

# Family Engagement Community Asset Mapping

## UCS Family Engagement Toolkit

### Designed For

Program leads and Special Olympics liaisons.

### Time Estimate

The length of time needed to complete an asset map depends on how much detail your team wants to collect about each asset. You can complete an asset map in 1 hour or you can take 3-5 days to explore the school's neighboring community.



**Build Equitable Schoolwide  
and Community Engagement**

### When Should I Use this Tool?

You can use community **asset mapping** any time you need to identify community resources that can help make your UCS program a success—whether at the start of your UCS program, or intermittently as needed.

An **asset map** is a visual representation of a community's way to uncover strengths, resources, and assets that exist in the neighboring community. The process of community asset mapping allows schools to link with local assets — for example, buses, parks, or people. It is typically visualized on a map or diagram to show connections across the various assets.

This Family Engagement Community Asset Mapping resource is an extension of the **UCS Urban District Strategy: Community Asset Mapping** resource.



### SO UCS Resource

[UCS Urban District Strategy: Community Asset Mapping](#)

**UCS Urban District Strategy: Community Asset Mapping** provides community partner examples, planning questions, and connections to Unified Sports, youth leadership, and whole school engagement. You will also find recommendations about resources that you will need for the implementation of Unified Sports, youth leadership, and whole school engagement.



This Family Engagement Community Asset Mapping resource provides you with fillable forms, step-by-step procedures, and strategies for creating inclusive teams. It can be adapted for multiple purposes, such as finding resources for UCS programs or locating resources to assist students with their transition out of high school.



### Family Engagement Toolkit Resources

You may connect the community asset mapping process with **Designing and Facilitating Inclusive UCS Leadership Team Meetings**, available [here](#).

## Why Would I Use this Tool?

You can use the asset mapping process to uncover strengths in your community, identify gaps in your UCS programs, and determine what resources are available to support UCS events. The asset mapping process is essential to becoming aware of all the different resources available in your community, which can help to increase partnerships and collaboration with community organizations. You will also gain valuable input from family members.

Each community will be different and each UCS program will require a different type of support. A community asset map can be completed with a small (3-5 people) or large (10–15 people) team of school-based participants. Community asset mapping can be a helpful tool for school liaisons who do not live near the school or are unfamiliar with the community.

If you are a Special Olympics Program lead, you can use the community asset mapping process with an entire school district or individual school. You also can train school liaisons to use this tool with their UCS team.

## How Should I Use this Tool?

You can use this tool to increase collaboration among school staff and enhance family engagement by including family members as part of the team. Family members will have the most insight into resources in the community and, as a result, are critical to understanding which neighborhood resources are available within a 1-5 mile radius of the school. A larger radius may be appropriate if you are in a less densely populated area.

## Family Engagement Community Asset Mapping

Image adapted from: Boon, P. (2008). *On Assets*.



### Step 1: Establish an Asset Mapping Workgroup

Invite teachers, parents, and/or administrators to examine current school, district, and community resources. At a minimum you will want to identify 3-5 participants. Ideally, your workgroup will include at least one representative from each of the following: parents of children with disabilities, parents of children without disabilities, general education teachers, and a community member. Including parents and other community members is particularly valuable if you are unfamiliar with the school's neighborhood.

You can also use data from the district and school profiles resource to identify the community's diverse cultures and languages to ensure that your team represents the community's diversity.



### Family Engagement Toolkit Resources

You can access **How to Create District and School Profiles** [here](#). This resource guides you in the process of developing a profile of a school and its district to better understand the local context of a school and its community.

## Step 2: Gather Initial Thoughts on Assets in the Neighborhood

Schedule a time to meet with the asset mapping workgroup.

- Identify one UCS program and talk about what your UCS program needs to be successful. This could be refreshments, a venue for an event, or uniforms. You may even consider ways to partner with other schools.
- Think about resources that you need for your UCS program. Consider the following:
  - What do we need? Who can provide that?
  - What can we achieve by using our own resources?
  - What can't we do that we need community partners to help with?
- Community assets fall into 5 categories: people, physical space, public/private transportation, parent/family member volunteers, and partnerships with businesses, organizations, or local agencies.



- Use poster board paper, sticky notes, or an interactive white board to write down everyone's ideas about what you need and what resources are available in the community.
- Complete the brainstorming session on what your team knows about community resources in your school's neighborhood. Those may include educational organizations, financial assistance organizations, healthcare facilities, elected officials, first responders, and religious and community organizations. These will be guesstimates about which organizations are willing to partner with your UCS program. While some may not be needed immediately, they may turn out to be very helpful later. The brainstorming process is important because it provides parents with the chance to be valued contributors.



### SO UCS Resource

#### UCS Urban District Strategy: Community Asset Mapping

You can learn more about the 5 Ps — people, physical space, public/private transportation, parent/family engagement, and partnerships — [here](#).



### Step 3: Create an Asset Resource File

The Asset Resource File will include businesses, organizations, and people that are in the community where the school is located and have been identified by your asset mapping workgroup.

- Using the list generated in Step 2, make a list of businesses, organizations, and people that could connect with your UCS program.
- Identify at least 2 potential assets that can support your program needs identified in Step 2. For example, you may need physical space and volunteers.
- Identify the resource and the person you will contact.
- Identify the primary contribution for the resource. There may be more than one contribution for each resource. For example, someone who owns a nearby restaurant may be willing to donate refreshments.

### Sample Community Asset Resource File

ASSET RESOURCE FILE			
Resource	Primary Point of Contact	Asset Type	Notes
El Tamarindo	Junior Diaz, Restaurant Owner  210-555-5555 342 N. Florida	<input type="radio"/> People <input type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other(s): Refreshments for unified sport events	Management at El Tamarindo restaurant has agreed to provide 30 empanadas on UCS game days
Masjid al Islam	Nazar Ali, Director of Community Outreach  210-534-1234 642 Cardinal Rd.	<input type="radio"/> People <input checked="" type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input type="radio"/> Other(s)	Director of Community Outreach at the Masjid al Islam has agreed to allow for Saturday practice in the gym at the community center
Healthy Families Medical Center	Nadine Brockman, UCS Parent and physician  210-645-8967 554 Sycamore Lane	<input checked="" type="radio"/> People <input type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input type="radio"/> Other(s)	Physician at Healthy Families Medical Center has agreed to provide free physicals for athletes and partners



## Step 4: Engage with Potential Partners

### Phase 1: Make Connections.

Prioritize the needs of your UCS program and select 2 locations from the Five Ps found in your community asset resource list that you believe can best meet those needs.

- Have team members sign up to do outreach at the 2 locations that you have prioritized. Try to create groups of 1-2 people and, if possible, include a family member.
- Establish a connection with the organization by sending an email to an identified point of contact.
  - Your email can summarize the purpose of UCS programs, your upcoming events, and ways their business or organization can contribute to UCS program events.
- If the person is available to meet, schedule a time to meet with a contact person at two or more of the organizations identified above.
- Determine where and at what time your group will meet.
- As a team, plan to drive or take public/private transportation to various locations on your community resource list. Alternatively, you can schedule a virtual meeting.

### Phase 2: Gather Information.

Select at least 2 locations from the Five P's found in your asset resource list. Your group should identify a community resource and learn about the resource so that your conversation with the point of contact begins with understanding and respect for their business and contributions to the community. As an example, you may want to identify the mission or vision statement of the organization, determine if the organization has a current partnership, or determine if the community member has children in your school.

Introduce yourself as a Special Olympics UCS Team from your school who wants to learn more about their organization and develop a potential partnership. Share your goals for the Special Olympics UCS program and explain how their organization might be able to support you.

- Give them information about Special Olympics.
- Explain the importance of Unified Sports, whole school engagement, or inclusive youth leadership.
- Provide background information about your UCS program.
- Make the request for support and partnership by summarizing what was discussed during the initial contact or email. Explain how their donations can support UCS programming.
  - The business owner or community member may not be able to commit to a formal partnership, but this is also a chance to gather more community support and invite them to a UCS event.
- Your conversation should be brief and take about 5- 8 minutes.

### Phase 3: Follow Up with Community Point of Contact.

Follow up with an email or another visit to thank them for their commitment. Send an email even if the person or organization is not able to assist. They may be able to support you at another time. The first steps in the development of your Community Asset Mapping are complete.



### Step 5: Debrief

Get together with your UCS Asset Mapping Team and share what you learned. Review your field notes for interesting opportunities for partnership. Make a note of the people you did not have the opportunity to talk with. Make a note of the resource gaps that you were able to close.

### Step 6: Update the Asset Resource File

Update and finalize your team's Asset Resource File with the resources that you found in your school's community. Highlight important findings and discoveries that emerged through the conversations. From the example above, you might report that the owner of a local restaurant has agreed to provide refreshments on game days. Finally, discuss ways you can integrate these community resources into UCS programs to support parent and student engagement.

### Step 7: Identify Remaining Gaps

You may also find that there are additional needs that have emerged. Use the list of asset types from Step 2 to determine what additional resources are needed for your UCS program to be successful.

Determine if your team needs to connect with additional assets in the community. Or connect with your school's administration or school district to help you close the remaining gaps. You can complete these steps in the asset mapping process as many times as you need.



## Fillable Form: Community Asset Resource File

ASSET RESOURCE FILE			
Resource	Primary Point of Contact	Asset Type	Notes
		<input type="radio"/> People <input type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input type="radio"/> Other(s)	
		<input type="radio"/> People <input type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input type="radio"/> Other(s)	
		<input type="radio"/> People <input type="radio"/> Physical space <input type="radio"/> Public/Private transportation <input type="radio"/> Parent/Family engagement <input type="radio"/> Partnerships <input type="radio"/> Other(s)	





## SAMPLE INVITATION TO PARTNER WITH SPECIAL OLYMPICS PROGRAM

(Email, Text, Letter)

COPY & PASTE



[INSERT STATE SOUCS AND SCHOOL LOGO HERE]

### Subject: Invitation to Partner with Special Olympics Program

Dear [name of business owner or community member]:

Our Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools (UCS) program at [name of your school] offers students with and without disabilities to participate in [name of your UCS program component].

We would like to learn about ways that our Special Olympics UCS program can partner with your [business/organization name] to provide [enter one or more of the 5 P's].

We would like to talk with you to discuss potential ways you or your organization can get involved with UCS programs. A few examples include making a donation, volunteering, or attending our Special Olympics UCS program events.

For a short 6-minute introductory video to Special Olympics UCS, click [here](#).

Are you available for a short 15-minute conversation to share ideas about ways you can help to sustain and partner with our UCS program? What are the best days of the week and times of day to reach you for a quick visit, phone call, or virtual meeting?

Please respond with your availability by text or email to [insert name and role] by [insert number, email address].

Thank you,  
[insert name, title]  
[Insert contact information]



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Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®  
**Family Engagement Toolkit**

For questions or comments about the Toolkit, please contact:

[ucs@specialolympics.help](mailto:ucs@specialolympics.help)