned a statewide survey, key informant interviews, and listening sessions to collect information on the current gaps, barriers, and opportunities for inclusive sports in Ohio schools. The needs/asset assessment was guided by both principles of universal design and the PRECEED-PROCEED Model, an effective and evidence-based framework for health promotion and program planning (Green and Kreuter, 2001). Specifically, the PRECEDE steps were used as the framework to conduct the assessment and the information learned will be used to guide the development of the training and resources for the Inclusive Sports Project. Table 1 provides information on each step within the PRECEDE model and the associated overarching needs assessment questions and sources of data to answer these questions.

Table 1. PRECEDE Model Template

PRECEDE Step	Assessment Questions	Data Sources
Social Assessment	1) What are the current priority needs, concerns, assets, and status of inclusive sports in Ohio schools from the perspective of youth with disabilities and their families, school staff, and other stakeholders? 2) What is the current status of inclusive sports access and opportunities in Ohio schools from the perspective of youth with disabilities and their families, school staff, and other stakeholders?	Survey Key Informant Interviews Listening Sessions
Epidemiological assessment	3) What is the current status of inclusive sports in Ohio schools based on existing data and statistics?	Secondary data collection
Behavioral & Environmental Assessment	4) What are the behavioral, attitudinal, and environmental factors associated	Survey Key Informant Interviews Listening Sessions

	<p>with inclusive sports opportunities in Ohio?</p> <p>5) How can communication pathways for students with disabilities and their families be improved to help facilitate increased participation in inclusive sports?</p> <p>6) What is the status of the seven pillars of inclusion in school sports: access, attitude, choice, partnerships, communication, policy, and opportunities?</p>	
Educational Assessment	<p>7) What predisposing, reinforcing, and enabling factors could be leveraged to increase inclusive sports opportunities for youth with disabilities?</p> <p>8) What are the current training interests, knowledge gaps, and needs of school staff and coaches around inclusive sports?</p>	<p>Survey Key Informant Interviews Listening Sessions</p>
Administrative & Policy Assessment	<p>9) What are the current capacity and resources in Ohio that may help us in successful program implementation of the training developed through this project?</p> <p>10) What are the areas of opportunity to increase and empower local communities in active engagement to help promote participation in inclusive sports?</p>	<p>Survey Key Informant Interviews Listening Sessions</p>

Survey

A survey was developed for youth with disabilities from kindergarten age through 22 years old, their family members, and school professionals (including physical education teachers, coaches, athletic staff, and other relevant stakeholders). See Appendix 1 for a copy of the survey questions. The survey was available online, paper copies were made available for in-person recruitment, and accommodations were made available if requested. Participants were recruited through email, flyers, social media, and newsletter posts through relevant disability

organizations, school, and community partners. The survey opened in April 2023 and was closed in July 2023. Throughout the period that the survey was open, several reminder emails and social media posts were sent, and targeted outreach was conducted to reach as many participants as possible with diverse backgrounds.

Key Informant Interviews

A semi-structured interview guide was developed for Key Informant Interviews with key inclusive and adaptive sport and dance stakeholders in Ohio (Appendix 2). Key informants to be interviewed were selected and prioritized by the project advisory committee. Participants were invited to participate in 1- hour Zoom meetings that were audio-recorded. Accommodations for participation were made available upon request.

Listening Sessions

A semi-structured listening session guide was developed for listening sessions with athletes with disabilities and their parents/caregivers (Appendix 3). Listening session participants were recruited from survey participants who volunteered to participate in listening sessions to provide in-depth information about their experiences with inclusive sports in Ohio and from recommendations for participants from Key Informants. Participants were invited to participate in 1- hour Zoom meetings that were audio-recorded and accommodations for participation were made available upon request.

Secondary Data Collection

A third-year Doctor of Physical Therapy student completed a secondary data collection to find literature on models and best practices for inclusive sport programs, existing training resources, and existing inclusive and adaptive sports programs and resources in Ohio. The student then compiled a resource list of the secondary data collected to be used during the development phase for the Inclusive Sport Project Training.

Data Analysis

All survey data were analyzed using SPSS to calculate descriptive statistics including means, ranges, and frequencies of quantitative data. Transcripts for key informant interviews and listening sessions were cleaned for accuracy and uploaded into ATLAS.ti for qualitative analysis. The key informant interviews and listening sessions were analyzed by a team of three evaluators. Qualitative codes were generated prior to the analysis based on the literature on this topic and codes were added throughout the analysis process as new codes emerged from the data. Data were analyzed in three waves. During wave 1 coding, two qualitative coders applied initial coding to transcripts. During wave 2 coding, transcripts were exchanged between

the qualitative coders to verify wave 1 coding and to add any additional codes missed from the first wave. During wave three, all three evaluators reviewed the completed codes across the transcripts and discussed themes that emerged from the codes until consensus was reached. Themes were also analyzed and merged across survey participants, key informants, and listening session participants.

Demographics

Survey

A total of 428 people participated in the survey. There were 255 participants who represented the athlete with disability perspective (60%). Among these 255 participants, eight participants were youth athletes with disabilities and 247 participants were parents/caregivers responding on behalf of youth athletes with disabilities. There were also 173 participants who represented the school professional perspective (40%).

Most athletes represented in this survey have an intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) (94%). Other functional disability types represented include athletes with cognitive disabilities, self-care disabilities, mobility disabilities, and athletes who are Blind or have low vision, and athletes who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Table 2).

Table 2. Functional Disability Characteristics of Athletes with Disabilities

Disability Type	Athlete & Parent Survey Total and Percentage (n=255)
Intellectual and Developmental Disability	239 (94%)
Cognitive Disability	200 (78%)
Self-Care Disability	112 (44%)
Mobility Disability	75 (29%)
Blind or Low Vision	21 (8%)
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	19 (8%)

Most of the athletes with disabilities represented in the survey are white individuals (68%) and 19% are individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) (Table 3).

Table 3. Race and Ethnicity of Athletes with Disabilities

Race/Ethnicity	Athlete & Parent Survey Total and Percentage (n=255)
White	165 (68%)
Black, Indigenous, and Person of Color (BIPOC)	48 (19%)
Prefer not to say	38 (15%)

Most of the athletes with disabilities represented in the survey are boys (58%) (Table 4).

Table 4. Gender Identity of Athletes with Disabilities

Gender	Athlete & Parent Survey Total and Percentage (n=255)
Boy	148 (58%)
Girl	58 (23%)
Prefer not to say	47 (18%)
Other	2 (1%)

Most athletes with disabilities represented in the survey are in elementary school (40%), followed by 27% in middle school, 26% in high school, and 7% in either pre-Kindergarten, having multiple athletes with disabilities in multiple grade levels, or beyond high school (Table 5). In terms of the grade levels that school professionals in the survey interacted with, most worked with youth from elementary to high school (27%), followed by 24% working in elementary school, 18% in high school, 14% in middle school, 9% in both middle and high school, 5% in both elementary and middle school, and 3% in pre-Kindergarten (Table 5).

Table 5. Grade Levels Represented Among Survey Participants

Grade	Athlete & Parent Survey Total and Percentage (n=255)	School Professional Total and Percentage (n=173)
Elementary School (K – 5)	101 (40%)	42 (24%)
Middle School (6 – 8)	68 (27%)	24 (14%)
High School (9 – 12)	66 (26%)	31 (18%)
Elementary & Middle (K – 8)	n/a	8 (5%)
Middle & High (8 – 12)	n/a	16 (9%)
Elementary to High (K – 12)	n/a	47 (27%)
Other (pre-K, multiple children in multiple grades, or beyond high school)	20 (7%)	5 (3%)

There was a large diversity of types of professional perspectives represented in this survey. Most school professional participants are teachers or special education teachers (45%), followed by school nurses (16%), coaches for school sport (12%), other school administrators (11%), other professional types (8%), paraprofessionals (5%), volunteers for school sports (4%), athletic directors (4%), school-based physical therapists (3%), physical education teachers (3%), school based-speech therapists (2%), school-based occupational therapists (2%), school-based psychologists (2%), principals (2%), instructional resource consultants (1%), and orientation and mobility specialists (1%).

Additionally, the majority of school professionals in this survey currently work with youth with disabilities in their school (91%) (Table 6).

Table 6. The Number of School Professionals who Work with Youth with Disabilities

Do you work with youth with disabilities in your school?	Professional Total and Percentage (n=173)
Yes	158 (91%)
No	12 (7%)
I don't know	2 (1%)
Missing	1 (1%)

Finally, survey participants represented 70 of Ohio's 88 counties (80% of counties). Most participants are from rural and Appalachian counties (49%), followed by 37% in urban counties, and 14% in suburban counties. Additionally, participants represented all regions of Ohio (regions defined by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities: <https://dodd.ohio.gov/about-us/support-team>). Specifically, 28% of participants are from Central Ohio, 21% are from Southern Ohio, 18% are from Northeast Ohio, 15% are from Northwest Ohio, 10% are from Southwest Ohio, and 8% are from Eastern Ohio. The top three counties represented in the survey are Athens County (18%), Franklin County (16%), and Cuyahoga County (5%).

Key Informant Interview

A total of 12 Key Informant Interview sessions were conducted with a total of 17 participants across all sessions. Participants were professionals from across Ohio from (1) adaptive sport programs/organizations, (2) inclusive sport programs/organizations, (3) inclusive and adaptive dance programs/companies, (4) school-based physical therapists and occupational therapists, (5) adaptive physical education teachers, and (6) public health professionals. Among the 17 participants, three individuals identified as athletes with disabilities (developmental disabilities and mobility disabilities) and two identified as parents of athletes with IDD, representing 29% of Key Informant Interview participants.

Listening Session

A total of six listening sessions were conducted with 17 total participants. Four of these sessions were with parents of athletes with disabilities (12 participants total) and two listening sessions were with athletes with disabilities (5 participants total, with 1 participant being a parent assisting their child athletes to participate in the session).

Among the parent listening sessions, most (10 out of 12) represented an athlete with IDD, one participant represented an athlete with a mobility disability, and one participant represented a Deaf athlete. Most participants represented athletes who are white (8 out of 12), and four

participants represented BIPOC athletes. Additionally, in terms of gender identity, eight participants represented athletes who are boys, three represented athletes who are girls, and one represented an athlete who is non-binary.

Four participants represented athletes who are in elementary school, two participants represented athletes in middle school, and six participants represented athletes in high school.

Six participants represented athletes who currently play sports in school. The school sports that each of their children play are:

- Basketball, Bowling
- Basketball, Track & Field
- Soccer
- Swimming & Diving
- Track & Field
- Track & Field

Six participants represented athletes who currently play club sports outside of school. These sports included:

- Fencing
- Lacrosse, Basketball, Baseball
- Tee ball
- Track & Field, Basketball, Bowling, Baseball, Softball, Soccer, CrossFit
- Wheelchair basketball
- Wheelchair Basketball, Soccer

Finally, parent participants represented twelve different Ohio counties. Five were from urban counties, four were from rural and Appalachian counties, and three were from suburban counties.

Among the athlete listening sessions, all athletes were athletes with IDD. Most participants were white individuals (4 out of 5) and one participant identified as a BIPOC individual. Three participants were boys/men and two participants were girls/women.

In terms of grade level, one participant was in elementary school, one was in high school, and the remaining participants were beyond high school. All participants were from urban counties.

Two of the athletes played sports in school. These sports included:

- Swimming and Cross Country
- Wrestling

Three of the athletes played club sports outside of school. These sports included:

- Hockey
- Special Olympics Bowling and Swimming
- Special Olympics Track and Field

Results

Survey

Among the 255 youth with disabilities represented in this survey, only 26% of participants currently play school sports. The top five sports that these athletes with disabilities currently play in school are:

- 1) Track and field
- 2) Basketball
- 3) Baseball
- 4) Football
- 5) Volleyball

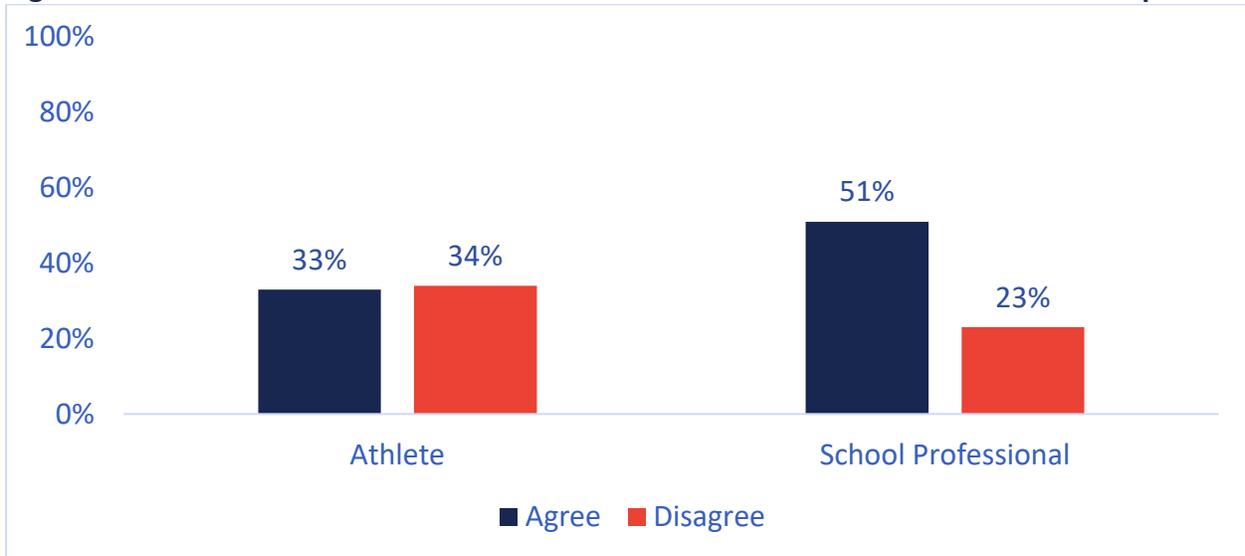
Additionally, half (50%) of the youth with disabilities represented in this survey said they play club sports outside of school. Among the youth with disabilities represented in this survey who do not currently play sports, a majority (56%) said that they do **want** to play sports in school. The top five sports that these athletes with disabilities want to play in school are:

- 1) Basketball
- 2) Soccer
- 3) Baseball
- 4) Track and Field
- 5) Swimming and Diving

The survey asked several questions about inclusion in school sports. We found that from the disability perspective, athletes and their families sometimes agree that coaches and other students make them feel welcome in school sports (33%), but for some this is not their experience, and they disagree with this statement (34%) (Figure 1). However, most school

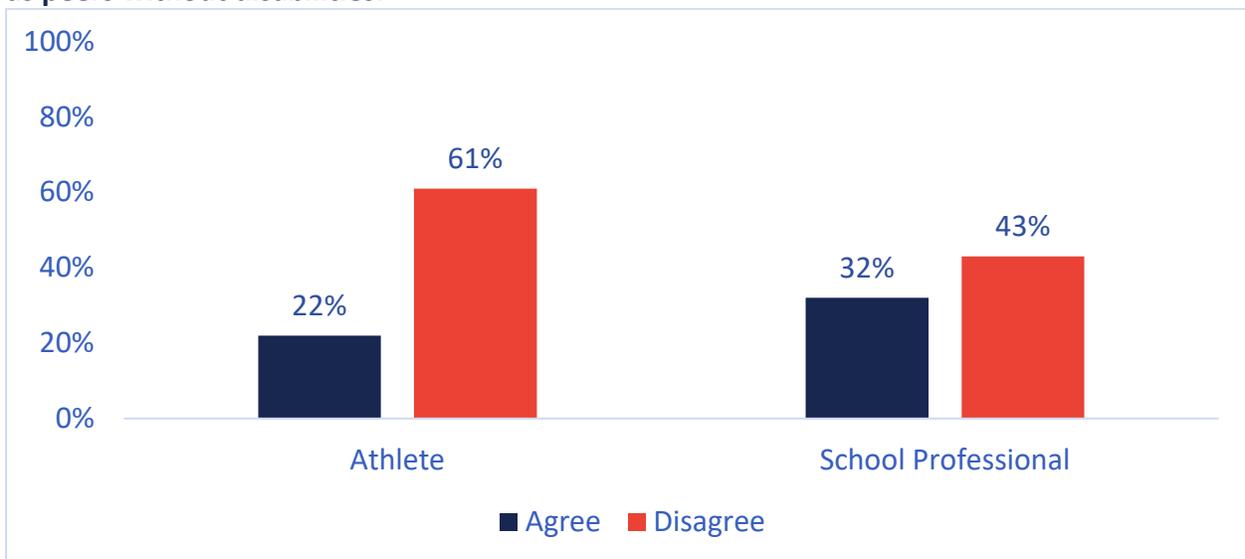
professionals feel like coaches and other students make athletes with disabilities feel welcome in sports (51%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Coaches and other students make athletes with disabilities feel welcome in sports



When asked if students with disabilities have the same choices and options to play sports in school as peers without disabilities, both athletes and their families and school professionals disagreed with this statement, with athletes and their families disagreeing much more than school professionals (Figure 2).

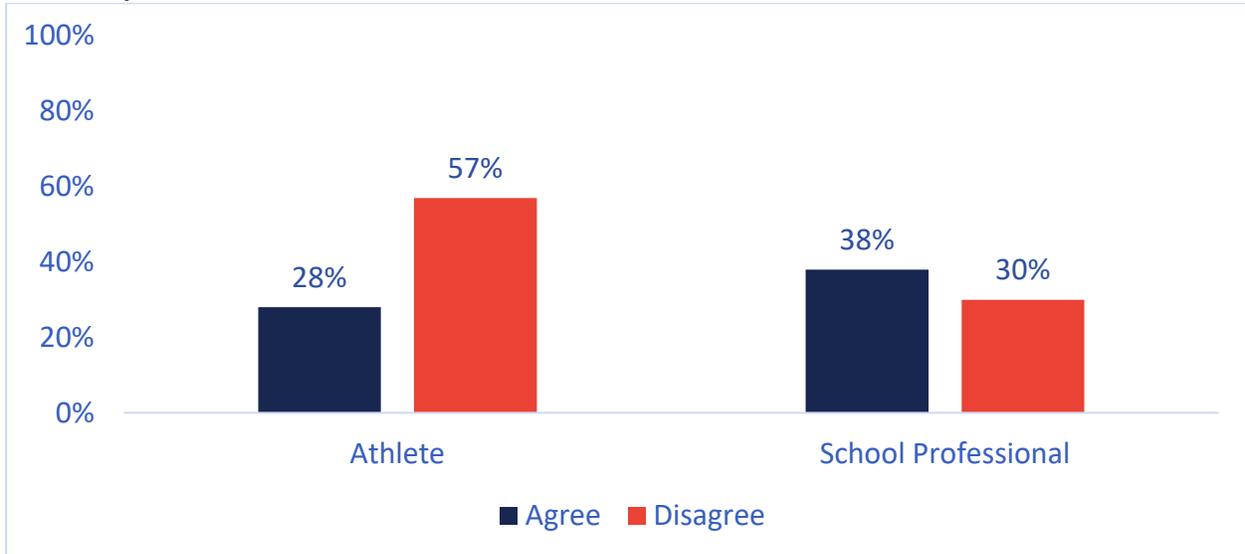
Figure 2. Students with disabilities have the same choices and options to play sports in school as peers without disabilities.



When asked if teachers and coaches in school let students with disabilities know about sports they can be a part of, most athletes and their families disagreed with this statement, whereas

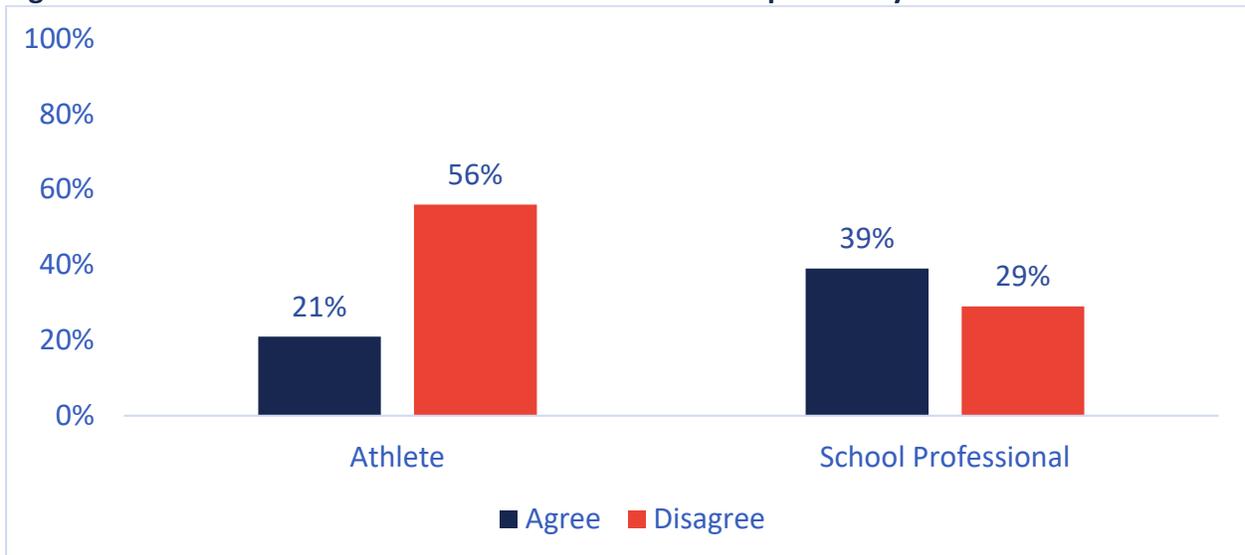
school professionals were more split on this statement with slightly more school professionals agreeing with this statement (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Teachers and coaches in school let students with disabilities know about sports they can be a part of



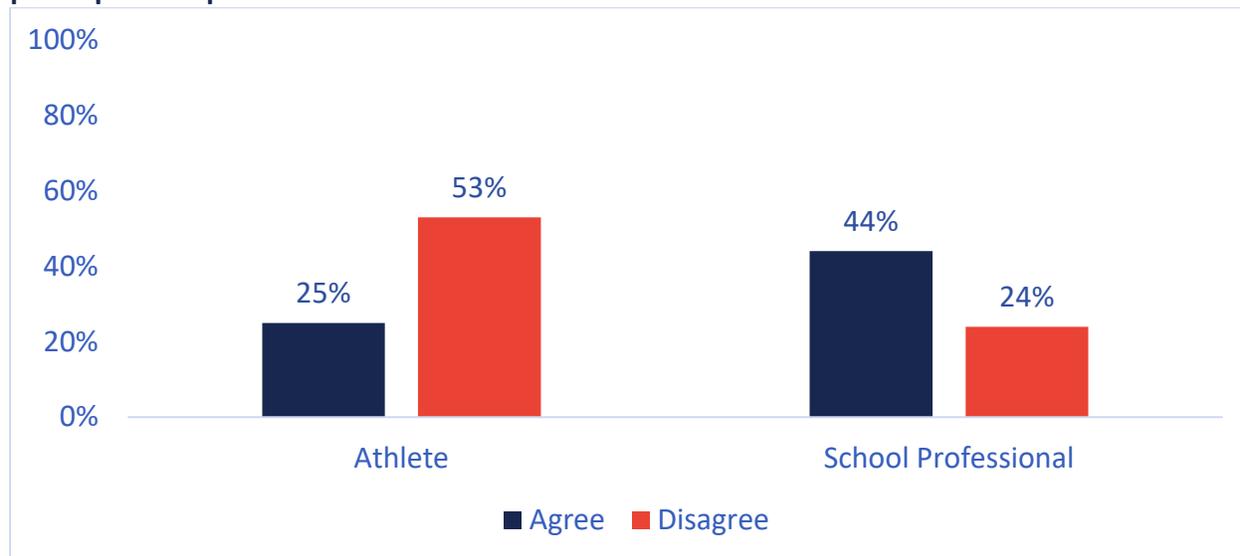
We also found that most athletes and their families disagreed that schools commit to and take responsibility for inclusion, whereas school professionals were more likely to agree with this statement (Figure 4).

Figure 4. School and athletic clubs commit to and take responsibility for inclusion



Additionally, most athletes and their families disagreed that schools provide opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in sports whereas most school professionals agreed with this statement (Figure 5).

Figure 5. School and athletic clubs provide opportunity for students with disabilities to participate in sports



When asked about things that makes it hard personally for students with disabilities to play sports in schools, participants cited the following top three responses 1) students don't know about sports they can play, 2) students think they don't have the skill to play sports and 3) students don't know how to join sports teams (Table 7). When we look at responses by athletes and their families versus school professionals, we saw that the top reason cited remained the same for both groups.

Table 7. What makes it hard personally for students with disabilities to play sports in school

What makes it hard personally for students with disabilities to play sports in school	Total and Percentage (n=428)
Students don't know about sports they can play	204 (48%)
Students think they don't have the skill to play sports	146 (34%)
Students don't know how to join sport teams	125 (29%)

When asked what makes it hard socially for students with disabilities to play sports in school, the top three responses that were cited among participants were 1) parents or caregivers are afraid for their child to play sports, 2) coaches in school are not supportive and 3) other reasons (Table 8). When looking at the top reasons cited for the disability versus school professionals, the top response cited for athletes and their families was that coaches in school are not supportive. The top reason for professionals was that parents or caregivers are afraid for their child to play sports.

Table 8. What makes it hard socially for students with disabilities to play sports in school

What makes it hard socially for students with disabilities to play sports in school	Total and Percentage (n=428)
Parents or caregivers are afraid for their child to play sports	147 (34%)
Coaches in school are not supportive	141 (33%)
Other	113 (26%)

We also asked what environmental barriers make it hard for students with disabilities to play sports in school. The top three responses cited among participants were 1) coaches and other school staff don't know how to include students with disabilities in sports, 2) there are no opportunities for students with disabilities to play sports in school, and 3) students don't have the right equipment to play the sport they want to play (Table 9). The reason among athletes and their families and school professionals was the same.

Table 9. What barriers make it hard for students with disabilities to play sports in school

What barriers make it hard for students with disabilities to play sports in school	Total and Percentage (n=428)
Coaches and other school staff don't know how to include students with disabilities in sports	227 (53%)
There are no opportunities for students with disabilities to play sports in school	147 (34%)
Students don't have the right equipment to play the sport they want to play	99 (23%)

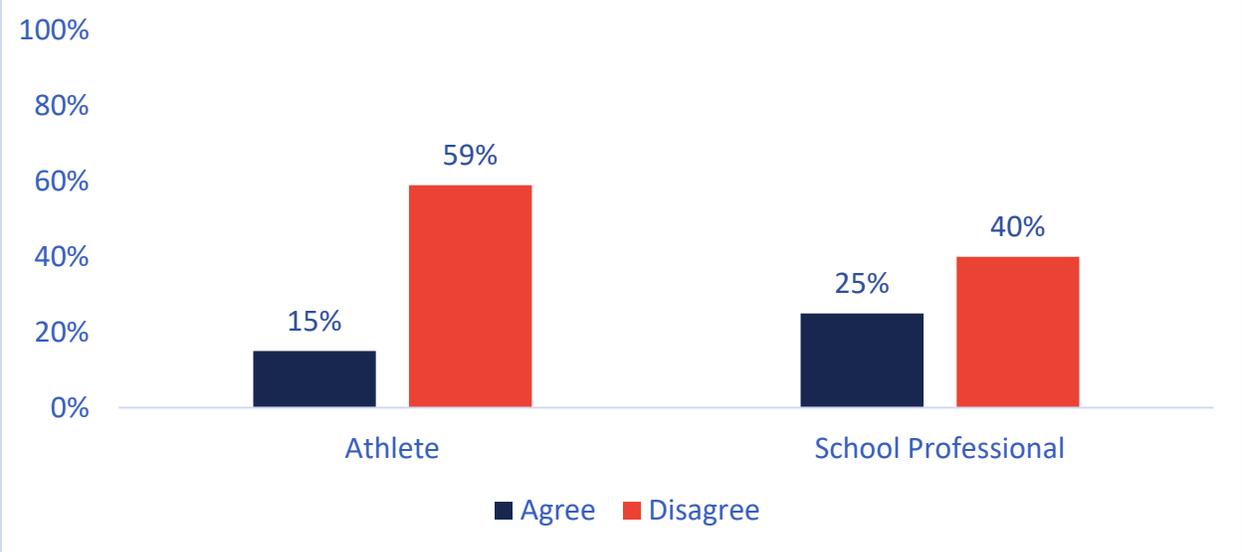
Most (69%) survey participants said that they want more opportunities for youth with disabilities to play sports in school with peers without disabilities (Table 10).

Table 10. Do you want more opportunities for youth with disabilities to play sports in school with peers without disabilities?

Do you want more opportunities for youth with disabilities to play sports in school with peers without disabilities?	Total and Percentage (n=428)
Yes	296 (69%)
No	19 (4%)
I don't know	55 (13%)
Missing	58 (14%)

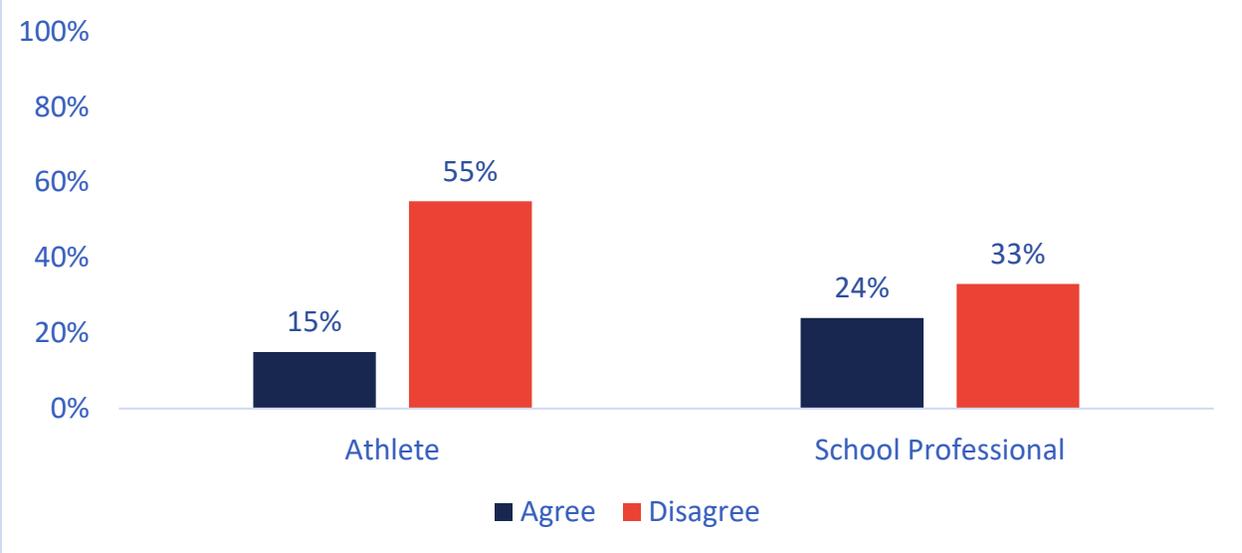
When asked if they feel that sports are inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities, most athletes and their families, and school professionals disagreed with this statement, with athletes and their families more strongly disagreeing with this statement (Figure 6).

Figure 6. I feel that school sports are inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities



When asked if students with disabilities are meaningfully included in school sports, a majority of athletes and their families disagreed with this statement whereas, school professionals were more split on this statement (Figure 7).

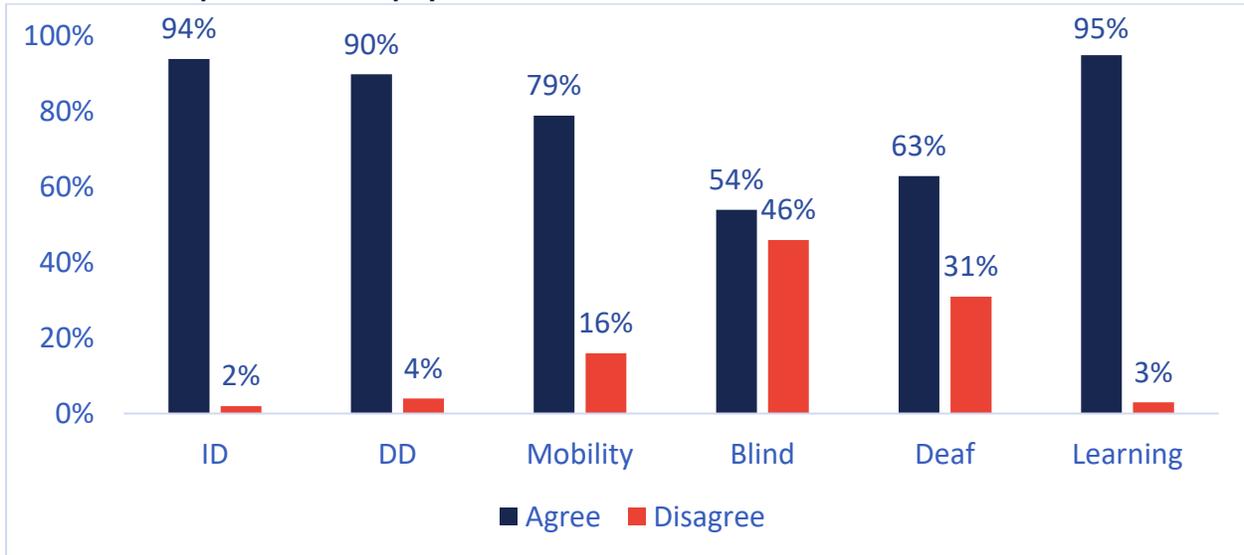
Figure 7. I feel that students with disabilities are meaningfully included in school sports



School professional participants were asked about their confidence in working with students with different functional disability types in sports or other physical activities (Figure 8). School

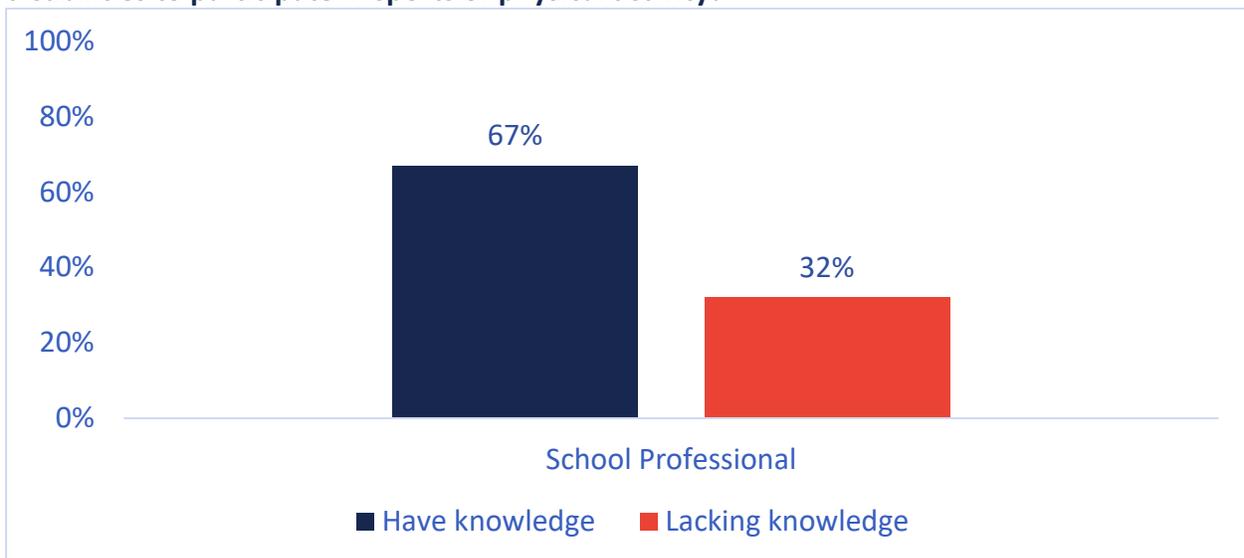
professionals felt most confident working with students with learning (95%), intellectual (94%), developmental (90%), and mobility disabilities (79%). School professional participants had less confidence working with students who are Blind or low vision (54%) or those who are Deaf and hard of hearing (63%).

Figure 8. I am confident in my ability to work with youth with the following types of disabilities in sports or other physical activities.



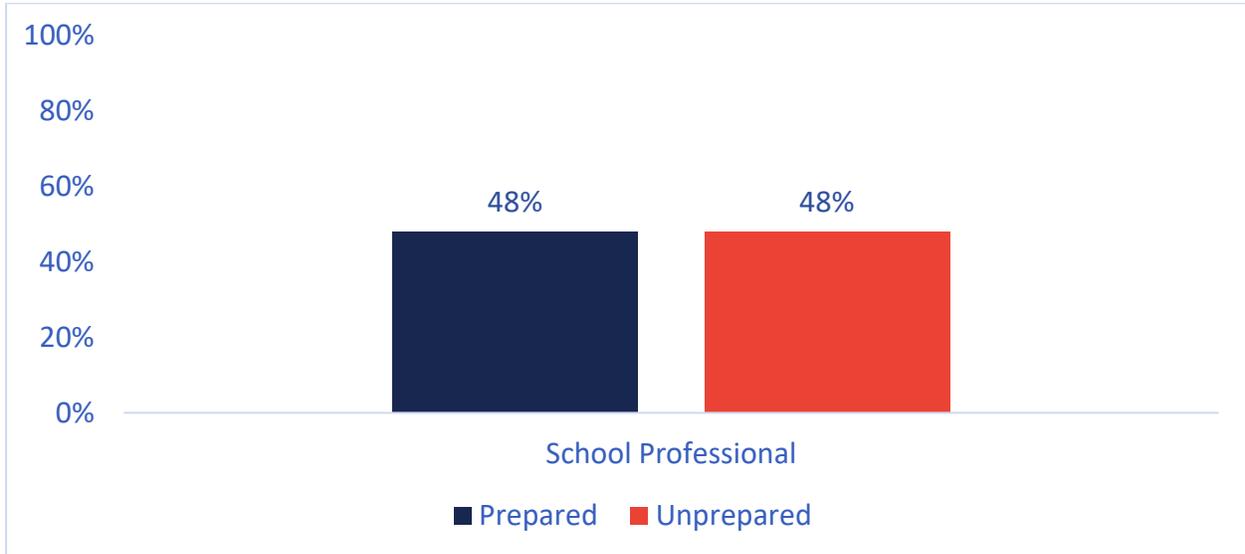
School professional participants were also asked about how knowledgeable they felt about providing accommodations; most participants (67%) felt they have knowledge in this area (Figure 9).

Figure 9. How knowledgeable are you about providing accommodations to youth with disabilities to participate in sports or physical activity?



About half of school professionals (48%) felt like they are unprepared to provide inclusive and adaptive sports opportunities to youth with disabilities (Figure 10).

Figure 10. How prepared do you feel to provide inclusive and adaptive sport opportunities to meet the needs of students with disabilities?



Most school professionals, however, think that the school district they work in would be supportive of staff receiving training on inclusive sports (56%) (Table 11).

Table 11. Do you think that the school district you work in would be supportive of staff receiving training on inclusive sports?

Do you think that the school district you work in would be supportive of staff receiving training on inclusive sports?	Professional Total and Percentage (n=173)
Yes	97 (56%)
No	6 (4%)
I don't know	35 (20%)
Missing	35 (20%)

Nearly half of families (49%) do not know of resources in their school or community that are available for their child to participate in sports. Additionally, very few school professionals know where to find resources specifically around inclusive sport program design, and where to access equipment, training, and funding.

In terms of training, 61% of school professionals have not had any training on inclusive sports for students with disabilities. However, 72% of school professionals are interested or potentially interested in receiving training on inclusive sports. The top training needs cited by school professionals were inclusion/integration of disabled students, program accessibility, disability sport technology, attitudes about disability, and inclusive versus population specific sport. School professionals prefer in-person trainings, followed by live virtual trainings, self-paced online trainings, and a combination of in-person/virtual live trainings and self-paced trainings.

Finally, from qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses, the overall top three codes that emerged were related to having limited or lack of opportunities, which makes it hard to participate in sports (121 codes), experiences of youth with disabilities being unwelcomed or excluded from school sports (110 codes), and the competitiveness of school sports making it hard to participate in sports (95 codes).

Key Informant Interview and Listening Sessions

The top ten overall themes that emerged in the key informant interviews with key stakeholders and listening sessions with athletes with disabilities and their families are presented in Table 12, along with the frequency of the number of times that the theme emerged in the conversation. Additional descriptive information about the top themes are described further in the section below.

Table 12. Top 10 Key Informant and Listening Session Themes

Key Informant Themes	Frequency	Listening Session Themes	Frequency
Existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs	99	Attitudinal bias	32
Successful programs have strong partnerships and buy in from all involved and are disability led	84	Lack of inclusive sport opportunities	31
Lack of resources	62	Existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports programs	31
Lack of knowledge and trained coaches/staff and support	52	Dependent on parent advocacy and support	28
Lack of inclusive sport opportunities	46	Program success is dependent on trained coaches who are welcoming and inclusive	28
Culture of inclusion and acceptance	35	Culture of inclusion and acceptance	26
Training topic priorities	30	Improve training of coaches and staff	25

There are resources for training on inclusive sports for coaches	29	Behaviors of coaches need to be improved	25
Attitudinal bias	28	Lack of knowledge and trained coaches/staff and support	23
Time and Travel	28	Aspects of successful inclusive sports programs	22

Qualitative Results Overall

All qualitative information from the survey, key informant interviews, and listening sessions were analyzed together and the tables below present the overall findings for what participants told us is working well and what makes it easy to play sports (Table 13), what makes it hard to play sports (Table 14), and what schools can do better to improve inclusive sports opportunities in schools (Table 15). This combined qualitative analysis reflects 18 hours of transcripts from 34 key informant and listening session participants and 428 survey participants.

Table 13. Working Well

Theme	Frequency
Existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs	136
Successful programs have strong partnerships, supports in place, buy in from all involved, and are disability led	123
Inclusive, integrated, universally designed, individual-based sports are most effective	91
Program success is dependent on trained coaches who are open to working with athletes with disabilities, welcoming, supportive, and inclusive	57
Examples of school opportunities exist	37

Participants in our needs assessment described what is currently working well and what makes it easy for youth with disabilities to participate in school sports. The following top five themes emerged:

1. There are many existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs with trained staff and coaches that are working well and are a positive experience for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mobility disabilities. One key informant shared:

“And then it went so well, and we had such a good response from the parents, the kids, the typical kiddos that played us and their parents, that we decided, you know, we’re gonna open this up to other people because other people were probably turned away like we were. So, we opened it up to other people and it exploded. We went from one team to four teams to six teams to eight teams. We started our nonprofit two years ago and now we have, 84 kids playing baseball this year in our little small area...”

- Inclusive sports and dance programs that have been successful have had strong partnerships and collaborations and support within the community, strong buy-in from leadership, have people with disabilities leading the program, involvement of clinicians like physical therapists and occupational therapists in the design and operations of the program, parent advocacy, support from students without disabilities on teams, support from teammates, the school community, family, and friends in general, and efforts to make parents and youth with disabilities aware of the program and opportunities/resources. One listening session participant noted that:

“From a facility standpoint or organization standpoint, I think what makes it easiest is the community that we live in is very inclusive minded and really want to be able to provide services and provide the ability for him to play.”

- The types of programs that are most successful are models that are integrated and inclusive with meaningful participation of athletes with disabilities that are universally designed with necessary accommodations provided and where the sport is individual and not team-based (such as swimming and diving, track and field, and dance) and not competitive (not a cut sport). A listening session participant shared:

“...our school district for track has been amazing. And they actually provide an aide.”

- Inclusive and adaptive sports programs work well when the staff and coaches are trained to work with athletes with disabilities and coaches are open, welcoming, encouraging, supportive, and willing to include athletes with disabilities on their teams. Also, when coaches and staff are actively engaged, patient, and view disability as an asset. One listening session participant explained:

“I think the attitude of the school administration and athletics department being welcoming to make you to make your child feel like they belong, and they want them, and that they're not a burden, because I do know that's not the case at all school districts.”

- There are a few examples of some schools that have inclusive/adaptive sports opportunities that are working well. The following example was shared during a listening session:

“We were super fortunate, because when we moved, he was in middle school in [city name], Ohio, where we live, happens to be the headquarters of [adaptive sports organization], which we benefited greatly because of them being in our community. So, they worked with [city name] schools and started the first adaptive sports team interscholastic sports team through the State of Ohio. So, he played wheelchair basketball for [city name] High School for four years.”

Wonderful experience that led him to join the track team. So, he competed in what's called the wheelchair, or seated events on his high school track team. So that's very unique, though, across Ohio, and it wouldn't be possible with that organization in [city name] working directly hands-on with that school, with the school district to make those opportunities possible."

Table 14. What makes it hard to play sports

Theme	Frequency
Lack of accessibility	310
Attitudinal bias	266
Lack of knowledge and trained coaches/staff and support	223
Lack of inclusive sport opportunities	212
Lack of resources	185

Participants in our needs assessment also described what makes it hard for youth with disabilities to participate in school sports (Table 14). The below top five themes emerged:

1. A lack of universally designed programs and appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and tailoring to specific access needs of athletes with disabilities as well as the physical and sensory accessibility of spaces for sports is a barrier to participating in sports for youth with disabilities, which leaves youth with disabilities feeling that they cannot access sports due to skills or physical limitations. One listening session participant reported the following:

"They don't know what to do with him...and at this point it's easier for him to just feel [like] he doesn't care."

2. Examples of attitudinal bias and unwelcoming and exclusionary behavior towards athletes with disabilities along with coaches and staff having incorrect assumptions, lack of knowledge, and low expectations about athletes with disabilities are barriers that prevent participation in sport for youth with disabilities. One survey respondent shared:

"My typical son gets all the emails and notices about sports and clubs. My son with autism gets no notices or emails or invites. So, I can tell right there that kids with special needs are not invited or included."

3. A lack of understanding/knowledge about including athletes with disabilities, a lack of trained coaches and staff, a lack of comfort for coaches to work with athletes with disabilities, and a lack of support from the school including having proper staffing for inclusive sports are barriers to participation in school-based inclusive sports. One key informant shared:

"...it's a combination of lack of education and comfort and lack of resources. Just not having the bodies, the people to assist these students, especially when they

have a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, and they, you know, need more support. The coaching staff are already short staffed, and it's very difficult and stressful for them. You know. I think they have good intentions, and they really want to be, but then they also feel like, I don't have the training, I don't have the knowledge. I don't have the time, or, you know, to be able to really provide the resources that these students sometimes need."

4. A lack of opportunity and access to school inclusive sports opportunities, particularly in rural areas. Further, many existing opportunities have athletes with disabilities segregated or isolated from peers or are used for tokenism. When asked to explain why school sports are not inclusive or accessible, one survey respondent wrote:

"We currently drive an hour for almost any sport my son wants to play because there are not opportunities closer, save one, which doesn't allow him to play independently and is not competitive."

5. A lack of resources, including equipment, financial resources, and access to trainings, or awareness of existing resources, which often operate in silos, with parents being left to have to figure out resources on their own are barriers to participation in school-based inclusive sports. One parent shared:

"Without me being my daughters track coach our school would have no opportunities for my daughter to play sports."

Table 15. What schools can do better

Theme	Frequency
Culture of inclusion and acceptance	102
Aspects of successful inclusive sports programs	88
Improve training of coaches and staff	72
Meaningful participation in inclusive school sports	69
Improve accessibility to spaces, equipment, and resources	68

Finally, participants in our needs assessment also described what schools can do to better to include youth with disabilities in school sports (Table 15). The following top five themes emerged:

1. Schools need to foster and facilitate a culture of inclusion and acceptance for athletes with disabilities that starts from the top with buy-in and support from administrators. Schools also need to provide a supportive and inclusive, and accessible environment for athletes with disabilities. This includes having receptive, knowledgeable, and supportive coaches and staff starting at an early age. One key informant stated:

“It has to come from the top and trickle down because if our superintendent doesn't believe that this is an important aspect of our school district or that our students, you know, with special needs, if they don't believe that we need to be an inclusive building, even though our mission statements say that we are an inclusive district, if their vision doesn't meet a true definition of inclusive, then we're going to get nowhere.”

2. Successful inclusive sports programs have whole school engagement including administrators, teachers/coaches, students and the community. This also includes having opportunities for inclusive sports in school teams, providing opportunities for sports that are for experience versus competition, offering adaptive sports in physical education classes, collaborating with community partners, and including healthcare providers such as physical therapists and occupational therapists. Other aspects include working with and building off existing successful inclusive/adaptive sports and dance organizations and using existing accessible spaces for school sports. Further, improving communication and expectation setting between the school and families can increase awareness of sport and dance opportunities for youth with disabilities. A listening session participant explained:

“I do think a key to it is like a third-party organization, like adaptive sports, who have expertise that can work with the school district, educate them because school districts, they're not gonna do it or they're not gonna have the number of athletes to really develop programs. So I think it does take a third-party intervention to kind of be the intermediary, and that takes funding for them to be able to do that.”

3. Schools need to improve access to trainings and educate coaches and staff utilizing existing resources such as the Move United Inclusive Playbook on how to include athletes with disabilities in sports. One key informant shared:

“I think that finding a way, and maybe that's through training, because it does help to have language that's already available for coaches to use and even language that could be made available for kids to use if they're not sure how to interact with their teammates because maybe someone's disability makes them feel awkward. Who knows. But perhaps having tools, even if that's like some sort of learning material for both the kids, maybe for other parents. And then of course the coaches. But kids of parents just to understand. How to be on a team with everybody. It'd be helpful and making people feel welcome.”

4. Athletes with disabilities want to be able to participate in school sports alongside peers without disabilities and schools need to create sport opportunities in schools that allow for meaningful participation (not token participation) in athletics that fosters a sense of belonging. One parent explained:

“I don't want him to be the mascot...I don't want him to be you know, the team lucky charm. I want him to be part of the team. Even if he's not competing at their level. Just having that experience of being part of the team.”

5. Schools need to ensure spaces/facilities are physically and sensory accessible, access to adaptive equipment, access to aides/volunteers/peers to assist in sport, and access to dedicated resources for the inclusion of athletes with disabilities. A key informant shared:

“If we had unlimited resources and funding, we would have more aides available for after school exercises to help these kids participate. We would have better transportation options for after school, so that kids could be still transported home and not have to rely on parents who are working or don't have the ability, who have other children and can't get there.”

Discussion

The Inclusive Sport Project statewide needs and asset assessment gathered information from a diverse group of Ohioans from all regions of the state through survey, key informant interviews, and listening sessions to gain an understanding of the status of inclusive sport opportunities for Ohio youth with disabilities. We organized the key results within the PRECEDE Model, outlined in Table 1 in the Methods section, to identify patterns and relationships between the data collected. Further, we sought to answer the ten key questions with this assessment based on participant responses.

Social Assessment

1) What are the current priority needs, concerns, assets, and status of inclusive sports in Ohio schools from the perspective of youth with disabilities and their families, school staff, and other stakeholders?

According to survey participants, key informants, and listening session participants, the top three priority needs and concerns that emerged from the assessment were:

1. **Lack of accessibility** – A lack of universally designed programs and appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and tailoring to specific access needs of athletes with disabilities as well as the physical and sensory accessibility of spaces for sports is a barrier to participating in sports for youth with disabilities, which leaves youth with disabilities feeling that they cannot access sports due to skills or physical limitations.
2. **Attitudinal bias** – Examples of attitudinal bias and unwelcoming and exclusionary behavior towards athletes with disabilities along with coaches and staff having incorrect

assumptions, lack of knowledge, and low expectations about athletes with disabilities are barriers that prevent participation in sport for youth with disabilities.

3. **Lack of knowledge and trained coaches/staff and support** – A lack of understanding/knowledge about including athletes with disabilities, a lack of trained coaches and staff, a lack of comfort for coaches to work with athletes with disabilities, and a lack of support from the school including having adequate staffing for inclusive sports are barriers to participation in school-based inclusive sports. Which in many cases leaves parents of youth with disabilities to have to volunteer to coach their child or teams for youth with disabilities.

The top two assets that emerged from the assessment were:

1. **Existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs** – There are many existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs with trained staff and coaches that are working well and are a positive experience for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mobility disabilities.
2. **Successful programs have strong partnerships, supports in place, buy in from all involved, and are disability led** – Inclusive sport and dance programs that have been successful have had strong partnerships and collaborations and support within the community, strong buy-in from leadership, people with disabilities leading the program, involvement of clinicians such as physical therapists and occupational therapists in the design and operations of the program, parent advocacy, support from students without disabilities on teams, support from teammates, the school community, family, and friends in general, and efforts to make parents and youth with disabilities aware of the program and opportunities/resources.

2) What is the current status of inclusive sports access and opportunities in Ohio schools from the perspective of youth with disabilities and their families, school staff, and other stakeholders?

According to most survey participants, they feel that school sports are not inclusive, welcoming, and accessible to students with disabilities, particularly from the perspective of athletes with disabilities and their families. Furthermore, most survey participants feel that when athletes with disabilities are included in school sports, they are not meaningfully included, particularly from the perspective of athletes with disabilities and their families.

According to survey participants, key informants, and listening session participants, most school-based sports that participants are familiar with are not currently accessible as described above. Many participants discussed that the characteristics of programs that are working well and make it easy to participate in school sports are those that have strong partnerships, supports in place, buy in from all involved, and are disability led. Finally, from participant perspectives, the top area needed for improvement is that schools need to foster and facilitate a culture of inclusion and acceptance for athletes with disabilities.

Epidemiological Assessment

3) What is the current status of inclusive sports in Ohio schools based on existing data and statistics?

There is very little existing data or available statistics that would indicate the extent to which schools are already implementing inclusive school-based sports. Our review found that most of the opportunities for organized, inclusive sport existed outside of school programs in dedicated adapted sport clubs or dedicated opportunities for sports that include students with and without disabilities. In theory, all schools should have the processes in place to make adaptations to sport and recreation programs as required by law. However, our review indicates that this guidance is likely not being universally applied across school systems in Ohio.

The Ohio Department of [Education Advanced Reports](#) (State Fiscal Year 2021-2022) notes that there are an estimated 255,783 students with disabilities, accounting for 15.8% of the student population (or about half the total population of Wyoming). This highlights the demand for inclusive sports that meets the needs of a significant proportion of Ohio's student population. The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools (UCS) initiative is designed to address this by recognizing schools that implement inclusive sports and clubs, inclusive youth leadership opportunities, and whole school engagement. The program is based on a three-component model with sports as the foundation. According to information shared with our assessment team from the Ohio UCS program, of the 3,656 public schools in Ohio, 170 are listed as being included in the Special Olympics Unified School Champions initiative, representing less than 5% of schools that meet Special Olympics criteria to be included in the program. Many of the schools in the UCS program are self-sustaining and two schools in Southwest and Northeast Ohio have recently achieved National Banner Recognition for being a Special Olympics Unified Champion School, the highest honor in the program, which indicates that there may be some model policies that currently exist about inclusive sport and school engagement.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guarantees the right of students with disabilities to an opportunity to benefit from the school district's program equal to that of students without disabilities. This includes the school district's extracurricular activities such as athletics. Section 504's definition of an individual with a disability is quite broad, including any student who: (1) "has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities"; (2) "has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment." However, inclusion looks different for each student and depends on the child's individual circumstances and the activity involved. School districts should provide students with disabilities accommodation and services that are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate. A school district is required to conduct an "individualized inquiry" to determine whether a student can participate with certain accommodations or modifications. If a proposed accommodation would fundamentally alter the sport, the school district should consider whether other accommodations or modifications might enable the student's participation prior to excluding the student outright.

Behavioral & Environmental Assessment

4) What are the behavioral, attitudinal, and environmental factors associated with inclusive sports opportunities in Ohio?

One of the main themes that emerged from the needs assessment that is a barrier for youth with disabilities to participate in sports is attitudinal bias and unwelcoming and exclusionary behavior towards athletes with disabilities among coaches. It was also revealed by participants that having an inclusive sports program in schools are often dependent upon on having parent advocacy or a local champion. In listening sessions with athletes with disabilities and their families, it emerged that inclusive sports program success is dependent upon trained coaches who are welcoming and inclusive and often behaviors of coaches need to be improved. Specifically, coaches need to treat athletes with disabilities equitably as they would treat other athletes, demonstrate empathy and patience, provide individualized coaching support, view disability as an asset and see value in athletes with disabilities participating on their teams, and foster a culture of acceptance and support among teammates.

Many other behavioral, attitudinal, and environmental factors were identified among survey participants. In terms of personal barriers that make it hard to play sports in schools, the top barrier cited among survey participants is that athletes with disabilities and their families do not know about sports that they can play in school. In terms of social barriers that make it hard to play sports in schools, the top barrier cited by athletes with disabilities and their families is that coaches in their school are not supportive. The top social barrier cited by school professionals is that parents or caregivers are afraid for their child to play sports. In terms of environmental barriers that make it hard to play sports in school, the top cited barrier among survey participants is that coaches and other school staff do not know how to include athletes with disabilities in school sports.

5) How can communication pathways for students with disabilities and their families be improved to help facilitate increased participation in inclusive sports?

From both the survey and listening sessions it was revealed that for programs to be successful, athletes with disabilities and their families need to be made aware of the sport opportunities open to students through improve communication between the school and families. It was found from the survey that many families reported that they are not made aware of sports they can be a part of and do not know their options, whereas school professionals felt that they are communicating these opportunities, which may indicate a disconnect in communication.

6) What is the status of the seven pillars of inclusion in school sports: access, attitude, choice, partnerships, communication, policy, and opportunities?

The seven pillars of inclusion are a framework that serve as a starting point for sports clubs and organizations to address inclusion and diversity in sport (Woods, 2018). The general consensus among needs assessment participants is that the seven pillars of inclusion are not adequately present in school sports from the experiences of survey, key informant, and listening session participants.

The first pillar, **access to inclusive sport**, which includes a welcoming environment and habits that create it, was found to be insufficient among needs assessment participants. Many survey participants cited that coaches and other students do not make students with disabilities feel welcome in school sports. Furthermore, participants across the entire needs assessment cited many examples of inaccessibility of school sports and examples of unwelcoming and exclusionary behaviors.

The second pillar, **attitude**, which includes how willing schools are to embrace inclusion of students with disabilities in school sports, was also found to be insufficient among needs assessment participants. Specifically, a reoccurring theme around attitudinal bias towards athletes with disabilities in school sports was present throughout the assessment. Though it is important to note that most school professionals in the survey cited wanting to provide more inclusive opportunities for athletes with disabilities in their schools.

The third pillar, **choice around having options to play sports**, was found to be lacking among needs assessment participants. When asked in the survey if students with disabilities have the same choices and options to play sports in school as peers without disabilities, both a majority of athletes and their families and school professionals disagreed with this statement.

The fourth pillar, **partnerships**, was found to be an important component of successful inclusive sports programs that were provided as examples from needs assessment participants.

The fifth pillar, **communication**, which includes letting athletes and families know about sports options for them, was also found to be insufficient in many cases from needs assessment participants. When asked if teachers and coaches in school let students with disabilities know about sports they can be a part of, most athletes and their families disagreed with this statement. Additionally, good communication was highlighted as an important component of successful inclusive sport programs.

The sixth pillar, **policy**, which includes how schools commit to and take responsibility for inclusion was found to be insufficient among athletes with disabilities and their families. In the survey, most athletes and their families disagreed that schools commit to and take responsibility for inclusion of athletes with disabilities in school sports.

Finally, the seventh pillar, **opportunities**, was also found to be insufficient among athletes with disabilities and their families. In the survey, most athletes and their families disagreed that schools provide opportunity for students with disabilities to participate in sports and in the listening sessions a lack of opportunity for participation in school sports was cited as a barrier.

Educational Assessment

7) What predisposing, reinforcing, and enabling factors could be leveraged to increase inclusive sports opportunities for youth with disabilities?

Needs assessment participants shared that there are many existing inclusive and adaptive programs with trained staff that are working well that can be leveraged to increase inclusive sports opportunities in Ohio schools. Additionally, it was identified that there are many aspects of successful programs that can be replicated in school districts across Ohio.

Additionally, the current lack of knowledge and training among coaches and school staff was consistently cited as a barrier and a need to improve training for coaches and staff was prioritized. Needs assessment participants identified as one of the main themes that schools need to foster and facilitate a culture of inclusion and acceptance for athletes with disabilities that starts from the top with buy-in and support from administrators and provide a supportive and inclusive and accessible environment for athletes with disabilities that includes having receptive, knowledgeable, and supportive coaches and staff that begins at an early age.

8) What are the current training interests, knowledge gaps, and needs of school staff and coaches around inclusive sports?

From the survey it was found that most school professionals have not had any training around inclusive sports for athletes with disabilities and that a majority are interested in receiving training on inclusive sports. Across all needs assessment participants, the main consensus is that coaches and school staff need training around how to be inclusive of youth with disabilities in sport. There was interest in training across grades K through 12 and for a combination of in-person/virtual live training and asynchronous self-paced training.

Administrative & Policy Assessment

9) What are the current capacity and resources in Ohio that may help us in successful program implementation of the training developed through this project?

From the survey, key informant interviews, listening sessions, and secondary data collection, we learned that there are many existing community-based inclusive/adaptive sports and dance programs with trained staff and coaches that are working well and are a positive experience for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mobility disabilities. These current programs can serve as resources and partners to assist in the implementation of our training and assisting schools in expanding inclusive sport opportunities for youth with disabilities. For example, the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools, Move United Program and Inclusive Playbook, and other inclusive and adaptive sports programs in Ohio have excellent resources and experiences to share as we seek to help schools improve their capacity and knowledge to provide more school-based inclusive sport opportunities.

We also learned that successful programs have strong community partnerships and are disability led. To assist with successful program implementation, schools could partner with

local disability organizations and parent advocacy groups as well as find physical therapy and occupational therapy community partners to help expand their inclusive sports opportunities such as partnering with local training programs as a service-learning opportunity for physical therapy and occupational therapy students.

10) What are the areas of opportunity to increase and empower local communities in active engagement to help promote participation in inclusive sports?

There are multiple areas of opportunity to leverage to expand inclusive sports opportunities for youth with disabilities in Ohio schools. First, the reach of our survey to 70 of Ohio's 88 counties across all regions in Ohio demonstrates the statewide interest in the topic of expanding inclusive sport opportunities for youth with disabilities. Furthermore, most survey participants who do not currently play sports in school want opportunities to play sports in school and most survey participants specifically want to expand inclusive sport opportunities in Ohio schools in general.

Other areas of opportunity include that there is an eagerness from school professionals to learn more about how they can expand access to sports for youth with disabilities and the perception from school professionals that school districts would be supportive of allowing their faculty and staff to participate in an inclusive sport training. Also, while our assessment found that there are many existing resources that do exist, most school professionals and parents/caregivers were not aware of such resources. Therefore, there is an opportunity to help connect schools and families to already existing resources in Ohio.

Additionally, there were many examples from the assessment of individual-based sports, such as swimming and diving, track and field, and dance that are already working well and there is opportunity to build upon these successes in other school districts across Ohio. Furthermore, there is an opportunity specifically to expand more access to dance in schools through collaborations between local dance studios and companies to include dance classes as alternatives to physical education classes or to integrate youth with disabilities on school dance teams. While not a main theme that emerged from our assessment due to the small sample size, when speaking with inclusive and adaptive dance programs in Ohio we did not hear about the same challenges to inclusion to this activity. Key informants from the dance community cited this is because dance does not have the same level of rules and competitiveness as other sports, it is more individual-based, and there is more freedom of expression to move the body in whatever way works for the individual.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this assessment and therefore the results must be interpreted with caution. First, this needs assessment used a non-randomized convenience sample to solicit participation. Although efforts were made to ensure a diverse sample of participants, these results cannot be generalized to be representative of Ohio as a whole because the sample of participants were not randomized. Therefore, the results of this assessment are limited to the

perspectives of the participants only. Additionally, the qualitative analysis is open to subjective bias of the coders. Although this bias was attempted to be mitigated by having multiple people review and reach consensus on the analysis, as well as triangulating findings across data collection methods and sharing with the project advisory committee to confirm their interpretations from their experiences, it is possible that other individuals would have different subjective interpretations of the qualitative data. Finally, it is possible that this assessment may be missing perspectives of stakeholder groups that our team and our advisory committee did not know to include.

Conclusion

Assessment participants felt that sports in Ohio schools are not inclusive and accessible to youth with disabilities. Participants identified the accessibility of sports, fostering a culture of inclusion and acceptance to correct attitudinal biases, and providing training to coaches and staff on inclusive sports for youth with disabilities as the top areas to be addressed. The assessment also found that the most successful programs include models that are integrated and inclusive, with meaningful participation of athletes with disabilities that are universally designed, and have necessary accommodations provided. Further, participants noted that they have had success with individual sports (such as swimming and diving, track and field, and dance) versus team-based, and sports that are not competitive. The assessment found that there are many existing inclusive and adaptive sport opportunities and resources that exist in Ohio that can be leveraged. School professionals indicated having a high level of support for inclusive sport opportunities and felt that opportunities are often inclusive and accessible. School professionals, however, may be unaware of the extent to which families and youth are encountering inaccessibility in sport opportunities and communication about opportunities. Therefore, the information gleaned from this assessment will be used to develop a training for schools that can address the priority gaps in knowledge, highlighted skills, and also help to connect schools to existing community-based resources.

Action Plan

The next steps for this project are to take the findings from this assessment and to develop a training in collaboration with our expert advisory committee and key stakeholders to be piloted in Athens County, and then spread to the rest of Ohio. The training will focus on closing the gaps identified from this assessment and building on existing capacity and resources and leveraging areas of identified opportunity to expand inclusive sport access across Ohio.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questions

Disability Perspective -Youth with disabilities module

Question	Response Options
<p>1) Do you have an intellectual or developmental disability?</p> <p>Examples of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities include autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, and so on.</p>	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I don't Know</p>
<p>2) Are you deaf, or do you have serious difficulty hearing?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>3) Are you blind, or do you have serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>4) Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>5) Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>6) Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>7) What grade are you in?</p>	<p>a. 6th grade</p> <p>b. 7th grade</p> <p>c. 8th grade</p> <p>d. 9th grade (Freshman)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. 10th grade (Sophomore) f. 11th grade (Junior) g. 12th grade (Senior) h. Other: _____ i. I am not in school (end of survey)
8) Do you play school sports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes (skip to 10) b. No (skip to 9)
9) Do you want to play school sports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes (skip to 11) b. No (skip to 11) c. I don't know (skip to 11)
10) What school sport(s) do you play? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseball b. Basketball c. Bowling d. Cheerleading e. Cross Country f. Dance g. Field Hockey h. Football i. Golf j. Gymnastics k. Ice Hockey l. Lacrosse m. Soccer n. Softball o. Swimming & Diving p. Tennis q. Track & Field r. Volleyball

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> s. Wrestling t. Other (please list)
11) What school sport(s) do you want to play? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseball b. Basketball c. Bowling d. Cheerleading e. Cross Country f. Dance g. Field Hockey h. Football i. Golf j. Gymnastics k. Ice Hockey l. Lacrosse m. Soccer n. Softball o. Swimming & Diving p. Tennis q. Track & Field r. Volleyball s. Wrestling t. Other (please list) u. I don't know
12) Do you play any club sports? (Sports played outside of school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes (skip to question 13) b. No (skip to question 14)
13) What club sports do you play?	Text response
Please choose how much you agree with each statement below:	
14) Coaches and other students make me feel welcome in school sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly agree 

<p>15) I have the same choices and options to play sports in my school as my friends without disabilities</p>	<p>b. Agree 😊</p> <p>c. Disagree 😐</p>
<p>16) Teachers and coaches in my school let me know about sports I can be a part of</p>	<p>d. Strongly disagree 😞</p> <p>e. I do not know 😕</p>
<p>17) What makes it hard for you personally to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<p>a. I don't think I have the skill to play sports</p> <p>b. I am afraid to play sports</p> <p>c. I don't know about sports that I can play</p> <p>d. I don't know how to join sports teams</p> <p>e. Other: _____</p> <p>f. Nothing, it is not hard for me to play sports in school</p>
<p>18) What makes it hard for you socially to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<p>a. My parents or caregivers are afraid for me to play sports</p> <p>b. My family is not supportive</p> <p>c. My friends are not supportive</p> <p>d. Coaches in my school are not supportive</p> <p>e. Other: _____</p> <p>f. Nothing, it is not hard for me to play sports in school</p>
<p>19) What barriers make it hard for you to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<p>a. There are no opportunities for me to play sports in my school</p> <p>b. Coaches and other school staff don't know how to include me in sports</p> <p>c. It costs too much for me to play sports</p> <p>d. I don't have transportation to practices, games, events, or competitions</p> <p>e. I don't have the right equipment to play the sport I want to play</p>

	<p>f. I can't access the space (such as a locker room, field, stadium, practice space and so on)</p> <p>g. Other: _____</p> <p>h. Nothing, it is not hard for me to play sports in school</p>
<p>20) What other ways make it hard for you to play sports in school?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>21) Do you want more opportunities to play sports with your friends without disabilities?</p>	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I don't know</p>
<p>22) I feel that sports are inclusive and accessible to me in my school.</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p> <p>c. Disagree </p> <p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p> <p>*if disagree or strongly disagree will be asked "Please explain why sports in your school are not inclusive and accessible to you." and skip to question 25</p> <p>*if agree or strongly agree will be asked "Please explain how sports in your school are inclusive and accessible to you." and also skip to question 24</p>
<p>23) I feel that I am meaningfully included in sports in my school. This means that I can fully participate in the same sports together with my friends without disabilities.</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p>

	<p>c. Disagree </p> <p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p> <p>*if disagree or strongly disagree will be asked “Please explain why you are not meaningfully included in school sports.”</p> <p>*if agree or strongly agree will be asked “Please explain how you are meaningfully included in school sports.”</p>
<p>24) Are you of Hispanic or Latino/a origin?</p>	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I prefer not to say</p>
<p>25) What is your race? (Choose all that apply to you)</p>	<p>a. Asian</p> <p>b. Black or African American</p> <p>c. Middle Eastern or North African</p> <p>d. Native American or Alaska Native</p> <p>e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</p> <p>f. White</p> <p>g. Other: _____</p> <p>h. I prefer not to say</p>
<p>26) What county is your school in?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dropdown of all Ohio counties including option I do not go to school in Ohio • I do not know (skip to 28)
<p>27) What is your ZIP code?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>28) What is your gender identity?</p>	<p>a. Girl</p> <p>b. Boy</p>

	<p>c. Non-binary (a person whose gender identity cannot be described as girl or boy)</p> <p>d. Other identities: _____</p> <p>e. I prefer not to say</p>
<p>29) Are you interested in being a part of a listening session group to share more about your experiences? If so, please type in your email address below.</p>	Text entry

Disability Perspective- Parent/caregiver of youth with disabilities module

Question	Response Options
<p>1) Does your child have an intellectual or developmental disability?</p> <p>Examples of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities include autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, and so on.</p>	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I don't Know</p>
<p>2) Is your child deaf, or do they have serious difficulty hearing?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>3) Is your child blind, or do they have serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>
<p>4) Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does your child have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?</p> 	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p>

<p>5) Does your child have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?</p> 	<p>a. Yes b. No</p>
<p>6) Does your child have difficulty dressing or bathing?</p> 	<p>a. Yes b. No</p>
<p>7) What grade is your child in?</p>	<p>a. Kindergarten b. 1st grade c. 2nd grade d. 3rd grade e. 4th grade f. 5th grade g. 6th grade h. 7th grade i. 8th grade j. 9th grade (Freshman) k. 10th grade (Sophomore) l. 11th grade (Junior) m. 12th grade (Senior) n. Other: _____ o. I do not have a child in school (end of survey)</p>
<p>8) Does your child play school sports?</p>	<p>a. Yes (skip to 10) b. No (skip to 9)</p>
<p>9) Does your child want to play school sports?</p>	<p>a. Yes (skip to 11) b. No (skip to 11) c. I don't know (skip to 11)</p>

<p>10) What school sport(s) does your child play? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseball b. Basketball c. Bowling d. Cheerleading e. Cross Country f. Dance g. Field Hockey h. Football i. Golf j. Gymnastics k. Ice Hockey l. Lacrosse m. Soccer n. Softball o. Swimming & Diving p. Tennis q. Track & Field r. Volleyball s. Wrestling t. Other (please list)
<p>11) What sport(s) does your child want to play? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseball b. Basketball c. Bowling d. Cheerleading e. Cross Country f. Dance g. Field Hockey h. Football i. Golf j. Gymnastics

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. Ice Hockey l. Lacrosse m. Soccer n. Softball o. Swimming & Diving p. Tennis q. Track & Field r. Volleyball s. Wrestling t. Other (please list) u. I don't know
12) Does your child play any club sports? (Sports played outside of school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes (skip to question 13) b. No (skip to question 14)
13) What club sports does your child play?	Text response
Please choose how much you agree with each statement below:	
14) Coaches and other students make my child feel welcome in school sports	
15) My child has the same choices and options to play sports in their school as their classmates without disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Disagree  d. Strongly Disagree  e. I do not know 
16) Teachers and coaches in my child's school let us know about sports they can be a part of	
17) My child's school and athletic clubs commit to and take responsibility for inclusion	

<p>18) My child’s school and athletic clubs provide opportunity for children with disabilities to participate in sports</p>	
<p>19) What makes it hard for your child personally to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My child doesn’t think they have the skill to play sports b. They are afraid to play sports c. We don’t know about sports that they can play d. We don’t know how to join sports teams e. Other: _____ f. Nothing, it is not hard for my child to play sports in school
<p>20) What makes it hard for your child socially to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I am afraid for my child to play sports b. Our family is not supportive c. Their friends are not supportive d. Coaches in their school are not supportive e. Other: _____ f. Nothing, it is not hard for my child to play sports in school
<p>21) What barriers make it hard for your child to play sports in school? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are no opportunities for my child to play sports in their school b. Coaches and other school staff don’t know how to include my child in sports c. It costs too much for my child to play sports d. We don’t have transportation to practices, games, events, or competitions e. My child doesn’t have the right equipment to play the sport I want to play

	<p>f. My child can't access the space (such as a locker room, field, stadium, practice space and so on)</p> <p>g. Other: _____</p> <p>h. Nothing, it is not hard for my child to play sports in school</p>
22) What other ways make it hard for your child to play sports in school?	Text response
23) Do you know of resources in your school or community that are available to you and your child to participate in sports?	<p>a. Yes (skip to text response)</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I don't know</p>
* Please type in the resource(s) below.	Text response
24) Do you want more opportunities for your child to play sports with their friends without disabilities?	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. I don't know</p>
25) I feel that sports are inclusive and accessible to my child in their school.	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p> <p>c. Disagree </p> <p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p> <p>*if disagree or strongly disagree will be asked "Please explain why sports in your school are not inclusive and accessible to your child." and skip to question 28</p> <p>*if agree or strongly agree will be asked "Please explain how sports in your school are inclusive"</p>

	and accessible to your child.” and also skip to question 27
26) I feel that my child is meaningfully included in sports in their school. This means that they can fully participate in the same sports together with their friends without disabilities.	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p> <p>c. Disagree </p> <p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p>
27) Is your child of Hispanic or Latino/a origin?	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. Prefer not to say</p>
28) What is your child’s race? (Choose all that apply to your child)	<p>a. Asian</p> <p>b. Black or African American</p> <p>c. Middle Eastern or North African</p> <p>d. Native American or Alaska Native</p> <p>e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</p> <p>f. White</p> <p>g. Other: _____</p> <p>h. Prefer not to say</p>
29) What county is your child’s school in?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dropdown of all Ohio counties including option I do not go to school in Ohio
30) What is your child’s gender identity?	<p>a. Girl</p> <p>b. Boy</p>

	<p>c. Non-binary (A person whose gender identity cannot be described as girl or boy)</p> <p>d. Other identities: _____</p> <p>e. I prefer not to say</p>
<p>31) Are you interested in being a part of a listening session group to share more about your experiences? If so, please type in your email address below.</p>	Text entry

School professionals' module

Question	Response Options
<p>1) Please select all the grade levels of students that you work with in your school(s).</p>	<p>a. Kindergarten</p> <p>b. 1st grade</p> <p>c. 2nd grade</p> <p>d. 3rd grade</p> <p>e. 4th grade</p> <p>f. 5th grade</p> <p>g. 6th grade</p> <p>h. 7th grade</p> <p>i. 8th grade</p> <p>j. 9th grade (Freshman)</p> <p>k. 10th grade (Sophomore)</p> <p>l. 11th grade (Junior)</p> <p>m. 12th grade (Senior)</p> <p>n. Other: _____</p>
<p>2) Please select the county or counties for the schools that you work</p>	<p>a. Dropdown of all Ohio counties including option I do not work in an Ohio school</p>

<p>3) What is your role within the school or schools that you work? (Select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Coach for a school sport b) Physical education teacher c) Athletic director d) Special education teacher e) Teacher f) Paraprofessional g) Principal h) Other school administrator: _____ i) Physical therapist j) Occupational therapist k) Speech therapist l) Nurse m) Psychologist n) Orientation and mobility specialist o) Instructional resource consultant p) Volunteer q) Other: _____
<p>4) What sports or activities do you coach, teach, or participate with students in?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseball b. Basketball c. Bowling d. Cheerleading e. Cross Country f. Dance g. Field Hockey h. Football i. Golf j. Gymnastics k. Ice Hockey l. Lacrosse m. Soccer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n. Softball o. Swimming & Diving p. Tennis q. Track & Field r. Volleyball s. Wrestling t. Other (please list) u. I don't know v. I don't participate in any of these sports or activities with students
5) Do you work with youth with disabilities in your school(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
I am confident in my ability to work with youth with the following types of disabilities in sports or other physical activities:	
6) Intellectual disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Disagree  d. Strongly Disagree  e. I do not know 
7) Developmental disability	
8) Mobility disability	
9) Blind or low vision	
10) Deaf or Hard of Hearing	
11) Learning disability	
12) How knowledgeable are you about providing accommodations to youth with disabilities to participate in sports or physical activity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Very knowledgeable b. Somewhat knowledgeable c. A little knowledgeable d. Not knowledgeable at all
13) How prepared do you feel to provide inclusive and adapted sport opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Very prepared b. Somewhat prepared c. A little prepared

to meet the needs of students with disabilities in your school?	d. Not prepared at all
14) Do you know who to ask or where to go to access the following resources to include youth with disabilities in school or community sports (select all that apply):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Training b. Indirect/direct support (ex: staff) c. Funding d. Inclusive sport program design (types of modifications, appropriate adaptive equipment to use) e. Where to access adaptive equipment f. Other: _____
Please choose how much you agree with each statement below:	
15) Coaches and other students make students with disabilities feel welcome in school sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strongly agree  b. Agree  c. Disagree  d. Strongly Disagree  e. I do not know 
16) Students with disabilities have the same choices and options to play sports in their school as their classmates without disabilities	
17) Teachers and coaches in my school(s) let students with disabilities and their families know about sports they can be a part of	
18) My school(s) and athletic clubs commit to and take responsibility for inclusion	
19) My school(s) and athletic clubs provide opportunity for children with disabilities to participate in sports	
20) Do you want more inclusive sport opportunities in your school(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
21) What do you think are the training needs/topics for school-based professionals around inclusive sports for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ableism b. Facility accessibility

<p>youth with disabilities? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Program accessibility d. Inclusion/integration of disabled students e. Attitudes about disability f. Disability awareness/orientation g. Inclusive vs. population specific sport h. Disability sport technology i. Disability etiquette j. Athletes with intellectual disabilities k. Athletes with developmental disabilities l. Athletes with mobility disabilities m. Athletes with amputations n. Athletes with spinal cord injuries o. Blind athletes or athletes with low vision p. Deaf or Hard of Hearing athletes q. Athletes with learning disabilities r. Other: _____
<p>22) Please rank the best way to deliver a training to school professionals from most important (1) to least important (4)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In-person training b. Live virtual training c. Online self-paced training d. Other: _____
<p>23) What is the best way to motivate school professionals to participate in an inclusive sports training for students with disabilities?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>24) Have you had any training on inclusive sports for students with disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes (skip to question 25) b. No (skip to question 26)
<p>25) What training did you receive?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>26) Are you interested in receiving training on inclusive sports for students with disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes b. No c. I don't know

<p>27) Do you think that the school district(s) you work in would be supportive of staff receiving training on inclusive sports for students with disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes b. No c. I don't know
<p>28) What do you think are the personal barriers to making school sports and physical activity opportunities inclusive and accessible to youth with disabilities? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Child thinks they do not have skill to play sports b. Child is afraid to play sports c. Child/family does not know about sports options available d. Child/family does not know how to join sports team e. Other: _____ f. Nothing, there are no personal barriers
<p>29) What do you think are the social barriers to making school sports and physical activity opportunities inclusive and accessible to youth with disabilities? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parent/caregiver is afraid to let their child play sports b. Child's family is not supportive c. Child's friends are not supportive d. Coaches are not supportive e. Other: _____ f. Nothing, there are no social barriers
<p>30) What do you think are the environmental/program barriers to making school sports and physical activity opportunities inclusive and accessible to youth with disabilities? (select all that apply)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are no opportunities for youth with disabilities to play sports in school b. Coaches and other staff do not know how to include youth with disabilities in sports c. It costs too much d. Lack of transportation to practices, games, events, or competitions e. School does not have the equipment needed for youth with disabilities to play sports

	<p>f. Youth with disabilities can't access the space (such as locker room, field, stadium, practice space and so on)</p> <p>g. Other: _____</p> <p>h. Nothing, there are no environmental/program barriers</p>
<p>31) What do you think are other barriers to making school sports and physical activity opportunities inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>32) What do you think are the greatest opportunities for inclusive sports in your school(s)?</p>	<p>Text response</p>
<p>33) I feel that sports are inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities in my school(s).</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p> <p>c. Disagree </p> <p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p> <p>*if disagree or strongly disagree will be asked "Why are sports not inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities in your school(s)?" and skip to end of survey</p> <p>*if agree or strongly agree will be asked "How are sports inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities in your school(s)?" and skip to question 34</p>
<p>34) I feel that youth with disabilities are meaningfully included in sports in my school(s).</p>	<p>a. Strongly agree </p> <p>b. Agree </p> <p>c. Disagree </p>

	<p>d. Strongly Disagree </p> <p>e. I do not know </p> <p>*if disagree or strongly disagree will be asked “Why are youth with disabilities not meaningfully included in sports in your school(s)?”</p> <p>*if agree or strongly agree will be asked “How are youth with disabilities meaningfully included in sports in your school(s)?”</p>
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Appendix 2: Key Informant Interview Questions

1. First can you tell me about the work you do with [organization] and the services you offer?
2. Can you tell me about your experiences with or knowledge of inclusive sports opportunities for Ohio youth with disabilities in schools or in Ohio in general.
3. What are your thoughts about the general accessibility of sports for youth with disabilities in Ohio?
4. Tell me about any examples of good models of inclusive sports or physical activity happening in Ohio that we should look at.
5. What do you think is working well for youth with disabilities to participate in school sports or sports outside of school?
6. What are the barriers for youth with disabilities to participate in school sports?
7. What resources do you know of in Ohio that can help youth with disabilities participate in sports?
8. What are the opportunities to leverage those resources in our program?
9. What do you think schools can do better so youth with disabilities can be included in sports?
10. Do you feel that athletes with disabilities are accepted, valued, and welcomed in school sport teams?
 - a. If yes, what has helped them feel accepted, valued, and welcomed?
 - b. If not, what could help them to feel accepted, valued, and welcomed? How would you recommend that athletes with disabilities are better welcomed in sports?

11. What do you think are the training needs/topics for those involved with school sports to improve the accessibility and inclusion of youth with disabilities?
12. What is the biggest thing that needs to be improved in Ohio for youth with disabilities to be included in sports?
13. Should our training program to improve sports opportunities in schools for Ohio youth with disabilities focus on training staff in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, or K-12? Why?
14. Should our training program to improve sports opportunities in schools for Ohio youth with disabilities focus on inclusive sports (where athletes with disabilities play and fully participate in the same sport or recreational activity together alongside athletes without disabilities) or adaptive sports (where a sport has been adapted to disabled athletes by adapting the activity, use of specialized equipment/assistive technology or both and are practiced only by athletes with disabilities)? Why?
15. Is there anything else that we have not asked you about with respect to inclusive sports opportunities for Ohio youth with disabilities that you would like to share with us?

Appendix 3: Listening Sessions Questions

Listening Sessions for Parents/Caregivers of Youth with Disabilities:

1. Does your child play sports in school?
 - a. If yes, what sport does your child play?
 - i. What does your child like about that sport?
 - b. If no, what sport does your child want to play?
 - i. Why does your child want to play that sport?
 - ii. Why is your child not playing that sport right now? What are the barriers?
2. What makes it easy for your child to play sports in school? What helps your child play sports in school?
3. What makes it hard for your child to play sports in school?
4. What support do you need as a parent to help your child participate in sports?
5. Do you feel that your child is included in sports and other physical activities at their school?
6. If yes, why do you feel your child is included?
 - a. If no, why not?
7. What can schools do better so your child can be included in sports?

8. Do you feel that athletes with disabilities are accepted, valued, and welcomed in your school sport teams?
 - a. If yes, what has helped them feel accepted, valued, and welcomed?
 - b. If not, what could help them to feel accepted, valued, and welcomed? How would you recommend that athletes with disabilities are better welcomed in sports?
9. Do you feel like your child has the same options and opportunities to play sports in school compared to children without disabilities?
10. What do you wish coaches knew about people with disabilities?
11. What can coaches do better to support children with disabilities in playing sports?
12. What do you wish teammates knew about people with disabilities in sports?
13. Do you have any concerns about your child playing sports in school?
14. What do you think about how the school communicates with you about sports for your child?
15. What kind of support do you and your child receive to play sports in school?
16. What do you think is working well for your child to participate in sports?
17. What resources do you know of that can help your child participate in sports?
18. What is the biggest thing in Ohio that needs to be improved so your child can be included in sports?

Listening Sessions for Youth with Disabilities:

1. Do you play sports?
 - a. If yes, what sport do you play?
 - i. Probe if needed: Where do you play sports? (probe about school sports versus club and other community-based sports if needed; ask for specific information to capture community clubs and groups to help make linkages in the community with schools)
 - b. If no, what sport would you want to play?
 - i. Why do you want to play that sport?
 - ii. Why are you not playing that sport right now?
2. What helps you play sports? What makes it easy for you to play sports?
3. What makes it hard for you to play sports?
4. What ways do you like to move and be active? What types of activities are fun for you in school? (probe about physical activity if needed)

5. Do you feel included and that you belong in sports, physical education, and other physical activities at your school?
 - a. If yes, why do you feel included?
 - b. If no, why not?
6. What are schools doing well to include you in sports?
7. What can schools do better so you can be included in sports?
8. Do you feel that athletes with disabilities are accepted, valued, and welcomed in school sport teams?
 - a. If yes, what has helped them feel accepted, valued, and welcomed?
 - b. If not, what could help them to feel accepted, valued, and welcomed? How would you recommend that athletes with disabilities are better welcomed in sports?
9. Do you prefer doing sports with everyone or doing adaptive sports with other athletes with disabilities? Do you like doing both?
10. What do you wish coaches knew about people with disabilities?
11. What are coaches doing well to support you in playing sports?
12. What can coaches do better?
13. What do you wish your friends knew about playing sports with you?
14. If you could change one thing about your school sports teams what would that be?