



2018 Spring Season Informational Packet

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Spring Season Calendar

APRIL

- 8th Candlepin Bowling - Woburn
Candlepin Bowling - Peabody
- 14th Coaches College Track & Field
- 16th Boston Marathon
- 22nd Swimming Qualifier - Bridgewater State
Swimming Qualifier - Milford High School
Volleyball Assessment Round – Springfield College
New England Revolution Soccer Clinic for athletes ages 16-24 years old
See Page 25 for more info

MAY

- 2nd Monument Games- Monument Mountain Regional High School
- 5th Swimming Qualifier – Boston University
Track & Field Qualifier – Brockton High School
May Games (*Track & Field / Swimming Qualifier*) – Chicopee Comprehensive High School
- 6th Gymnastics Assessment Round – MIT
- 14th TD Bank Campaign Begins
- 19th Track & Field Qualifier – Barnstable High School
- 20th Track & Field Qualifier – Milton Academy
Gymnastics Assessment Round – Bay State Gymnastics
- 27th Boston's Run to Remember
- 30th Cape Cod Torch Run

JUNE

- 2nd Glow in the Park Fun Run
- 7th Hall of Fame Induction
- 8th Summer Games Opening Ceremony – Boston University
- 9th Summer Games
- 10th Summer Games
- 22nd TD Bank Campaign Ends

2018 Spring Season Deadlines

All athletes MUST have a valid medical to begin training

All Class A's/Medicals are due no later than week before the qualifier, or they will be scratched from competition

Send all forms to Ops@SpecialOlympicsMA.org

Wednesday, April 4th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming registrations due for team attending BSU or Milford qualifiers • Volleyball registrations due • Gymnastics registrations due for teams attending GLC Meet
Wednesday, April 11th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and Field registrations due for teams attending May Games and Brockton Qualifiers • Swimming registration due for teams attending May Games (Chicopee Comp) or BU • Gymnastics registrations due for teams attending MIT Meet
Wednesday, April 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and Field registrations due for teams attending Cape Cod and Milton Qualifiers • Gymnastics registrations due for teams attending Bay State Meet • Tennis and Powerlifting registrations due
Monday, May 21st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Registrations sent to coaches
Wednesday, May 23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing forms due • Changes to Final Registrations due • All recently expiring class A/medicals, and new chaperone class A's due

Spring Season Sport Offerings

<u>Sport</u>	<u>2017 Participation Count*</u>	<u>Sport</u>	<u>2017 Participation Count*</u>
Track & Field	10,011	Swimming	758
Volleyball	368	Tennis	94
Gymnastics	86	Power Lifting	53
Roller Skating	20		

**#'s include Athletes & Unified Partners and can be found on the 2017 SOMA census that we provided to SOI. Includes both those that trained and competed and those who trained but did not compete*

Sport Rules

- Qualifying events are mandatory for all athletes and teams interested in advancing onto Season Ending Tournament (*Summer Games*)
- Events that are called invitationals are not mandatory events for advancement
- All athletes must have a valid athlete application (*medical*) in order to participate in any Special Olympics activity
- **Coaches are required to have a copy of all athlete applications at all Special Olympics activities**
- In order to participate in a SOMA event (*Invitational, State Qualifying Tournament or State Tournament*) programs must have all their registration information into SOMA by the established deadline. Failure to do so forfeits your opportunity to participate in said event.

Age Guidelines & Requirements

Individual Sports:	8-11	12-15	Team Sports:	8-12 or 8-15
	16-21	22-29		13-21
	30+			22+

- These are guidelines athletes maybe bumped up in age group to make competitive divisions. But will not be bumped up an age group that spans to age groups. Divisioning comes down to ability being the determining factor.
- Athletes age is determined by age of athlete at State Games
- Athletes must be 8 years old to compete in a Special Olympics Massachusetts State Games

Special Olympics Sports Rules

- All Special Olympic official rules can be found at http://www.specialolympics.org/Sections/Sports-and-Games/Sports_and_Games.aspx
All Special Olympic rules have been created based on National Governing Body (*NGB*) rules and NGB rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with Special Olympic modifications.

Sports Overview – Core Sport Swimming

Swimming Quota

- Summer Games –
 - 600
- For the 4x50M & 4x25M Freestyle Relay must finish in top 2 of assigned division at Qualifiers to advance on in these events.
- If #'s exceed the quota of 600, SOMA will follow guidelines outlined in Special Olympics Rules Article 1 on advancement

Swimming Rules

- USA Swimming is the NGB for the United States and the SOMA Summer Games State swimming Competition will be officiated by USA Swimming and will follow USA Swimming rules and guidelines.
- A list of common swimming disqualifications is below and posted on the Special Olympics Massachusetts Website
- SOMA is working with USA Swimming to get certified officials at the qualifying rounds

Common Swimming DQ's

Freestyle

- Walking on the bottom
- Pulling on the lane lines

Butterfly

- Non-simultaneous hand touch
- Wrong kick style (*usually flutter kick*)
- Underwater recovery of arms
- Arms in wrong plane (*usually freestyle*)

Breaststroke

- Non-simultaneous hand touch
- Wrong kick style (*usually flutter kick*)
- Arms in wrong plane

Backstroke

- Turning over before touching the wall
- Pulling lane lines
- Not swimming on back

All relays/individual events

- False starts

See USA Swimming Rules for a full listing of rules and regulations for each stroke

Sport Overview – Core Sport Track & Field

Track & Field Quota

- Summer Games –
 - 850 (*Traditional*)
 - 200 (*Unified Team Model*)
- Relay's **will not** count towards an athlete's advancement to Summer Games
- SOMA will follow guidelines outlined in Special Olympics Rules Article 1 on advancement

Track & Field Information

- Track & Field Season Information Power Point can be found at the Spring Season page of the SOMA website, under Track & Field
- Power Point details the following
 - Advancement criteria throughout all levels of play
 - Track Categories
 - Invitational offerings
- According to Special Olympics International Guideline Athletes in the 50M dash with a score/time faster than 10 seconds have mastered this event and should be pushed to achieve success in a new event.
- All field events (*shot put, softball throw, tennis ball throw, javelin*) **must be** measured in **meters**
- Athletes competing in the softball throw with a score of greater than 30 meters need to pick a new field event (*See Softball throw info on page 10*)

Unified Track and Field

- Unified Track and Field will be conducted as a team model.
- Unified Track will be a one day track meet at Boston University's Nickerson Field
- All Unified Track teams may stay for the weekend and participate in all extracurricular events.

Sport Overview – Core Sport Track & Field

Updated Registration Categories – Traditional Track & Field

- Athletes must register for one of the following categories and may participate in up to three events within that category. **May not** cross categories
- **UPDATED 2018** – Categories have been reduced to be more reflective of athlete's abilities and are based off USA & World Games track categories.
- **UPDATED 2018** – Wheelchair athletes are not restricted to Category 1 - Developmental events. If a wheelchair athlete can do the distance then they can register for events in other categories
- **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that an athlete register for one field, one track and a relay. This will eliminate the risk of event overlapping and an athlete being called for two events at the same time.

Category 1 –Developmental Track & Field Categories

- Wheel Chair Events: 10M, 25M, 25M Obstacle, 30M Slalom
- Assisted Walks: 10M, 25M, and 50M.
- Walks -50M Walk,
- Runs - 50M Dash,
- Field Events -Standing Long Jump, Tennis Ball Throw, Shot,

Category 2 – Dashes

- Walks -100M Walk,
- Runs - 100M Dash, 100M Guided Dash, 400M Dash, 4x100M Relay
 - *Wheelchair athletes at these distances*
- Field Events –Softball Throw, Javelin, Running Long Jump, High Jump, Shot Put
- Pentathlon

Category 3 - Walks

- Walks – 400M Walk, 800M Walk, 1500M Walk, 3000M Walk
- Field Events –Softball Throw, Javelin, Running Long Jump, High Jump, Shot Put

Category 4 – Distance Runs

- Run- 400M Run, 800M Run, 1500M Run, 3000M Run, Relays
- Field Events –Javelin, Running Long Jump, High Jump, Shot Put

Summer Games Track Schedule Update

Special Olympics Massachusetts will be updating the Summer Games Schedule to reflect the updated categories so an athlete can participate in multiple events with their chosen category. For example the 100M & 200M Dash, 800M & 1500M (*run& walk*), 1500M & 3000M (*run& walk*) will be separated and not run on the same day so an athlete may now do both.

Sport Overview – Core Sport Track & Field

Common DQ's

Throwing Events (*Softball Throw, Tennis Ball Throw, Shot Put & Javelin*)

- Stepping over toe line or on top of toe board
- Throw landing outside the vector
- Using improper throwing motion
- Leaving throwing vector in front of marks

Jumping Events (*Long Jump & Standing Long Jump*)

- Jumping from wrong board
- Standing long jump take off from one foot

Walking events

- Using improper form
- Running
- Being paced

Running Events

- Impeding or interfering with other runners
- Not staying in lanes on certain races or until certain merge points
- Leaving the track
- Being paced

Relays

- Not staying in proper lane or improper merge
- Dropped baton-improper return to lane
- Exchanges taking place outside exchange zones
- Impeding or interfering with other runners

See USA T&F Rules for a full listing of rules and regulations for each race/event

Sport Overview – Core Sport Track & Field

Softball Throw

SOMA will be **imposing a limit of 30 meters (98 ft)**. Special Olympics International believes that once an athlete in the softball throw reaches the 30 meter mark, they have mastered the art of the softball throw and have advanced past the lower ability level that this event is intended for. We believe that part of Special Olympics is to motivate and challenge our athletes to become the best that they possibly can be while becoming around better people and athletes. We feel that once an athlete masters an event, it is time to challenge them to learn and master another event or discipline and to expand their skills and knowledge. For that reason and for the safety of everyone who is competing at the track we will be enforcing the 30 meter limit.

Other Field events include:

Long Jump Shot Put High Jump Javelin

Special Olympics Massachusetts will look at the results from the previous Summer Games (& *qualifying events*) and will contact any program who has an athlete who is over the 30 meter mark and help them to pick a new field event listed above.

Thank you in advance with your help in identifying athletes who have exceeded this mark and for helping to challenge our athletes to strive to be the best athletes they can be.

Field Equipment Sizes

- Javelin
 - Ages 15 under – 400g Mini Javelin
 - Ages 16+ - 600g Training Javelin
 - **NEW FOR 2018**
- Shot put sizes
 - Male
 - Ages 12 & over 4.0kg/8.8lbs
 - Ages 8-11 3.0kg/6.8lbs
 - Female
 - Ages 12 & over 3.0kg/6.8lbs
 - Ages 8-11 2.0kg/4.4lbs

Javelin Update

Starting in 2018, SOMA is accepting the recommendation from our Track and Field Advisory Board to adopt the use of a training javelin for all adult divisions. The javelin is a heavier weight and will be 600 grams compared to the 400g of the mini jav. It will also be closer in length to a true javelin. Understanding that this change can be frustrating for teams, SOMA has purchased 2 javelins for programs that had registered athletes competing in 2017. This will help to alleviate the additional costs as our program makes the change to this new throwing equipment. The smaller 400 gram turbo javelin or mini-jav will still be used for all Junior's divisions. The new equipment will be available at the upcoming Coaches College on April 14th and we will review the change along with showcasing the new equipment.

Sport Overview – Core Sport Track & Field

Unified Team Track & Field

Team Rosters

Rosters are of between 12-20 participants who are of similar ages. Age Groups will be juniors 8-15 and Adults 16 +. The team composition should be a combination of athletes with intellectual disabilities and without disabilities. Ideally, 50% of the team should be composed of athletes with intellectual disabilities.

Events

Each athlete and partner can participate in up to 3 events from the following list. Each team can submit up to two (2) relay teams in each of the relays listed.

Track Events

50 meters (Jrs only)
100 meters
200 meters
400 meters
800 meters
4 x 100 meter relay
4 x 400 meter relay

Field Events

Softball Throw (Jrs only)
Shot Put
Standing Long Jump
Javelin

Divisioning

Teams will fall into 2 categories, juniors 8-15 years of age and Adults 16 years of age and older. From there, competition is conducted in co-ed divisions composed of competitors with similar abilities. Divisions consist of competitors with and without disabilities and are only determined by the participants' ability levels as expressed by times or distances. During the races, athletes and partners will be divisioned based on their qualifying time for the event(s) they are participating in. For example in the 100m dash, all individuals who have a qualifying time within 20% of one another (*16-20 seconds*) will race against each other with no distinguishing between athlete or partner.

Team Scoring

For all Unified Track and Field meets (*dual, triangle, or championship*) the following scoring format will be employed: Team Scoring – 10 points for 1st, 8 pts, for 2nd, 6 pts, for 3rd, 4 pts, for 4th, 2 pts, for 5th, 1 pt, for 6th

- For the SOMA State Championship meet ribbons will be awarded to each individual in every heat.
- Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded to the top three point scoring teams. Rosette Ribbons will be awarded to fourth through 9th place teams.

Sports Overview

Gymnastics Notes

- Artistic Women gymnasts will be on Saturday
- Rhythmic gymnasts & Men gymnasts will be on Sunday

Power Lifting Notes

- Athlete must compete in both the bench press & deadlift or may compete in the combination event which includes bench press, deadlift & squat.
- SOMA will be inviting other S.O. Chapters to attend

Tennis Notes

- Tennis Skills will be offered on Saturday June 9th
- Athletes may participate in both Singles and Doubles competition.
 - Doubles maybe either Traditional Doubles or Unified Doubles not both

Volleyball Notes

- Saturday's portion of Summer Games will be divisional round robin play
- Sunday's schedule, depending on the # of teams, will either be a continuation of round robin play or tournament seeded/medal round play.
- Athletes who need to serve from the modified serve line must be tested at the Springfield College Qualifying Tournament
 - If participants are not tested for the modified serve at the Qualifying Tournament they will not be eligible to serve from the modified line during Summer Games competition.

Uniform Guidelines

As an accredited program of Special Olympics International, Special Olympics Massachusetts has agreed to certain uniform standards. Please see below for the correct way to include the Special Olympics logo with your team's mascot, name, or organization logo. **At a minimum, all uniforms used in Special Olympics competitions must include the Special Olympics Massachusetts logo and may not include any sponsor logos.** Additionally, please be sure you are using the newest version of the Special Olympics logo seen below.

Logos to be used:



Logo use option 1:



Logo use option 2:



You can also use a crest style:



If you have any questions, please reach out to your Business Operations contact or our Marketing and Communications Manager, Charles Hirsch:

charles.hirsch@specialolympicsma.org or 508-485-0986 x223

Uniform Guidelines

Special Olympics Massachusetts events are Sporting events, ALL participants **MUST BE** properly outfitted to compete in their sport, under the established guidelines for that sport. “Dress for Success” is not just a term for the business world, as it applies to the sporting world as well.

Track & Field

- Properly Logoed T-shirt or Tank Top
- Matching shorts or sweat pants (*logo desired not required*)

Swimming

- Proper Swim Suite
- Matching Swim Cap (*recommended not required*)
- Sandals
- Swim Goggles (*recommended not required*)

Tennis

- Properly Logoed T-Shirt or Collared Shirt
- Matching athletic shorts or Khaki Shorts
- Tennis shoes

Volleyball

- Properly Logoed jersey or T-shirt with numbers
- Matching shorts or sweat pants (*logo desired not required*)
- Sneakers
- NO Jewelry, accessories, do-rages, hats or hard casts

Power Lifting

- Properly Logoed Lifting Singlet
- Matching Undershirt.
 - All team members must have the same color undershirt if worn
- Matching shorts (*logo desired not required*)
 - All team members must have the same color shorts for warm ups

Gymnastics

- Leotard
- When not competing athletes should have the following warm ups
 - Properly logoed T-shirt
 - Matching shorts (*logo desired not required*)
 - Not required – Properly logoed warm up suit (*jacket & pants*)

2018 Summer Games Fact Sheet

Dates

- Thursday June 7th – Sunday June 10th

Host Venues

- Boston University, Harry Agganis Way, Boston, MA
- Harvard University Athletic Complex, 65 N. Harvard St, Boston, MA

Event	Location	Date
• Hall of Fame	TBD	June 7 th
• Opening Ceremony	Nickerson Field BU	June 8 th
• <i>Rain Site</i>	<i>BU Indoor Track & Tennis Center</i>	
• Cruiser Convoy	Harvard University	June 9 th
• Dance	BU Indoor Track & Tennis Center	June 9 th
• Dinner	BU Dining Halls	June 9 th
• Olympic Town	Jordan Field Entrance, Harvard BU Nickerson Field	June 9 th & 10 th
• Gymnastics		June 9 th & 10 th
• Power Lifting	Palmer Dixon Strength & Conditioning Center, Harvard	June 9 th
• Tennis	Beren Tennis Center	June 9 th & 10 th
• Track & Field	McCurdy Outdoor Track, Harvard	June 9 th & 10 th
• Swimming	Blodgett Pool, Harvard	June 9 th & 10 th
• Unified Track & Field	Nickerson Field, BU	June 9 th
• Volleyball		June 9 th & 10 th

2018 Summer Games Fact Sheet Cont'd

Capacity Guidelines

In keeping with the sports philosophy of Special Olympics International that regardless of ability level, competition progression is key to acknowledging and rewarding every athlete's hard work, improvement and athletic excellence. This practice is consistent with many of the world's sports organizations.

Other factors such as venue capacity, schedules, funding, volunteer workforce, and more, dictate realistic parameters regarding the size and duration of Games. This inherently necessitates constraints on how many participants can be accommodated and how many competitions can be contested during a set time.

- Swimming 600 athletes
- Gymnastics 120 athletes or 60 per day
- Power Lifting 80 athletes or 40 per day
- Tennis 64 athletes
- Track & Field 1,050 athletes & Unified Partners
 - *Traditional Track* 850 athletes
 - *Unified Track* 200 athletes & Unified Partners

Housing

- Boston University West Campus:

Claffin Hall	Sleeper Hall	1019 Commonwealth Ave
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- Boston University Warren Towers

Please Note that when it comes to the dorms, SOMA must follow B.U.'s rules & regulations and floor layouts. SOMA has no control on what sex's bathroom is on what floor, how keys are to be checked in & out and to how many bags a person can carry on an escalator. We work with the BU to make things easier on our participants, but at the end of the day we are guests at BU and have to follow their guidelines and rules.

Move In & Move Out

Olympia Moving & Storage will again be onsite on Friday June 3rd and on Sunday June 5th, to assist with the move in and move out of the dorms. On Friday, June 3rd, they will assist your programs in moving your luggage to your assigned floor and on Sunday, June 5th, they will transport your luggage to Harvard and store it for you until you are ready to pick it up.

Meals

The following meals will be offered to credentialed athletes, coaches & unified partners. Limited concession options will be available on site.

- Saturday June 9th Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner
- Sunday June 10th Breakfast & Lunch

2018 Summer Games Fact Sheet Cont'd

Transportation

Transportation from Boston University to Harvard and back will be provided to all athletes, coaches, family members, unified partners and volunteers via yellow school buses. Transportation schedule will be provided.

Parking BU: NEW 2018

As of 2018 Boston University will no longer providing complementary parking on campus. BU however is offering the following discounted rates

- Day Pass \$5 per car per day (*regular rate \$12 per day*)
- Overnight Pass \$10 per car per night (*regular rate \$24 per night*)

Parking Harvard:

Limited parking inside athletic complex for handicap vans. All other parking at Harvard is available at the Harvard Business School Soldiers Field Parking Garage on Western Ave at a discounted Rate of \$5 per car per day. Link to pre purchase a parking pass will be made available on the Summer Games event guide

Coach Education Criteria

To Receive Certification

- 1) Be a SOMA Class A Volunteer:
 - a. Complete a Class “A” Volunteer application (*every 3 years*)
 - b. Complete the online Protective Behaviors (*every 3 years*)
 - c. Complete a “Coaching in SOMA” General Orientation (*1 time only*)
- 2) Complete the SOMA Sport Certification test (*every 3 years*)
- 3) Concussion Awareness Training
 - a. Requirement for all S.O. coaches across the country.
 - i. Available through the CDC website
 - ii. Available through the National Federation of State High School Associations www.NFSH.org
 - iii. If you have already taken it through your work or school submit your completed certificate to SOMA and you are covered
- 4) CPR & First Aid Certification
 - a. All programs to have at least one individual who attends practices and tournaments to have this certification.
 - b. Does not need to be the Head Coach, just someone SOMA can track
- 5) Coaching Special Olympics Athlete
 - a. This is a Special Olympics North America Requirement
 - i. Course is available online for \$17
 - ii. SOMA will be launching an in person training for all programs. The course will be debuted at the 2016 New England Conference

And if you coach Unified Sports:

- 6) Complete a Unified Sports Course to Coach a Unified Sports Team
 - b. *Only if you coach a Unified Sports team*
 - c. *Done online*

If you have any questions about your certification status or certification status of the coaches in your program please contact your Business Operations contact

Grant Information

Special
Olympics
Massachusetts



50 YEARS
1968 - 2018

Volunteers are the backbone of Special Olympics Massachusetts, helping the organization to offer sports training and competition to over 12,000 athletes and Unified Partners in the state of Massachusetts on a year-round basis.

**Did you know there's another easy way
to support your athletes?**

**Does your employer offer grant
funding?**

Grant funding from your company will go directly towards athlete uniforms, basketballs, medals, and other items that make participation in Special Olympics a reality. Beyond supporting the costs of competition for our athletes, your donation furthers a movement that is breaking down barriers and stereotypes; all while creating fuller, richer, healthier lives for people with intellectual disabilities.

Contact:

George.kent@specialolympicsma.org

He'll help you find out if your company offers grant awards,

and he'll do the paperwork!

You'll add to the legacy of Special Olympics!

Unified Champion Schools

The mission of Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools Program is to activate youth around the country in an effort to develop school communities where all young people are agents of change – fostering respect, dignity and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities by utilizing the programs and initiatives of Special Olympics. The Unified Champion Schools Program is a national project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.



Unified Sports

Students with and without intellectual disabilities participate in sports alongside each other through Unified Sports or an Inclusive Youth Athletes Program.

Examples: Unified Track and Field, Unified Basketball, Young Athletes (ages 2-7)



Youth Leadership

Provide students with and without intellectual disabilities opportunities to take on leadership roles to promote unified activities in the school and in the community.

Examples: Partner's Clubs, Teaming up with Best Buddies Club, SOMA Youth Activation Council



Whole School Engagement

When an entire school accepts and includes students and others with intellectual disabilities, it is a powerful community of change.

Examples: "R-word" campaigns, Unified Pep Rallies, assemblies, Fans in the Stands

Contact schools@specialolympicsma.org to get involved today!

***Become a Unified Champion School and
Start a Unified® Track and Field Program at Your High School***

Unified Champion Schools

Goal: Turn every high school in the Commonwealth into a Unified Champion School, utilizing Unified Track and Field as the platform.

Partnership with MIAA and Special Olympics, MA: The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and Special Olympics have established a partnership and is focused on growing Unified Sports® in High School Athletics with an emphasis on growth at the Track and Field level.

What is the US DOE Guidance on Athletic Equity? In January, 2013, the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights announced guidance detailing school districts' legal obligations to provide students with disabilities equal access to athletics activities. The guidance letter clarifies existing law and encourages school districts to improve and expand upon athletic opportunities for students with disabilities (*see [US DOE Guidance for more information](#)*).

How Can Special Olympics help? Special Olympics can offer the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools Program, which is a successful solution to this directive. This program has shown proven results in providing students opportunities to play sports together, enhance school climate and give students increased physical, social and educational skills.

What is Special Olympics Unified Champion School Program? The Special Olympics Unified Champion School program is a comprehensive model of the Unified Schools strategy that combines Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership and Whole School Engagement to create the greatest impact. The activities and opportunities provided through the program help to reduce bullying and exclusion, promote healthy activity and interactions, combat stereotypes and stigma, eliminate hurtful language in schools and engage people in social activities that lead to personal growth.

What is the Role of Unified Sports®? By bringing together people with and without intellectual disabilities, as teammates and competitors, on the field of play, Unified Sports breaks down the walls of social exclusion enabling all participants to gain a new appreciation for one another, dispel fear, misperceptions and low expectations, develop friendships and pave the way for broader social inclusion in the community.

How can my school become a Unified Champion School? It's simple . . . You can become a Unified Champion School by participating in all three components of the program: (1) Unified Sports (e.g.: Unified Track and Field, Unified Basketball, or Unified Bocce) (2) Youth Leadership/advocacy (e.g.: through having a leadership club such as Best Buddies, Student Council or Unified Club) (3) a school-wide activity that educates and promotes inclusion (eg Fans in the Stands at a Unified Sports Event, or an R-word campaign to eliminate hurtful language in the schools).

Unified Champion Schools

SOMA Unified Sports® Track & Field Team Leagues In the 2016 Spring school sports season, there were 2 Unified Track and Field Leagues and 33 schools who participated in Unified Track and Field. It only takes 5 schools in a geographic area to create a league. It is a separate program from Varsity Track and Field, but follows the same MIAA rules and guidelines, with exceptions as needed. Athletes and Unified Partners train approximately 3 days a week, have 3-4 inter-league meets, a sectional meet and a State Championship.

Financial Implications for Starting a Unified Sports Track and Field Program in your

High School: As in any other program, there are costs to this program, but they are relatively minimal. Estimated cost is \$3000-\$4000* per sports season. Breakdown includes:

- 1 Coach for unified sports team
- Transportation for approximately 4 league meets, sectional and state championship
- Uniforms and Equipment (already have most if not all of the equipment)

*Special Olympics MA offers grant funding to schools who make a 3 year commitment to being a Unified Champion School and implementing the 3 criteria – Unified Sports, Youth Leadership and Whole School Engagement.

Recommended Timeline to start a Unified Sports Team:

- **September/October/November**
 - o Obtain school approval from principal/school committee
 - o Sign application and return to SOMA
- **December**
 - o Secure Unified Track and Field Coach
 - o Recruit athletes and unified partners within your school
 - Send letter of interest to special needs population
 - Talk with teachers to target recruit athletes and unified partners
- **January**
 - o Get required training for coaches
 - o Determine any additional equipment needs and uniforms
 - o 1 faculty and 2 student athletes attend youth leadership conference at SOMA.
 - o Coordinate logistics of training times
 - o Secure fields, practice schedules
- **February**
 - o Coaches League Meeting
 - o Signup athletes for season
 - o School stipends distributed for year 1 and year 2 schools
- **March**
 - o Begin practices by end of month
- **April**
 - o 3 to 4 Inter-league Meets

Unified Champion Schools

May

- League Championship meet
- State Championship meet (available to all 2nd year Unified Leagues and beyond)
- End-of-Season Banquet
- All-school unified assembly or r-word campaign (can be completed any time during the school year)

Testimonial from a Unified Track and Field Coach:

Two years ago we started Unified Track and Field in our school. I have seen the program double in size in those two years to now include Unified Basketball and Track with over 35 students participating in each sport. I have seen how the students interactions have impacted the lives of the athletes, partners and parents. The students, through their actions, have changed the culture of our school in a very short time. Our athletes have made enormous strides in their social development, especially their self-esteem. I want to share these experiences with schools so that the Unified Sports Program can continue to grow and impact many more students and parents throughout the state.

Upcoming Fundraising / Awareness Events

- **TD Bank Campaign May 14th – June 22nd** – we'll be contacting athletes to join our TD Bank Athlete Ambassador program! TD Bank employees and customers raised over \$100K for Special Olympics MA. Join us in thanking these valuable partners
- **Boston's Run to Remember - May 27th**
 - We are now accepting applications for our 2018 Xtra Mile Boston's Run to Remember team!! We have bibs for the **half marathon and 5 mile race!** [Apply online today!](#)
- **Cape Cod Torch Run – May 30th** – Officers will be carrying the Flame of Hope, 67 miles from Provincetown to Bourne ahead of Summer Games. To support of obtain their exact route, contact TorchRun@SpecialOlympicsMa.org
- **Glow in the Park 5k Fun Run – June 2nd** – North Attleboro Join us for the most fun you'll have this summer by wearing your best neon and glow gear to light up the night! The Law Enforcement Torch Run is hitting the streets for the 4th annual Glow in the Park. [Register today!!](#)
- **Falmouth Road Race - August 19th**
 - Join the Xtra Mile Falmouth team and be a part of one of the most premier road races in the country while supporting the athletes of Special Olympics Massachusetts! [Apply online today!](#)

New England Revolution Unified Soccer Experience