



Special Olympics Unified Sports

Competitive Unified Sports: Inclusive sports program with approximately equal number of athletes (persons with intellectual disabilities) and partners (persons without intellectual disabilities) who are **similar** in age and ability and train and compete together for a scheduled season or class.

Player Development Unified Sports: What differentiates Unified Sports Player Development from competitive Unified Sports and Unified Sports Recreation is: 1) teammates are not required to be of similar abilities, and 2) teammates of higher abilities serve as mentors to assist teammates of lower abilities in developing sport-specific skills and tactics, as well as in successfully participating in a cooperative team environment.

Sport Seasons:

- **Winter (November- March):** Unified Basketball
 - 20 Min Halves
 - 3 Athletes and 2 Partners
 - Max 10 on a roster
- **Spring (March-June):** Unified Soccer
 - Modified Fields
 - 5V5
 - 3 Athletes and 2 Partners
 - Max 10 on a roster



What does a typical Unified Sports season look like?

- Practices during school or after
- Practice minimum of once a week for at least 1 hour each
- 8-10 Week long season
- Compete in weekly league play against another school's Unified Sports team **OR** compete in multi-weekend tournaments where schools play multiple games against other schools in their league.
- Compete in a Regional/District Tournament
- If team qualifies at Regionals/Districts, they will advance to state



Insurance: Special Olympics will act as a secondary insurance during Special Olympics activities. This covers anyone involved.

How to get started?

- Complete Commitment to Inclusion Form.
- Complete Budget/Funding Request





Benefits of Unified Sports & Clubs

Unified Sports and Clubs go beyond simply providing fun, social opportunities for students with and without disabilities. By providing opportunities for social inclusion, students are gaining understanding, becoming more accepting, treating others with respect, and creating new friendships. And as those are happening, they are also increasing their confidence, reengaging in the classroom, earning higher grades, and feeling a part of the school community.

Benefits to the Education system in Washington:

- Assistance in providing increased opportunities for students of all ability levels,
- Assistance in facilitating meaningful inclusive opportunities within the school environment,
- Introduce students without intellectual disabilities (partners) to the gifts and talents of students with intellectual disabilities,
- Practical opportunities to learn about diversity and tolerance,
- Opportunities to foster positive character development,
- Opportunities to gain lifelong skills, physical fitness, acceptance and inclusion.
- Opportunities for service learning,
- Support for Individual Education Programs related to:
 - Least Restrictive Environment,
 - Learning and practicing life skills, communication skills, and community living skills,
 - Physical Education programs,
 - Participation with non-disabled peers,
 - Transition Planning,
 - Acknowledge and promoting all levels of ability,
 - Family involvement (sibling, parent, extended),
 - Supplementary aids and services – relationships with peers may transfer into assistance in the classroom on academics and behavior,
- Opportunities for professional development statewide and within the school,
- Assistance with strategies for family involvement in the program



Benefits to the Students:

- Promotion of sports, lifelong fitness and recreation skills,
- Assistance to students in developing positive relationships,
- Build positive character traits, such as patience, compromise, sharing responsibility, and helping others,
- Opportunities for students to use leadership skills to contribute to their school and community,
- Opportunities to identify, develop and practice academic, social, and athletic skills,
- Support to students when transitioning from school to community programs,
- Assistance with providing services identified in the Individual Education Plan,
- Building confidence through success and positive interactions with peers.

Benefits to Special Olympics Washington:

- Assistance in furthering its efforts to fulfill the Special Olympics Washington mission by providing people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to develop sports skills, demonstrate skills, experience joy, and share gifts with family, friends, and the community,
- Continuation of statewide outreach efforts,
- Assistance from professionals in the field of education, youth, disabilities, and sports/physical fitness,
- Ability to provide support to local community programs,
- Facilitation of growth of Special Olympics Washington programs statewide.



The Partnership

Special Olympics Washington provides opportunities and resources for student learning, professional development, and administration of programs. We recognize the importance of school district endorsement and involvement in the success of this program. Our goal for this partnership is to meet the needs of the school district as well as lay the foundation for future collaboration between Special Olympics Washington and school districts across the state.

Special Olympics Washington provides:

- Inclusive extra-curricular and sports programs for students of all abilities;
- Consultation, education, training, support and technical assistance for all sports programs and activities that promote inclusion, acceptance, respect and dignity for all students;
- Policies and procedures, training manuals, schedules, Athlete and Unified Sports Partner paperwork, General Rules etc.;
- Special Olympics Washington staff dedicated to development, implementation and administration of programs;
- Resources to support school based unified activities (as agreed);
- Get Into It service-learning curriculum for all ages, aligned with national standards;
- Assistance transitioning students from school to community Special Olympics programs;
- Special Olympics Washington logo and communications resources such as press releases, media contacts etc. used to introduce and promote programs;
- Formal recognition of collaboration between Special Olympics Washington and the school.

School provides:

- Endorsement from administration;
- Schools, educators, and students to develop and implement programs;
- Assistance with sanction of unified clubs in schools;
- Assistance with annual evaluation of programs, including Monthly Impact, Mid-term, and Final Reports submitted to Special Olympics Washington;
- Assistance with long term planning for the program within the school district;
- Compliance to all Special Olympics Washington policies and procedures, Athlete and Unified Sports Partner paperwork, General Rules;
- Formal recognition of collaboration between the school and Special Olympics Washington.



Special Olympics Washington

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