



HIGH SCHOOL UNIFIED SPORTS®

Unified Sports® is an inclusive program, which combines individuals with intellectual disabilities (unified athletes) and individuals without intellectual disabilities (unified partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Athletes and unified partners compete alongside one another, each in a meaningful and integral role on the Unified Sports® team.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In June of 2011, a partnership was formed between Special Olympics Arizona and the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) with the sole purpose of building a statewide Unified Sports® structure within the state's interscholastic athletics system.

High School Unified Sports provides a platform for students with and without intellectual disabilities to enjoy a true high school athletic experience in an inclusive arena. Utilizing the same structure as any other high school sports program, Unified Sports teams are managed by school athletic departments and have the same opportunities to experience the competition and camaraderie of interscholastic athletics.

STUDENT ATHLETE BENEFITS AND RECOGNITION

Unified Sports empowers unified athletes and unified partners to enjoy a **true high school athletic experience** by providing opportunities to:

- Build confidence through success and positive interactions with peers
- Experience being part of a team through engagement in an inclusive environment that promotes camaraderie, competition, sportsmanship, and lifelong friendships
- Achieve excellence and recognition in interscholastic athletics and activities
- Represent their school community with pride by wearing the school name/colors and competing in a legitimate arena alongside their peers
- Participate in the regular season, interscholastic league play against other high school Unified Sports teams
- Qualify for advancement to AIA state-level tournaments to compete for state championship titles
- Be eligible to receive JV and Varsity letters for participation in high school athletics and activities
- Promote academic and social support in the classroom, in the hallways, and in the overall school environment and community

SANCTIONED HIGH SCHOOL UNIFIED SPORTS / ACTIVITIES®

- | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| - Badminton | - Basketball | - Flag Football | - Floorball | - Golf |
| - Volleyball | - Soccer | - Spirit line (Cheer) | - Swimming | - Track and Field |

For more information, please contact:

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EXPLANATION OF PARTNERSHIP

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

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ARIZONA (SOAZ) PROVIDES:

- Inclusive sports and extra-curricular sports programs for students of all abilities
- Professional development and teacher training
- Assistance with funding of programs
- Access to Special Olympics Arizona corporate sponsorships, volunteers and education-related grant funding, as well as event opportunities and sponsorship
- Special Olympics Arizona staff and volunteer leadership dedicated to the development, implementation, and administration of programs
- Unified Sports Adaptive PE Curriculum, written to satisfy Arizona State Standards
- Resource for a transition of students from school to community sports and volunteer/service programs
- Formal recognition of collaboration between Special Olympics Arizona and the school

ARIZONA INTERSCHOLASTIC ASSOCIATION (AIA) PROVIDES:

- Leadership and representation at the national level
- Special programs and awards (Scholar-Athlete/Activity, Excellence Awards, Outstanding Girls Athletic Program, Directors Cup Award, AIA Champions Awards Program)
- Bylaws interpretations
- Source of rules books, scorebooks, case books, and other publications
- Adjudication and resolution of issues and concerns
- Officials-related services, including training, assignment, and payment via RefPay
- Student Excess Catastrophic Accident Insurance
- Promotion of sportsmanship and a cooperative spirit among member schools, coaches, and athletes
- Seminars, in-service training, and workshops for schools to implement sportsmanship and coaches' education programs
- Dissemination of informational materials to member schools
- Extensive website content regarding Unified Sports on www.aiaonline.org and www.AZPreps365.org

SCHOOL PROVIDES:

- Completed Program Application annually
- Personnel and students to develop and implement programs
- Assistance with scheduling interscholastic competition opportunities (e.g., contests, tournaments, etc.)
- Sports equipment, facilities, transportation to competitions
- Assistance with long-term planning for the program within the school
- Cooperation in an annual evaluation of programs
- Formal recognition of collaboration between the school and Special Olympics Arizona