



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS (UCS)

Unified Champion Schools is a program which seeks to create enriching and inclusive school climates through sports and youth leadership. There are three components which contribute to these desired outcomes: (1) Interscholastic Unified Sports:

This is a fully-inclusive co-ed high school sports program which facilitates social inclusion. Students with and without intellectual disabilities train and compete together as equal peers, and these teams are regarded the same as any other varsity sports team at the school; (2) Unified Clubs where students with and without disabilities take on co-leadership roles and collaborate to improve their school's culture; (3) Whole School Engagement activities designed to promote inclusion, acceptance, and respect for all students.

UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS IMPACT

94% of teachers/school staff reported that UCS increases opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to work together.

92% of school staff credit UCS with reducing bullying, teasing and offensive language

94% of participants said involvement in Unified Sports made them healthier



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools**

OUR FOCUS AND APPROACH

Special Olympics PA currently has Unified Champion Schools partnerships with 371 schools in 51 counties including the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Our goal is to reach more than 450 schools by 2024 and 550 schools by 2025.

Partnerships with schools include funding, resources, and staff support provided by Special Olympics PA. Although demand from new schools continues to increase, expansion is limited due to our increased funding and capacity needs.

Unified Champion Schools is endorsed by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Unified Sports Offered: indoor bocce, track and field, and soccer. In the high schools, Unified Sports is conducted and regarded the same as the other PIAA sports with practices, regular and post-season competitions, and a state championship co-hosted by the PIAA.