



School-Based Unified Sports®

Special Olympics Unified Sports joins students with and without intellectual disabilities as teammates in the same sport. It is inspired by a simple principle: training, playing, and competing together is a quick path to understanding, acceptance and friendship. Half a million people worldwide take part in Unified Sports, and break down stereotypes about people with intellectual disabilities.

Popular unified team sports

- Basketball
- Bowling
- Flag Football
- Soccer
- Track & Field
- Volleyball



Benefits of Unified Sports

- Encourages youth participation, inclusion and leadership in the schools and community.
- Offers a positive foundation for activity between special education and general education students.
- Leads to new friendships; improved self-esteem; and positive changes in attitude, behavior and performance for all students involved.
- Creates a lasting impact on all those participating and is a great addition to any educational environment.

Special Olympics Southern California
Unified Sports is currently recruiting schools!

To get involved, or for more information, visit:
www.sosc.org/unifiedsports or contact:

Frequently Asked Questions

What can a Unified Sports program look like at my school?

Unified Sports® can take on many forms. A school club may organize a sports-centered activity, even hosting a “lunchtime league” in a particular team sport. In some districts, schools form teams by combining their special education classes with general education PE classes. Schools may also form interscholastic unified teams that are officially recognized as part of their athletic program. No matter how it takes form, the team trains and competes together.

Who should be recruited for the team?

All students. The best places to start are General Physical Education, Special Education or Adapted Physical Education students. Students who participate in clubs like Leadership or other inclusion-based clubs are another great starting point.

What does Special Olympics Southern California (SOSC) provide?

SOSC will work collaboratively with the school and/or district to provide consultation, education, support and assistance. This may include financial resources, Unified Sports training for coaches, and instruction and assistance to school administration.

What is needed to implement Unified Sports?

A core committee is the foundation for any successful Unified Sports program within a school and/or district. An Athletic Director may act as the liaison between SOSC and the school district or individual schools, while staff members that are passionate about sports and inclusion serve as coaches for each participating team. Resources needed may include training with SOSC staff to properly execute Unified Sports, a group of students with and without disabilities to field two or more teams, sports equipment, uniforms, a location to host the culminating competition, support of high school students or parent-group volunteers to organize and conduct the competition.

What does a Unified Sports League and Season look like?

Depending on the individual district’s needs, seasons may align with quarters, semesters, or another time frame. However, training should occur a minimum of 1x per week for 8-10 weeks or 2x per week for 4-5 weeks. Trainings should lead to scrimmages against other teams. There may be additional opportunities to collaborate with schools from another district. Training and competition may occur before or after school hours; during PE class; or as part of academic curriculum, like a leadership class project.

