



# AIA Unified Team Track & Field Sports and Competition Rules



**Special Olympics**  
Arizona





# AIA Unified Team Track & Field Sports & Competition Rules



AIA Unified Team Track and Field is an AIA-sanctioned sport supported by and in conjunction with Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) to allow for interscholastic competition between Arizona high schools participating in Unified Sports. Unified Team Track and Field was established to foster inclusion, camaraderie, and the development of meaningful relationships between students with and without intellectual disabilities as high school athletes, teammates, and training partners.

## Registration Terminology

Participants with intellectual disabilities will be registered as “Unified Athletes”. Participants without intellectual disabilities will be registered as “Unified Partners”.

## Eligibility for AIA Unified Sports®

- A. Students who meet all AIA athletic eligibility and clearance requirements will qualify as either a Unified Athlete or a Unified Partner.
- B. In order to be eligible as a Unified Athlete, a student must meet AIA clearance and eligibility requirements AND be identified by the school as receiving special education and related services consistent with an individual education program based on a cognitive, developmental and/or intellectual disability.
- C. Unified Athletes are exempt from the AIA age requirement as long as they are enrolled in an AIA member school.
- D. All Unified Athletes and Unified Partners shall complete all clearance requirements put forth by the AIA and Special Olympics Arizona for participation in AIA Unified Sports as outlined in the school’s athletic clearance packet including, but not limited to – registration/consent forms, sports physicals, and concussion training.
- E. All Unified Sports coaches shall complete all certification requirements put forth by the AIA, Special Olympics Arizona and his/her school district prior to the beginning of the sports season.
- F. Any student who also competes on the school’s traditional Track & Field team ***IS*** eligible to participate as a Unified Partner in Unified Team Track and Field, ***EXCEPT*** during the following circumstances –
  - i. Any competition at which the student is attempting to qualify for advancement to a state-level competition in any non-Unified event.
  - ii. Any state-level competition at which the student is competing in any non-Unified events.
- G. High school athletes in other spring sports may participate in Unified Team Track and Field, if allowed by the school and coaches.

## Modifications/Adoptions

### I. Team Composition

- A. Each team shall have an adult non-playing coach responsible for the lineup and conduct of the team during competition.
- B. A team roster shall consist of a minimum of 8 participants and of no more than 24 participants. For any concerns regarding roster size, please contact **Laura Duncan** at [Laura@SpecialOlympicsArizona.org](mailto:Laura@SpecialOlympicsArizona.org).
- C. During competition, team rosters should consist of a 50/50 ratio of Unified Athletes to Unified Partners. If this ratio cannot be met, teams are permitted to compete with a 60/40 ratio of Unified Athletes to Unified Partners.
- D. Teams will be coed with no limitation on the number of boys or girls in an event or on a team.





# AIA Unified Team Track & Field Sports & Competition Rules



- E. There must be an equal number of Unified Athletes and Unified Partners competing in each event a school enters participants into.
- F. To emphasize the values of inclusion and teamwork, awards will be for team accomplishments only.

## II. Official Events and Entry Requirements

- A. The following events will be offered for AIA Unified Team Track and Field during the 2016-2017 inaugural season:
  - i. 100 Meters
  - ii. 400 Meters
  - iii. 4X100 Meter Relay
  - iv. Shot Put
  - v. Long Jump
- B. An individual may NOT be entered (as a participant AND/OR as an alternate) in more than three (3) events, including relays. An individual shall not compete in more than three (3) events during competition.
- C. During the 2017 AIA State Track and Field Invitational, each school may enter the following maximum number of participants in the events below. There must be an equal number of Unified Athletes and Unified Partners entered in each event:
  - i. 100 Meters – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
  - ii. 400 Meters – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
  - iii. 4X100 Meter Relay – 1 relay team of 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
  - iv. Shot Put – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
  - v. Long Jump – 4 participants (2 Unified Athletes / 2 Unified Partners)
- D. Wheelchair Participants
  - i. Participants using manual wheelchairs or power wheelchairs are eligible to participate.
    - a. Track Events
      - **MANUAL WHEELCHAIRS:** Participants compete against students with and without disabilities.
      - **RELAYS:** Only participants using a manual wheelchair are eligible to be selected as a possible member of the 4 x 100 meter relay. To ensure participant safety, competitors using a manual wheelchair will be required to compete as the final leg of the unified relay.
      - **POWER WHEELCHAIRS:** Participants compete in a division which only is composed of power wheelchair competitors. Because the chair is propelled by the engine and not a person, the type of competition is different. If there is only one competitor in a division, he/she tries to exceed their personal best for the season. If successful, he/she receives the point total for 1<sup>st</sup> place. If not, he/she receives the point total for 2<sup>nd</sup> place.
      - **LANE ASSIGNMENTS:** Assign two lanes for a wheelchair competitor during a race, preferably an inside lane.
    - b. Field Events
      - Manual and power wheelchair participants compete against students with and without disabilities.



# AIA Unified Team Track & Field Sports & Competition Rules



- E. Participants with Visual Impairments
  - i. Participants with visual impairments (defined as blind or with severely restricted vision) may use a guide runner to assist them. The guide runner is given one adjoining lane.
  - ii. Another acceptable option is for the participant to use a guide rope held by volunteers with a relay baton attached to it. The runner grabs the baton and slides it along the rope while running or walking during the race.
- F. Participants with Hearing Impairments
  - i. The competitor should be placed in the lane closest to the positioning of the official starter.
  - ii. An assistant standing next to the starter should drop a brightly colored (red or yellow) cloth when the gun sounds.
  - iii. Another allowable option is to have the assistant stand behind the competitor with the hearing impairment and tap him/her on the shoulder when the gun sounds.

### III. Divisioning and Team Scoring

- A. Participants with and without disabilities **compete against each other in co-ed divisions** within each event. These divisions are determined by the entrants having similar qualifying times or distances.
- B. Qualifying times and distances for each competitor must be submitted at least 10 days prior to a competition for the events in which he or she will be entered. For example, if a participant will be entered in the 400 meters and the running long jump, qualifying scores must be submitted for each event.
- C. Ideally, the variance between the highest and lowest score in a competition division should be no more than 15%. However, this variance can be expanded in order to have fuller divisions of three or more competitors.
- D. The minimum number of competitors in a division should be three and the maximum number is eight.
- E. Every event competition division results in the same allocation of points awarded to the teams. For example, if there are seven divisions of the 100 meters, competitors in each of the seven divisions will score points for their teams based upon their place of finish.
- F. Team scoring is based upon the format delineated in the National Federation of State High School Associations' Track and Field Rules Book for dual meets. Since all competition divisions score points for a team, the Unified Team Track and Field rules modification is as follows:
  - i. For all types of Unified Track and Field meets (dual, triangle, or invitational) the following scoring format will be employed for every event division:
    - a. 1st place = 10 points
    - b. 2nd place = 8 points
    - c. 3rd place = 6 points
    - d. 4th place = 5 points
    - e. 5th place = 4 points
    - f. 6th place = 3 points
    - g. 7th place = 2 points
    - h. 8th place = 1 point
  - ii. Adding together the total amount of points earned by all the participants on each Unified Track and Field team will determine the teams' final place of finish for the competition.





# AIA Unified Team Track & Field Sports & Competition Rules



## IV. Event Rules

- A. All track and field events will follow National Federation of State High School Associations rules, except where there are rules modifications set forth in the Official Special Olympics rules for athletics (track & field). These rules can be found on the Special Olympics web site at [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)
- B. Highlighted **TRACK** event rules appearing in the Special Olympics rules book include the following:
- In races up to and including the 400 meters, the runners have the option of using or not using starting blocks.
  - A runner who is charged with two false starts in the same race will be disqualified from that race.
  - All runners should run within their lanes. However, if a runner either runs outside his/her lane in the straight or runs outside the outer lane on the bend, with no material advantage being gained, and if no other runner is obstructed, then the competitor shall not be disqualified.
  - Wheelchair Racers
    - A competitor using a wheelchair finishes his/her race when all front wheels (one or two) of the wheelchair reach the finish line.
    - The lanes used by wheelchair athletes shall be two track lanes wide.
- C. Highlighted **FIELD** event rules appearing in the Special Olympics rules book include the following:
- Event Scoring
    - Participants shall be allowed to perform two non-consecutive attempts during competition.
    - All attempts shall be measured and recorded.
    - The longest measurement of each competitor's two attempts shall be used for scoring final place of finish.
    - In the event of a tie, competitors' second measurement shall determine final place of finish.
  - Shot Put
    - All competitors will use a 6 lb. shot during competition.
  - Long Jump
    - Participants must use one of the following two approaches when performing the Long Jump.
    - During competition, participants will be required to use the same approach for both attempts and must notify the field judge of their approach prior to initiating the first attempt.
      - Standing Approach
        - The takeoff board for Standing Long Jump shall be placed one inch from the edge of the sandpit.
      - Running Approach
        - The takeoff board for Running Long Jump shall be placed one meter from the edge of the sandpit.
        - In order to safely clear the space between the takeoff board and the sandpit, competitors must be able to jump a **minimum of one meter** to use the **running approach** during competition.

★ *NOTE – Participants who **CANNOT jump at least one meter** will be required to use the **standing approach** during competition.*