

Unified Sports Getting Started Checklist

Special Olympics
Washington



- ___ 1. **Make contact** with Special Olympics Washington State Office to start the process of Unified Sports at your school.
- ___ 2. **Choose the sport** you will implement in the fall and/or spring.
 - **Fall:** Unified Flag Football or Unified Bowling
 - **Winter:** Unified Basketball
 - **Spring:** Unified Soccer or Unified Relays
- ___ 3. **Identify the coach(es) at your school.** The more educated the coach, students and adult allies become about Unified Sports, the more success you will achieve. Special Olympics has teamed up with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) to bring you a 90 minute interactive online training at no cost! Simply log on to [www. NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com) to take this course. You can complete this all at one time or start and stop at your convenience.
- ___ 4. **Introduce Unified Sports to your school.** Hold an interest meeting at the school to promote participation on the team. Send a school-wide e-mail with details about the program and contact information. Include information in the school's family newsletter. Meet the special education staff in your school to help identify and recruit athletes.
- ___ 5. **Recruit Athletes.** Athletes are students who have an intellectual disability. Athletes also include people who have closely related developmental disabilities.
- ___ 6. **Recruit Unified Partners.** Unified Partners are students without an intellectual disability. Students with other types of disabilities may be eligible to participate as a Unified Partner so long as there are a proportional number of students without any disability on the team. A "targeted approach" is recommended when recruiting partners to ensure they are committed to the team. When recruiting partners, ensure that you will have a meaningful role for each partner recruited.
- ___ 7. **Submit teammate forms to Special Olympics Washington.** Special Olympics athletes must fill out the Application for Participation Form (AFP), which must be signed by a medical professional before the first team practice. Unified Partners must fill out the Unified Partner Application. Coach(es) must fill out the background check & complete online trainings.
- ___ 8. **Secure a facility and set a team schedule.** Work with Athletic Director or Administration to identify the team practice schedule, transportation and facility needs.
- ___ 9. **Hold regular practices and competitions.** Unified Sports teams should practice and compete similarly to any other sports team at your school. Remember, the team must practice at least once a week, with the majority of athletes and partners on the team participating in each practice.