

# Basics of Unified Sports

Ways to get involved with Unified Sports in Ohio

***Special Olympics***

*Ohio*



# What are Unified Sports?

***Special Olympics***

*Ohio*



# Who has participated in Unified Sports?

***Special Olympics***

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# What are Unified Sports?



An inclusive sports program that combines individuals with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and individuals without intellectual disabilities (Unified Partners) on sports teams for training and competition



# Benefits of Unified Sports

- Learn new sports
- Develop higher-level sports skills and knowledge
- Have new competition experiences
- Experience meaningful inclusion as each athlete is ensured of playing a valued role on the team
- Socialize with peers and form friendships
- Breaks down stereotypes surrounded around individuals with intellectual disabilities

# Models of Unified Sports



## 1. Competitive

- ▶ Similar Age and ability levels; equal partner and athletes
- ▶ Developed sufficient sport-specific skills and tactics
- ▶ No modification of official Sport Rules
- ▶ Advancement beyond program level
- ▶ Training for competition/season

# Models of Unified Sports



## 2. Player Development

- ▶ Similar Age; equal partner and athletes
- ▶ Not similar ability levels
- ▶ Rules modifications define player roles and ensure meaningful involvement
- ▶ No advancement beyond program level
- ▶ Training for competition/season

# Models of Unified Sports



## 3. Recreation

- ▶ Preferred composition 25% athlete/partner ratio
- ▶ Not similar ability levels
- ▶ Rules modifications define player roles and ensure meaningful involvement
- ▶ No advancement beyond program level
- ▶ Training for competition/season



# Unified Sports in Ohio



## Community Based Unified Sports

Unified Sports are offered for the following state competitions:

- ▶ Alpine Skiing
- ▶ Athletics
- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Bocce
- ▶ Bowling
- ▶ Cycling
- ▶ Figure Skating
- ▶ Golf
- ▶ Nordic Skiing
- ▶ Roller skating
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Softball
- ▶ Speed Skating
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Volleyball

# Unified Sports In Ohio



## Collegiate Unified Sports

Unified Sports at the college level combines college students and local Special Olympics athletes on the same team to compete against other college Unified Sports teams. The following universities participate in Unified Sports:

- ▶ Ashland University
- ▶ Kent State University
- ▶ Ohio State University
- ▶ University of Akron
- ▶ University of Toledo
- ▶ Walsh University



# Unified Sports In Ohio



## Interscholastic Unified Sports

# Unified Sports In Ohio



## Unified Champion Schools

The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools (UCS) program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities.

### **3 Components of Unified Champion Schools:**

1. Inclusive Sports– Unified Sports
2. Whole School Engagement
3. Inclusive Leadership

To become a nationally recognized Unified Champion School, schools must apply by showing that successfully meet each of these components.



# THIS IS YOUR RECRUITMENT LETTER

# Unified Sports Experience: Pickleball

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# Pickleball Rules



- ▶ The game begins with one side serving the pickleball, using the paddle to hit the pickleball.
- ▶ To properly serve the ball, the player must keep one foot behind the back line and strike the ball with an underhand swing
- ▶ For Unified Pickleball, both players get to serve once, and then the serve is taken over by the opposing team.
- ▶ Both sides must allow the pickleball to bounce first before hitting it with the paddle at least one time from the start of the game. Thereafter, players may volley the ball (hit it without allowing it to bounce).
- ▶ A player or team scores points only when they are serving. A pickleball game is played to 11 points and a win must be by two points.
- ▶ Similar to tennis, the following moves are faults in the game of pickleball, which cause a loss of a point:
  - ▶ Failing to clear the net.
  - ▶ Hitting the ball out of bounds.
  - ▶ Volleying the ball before it has bounced on a first serve or first return

Thank you.

Side by Side, Unified

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