The following three documents govern the inclusion of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in physical activity.

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Dear Colleague Letter of 2013
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004

These documents establish the responsibilities of physical education instructors, extra-curricular activity providers, and recreation providers. By becoming familiar with them and meeting their requirements, school districts can ensure that children with I/DD have the same opportunities to be physically active as their typically developing peers.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
A federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal assistance, including all elementary and secondary public schools. According to this law:

- All students with disabilities must be provided with physical education.
- All students must have the same opportunities to engage in extra-curricular athletic activities.

**Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Dear Colleague Letter of 2013**
Written in response to reports that schools were not complying with requirements to offer students with disabilities the same opportunities to be as physically active as their non-disabled peers. The letter recommends that school districts:

- “...work with their athletic associations to ensure students with disabilities are not denied an equal opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics.”
- “...(do) not rely on generalizations about what students with a type of disability are capable of—one student with a certain type of disability may not be able to play a certain type of sport but another student with the same disability may be able to play that sport.”
- “...(make) reasonable accommodations—to ensure (a student has) an equal opportunity to participate.”
Individuals with Disabilities
Education Act (IDEA) of 2004

A federal law that requires schools to serve the educational needs of students
with disabilities. According to this law:

• Schools are required to provide students with a “free and appropriate
  public education” in the “least restrictive environment.”
• Physical education is a requirement for students who receive
  special education.


U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Dear Colleague Letter. Office of the Assistant Secretary.