


DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES
Township of Union Public Schools
M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M

TO: Dr. Gerald Benaquista

C: Marissa McKenzie, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Yolanda Koon, Kim Conti, Bernadette Watson, Diane Cappiello

FROM: Joseph Seugling 

RE: Board Agenda

DATE: 2025-05-15

Approve the following class for scheduling at Union Senior High School for the 25-26 school year:

Unified Physical Education.

This class builds on the previously awarded grants from the Special Olympics organization to support district students, and emphasizes inclusive practices with the goal of "...bringing students with and without disabilities together, as equals..."

Overview & Philosophy

Unified Physical Education provides a unique opportunity for students with and without disabilities to come together through ongoing educational and physical activities. The Unified Physical Education course is structured around the national physical education standards and grade-level outcomes, which include gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a health-enhancing level of fitness. Additionally, the class supports the development of leadership skills for all students, and the empowerment of ALL students to foster an inclusive class and school-wide environment. Unified Physical Education courses can be a gateway for further participation in Special Olympics programs and events.

Anecdotal evidence supports that participation in Unified Physical Education leads to an increase in student engagement in physical education and the greater school community. In addition, schools that have implemented the Unified Physical Education concepts have indicated that their student body has become more accepting of all students, and more apt to celebrate individual differences. Examples include students with and without disabilities eating lunch together, doing activities together on the weekends, and inspiring social change throughout the school.

How does Unified Physical Education work?

Each school/district is encouraged to work with their State Special Olympics staff to determine how Unified Physical Education could be part of the physical education curriculum. Concepts from these resources can be incorporated into an existing course, or used to develop a new course. The course is typically taught by a certified physical education teacher. Regardless of the structure, this course should be offered in the same manner as any other class in the school. It should be included in the registration guide alongside all other course options eligible for graduation credit. In addition, all students participating in the class should receive the same type of academic credit.