

Unified Sports



Special Olympics
Pennsylvania



A close-up photograph of two hands held palm-to-palm, fingers spread. The hands are covered in vibrant, multi-colored paint in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue, creating a rainbow effect. The background is a plain, light gray.

**PLAY UNIFIED.
LIVE UNIFIED.**

BE A GAME
CHANGER



Unified Sport Quiz

What are Unified Sports?

- Individuals with (athletes) and without (partners) intellectual disabilities training and competing together on a team

What is the ideal roster composition of athletes and partners on a Unified team?

- 50/50 is the ideal roster composition of athletes and partners, age and ability matched

Can a Unified partner also be a coach of their team?

- No, Unified partners may not play a dual role as coach and teammate

What are the 3 Unified Sport models?

- Recreational, Player Development and Competitive

Unified Sport Quiz continued



What is Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS)?

- SOPA's Unified strategy in the schools, our focus is high schools

Who manages IUS?

- Currently, 4 staff members in the state office

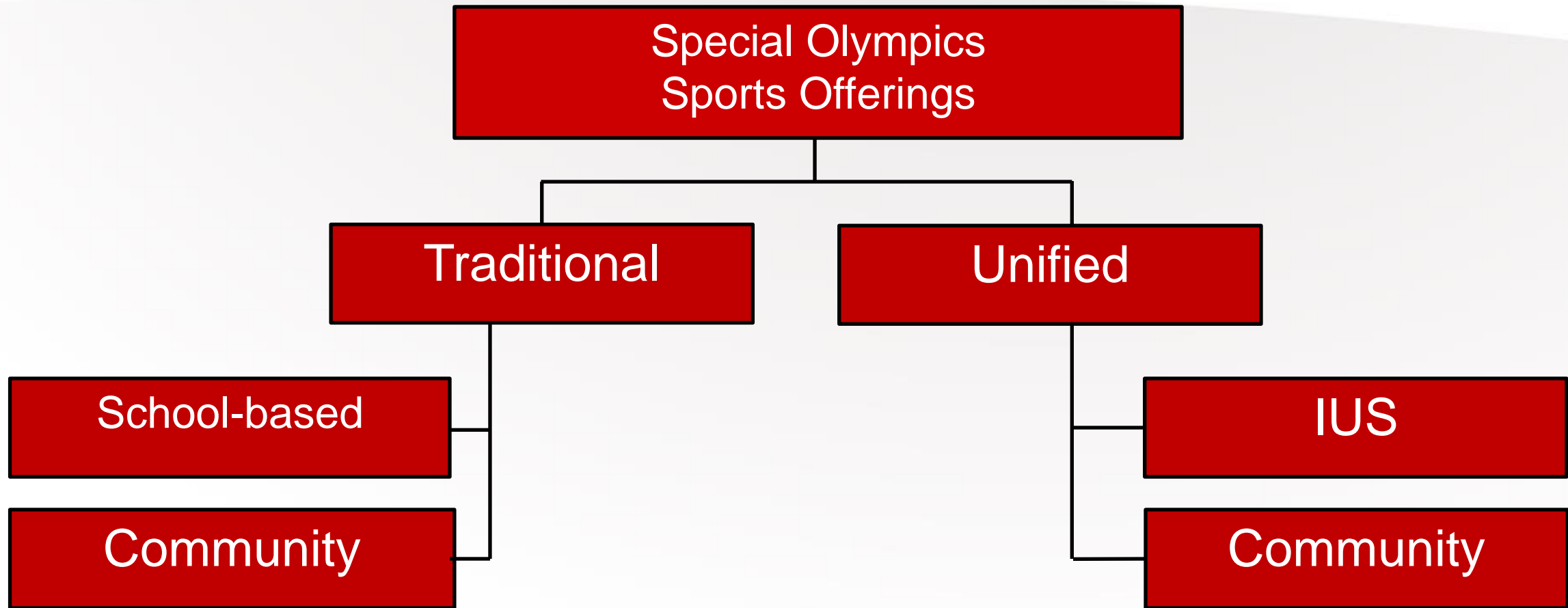
How are the local programs involved in IUS?

- Relationship building with the school, transitioning IUS athletes and partners into your local program

Do IUS athletes advance to SOPA State level competitions?

- IUS athletes advance to PIAA State level competitions

Difference between IUS & Unified Sports



Unified Sports Umbrella



Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS)

- IUS is SOPA's focus of Unified growth in the schools and encompasses the 3 components:
 - Unified Sports
 - Youth Leadership
 - Whole School Engagement
- IUS is largely run by staff
- Yearly culminating events are IUS/PIAA Championships.
- Schools referred to as Unified Champion Schools

Community based Unified Sports

- Community based Unified Sports is a program parallel to our traditional sport offerings
 - It serves as another option for participation
- It is run by the local program
- Yearly culminating events are SOPA State Games.

Goal of IUS

- ▶ The goal of IUS is to create a fully inclusive school culture where all individuals are treated with respect and viewed as equals.
- ▶ We do this utilizing 3 components:
 - ▶ **Unified Sports**
 - ▶ fully-inclusive co-ed sports program which facilitates social inclusion by bringing together students with intellectual disabilities, other disabilities, and without disabilities on teams for training and competition.
 - ▶ These teams are regarded the same as any other varsity sports team at the school.
 - ▶ **Youth Leadership and Advocacy**
 - ▶ Unified Clubs where students with and without disabilities collaborate to improve their school's culture
 - ▶ **Whole School Engagement**
 - ▶ activities designed to promote inclusion, acceptance, and respect for all students

IUS now, 2016-17

- ▶ 86 schools
- ▶ 15 counties plus city of Pittsburgh
 - ▶ Philadelphia, Delaware, Montgomery, Area M, Clearfield, Tioga/Bradford, Allegheny, Westmoreland, Beaver, Mercer/Butler/Lawrence, Erie, Elk/Cameron, Pittsburgh
- ▶ 2015-16 total numbers (61 schools), 698 athletes, 604 partners = 1302
- ▶ Participant growth is about 30% per year, estimation for 2016-17 = 1700

**CHANGE DOESN'T
HAPPEN FROM
THE SIDELINES.
GAME ON.**



Goals for 2017-18



- IUS active in 120 schools
- Targeted counties:
 - Area P, York, Lancaster, Centre, Blair, Lehigh Valley (Lehigh, Northampton, Bethlehem)
 - Actively look to expand in Area M, Bradford/Tioga/Sullivan, Elk/Cameron, Clearfield
- Anticipated number of athletes/partners = 2200

IUS Transition Plan

Benefits of IUS for Local Programs

- Leads to new partnerships with schools which can provide valuable in-kind resources and facilities.
- Brings prospective new volunteers to the program through family members of IUS athletes, Unified partners, and teachers.
- Engages young people who want to contribute to Special Olympics as advocates, volunteers, and fundraisers.
- IUS athletes, partners and coaches will count as part of the program's overall numbers.
- Builds a continuum of programming for high school Special Olympics athletes and through this outreach, helps fulfill the mission to serve people with intellectual disabilities





IUS Transition Plan



Local Program Expectations

The local program will be expected to build a relationship with school personnel in order to:

- ▶ Educate schools of the Special Olympics offerings in the community
- ▶ Ensure a transition of athletes from IUS into the community program, while they are in school and upon graduation.



