



# 2023 Interscholastic Unified Futsal Coaches' Resource Guide



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# Special Olympics Pennsylvania Interscholastic Unified Sports®

## Interscholastic Unified Futsal Program

Special Olympics Interscholastic Unified Sports® (IUS) is a fully-inclusive co-ed high school sports program which successfully brings together students with and without disabilities. They train together and compete as equal teammates and through this experience, become friends. IUS teams are regarded like every other interscholastic sports team at the high school.

### ***Program Summary***

- **Model of Play:** **PLAYER DEVELOPMENT**
  - Partners (general education students) serve as on-court coaches
  - Only athletes (special education students) can score
  - Only athletes can play goalkeeper
  - Partners cannot steal the ball
- **Roster:** A Unified Futsal team can have a minimum of 8 and maximum of 10 participants. The team is co-ed and consists of a proportional number of high school students who are Special Olympics eligible and students without intellectual disabilities.
- **Format:** The SOPA Philadelphia Unified Futsal competition format is 5v5.
- **Season:** 10 week long season which begins the first week of February and ends the third week of April. Teams must practice at least twice a week. They participate in at least three competitions against other high school Unified Futsal teams.
- **Uniforms:** Members wear uniforms with their school's name and colors.

The Philadelphia program is an in-school program. Participation in official Special Olympics PA competitions outside of Philadelphia would require students to have a physical examination and complete required consent forms.

## ***Principle of Meaningful Involvement***

The most important of the “7 Criteria for the Success of a Special Olympics Unified Sports Program” is the **principle of meaningful involvement**. *Fundamentally, the principle of meaningful involvement ensures that every player is given an opportunity to contribute to the success of his or her team through their unique skills and qualities.* This means that every teammate: (a) demonstrates sufficient sport-specific skills and game understanding; (b) plays a valued role on the team that emphasizes his or her personal talents; and (c) has an opportunity to play without a heightened risk of injury.

All team members must be engaged and provide their own individual abilities and strengths. In so doing, athletes and partners may have different perspectives. The athletes on the team may not be accustomed to the experience of having their contributions accepted and respected. In addition, partners may need to be encouraged to play to their own personal bests while being a good teammate to others.

Consequently, when Unified Sports teams are created, it is extremely important that both athletes and partners are assessed as to their abilities and game play. The goal is that every teammate should play a meaningful role and have the opportunity to contribute his or her strengths to their Unified Sports team. There should be a quality of social interaction and communication among teammates that allows everyone to participate fully and enjoy a positive experience.

### **Indicators of Meaningful Involvement**

- Teammates have the ability and given the opportunity to contribute to the success of the team.
- Teammates bring their unique talents and personal qualities to the team during training and competition.
- Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates participate according to the rules of competition.

### **Meaningful involvement is not achieved when certain team members ...**

- Display superior sports skills without involving their teammates.
- Serve predominantly as on-field coaches rather than teammates or mentors.
- Control most aspects of the game, especially during the most critical periods.
- Do not train or practice regularly and only show up on the day of competition.

Note: It is important that all coaches and program leaders understand the Principle of Meaningful Involvement prior to the selection of team members.

### **Season Timeline:**

- February 6th: Season starts
- March & April: Teams are responsible for scheduling 3 head-to-head matchups

### **Futsal Schools:**

- South Philadelphia High School
- Olney High School
- Universal Audenried Charter High School
- Kensington High School
- Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts
- Hill-Freedman World Academy
- Horace Furness High School

### ***Coach Responsibilities***

#### **Required Coaches Trainings**

All coaches must take the following two courses by the Notational Federation of High Schools (NFHS). You will need to register with the NFHS but the courses are free.

- **Concussion Training** – <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>
  - Signs & Symptoms
  - When to seek medical attention
  - Concussion Prevention
  - What to do if you suspect a concussion
  - When to return to play
- **Unified Sports Training** – <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/coaching-unified-sports>
  - Selection of Teammates
  - Principles of Meaningful Involvement
  - Unified Rules
  - Player Dominance

#### **Coaches Quiz- ALL coaches**

- Open book quiz - we encourage you to use your Bocce Coaches' Resource Guide while taking this quiz.
- Those who do not score higher than 85% will be required to attend additional SOPA trainings.
- Quiz must be taken by: March 1st, 2023
- Quiz Link: <https://forms.gle/DBberDkpcNZCwi9M6>

For more information: contact Shannon Burke at [sburke@specialolympicspa.org](mailto:sburke@specialolympicspa.org)

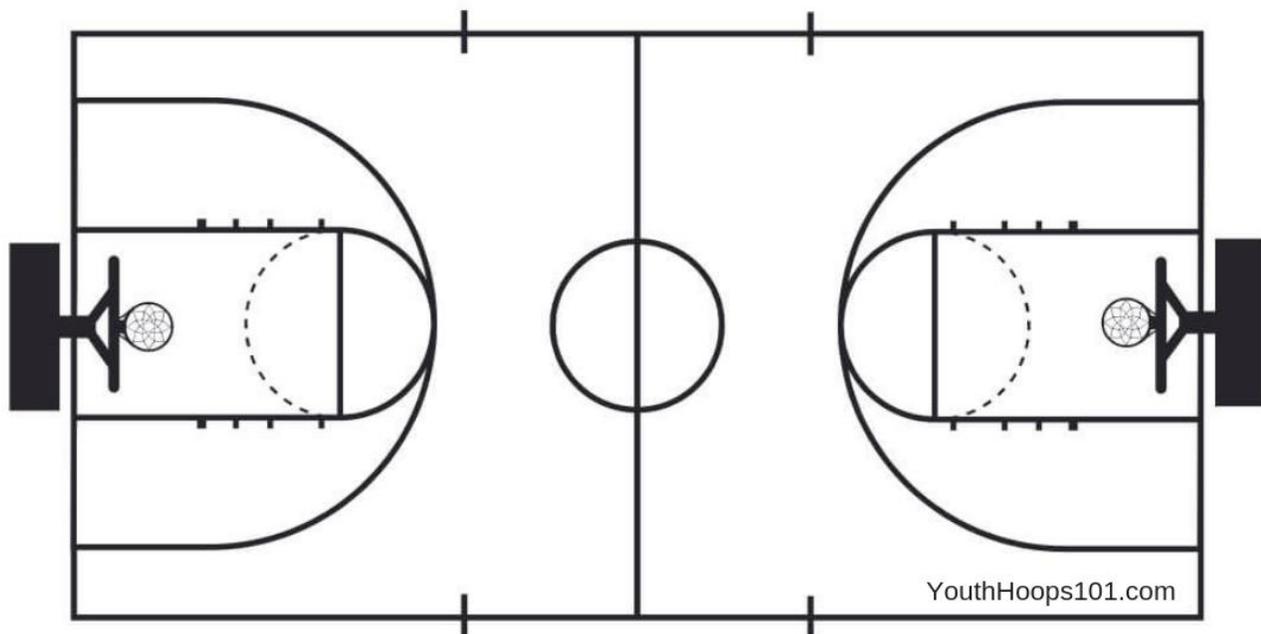
## Requirements for Unified Futsal Team Roster

- Interscholastic Unified Futsal teams can have rosters ranging from 8 to a maximum of 10 participants.
- Every Unified Futsal team (8-10 participants) needs to have a single designated coach.
- This is a co-ed program and students must be in the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. Students up to the age of 21 who are still receiving services from the school district are also eligible.
- On a roster, there needs to be a proportional number of (1) students eligible to participate in Special Olympics (defined as having an intellectual disability, cognitive delay, or developmental disability including different types of autism) **and** (2) students without intellectual disabilities (referred to as Unified partners). Students with other disabilities are welcome to participate as Unified partners. To foster a true inclusive environment, however, the majority of Unified partners should not have a disability.
- **While the ideal goal is 50% of the team as Special Olympics athletes and 50% of the team as general education students, the allowable minimum is at least 40% and no more than 60% for either group.**
- Students participating on **any spring interscholastic sports team (including track and field)** are **ineligible** for the Unified Futsal team. Fall and winter varsity athletes may participate.

### *5-A-Side Futsal Rules*

#### The Field of Play

The diagram below shows that a basketball court can accommodate futsal. The lane/paint on a basketball court can be used as the penalty area/goalkeeper's box.



### **The Style of Play**

Futsal is designed to be a slow-paced and more technical-skilled style of soccer. The ball is meant to be played on the court's surface, and not to be played with the ball in the air.

### **The Ball**

Size 4 Futsal ball will be used, designed for reduced bounce compared to an outdoor soccer ball.

### **The Number of Players**

- The maximum number of participants for a futsal team is 10, and the minimum number of participants is 8.
- The maximum number of partners on the court during play is 2.
- The game is played between two teams, each consisting of five players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. A minimum of three players shall be on the field at any one time.
- Substitutions are unlimited in number (players may return to the field after being substituted). Substitutions can be made any time the ball is out of bounds, between periods, after a goal is scored or during a timeout for an injury. The coach must signal the referee or linesman to make a substitution. A substituted player can only come on to the field when given a signal by the referee.

### **Players' Equipment**

- Special Olympics Pennsylvania Futsal jersey is required.
- Shin pads are required.
- No player is allowed to wear any jewelry, hair clips, earrings, bracelets, nose rings, lip rings or any other item deemed to be jewelry by the referee.
- Athletic sneakers are required.

### **The Referee**

- Each match is controlled by one referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he/she has been appointed.

### **Duration of the game**

- The duration of the game shall be two equal periods of ten minutes with a halftime interval of five minutes.
- During the regular season, a tie game is permitted
- If the game ends in a tie during the playoffs, a 5-minute Golden Goal (team that scores first wins) overtime will be played

### **Start of play**

- A ball must be kicked forward from the center spot before being touched by another player. A goal can be scored directly from a kickoff.
- Ball in and out of play:
- Ball completely over the sideline results in a kick in.
- Ball over the end line results in a goal clearance or a corner kick.
- The ball must be completely over the line to be considered out of play.

### **Goal Clearance**

- When the ball passes over the end line, having last been played by an attacking player, the goalkeeper, standing within his own penalty area, shall roll the ball back into play beyond his own penalty area, but not further than the halfway line (i.e., the ball must touch another player before crossing the halfway line). The ball shall be deemed in play as soon as it passes outside the penalty area.
- The above rules of goal clearance also apply when a goalkeeper gains possession, with his hands, of a ball that is still in play.
- Infringement penalties:
  - If the ball rolled by the goalkeeper passes beyond the goalkeeper's half of the field without first having been touched by a player, the referee shall award a direct free kick for the opposing team from any point on the halfway line.
  - From the goalkeeper's roll, if the ball is touched by any player inside the penalty area, the roll shall be retaken.

### **Method of scoring**

- The whole of the ball must have completely crossed the line inside the goal to count as a goal.

### **Fouls and misconduct:**

- Tripping, pushing, intentional handball or charging result in a direct free kick. Obstruction or dangerous play results in a direct free kick.
- An intentional handball is when a participant moves their arms to purposely make contact with the ball, or when the participants arm/hand is raised above their shoulder and makes contact with the ball.
- There is no offsides.
- If a player is expelled from the game (receives two yellow cards or a red card), this player may not re-enter the game.
- A yellow card will be given when a participant is repeatedly fouling, shows dissent by word or action, or slide tackles (playing the ball horizontally)
- A red card will be given when a player commits a serious foul, uses violent conduct, uses offensive language, or gestures, or receives a 2nd yellow card
- The minimum participants needed to play a game of futsal is 4 (2 athletes/ 2 partners)

## Free Kick

- Opposing players must retire at least ten feet from the ball for all free kicks.
- All free kicks are direct

## Penalty Kick

When a player of the defending team intentionally commits a foul within the penalty area that calls for a direct kick, a penalty play will follow:

- All players must be behind the halfway line except the opposing goalkeeper. They may not cross the line until the ball hits the goalkeeper, goes out of bounds, or goes in the goal.
- Any athlete has five (5) seconds to attempt a shot. The ball is placed at the halfway line to start. If five (5) seconds expire before a shot is attempted, a direct kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot where the ball was when time expired.
- Play continues once the shot is attempted.
- The goalkeeper may move as soon as the ball is touched.
- A penalty play must be continuous toward the goal and once the shot is attempted, the shooter may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.
- If the goalkeeper fouls the offensive player, the play shall be retaken, and a caution issued to the goalkeeper. If the offensive player fouls the goalkeeper, no shot will be allowed, and a free kick awarded the defensive team from the spot of the foul.
- Intentional handling of the ball by the goalkeeper outside of the penalty area that prevents a goal scoring opportunity shall result in the penalty play being retaken.
- **There is no horizontal play allowed by any field player during the game.** Only the goalkeeper may play the ball in a horizontal position. If a field player plays the ball in a horizontal position the referee will award a free kick to the opposing team.

If an INTENTIONAL, FLAGRANT foul prevented a ONE-ON-ONE with the goalkeeper, a penalty kick will be awarded.

## Kick In

When the whole of the ball passes over a sideline, it shall be kicked back into the game, from the place where it crossed the line (on the sideline), by a player from the opposing team to that of the player who last touched it. The ball must be stationary before being kicked. The ball cannot be played again by the kicker until it has been touched by another player. The players from the opposing team must be at least ten feet from the spot where the kick is being taken.

- A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick in.
- A goalkeeper may not pick up a ball passed back to him/her from a kick in.
- A goalkeeper may not pick up a ball passed back to him/her by their own player.
- Infringement Penalty- If the player taking the kick in plays the ball for a second time before it has been touched by another player, a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the point where the infringement occurred.

#### **Corner-Kick**

- Awarded to the attacking team when a player from the defending team kicks the ball over his/her own end line.
- Opposing players must be 10 feet away from the ball.

#### **Overtime/Penalty Kick**

- In regular league play, ties are considered final.
- In tournament play, overtime periods shall be five minutes each (Golden Goal).
- If the game is still tied after the overtime periods, penalty kicks shall be used to decide the game using the following procedure:
  - The referee chooses the goal at which the kicks will be taken. The referee tosses a coin and the team whose captain wins the toss decides whether to take the first or the second kick.
  - The 3 athletes from each team that are on the court after the Golden Goal overtime has ended will be the penalty kick takers
  - The highest score after 3 penalty kicks from each team are taken is declared the winner. The referee keeps a record of the kicks being taken.
  - The kicks are taken alternately by the teams.
  - If, before both teams have taken all three kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its three kicks, no more kicks are taken.

## Overtime/Penalty Kick Continued

- If, after both teams have taken three kicks, both have scored the same number of goals, or have not scored any goals, kicks continue to be taken by the athletes on the bench. This will continue in the same order until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.
- A goalkeeper who is injured while kicks are being taken from the penalty mark and is unable to continue as goalkeeper may be replaced by a named substitute.
- With the exception of the foregoing case, only players who are on the field of play at the end of the match, which includes extra time where appropriate, are eligible to take penalty kicks.
- If at the end of the match one team has a greater number of players than its opponents, it must reduce its numbers to equate with that of its opponents. The team captain must inform the referee of the name and number of the excluded player. The referee must ensure that an equal number of players from each team remains within the center circle, and they shall take the kicks. Each kick is taken by a different player and all eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick.

## Effective Unified Sports® Student Recruitment Strategies

High schools offering Interscholastic Unified Sports have employed several different successful approaches to recruit students with intellectual disabilities, with other types of disabilities, and without disabilities to participate on their Unified Sports teams.

Since promotion of social inclusion is one of the key outcomes, a Unified Sports team must have a proportional number of students with and without disabilities.

Following is a summary of best recruitment practices utilized by various high schools for Unified Sports. It is important to use as many as possible to ensure the broadest number of students are being reached.

### Overview

- You need a **TEAM of teachers, students, and staff** promoting Unified Sports within a school building. If the coach is the only one doing the outreach, the program will falter.
- Success is predicated on a group of educators and staff being highly proactive and energetic in engaging students and helping them to see the rewards of joining their high school's Interscholastic Unified Sports team. This requires the use of compelling message points and using multiple promotional approaches to sell the program.
- Organize a small **UNIFIED SALES FORCE** comprised of special education teachers, general education teachers, and students, as well as staff involved with the school's extracurricular activities.
- Having Unified Sports promotional pieces (flyers, posters, etc.) are effective in raising awareness of the program and need to be hung in highly visible locations throughout the building. However, these materials by themselves DO NOT sell the Unified Sports program. ***Closing the sale is done most effectively by personal selling by the teachers.*** This has proven to be the most successful approach time and again in schools.
- Another strategy to use in conjunction with engaging the teachers is mobilizing the students. Using an **Each One Reach One** approach in which a student persuades a friend or classmate to join them on a Unified Sports team has proven to be highly effective.

## Reaching Students with Disabilities

- Meet with the building's Special Education Team Leader/Coordinator and staff. Provide concise and relevant information about the high school's Unified Sports team at one of their staff meetings and include the head coach's contact information so students and parents know how to reach him/her.
- Engaging special education teachers is vital! They play an essential role by reaching out to their students and parents and promoting the beneficial outcomes of Unified Sports. Teachers should discuss the Unified Sports program with their students, so they fully understand the value and fun of being part of a team; make phone calls to parents of students and share how this fully-inclusive sports program is beneficial for their son or daughter; and send letters and information home which also has the coach's name and contact information.
- ***If the special education teacher invests the time to recruit students in his/her class through ongoing encouragement and communication with the students and their parents, this often leads to participation on a Unified Sports team.***
- Work with para-educators and instructional assistants to reach prospective students. Often these staff members have a close relationship with their students and can have a strong influence on them.
- During the team recruitment phase, the head coach should connect often with special education teachers and assistants for an update of the names of students they are actively recruiting. Follow up with these students and their parents, if appropriate.
- Set an ambitious, yet realistic recruitment goal for the special education team to attain in terms of number of Unified Sports participants with disabilities. (i.e. each teacher will successfully recruit X number of team members). This number will depend on the sport's roster size.
- *For High Schools with Existing Unified Sports Teams:* Enlist the help of current Unified Sports participants and their parents to speak with their peers about the beneficial experience of joining a Unified Sports team.

## Reaching Students Without Disabilities

- Ask 4-5 popular general education teachers to be part of the **UNIFIED SALES FORCE**. Provide them with key selling points about the program as well as the benefits, and ask each one to personally reach out and convince a set number of students without disabilities to join the Unified Sports team. This number could be two, three or four students per teacher, depending on the roster size of the sport.

- Have these teachers approach certain students they think would be ideal fits for the program and make a personal pitch to them: For example: “I think you would be an excellent addition to the Unified XX team because of your leadership skills and ability to help your classmates reach their potential.”
- Make sure these teachers get the contact information for the students (name, home room, phone number, email address) so the head coach can follow-up with them immediately. Also, they need to give the students the head coach’s contact information so they can contact him or her with questions.
- ***Engaging student leaders in the process is very important!*** Meet with them and ask them to enthusiastically recruit their friends and classmates to participate on a Unified Sports team. The head coach needs to connect regularly with these student leaders so he/she can follow up with potential team members.
- Meet with the faculty advisors for various groups and clubs which might have students currently not playing sports who might be interested. These include student government, band, Best Buddies, theater, National Honor Society, debate team, etc.
- Utilize all available communication resources to promote the high school’s Unified Sports team including morning announcements, the school web site, social media, assemblies and meetings, emails/letters/flyers, etc.

### **Supplemental Resources**

- 1) Special Olympics International Soccer Guide: detailed coaching resource that includes fundamentals that breakdown individual soccer skills, examples of practice sessions, playing formations, etc.

[https://read.nxtbook.com/special\\_olympics/guide\\_books/football\\_coaching\\_guide\\_2021/football\\_coaching\\_guide\\_docum.html](https://read.nxtbook.com/special_olympics/guide_books/football_coaching_guide_2021/football_coaching_guide_docum.html)

- 2) The women's soccer from the University of Southern Maine created a tutorial video that breaks down and demonstrates each individual skill set to support the Unified Soccer program for Special Olympics Maine :

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I\\_1exOVb0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_1exOVb0)

|         | <i>Player Name<br/>(full name, no nickname)</i> | <i>Athlete<br/>(A) or<br/>Partner<br/>(P)</i> | <i>Ball<br/>Skills</i> | <i>Passin<br/>g</i> | <i>Move-<br/>ment</i> | <i>Game<br/>Aware<br/>-ness</i> | <i>Shootin<br/>g</i> | <i>Defens<br/>e</i> | <i>Goal<br/>Keepin<br/>g</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------|---|---|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 2.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 3.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 4.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 5.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 6.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 7.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 8.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 9.      |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 10<br>. |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 11<br>. |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |
| 12<br>. |   |   |                        |                     |                       |                                 |                      |                     |                              |              |