

SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

FALL 2017





SPECIAL OLYMPICS MISSION

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS VISION

Sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all over the world.



OUR GOAL: A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Diversity is valued.
- Equity is demanded.
- Every student is a contributing member.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST



WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST

- Isolation
- Bullying
- Inactivity
- Obesity

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: ISOLATION

- Isolation for students with disabilities remains the norm.
 - **28%** or nearly 1 in 3 students ages 12–18 report being bullied during the school year.
 - **71%** of young people say they have seen bullying in their schools.
 - **15%** reported being bullied online or electronically.
 - **18%** were made fun of, called names or insulted.
- Students with disabilities participate less in school sponsored sports, clubs and organizations than their peers without disabilities.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: BULLYING & SAFETY CONCERNS

- When reporting bullying, youth in special education were told not to tattle almost twice as often as youth not in special education.
- Students with disabilities worry more about school safety and being injured or harassed by other peers compared to students without disabilities.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: BULLYING & SAFETY CONCERNS

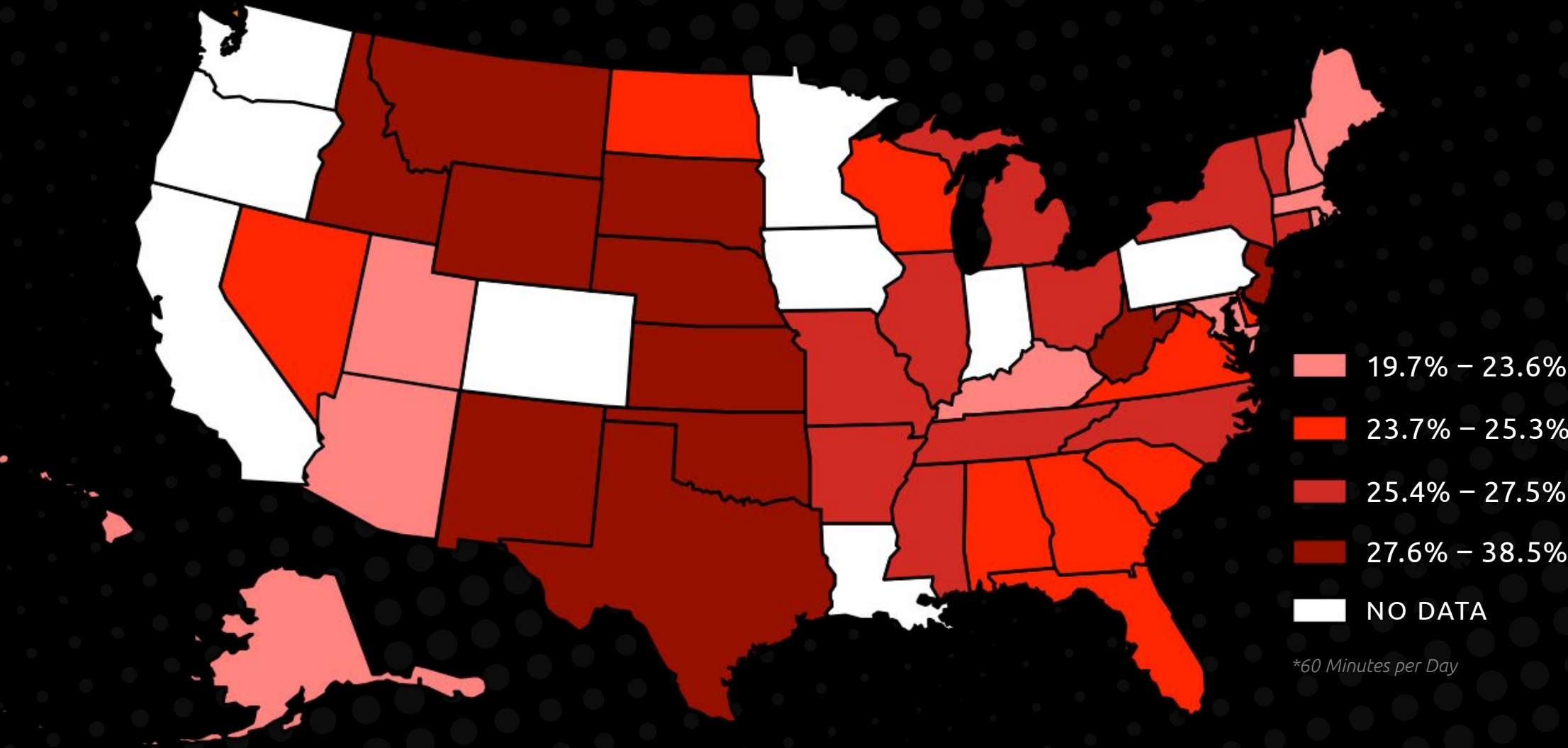
- Youth victimized by their peers were 2.4 times more likely to report suicidal ideation and 3.3 times more likely to report a suicide attempt than youth who reported not being bullied.
- 15% of high school students say they have seriously considered suicide within the last year.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: INACTIVITY & OBESITY

- Students with disabilities report rates of physical activity 4.5 times lower than their peers without disabilities.
- Only 29% of high school students are engaging in the recommended amount of daily physical activity.

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: INACTIVITY & OBESITY

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ENGAGING IN THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNT OF DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY*



*60 Minutes per Day

WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST: MOST EDUCATORS RECOGNIZE THESE CHALLENGES

UNSAFE & UNSUPPORTIVE
SCHOOL CLIMATES — BULLYING

FEAR OF DIFFERENCE & DISABILITY
& MISUNDERSTANDING OF ABILITIES

DISENGAGED STUDENTS

NEGLECT & INJUSTICE

ABSENCE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

ISOLATION OF PEOPLE WITH
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

OBESITY AND OTHER
HEALTH-RELATED PROBLEMS

POOR HEALTH & INACTIVITY

INTOLERANCE + INJUSTICE + INACTIVITY

HOW DO WE OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES?



Special Olympics **Unified Champion Schools**



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS

A strategy to activate youth, engage educators, and promote school communities of acceptance and inclusion where all young people are agents of change.



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: OBJECTIVES

- Create schools of acceptance.
- Promote positive attitudes and behaviors.



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: OBJECTIVES

- Increase participation in school-based unified sports.
- Increase youth involvement at the school, local and state level.
- Promote social inclusion for individuals with and without ID.

UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CORE PROCESSES	OPERATIONAL PROCESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="603 730 1019 774">• Youth Leadership<li data-bbox="603 878 1456 921">• Creating and Sustaining Relationships<li data-bbox="603 1025 1127 1069">• Unifying Programming<li data-bbox="603 1173 1379 1216">• School/Community Collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1617 748 2002 791">• Communication<li data-bbox="1617 895 2236 939">• Professional Development<li data-bbox="1617 1043 2211 1086">• Continuous Improvement

UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: RESPONDS TO THESE CHALLENGES

UNSAFE & UNSUPPORTIVE
SCHOOL CLIMATES — BULLYING

LESSONS & ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE
UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENCES

DISENGAGED STUDENTS

YOUTH LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

ABSENCE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

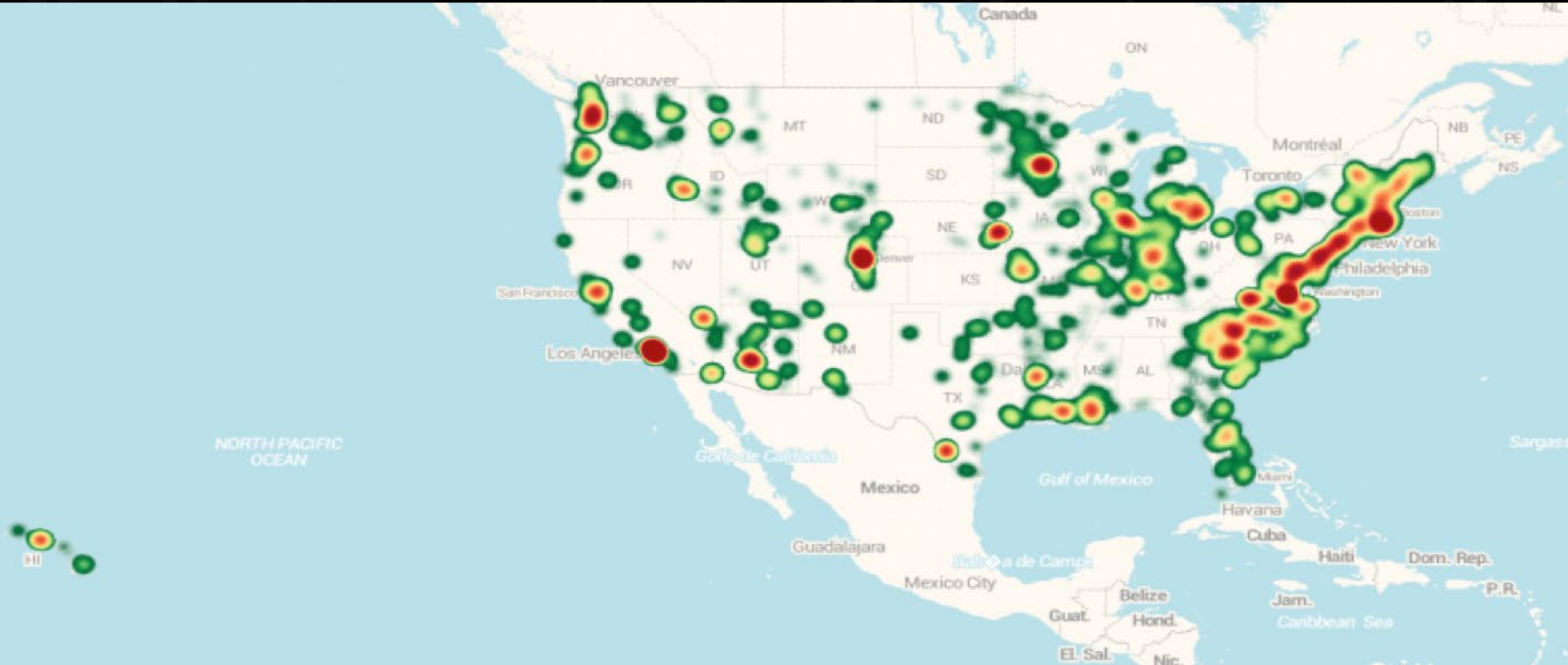
PROGRAMMING DESIGNED &
MEANT FOR **ALL** STUDENTS

OBESITY & OTHER
HEALTH-RELATED PROBLEMS

UNIFIED SPORTS

TOLERANCE + JUSTICE + ACTIVITY

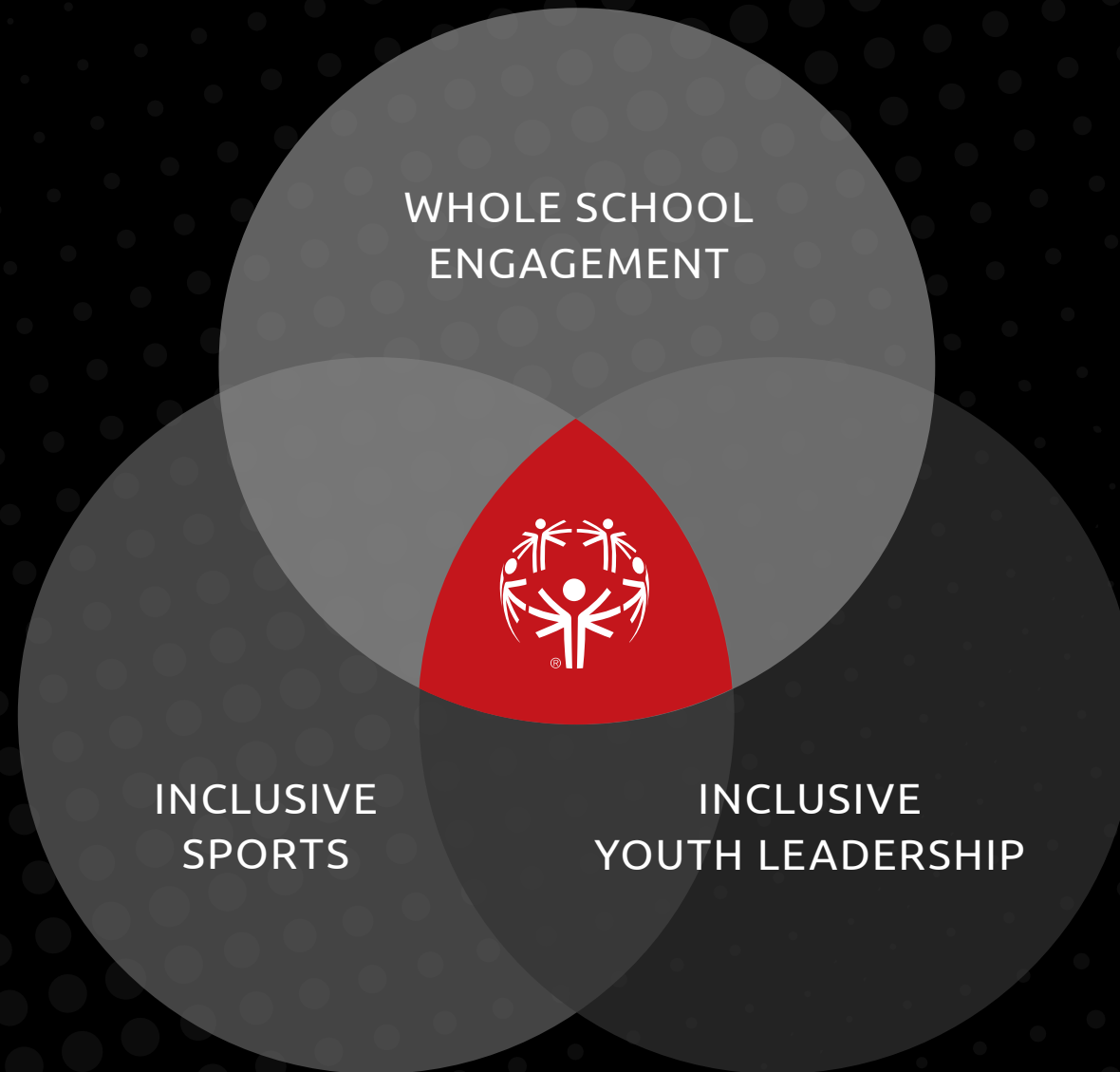
UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: DENSITY HEAT MAP



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

“Past evaluations have found that Whole School Awareness activities are important for reaching the greatest number of students, and have the most direct impact on students’ perceptions and attitudes toward inclusion in the school and classroom settings. However, the smaller team- or club-based activities (i.e., Inclusive Youth Leadership Clubs and Unified Sports) can provide students with more meaningful social interactions with their peers with disabilities, which allow students to personally gain the most from their involvement. Therefore, Unified Champion Schools program activities have maximum impact on students and schools when activities from each of the three core experiences are offered in concert with one another.”

UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: CORE COMPONENTS



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSITION

SPECIAL OLYMPICS "PIPELINE"



IMPACT & DATA

IMPACT & DATA: KEY FINDINGS

STUDENTS WITHOUT ID	STUDENTS WITH ID
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive attitudes toward their peers• More tolerant• Realize the impact of their words & actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feel welcome• Are routinely included• Feel they are a valued part of all activities
STUDENTS WITH & WITHOUT ID	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than three quarters of students who got to know a student with a disability through their participation in Unified strategy activities considered this person to be their friend.	

IMPACT & DATA: KEY FINDINGS

- **72%** of involved teachers/school staff believe participation in Unified Champion Schools program has made a big difference in increasing the confidence of students with disabilities.
- **81%** of students learn about the challenges of being a leader.
- **84%** of students become better at sharing responsibility.
- **84%** of students learn the pro-social skills of patience and compromise.
- **65%** of students felt they learned they have things in common with their peers with intellectual disabilities.
- **76%** of students say that participation in the Unified Champion Schools program had an impact on their plans for the future.

IMPACT & DATA: KEY FINDINGS

Staff of Unified Champion Schools perceived their school community, compared to schools without UCS programming, to have higher levels of:

- Social and emotional security
- Social and civic learning
- Respect for diversity
- School connectedness & engagement



IMPACT & DATA: LASTING IMPACT

- There is a strong relationship between school connectedness and important outcomes such as regular school attendance and staying in school.
- 92% of school liaisons feel that the Unified Schools strategy has made a big impact in creating a more inclusive school environment.
- 86% of liaisons feel the Unified Schools strategy has made a big impact in reducing bullying and teasing in their schools.
- 97% of high school seniors say that the Unified Champion School program is changing their school for the better.



IMPACT & DATA: LASTING IMPACT

- 70% of graduates keep in contact with athletes after graduation.
- Graduates gain leadership skills that carry into their present lives.
- 75% of graduates say participation has influenced future plans.



IMPACT & DATA: REACH

- Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools has a presence in more than 5,000 schools across 46 states and the District of Columbia.
- As many as 3.5 million young people are taking part in inclusive experiences through the Unified Champion Schools program with 3.9 million different opportunities offered across the country.
- During the 2016–2017 school year, over 290,000 students were provided with opportunities to participate in inclusive sports through Special Olympics Unified Sports.



UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS: OUR CHALLENGE TO YOU

[Click to play video](#)

THANK YOU

