

State of Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
Washington Interscholastic Activities Association
Special Olympics Washington

February 26, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

We recently received guidance from the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights regarding extracurricular access to athletics for students with disabilities. We recognize many of you may also have questions regarding this guidance. We wanted you to know that our organizations have met and are discussing the practical implications of this guidance in Washington State.

One example of responding to this guidance could be Unified Sports[®], an inclusive Special Olympics sports program that combines athletes with and without intellectual disabilities in training and competition. This program is already being successfully implemented in many school districts including Seattle, Bellingham, Edmonds, and Federal Way. Tacoma is now joining the program. So, there could be an infrastructure that already exists to meet the needs of the recent guidance. You may have other solutions that you are contemplating as well.

The WIAA is putting together information that will be provided to Superintendents when they attend their spring meeting in Chelan. The information will include current activities that the WIAA is already providing. Additionally plans are being discussed about launching Unified Soccer in the spring of 2014 across the State.

While we clearly do not have all of the questions or answers at this time, we wanted you to know that we are working on the issues raised by the guidance. There will be more information to follow through our routine and regular communication channels.

Sincerely,



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