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MEDIA CONTACT – Wenona Sutton, 610-630-9450 ext 219, wsutton@specialolympicspa.org

NORTH PENN HIGH SCHOOL TO RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION FROM SPECIAL OLYMPICS FOR ACHIEVEMENTS WITH INCLUSION

(Norristown, PA, November 13, 2018) – North Penn High School (NPHS), a Special Olympics Pennsylvania Unified Champion School, will host a special banner presentation on Monday, November 19th in its main gymnasium located at 1340 S. Valley Forge Road, Lansdale, PA from 1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. The banner presentation is to acknowledge North Penn High School's national recognition for its outstanding efforts to provide inclusive sports and activities for students with and without disabilities. The school is receiving this honor as a result of meeting national standards of excellence in the areas of inclusion, advocacy and respect, which places it among a select number of schools to receive this distinction. The special school assembly will include a small program featuring cheering students, athlete and Unified Partner testimonials, guest speakers, a banner unveiling, and more.

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. In 2018, only 132 schools nationwide achieved national banner recognition, including just one in 2017 and four in 2018 for Pennsylvania.

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

More than 125 schools are currently participating in Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools programming in Pennsylvania as part of more than 5,000 schools across the country engaged in the program. Special Olympics has a global goal of creating 10,000 Unified Champion Schools by 2020.

The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools model is supported by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education. Research has proven this model to be an effective and replicable means to providing students, both with and without disabilities, the opportunity to form positive social relationships and promote a socially inclusive school climate*. Among the findings were:

- 72% of involved teachers believe participation in the program has increased the confidence of students with disabilities.
- 88% of involved teachers credit the program with reducing bullying and teasing in their schools.

**Evaluation conducted by the Center for Social Development and Education (CSDE) at the University of Massachusetts Boston*

About Special Olympics Pennsylvania

Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) provides year-round training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy. For more information, visit our web site at www.specialolympicspa.org.

About North Penn High School

NPHS was recognized for our excellence in academics by the U.S. News & World Report and the Washington Post and also nationally for their exemplary work in the arts and prowess in athletics. For more info, visit <http://www.npenn.org>.