

# UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

## INTRODUCTION

Building upon Special Olympics' values, principles, practices, experiences, and impacts, the Unified Champion Schools® (UCS) program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change. Our goal is to engage students of all ages and abilities and to help shape a **Unified Generation** that "Chooses to Include."

With sports as the foundation, the UCS model offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classroom and school climates of acceptance. These are school climates where students with disabilities feel welcome and are routinely included in, and feel a part of, all activities, opportunities and functions.

This is accomplished by implementing the program's four pillars: inclusive youth leadership opportunities, Unified Sports®, whole school engagement, and collaborative fundraising. The program is designed to be woven into the fabric of the school, enhancing current efforts and providing rich opportunities that lead to meaningful change in creating a socially inclusive school that supports and engages **all** students, teachers, and administrators.

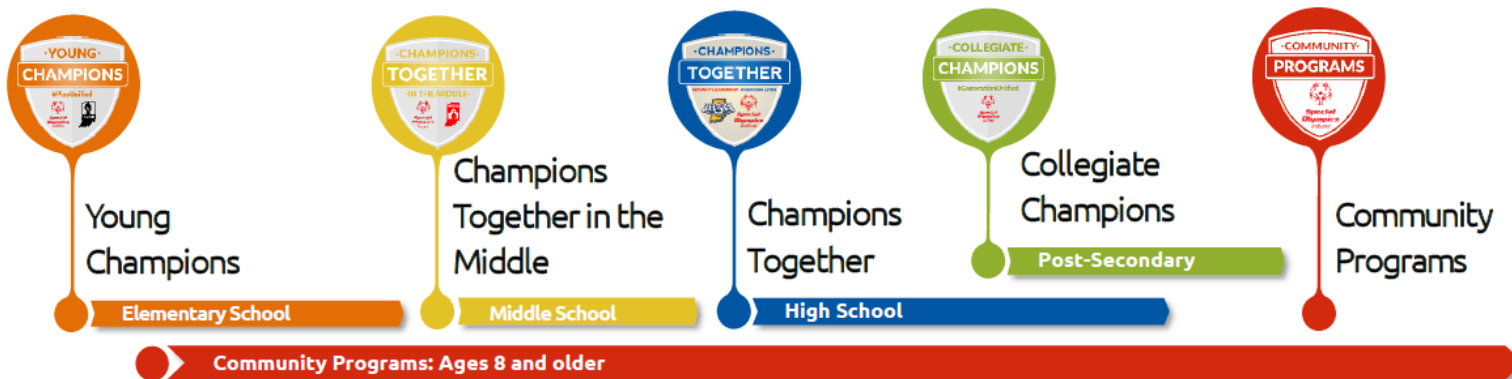


## WHAT MAKES A UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOL?

<p><b>Inclusive Youth Leadership</b></p> <p>Opportunities for youth with and without intellectual disabilities to become agents of change within their school, community, and state.</p>	<p><b>Special Olympics Unified Sports®</b></p> <p>Students develop athletic skills while forming friendships, fostering respect for each other, and becoming leaders on and off the playing field.</p>	<p><b>Whole School Engagement</b></p> <p>An important feature of creating a socially inclusive school climate is engaging the entire school community in the process.</p>	<p><b>Collaborative Fundraising</b></p> <p>School communities work together to raise the money needed to ensure that the UCS program is self-sustaining and can continue to grow.</p>
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## CHAMPIONS AT EVERY LEVEL

As a global leader in the implementation of UCS programming, Special Olympics Indiana works with partners including the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA), the Indiana Middle Level Education Association (IMLEA), and the Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE) to reach more than 260,000 students in over 650 Indiana schools each year.



Participating schools are challenged to engage their entire school community in inclusive activities and to achieve certain goals related to each of the four pillars of the UCS program. Schools that meet or exceed each of these milestones in a given school year are awarded a recognition banner, while those that go above and beyond may be eligible for national recognition by Special Olympics North America.

## STATE OFFICE CONTACTS

High School and Collegiate  
Middle School  
Preschool and Elementary

Mike Hasch, mhasch@soindiana.org  
Tori Batson, tbatson@soindiana.org  
Lisa Graham, lgraham@soindiana.org

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## BANNER PROGRAM

The Unified Champion Schools partnerships with the **Indiana High School Athletic Association, Indiana Middle Level Education Association** (Champions Together in the Middle), **Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education** (Young Champions) will provide a "Unified Champions School" banner to all partnership member schools that meet all of the following UCS goals:

1. All school sponsored activities must be planned, organized and administered by an **Inclusive Student Leadership** team that strives to do things WITH students with intellectual disabilities **NOT FOR** them.
2. The school must participate in at least one activity designed around **Whole School Engagement** that promotes and encourages awareness, respect and inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities.
3. The school must organize and participate in at least one of the **Unified Sports** activities such as IHSAA Unified Track & Field or Unified Flag Football, SOIN Unified Bocce or Unified Bowling, Unified Robotics, a Unified practice or clinic, or a Unified competition with students with intellectual disabilities OR local Special Olympics athletes.
4. **Fundraising**—a school must raise a minimum of \$1500 (high school), \$750 (middle school), or \$250 (elementary) for the support and expansion of Unified Champion Schools programs.

## UCS FUNDRAISERS

Here are some simple rules for UCS schools that conduct Special Olympics fundraisers.

1. Please contact Mike Hasch (mhasch@soindiana.org) or Tori Batson (tbatson@soindiana.org) as soon as you plan a fundraising event so that they can establish a UCS fundraising page to monitor your donations and credit your school towards the Unified Champion Schools banner award.
2. All funds collected should be deposited in a school account immediately following any event.
3. Within two (2) weeks of the event, a check payable to **SO Indiana** should be mailed to:  
Special Olympics Indiana  
Attn: Mike Hasch, Champions Together  
6200 Technology Center Drive, Suite 105  
Indianapolis, IN 46278  
The tax ID number is: 35-1262574

**Be sure to include your school name on a note with the check to ensure proper credit.**

4. If a school receives a check from a donor payable to Special Olympics, that check should be enclosed with the school check.
5. If the fundraiser includes the sale of merchandise, all proceeds above the cost of the merchandise should be sent to SO Indiana at the address above. Neither the IHSAA, IMLEA, nor SO Indiana can be responsible for any expenses associated with fundraisers, including, but not limited to, unrecovered costs of unsold merchandise.
6. Questions? Contact Mike Hasch (mhasch@soindiana.org) or Tori Batson (tbatson@soindiana.org).



## SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

Hosted by comedian Craig Tornquist, our high energy school assemblies are an uplifting and fun way to energize your school while learning about *Champions Together* and Unified Champion Schools. Best known for his love of audience participation, Craig has delighted more than 3,000 school assembly crowds across the country and is joined by Special Olympics Indiana staff and student ambassadors in providing an overview of our program.

## YOUTH AMBASSADORS

The Special Olympics U.S. Youth Ambassadors are a group of 30 youth leaders with and without intellectual disabilities who are striving to make the nation a more inclusive place for all. These youth leaders act as advocates, share stories, and demonstrate the values of Inclusive Youth Leadership across the country. Indiana is represented in this elite group by athlete Liam Price (student at the University of Indianapolis) and partner Elizabeth Price (Carmel HS).

## FOLLOW CHAMPIONS TOGETHER

Here are the various ways to follow Champions Together through social media.



ChampionsTogether



@champstogether



@championstogether

SNAPCHAT: @champstogether  
YOUTUBE: Champions Together