

MEMORANDUM: Cross Country UNIFIED Authorization Form
TO: Athletic Director / Cross Country Coach
FROM: Justin Kesterson
SUBJECT: UNIFIED Division State Cross Country Championships

The WIAA member schools and the state cross country meet management are excited to partner with Special Olympics of WA to offer a two-mile Unified Cross Country race at the 2026 State XC meet in Pasco. It is important that students of all abilities have the opportunity to compete in interscholastic activities within the schools they attend. To this end it is imperative that each school sending a team take the time to make sure that each athlete/partner is eligible under both WIAA, Special Olympics of WA 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. **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.

***Unified Athlete** – Is a student who must be identified by an agency or professional as having one of the following conditions: Intellectual disabilities, cognitive delays as measured by formal assessment, or significant learning or vocational problems due to a cognitive delay that require or have required specially designed instruction.

***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, pairs must be one male, one female. The teams' average time is what will be calculated to determine placing in the race. Unified and Ambulatory Competitors will compete in the same 2-mile race but will be scored and awarded separately.

Please Submit by October 16, 2026

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

Name of Unified Athletes/Partners:

_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____
_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____
_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____
_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____
_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____
_____	Gender: _____	Grade: _____	(A)thlete/(P)artner: _____

Are any accommodations required: _____

All Unified competitors must qualify for the state meet through the qualifying meet procedure. All Unified 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

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

Justin Kesterson | Assistant Executive Director WIAA 435 Main Avenue South, Renton, WA 98057 | email: jkesterson@wiaa.com