



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SPECIAL OLYMPICS PA AND THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA TO PARTNER FOR  
6TH ANNUAL UNIFIED SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP**

*10 Philadelphia High Schools gather to celebrate inclusion through sports*

**(Philadelphia, PA, May 18, 2018)** – On Wednesday, May 30th, Special Olympics Pennsylvania’s Philadelphia Program (SOPA Philly) in partnership with the School District of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools will present the sixth annual Unified Soccer Championship held at George Washington High School located at 10175 Bustleton Avenue in Philadelphia. Opening Ceremonies for the Unified Soccer Championship will kick-off at 10:00 am with Opening Ceremonies followed by competition with the Championship games at approximately 12:40 pm.

The Championship matches will feature 9 veteran high schools and one new high school from across Philadelphia including Abraham Lincoln, Universal Audenreid Charter, Frankford, Furness, George Washington, High School of the Future, Kensington Health Sciences Academy, Martin Luther King, Sayre, and Thomas Edison. Over 100 athletes (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and partners (individuals without disabilities) have been training for months and have competed in two League Play Days prior to the championship. The Unified Soccer Championship will display the hard work and dedication of all the athletes, partners, and coaches of each of these schools. Throughout the championship, an Olympic Village will provide fun and entertainment for all guests with activities provided by Dave and Busters and others. Students from Universal Daroff Charter School and Loesche Elementary School who participate in Unified Bocce and Young Athletes, respectively, will be in attendance to cheer on the inspiring sportsmanship and talents of the athletes and partners on the field.

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is an inclusive sports program that puts athletes with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. In a partnership between the *School District of Philadelphia* and Special Olympics Pennsylvania, the Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS) Program includes a curriculum with youth leadership components, anti-bullying elements and sports training and competition. The course provides greater access to sports for all students, with and without disabilities. The Philadelphia IUS Program is made possible by The Lincoln Financial Foundation and The Philadelphia Foundation. Additionally, a partnership with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) helps to provide officials for sports events.

Spectators are welcome to cheer on the athletes and partners as they compete for the championship trophy. There is no charge to attend Special Olympics PA competitions for athletes, volunteers or spectators.

***About Special Olympics Pennsylvania***

Special Olympics Pennsylvania provides year-round training and competition in 21 Olympic-type sports to nearly 20,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. For more information about how you can help “Reveal the Champion Inside” thousands of Special Olympics athletes, visit [www.specialolympicspa.org](http://www.specialolympicspa.org).

***About Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS)/Project Unify***

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Created by Joseph P Kennedy Jr. Foundation. Authorized and accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.



Special Olympics Pennsylvania Interscholastic Unified Sports (IUS) is a fully-inclusive co-ed high school sports program which successfully facilitates social inclusion by bringing together a proportional number of students with and without intellectual disabilities on teams for training and competition.

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