



Unified Sports



**Special
Olympics**
Utah





Unified Sports

What is a Unified Sports?

Unified Sports is an **inclusive sports program** that combines a proportionate number of Special Olympics Utah **athletes** (individuals with intellectual disabilities) **and partners** (individuals without intellectual disabilities) **on teams** for training and competition. The Unified Sports philosophy includes **social inclusion** (relationships created in sport, enhanced in inclusive school climate), **meaningful involvement** of all teammates playing together, and **respecting** teammates and others on and off the field of play.

Believing in the value of participation for all students, the UHSAA has joined forces with Special Olympics Utah (SOUT) to provide member schools the opportunity to participate in interscholastic Unified Sports in soccer and track.

Soccer Season Overview:

- Co-ed rosters of up to 12 players, 1 head coach, and 2 assistant coaches
- Games start March 21 and run through state championships on May 5
- All teams will play a maximum of 6 games
- State championships will be divided into divisions based on the teams performance during the regular season games

Track Season:

- Meets begin March 7 and run through state championships on May 18
- Schools can participate in regularly scheduled track meets with their schools traditional track team
- Schools may also host and participate in Unified only track meets
- Schools must compete in at least one meet in order to be eligible to compete in state championships
- Times for all athletes in all events must be brought to state championships

How does our school sign-up?

Schools that wish to sign up for Unified Soccer or Track must have their athletic director or administrator email Jon Oglesby joglesby@uhsaa.org by January 12 for soccer and March 1 for track. Schools must also complete a Unified Champion Schools Agreement with Special Olympics Utah that can be found at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools.



Program Guidelines

Who Can Participate?

Competitions shall be governed by NFHS and Special Olympics official sports rules. Unified Sports is considered a separate program from other high school teams and, therefore, is not subject to the UHSAA Sports Season Rule. However, students who made a high school soccer team or track team (varsity, JV, sophomore, freshman) are ineligible to compete on the UHSAA/SOUT Unified Sports soccer or track respectively during the same school year.

Member schools may combine with another member school(s) to form a co-op team if the principals of the participating schools secure written approval from the UHSAA prior to the start of the season. Member schools may adopt a non-member special needs/cluster school if the school secures written approval of both principals and the UHSAA. UHSAA age rule does not apply for students with intellectual disabilities

Athletes: A person is considered to have an intellectual disability for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate with SOUT as an athlete if that person satisfies any one of the following:

- The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities; or
- The person has a cognitive delay as determined by standardized measures such as intelligence quotient or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or
- The person has a closely related developmental disability. This means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and in adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care).
- The person is on the Autism spectrum.



Partners: Unified Sports provides opportunities for typically-developing students as well as students with physical or other disabilities (hearing, sensory, ADD, ADHD) to engage in sports training and competition as Unified Sports partners.



Funding (Equipment, Uniforms & Transportation)

Unified Sports is part of the Unified Champion Schools program with Special Olympics Utah and is funded in part by the Department of Education through a grant. Funding is available to schools participating in Utah based on the following funding model:

- Year 1: Schools will be able to receive funding for all activities within the three elements of a Unified Champion Schools program.
- Year 2: Schools will receive funding for all activities if they participate in all three elements as a Unified Champion School.
- Year 3: Unified Champion Schools will receive funding for all new activities (i.e. new Unified Sports team, new whole school activity).
- Year 4 and beyond: Unified Champion Schools can apply for funding up to \$500 to help offset the costs of new activities and programs.

Because this funding model is new, all schools returning to the program for the 2017-2018 school year will be considered a Year 2 school. Special Olympics Utah can help to provide fundraising opportunities for schools to participate in to help cover the costs that can no longer be covered by grant funding.

Based on the funding model listed above, schools can receive funding for all **equipment, uniforms, and transportation** needed for the sports season. Equipment and uniforms can be ordered through Special Olympics Utah at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools and transportation can be reimbursed to the school by sending the bus costs to Ashlee at chatterton@sout.org.

Coaches Training & Stipends

Each team is allowed 1 head coach with 2 assistant coaches. All coaches must complete the outlined trainings and certifications found in the Unified Sports Rules Course that will be sent out to all registered schools. Once all requirements are met, coaches may complete the stipend request form found at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools. Head coaches will receive a stipend of \$500 and assistant coaches will receive \$250. Coaches stipends will only be paid to those who have completed all coaches certifications and trainings. Stipends will be paid after the school has participated in the mandatory survey through Special Olympics provided by UMASS as part of the Unified Champion Schools program and funding.



Getting Started Checklist

- ✓ **Sign-up your school**
Send email to Jon at UHSAA & complete Unified Champion Schools Agreement at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools
- ✓ **Complete UHSAA Rules Clinic Course**
Will be sent out to all schools participating
- ✓ **Athlete & Unified Partner paperwork**
Complete all UHSAA paperwork & SOUT Consent Form
- ✓ **Coaches Training**
Make sure all coaches have completed necessary trainings and certifications (all listed in Rules Clinic Course)
- ✓ **Complete coaches stipend request**
Found at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools
- ✓ **Order equipment & uniforms needed**
Order forms found at www.sout.org/UnifiedChampionSchools
- ✓ **Compete in season & state championships**

If you have any questions, please contact:

Ashlee Chatterton, Manager of School Partnerships (chatterton@sout.org)
Jon Oglesby, Assistant Director UHSAA (joglesby@uhsaa.org)