

AIA Unified Team Track and Field 2016-2017 Inaugural Season Fact Sheet



AIA UNIFIED TEAM TRACK AND FIELD

AIA Unified Team Track and Field is an AIA-sanctioned sport supported by and in conjunction with Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ), which has been established to foster **inclusion, camaraderie, and the development of meaningful relationships** between students with intellectual disabilities (Unified Athletes) and students without intellectual disabilities (Unified Partners) as high school athletes, teammates, and training partners.

To guarantee *meaningful involvement* and a memorable experience for all participants, the following modifications are in place under this model –

- Participants with intellectual disabilities (Unified Athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (Unified Partners) compete against each other in co-ed heats/flights within each Unified event.
- To provide a competitive and level playing field where all participants have the opportunity to succeed, seeding for all heat/flights will be determined by similar qualifying times or distances.
- To emphasize inclusion and teamwork, awards will be given for team accomplishments only.
- Team rosters shall be a minimum of 8 participants and no more than 24 participants with an approximately 50/50 ratio of Unified Athletes to Unified Partners. If your team's roster exceeds 24 participants, please contact Laura@SpecialOlympicsArizona.org.

EVENTS OFFERED

- ♦ 100 Meters ♦ 400 Meters ♦ 4x100 Meter Relay ♦ Shot Put ♦ Long Jump

2016-2017 REGULAR SEASON

- Special Olympics Arizona's "8-practice" rule is in effect for participation in AIA Unified Sports. Practices must be at least one hour to qualify as a sanctioned practice, and all eight hours of practice must be completed prior to the team's first competition.
- Unified teams are encouraged to schedule regular season interscholastic competition under AIA rules. Schools are encouraged to offer other AIA unified track & field events during regular season competition.
- Unified teams are not required to compete in any regular season competition and/or sanctioned qualifying events to be eligible for participation in the 2017 AIA State Unified Team Track and Field Invitational.

2017 AIA STATE UNIFIED TEAM TRACK AND FIELD INVITATIONAL

- During the inaugural season, the State AIA Unified Team Track and Field event will be sanctioned as an **invitational event** with no formal qualification/advancement requirements for participation.
- This event will be hosted during the 2017 AIA State Track and Field Championship –
 - **Friday, May 5, 2017**
 - **Mesa Community College** – 1833 W. Southern Ave. Mesa, AZ 85202
- A maximum of 14 high schools will be allowed to participate in the inaugural 2017 State Unified Team Track and Field Invitational tournament.
- Participating schools will be chosen on a "**first-come, first-served**" basis pending completion dates of the Unified Team Registration Form.
 - *If there are sufficient teams in the future, sectional tournaments will be implemented to qualify teams for the state tournament based on team scores.*
- **School Application Deadline**
 - **Friday, April 7, 2017** – DUE by 5pm
- **Tournament Entry Deadline**
 - **Friday, April 21, 2017** – DUE by 5pm – All Entries and Final Qualifying Scores

GOVERNANCE AND RULES

For more information on specific rules and regulations, check the **AIA Unified Team Track and Field Sports and Competition Rules** and the **2017 AIA State Unified Track and Field Invitational Tournament Guide** located on the AIA's website at <http://aiaonline.org/sports/unified>.

AIA UNIFIED SPORTS STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND CLEARANCE



AIA UNIFIED SPORTS TEAM ROLES

- Unified Athlete – an enrolled student with an intellectual/developmental disability
- Unified Partner – an enrolled student without an intellectual/developmental disability

UNIFIED ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

- Any enrolled student *with an intellectual disability* who meets both the Unified Athlete eligibility statement below and all requirements of the AIA and school district's athletic clearance policy is eligible to participate as a Unified Athlete in AIA Unified Sports.
- An individual is considered to have intellectual disabilities for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate in Unified Sports® if that individual:
 - Has been identified by an agency or professional as having intellectual disabilities as determined by their localities; or
 - Has been 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.

UNIFIED PARTNER ELIGIBILITY

- Any enrolled student who meets all requirements of the AIA and school district's athletic clearance policy is eligible to participate as a Unified Partner in AIA Unified Sports.
- Any student competing in an individual sport (i.e. Swim, Track & Field) **IS** eligible to participate as a Unified Partner in the same sport, **EXCEPT** during the following circumstances –
 - Any competition at which the student is attempting to qualify for advancement to a state-level competition in any non-Unified event.
 - Any state-level competition at which the student is competing in any non-Unified events.
- Any student competing in a team sport (i.e. Flag Football and Basketball) at the **varsity level** is **NOT** eligible to compete as a Unified Partner in the **same sport**.
 - Example – A varsity soccer player is **NOT** eligible to compete on the Unified Soccer team
 - Example – A varsity soccer player **IS** eligible to compete on a Unified Basketball team.

AIA STUDENT ATHLETIC CLEARANCE POLICY

- All participants in interscholastic activities must be in compliance with all student eligibility rules. The student eligibility rules are enumerated and presented in detail in Article 15 of the AIA Bylaws.
- **Physical Examination Rule (Article 15.7)** states a student shall not be allowed to practice or compete in interscholastic athletics until there is a record of a preparticipation physical examination on file with the school. The preparticipation physical examination forms provided by the AIA include three parts:
 1. Annual Preparticipation Physical EVALUATION – To be completed and signed by the parent or legal guardian and the student athlete. This form must also be signed by the examining medical provider. (Form 15.7-A)
 2. Annual Preparticipation Physical EXAMINATION – To be completed and signed by the examining medical provider. (Form 15.7-B)
 3. Annual Preparticipation Acknowledgement – To be completed and signed by parent or guardian and student athlete. (Form 15.7-C).
- **Parental or Legal Guardian Consent Rule (Article 15.8)** states that parental or legal guardian consent is required before a student can be eligible to practice or compete in interscholastic competition. All students shall have appropriate permission in which the parent or legal guardian authorized participation on file with the school.

SCHOOL/DISTRICT ATHLETIC CLEARANCE POLICY

- Unified Athletes and Unified Partners are to be treated and recognized as AIA high school athletes, and will be expected to adhere to any and all district/school policies and procedures regarding student athletic participation and clearance.
- If a district has a "Pay to Play" policy, it is the district's choice to charge a participation fee for AIA Unified Sports.
- Unified Athletes and Unified Partners are subjected to a grade check as defined by their district/ and/or school's athletic academic eligibility policy.

