



Special Olympics  
**Unified Schools**

# SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSOURI UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

JUNE

## INCLUSIVE SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

State Summer Games were held on the University of Missouri campus. Athletes and Unified partners from across the state represented their schools in athletic competitions.

Capital City High School, Tipton and Jefferson City High School held a Unified Track meet at our Training for Life Campus. Sullivan High School also hosted a Unified Track meet.

## INCLUSIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES HIGHLIGHTS

This coming month SOMO Unified partners and an athlete will join the Missouri Association of Student Councils' Summer Leadership Workshop.

## WHOLE SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

[Athlete, Abby Bax, and her teammates went viral](#) when Jefferson City High School celebrated students participating in a Unified Track Day. SOMO athletes and their MAC-Scholar partners walked in a parade around JCHS, joined by the drumline and cheerleaders. They ended the procession with a celebratory walk and dancing in front of the school.

Belle Elementary School had a Pee Wee Plunge supported by the Belle Fire Protection District and Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Warrensburg Middle School had a clap out to celebrate the athletes competing in a Special Olympics Missouri track event.

Stockton High School hosted an Inclusion Revolution day with outdoor games, face painting, and cotton candy.

Fulton Public Schools hosted a play Unified Day.



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*“Diversity is being invited to the party.*

*Inclusion is being asked to dance.” – Verna Myers*

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# Special Olympics Unified Schools

## RESOURCES

Want to find more ways to engage your students with inclusion? Check out Unified Classroom for easy to implement lessons on identity, teamwork, empowerment, leadership, appreciation, and so many more valuable topics! Lessons are differentiated for all abilities and grade levels and include objectives and standards.

[www.generationunified.org/unified-classroom](http://www.generationunified.org/unified-classroom)

## HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

SOMO is hosting events all around the state, and we are looking for volunteers! If you would like information on events you and your students can volunteer at check out [somo.org/volunteer/](http://somo.org/volunteer/).

Consider hosting an inclusion revolution. This one-day unified event, where students with and without intellectual disabilities play together breaks down barriers, educates students on the importance of inclusion, and provides a meaningful experience for all participants. We would love to support you as we work together towards building whole school engagement.

Young Athlete Programs (YAP's) are a great way to work with younger schools in your district. YAP is for those 2-7 with and without intellectual disabilities where we play games to work on motor and social skills, as well as introduce them to our sports that we offer year-round. We meet once a week and this can be done either during the school day, or after school. For more information or if you are interested please feel free to reach out to me, we are excited to help you get things started!

## NATIONAL BANNER PROGRAM

A Special Olympics Unified Champion School has an inclusive school climate and exudes a sense of collaboration, engagement and respect for all members of the student body and staff. A Unified Champion School receiving national banner recognition is one that has demonstrated commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 national standards of excellence. These standards were developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community.

The primary activities within these standards include: [Special Olympics Unified Sports®](http://SpecialOlympicsUnifiedSports.com) (where students with and without disabilities train and compete as teammates), Inclusive Youth Leadership and Whole-School Engagement. Banner Unified Champion Schools should also be able to demonstrate they are self-sustainable or have a plan in place to sustain these activities into the future.

## SCHOOL VISITS

Want practical ideas for becoming a more inclusive school? I am looking forward to traveling the state visiting different schools and learning about all of the great things you are doing to promote inclusion. My goal is to provide you more information on the three standards and what more you can do to be on pace to achieve national banner status. If you would like to meet please reach out to me at [thomas@somo.org](mailto:thomas@somo.org).



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## SCHOOL SURVEY

Please take a moment and fill out our survey so we can continue to serve you and your students creating a place where everyone feels welcome! <https://form.jotform.com/213266085825055>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**St. Louis Metro Area** - contact Jocelyn Diehl ([diehl@somo.org](mailto:diehl@somo.org)) (314)-961-7755

**Central Area** – contact Tim Schuster ([schuster@somo.org](mailto:schuster@somo.org)) (573)-635-1660

**Kansas City Area** - contact Alyssa Cress ([cress@ssomo.org](mailto:cress@ssomo.org)) (816)-535-9610

June 15<sup>th</sup> KC Metro Tennis Clinic

June 22<sup>nd</sup> Pickle Ball Clinic

July 5<sup>th</sup> Softball Clinic

**North Area** – contact Jalyn Griffith ([griffith@somo.org](mailto:griffith@somo.org)) (816)-535-9610

**Southeast Area** – contact Scott Williams ( [swilliams@somo.org](mailto:swilliams@somo.org)) (573)-339-6733

**Southwest Area** – contact Jana Fornelli ([fornelli@somo.org](mailto:fornelli@somo.org)) (417)-624-5505

**Statewide** – contact Susan Shaffer ([shaffer@somo.org](mailto:shaffer@somo.org)) (573)-635-1660

June 26th- July 1<sup>st</sup> Sports Camp at Training for Life Campus

## MESSAGE FROM ME

With first-hand experience on all sides of Special Olympics Unified Schools, I am uniquely equipped to support you in starting or growing your Unified Champion Schools program. I grew up in Kansas City and attended Park Hill School District. In 2010, I moved to Oklahoma and attended Owasso High School and became a Unified partner for the district's Unified Bocce Team. The inclusive experiences I had led me to become a Special Educator and a Unified Club Co-Sponsor for the same school. As our coaches incorporated inclusive youth leadership opportunities within the club and facilitated student led whole school engagement we became a National Banner Unified Champion School. I would love to meet you and support your next steps towards being a more inclusive school.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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