



Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®

2024-25 Unified Champion Schools Grant Application

Special Olympics Maine is pleased to offer a grant for the 2024-25 school year to schools across Maine who utilize the Unified Champion Schools strategy to promote social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting system-wide change. With sports as the foundation, the three-component model offers a unique combination of effective activities that equip young people with tools and training to create sports, classrooms and school climates of acceptance. These are school climates where students with disabilities feel welcome and are routinely included in, and feel a part of, all activities, opportunities and functions.

This is accomplished by implementing inclusive sports, inclusive youth leadership opportunities, and whole school engagement. Unified Champion Schools is designed to be woven into the fabric of the school, enhancing current efforts and providing rich opportunities that lead to meaningful change in creating a socially inclusive school that supports and engages all learners.

Together we are creating a *Unified Generation* that **Chooses to Include**. [Join us.](#)

Unified Champion Schools combines three main components:

Each school must include each of the three Unified Champion Schools components as part of their grant proposal.

1. Unified Sports: This means two things in Unified Champion Schools:

- ✓ Students with intellectual disabilities are provided with the opportunity to participate in sports.
- ✓ Students with and without intellectual disabilities participate in sports alongside each other – inclusively. Students develop exceptional athletic skills while forming friendships, fostering respect for each other, and becoming leaders on and off the court.

2. Inclusive Youth Leadership & Advocacy: Opportunities for youth with and without intellectual disabilities to become agents of change within their school, community, and state.

3. Whole School Engagement: An important feature of creating a socially inclusive school climate is engaging the entire school community in the process.

Unified Champion Schools Resources

For more information on Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools, Special Olympics Maine and related initiatives visit:

- [Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools](#)
- [Special Olympics Maine Unified Champion Schools](#)
- [Generation Unified](#)

2024-25 Grant Opportunities

Special Olympics Maine is providing funding to schools across Maine to support the implementation of Special Olympics Maine's Unified Champion Schools strategy for the 2024-25 school calendar year (9/3/2024-6/13/25). Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2025 or until funding is exhausted.

Grant Eligibility

1. School must be an elementary school, middle school, high School or college/university in Maine.

2. Schools must implement the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools 3 component strategy (Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership & Whole School Engagement) on their campus.
Note: Students and teachers are encouraged to work together in developing proposals, with the expectation that youth will lead whenever possible.
3. Schools are eligible to apply for 2 consecutive years of funding (schools that have received 2 years of funding are not eligible to apply, unless applying to establish a new Unified Champion Schools program).

Grant Guidelines

School applicants must be able to meet the following guidelines:

1. School applications must focus on all three main components of Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools and will require schools to meet the requirements of a Unified Champion School by the end of the school year.
 - ✓ Unified Sports
 - ✓ Inclusive Youth Leadership & Advocacy
 - ✓ Whole School Engagement
2. Schools must showcase how students with and without intellectual disabilities will be involved in the planning, implementation, and participation in Unified Champion Schools initiatives.
3. Each School must have a Unified Champion Schools School Leadership Team or demonstrate a plan in place to establish one within the school year. The team will be responsible for establishing the vision and overarching goals for the school, coordinating early stages of implementation, and working with leaders of specific events. The team will also monitor the success of the strategy, with an eye toward continuous improvement.
4. Application must be submitted by April 1, 2025.
*Partnerships with local community groups, businesses and organizations are strongly encouraged

Grant Expectations & Requirements

School applicants must be able to meet the following expectations and requirements, if selected.

1. Plan Implementation: schools will implement their plan as proposed in their application.
2. Documentation: schools will be asked to document (photos, video, written updates/journal, social media posts etc) their engagement in their proposed plan
3. Project Evaluation: schools are asked to complete National and State level surveys capturing what worked. What would you change? What improvements would you make? What challenges did you face? How did you overcome them?
4. Final Report: schools must submit receipts, unused funds, and any post-project action plan to Special Olympics Maine no more than thirty (30) days after the event or activities conclude.

The Grant Application

School applications must include the following:

1. Proposal: schools will provide details on how they plan to implement all three Unified Champion Schools Components (Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership & Whole School Engagement) on its campus.
2. Budget: schools must provide a proposed budget with their application. (What expenses do you anticipate and how much will you spend on each? What is the total budget for your project? What expenses can be donated or shared?)

Grant Awards

Grant Awards will range from \$1-\$6,000.00. See funding specifics below:

- Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Basketball max request
 - Year 1 applicants - \$3,000.00
 - Year 2 applicants - \$2,000.00
- Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Bocce max request - \$1,500.00 per year
- Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Volleyball max request - \$2,000.00 per year.

- Youth Athletes Programs max request - \$1,000.00 per year
- Youth Summit max request - \$500.00 per year

Proposal Review Criteria

- Complete entire Special Olympics Maine Unified Champion Schools funding application
 - Application questions and link on next pages
- Merits/quality of proposed project
- Concise, clear and straightforward answers to the proposal questions
- Written sections show attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Strong evidence that youth have been involved in developing the proposal
- A clearly defined, appropriate budget
- A definite project timeline

Notification

- Schools will be notified of their funding decision within 2 weeks of their application submission.

Questions

Contact Erin Shultz, erins@somaine.org or 207-879-0489



Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools®

2024-25 Unified Champion Schools Grant Application Question

Review Special Olympics Maine's 2024-25 Unified Champion Schools Grant Application questions to draft your school's proposal. Once you have your school's application draft completed, submit your responses through the [online application](https://forms.gle/YRCuUHWULPQY3uPZ9) (<https://forms.gle/YRCuUHWULPQY3uPZ9>) process by the deadline on April 1, 2025.

Unified Schools - Unified Sports

1. What Unified Sport opportunities will your school be involved in?
 - ☐ SOME Unified Sports competitions/events
 - ☐ MPA Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Basketball league
 - ☐ MPA Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Bocce
 - ☐ Middle School Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Basketball
 - ☐ Unified Sports Physical Education Class
 - ☐ Unified Fitness & Health
 - ☐ Young Athletes Program
 - ☐ Other:
2. Describe your school's Unified Sports plan. Include Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of your school's Unified Sports plan.
3. Who will support you in the development and execution of the Unified Sports opportunities and how? (e.g., students, Faculty, Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent, Family members etc.)
4. How will you promote your Unified Sports opportunities to your students, faculty & community members? (e.g., school website & social media, school rally, daily announcements, newsletters etc.)

Unified School – Inclusive Youth Leadership

1. What Inclusive youth leadership opportunities will your school/students be involved in? (Youth leadership opportunities are where students with and without intellectual disabilities work together, as a team, to provide awareness and advocacy for all students while promoting respect.)
 - ☐ Unified Club
 - ☐ Unified Youth Council
 - ☐ Partners Club
 - ☐ Best Buddies
 - ☐ Other:
2. Describe your school's Inclusive Youth Leadership plan. Include the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of your school's Inclusive Youth leadership plan.
3. Who will support you in the development and execution of your school's Inclusive Youth Leadership plan and how? (e.g. students, Faculty, Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent, Family members etc.)
4. How will leadership be shared among students with and without intellectual disabilities?
5. What leadership roles will students assume through Unified Champion Schools?

6. How will you promote your Inclusive Youth Leadership plan to your student and faculty? (e.g., school website & social media, school rally, daily announcements, newsletters etc.)

Unified School - Whole School Engagement

1. What Whole School Engagement opportunities will your school be involved in?
 - ☐ Spread the Word Campaign
 - ☐ Respect Campaign/Rally
 - ☐ Fans in the Stands
 - ☐ Host a Unified Sports competition/event/game
 - ☐ Fundraising supporting Special Olympics Maine
 - ☐ Other:
2. Describe your school's Whole School Engagement Plan. Include the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of your school's Whole School Engagement plan.
3. Who will support you in the development and execution of the Whole School Engagement plan and how?
4. How will you promote your Whole School Engagement plan to your students and faculty?

Unified Schools – School Leadership Team

1. Provide information on your school's Unified Champion Schools School Leadership Team. Does your school currently have a School Leadership Team established and if so, who is a part of the team? If not, please explain how your school will work to establish a School Leadership Team.

Unified Schools - Budget Proposal

Awards will range from \$1-\$6,000.00. See examples of funding below:

- Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Basketball applicants max request - \$2,500.00 year 1 & \$2,000.00 year 2. Schools that previously received Year 1 & 2 funding - \$1,000.00 max
- Interscholastic Special Olympics Unified Bocce applicants max request per year - \$1,000.00
- Youth Athletes Programs max request per year - \$1,000.00
- Youth Summit max per year - \$500.00

<u>Line Item</u>	Amount Requested	Purpose
Coach Stipend		
Equipment (Sports Equipment)		
Officials		
Provisions (Competition meals)		
Supplies (Uniforms, T-shirts, Classroom supplies)		
Transportation		
Other		

Total Funding Request		
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1. Will your school, district or district foundation support the Unified School program with funding and/or materials to your project? Please describe. Provide any financial or in-kind support from your school or school district. In what ways will they help?
2. Describe any community, parent or local business support of the project. Include signed statements or letters of support from each.

Unified Schools - Putting it all together.

1. Please explain your school's inclusion strategy and goals and how Unified Champion Schools can help you achieve them.
2. Who will participate in and be impacted by Unified Champion Schools' initiatives?
3. Describe how you will document Unified Schools from the beginning to the end. (e.g., photos, video, develop PSAs, utilize the web or any social media?)
4. Describe your school's sustainability plan for Unified Champion Schools programs within your school after grant funding is exhausted, if approved.