

MEMORANDUM: Cross Country Wheelchair, Para-Athlete, and Unified Authorization Form
TO: Athletic Director / Cross Country Coach
FROM: Justin Kesterson
SUBJECT: Wheelchair, Ambulatory and Unified Divisions State Cross Country Championships

The WIAA member schools and the state cross country meet management are excited to offer a Unified XC exhibition division for the 2024 State Cross Country meet in Pasco in addition to the wheelchair and ambulatory divisions. It is important that students of all abilities have the opportunity to compete in interscholastic activities within our schools. To this end it is imperative that each school sending a competitor(s) take the time to make sure that each athlete is eligible under both WIAA and school rules. All athletes are required to demonstrate compliance with those rules of eligibility in Article 18 of the WIAA Handbook and any corresponding school rules and regulations. *Special Olympics Unified Sports[®] is an inclusive sports program that combines an approximately equal number of Special Olympic athletes (individuals with intellectual disabilities) and partners (individuals without intellectual disabilities) on teams for training and competition.*

***A wheelchair athlete is anyone with a permanent physical disability. A statement of disability must be verified by a licensed physician and maintained on permanent file at the school.**

***An ambulatory athlete shall have a permanent orthopedic, neuromuscular or other physical disability. The ambulatory division will include Visual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Dwarfism, Amputees and similar physical disabilities. Permanent orthopedic impairment shall be verified by a licensed physician and maintained on permanent file at the school.**

***Unified Athlete - A person is considered to have an intellectual disability for purposes of determining his or her eligibility to participate in Special Olympics if that person satisfies any one of the following requirements:**

- The person has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability as determined by their localities; or
- The person has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measures such as intelligent quotient or “IQ” testing or other measures which are generally accepted within the professional community in that Accredited Program’s nation as being a reliable measurement of the existence of a cognitive delay; or
- The person has a closely related developmental disability. A “closely related developmental disability” means having functional limitations in both general learning (such as IQ) and in adaptive skills (such as in recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care).

***Unified Partner may be any student without intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. That has not qualified for the postseason in a varsity race.**

A Unified team will consist of any one (1) Unified athlete and any one (1) Unified partner athlete of either gender (teams can be same gender or co-ed). The teams’ average time is what will be calculated to determine placing in the race. Ambulatory and Unified Competitors will compete in the same 2-mile race but will be scored and awarded separately in an individual capacity, no team points.

**** Please fill out athlete(s) information on the back of this form. ****

Please Submit by October 25, 2024

Name of Athlete: _____ Gender: _____ Grade: _____

School Name: _____ WIAA Classification: _____ WIAA District: _____

Principal / Athletic Director _____

Wheelchair Division

Ambulatory Division

All ambulatory and Unified competitors must qualify to the state meet through the qualifying meet procedure. All WIAA Inclusive division athletes must meet or exceed the minimum standards established by the WIAA during the season and compete at the district meet. The standards are as follows:

2-mile race = 24:00 minutes

3-mile race = 39:00 minutes

5k race = 40:18 minutes

Name of Unified Athlete: _____ Gender: _____ Grade: _____

Name of Unified Partner: _____ Gender: _____ Grade: _____

Unified Division

Completed applications should be mailed or e-mailed to the WIAA:

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