



## Unified Champion Schools®

### An Invitation to Participate in **Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®**, a Service-Learning Program Making Positive Changes to School Climates in Louisiana

Special Olympics Louisiana is excited to invite you and your school to participate in our Unified Champion Schools® program for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. The success of Unified Champion Schools® is manifested in the inclusive friendships formed as youth with and without intellectual disabilities work together as leaders to create communities of caring and respect.

#### What is Unified Champion Schools?

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools® is a U.S. national project, partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of Unified Champion Schools® is to activate youth to promote school communities where all young people are agents of change – fostering respect, dignity and advocacy for people with cognitive disabilities by utilizing the programs and initiatives of Special Olympics.

#### A Catalyst for Change:

The past eleven years have shown that Unified Champion Schools® provides significant positive outcomes for participants, and can play an important supporting role in state, district, and individual school strategic goals, whether it be promoting a positive school climate, developing physical fitness, building character, preventing bullying, enhancing student engagement and promoting and building student leadership skills.

Through data collected, Special Olympics has learned that in order to be transformative within schools, state programs need to go beyond simply providing students the opportunity to engage in single, Special Olympics specific initiatives. It is the connections between initiatives – along with the whole school's involvement in the design and implementation of Unified Champion Schools® – that can foster a more inclusive and welcoming environment for students with cognitive disabilities.

#### Unified Champion Schools® Initiatives:

Unified Sports® Options/ skill development or training • Inclusive fitness or recreation activities  
Fans in the Stands • Youth Leadership training • Young Athletes™ Programs  
Spread the Word Inclusion • Respect /Awareness campaigns • Education Leadership Network  
Get Into It™ resources and activities • Youth Activation Committee • Cool Schools

#### What is a Unified Champion School®:

A school just beginning their involvement must choose an activity within one of the three components listed below; however, your school can do activities in each category if desired. A returning school that has been involved in the past should focus on a minimum of one activity from each of the components.

1. Participation in Special Olympics-themed unified sports experiences
2. Inclusive Youth Leadership
3. School-wide awareness activity (Whole School Engagement)

Schools may also engage in professional development opportunities provided by Special Olympics Louisiana and apply for School Awards to support and activate students and staff on innovative projects.

#### Special Olympics Louisiana

46 Louis Prima Dr. Suite A, Covington, Louisiana 70433, USA Tel 1-800-345-6644 Fax 888-836-2187

Email [laso@laso.org](mailto:laso@laso.org) Website [www.laso.org](http://www.laso.org) Twitter @SOLouisiana Facebook SpecialOlympicsLouisiana

*Created by Joseph P Kennedy Jr Foundation. Authorized and accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities*

# Special Olympics Louisiana

## Unified Champion Schools 2020-2021 School Participation Form

Please FAX scan and email to Brock Banos at [bbanos@laso.org](mailto:bbanos@laso.org). **This is not a contract, simply a planning tool for SOLA and Unified Champion Schools.**

<b>SCHOOL NAME:</b>			
Mailing Address:			
City/State/Zip:			
<b>SCHOOL CONTACT:</b>			
Phone:		Email:	
<b>STUDENT LEADER:</b>			
Phone:		Email:	
<b>SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION:</b>			
Phone:		Email:	
<b>Signature of School Administration</b> <i>(required):</i> <i>Placing administration name on this document ensures they are aware and are in support of program participation.</i>			
<b>Total School Enrollment:</b>			

A school just beginning their involvement must choose **one activity from any of these categories list below**; however, your school can do activities in each category if desired. A **returning school** that has been involved in the past should focus on a **minimum of one activity from each of the components** *(Please highlight the activities you select for this year. This helps with planning and reporting)*

### 1. CATEGORY 1: UNIFIED SPORTS

- Unified Sports or Inclusive Sports Opportunities:** participation by students with and without intellectual disabilities.
- Other Unified Sports options:** Unified P.E., unified fitness, sports clinics.
- Young Athletes Program:** Sport and play program for two to seven year olds.
- Unified Sports Experience:** At school event introducing students to Unified Sports

### 2. CATEGORY 2: INCLUSIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP

- Students as event organizers:** Students organizing and planning Special Olympics events or inclusive activities
- Special Olympics Unified Club:** Students plan/carry out recreational activities for/with Special Olympics athletes at school or in the community
- Change for Champions:** Youth Raise money for Special Olympics and their school program by collecting funds. 50% to state program, 50% goes to school.
- Student Volunteers:** Students volunteering with Special Olympics Louisiana during competition and other events.
- Youth Activation Committee:** Participate in the Statewide YAC or create a committee within your school.
- Youth Activation Summit:** Attend the statewide Louisiana Youth Activation Summit in March 2020.

### 3. CATEGORY 3: SCHOOL-WIDE AWARENESS (WHOLE SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT)

- Respect/Awareness campaign:** organize awareness campaigns encouraging respect, tolerance and acceptance for all
- Fans in the Stands:** Students cheer as fans for Special Olympics athletes at school events or local competitions
- Get Into It™:** Utilize free online lessons and resources endorsed by the Department of Education for use in general education classrooms that teaches about character education, respect, acceptance, power of words, etc. Learn more about Get Into It™ at: <https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/> or email [bbanos@laso.org](mailto:bbanos@laso.org)
- Spread the Word Inclusion:** Students learn to spread acceptance, respect, and dignity throughout their school by taking the pledge of inclusion.

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**We also ask that each of the schools remember to ...**

1. Identify Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools® in each of your initiatives
2. Engage students in leadership capacities to plan and implement your school projects
3. Report all activities and numbers of students involved in activities
4. Engage Special Olympics athlete involvement to have an integrated and successful

\*\*Faculty contacts will be required to participate in a brief Special Olympics survey at the end of the Unified Champion Schools® year (*administered by the University of Massachusetts.*) Thank you, in advance, for your participation in the survey which serves to evaluate our state program and determines the availability of future funding for this program.

**School award funding opportunity:**

To further support your school's Unified Champion Schools® programming efforts, Special Olympics Louisiana will make available a limited number of school awards for students and staff to activate innovative projects that involve Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools® at their school. Schools will be eligible for up to \$2500. These projects can include, but are not limited to: Unified Sports, inclusive youth leadership, and whole school awareness.

**As a Unified Champion school, your school is eligible to receive the following resources:**

- Opportunity to apply for a school awards for creative projects or activities that support Unified Schools ideas
- Opportunity to participate in a statewide Youth Activation Committee/Summit
- Inclusive Leadership Guide
- Guide To Unified Sports
- Staff Support

**Please scan and email the completed form to Brock Banos at [bbanos@laso.org](mailto:bbanos@laso.org)**

**For questions or information on Unified Champion Schools®, please contact Brock Banos at [bbanos@laso.org](mailto:bbanos@laso.org) or call 985-345-6644 ext.107.**

**Special Olympics Louisiana**

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