

AIA Unified Sports® FACT SHEET



AIA UNIFIED SPORTS®

AIA Unified Sports® is an inclusive program, which combines students with intellectual disabilities (unified athletes) and students without intellectual disabilities (unified partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Unified athletes and unified partners compete alongside one another, each in a meaningful and integral role on the Unified Sports® team.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A partnership was formed between the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) and Special Olympics Arizona (SOAZ) to build a statewide Unified Sports® structure within Arizona's high school athletics system. Similar to any other high school sports team, AIA Unified Sports® teams are managed by the school's athletic department, and both unified athletes and unified partners are eligible to receive the same benefits and recognition as any other high school student athletes.

STUDENT ATHLETE BENEFITS AND RECOGNITION

Participation in AIA Unified Sports® empowers unified athletes and unified partners to gain a true high school athletic experience by providing opportunities to:

- Build confidence through success and positive interactions with peers
- Promote academic and social support in the classroom, in the hallways, and the overall school environment and community
- Achieve excellence and recognition through athletics in an inclusive arena
- Represent their school community by wearing school name and colors while participating in a school activity alongside peers
- Experience being part of a team through engagement in an environment that promotes camaraderie, competition and sportsmanship
- Participate in regular season league play with other AIA Unified Sports® teams
- Participation in AIA-sanctioned events (e.g. invitationals, tournaments) at the conference, regional, and state level
- Be eligible to receive JV and Varsity letters for participation in Unified high school athletics

SANCTIONED AIA UNIFIED SPORTS®

As of the 2016 - 2017 school year, the following sports are sanctioned as AIA Unified Sports® –

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| - Badminton | - Basketball | - Flag Football |
| - Floorball | - Golf | - Soccer |
| - Spiritline (Cheerleading) | - Swimming | - Track and Field |

For more information, please contact:

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