ATHLETES SERVING ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Special Olympics General Rules on Sections 5.01 (c) and 5.02 (c) state the following:

The Board of Directors of an Accredited Program shall be responsible under the Program's by-laws or other organizational documents for overseeing the conduct of the Program's affairs.

The Board of Directors of an Accredited Program shall be sufficient in size to permit responsible program oversight and decision-making and should include members from diverse geographic locations and diverse professional backgrounds who have background or experience in Special Olympics or with intellectual disabilities, or an interest in developing and expanding Special Olympics programs.

As part of this requirement, every Accredited Program's Board of Directors/Program Committee shall, within their Board or Committee structure, include at least one:

* Sports expert;
* Expert in the field of intellectual disabilities;
* Special Olympics athlete, who shall have received training on Board/Program Committee participation;
* Family relation of a Special Olympics athlete.

**Athlete members must have the same rights and privileges as other voting Board members, including full voting rights as well as the same term as other members.**

**Athletes should play a meaningful and integral role and should not be chosen only to satisfy the accreditation requirement. This constitutes tokenism.**

Suggested criteria to be used when selecting an athlete to serve on the Board of Directors:

1. Athlete Leadership Courses Completed:

* Introduction to Athlete Leadership
* Understanding Leadership
* Athlete Representative
* General Board orientation and training provided to all Board of Directors

1. Have at least 5 years Special Olympics experience

* Currently registered athlete
* Involved in Athlete Leadership, either one year experience on an Athlete Leadership Council, or on a Special Olympics Committee
* Participated in a sport competition within the last 5 years

1. Be an adult (over 18 or 21, depending on local legislation)
2. Be knowledgeable about Special Olympics
3. Have effective communication skills (oral, written or listening)
4. Ability to contribute opinions and ideas during meetings

1. Commits to time, requirements, and expectations of the role
2. Has a professional demeanor, can conduct themselves appropriately, and can honor the confidential nature of board business