



September Newsletter



We're looking for schools to partner with us to host **Unified Track and Field** meets this spring as we work towards emerging sport status with Missouri State High School Activities Association.

These competitions are different from a traditional SOMO Track Meet because they are more competitive and athletes and Unified partners compete to earn team points instead of individual awards. If you'd like to learn more about this email ucs@somo.org. Support our efforts by advocating to your Athletic Director to acknowledge your Unified Sports team similarly to other teams. This might include equitable opportunities for athletic letters, pep assemblies, uniforms, equipment, transportation and practice space.

Highlights from Missouri Schools



As a leader in the unified movement, we encourage as many staff members in your school(s) to take the FREE "Coaching Unified Sports" training course thru NFHS. [Coaching Unified Sports Course \(nfhslearn.com\)](https://www.nfhslearn.com)



Unified Clubs...Creativity is Essential

Of the many great aspects of being a part of a Unified Champion School is the ability and desire to allow students to make it their own. We LOVE hearing about the many different Unified Clubs throughout the state!



Esports: Make It Unified

Thanks to the fantastic student and staff leadership at Odessa High School, Unified Esports were introduced last school year. Expect many more opportunities thru Unified Esports, which may include a multi-state streamed competition in 2023-24



Laurence Bowers gave SOMO athletes and Unified Partners scholarships to participate in his [9th annual basketball camp](#).



Students from Battle High School, Hickman High School, and Rock Bridge High School (Columbia Public Schools) came to the Special Olympics Missouri Training for Life Campus to experience Unified sports and Inclusive Youth Leadership! We also had volunteers from the Jefferson City YMCA Counselors in Training program leading stations for soccer, running, t-ball and disc golf. [See more.](#)

Resources and Ideas for your School

Make your game plan, complete the Partnership for Inclusion 2023-24. If you have not already done so, schools in the unified movement are invited to submit the [2023-24 Partnership for Inclusion](#) online form. In doing so, your campus will become an official Unified Champion School in '23-'24. Please communicate with your student leaders and educators when planning for each of the three UCS components (Inclusive Youth Leadership, Whole School Engagement and Unified Sports & Activities).

Join us for an Inclusive Youth Leadership Summit

Special Olympics Missouri's Training for Life Campus

305 Special Olympics Dr. Columbia, Mo 65101

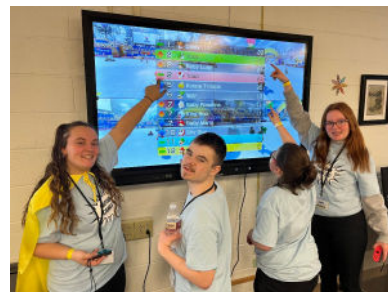
Thursday, Nov 16th 9:30-1:30

Register students by October 26th at: <https://form.jotform.com/231984279877074>

Unified pairs will rotate through a variety of leadership and sports activities. Bring a 1:1 ratio of athletes (students with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability) to Unified partners. This is not a SOMO competition, therefore students do not need to be registered SOMO athletes and Unified partners to participate. Lunch will be provided.

Dates for Play Vs. [Free Unified Fall Esports League](#)

- Registration deadline: 9/22/23
- Preseason: Weeks of 9/11/23 & 9/18/23
- Regular Season: 9/25/23 - 11/17/23
- Playoffs: 11/27/23 - 12/8/23
- Fall Championships: Week of 12/11/23



Youth Innovation Projects

Are you ready to promote inclusion in your community?

Special Olympics awards project-based grants to young people with and without intellectual disabilities. These grants fund youth-led projects that promote inclusion in schools and communities across the globe. [Grant application](#) deadline is November 1st, 2023.

YOUTH ACTIVATION COMMITTEE

This statewide, student lead committee will meet monthly (first Thursday of the month at 3:30 p.m. via zoom) for students to gain leadership skills and collaborate on providing inclusive opportunities to impact students across the state. Unified pairs (one athlete and one Unified partner) from your school may work together to submit an application by October 18th.



Missouri YAC
Application 2023



Special Olympics
Unified Champion
Schools®

Questions? Email ucs@somo.org

Missouri YAC Application

**Special
Olympics**
Missouri



WHO CAN BE AN ATHLETE?

To compete as a Special Olympics Missouri athlete, a person must be at least 8 years of age. A person must also be identified by an agency or professional as having one of the following:

- Intellectual disability
- Closely related development disability, which means having functional limitations in both general learning and in adaptive skills such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care.



WHO CAN BE A UNIFIED PARTNER?

Unified Partners must be at least 8 years old to compete. These are people without intellectual disabilities who want to participate on Special Olympics Unified Sports teams with peers with similar athletic skills.

WHO CAN BE A YOUNG ATHLETE?

Young athletes are children with and without intellectual disabilities, ages 2 to 7 years old.

Click Here for Upcoming Events in Your Area

COME VISIT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSOURI TRAINING FOR LIFE CAMPUS



FREE field trip opportunity inclusive of students of all abilities!



VISIT FOR A DAY, TAKE BACK IDEAS TO IMPACT YOUR SCHOOL YEAR ROUND!

Come join us for a free field trip to experience each component of the Unified Champion Schools strategy: Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership and Whole School Engagement.

Contact us to set a date, time and activity plan that works well for your students of all ages. We welcome large groups of students with and without Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Please note transportation assistance may be available.

CONTACT US

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- Contact your Area Program Director now to plan ahead for bowling and basketball sports seasons. These sports will have Area competitions beginning in November, basketball will have regional competitions around February 2024, and both will culminate in State Indoor Games in St. Charles, MO around March 2024.
- Would you like to host a Unified sports competition to provide opportunities for your students with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities to compete together on the same team? Popular sports for fall are flag football, bocce, cornhole, and kickball. Review this resource, get student input, and contact ucs@somo.org to start planning. This is a great way to engage your school, your district, or your surrounding area!

Visit Our Website to Learn How to Become a Unified Champion School

Visit Generation Unified for Free Lessons and Videos