

# RESOURCES

## Resource Links

Please find below a list of resources to assist in implementation of your Unified Champion Schools program. These resources can also be found at [resources.specialolympics.org/unified-champion-schools-resources/](https://resources.specialolympics.org/unified-champion-schools-resources/)

### Students

**It's Our School Too!**: Script for *It's Our School, Too!* play for inclusive school performance.

**Tips for a Meaningful Mentor/Mentee Relationship**: Some key tips for mentoring.

**Tips for Shared Learning Among Youth and Adults**: Suggestions for ways that adults and youth can work together to create social change.

**Types and Sources of Power**: A resource that could be helpful when providing inclusive youth leadership.

### Educators

**Inclusive Youth Leadership Guidelines**: This will provide more information on how adults can effectively nurture inclusive youth leadership.

**It's Our School Too!**: Script for *It's Our School, Too!* play for inclusive school performance.

**Mini-Lesson: Taking Action to Become a Socially Inclusive School**: The series of mini-lessons can be used school-wide within a PBIS framework.

**Mini-Lesson: Tolerance and Acceptance**: The series of mini-lessons can be used school-wide within a PBIS framework.

**Mini-Lesson: Understanding Disability**: The series of mini-lessons can be used school-wide within a PBIS framework.

**Mini-Lesson: Visions of a Socially Inclusive Community**: The series of mini-lessons can be used school-wide within a PBIS framework.

**Special Olympics Unified Physical Education Resources**: This contains information that can be used in a physical education curriculum.

**Special Olympics Unified Sports in Schools**: This provides an overview of the ways that Unified Sports can be incorporated into Unified Champion Schools.

**Tips for a Meaningful Mentor/Mentee Relationship**: Some key tips for mentoring.

**Tips for Shared Learning Among Youth and Adults**: Suggestions for ways that adults and youth can work together to create social change.

**Types and Sources of Power**: A resource that could be helpful when providing inclusive youth leadership.

### Special Olympics Resources

**Special Olympics Unified Schools List of Resources on the web** Youth and School resources

### Special Olympics State Programs

**NFHS Coaching Unified Sports Online Course**: Find a free 90-minute online coaching course here.

**Special Olympics Unified Sports in Schools**: This provides an overview of the ways that Unified Sports can be incorporated into Unified Champion Schools.

### Contacts

#### Special Olympics State Programs

Your number one ally in implementing strategies and activities from the Unified Champion Schools Middle Level Playbook is your State Special Olympics Program.

On this webpage, <http://www.specialolympics.org/north-america/>, all North American Special Olympics Programs are listed for your convenience. Please follow the corresponding link to your state/area to contact the appropriate staff member.

# Position Paper

## Middle Level Schools and Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools

The following are excerpts from a paper written for the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE). A revised version, “Social Inclusion, It’s Our Middle School, Too,” appeared in the February 2013 issue of AMLE’s Middle Ground Magazine and can be found at <http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/mg/Feb2013.pdf>. State Special Olympics Programs have permission to reproduce it and the paper, “Social Revolution Through Sports,” in their newsletters with appropriate citation.

## Characteristics of the Young Adolescent

Early adolescence is the period of human growth and development between childhood and adolescence (simply translated those years between elementary and high school). During this stage of the life cycle, young adolescents (10- to 15-year-olds) experience rapid and significant developmental change—physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially. The experiences that young adolescents have through curricular and extracurricular programs or social situations need to support the specific needs of this age group.

According to *This We Believe*, the Association for Middle Level Education’s Foundational document, “in order to become a fully functioning, self-actualized person,” each young adolescent should:

- **Respect and value the diverse ways** people look, speak, think, and act.
- Develop the **interpersonal and social skills** needed to learn, work, and play with others **harmoniously and confidently**.
- Assume responsibility for his or her own actions and be cognizant of and ready to **accept obligations for the welfare of others**.

How can we expect students to develop these skills and put them into actions if opportunities are not provided within schools for students to interact with, support, and grow to know and appreciate fellow students of diverse abilities, characteristics, and backgrounds? This We Believe further affirms that an education for young adolescents must be:

- **Developmentally responsive**
- **Challenging**
- **Empowering**
- **Equitable**

The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform identifies the following basic tenets for middle schools to be recognized as Schools to Watch:

- **Academic Excellence**
- **Developmentally Responsive**
- **Socially Equitable**

Each of these attributes also reflects the essential nature of an inclusive school, thus suggesting that an effective middle grades school also must be an inclusive school. According to the Inclusive Schools Network, inclusive schools are built on a strong philosophical belief that all children can learn and be successful within a shared learning environment. An inclusive school climate fosters acceptance, respect and human dignity for all students; and it is the foundation upon which the school staff educates, motivates and activates students. It is a place where all students, both with and without intellectual disabilities, are supported and encouraged to be “agents of change.” Inclusive education should be a universal commitment and a core value that ensures equitable access and success for all students and adults.

One of This We Believe’s sixteen characteristics of a successful middle grades school is, “The school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all.... In such a school, human relationships are paramount.” It is further states that “Everyone in an inviting school works proactively to eliminate harassment, verbal abuse, bullying, and name-calling. Students and teachers understand that they are part of a community in which differences are respected and celebrated.... Every student—no matter what creed, color, or uniqueness—is a genuine and **contributing member of the school community**.”

Since the middle school movement started in the 1960s, there has been a strong emphasis on schools that support all students and address the unique characteristics of young adolescents. Many of those characteristics, identified by Dr. Peter Scales at the Search Institute, point to the need for an inclusive school environment and the understanding and supportive actions of adults to ensure and sustain a supportive school experience for all students. The following are a few of these researched characteristics that highlight the vulnerability and needs of developing young adolescents to be educated in

a supportive environment—one that respects the needs and gifts of all students and provides positive opportunities for students to interact in social situations.

### In the area of moral development, young adolescents:

- Are in transition from moral reasoning that focuses on ‘what’s in it for me’ to consideration of the feelings and rights of others.
  - Are generally idealistic, desiring to make the world a better place and to make a meaningful contribution to a cause or issue larger than themselves.
  - Are capable of, and value, direct experience in participatory democracy.
  - Are likely to believe in and espouse values such as honesty, responsibility and cultural acceptance, while at the same time learning that they and the people they admire also can be...intolerant.
- In the area of psychological development, young adolescents:
- Tend to be self-conscious and highly sensitive to personal criticism.
  - Desire recognition for their positive efforts and achievements.
  - Are psychologically vulnerable because at no other stage in development are they more likely to encounter and be aware of so many differences between themselves and others.

### In the area of social-emotional development, young adolescents:

- Have a strong need for approval and may be easily discouraged.
  - Are increasingly concerned about peer acceptance.
  - Have a strong need to belong to a group, with approval of peers becoming as important as adult approval, and on some matters even more important.
  - In their search for group membership, may experience significant embarrassment, ridicule or rejection from those in other cliques from which they are excluded.
- In the area of physical development, young adolescents:
- Have accelerated and uneven growth.
  - May experience coordination issues since bones grow faster than muscles.
  - Are often physically vulnerable due to poor physical fitness and poor health habits.

These characteristics reinforce the needs of all middle level students to be part of a democratic learning environment where students interact, are respected and work for the good of the whole as well as the individual. . It is clear that once an inclusive environment is created, it is beneficial to all.

## Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools and Middle Level Schools

The middle school years are critical times of development for young adolescents; in fact, youth go through more developmental changes during these years than any other time except the first two years of life. The various characteristics of young adolescents point to the needs of all students to be part of a supportive environment in which they interact, are respected, and are recognized as important members of the school community.

Because the Unified Champion Schools program addresses the developmental characteristics and needs of young adolescents, it is an important program to be implemented in middle level schools. While inclusive high schools are critically important for students, social acceptance and integration programs need to be started earlier in a child’s school experience. Further, transitioning from one school level to the next is always difficult for students, but that transition can be made easier if students are moving from a socially inclusive middle school to a socially inclusive high school. Therefore, it can be helpful to think about a system of inclusive schools in which inclusive middle level schools “feed” into inclusive high schools. Just as a student’s academic learning increases and expands as he or she moves along the learning continuum, social engagement and acceptance increases and matures with increasing opportunities for understanding and application.

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools and socially inclusive schools directly align with the basic precepts of middle level education and the needs of young adolescents. There are three major documents that identify the characteristics of effective, middle level schools: Association for Middle Level Education’s *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (<http://www.amle.org/AboutAMLE/ThisWeBelieve/tabid/121/Default.aspx#122516-the-16-characteristics>), National Association of Secondary School Principal’s “Breaking Ranks in the Middle” (<http://www.nassp.org/Portals/3/content/53576.pdf>), and the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform’s “Schools-to-Watch Criteria” (<http://www.middlegradesforum.org/index.php/schools-to-watch> ). The following charts summarize how relevant characteristics of effective middle level schools align with the seven elements of Unified Champion Schools: Youth Leadership, Creating and Sustaining Relationships, Unifying Programming, School/Community Collaborations, Communication, Professional Development and Continuous Improvement. Of the nine categories of effective middle level schools, the following five are directly or indirectly related to social inclusion (the other characteristics of effective middle level schools relate more directly to academic learning).

Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
<b>Organizational structures promote academic growth &amp; personal development</b>	<p>The school establishes structures and practices to <b>banish anonymity and individualize the learning experience for each student.</b></p> <p>The school implements scheduling and student <b>grouping practices that are flexible, meet each student's needs</b>, and ensure successful academic growth and <b>personal development.</b></p> <p>The school offers <b>alternatives to tracking and ability grouping</b> while maintaining the flexibility to appropriately <b>support and challenge each student.</b></p> <p>The school <b>fosters collaboration</b> to improve student performance through such structures as teacher teams and regularly scheduled common planning time.</p> <p>The school ensures a smooth academic and <b>social transition for each student</b> from grade to grade and school to school.</p> <p>Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and <b>meaningful relationships.</b></p> <p>Every student's academic and <b>personal development</b> is guided by an adult advocate.</p>	<p><b>Unifying Programming</b></p> <p>Access and opportunities are regularly provided for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate together in sports and engagement activities.</p> <p>Academic and non-academic activities are connected.</p> <p>Various school and community programs are coordinated for consistency in developing each student's potential.</p> <p>School leaders can articulate and point to programs that build inclusiveness in their school or district.</p> <p>School leaders create an inclusive culture, showcasing the work and achievements of all, creating unified programs and eliminating boundaries between students.</p> <p>Student clubs and activities consistently work toward being inclusive and welcoming for all students.</p>

Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
<b>Safe, healthy, personalized environment</b>	<p>The school establishes structures and practices to <b>banish anonymity</b> and individualize the learning experience for each student.</p> <p>The school creates a <b>safe, caring environment</b> characterized by interactions between adults and students that convey high expectations, <b>support and mutual respect.</b></p> <p>The school <b>coordinates with community agencies</b> in the delivery of social, physical and mental health services <b>to meet the needs of students</b> and their families.</p> <p>The school <b>values diversity and fosters an array of viewpoints, perspectives and experiences.</b></p> <p>Every student's academic and <b>personal development is guided by an adult advocate.</b></p> <p>The school environment is <b>inviting, safe, inclusive and supportive of all.</b></p> <p>School-wide programs, policies and curricula <b>promote health and wellness.</b></p> <p>The school provides access to comprehensive services <b>to foster healthy physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.</b></p> <p>The school provides age-appropriate, co-curricular activities to <b>foster social skills and character, and to develop interests beyond the classroom.</b></p> <p>The school community <b>knows every student well.</b></p>	<p><b>Creating and sustaining relationships</b></p> <p>School staff provide regular and frequent activities in which adults and youth work together to solve problems and learn together, promoting a collaborative climate.</p> <p>School staff provide high-quality opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to work together for the benefit of all.</p> <p>School staff ensure that all students in the school receive instruction that meets their individual skill levels, learning styles and engagement levels.</p> <p>School staff eliminate physical barriers and creates an environment that is physically accessible, safe and supportive for all.</p> <p>A climate of trust and respect, which honors the diverse talents, perspectives and assets of all students, is pervasive throughout the school and district.</p>



Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
Prepared knowledgeable teachers & principals	<p>Each educator possesses pedagogical expertise, a broad academic foundation, in-depth content knowledge in the subjects taught, and an <b>understanding of the developmental needs of his or her students.</b></p> <p>The <b>school fosters collaboration</b> to improve student performance through structures, such as teacher teams and regularly scheduled common planning time.</p> <p>Educators <b>value young adolescents</b> and are prepared to teach them.</p> <p>Leaders are <b>committed to, and knowledgeable about, this age group</b>, educational research and best practices.</p> <p>Leaders demonstrate <b>courage and collaboration.</b></p> <p>Organizational structures <b>foster</b> purposeful learning and <b>meaningful relationships.</b></p> <p><b>Teachers continually adapt</b> curriculum, instruction, assessment and scheduling <b>to meet their students’ diverse and changing needs.</b></p>	<p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>School and district leaders make necessary changes to adapt school climate to changing needs of student populations.</p> <p>Teachers engage in reflective practices and continuously monitor instruction and classroom management to identify opportunities for their classroom to become more inclusive.</p> <p>The district provides opportunities for staff to work collectively across schools to share, assess and improve inclusive practices.</p> <p>Opportunities exist for bringing together students, families, school and community leaders, and community members to reflect on the success of the school.</p> <p>Instructional strategies and school programs are consistently reviewed and revised to ensure inclusiveness and effectiveness.</p> <p>Policies ensure accessibility for all students through instructional effectiveness, school programs and school climate.</p> <p>A comprehensive system of evaluation and ongoing improvement addresses school effectiveness, including issues of inclusion.</p>

Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
Democratic, collaborative leadership	<p>The school <b>provides meaningful decision-making roles for staff, students and parents.</b></p> <p><b>All members of the school community actively collaborate</b> to develop and implement the agreed-upon learning goals and improvement plan.</p> <p>Teachers and teacher teams <b>provide leadership essential for student success.</b></p> <p>The school <b>develops partnerships</b> with individuals, organizations, community agencies, and businesses in <b>support of its mission.</b></p> <p>The school, in addition to its <b>continuous progress monitoring</b>, will convene a broad-based panel to conduct an in-depth assessment and present their findings to the public at least once every three years.</p> <p>The <b>school and students’ families are partners</b> in fostering the academic, intellectual and emotional success of each student.</p> <p>Leaders demonstrate <b>courage and collaboration.</b></p> <p>A <b>shared vision</b> that is developed by all stakeholders guides every decision.</p> <p>The school <b>includes community</b> and business groups as partners.</p> <p><b>All students have opportunities for voice</b>—posing questions, reflecting on experiences, and participating in decisions and leadership activities.</p> <p>The school <b>staff members develop alliances with families</b> to enhance and support the well-being of the children.</p>	<p><b>Inclusive Youth Leadership</b></p> <p>All young people, regardless of ability or achievement level, are given a voice to make meaningful changes in their classrooms, schools and communities.</p> <p>Youth of every ability level are given opportunities and means to execute their decisions and to be leaders and agents of change in their communities.</p> <p>There is access, opportunity and encouragement for all youth to fulfill leadership positions within the school.</p> <p>Adults model the attitudes, skills and efforts required of leadership and provide opportunities to empower youth to be leaders.</p> <p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>School and district leaders make necessary changes to adapt school climate to changing needs of student populations.</p> <p>Opportunities exist for bringing together students, families, school and community leaders and community members to reflect on the success of the school.</p> <p>Policies ensure accessibility for all students through instructional effectiveness, school programs and school climate.</p> <p>A comprehensive system of evaluation and ongoing improvement addresses school effectiveness, including issues of inclusion.</p>



Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
Democratic, collaborative leadership	<p>Staff members <b>provide all students with opportunities to develop citizenship skills</b>, to use the community as a classroom, and to engage the community in providing resources and support.</p> <p>The faculty <b>welcome and encourage the active participation</b> of all its families and makes sure that all its families are an integral part of the school.</p>	<p><b>School/Community Collaborations</b></p> <p>School personnel work with community-based organizations to create and sustain collaborations and meaningful relationships that provide students with opportunities to contribute to content, design and implementation of projects and interactions.</p> <p>Students are given opportunities to develop relationships and promote their credibility with organizations representing the full breadth of the community, including businesses, youth development groups and clubs, before- and after-school programs, faith-based groups and civic and service groups.</p> <p>Students are given opportunities to collaborate with diverse community populations, reflecting ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and ability differences.</p> <p>Students are engaged in the evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of school-community collaborations on individuals, organizations and communities.</p> <p>School-community collaborations reflect a widespread belief that everyone is essential to the success of the community.</p>

Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
Equity and access for every student	<p>The school <b>values diversity and fosters an array of viewpoints, perspectives and experiences.</b></p> <p>The school advocates and models a set of core values that are essential in a democratic and civil society.</p> <p>The school <b>offers alternatives to tracking and ability grouping</b> while maintaining the flexibility to appropriately support and challenge each student.</p> <p>The school <b>environment is inviting, safe, inclusive and supportive of all.</b></p> <p>Organizational structures foster <b>purposeful learning and meaningful relationships.</b></p> <p>To the fullest extent possible, all <b>students, including English learners, students with disabilities, and gifted and honors students, participate in heterogeneous classes with high academic and behavioral expectations.</b></p> <p>All students have ongoing <b>opportunities to</b> learn about and <b>appreciate their own and others’ cultures.</b></p> <p>The school’s <b>reward system is designed to value diversity, civility, service and democratic citizenship.</b></p> <p>Staff members understand and <b>support the family backgrounds and values of their students.</b></p>	<p><b>Inclusive Youth Leadership</b></p> <p>All young people, regardless of ability or achievement level, are given a voice to make meaningful changes in their classrooms, schools and communities.</p> <p>Youth of every ability level are given opportunities and means to execute their decisions and to be leaders and change agents in their communities.</p> <p>There is access, opportunity and encouragement for all youth to fulfill leadership positions within the school.</p> <p><b>Creating and Sustaining Relationships</b></p> <p>School staff provide high-quality opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to work together for the benefit of all.</p> <p>A climate of trust and respect, which honors the diverse talents, perspectives and assets of all students, is pervasive throughout the school and district.</p> <p><b>Unifying Programming</b></p> <p>Access and opportunities are provided regularly for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate together in sports and other engagement activities.</p> <p>School leaders create an inclusive culture, showcasing the work and achievements of all, creating Unified programs, and eliminating boundaries between students.</p>



Characteristics of Middle Level Schools	Middle Level Concepts	Unified Champion Schools Elements
Equity and access for every student (continued)		<p><b>School/Community Collaboration</b></p> <p>Students are given opportunities to collaborate with diverse community populations, reflecting ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and ability differences.</p> <p>School-community collaborations reflect a widespread belief that everyone is essential to the success of the community.</p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p>When the word “student” is used, it always refers to every student in the school, regardless of ability level, special needs, services or academic placement.</p> <p>The school community intentionally shares and celebrates the skills, practices and accomplishments of all students and adults.</p> <p>Lessons, class projects and school activities, are conducted in ways that reach all types of learners by using music, videos, arts, interactive activities or a team-based approach.</p> <p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p>School and district leaders make necessary changes to adapt school climates to changing needs of student populations.</p> <p>The district provides opportunities for staff to work collectively across schools to share, assess and improve inclusive practices.</p> <p>Policies ensure accessibility for all students through instructional effectiveness, school programs and climate.</p>



# SOCIAL INCLUSION ASSESSMENTS





# CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT

The following assessment is designed to assist the inclusive leadership team to determine the degree of inclusiveness in the school and set a baseline for future work. Individual members of the team should take the assessment separately then combine the results. The compilation of the perspectives of different individuals will result in a more accurate report or will highlight perspective variations.

Please read the following questions and select the options that apply to your school. You can select more than one option per question, as applicable. If you do not select any option, it is equal to selecting 'none,' 'no one,' 'not evident' (in other words, no score for that particular question).

Please note that three academic categories of students are referenced in the assessment:  
1) Advanced, 2) General and 3) Special Education. While individual students might fall into more than one of these categories for different classes, please respond regarding each category as a whole for the purpose of this assessment.

Also, please note that 'special education students' and 'students with intellectual disabilities' have been used interchangeably in this assessment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Role:

- ☐ Principal/Assistant Principal
- ☐ Guidance Counselor/Social Worker
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other School Staff
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Parent/Guardian
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_



## GUIDELINES FOR SCORING

1. When you select a particular option for a question, it is equivalent to one point. Based on this criterion, record the score for each question at the end of the question.

2. Please note that questions 1 and 2 are organized slightly differently than the other questions. However, the scoring criterion is the same. Whether the question is in matrix format or a simple multiple choice format, record “1” point for each option that is evident in your school. If an identified option is not evident in your school, leave the cell blank.

For example, in Question 1, if students in ‘advanced’, ‘general’ and ‘special’ education influence or are involved with school communications (e.g., announcements, newspaper), record a “1” in each cell in that row. If only students in one or two of those categories are involved, record a “1” in the appropriate column. If no students are involved, leave all cells blank.

At the end, sum each column then combine the three column scores to get the score for the question. For the rest of the questions (all multiple choice), record a “1” beside each option that is evident in your school. If that option is not evident, leave it blank. Sum the responses for each question and record that answer in the place provided.

3. At the end of each domain (e.g., ‘youth leadership’), calculate the score for the domain by adding scores for all the questions in that particular domain (e.g., Q1 to Q5 for ‘youth leadership’, Q6 to Q9 for ‘creating and sustaining relationships’, and so on).

4. When the entire assessment is complete, please input the score for each domain on the first scoring sheet (‘scoring sheet for individual response’) provided at the end and determine in which category you belong by referring to the second column (‘score ranges by level’) in the scoring sheet. Please note that there are four levels: limited, emerging, inclusive and fully accomplished. The ranges for these levels are not uniform across the domains.

5. To compute the total score, simply add all the scores from the third column (‘your domain score’). Again, the level for total score can be determined by referring to the second column (‘score ranges by level’).

6. To obtain the scores for the school, please use the second scoring sheet (‘scoring sheet for the school’). For this, calculate the average score from all the individual responses (leadership team), and input in the ‘school’s domain score.’ Then, find out the categories for each domain for the school by referring to second column (‘score ranges by level’) in the scoring sheet. The school’s total score and level can be determined by following similar step as Q5 above.



I. YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Q1. Which students, if any, influence school decisions, and how are they involved?

	Advanced Education	General Education	Special Education
Communications (e.g., school newspaper, announcements)			
Student government			
Surveys			
Class discussions			
Events/assemblies (i.e., leading/ determining focus, not just attending)			
Youth leadership club			
Principal Advisory Committee			
Other (specify)			
Score (for each column)			
Score for the question (total of all three columns):			

Q2. In what ways are students of different abilities involved in improving the inclusiveness of the school?

	Advanced Education	General Education	Special Education
Decisions about class scheduling			
Development of inclusive events			
Creation of communications supporting inclusion (e.g., posters, newspaper articles, bulletin board displays)			
Participation in inclusive clubs or sports			
Other (specify)			
Score (for each column)			
Score for the question (total of all three columns):			



Q3. Which students serve as youth leaders in school (e.g., through sports teams, classroom discussions, service opportunities)?

- \_\_\_ Advanced education students
- \_\_\_ General education students
- \_\_\_ Special education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q4. Which students, if any, receive instruction in social-emotional skills (e.g., decision making, collaboration, self-management, conflict resolution)?

- \_\_\_ Advanced education students
- \_\_\_ General education students
- \_\_\_ Special education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q5. In what social-emotional learning (SEL) areas, if any, do students receive instruction?

- \_\_\_ Decision making
- \_\_\_ Conflict Resolution
- \_\_\_ Communication
- \_\_\_ Ethics
- \_\_\_ Emotion Regulation/Self-management
- \_\_\_ Empathy

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q1 to 5) :

II. CREATING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Q6. Where do students with intellectual disabilities interact with students without intellectual disabilities?

- \_\_\_ Hallways
- \_\_\_ Cafeteria
- \_\_\_ Library/Media Center
- \_\_\_ Enrichment classes (e.g., gym, art, music)
- \_\_\_ Core academic classes
- \_\_\_ Sports
- \_\_\_ Extracurricular clubs/service-learning opportunities

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q7. Which members of the school community are formally involved in efforts to include students with intellectual disabilities in school programs or activities?

- \_\_\_ Special education teachers
- \_\_\_ General education teachers
- \_\_\_ Administrators, support staff and other school personnel
- \_\_\_ Students participating in Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program
- \_\_\_ General education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q8. Where do students without intellectual disabilities demonstrate their friendships with students with intellectual disabilities?

- \_\_\_ In class
- \_\_\_ In the hallways
- \_\_\_ During sports and extracurricular activities
- \_\_\_ Outside of organized activities (e.g., in their homes, during weekends)

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q9. Where do parents of students without intellectual disabilities interact with parents of students with intellectual disabilities?

- \_\_\_ At school events
- \_\_\_ At organized community events (e.g., sports, religious services)
- \_\_\_ Outside of organized activities (e.g., in their homes, during weekends)

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q6 to 9) :

III. UNIFYING PROGRAMMING

Q10. Which resources, if any, does the district provide for unifying programming?

- \_\_\_ Money
- \_\_\_ Time (e.g., holding training during school hours, program development)
- \_\_\_ Personnel
- \_\_\_ Facilities

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q11. Which students regularly participate in school athletic programs?

- \_\_\_ Advanced education students
- \_\_\_ General education students
- \_\_\_ Special education students
- \_\_\_ Students with exceptional athletic ability

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q12. Which students regularly participate in extracurricular opportunities?

- \_\_\_ Advanced education students
- \_\_\_ General education students
- \_\_\_ Special education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q13. For which clubs and sports does the school celebrate accomplishments?

- \_\_\_ Traditional sports teams
- \_\_\_ Unified Sports® teams
- \_\_\_ Academic extracurricular clubs
- \_\_\_ Other extracurricular clubs

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q10 to 13) :



IV. SCHOOL COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

Q14. Which individuals, if any, have an active voice developing and implementing an inclusive vision and goals for the school?

☐ Students

☐ School personnel

☐ Parents/Guardians

☐ Community members

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q15. Which community organizations collaborate with the school on events or activities?

☐ Sports organizations (e.g., community recreational department lends equipment for school teams; members of local sports teams help coach Unified Sports teams)

☐ Social service organizations (e.g., social workers train students to become peer mediators; social service organizations invite students to help in the creation of a community-wide health campaign)

☐ Media organizations (journalists work with students on the school newspaper; local newspaper features school events or accomplishments)

☐ Public safety organizations (e.g., police make a presentation about drug use during a school assembly; EMTs lead student training on CPR)

☐ Health services organizations (e.g., doctor provides exams for members of Unified Sports teams; school nurse presents sessions on health, wellness and movement)

☐ Local business leaders (e.g., business leaders partner with unified club on projects; local grocery store participates in healthy eating project)

☐ Religious organizations (e.g., church/synagogue/mosque help to organize school canned food drive for a food pantry)

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q16. Which students interact with community organizations through curricular and extracurricular activities?

☐ Advanced education students

☐ General education students

☐ Special education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q17. Which students leave school grounds to participate in school-sponsored community activities?

☐ Advanced education students

☐ General education students

☐ Special education students

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q14 to 17) :

V. COMMUNICATION

Q18. When do educators discuss the importance of inclusive language?

☐ In school-wide events and posters

☐ In the curriculum

☐ In day-to-day instruction

☐ With the broader community

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q19. In what ways is inclusive language used when communicating with students, school staff, parents or community members?

☐ Through formal communications

☐ Through informal communications

☐ In meetings

☐ In informal conversations

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q20. With whom does the school share the accomplishments of special education students?

☐ Special education students and parents

☐ Other students and parents

☐ All school personnel

☐ Broader community

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q21. Who stops others from using language that is hurtful toward students with intellectual disabilities (e.g., terms such as: retard[ed], “those kids”, slow class)?

☐ School personnel

☐ Parents/Guardians

☐ Community

☐ Students

☐ No one

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q18 to 21) :

VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Q22. Who receives instruction from the school about addressing the needs of the special education student population and the use of inclusive teaching strategies?

- \_\_\_ Special education teachers
- \_\_\_ General education teachers
- \_\_\_ Administrators, support staff and other school personnel
- \_\_\_ Parents/Guardians
- \_\_\_ Students
- \_\_\_ Community

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q23. When do special and general education teachers have opportunities to collaborate?

- \_\_\_ Informal discussions
- \_\_\_ Professional development sessions
- \_\_\_ Regular planning time
- \_\_\_ Team teaching
- \_\_\_ Faculty meetings
- \_\_\_ School-wide events

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q24. When do school personnel receive professional development training on promoting students’ social-emotional skills (SEL)?

- \_\_\_ In SEL specific workshops (e.g., conflict resolution, restorative justice)
- \_\_\_ SEL strategies are integrated into all professional development

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q25. In what ways does the school integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) into the school?

- \_\_\_ Through a program/curriculum focused on social-emotional learning
- \_\_\_ Through classroom management strategies informed by social-emotional learning best practices
- \_\_\_ Through explicit school norms (e.g., student code of conduct)
- \_\_\_ Through a range of pedagogies (e.g., cooperative learning, service-learning, conflict resolution/mediation related learning, moral dilemma discussions)
- \_\_\_ Through adults modeling appropriate behavior
- \_\_\_ Through extracurricular activities that foster social-emotional learning

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q22 to 25) :

VII. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Q26. Aside from data on student achievement, consider the data collection processes that you use to support your school improvement efforts, and check all that apply below:

- \_\_\_ Data are collected on school climate.
- \_\_\_ Data are collected on social inclusion.
- \_\_\_ Evaluation measures used to assess school climate and/or inclusion are research-based, established tools (reliable and valid).
- \_\_\_ Data are collected regularly (annually or biannually).
- \_\_\_ Data are not collected for school improvement efforts.
- \_\_\_ Data are collected, but they not analyzed or used for school improvement efforts.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q27. Data are collected regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities:

- \_\_\_ Through formal communications
- \_\_\_ Through informal communications
- \_\_\_ In meetings
- \_\_\_ In informal conversations

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q28. Data are collected from:

- \_\_\_ Students.
- \_\_\_ School personnel.
- \_\_\_ Parents/Guardians
- \_\_\_ Community members.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Q29. With whom do administrators share findings and strategies about inclusive practices?

- \_\_\_ Leadership team
- \_\_\_ Special education department
- \_\_\_ Students
- \_\_\_ All school personnel
- \_\_\_ Parents/Guardians
- \_\_\_ School district personnel
- \_\_\_ Broader community

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score for Youth Leadership (Q26 to 29) :

# SCORING SHEET FOR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE

Please note that the scoring range is different for each domain (second column). Please input your score for each domain in ‘Your Domain Score’ column and then determine under which level (Limited, Emerging, Inclusive and Fully Accomplished) you fall in each of the domains by referring to the second column.

Domain	Score Ranges by Levels	Your Domain Score	Your Level
Youth Leadership	Limited (0-13) Emerging (14-26) Inclusive (27-38) Fully Accomplished (39-51)		
Creating and Sustaining Relationships	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-9) Inclusive (10-14) Fully Accomplished (15-19)		
Unifying Programming	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-9) Inclusive (10-14) Fully Accomplished (15-18)		
School Community Collaborations	Limited (0-4) Emerging (5-9) Inclusive (10-13) Fully Accomplished (14-17)		
Communication	Limited (0-4) Emerging (5-8) Inclusive (9-12) Fully Accomplished (13-16)		
Professional Development	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-10) Inclusive (11-15) Fully Accomplished (16-20)		
Continuous Improvement	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-10) Inclusive (11-14) Fully Accomplished (15-18)		
Your Total Score	Limited (0-40) Emerging (41-80) Inclusive (81-120) Fully Accomplished (121-160)		

# SCORING SHEET FOR THE SCHOOL

Please input average score (from all the responses) for each domain in ‘School’s Domain Score’ column and then determine under which level (Limited, Emerging, Inclusive and Fully Accomplished) your school falls in each of the domains by referring to the second column.

Domain	Score Ranges by Levels	School's Score <small>(average of the individual domain scores)</small>	School's Level
Youth Leadership	Limited (0-13) Emerging (14-26) Inclusive (27-38) Fully Accomplished (39-51)		
Creating and Sustaining Relationships	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-9) Inclusive (10-14) Fully Accomplished (15-19)		
Unifying Programming	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-9) Inclusive (10-14) Fully Accomplished (15-18)		
School Community Collaborations	Limited (0-4) Emerging (5-9) Inclusive (10-13) Fully Accomplished (14-17)		
Communication	Limited (0-4) Emerging (5-8) Inclusive (9-12) Fully Accomplished (13-16)		
Professional Development	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-10) Inclusive (11-15) Fully Accomplished (16-20)		
Continuous Improvement	Limited (0-5) Emerging (6-10) Inclusive (11-14) Fully Accomplished (15-18)		
Your Total Score	Limited (0-40) Emerging (41-80) Inclusive (81-120) Fully Accomplished (121-160)		





# SOCIAL INCLUSION SCALE

The Social Inclusion Scale is designed to be administered to students, parents and school personnel once a year. Ideally the administration should take place at the same time each year to get a more consistent view of perceptions over time. If you plan to administer the scale to the entire population, you may want to create an online version of this survey (using Survey Monkey or another platform) to make scoring and reporting easier for your team to analyze.

Instructions: In this survey, you will find questions about your school’s inclusiveness, which refers to the extent that all students in your school community are valued, respected and supported. The following questions are designed to measure how well your school specifically includes special education students (or students with all disabilities) in the school community.

Please indicate your role:

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Pupil Personnel Services
- ☐ Administrator
- ☐ Other School Staff
- ☐ Parent/Guardian



In the following chart, please identify the degree to which you **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Every student of any ability can be a leader in this school.				
2. In this school, the accomplishments of students of all abilities are celebrated (e.g., award ceremonies in school assemblies, sports awards dinners, displaying school projects).				
3. At this school, after school activities (e.g., sports clubs) include students with and without disabilities				
4. Most people in this school feel responsible for including special education students in all areas of school life				
5. This school provides opportunities for all students, including special education students, to help others (e.g., service-learning, community service).				
6. This school provides opportunities for all students, including special education students, to share their ideas (e.g., contribute to school decisions or inclusion efforts.				
7. In this school, students do not use negative terms to refer to students with disabilities.				
8. In this school, adults do not use negative terms to refer to students with intellectual disabilities.				
9. This school encourages students to develop friendships with special and general education students and interact in social situations (e.g., extracurricular activities, lunchtime, unstructured time within and between classes.				
10. In this school, adults encourage special education students to participate in all school activities				
11. Students in this school learn from having students of all abilities in the classroom.				

In the following chart, please indicate whether any of the following activities were **offered** at your school? IF the activity was offered, please indicate **where** you participated in it. Also, indicate whether you helped **plan or lead** the activity. With this data, you will be able to see where and how students are engaged in the Unified Champion Schools program, which can be used to inform next steps.

Activity/Event	Was this activity offered at your school?		Did you participate in the activity or event?		Did you help plan or lead the activity or event?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>R-word Campaign or Spread the Word to End the Word Day</b> (Raise awareness of the hurtful use of the R-word (“retard[ed]”) and advocate to end the use of the word.)						
<b>Inclusive Sports</b> (Students with and without intellectual disabilities train and compete together on the same teams.)						
<b>Traditional Special Olympics Sports</b> (Sports teams where only students with intellectual disabilities compete.)						
<b>Unified Club or Youth Activation Committee</b> (Any club where students of all abilities participate together as equals to make the school socially inclusive.)						
<b>Young Athletes Program Volunteer</b> (This is a program where students volunteer to help young children, ages 2-7, with physical activities.)						
<b>Special Olympics Unified Sports Day</b> (This is similar to a track and field day.)						
<b>Fans in the Stands</b> (Students support and cheer athletes at Unified Sports competitions or Special Olympics events.)						
<b>Other extracurricular activities that include students with and without intellectual disabilities.</b>						

**USE:** The results from this survey will provide you with a snapshot of the responses to the Social Inclusion Scale (whether responses are mostly in positive range or in a negative range). This data can be used to inform next steps (e.g., school leadership’s team’s discussion of action planning) for the social inclusion efforts in your school.

Calculating the percentages of response type

1. The response scale of this survey comprises the following categories: “Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree,” “Agree” and “Strongly Agree.” One way to get a good picture of the responses is to see the percentages for each of these categories. For example, consider all student responses to this scale. The percentage of responses can be calculated across all four categories for each of the questions in the Scale. This would then help you see patterns of agreement or disagreement by population.
2. An average for each category (e.g., average of % Strongly Disagree’) can also be computed by taking average of the columns. This will provide information on the average percentage of responses falling into the negative category (“Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree”) or positive category (“Agree,” “Strongly Agree”). The table below provides an example.
3. A similar process can be used for other responding groups (school personnel, parents).
4. Record the number of respondents (N) and response rate (N/total available population) for each population.

Question Number	% Strongly Disagree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Total
Q1	10	5	50	35	100
Q2	5	15	45	35	100
Q3	5	25	35	35	100
Q4	15	50	20	15	100
Q5	0	25	45	30	100
Q6	10	20	30	40	100
Q7	0	10	40	50	100
Q8	0	25	50	25	100
Q9	0	20	35	45	100
Q10	5	20	35	40	100
Q11	35	30	30	5	100
Average	7.27	22.27	37.73	32.73	100

Interpreting the example:

Again, please note that the negative range includes “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree”, and the positive range includes “Strongly Agree” and “Agree”. In this example, students showed some variation in their perception of social inclusion, leaning towards a positive perception (70.46% were in the positive range, while 29.54% were in the negative range.) Among all the questions, those with the highest negative perception include “Q4” and “Q11,” which indicate some areas of potential improvement. Among all the questions, those with the highest positive perception include “Q1” and “Q7,” which indicate areas of particular strength and celebration.

**NOTE:** To calculate which questions have the highest negative perception, add the percentage values for “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” for each question (i.e., the two columns to the left of the bolded blue line). The highest sums indicate which questions were scored more negatively than others. In addition, to find the questions with the highest positive perception, add the percentage values for “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” (i.e. the two columns to the right of the bolded blue line).

\*This assessment was developed in collaboration with the National School Climate Center (NSCC).

Social Inclusion Rubric

The following rubric is designed to help you determine the degree of inclusiveness in your school and to assist with continuous improvement planning by documenting your school’s path to social inclusion. By measuring your work against a set of indicators or benchmarks, you will obtain clearer pictures of social inclusion, identify with which level your schools aligns, and be able to identify necessary next steps to continue progress. In order to have an accurate and comprehensive report, it is important to obtain input from various stakeholders, including students. Also, don’t forget to gain the perspective of parents and various staff across the school such as paraprofessionals, custodians, bus drivers and cafeteria staff in addition to educators and students. The compilation of the perspectives of different individuals or stakeholder groups will result in a more accurate report and can help identify differences in perspectives, which provide important insights.

Directions

Using this rubric, rate your school on seven categories—Inclusive Youth Leadership, Creating and Sustaining Relationships, Unifying Programming, School/Community Collaborations, Communication, Professional Development and Continuous Improvement. Based upon the descriptors under each level in the rubric, determine whether your school is at the “Novice,” “Emerging,” “Accomplished,” or “Highly Inclusive” level for each category. Please note that when a category is rated as “Accomplished” or “Highly Inclusive,” descriptors from preceding levels also will likely be present at the school.

Working as individuals or groups, read all the descriptors under each level and determine which level is most reflective

- of your school. While all descriptors under a level might not be evident at your school, select the level that is most like your school. It is possible (and probably even likely) that the selected levels will be different for the various categories. For example, you might determine that your school is “Accomplished” regarding Unifying Programming and “Novice” for Inclusive Youth Leadership, but that information will be helpful when identifying priority areas for improvement.
- If you work as a group, discuss the descriptors for each level and come to consensus on the level that is closest to your school.
- If completing the rubric as individuals, compile the individual results to obtain a collective view of each category.

If there is a significant difference between the ratings identified for a specific category, debrief with each group or individual to find the reasons for their conclusions. This in itself might suggest additional areas for focus. For example, a group of students might view opportunities for “Youth Leadership” differently than teachers or administrators view those same opportunities. Why are there variations in opinions? Have their experiences at school impacted their perspectives? What does that tell you? How can those differences inform school improvement efforts? Be sure to validate each perspective and accept it as a valid response based on each rater’s experience. There are no right or wrong answers, as each response offers insights into how social inclusion is experienced by various individuals or groups in the school.

This rubric can be periodically administered to monitor progress of school improvement efforts and determine priorities for next steps.



INCLUSIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>Student leaders are represented by a narrow range of the student population.</p> <p>Student participation in leadership opportunities is limited to traditional avenues (e.g., student council).</p> <p>If there is work by youth to create a more inclusive school, participation is generally limited to students without disabilities.</p> <p>Goals are set and decisions are made by adults.</p> <p>Little or no leadership skill development occurs.</p>	<p>Youth are represented on selected school committees and participate in some decision-making processes.</p> <p>Youth with and without disabilities are given opportunities to provide leadership, but all opportunities are not inclusive.</p> <p>Goals are set and decisions are made by adults with youth input.</p> <p>Some leadership training happens at the outset of an activity.</p>	<p>Youth of all abilities are provided opportunities to be leaders in their schools and communities.</p> <p>Youth with and without disabilities share leadership in school groups and committees in inclusive settings.</p> <p>Goal setting and decision making is shared by youth and adults.</p> <p>Youth and adults actively initiate intergenerational leadership within the school, including serving on the Unified Champion School Leadership Team.</p> <p>Leadership skills are developed in all students through classes, extracurricular activities, service opportunities and sports.</p> <p>Instruction in socio-emotional learning (SEL) (e.g., decision-making, conflict resolution, ethics) is provided to all students.</p>	<p>Student leadership positions are held by a diverse representation of the student body with all students being supported and provided the necessary skills to be agents of change in their communities.</p> <p>Students and adults share leadership in creating and maintaining an inclusive climate and physical environment in their school.</p> <p>All students are prepared for leadership roles by being given opportunities to learn and practice making and executing their decisions.</p> <p>Goal setting and decision making are led by students with and without disabilities on behalf of all youth.</p> <p>Youth engage in assessments, evaluations and reflections to examine their leadership knowledge, skills and impacts on themselves and others.</p>

CREATING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>Students' preconceptions and stereotypes about students with intellectual disabilities are not challenged.</p> <p>Multiple perspectives are not intentionally sought or incorporated into nurturing and supporting a positive school environment.</p> <p>Limited steps are taken to ensure the school provides a physically inclusive setting.</p> <p>There are no established avenues for students of diverse backgrounds to interact and form relationships. In fact, schedules and building arrangements sometimes hinder interactions.</p>	<p>Students with and without intellectual disabilities are afforded frequent opportunities to interact in social and academic settings (e.g., through unified clubs, after-school activities, community service).</p> <p>Instructional strategies are utilized that provide differentiated instruction to allow students with diverse learning needs to receive instruction together.</p> <p>The Unified Champion Schools program is explored as a means for students to interact, support each other and establish relationships. Some staff model and expect positive relationships between students with and without disabilities.</p> <p>Curriculum and classroom management strategies incorporate social-emotional learning such as collaboration, conflict resolution, regulation and self-management.</p>	<p>The school staff and students intentionally build a sense of community among students with and without disabilities that promotes student engagement and relationships in formal and informal settings with the school.</p> <p>The skills, abilities and perspectives of all students are valued and respected by staff and school/district leaders.</p> <p>Opportunities are sought to engage a broad range of students, parents, staff and community members in the ongoing work of the school, providing opportunities for the development of positive intergenerational relationships.</p> <p>All school staff foster opportunities to build positive relationships between students with and without disabilities in the classroom.</p> <p>School schedules and building arrangements ensure regular opportunities for students to interact.</p> <p>Adults model effective social-emotional learning skills.</p>	<p>There is a caring, respectful and compassionate community within and beyond the school setting to create supportive relationships for all families, youth and adults.</p> <p>Staff and school/district leaders actively seek to enlist the skills, abilities and perspectives of all students, understanding that the work of the whole is enriched by diverse perspectives and abilities.</p> <p>All students, staff, parents and the broader community are viewed as equal partners in creating and sustaining an inclusive school community.</p> <p>Policy development and decisions at the school and district levels intentionally incorporate diverse perspectives and ensure opportunities for student interaction and engagement.</p> <p>Students work to ensure all students are engaged in the school and feel they are important and respected.</p> <p>School norms explicitly expect and support social-emotional learning.</p>

UNIFYING PROGRAMMING

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>School and community programs provide for a limited range of student ability needs to be adequately met.</p> <p>Traditional school sports and clubs rarely involve students with intellectual disabilities.</p> <p>The continuum of opportunities for students to learn in an inclusive setting is limited to coursework at their ability levels.</p> <p>There are no social or sports avenues for students with and without intellectual disabilities to learn and grow together.</p> <p>Few resources (e.g., money, time, personnel) are provided for unifying programming.</p>	<p>A broad range of parallel activities are offered that collectively honor and develop the skills and abilities of all students.</p> <p>The district provides equitable support for inclusive student activities such as Unified Sports® and unified clubs, demonstrating equal value for these activities as traditional sports and clubs; however, implementation is not consistent or evident in all schools.</p> <p>School staff explores various opportunities for students to learn in inclusive settings, but all students are not encouraged to participate</p>	<p>Access and opportunities for all students to participate in inclusive settings in both instructional and non-academic activities are provided regularly.</p> <p>School staff consistently works to ensure the effectiveness of the inclusive learning environment both inside and outside the classroom.</p> <p>Traditional school sports and clubs consistently work toward becoming more inclusive and welcoming for all students.</p> <p>An extensive selection of Unified Sports, clubs and social activities are offered to all students.</p> <p>Unifying programming is included in the school budget and action plan.</p>	<p>School activities and groups intentionally engage a diverse student population.</p> <p>There is an expectation for the entire school community to continuously seek opportunities to become a more inclusive learning environment, offering unified programs and activities.</p> <p>School leaders ensure extra-curricular and sports opportunities are provided that build inclusiveness and eliminate boundaries between students.</p> <p>Recognition programs are provided for all students participating in Unified Sports, unified clubs and extra-curricular activities, including traditional methods such as athletic letters, award banquets, and school assemblies.</p> <p>The district allocates resources to support Unified Champion Schools activities.</p>

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>The school generally works in isolation from the community, though community partners sometimes support specific projects.</p> <p>School policy inhibits or prevents students from leaving school grounds to participate in community activities.</p> <p>The school is occasionally asked to assist with events or projects in the community, but only selected students are engaged in the activities.</p> <p>Community members have little or no opportunity to share their ideas and perspectives with the school.</p>	<p>Students and staff seek opportunities to engage community entities in school activities, but there are limited interactions.</p> <p>Opportunities exist for select students to interact with a few community organizations on a limited basis.</p> <p>Interactions with the community are planned by adults with little or no input by the students.</p> <p>Community members have little voice or active involvement in the school.</p>	<p>Students and staff are trained in collaborative skills and are expected to build meaningful diverse partnerships with the community.</p> <p>Two-way communication and ongoing interaction with community partners is central to the school.</p> <p>Students and adults at the school work with multiple community partners to develop common goals and implement shared projects.</p> <p>The community accepts and encourages inclusive practices in the schools and wider community.</p> <p>All students are provided opportunities for engagement in the community through a variety of programs.</p>	<p>The school and community create and work toward a shared vision that supports and sustains an inclusive school climate.</p> <p>Students and staff at the school maintain mutually beneficial relationships with community entities that represent a broad cross-section of the community.</p> <p>School and community programs equitably develop each student's potential through sports and academic, civic, social and service activities that engage both students with and without intellectual disabilities.</p> <p>Participants in school-community collaborations regularly reflect on their shared goals, progress and effectiveness of their collaborative process.</p>

COMMUNICATION

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>Inclusion and inclusive language is rarely used in formal and informal school communications.</p> <p>School communication leaders/ staff have not been trained to use inclusive language.</p> <p>School communications prioritize certain students’ academic, athletic and service attributions and contributions.</p> <p>There are no formal programs to eliminate the use of offensive or abusive language within the school.</p>	<p>School staff members are trained in the use of inclusive language and generally use these skills in their daily communications.</p> <p>School regularly offers assemblies and events which focus on inclusion and how to talk about it with peers, parents and community members.</p> <p>Programs that reduce the use of offensive or abusive language (e.g., R-word) are offered.</p>	<p>School communications highlight students’ diverse gifts, talents and contributions, demonstrating the value placed on both students’ unique individual abilities and similarities.</p> <p>Students are taught to use inclusive language in their school and personal verbal, written and social networking communications.</p> <p>There are clear expectations that all students and staff use inclusive language in their daily communications, which is supported by modeling and reinforcement.</p> <p>Signs, posters and displays in the school reflect inclusion and the school’s commitment to ensuring every student is valued.</p>	<p>Mechanisms and systems are in place to regularly inform stakeholders of the positive impacts of inclusiveness on the entire student body.</p> <p>The word/concept of “student” is intentionally used to refer to all students.</p> <p>School communications use inclusive language and formats.</p> <p>The value students and staff place on inclusion is communicated throughout the school, in trophies and awards that are displayed, the goals and mission of the school, and the activities and efforts that are promoted.</p> <p>The word “inclusion” is frequently used on the school’s web site and in presentations given by school leaders, staff and students.</p> <p>Students with and without intellectual disabilities regularly speak to school and community groups about the importance of social inclusion.</p>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>Basic knowledge about addressing the needs of a diverse student population is provided to all staff; however, it does not address issues of social inclusion.</p> <p>Professional development is targeted at distinctly different audiences rather than shared learning experiences between general education and special education staff.</p> <p>Social-emotional learning is not explicitly addressed in district-supported professional development.</p>	<p>Informational programs are provided to parents, students and staff to increase understanding of diverse student abilities, inclusive teaching strategies and the importance of social inclusion.</p> <p>Special and general education teachers occasionally collaborate as professional learners within a professional learning community.</p> <p>Professional development is offered in classroom management strategies and pedagogies that support and are informed by social-emotional learning best practices.</p>	<p>Specific district professional development opportunities frequently incorporate discussions and skill building in supporting inclusiveness.</p> <p>School and community events are offered to students and the broader community to increase knowledge and skills that support inclusive schools.</p> <p>Collaborations between special and general education teachers are encouraged to build competencies in providing an inclusive learning environment, including social inclusion.</p> <p>All staff members are expected to become proficient in teaching, supporting and reinforcing social-emotional skills.</p>	<p>Students, staff and families are provided opportunities to increase their competencies to create and sustain an inclusive school environment.</p> <p>High-quality, ongoing professional development on social inclusion and school climate is supported through the use of regular and frequent professional learning communities.</p> <p>There is an expectation that special and general education teachers will collaborate to create an inclusive learning environment, and are provided regular, scheduled opportunities for this to occur.</p> <p>Students with and without disabilities are engaged as co-facilitators of professional development to share strategies they find most effective in creating and sustaining an inclusive school environment.</p>



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Novice	Emerging	Accomplished	Highly Inclusive
<p>Plans for developing and supporting an inclusive school climate are implemented without collecting data to guide decisions.</p> <p>Programs and activities to create a more inclusive school climate and increase the effectiveness of the learning environment for all students are adopted without a shared vision and collective agenda.</p>	<p>School and district leaders allocate time and resources to develop effective learning environments that provide inclusive school climates and meet the needs of all students.</p> <p>Efforts to improve school climate and increase effectiveness of instructional practices are consistently reviewed and revised to provide inclusiveness and effectiveness of the learning environment.</p> <p>Data is collected to monitor inclusion of students with disabilities in academic settings.</p>	<p>A social inclusive assessment (e.g., CSIS Assessment, Social Inclusion Scale) is used to establish baseline data regarding the degree of social inclusion in the school.</p> <p>All constituents (including students, staff, parents and community) are given regular opportunities to reflect and share input on the effectiveness of the learning environment in meeting the needs of all students.</p> <p>Policies are in place and actively used to ensure social inclusion for all students through instructional effectiveness, school programs and school climate.</p> <p>Data is collected to assess inclusion of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities, sports and social events.</p>	<p>Data is regularly collected on the inclusiveness of the school climate and effectiveness of the learning environment from multiple sources across all stakeholders in the school and community throughout the year.</p> <p>Data on discipline, attendance, and participation in extracurricular offerings is disaggregated to ensure all students and disability subgroups have equitable opportunities to succeed in formal and informal settings.</p> <p>A baseline assessment is conducted during initial stages of implementation, and a rubric (e.g., Social Inclusion Rubric) is used to assess progress and identify areas for continuous improvement. This evidence guides decisions and plans for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Evidence is used to improve experiences and progress toward goals to ensure inclusiveness and effectiveness of the learning environment.</p> <p>Evidence of progress is communicated with the broader community to deepen understanding of an inclusive school climate and an effective learning environment.</p>







# ACTION PLANNING FORMATS

## Special Olympics Unified Champion School Strategic Plan

### Leadership Team Members

School(s) to be involved:

What do we hope social inclusion will achieve? As a team, ask yourselves what you would like success to look like in concrete, measurable terms. What will people in our school do that demonstrates we are a socially inclusive school? Which set of goals will help us progress on the social inclusion rubric? Identify 3-5 SMART goals. SMART goals are:

- S - Specific
- M - Measurable
- A - Action-oriented
- R - Realistic
- T - Time-bound

How will social inclusion help meet our school's broader goals?

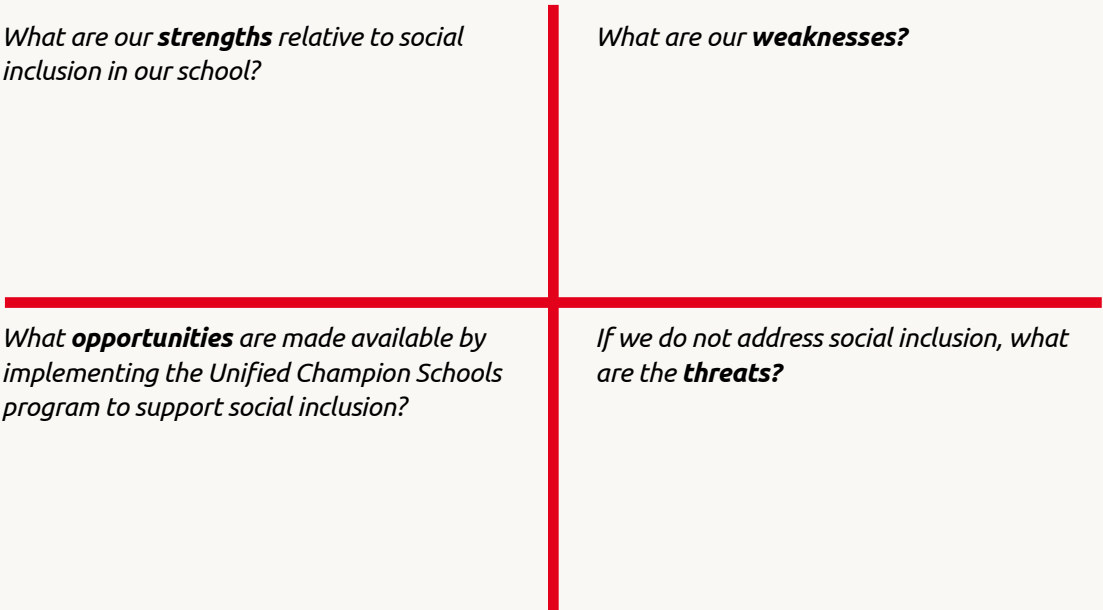


# Finding Our Starting Point

Effective planning starts with an assessment of the current situation. It begins with asking  
1) Who are we? and 2) Analyzing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.  
Who are we?

- 1. Who are we as a school?
- 2. What are the common interests of our school community and how can we best represent them?
- 3. What are our values?

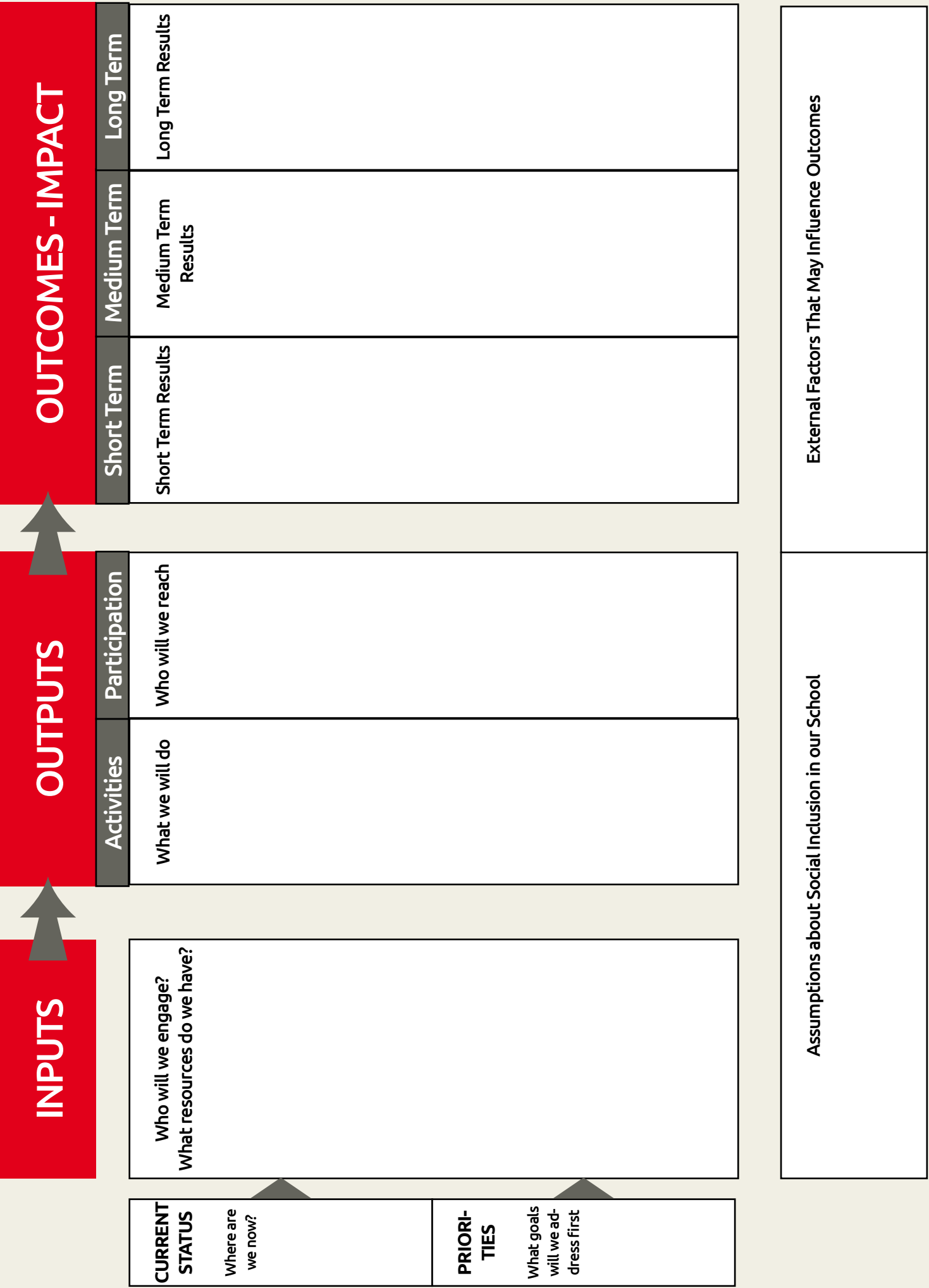
## SWOT ANALYSIS (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)



- 5. What are the primary obstacles to social inclusion and how might we overcome them?
- 6. Are there previous initiatives that failed due to lack of support or other obstacles? What were they, and why did they fail?
- 7. What assistance do we need with this work?

### MONITORING

- 1. Who has oversight and review authority for the plan content? Who is responsible for measuring progress?
- 2. What measures of progress will we use?
- 3. How often will we review progress?
- 4. How will we use progress monitoring to ensure our efforts continuously improve?



What is our vision for social inclusion in our school?

Whole School Engagement Action Plan

Strategy/Activity	Tasks	When will each task be completed?	Who will facilitate the completion of each task?	Who else can help?
<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Youth Leadership</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Unified Sports</div>	1	1	1	
	2	2	2	
	3	3	3	
	4	4	4	
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<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Youth Leadership</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Unified Sports</div>	1	1	1	
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What is our vision for social inclusion in our school?

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	4	4	4	
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Inclusive Youth Leadership Action Plan

Strategy/Activity	Tasks	When will each task be completed?	Who will facilitate the completion of each task?	Who else can help?
<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Whole School Engagement</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Unified Sports</div>	1	1	1	
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<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Whole School Engagement</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Unified Sports</div>	1	1	1	
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	4	4	4	
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Inclusive Youth Leadership Action Plan

Strategy/Activity	Tasks	When will each task be completed?	Who will facilitate the completion of each task?	Who else can help?
<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Whole School Engagement</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Unified Sports</div>	1	1	1	
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Unified Sports Action Plan

Strategy/Activity	Tasks	When will each task be completed?	Who will facilitate the completion of each task?	Who else can help?
<div>This strategy/activity also connects with:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Whole School Engagement</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Youth Leadership</div>	1	1	1	
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Unified Sports Action Plan

Strategy/Activity	Tasks	When will each task be completed?	Who will facilitate the completion of each task?	Who else can help?
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# Getting Started Checklists

There are many ways the whole school can learn about and create a socially inclusive school. The following tips and checklists offer some ideas to get started with a few different activities. These activities can be changed and expanded to best address students’ identified needs and fit into the structure of your school. Have the students work in inclusive teams or unified pairs on many of these activities. Ensure that all students have opportunities to use their strengths and develop new skills.

*NOTE: The first list includes steps that should be implemented with any major activity. Subsequent lists outline steps that address each specific activity.*

## General Steps for Implementing Any Major Activity

There are some actions that need to be done when preparing for any activity or event.

- \_\_\_1. Work with your teachers to schedule a meeting with the Unified Champion School Leadership Team to talk about the activity or event you are planning. Before the meeting, work with your teacher(s) to make sure your presentation includes your ideas and is well organized. Be prepared to discuss a timeline for recruiting students organizing, and preparing for the activity.
- \_\_\_2. Talk with school staff about the date, purpose of the activity, and why it is important to your school. Your Leadership Team can help you with explaining the activity to other people in the school.
- \_\_\_3. Publicize the activity or event. Consider asking staff to assist with sharing information through announcements, the school website, letters sent home, the school newspaper and local news media.
- \_\_\_4. After the event, be sure to thank all of those involved. Send a special thank-you note to any guest speakers, sponsors or those who donated to the activity.

Whole School Engagement

## School Assembly or Youth Rally

School assemblies or rallies can be a good way to share information, create excitement, or introduce a new program or activity about social inclusion and being respectful of others. The following are things you need to do to hold a school assembly or youth rally. Work with your teachers as you make your plans.

- \_\_\_1. Use a club, advisory session or class to discuss issues or concerns that you would like to address in an assembly. After deciding the issue to be addressed, brainstorm ideas for the assembly, such as guest speakers, skits, pep rally or student presentation.
- \_\_\_2. Research the selected issue(s), identify who or what it affects and what changes are needed.
- \_\_\_3. Develop a plan.
  - Set the date and time for the assembly.
  - Create a plan for each task that needs to be completed, including deadlines and a list of who is responsible for carrying out each step.
  - Make sure the date and time are cleared with the principal and your teachers before advertising the assembly.
  - Consider working with another group in the school or community to help with the assembly.
- \_\_\_4. Invite guest speakers, develop a presentation, and prepare any necessary materials.
  - Get the audience involved; ensure the event is fun, memorable and engaging.
  - Use a speech, skit or other presentation to tell attendees about the topic.
  - Consider using videos, visuals or other multimedia to maintain interest.
  - Use speakers or others who can be part of the assembly to educate and engage participants.

Whole School Engagement

## It’s Our School, Too! Play

This play is written for a cast of 10-20 students with and without intellectual disabilities. The script includes a variety of short scenes shared by students at real schools. The play is designed to let others know what school can be like for students with intellectual disabilities.

- \_\_\_1. Get a copy of the script for the play in the Educator Resources section found at [www.specialolympics.org/mlplaybook-resources](http://www.specialolympics.org/mlplaybook-resources).
- \_\_\_2. Share the script with students in your language arts class, Unified Club or other interested group. Ask your teacher if you can lead a discussion among students interested in performing the play, and identify areas of concern that students may have about inclusion in school.
- \_\_\_3. Develop a plan.
  - Assign role and schedule rehearsals. Make sure that both students with and without intellectual disabilities have roles in the play.
  - Create a plan for each task that needs to be completed, including deadlines, and a list of who is responsible for carrying out each step. Be sure to assign inclusive co-leaders for each major task, and make sure they are cleared with your teachers and principal before releasing the information to others.
- \_\_\_4. Practice until everyone knows their roles.
- \_\_\_5. Perform the play for the school and/or community.
- \_\_\_6. After the play, work with your teachers to schedule times during advisor-advisee or other classes to discuss the play, what the audience experienced, and any issues that exist in the local school and/or community.
- \_\_\_6. Work with the Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, Unified Club or other interested group to discuss the issues and develop a plan to make changes that will create a more socially inclusive school.



**Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign**  
The Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign or R-word Campaign ([www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org)) helps others understand the hurtful effects of the word, “retard(ed),” and encourages people to pledge to stop using the R-word. Activities vary from school to school, but are often planned to coincide with the Spread the Word annual day of awareness held the first Wednesday in March.

\_\_\_1. Work with other students in the Unified Club, a class or other groups in the school to organize activities that will raise awareness about the harmful effects of using the R-word.

\_\_\_2. Meet with the principal to discuss plans for the R-word Campaign, and obtain his/her support and approval.

\_\_\_3. Decide which activities the campaign will include, such as:

- Holding a small rally or school assembly. Have students give speeches about use of the R-word and plans to stop using it. Distribute information to other students.
- Setting up a pledge station where all students and adults sign a banner or poster in a pledge to stop using the R-word.
- If approved, selling T-shirts with a slogan about stopping the use of the R-word (find information about R-word logos at <http://www.r-word.org/r-word-resources.aspx>.)
- Teaching others about the use of respectful words, and including information on stopping use of the R-word as part of your school’s behavior expectations.
- If school policies allow, sharing information about the campaign via social media or the school website. Consider writing a blog, developing a podcast, or including information in the school newsletter.

\_\_\_4. Develop a plan.

- Schedule R-word Campaign activities.
- Create a plan for each task that needs to be completed, including deadlines, and a list of who is responsible for carrying out each step. Arrange for inclusive co-chairs (one student with an intellectual disability and one without) for major tasks.
- Make sure the scheduled activities are all cleared by your teachers or principal before releasing the information to others.
- Hold a meeting with everyone who will be working a pledge station, and provide them with talking points and discussion topics.

\_\_\_5. Ask your teacher to help you check with your State Special Olympics office for R-word stickers, posters, banners and other items to use at the pledge station. Also, check the resources available here:  
<http://www.r-word.org/r-word-resources.aspx>,

\_\_\_6. Be sure to track the number of pledges signed, number of people involved, and highlights of success stories. Ask your mathematics teacher for help with identifying statistics about the pledges. Talk with your Leadership Team about sharing this information with your board of education. Consider asking the local newspaper to share this information with the community.

Whole School Engagement

**Fans in the Stands™**  
Fans in the Stands is a program that ensures every student or team has fans who cheer for them at every game, rain or shine, win or lose. Fans in the Stands promote unity, acceptance, empowerment, respect, inclusion, pride, confidence and fun—for both the athletes and the fans!

\_\_\_1. Identify students who may be interested in being Fans in the Stands. This effort may be organized by the Unified Club, one of the interdisciplinary teams, or other groups at the school.

\_\_\_2. Develop a calendar of all intramural, interscholastic, Special Olympics and Unified Sports events that will take place during each semester.

\_\_\_3. Publicize Fans in the Stands and dates of cheering events. Ask staff to attend and assist with communications through announcements, the school website and school newsletter.

\_\_\_4. Identify students who will take responsibility for ensuring cheering fans are present at each event. You might set up a table in the cafeteria or in the front hall before school where students can sign up to be Fans in the Stands.

\_\_\_5. Prior to each event, create items such as posters, signs and banners to encourage the team. Create special cheers and chants to support the teams.

Whole School Engagement

**Unified Sports Day or Unified Sports Festival**  
Organize a Unified Sports Day or Unified Sports Festival at the school with inclusive sports activities for the student body.

\_\_\_1. Meet with the principal to get approval and administrative support. Share the goals and possible activities. Be sure to stress the positive impact the event can have on creating a socially inclusive school climate.

\_\_\_2. Work with the physical education teachers or Unified Sports coach/team members to organize activities and make accommodations to ensure all activities are accessible to all students.

\_\_\_3. Develop a plan.

- Set the date and time for the day’s activities.
- Decide which activities will be included, determine whether the day will focus on a specific sport, and identify how all students will have equitable opportunities to participate.
- Create a plan for each task that needs to be completed, including deadlines and a list of who is responsible for carrying out each step.
- Make sure everyone is involved.
- Make sure the date, time and location are all cleared with the necessary school personnel before releasing the information to others.

\_\_\_4. Publicize the United Sports Day to your school and community. Reach out to the local newspaper and radio station. Include information about the event on the local access television.

Unified Sports

Unified Clubs

A Unified Club is a school club that is focused on Unified Champion Schools activities and is recognized as a formal club by the school. It teams students of all abilities through sports activities, and social and recreational opportunities to build friendships and collaborate on projects and activities.

1. Make personal invitations to students with and without intellectual disabilities who are interested in making your school a place of acceptance. Identify a core group of 3-5 students who can serve as a student advisory committee during the initial setup stages of the club, and provide leadership after it is established.

2. Work with the student advisory committee and your club advisor to establish the club. While adults provide guidance, the students should provide primary club leadership.

- Find out the school’s requirements for starting a club; be sure to follow the steps for approval.
- Develop a presentation that includes why it is important to have a socially inclusive student club and what type of events you plan to do. Include facts and identify the issue(s) the club will address within the school. It is important to explain how this club can impact students and improve your school.
- Work with your principal to have the socially inclusive student club designated as a formal school club, following all rules and policies that are expected of other clubs in the school.
- Set up a structure for the club, including the election of members to leadership roles (e.g., chair, secretary, treasurer). When possible, establish co-leaders, having students with and without intellectual disabilities partner to serve as club officers or committee chairs.
- Make sure that all members have roles to address.
- Ensure someone is designated to:
  - o Be the liaison with the Inclusive Leadership Team and your state’s Special Olympics office, as needed.
  - o Keep track of funds and project costs.
  - o Maintain membership records and take meeting notes.

3. Have an introductory meeting with the advisory committee and club advisor to determine key guidelines for the club.

- How often will the club meet?
- When will the club meet, and for how long? Use time during the school day as much as possible.
- Where will the club meet?
- Is there money for activities? Does your school allocate money for clubs? Does your State Special Olympics office have money to support club activities? Ask your teacher if there are grant opportunities. Are there fundraising opportunities?
- How will the club make decisions?

4. Identify issues important to club members. Determine how the club members will make decisions.

Student Advisory Committee

Come up with a plan to recruit members and engage them in the club:

- Invite friends, teammates and other interested students to join the club.
- Advertise the club through posters, announcements, school paper or other communications. You might coordinate with art classes to make colorful posters. Include time and place for meetings, and describe the types of activities you will be doing.
- If allowed, use social media to promote the club. Include information about the club, pictures and descriptions of past activities, and updates on any upcoming activities. Invite students from your school to stay up-to-date with the club’s activities.
- Talk to the special education teacher(s) in your school to help involve students with disabilities. Ask them to share club information with students and assist you with any advice you may need for recruiting students with disabilities.

Hold your first meeting:

- Establish an agenda for the meeting.
- Provide a description of the club and its purpose.
- Include an icebreaker or get-to-know-you activity at the first meeting to start establishing friendships among club members.
- Have the student advisory committee introduce themselves and explain their roles.
- Distribute a membership form to obtain contact information from each member.
- Establish club routines and guidelines for interacting and collaborating, which ensures everyone is meaningfully engaged.
- Brainstorm ideas for future activities.
- Discuss ideas for committees to get everyone involved and provide more opportunities for leadership.
- Share the dates of upcoming meetings and activities, and give closing remarks.
- Remind members of the next meeting and encourage them to recruit additional members.

Develop a list of activities to build into initial meetings:

- Talk with your teacher or advisor about including disabilities awareness training as part of one of your first few meetings. This will ensure all participants have a better understanding of different disabilities so that students can better support one another.
- Identify other information or activities you want to include in the first meetings to address social inclusion in your school.

Use your regularly scheduled meeting to further enhance the skills of club members. Meetings should be led by the student advisory committee, but find opportunities for all students to take leadership roles during the meeting.

- Always welcome new members or interested students.
- Discuss ideas with the group. Be certain each individual has the opportunity to share his or her thoughts.
- If you see one individual controlling the conversation or leadership of the group, pause and ask others about their opinions on the topic.
- Provide all members with notes of the meeting and action items to be completed through social media or other established forms of communication.



Making Existing Clubs Inclusive

Talk with the members and advisor of an existing school club about making it an inclusive club. Help the club to include diverse students or student groups as members, including students with and without intellectual disabilities. Engage your inclusive club in the following steps:

- 1. Work with your teachers to schedule a meeting with the Unified Champion School Leadership Team to discuss making more clubs at your school inclusive. Be prepared to discuss a timeline for recruiting, organizing and preparing for the activity.
- 2. Talk with your principal about social inclusion and why it is important for students with disabilities to be included in school clubs.
- 3. Speak with club advisors and officers about the value of inclusive youth leadership and how it supports and enhances their goals.
- 4. Connect with the club members to better understand their current work. Ask them the following questions:
  - What is the club’s mission?
  - What type of work are you currently doing?
  - Are students with intellectual disabilities members of the club?
  - How might the club improve by including students with disabilities?
  - How might the school improve by having clubs with more diverse student representation?
- 5. Work with the club members to increase their understanding of social inclusion and gain skills in collaborating with different students. Club members might find it helpful to lead activities from the Special Olympics curriculum found at the link below and click on “Middle School”  
[http://resources.specialolympics.org/unified-champion-schools-resources/?\\_ga=2.125056642.985354402.1507557185-1542624116.1491931800&\\_gac=1.229657326.1506348744.CjwKCAjw0qLOBRBUEiwAMG5xMM62VWLzwxYdYXYrz0jx9iMvL4cu-JfCo3MZZbMTd4PCIOhPJGnNB0CJ1YQAvD\\_BwE#section14](http://resources.specialolympics.org/unified-champion-schools-resources/?_ga=2.125056642.985354402.1507557185-1542624116.1491931800&_gac=1.229657326.1506348744.CjwKCAjw0qLOBRBUEiwAMG5xMM62VWLzwxYdYXYrz0jx9iMvL4cu-JfCo3MZZbMTd4PCIOhPJGnNB0CJ1YQAvD_BwE#section14).
- 6. If there is a selection process for the club, revise guidelines to include students with intellectual disabilities and other diverse groups in the club’s membership.
- 7. Have a team meeting to discuss the club and identify students who are interested in being part of the club. You might also consider requesting that teachers ask their students if they are interested.
- 8. Make posters about the club and hang them in the hallways, and include messages in the daily announcements to gain interest.
- 9. Ensure all students are provided leadership and co-leadership opportunities. Work with your teachers to increase skills in decision-making.

Unified Sports Competitive & Player Development Models

There are differences between the three Unified Sports models, and how the models are implemented will depend on the sport or how the school is organized. The following checklists serve as a good starting point for creating Unified Sports opportunities. Whether your school is rural, urban or suburban, the following activities provide ideas that can be adjusted to suit your needs and interests.

Work with your teachers or principal on these tasks.

- 1. Contact your State Special Olympics office to begin the process of forming a Unified Sports team at your school.
- 2. Select a sport; identify when students will start playing and where the sport will be played.
- 3. Identify an adult coach and others who can support the team in different ways.
- 4. Have all Unified Sports coaches complete training requirements for coaches. A free online course is available at <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/36000/coaching-unified-sports>.
- 5. Recruit teammates with and without intellectual disabilities. Ensure there is a meaningful role for each student who is interested in participating (e.g., teammate, assistant coach, fan, manager).
  - a) Competitive: Use a targeted approach to recruit students without disabilities who will be of similar ability as students with disabilities and will be committed to the team.
  - b) Player Development: Recruit students without disabilities who will be of similar age as students with disabilities and be committed to the team.
- 6. Ask interested teammates/parents to complete and submit required participation forms.
- 7. Secure logistics and set a team schedule:
  - a) Work with the school’s athletic director or principal to identify the team practice schedule, transportation (if necessary), equipment, uniforms and facility needs.
  - b) Develop a schedule for intramural or interscholastic games.
- 8. Conduct a team orientation meeting (this could include parents).
- 9. Hold regular practices and competitions.
- 10. Ensure the Unified Sports teams receive the same kind of support as other teams in the school, including pep rallies, Fans in the Stands, recognition letters.

## Unified Sports Recreation Model

- \_\_\_1. Schedule a meeting with the Unified Champion School Leadership Team to discuss getting Unified Sports started in your school. Develop a timeline for recruiting, organizing and preparing for the activity.
- \_\_\_2. Contact your State Special Olympics office to begin the process of initiating a Unified Sports activity at your school.
- \_\_\_3. Choose the sport/activity you will implement and when/where it will take place.
- \_\_\_4. Recruit an adult and identify others who can support the activity in different ways.
- \_\_\_5. Have all coaches complete training requirements. A free online course is available at <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/36000/coaching-unified-sports>. Your principal can help with this.
- \_\_\_6. Recruit participants with and without intellectual disabilities. Ensure there will be a meaningful role for each student who is interested in participating.
- \_\_\_7. Ask interested students/parents to complete and submit required participation forms.
- \_\_\_8. Secure logistics and set a schedule:
  - Work with the school's athletic director or principal to identify the schedule, transportation, equipment, uniforms and facility needs.
- \_\_\_9. Conduct an orientation meeting (this could include parents).
- \_\_\_10. Get together on a scheduled regular basis.





# Examples of Advisor-Advisee or Classroom Discussions

Special Olympics Activities and Lessons  
Grades 6-8

At this level, these activities work to fulfill this age group’s need for affirmation and peer relationships. The first activity asks individuals to think about the different pieces of themselves. This discussion also addresses the concept of labeling, and the hurtfulness of name-calling, like the use of the word, “retard(ed).” Individuals are given an opportunity to experience the difficulties and frustrations of people with intellectual disabilities, and are challenged to consider their own reactions and responses to bullying.

The activities in this section are based more on discussion and experiences, and therefore, would be most effective in a homeroom or advisor-advisee setting; or they could be combined with more physically-oriented team-building exercises. The group is asked to think critically about their environment, and work to brainstorm, plan and execute an initiative to improve their school and community.



## Lesson 1: SO...What’s the Challenge?

### OPENING

Write the following quote on a chalkboard or poster board and have it on display as students arrive. “There are all kinds of courage. It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.” Harry Potter fans will recognize the quote from Dumbledore in “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone.” Have students discuss or write in their journal: What does this quote mean to me? Do I agree or disagree with it? How does it relate to an experience in my life?

### TEAM-UP ACTIVITY

Explain to the group that they will be brainstorming about the different pieces of themselves. Divide participants into five different groups and assign each group to think about one category: physical traits, personality traits, interests, things I’m proud of, or things I’d like to work on. Explain that each individual has to think of one word to describe himself or herself, but the word should be based on the category assigned to that group. Have people share (or act out/demonstrate) their identifying word. Ask the groups: What would it be like if you were only identified and judged by one characteristic of yourself? What were your reactions to the different categories?

### REFLECTION

Talk to the group about the power that one word can have as a label on other people. Ask how many people have heard the word, “retard(ed)” before. Do they hear the R-word used in movies or songs? How about in school? Have they used it? Is it just as bad to remain quiet when someone is calling someone a “retard” as it is to use the term yourself? How does this relate to Dumbledore’s quote?

### ACTION

Have the group reflect in their journals (either with words or pictures) about an experience from their own lives—at school or in their community—when they:

- Discriminated against someone.
- Stood by quietly as a friend discriminated against someone.
- Were a victim of discrimination.

## Lesson 2: Changing Perceptions

### OPENING

Ask the group if they think it is actually possible to reverse the trends of intolerance related to intellectual disabilities. If so, whose responsibility is it? Have individuals complete the following sentence in their journals: “In order for my generation to help reverse stereotypes against those with intellectual disabilities...”

### TEAM-UP ACTIVITY

After discussing their answers, tell the group that you are going to give them a difficult but important assignment that they will have five minutes to finish. Explain that there will be a prize for those who complete it (the prize is important because you are trying to establish a sense of urgency and competition).

Have them either:

- Translate the following Latin phrase into English: Utviaminveniamautfaciam

Answer: Either I shall find a way or I will make one.

- Compute the following math problem: The sum of the first and twice the second is 100, and the product is a maximum. What are x and y?

- Answer: x=50, y=25

After a few minutes of trying, discreetly distribute answer sheets to some groups but not others.

### REFLECTION

Once time is up, ask students to discuss or journal their feelings about the exercise. Ask: “Did you sincerely try to complete the challenge? For those who did not get the answer sheets, did it increase your frustration when other groups got the answer and you didn’t? How might this relate to the feeling of having an intellectual disability?”

### ACTION

Share some facts about Special Olympics from the website with the group. Ask them to consider: How do sports help those with intellectual disabilities to change their perceptions of themselves? What type of impact does Special Olympics have on those who have never met someone with an intellectual disability? Tell the group to go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/SpecialOlympicsHQ> . Have them identify and share 1-2 videos with friends who may have never experienced Special Olympics.

## Lesson 3: What Does My School Look Like?

### OPENING

Ask the group to close their eyes and think about their school. Have them answer the following questions: If you were asked to describe your school using three words, what words would you choose?

Before they share their responses, divide the group into pairs and have each partner take turns trying to guess the other person’s favorite and least favorite parts of school (you can turn this into a game show style where the partners write down their answers separately and get points for how many answers they get correct about the other person).

After students compare their perspectives, ask them: “How can people who go to the same school see it from completely different perspectives?”

### TEAM-UP ACTIVITY

Tell the group they are going to spend some time thinking about how their school may look to someone with an intellectual disability. Have them work together in pairs or small groups (preferably inclusive) to think about related questions they need to have answered to better understand their school from this perspective:

- How many students at our school have intellectual disabilities?
- Are students with intellectual disabilities mainstreamed into general classes?
- Are there staff members dedicated to those with intellectual disabilities?
- Are students with intellectual disabilities encouraged/allowed to sign up for sports teams, clubs and special programs? If so, do they participate?
- What are the perceptions of other students regarding those with intellectual disabilities? Do they interact during classes, sit together during lunch, participate in extracurricular activities?
- Are there opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to interact and get to know one another?
- Do students with intellectual disabilities feel welcomed and included at school?

### REFLECTION

Have the groups brainstorm about what they would do with an unlimited budget to make their school more inclusive toward those with intellectual disabilities. Have them write about and describe the programs they would implement and the strengths and weaknesses of each. If they could only choose one, which would they choose?

### ACTION

Have the groups share their ideas with one another and select a few ideas that they might be able to work on together. Have them discuss strategies about how to put these ideas in place, the steps needed as they move forward, and how they can measure their success.



## Lesson 4: How Can I Create Change? Project

### OPENING

Share Eunice Kennedy Shriver’s opening remarks for the 1987 Special Olympics World Games. She said, “You are the stars and the world is watching you. By your presence, you send a message to every village, every city, every nation. A message of hope. A message of victory. The right to play on any playing field? You have earned it. The right to study in any school? You have earned it. The right to hold a job? You have earned it. The right to be anyone’s neighbor? You have earned it.”

### REFLECTION

Individuals should engage in reflection throughout the project, making regular entries into their journals. They should explore changes in their knowledge, skills and/or attitudes. What did you learn? What is the most satisfying aspect of working together? What surprised you? Have you accomplished your goals? How did the experience make you feel? How have you helped others? Are there other ways that you can continue to help?

### ACTION

Ask the group to think about these three questions: What is? What could be? How can I make it happen? Help them brainstorm: What are the current needs in the Special Olympics community? How can we use our leadership skills to promote inclusion and acceptance for everyone in our community? How would you describe “what is” with regard to tolerance and inclusion in school? Do you think “what is” is good enough? What improvements could be made? Ask the group to reflect on the previous activities. Describe the opportunities to make a difference in their school or community. List their ideas, and help them plan out their ideas and work out the steps to make them happen. Projects can be small (write and perform a cheer or song for another Special Olympics team), or large-scale (work together to develop a youth-led rally for respect).





CO-LEADERS/CO-LEADERSHIP

Two or more people who communicate and collaborate to achieve a shared goal. In Special Olympics, co-leadership can take many forms. One example is when two people decide to start a Unified Club together. While the two people may have different responsibilities within the club, they both work toward the same goal of leading a successful club. With Unified Champion Schools, the goal is for one co-leader to be a student with an intellectual disability and the other to be a student without an intellectual disability.

FANS IN THE STANDS

A formal way of encouraging students to support and cheer on students with and without intellectual disabilities at Unified Sports or Special Olympics events.

INCLUSIVE SPORTS

A fully inclusive sports or fitness program that combines an approximately equal number of students with and without intellectual disabilities. Examples include such things as Unified Sports, Unified PE or Unified intramurals. Special Olympics Unified Sports and Special Olympics Young Athletes are examples of inclusive sports.

INTERGENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Youth and adults work together to implement the Unified Champion Schools program through shared goals that are owned collectively.

INCLUSIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Students with and without intellectual disabilities working together to lead and plan advocacy, awareness and other Special Olympics-related inclusive activities throughout the school year. Examples include such things as Unified Clubs or a similar type of inclusive student group. The clubs are supported by an adult liaison and offer leadership opportunities and/or training for students with and without disabilities.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ACTIVITIES AND LESSONS EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

A number of lessons, activities, and resources that teach students of all ages about respect and acceptance of differences, while providing them with the tools to serve as active agents for change in not only their school, but also the community.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools is a comprehensive program of the Unified Schools strategy that combines Unified Sports, inclusive youth leadership and whole school engagement to create the greatest impact. This model is implemented in the United States. After first reference, it can be referred to as Unified Champion Schools.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SCHOOLS

Special Olympics Unified Schools refers to the larger global schools strategy to engage youth. It is the strategy for promoting social inclusion among youth with and without intellectual disabilities, reaching out to youth where they spend the majority of their time—at school.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED SPORTS®

A fully-inclusive sports or fitness program that combines an approximately equal number of students with and without intellectual disabilities. Examples include such things as interscholastic Unified Sports, Unified PE or Unified intramurals. These activities occur throughout the school year with the support of an adult coach, and include opportunities for competition.

SPREAD THE WORD TO END THE WORD/R-WORD CAMPAIGN

A set of resources and tools to help students eradicate the hurtful and harmful use of language that demeans and diminishes others.

UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

A group that takes responsibility to design, implement and sustain socially inclusive strategies in the school. It is generally comprised of at least one special education student and one general education student; at least one special education teacher and one general education teacher; at least one school staff member/counselor/social worker; and the principal, assistant principal or other school-level administrator.

WHOLE SCHOOL AWARENESS

Awareness and education activities that promote inclusion and reach the majority of the school population. Examples include such things as Spread the Word to End the Word (R-word) Campaigns, pep rallies or Fans in the Stands for Unified Sports teams, Respect Campaigns or student fundraising. Ideally, students with and without disabilities are involved in planning and leading awareness events with the support of an adult in the school.

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

Youth between the ages of 10 and 15 who individually develop at varying times and rates. As a whole group, they reflect specific developmental characteristics in the physical, cognitive, moral, psychological and social-emotional dimensions.

YOUNG ATHLETES™

The Young Athletes program was created to reach out to children with and without intellectual disabilities ages 2 to 7 and introduce them to the world of sport, with the goal of preparing them for Special Olympics training and competition. It is conducted as an inclusive program, and is often part of a Unified Champion School at the elementary or preschool level.

YOUTH ACTIVATION COMMITTEE

A Youth Activation Committee (YAC) is made up of young people who work together to promote school communities where all young people are agents of change. A YAC can be district-based, state-based, national or regional.



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