



Special Olympics

Virginia

Be a fan.™

Little Feet Meet



Community, friendship, sports, fun!
Henrico County



Special Olympics Virginia

Special Olympics Virginia is a year-round sports training and competition program for persons with intellectual disabilities or closely related cognitive delays. By using sport as a vehicle for social change, Special Olympics Virginia strives to create opportunities for meaningful interaction and self discovery for every member of the community. Such interaction will open the heart and mind of every Virginian to the value and abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Department of Education Grant

The Department of Education awarded Special Olympics, Inc. a large grant to fund Project UNIFY. The purpose of Project UNIFY is to build communities of acceptance and inclusion through the engagement of young people both with and without intellectual disabilities in their schools.

Special Olympics Virginia was awarded a Project UNIFY grant to focus on the development of Special Olympics programs in Henrico County Schools. The goals of the project are: 1) to involve all elementary age Henrico County Public School students with intellectual disabilities in Special Olympics, and 2) to educate students without intellectual disabilities about the value of people with intellectual disabilities by building communities of acceptance and inclusion.

Project UNIFY Description

Henrico County teachers will be encouraged to enhance their curriculum by including Young Athletes or a track and field component. A Special Olympics Virginia Young Athletes demonstration and track meet called the Little Feet Meet will be held on Friday, April 29 at Douglas Freeman High School. This event will be a field trip opportunity for participating schools. The track meet will feature Young Athlete stations for preschool students, age appropriate track demonstration events for grades K – 2 and a competitive track meet for grades 3 - 5.

Young Athletes

Young Athletes is an innovative sports play program for children ages 2 -7. The program consists of a series of developmentally appropriate activities designed specifically for young children. The program seeks to strengthen physical development and self-esteem for children by building skills for future sports participation and socialization prior to Special Olympics competition eligibility. There are two components to the Young Athletes program.

Young Athletes Stations for Preschoolers

Children participate in eight stations designed to develop sports skills for young children of all ability levels. A description of the eight stations and the equipment required are outlined in the Young Athlete Guide. Special Olympics Virginia will provide the equipment required to implement the eight stations. All children will receive a participation ribbon.

Young Athletes Track and Field Demonstration Events for Grades K - 2

Children with more advanced physical skills may participate in track and field demonstration events. These events will be conducted in a fun and informal way and all children will receive a participation ribbon. Children may participate in up to three events.

25M motorized wheelchair event

25M wheelchair event

25M assisted walk

25M walk/run

Tennis ball throw

Standing long jump

Track Meet for Grades 3 - 5

Students in grades 3 - 5 may compete in three track and field events. Participants must submit entry scores and will be divisioned by age, gender and ability. All participants will receive place ribbons for each event. All participants are encouraged to practice at least once a week for eight weeks prior to the competition. A Special Olympics Virginia track and field guide is available at http://www.specialolympics.org/Special+Olympics+Public+Website/English/Coach/Coaching_Guides/Athletics/default.htm to assist in planning practice sessions.

Events Grades 3 - 5

25M motorized wheelchair race
25M wheelchair race
25 M assisted walk
50M walk/run
Softball throw
Standing long jump

Track Meet Schedule

8:30 – 9:00	Children arrive
9:00 – 10:30	Young Athlete stations held for Pre-K children
9:00 – 10:30	Track events held for primary school children
10:30 – 11:00	Ceremony
11:00 – 12:15	Young Athlete stations held for Pre-K children
11:00 – 12:15	Track events held for primary school children
12:15 – 12:30	Children depart

All athletes will receive a T-shirt. Lunch will not be provided. Water will be available. The registration deadline for the track meet is **Friday, April 1**.

Students without Intellectual Disabilities

The students at Freeman High School will serve as the Young Athlete and track and field volunteers throughout the day. Students without disabilities from other schools are encouraged to travel with their school delegations as buddies and spend the day with the students with intellectual disabilities from their schools.

The R Word campaign (www.r-word.org) and Be a fan® will be presented to the student body of Freeman High School. Other schools providing buddies will be encouraged to use the R Word campaign and Be a fan® with their student populations. Special Olympics launched the R Word campaign to oppose prejudice and discrimination by continuously working to dispel the negative stereotypes associated with people with intellectual disabilities — the use of the R word (retard or retarded) being one such stereotype.

Be a fan® is a marketing campaign that sends a powerful message of respect, inclusion and unity. The Be a fan® campaign messages help establish the relevance of Special Olympics to students without intellectual disabilities and help them understand that if they are fans of respect, inclusion and unity, then they are fans of Special Olympics.

Special Olympics Virginia welcomes the opportunity to provide materials for teachers to incorporate the R Word campaign or Be a fan® into their curriculums. Special Olympics Virginia staff members and volunteers are also available to speak at assemblies or other appropriate student gatherings to deliver this important message of acceptance and inclusion.

Project UNIFY Implementation

Special Olympics Virginia staff and volunteers are available to meet individually with special education teachers, PE teachers, guidance counselors and others at elementary schools interested in the project. We hope that Project UNIFY will be beneficial for all students and will strengthen school environments in Henrico County.

LITTLE FEET WEBPAGE

<http://www.specialolympicsva.org/littlefeetmeet>

Fax registration forms to Tina Andes at 804-346-9633 by April 1