



**Athlete Input Councils** provide an opportunity for athletes to express their ideas, concerns, and recommendations at the local level, helping improve the quality and integrity of their Special Olympics programs. Area Input Councils elect representatives from their area to serve on a statewide Input Council, to serve on the local Area Leadership Team, and to serve on the state Games and management teams, to bring local feedback to the staff level.

**For athletes interested in joining a local Athlete Input Council**, or for those interested in helping their local program start a council, here is what is expected of an Athlete Input Council and its members:

- Athlete Input Councils must meet regularly, ideally once a month
- Members should bring feedback from their peers in Special Olympics to the council meeting
- One council member should be voted to represent the Area on the state Athlete Input Council
- One council member should be voted to represent the athletes on the Area Leadership Team



## Interested in Starting an Athlete Input Council?

- Ideal council members are current Special Olympics Washington athletes, have the ability to communicate effectively in small groups, and have a passion to bring new ideas to events and programming
- Recruit a facilitator to organize and run the council meetings – a coach, a volunteer, a parent, or a friend who can support athletes in meeting logistics
- Recruit 5-8 athletes interested in being on the council
- Arrange for a public meeting space, such as a meeting room in a library or a community center
- Contact the Special Olympics Washington Initiatives Manager to schedule a governance training with the facilitator and the council members
- Schedule your regular meetings and start bringing feedback to Special Olympics Washington

Council facilitators will be provided with sample agendas and new items for discussion for each meeting. Facilitators will be supported by the Initiatives Manager through regular phone meetings.

***Start an Athlete Input Council today!***

Contact Leah Shaffner, Initiatives Manager at [lshaffner@sowa.org](mailto:lshaffner@sowa.org) for more information