

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, I am the executive director of Adaptive Sports Ohio and I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on House Bill 96.

It has been our privilege to work with the Ohio Legislature during the last five budget cycles to promote change and provide interscholastic wheelchair basketball to students with physical disabilities. Starting as just an idea in 2015, we moved from a pilot program with one team to a league including thirteen school districts: Austintown, Beavercreek, Boardman, Centerville, Cloverleaf, Jackson, Tallmadge, Wooster, Massillon, Plain, Perry, Wadsworth, and North Canton. In addition to the provision of equipment and enclosed trailers, our organization works in conjunction with each athletic director to organize the season schedule, refine the playing rules, train coaches and officials, and organize post season playoffs.

In March, we concluded the 2024-2025 season, hosting the state championship at Kent State University. The event program from the state championship featuring all of the league teams has been included as part of my testimony today. The Jackson Polar Bears and the Tallmadge Blue Devils were the top two teams in the league and played in front of an audience of nearly 500 people including 5x Paralympian and 3x Gold Medalist, Steve Serio. During half-time, Steve Serio shared with the audience that although he achieved the pinnacle of accomplishment in wheelchair basketball, he was incredibly jealous of our athletes because he “never was able to wear his school colors and compete for his high school alongside his able-bodied friends.”

As part of our advocacy for wheelchair basketball and disability awareness, since September, our organization has conducted gym class takeovers in 30 schools, providing more than 10,000 students with and without disabilities the opportunity to experience wheelchair basketball. Through these events, perceptions about disabilities are changed, and peers without disabilities gain more respect and admiration for their peers with disabilities.

Fueled by the support our organization received from the State, we are accomplishing what we’ve set out to do: work alongside school districts to create opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in sport and improve their social, emotional, physical and academic

outcomes. This program is successful and I am proud to have Zayne Hammoudeh with me here today to share what being on a school team means to him. Written testimony has also been submitted by Franklin Nicola, a freshman college student at Youngstown State University Honors College. Franklin shares that wheelchair basketball gave him “the initiative to improve in schools and get better grades” and he feels that playing wheelchair basketball helped shape him into the man he is today and will become in the future. Every student with a disability, like Zayne and Franklin, deserve the opportunity to play school sports and wear their school colors.

While sports are a privilege and not a right, the Rehabilitation Act insists that interscholastic activities be afforded equally to students with and without disabilities. Our program here in Ohio demonstrates that this is possible. Zayne and Franklin’s story are two of many that demonstrate why it is so important. With the groundwork we’ve laid in the last 10 years, we are ready to expand and reach even more youth with disabilities. Our goal for the upcoming school year is to increase to 20 participating districts and we are confident that it will be attainable. Adaptive Sports Ohio has not relied solely on State dollars to fund this program, but has leveraged it to gain foundation and corporate support to generate the full resources necessary.

We are grateful that this program has been included in the Governor’s budget and remains in the House amended version. And, we are thankful that the Ohio Legislature has invested in it over the last ten years. We respectfully ask that the adaptive sports program ODE earmark in the FY26-27 budget remain and sustain our important work. Thank you all for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions at this time.

TALLMADGE BLUE DEVILS



JACKSON POLAR BEARS

ADAPTIVE
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OHIO INTERSCHOLASTIC WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Established by Adaptive Sports Ohio, Ohio Interscholastic Adaptive Sports (OIAS) is the governing body for interscholastic wheelchair basketball. OIAS oversees all aspects of interscholastic wheelchair basketball, including the rules, post-season, and sportsmanship.

ABOUT ADAPTIVE SPORTS OHIO

The wheelchair basketball league is one example of how we help students play sports within their school district. Adaptive Sports Ohio's community-based sports are open to all ages including disabled veterans, multiple disability types, and vary by location. Our program managers are available to help find the best fit for you. If you would like to contact us, email info@adaptivesportsohio.org.



The Ohio Interscholastic Wheelchair Basketball Championship is being streamed online for \$24.99. Share this QR code with your network!



Pictures from the championship can be purchased at <https://mikephotography18.zenfoliosite.com> or by scanning the QR code. Pictures will be available for purchase starting Sunday, March 2, 2025

TALLMADGE BLUE DEVILS VS JACKSON POLAR BEARS

EVENT SCHEDULE

- 4:30** Doors Open
- 4:30** Alumni Warm-Ups Begin
- 5:00** Alumni Game Start
- 5:30** State Finalist Warm-Up
- 6:00** Championship Game Start
- 7:30** Awards Presentation
- 7:45** Conclusion

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Steve Serio, Paralympian and Gold Medalist
Katherine McKinley, Ohio Department of Education

GAME OFFICIALS

Alumni Game
Suzanne Martin, John Bischoff

Championship Game
James Roth, Gregory Piatt, Timothy Mauk

ALUMNI GAME ROSTER

TEAM HAHN

Number	Player Name
0	David Rutherford
5	Leif Dietrich
10	Franklin Nicola
11	Jackson Detchon
22	Cerafina Currey
32	Brandon Hiser

TEAM FOLLOWAY

Number	Player Name
4	Ryan Hannan
22	Ashton Mohn
32	Spencer Glover
44	Madyson Followay
50	Preston Rouse
55	Andrea Mohn

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Akron
Children's

Thank you to Akron Children's Hospital for sponsoring today's game.



MetroHealth
Devoted to Hope, Health, and Humanity

Thank you to MetroHealth for providing athletic training services for today's game.

RECORD: 16-0

TALLMADGE BLUE DEVILS



Head Coach: Greg Michalec
Assistant Coach: Chris Diefendorf

Assistant Coach: Cory Michalec
Team Manager: David Blasko

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
1	Preston Schrock*
2	Justin Steele
10	Holden Ristau*
11	Ben James*
12	Liam Steele*
14	Ta'Shaun Myers
22	Geneva Burrows
23	Ilyad Yasin

Number	Player Name
24	Rex Lawhorn
25	Shataeya Patton
30	Mac Williams*
32	Michael Mami

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

JACKSON POLAR BEARS



Head Coach: Blake Dickson Assistant Coach: Bruce Solinger
Assistant Coach: Dave Rowland

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
2	Devin Burks	22	Will Simons
3	Kross Krzynowek	23	Abby Lapole
4	Gavin Carr	33	Evan Mauser*
11	Mason Shock	35	Brooke Hurd*
12	Lucas Benson*		
13	Jasper Friedman		
14	Dawson Simons		
20	Jackson Prince		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 9-7

WOOSTER GENERALS



Head Coach: Brett Followay

Assistant Coach: Joe Wirth

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
4	Saxon Ranney*
10	Nathan Pasteur*
11	Schae Followay*
12	Ezra Swartzentruber
22	Tony Rammel*
25	Cameron Wirth*
30	Makayla Maxwell
35	Austin Wilcox

Number	Player Name
44	Ella Wirth

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 11-6

PLAIN LOCAL EAGLES



Head Coach: Kristin Wellman

Assistant Coach: Brandon Hiser

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
11	Michael Murray*		
15	Karam Alkaied		
31	Marayah Nicholson		
32	Ricky Patron		
35	Cole Montgomery-Maher*		
44	Elena Knowles		
50	Gino Patron*		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 7-7

GREEN BULLDOGS



Head Coach: Warren Craig

Assistant Coach: Matt Craig

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
3	Sir Andrus*		
4	Olivia Derus		
5	Evan Compton*		
10	Karter White		
14	Landon Cunningham*		
20	Jack Pickett		
22	Zayne Hammoudeh		
55	Jaxon Osborne*		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 5-6

CENTERVILLE ELKS



Head Coach: Kenya Smith

Assistant Coach: Stacy Riste

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
0	Grady Cooper-Holt
1	Charlotte Monnin
2	Ellianna Davenport
3	Maggie Monnin
10	Elise Dabbelt*
11	Carter Cornell
12	Trevor Coghlan*
13	Wynne Calfee

Number	Player Name
14	Zykahra Williams
15	Lillie Wilcutt*
20	Luke Wilcutt*
23	Brendan Murthy
34	Kai Smith

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 7-8

CLOVERLEAF COLTS



Head Coach: Randy Pollock

Assistant Coach: Joe Cawley

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
1	Colton Miner*
4	Meghan Cawley
14	Addison Cawley*
21	Kenlee Jarvis*
22	Jordan Pollock
24	Trent Sparks
32	Maddox Ishler*
33	Colton Randall

Number	Player Name
50	Collin Bohley
55	Danny Wallace*

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 5-9

WADSWORTH GRIZZLIES



Head Coach: Heidi McCune

Assistant Coach: Derek McCune

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
0	Desmond Mack
1	KJ Mack*
3	Lucas Workman
4	Adam White
5	Colten Metheney
11	Alana Weber*
12	Cole Packer*
14	Rachel Workman*

Number	Player Name
21	Jacob Workman
22	Duncan Frantz*
25	Owen Cavicchi
30	Samantha Wooldridge
44	Alicia Boudinot

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 4-10

PERRY PANTHERS



Head Coach: Amanda Slates

Assistant Coach: Christopher Marx

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
1	Pierce Rhinehart*
2	Vanessa Perry
3	Blake Lennox*
4	Jax Dixon*
5	Bryce Rhinehart*
10	Cecelia Wells*
12	Christopher Good
13	Ahsha DiPietro

Number	Player Name
15	Skylar Cayton
22	Daniel Daugintis

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 3-7

BEAVERCREEK BEAVERS



Head Coach: James Terpenning
Assistant Coach: James McCormack
Assistant Coach: John Adelhardt

Assistant Coach: Richard Drye
Assistant Coach: Amy Yates

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name
1	Thomas Flach
3	Zhao McElroy
4	Kai-Li Nichols
5	Mei-Lynn Nichols
12	Duncan Gianni
20	Julia Kutter
21	Thomas Kutter
22	Alex Schmidt

Number	Player Name
23	Jacob Robertson
25	Aiden Conteh
32	Johnny Flach*
33	Jack Hoos
34	Enora McElroy
40	Zoe Roll
44	Matt Drye*

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 2-11

BOARDMAN SPARTANS



Head Coach: Stephen Olesky

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
0	Liam Levendosky		
2	Conner Levendosky*		
15	Karina Fox		
20	Elizabeth Nagle		
21	Bobby Fox*		
45	Billy Graff		
55	John Chordas*		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 0-5

NORTH CANTON VIKINGS



Head Coach: Corey Jones

Assistant Coach: K. Bartosic

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
0	Naomi Harsh		
2	Braxton Jones*		
11	Brooklyn Lias		
13	Stella Jarvis*		
15	Jack Jarvis		
40	Rocco Wolfe*		
50	Zachary Rambaud		
55	Maxwell Lawrence		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

RECORD: 0-4

AUSTINTOWN FALCONS



Head Coach: Cara Hahn

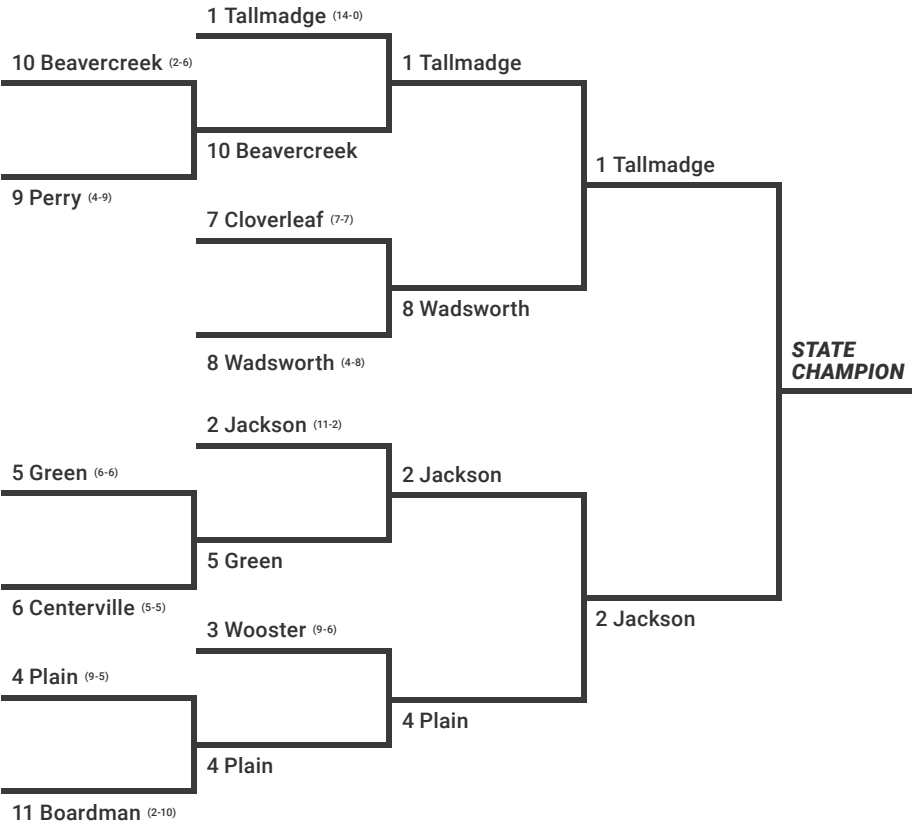
Assistant Coach: Franklin Nicola

2024-2025 ROSTER

Number	Player Name	Number	Player Name
4	Lukas Gibson*		
5	Gabriel Myers		
11	Isiah Campbell		
13	Michael-Kellan Clark*		
25	Justin Hahn*		
51	Balian Clark		

*denotes a non-disabled athlete

2024-2025 BRACKET



2024-2025 TOP SCORERS

Rank	Player Name	Class	School	Gm	Pts	PPG	High
1	Ta'Shaun Myers	Soph.	Tallmadge	15	259	17.3	27
2	Abby LaPole	Jr.	Jackson	15	233	15.5	24
3	Elena Knowles	Sr.	Plain Local	16	172	10.8	16
4	Chris Good	Fr.	Perry	14	115	8.2	18
5	Ella Wirth	8 th	Wooster	16	130	8.1	18
6	Matt Drye	Sr.	Beavercreek	8	48	6.0	6*
7	Johnny Flach	8 th	Beavercreek	9	52	5.8	6*
8	Jack Pickett	Jr.	Green	13	72	5.5	14
9	Ben James	Sr.	Tallmadge	10	54	5.4	6*
10	Luke Wilcutt	Fr.	Centerville	11	56	5.1	6*

*Non-disabled athletes are limited by rule to a maximum of 6 points in any game. Athletes must have played in at least 50% of their team's games to appear on this list.

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