

**“On the field we’re team mates! Off the field we’re friends!”**

Unified Sports Motto

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date/year)

Dear Families,

The \_\_\_\_\_ School District supports an after-school sports program called “Unified Sports”. Local schools around the state of Vermont and country are involved in developing this sport team concept, which was initiated and supported through Special Olympics. The Unified Sports Programs in Vermont are endorsed by both the Vermont Principals Association, and the Vermont Association of Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance (VTAHPERD).

Unified Sports supports the need to offer sport activities and competitive opportunities for students with disabilities, and for many other students who do not fit the mold of the typical after-school athlete. A Unified Sports Team consists of an equal number of students with intellectual disabilities “athletes”, and those who do not have disabilities “partners”, in grades \_\_\_\_\_. The typically developing peers serve as “partners” and models for team “athletes”. Everyone practices together, competes together, and has fun together. Everyone learns! Everyone benefits!

Weekly practices are held on \_\_\_\_\_. Teams practice for a minimum of eight weeks for each sport. At the end of the eight week period, there is a state competition held where all Unified Teams training in that sport meet for a day of competition. Most competition days are held on a school day.

All team members are required to have a signed and returned athlete/partner registration form to participate in this program. This medical form/registration form is a form that the Vermont Special Olympics State Office requires from all participants. The good news is this form needs to be signed by a physician just once every three years for athletes. Most physicians will provide a signature on this form if there is a current physical on file (within a year) so an additional appointment may not be required. Partners under the age of 19 need only fill out their registration form one time. Permission slips for each individual sport will also need to be filled out and turned in by each team member as each sport happens.

Also enclosed is an informational page for use with organizational concerns. Return the medical form, informational page, permission form for \_\_\_\_\_ (*sport you are about the begin*), to your child’s school attention “\_\_\_\_\_” as soon as possible. Our first practice will be \_\_\_\_\_.

Thanks for your support of this incredible opportunity to engage students in such a healthy and worthwhile sports experience!

Be A Fan!