



A school climate that fosters inclusion, acceptance, respect and human dignity for all students is the foundation upon which schools educate, motivate, and activate students. Project UNIFY believes that in order to have the greatest impact the change process needs to start with young people.

Project UNIFY® brings youth with and without intellectual disabilities together through education and sports related initiatives that provide them with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to create and sustain school communities that promote acceptance, respect and human dignity for all students.

Project UNIFY® provides another mechanism to incorporate youth voice and leadership in school climates and at the district and community level to foster the acceptance of their peers with intellectual disabilities and impact attitudes of the entire group. Youth leaders are increasingly viewed as a process that enhances school community change. Improvements of school climate and change also create relationships and professional development for teachers.

Benefits

- Creates school communities of acceptance where students with intellectual disabilities feel welcome, included and apart of school activities and opportunities
- Students without disabilities hold more positive attitudes towards their peers with intellectual disabilities
- Encourages social interactions between students with and without intellectual disabilities and creates meaningful friendships
- Provides opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to collaborate, coordinate, plan and lead inclusive activities together
- Inclusive sports programs provide opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate in sports activities alongside one another and creates meaningful friendships on and off the field of play
- Provides students with and without intellectual disabilities opportunities to take on leadership roles in their school and community
- School-wide initiatives provide opportunities for *all* students in the school to get involved

Special Olympics Oregon can provide:

- Resources
- Educational materials
- Support
- Volunteer and community service opportunities
- Inclusive sports programming
- Joint fundraising opportunities
- Youth leadership opportunities

“[Project] UNIFY has opened up the eyes of everyone to WANT to show respect, dignity and advocate for what they believe is right.”
- Rainier High School Student

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