



Getting Started Checklist

Making Existing Clubs Inclusive

As part of a school's commitment to social inclusion, it may decide to make existing clubs more inclusive of students with and without intellectual disabilities. This involves more than simply saying club membership is open to all. Rather, it is an intentional effort to ensure that all students have opportunities for meaningful participation in clubs. It also requires student and adult club leaders to commit to social inclusion as a school norm.

Making existing school clubs more inclusive may be a goal of the Unified Champion Schools leadership team or of the Unified Club. It could be led by the existing student government group or by staff advisors. Importantly, it likely will take more than a single school year and is a powerful way to demonstrate sustained inclusive youth leadership.

- 1. Identify which current school clubs**, if any, are inclusive and learn about their efforts.
- 2. Speak with club advisors and student officers/leaders** about the value of inclusive youth leadership and how it aligns with and enhances their goals.
- 3. Connect with the club members** to better understand their current work. Ask them:
 - What is the club's mission?
 - What type of work/activities are you currently doing?
 - How might the club benefit from including students with disabilities?
 - How might the school benefit from having clubs with more diverse student participation?
- 4. Work with the club members** to increase their understanding of social inclusion and help them learn about collaborating with students of all abilities. Club members may find it helpful to lead activities from the [Generation Unified website](#).
- 5. If there is a selection process for the club** (like voting for student government representatives,) guide members to establish a selection protocol or revise the policy to intentionally include students with intellectual disabilities and others in the club's membership.
- 6. Start recruiting new members!** Specifically visit inclusive general education and special education classrooms to identify students who are interested in being part of the club. Engage both staff and students in identifying and recruiting potential new members.
- 7. Check in with adult and student club leaders regularly** to ensure all members of the club are provided leadership and co-leadership opportunities. Use Special Olympics Inclusive Youth Leadership resources to identify training and activities for clubs.