**Pointers for Students with an Intellectual Disability**

**or Multiple Disabilities in Physical Education**

**Definition:** Intellectual Disability (ID) means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning that adversely affects a child’s educational performance existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period.

Multiple disabilities (MU) means two or more disabilities occurring together (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. MU does not include deaf-blindness.

**General Pointers:**

* Students may demonstrate poor muscle tone.
* Students (including students with Down syndrome) may experience upper respiratory infections or heart defects.
* May have a communication delay.
* May demonstrate a short attention span.
* May experience delay in reaching milestones in growth and development.
* Students may have difficulty comprehending and following directions, especially multi-step directions.
* May experience delay in social skills.
* May display a lack of confidence or lack of motivation.
* Student may have low level of physical fitness.
* Be aware of medical precautions.
* Check to see if student has been screened for Atlanto-Axial Instability of the neck.
* Provide a variety of modifications as needed.

**Modifications Suggestions:**

* Provide highly structured environment.
* Use a variety of cues including picture/symbol cues.
* Use brightly colored equipment.
* Establish boundaries – use brightly colored visuals (cones, poly spots, rope).
* Keep instructions brief and simplified. Break tasks into small, attainable steps.
* Pair instructions with repetition as needed.
* Offer prompt, positive feedback and be consistent with motivators.
* Avoid food as a motivator.
* Keep rules of games to a minimum.
* Avoid abstract language-use concrete materials to emphasize lessons.
* Be firm, maintain class structure.
* Be flexible. Have Patience, Patience, and Patience.
* Use stations to teach skills/activities.
* Set up self-paced activity opportunities.

NC Adapted PE Advisory Council 10/26/2011