



Project UNIFY[®]

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- Spread the Word to End the Word
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For more information, please go to:

<http://resources.specialolympics.org/Sections/What We Do/Project Unify/Project UNIFY Resources Homepage.aspx>





What is Project UNIFY?

Special Olympics Project UNIFY® is an education-based project, supported by the U.S. Department of Education that uses the sports and education programs of Special Olympics to activate young people across the U.S in order to promote school communities where all young people are agents of change - fostering respect, dignity and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics believes that through sports young people can make a difference in friendships, schools and communities.

Including:

- Unified Sports
- Youth Activation Committee (YAC)
- Spread the Word to End the Word

Who Participates?

- Individuals with and without disabilities
- Ages 2-7; Young Athletes
- 8 & over; Unified Sports & traditional Special Olympics

Benefits of becoming a Project Unify School:

- Change perceptions
- Improve attitudes
- Enhance relationships
- Increase acceptance of students with and without disabilities
- Student leadership

Where?

- In your own school
- Participate in Unified Sports in local area competitions
- Create a community presence outside of your school

When?

- Kick off rally in the fall
- Unified sports – fall, winter, spring
- R-Word Rally in March
- Youth Activation Committee (YAC) meetings monthly

More:

- Aligns with Common Core State Standards
- Training and resources available through Special Olympics Michigan
- Part of a national movement to change school climates
- Young Athletes
- Traditional Special Olympics
- Get Into It

For more information contact:

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Project UNIFY Resources & Contacts



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Websites:

Special Olympics Michigan
www.somi.org

Project UNIFY
www.specialolympics.org/project_unify.aspx

Project UNIFY-Michigan
www.somi.org/Get-Involved/Project-UNIFY.html

Special Olympics Resources
resources.specialolympics.org

Get Into It
www.getintoit.specialolympics.org

Spread the Word to End the Word
www.r-word.org

Find us on Facebook and Twitter!



Search for:



Project UNIFY Michigan
Special Olympics Michigan
@spolympicsmi



Road Map for Project UNIFY[®]

Schools participating in Project UNIFY are required to fulfill a number of tasks throughout their project time frame. The requirements are listed below and are specific Elementary, Middle and High Schools.

Elementary Schools should:

1. Appoint a school based liaison to work with your local Special Olympics program.
2. Meet with local Special Olympics program staff for a face-to-face meeting to discuss your specific Project UNIFY program.
3. Submit a monthly log.
4. Teach at least one lesson from the Special Olympics "Get Into It" curriculum to a general education class. These lessons can be downloaded, free of charge, through the Special Olympics International website or obtained from APE Staff.
5. Develop a Youth Activation Committee with students as the key project leaders.
6. Work with your YAC to implement a school wide Spread The Word To End The Word[®] or Respect activity.
7. Attend at least one local Unified sports event.
8. Implement at least one school-wide activity that promotes Be a Fan[™] and/or End the R-Word campaigns.

Other suggestions that are encouraged from every school involved in Project UNIFY are:

- Share photos, videos, and stories of activities and events on a Facebook page.
- Fundraise for local Special Olympics program.
- Participate in Fans in the Stands at a school event.

Middle and High Schools should:

1. Appoint a school based liaison to work with your local Special Olympics program. Meet with local Special Olympics program staff for a face-to-face meeting to discuss your specific Project UNIFY program.
2. Submit a monthly log.
3. Teach at least one lesson from the Special Olympics "Get Into It" curriculum to a general education class. These lessons can be downloaded, free of charge, through the Special Olympics International website.
4. Develop a Youth Activation Committee (YAC) with students as the key project leaders.
5. Work with your YAC to implement a school wide Spread The Word or Respect activity.
6. Work with your YAC to put on a Youth Rally/Youth Forum involving total school population.
7. Attend at least one local Unified sports event.
8. Attend at least one state Unified sports event.

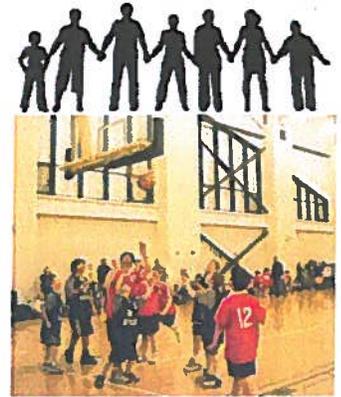
Other suggestions that are encouraged from every school involved in Project UNIFY are:

- Share photos, videos, and stories of activities and events on Area 8 Facebook page.
- Fundraise for local Special Olympics program.
- Participate in Fans in the Stands at a school event.



OVERVIEW

- Special Olympics Project UNIFY® is an education-based project that uses the sports and education programs of Special Olympics to activate young people across the U.S in order to promote school communities where all young people are agents of change – fostering respect, dignity and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics believes that through sports young people can make a difference in friendships, schools and communities.



PROJECT UNIFY KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Youth Leadership
- School/Community Collaborations
- Continuous Improvement
- Communications
- Professional Development
- Unifying Programming
- Creating Sustaining Relationships

CORE ACTIVITIES

Communication and Engagement: Be a Fan® and Spread the word to end the word “R” word campaigns, school rally’s, social networking and monthly updates

Inclusive Schools: Get Into It™, Partners Clubs, School Enrichment, Youth Summits, Young Athletes™

Inclusive Schools: Unified Sports® including Poly hockey, basketball, bocce, bowling and athletics or Unified Recreational Sports activity such as walking or exercise club or dodge ball leagues

Athlete Leadership & Self-Advocacy: Athlete Leadership Programs, Training and Education, Youth Forums



PROJECT UNIFY OUTCOMES

- The magic of Project UNIFY is manifested in the inclusive friendships formed, seeing paired youth in action as leaders, creating communities of caring and respect.
- Youth become core leaders in their school communities using Unified Sports and Spread the Word to End the Word as the catalyst for impacting change in a school climate.
- Administrators and teachers take the educated risk to support the vision and insight of youth to create inclusive environments in their schools through Unified Sports and youth leadership opportunities with a clear vision of impacting school environments.
- The inspiration and passion that comes from experiencing Special Olympics sports motivates young people to seek a world of unity, and then provides students with and without disabilities with the skills and opportunities to create social change.
- Policymakers and education leaders develop policies and support quality practices to encourage positive school climates with safe and nurturing learning environments for all students.

Contact:

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Starting a Project UNIFY® program in your school is easy.

- ✓ Identify a teacher to serve as the youth activation liaison.
- ✓ Meet with Project UNIFY staff to determine plan for the year and go over policies and procedures.
- ✓ Adult volunteers complete application and online general orientation and protective behaviors found at <http://somi.org/x417.xml>.
- ✓ Meet with Principle or administrator to discuss the program and plan for your school and get approval.
- ✓ Complete plan and application and send to somi.projectunify@yahoo.com.
- ✓ Register for Get Into It™ to receive online curriculum, and activity resources at no cost. http://www.specialolympics.org/Sections/What_We_Do/Project_Unify/Project_Unify_Educator_Resources.aspx
- ✓ Apply with your school to become an official club – not required but suggested for sustainability.
- ✓ Meet with Special Education teachers in your school to determine how all kids will be involved.
- ✓ Recruit student leaders to serve on the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).
- ✓ Once formed, meet with YAC which determines what activities and unified sports they will participate in.
- ✓ Have students fill out the Project Unify Application to participate.
- ✓ Determine fundraising plan to offset costs of activities and equipment.
- ✓ Join Special Olympics Michigan and Project Unify Michigan Facebook pages. Encourage students to join, upload pictures and stories regularly.

YAC – Youth Activation Committee

What is a State YAC?

A State YAC is a group of youth comprised of members with and without intellectual disabilities from across the state. This group works together throughout the year to educate, motivate, and activate youth to become agents of change in their communities and advocate for the respect, inclusion, and acceptance of all people, regardless of abilities. The State YAC uses a wide variety of tools to communicate effectively, such as e-mail, conference calls, Facebook, state summits, and state rallies. The goal of the State YAC is to reach out to other youth to help carry out social justice for all people.

Expected Outcomes:

- Youth leadership that collaborates with the YAC's respective State office to carry out Special Olympics initiatives, events, and activities.
- An increase in partnership between youth and adults --to reach out to more people in order to educate, motivate, and activate them to become more involved in Special Olympics and its initiatives.
- Involving youth in leadership to provide innovative new perspectives to ensure the continued success of Special Olympics Michigan.
- Youth will have a better understanding of how to reach out to their peers to engage them to Be a Fan[®] of Special Olympics!

Typical YAC

- 16-20 members. As close to equal partner-athlete ratio as possible. 50/50 is ideal, but we recognize that this is difficult. Minimum of 7 athletes and 7 partners.
- Ages 16-21 (sophomore in high school up to senior in college).
- Those on National YAC should be on State YAC.

State Rally

- Get other organizations involved.
- Hang posters for advertisement- local schools, community centers, local businesses.
- Talk to state governor.
- Find proper space (school gym, town hall, NFL arena, etc.).
- Band or some form of music- should make us get up and dance. Band made of athletes would be awesome! (i.e., Flame)
- Influential speakers (teachers, athletes, famous people from your state).
- Must be interactive.
- Make it have one purpose - get people wanting to join SO, talk about r-word, get people excited for state games, something like that- but needs to have **one goal**.
- Have beach balls in the crowd to bounce around- could have writing on it, key words promoting your topic.
- T-shirt give away - throw them into the crowd.



YAC - Youth Activation Committee

- Activity in front of the crowd - pie eating contest, 2 groups of people with 2 minutes to decorate a person into a clown and have them do an obstacle course, come up with a slogan and divide crowd into different sections and have them repeat phrase after you and loudest wins a prize.
- Quick video - 3-word if talking about the r-word, PU video if trying to get people to join, make you own!
- Each SO group make a banner.
- Wii - gets people excited and ready to go! Wii sports- to bring in sports aspect.
- Just Dance- any size group can play (just need 2 people to hold the controllers, then everyone can dance along).
- Decorate slushies (have them ready before).
- Grab bag when walking in.
- Towels with slogan or something and then when there are certain songs and stuff you can twirl around.
- Skit Simulation.
- Unified Sports.
- Fans in the Stands.
- Talk about how SO has expanded.
- Fundraising benefits.
- It's Our School, Too!

State Summit Topics

- Develop action plans to bring unified sports to schools through the use of clubs.
- Develop an "r-word" reaction team to positively write to people who use the r-word.
- Develop games that focus on building teamwork and the importance of every person (ex. Obstacle course, mission impossible).
- Educate the participants about social justice, how we can achieve it, and why it is important.
- Share ideas about ways to reverse stereotypical attitudes toward people with disabilities with SO.
- SOGII 101, how to use it in our schools, and how to pitch it to schools.
- Learn about Be a Fan™ campaign and how we can implement it into our school communities.
- Project UNIFY 101.
- Fundraising.



YAC – Youth Activation Committee

- Networking.
- Plan youth summits, rallies, and gatherings.
- State wide STWTETW strategy and how to publish it.
 - ✓ What can we do in our schools to make this an effective campaign?
 - ✓ What do you think the students and teachers would enjoy learning about?
 - ✓ Resources to include- websites, videos, Facebook pages, etc.
- Work on implementing GII
 - ✓ Make an outline/presentation for students to give to their schools.
 - ✓ Practice presenting for success!
- Recruit other youth to become part of Special Olympics, and possibly the YAC.
- Collaborate with other state YACs and the national YAC.
- Create a YAC website for your state.
- Send out a bi-monthly newsletter about what YAC is doing.
-
- PSA (Public Service Announcement) about YAC to show others- use it to inspire others to join and eliminate the stereotypes.
- Collaborate with other advocacy groups (i.e. Autism Speaks) and youth based organizations (i.e. student council).
- Create programs in schools to promote inclusion (i.e. - Best Buddies, Partner's Club).





Power In Partnerships



Great things can be accomplished through Project UNIFY[®] when partnerships are formed within the school community. Some suggestions for partnerships include:

Partner with existing school clubs or student organizations such as student council, Key Clubs, National Junior Honor Society, etc. Members of these organizations can serve as unified partners, volunteers for events, Fans in the Stands at local or state competitions, advocates during R-Word campaigns, etc.



Partner with civic clubs in the community for fundraising, awareness, and volunteer resources. For example, ask a local chapter of a civic club to come to the school once a week to assist with Special Olympics unified and traditional training. Members of the club could then assist with securing a venue for an end of the year competition and supply the refreshments and volunteers.

Partner with a local business in the same capacity as you would a local civic club. Local businesses can become involved with a program a variety of ways which include sponsorship, special events, volunteers for training and competition



Partner with a junior varsity or varsity athletes from the school to assist with unified or traditional sports training/competition. For example, the varsity basketball team could put on a clinic for the Special Olympics basketball team or the varsity team could play the unified team in a fun school event.

Partner with administration and/or the Guidance Office to incorporate your Project UNIFY[®] goals and programs into the overall school structure and mission. One great example is the establishment of a Unified Sports[®] PE Class, which should be included in the school's course catalogue. Another example would be including Special Olympics athlete awards at the end of the year sports banquet. This could even include Special Olympics athletes receiving varsity letters for outstanding efforts and accomplishments in sports.

Partner with the local Parks and Recreation Commission for facility use, sports expertise, and additional training and competition opportunities for your athletes.

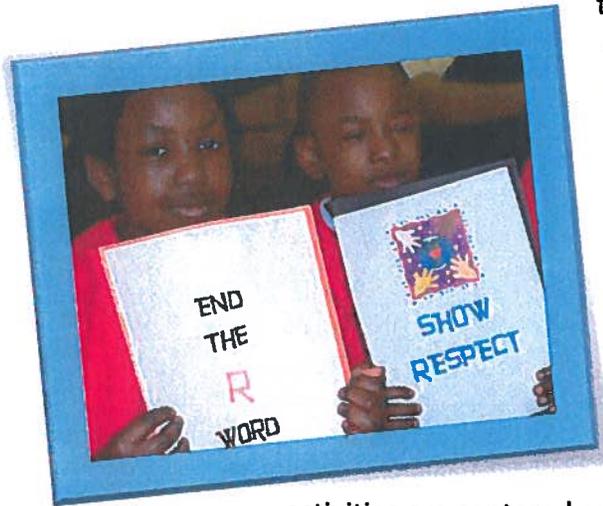
Partner with a local college or university for a variety of program resources. A local college could host a local competition for multiple schools and provide volunteers for an event. Another way to utilize a partnership with a college or university would be to work with the Adaptive PE or Special Education Department to arrange opportunities for their students to come in to your classrooms and train your athletes in Young Athlete Programs or traditional sports skills sets.

Partner with other schools participating in Project UNIFY[®] to combine efforts and resources for training and competition events. One example would be planning a unified basketball tournament with three other schools, where all teachers and youth involved work together on the event and give the athletes the awesome experience of competing against other athletes in the area.



SPREAD THE WORD TO END THE WORD

Spread the Word to End the Word™ is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics and our supporters to raise the consciousness of society about the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the word “retard(ed)” and encourage people to pledge to stop using the R-word.



The campaign, created by youth, is intended to engage schools organizations and communities to rally and pledge their support at www.r-word.org and to promote the inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The official annual day of awareness is held the first Wednesday of every March. While most activities are centered on or near that annual day in March, people everywhere can help spread the word throughout their communities and schools year-round thru pledge drives, youth rallies and online activation.

Spread the Word to End the Word was founded by (Notre Dame 2011) and Tim Shriver (Yale 2011) in 2009, and continues to be led by passionate young people, Special Olympics athletes and Best Buddies participants across the United States and in many other parts of the world.

Celebrity activist John C. McGinley is a spokesperson for the campaign.

Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. However, much of society does not recognize the hurtful, dehumanizing and exclusive effects of the word “retard(ed).”

It is time to address the minority slur “retard(ed)” and raise the consciousness of society to its hurtful effects.

Visit www.r-word.org to learn how you can **Spread the Word to End the Word™**.

college students Soeren Palumbo





Spread the Word to End the Word Action Kit

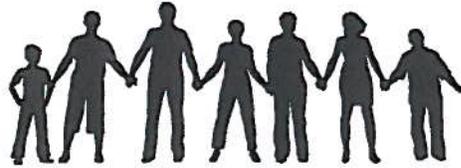
EVENT AND ACTIVATION IDEAS

Spread the Word to End the Word™ relies on grass-roots activities to garner the majority of the campaign's impact. Here are ideas on how you can participate locally in **Spread the Word to End the Word**.

1. Hold a local pledge event at school or in your community. Set up a laptop or tablet to encourage people to sign the www.r-word.org pledge page on the spot and/or create a banner for people to sign on the spot. Invite local Special Olympics athlete Global Messengers or Best Buddies Buddy Ambassadors to speak at an assembly.
2. Work with local sports teams to participate in a halftime event to promote **Spread the Word to End the Word**.
3. Spread the word - samples are on the resources page of our website (<http://www.r-word.org/r-word-resources.aspx>):
 - Use sample leaflets and talking points
 - Hang posters
 - Stickers
 - Send e-mails
 - Text / call your family and friends
 - Create your own **Spread the Word to End the Word Youth Rally**
 - Use your social networks on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Linked In
 - Join Spread the Word to End the Word's social networking pages (see Social Media Activation resource for more info)
 - Send an Evite to friends to take the pledge and spread the word
4. Print and distribute leaflets throughout your community.
5. Notify the press. Call local radio shows and write letters to the editor of your local newspaper using the samples provided in this kit.
6. Post a comment to an online social message board sharing your thoughts about the R-word and its abuse in our society.
7. Create a video speaking out against the use of the R-word, post it online and share it on our Facebook page so we can add it to the growing list of videos at www.r-word.org. Share the link with your friends and family.
8. Post your event's time and location in the community events section of your hometown newspaper or in your school newspaper or Web site. Don't forget to register your event on our website - <http://www.specialolympics.org/RegionsPages/RegisterEvent.aspx>
9. Set up a booth at events or conferences.
10. Contact your local Special Olympics or Best Buddies office to learn how to get involved in **Spread the Word to End the Word** events in your community.



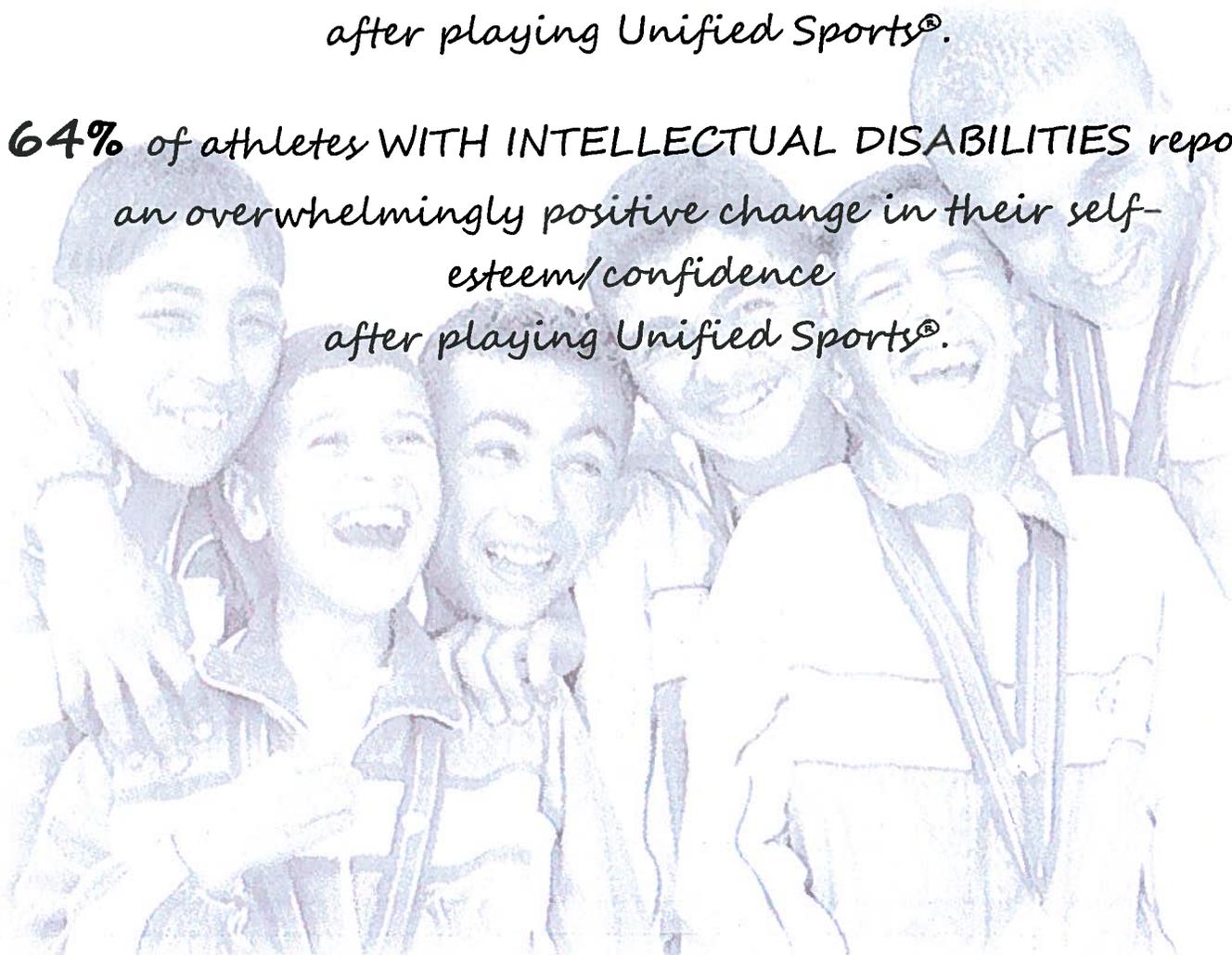
Project UNIFY.



*A positive impact on our children's
educational and social experience!*

*93% of PARTNERS say that they gained better
understanding of individuals with intellectual disabilities
after playing Unified Sports®.*

*64% of athletes WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES report
an overwhelmingly positive change in their self-
esteem/confidence
after playing Unified Sports®.*



Project UNIFY Dashboard



Performance improving
 Performance staying about the same
 Performance declining

* Collected through School year (Sep. - June)
 fall 2013 data expected February 2014

Numbers gathered from PU school reporting

Special Olympics Michigan Project UNIFY (PU)

Michigan's Project UNIFY Report - Year 5

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	Progress
Total number of Project UNIFY school districts	1	1	14	14	14	☺☺☺
Number of counties with Project UNIFY	1	1	10	10	10	☺☺☺
Total number of Project UNIFY schools	5	5	45	48	50	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY Elementary Schools	1	1	18	19	18	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY K-8 Schools	3	3	5	9	9	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY Middle Schools	1	1	9	8	6	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY High Schools	0	0	13	12	17	☺☺☺
Total number of Project UNIFY Students	100	100	1,474	2,673	*	☺☺☺
R-word Campaigns						
Project UNIFY schools hosted R-word campaigns	1	1	45	48	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY school districts hosting R-word campaigns	5	5	14	14	*	☺☺☺
Number of students reached by R-word campaigns	N/A	N/A	10,726	26,377	*	☺☺☺
Youth Activation Committees						
Project UNIFY schools with Youth Activation Committees (YAC)	5	5	45	48	*	☺☺☺
Students participating on YAC	100	100	1,474	2,673	*	☺☺☺
YAC meetings held	40	40	225	432	*	☺☺☺
YAC activities	N/A	N/A	456	771	*	☺☺☺
Participation in Unified Sports - Project UNIFY						
K-12 students participating in Unified sports	100	100	1,474	2,673	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY schools with Unified Sports	5	5	45	48	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY Unified Sports activities	5	5	56	82	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY students that attend State Unified Bocce	0	0	132	128	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY students that attend State Unified Bowling	0	0	0	262	*	☺☺☺
Project UNIFY students that attend State Unified Soccer	0	0	0	24	*	☺☺☺

2013 Strand Report

Lansing Public School District Ingham ISD

Special Olympics Michigan Project UNIFY



-  Performance improving
-  Performance staying about the same
-  Performance declining

* Information collected by Lansing Public Schools from school reporting requirements in Strand Report

Statistics from Lansing Public Schools					
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Progress
Graduation rate – Special Education		34.3%	43.7%		
Dropout	31.8%	15.9%	6.2%		
Suspension/expulsion (sep. – dec.)			2,727.5	1,786.5	
Educational Environment -80% or more	31.49%	39.61%	43.7%		
Educational Environment 80 % or more (PU Schools)		44.72%	59.62%		
Special Education Attendance Average	88%	86%	89%		
Project UNIFY Schools Attendance Average		95%	97%		

Impact of Project UNIFY Michigan's Liaison- Reported Data For Year 5

Special Olympics Michigan
Project UNIFY

* Information from Project UNIFY study conducted by University of Massachusetts through Special Olympics International

Michigan's Project UNIFY Report – Year 5

	Project UNIFY made a big difference	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Project UNIFY did not make a difference
Providing more sports opportunities for students with ID	31%	21%	38%	7%		3%
Creating a more inclusive climate in the school	45%	28%	21%	7%		
Helping promote leadership and advocacy skills among students with ID	38%	24%	28%	3%	7%	
Increasing participation of students with ID in school activities	38%	28%	31%	3%		
Increasing confidence of students with ID	52%	35%	14%			
Raising awareness about students with ID	55%	24%	14%	7%		
Increasing opportunities for students with and without ID to work together	62%	21%	17%			
Reducing bullying, teasing or use of offensive language	41%	21%	28%	7%		3%
Raising awareness of teachers and administrators about what students with ID can contribute to the school	35%	35%	24%	3%	3%	
Helping promote leadership and advocacy skills among students without ID	35%	31%	28%	3%	3%	
Increasing participation of students without ID in school activities	28%	38%	28%	3%		3%
Increasing the opportunities for general education and special education teachers to work together	41%	28%	17%	10%	3%	

Project UNIFY funding dashboard



- Performance improving
- Performance staying about the same
- Performance declining

* Funding received from Special Olympics International Grant to Special Olympics Michigan Project UNIFY schools

Special Olympics Michigan Project UNIFY

Michigan's Project UNIFY Report – Year 5

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	Progress
Total Amount awarded to Project UNIFY schools	\$85,000	\$80,000	\$1,866,000	\$1,577,000	\$120,000	
Average Start up cost per school					\$3,000	
Average maintenance cost per school					\$2,000	
Average cost per urban school					\$3,000	

Fact Sheet

Special Olympics
Michigan



Michigan

19,613 athletes
26 sports offered

12 state-level competitions,
district basketball tournaments
and more than 400 competitions
statewide.

Year-round sports training and
competitions

20,000 volunteers

Sports include:

Alpine Skiing

Aquatics

Athletics

Basketball

Bocce

Bowling

Cross-Country Skiing

Cycling

Equestrian

Figure Skating

Flag Football

Golf

Gymnastics (Artistic & Rhythmic)

Horseshoes

Poly Hockey

Powerlifting

Roller Skating

Snowboarding

Snowshoeing

Soccer

Softball

Speed Skating

Tennis

Volleyball

Weightlifting

*Plus: Unified Sports®

Healthy Athletes® Program

Young Athletes™ Program

Motor Activities Training Program

OVERVIEW

- Since 1968, Special Olympics has grown to become the world's largest movement dedicated to promoting respect, acceptance, inclusion and human dignity for people with intellectual disabilities through sport.
- Special Olympics provides a catalyst for social change and building communities by creating more unified communities around the world, where each person, regardless of ability or disability, is accepted and welcomed, and where every individual contributes to the strength and vibrancy of the whole.

ATHLETE PARTICIPANTS

- At competitions athletes are placed into divisions based on age, gender, and ability. Competitions take place at local, regional, state, national, and world levels.
- Special Olympics Michigan is a path to empowerment for athletes, and offers a chance to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy, inclusion and friendship with their families and other Special Olympics athletes.



Special Olympics
Project UNIFY®

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- Youth Leadership
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- Professional Development
- Unifying Programming
- Creating Sustaining Relationships

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Athlete Leadership & Self-Advocacy: Athlete Leadership Programs, Training and Education, Youth Forums

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