

As we head into the IHSA (high school) season, we wanted to prepare you all to answer any questions about athletes taking classes at RISE during this season. You may be approached by your athlete's track coach and told that they can't pole vault at RISE during the track season. This is completely false. Many of our athletes stay with us during the track season and their coach's are very accommodating and appreciative of the help that RISE provides their athletes, but some are not. If you are approached you need to be prepared and not panic, because it is almost always a case of a coach not knowing or understanding the rules. The IHSA by law that they may be referring to is as follows...(Here is a LINK for the complete by laws)

'3.100 INDEPENDENT TEAM PARTICIPATION

3.101 During the school season for a given sport, in a school which maintains a school team in that sport, a student shall not participate on any non-school **team**, nor as an individual unattached in non-school competition, in that given sport or in any competition that involves the skill of the sport in question. Violation shall cause ineligibility for a period not to exceed 365 days. An exception may be made by the Executive Director under the guidelines adopted by the Board of Directors for competitions sanctioned directly by the National Governing Body or its official Illinois affiliate for the sport.'

The keyword here is **TEAM**. RISE Pole Vault LLC is a training center or gym, not a competitive club or team. We like to use the example of a rock climbing gym or bowling ally. You are more than welcome to take a rock climbing lesson or bowl at the bowling ally during the high school track season just like you are able to pole vault at RISE during the track season. An example of a **TEAM** that is not allowed, would be a travel softball team, or a travel basketball team, etc. We are NOT THAT. We are a training center/gym that offers pole vaulting classes, just like a gym would offer a yoga class.

Before we founded RISE Pole Vault, we contacted Kraig Garber Assistant Executive Director at IHSA, to confirm that we would be able to provide a place for pole vaulters to continue to improve during the season and the IHSA has confirmed the contents of the letter you are reading. We really would encourage any coach's in question to reach out to Kraig Garber to confirm if they are still in question. We are always more than willing to talk to coach's as well.

To help avoid any potential issues and to make it easier to explain to coach's that we are NOT A COMPETITIVE CLUB or TEAM we have terminated our status as a USATF and AAU club and gone through a rebranding that includes a legal name change to remove the word "club" from RISE Athletic Club. Our legal name is now RISE Pole Vault LLC.

After seeing a lot of regression from athletes who had to stop vaulting at RISE last track season, we have worked very hard to make it as seamless as possible for our athletes to continue to improve throughout the year by making these affiliation and name changes along with adding more classes on the weekends to provide **maximum scheduling flexibility** during the High School track season so not to interfere with the high school team schedule.

I hope that you all know by now that we only have your child's best interest in mind. Athletes that train at RISE are always put before anything else, and we are constantly trying to find new ways to make their experience here better, and providing our services during the track season has really helped athletes to continue to progress and reach their ultimate potential. Please tell any and everyone that RISE Pole Vault is here to make the pole vaulting community better and that we want to work **WITH** IHSA teams and coaches, not against them. We believe this is the path that puts the athletes at the forefront, and that is what RISE is all about.

