

Unified Physical Education

Brittany Schmitt
Garden Grove Unified School District









Central High School
United PE Program





Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**

Research Overview



97% of Unified Champion Schools (UCS) liaisons felt that the UCS program has created a **more socially inclusive school environment**



94% of liaisons indicated that the Unified Champion Schools program has made a **big impact in reducing bullying**, teasing, and offensive language in their schools



Students who participate in the UCS program feel more supported by their teachers and peers, have **higher levels of grit, receive better grades, and are more empathetic and compassionate**



95% of liaisons reported **increased participation** of students with intellectual disabilities (ID) in school activities, leading to more **inclusive attitudes** school-wide

Schools to help them through a hard time (78%) compared to students not in the UCS program

Educational Benefits for Class Members & School Community



- School climate improvement through acceptance, friendship and social inclusion (SHAPE National Standard 4)
- Hands-on leadership development
- Social-emotional learning through student interactions and activities (SHAPE National Standard 4)
- Genuine inclusion and sports experiences for students of diverse ability levels
- Students empowered to educate and impact the entire school community

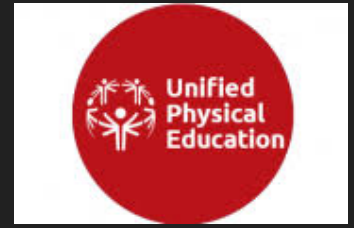
Overview & Philosophy



Unified Physical Education provides a unique opportunity for students with and without disabilities to come together through ongoing educational and physical activities. The Unified Physical Education course is structured around the national physical education standards and grade-level outcomes, which include gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a health-enhancing level of fitness. Additionally, the class supports the development of leadership skills for all students, and the empowerment of ALL students to foster an inclusive class and school-wide environment. Unified Physical Education courses can be a gateway for further participation in Special Olympics programs and events.

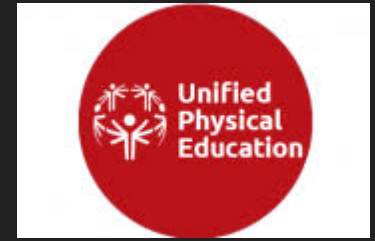
Anecdotal evidence supports that participation in Unified Physical Education leads to an increase in student engagement in physical education and the greater school community. In addition, schools that have implemented the Unified Physical Education concepts have indicated that their student body has become more accepting of all students, and more apt to celebrate individual differences. Examples include students with and without disabilities eating lunch together, doing activities together on the weekends, and inspiring social change throughout the school.

How does it work?



Each school/district is encouraged to work with their State Special Olympics staff to determine how Unified Physical Education could be part of the physical education curriculum. Concepts from these resources can be incorporated into an existing course, or used to develop a new course. The course is typically taught by a certified physical education teacher. Regardless of the structure, this course should be offered in the same manner as any other class in the school. It should be included in the registration guide alongside all other course options eligible for graduation credit. In addition, all students participating in the class should receive the same type of academic credit.

Sample Course Description



Course Description:

Students in the Unified PE class serve as mentor coaches to students in the Adapted Physical Education class while participating in various gross motor activities. This course combines all students to participate in developmentally appropriate activities including lifetime activities, physical fitness, and sports. Students will work together to increase competence and confidence in a variety of physical activities. Through ongoing leadership opportunities, members of this course will be empowered to help create a more inclusive and accepting school environment for all students. Students will not just serve as mentor coaches, but will be expected to improve their own skills. All students should be encouraged to use their unique skills to support each other. This semester-long course may be taken for Physical Education credit, or as an Elective if the student already has 2 years of PE credits.

Sample course outcomes



Course Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of and competency in motor skills, movement patterns, and strategies needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Students will achieve a higher level of physical fitness for health and performance while demonstrating knowledge of fitness concepts, principles, and strategies.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity.
4. Students will be able to self reflect on their own leadership skills and improve those skills in areas where needed.
5. Students will create a positive and accepting culture on their campus as they lead by example through their work with students of varying abilities.
6. Students will serve as a mentor coach and assist in the development of skills of another student(s) with varying abilities.
7. Students will demonstrate knowledge of various disabilities and strategies to help individuals with those disabilities be more successful in a gross motor environment.

Performance Evaluation:



1. Written weekly feedback that is completed in class to aide in evaluating and enhancing leadership skills.
2. Reflection essays that are assigned as homework to aide in generalizing skills and concepts learned in class to beyond the classroom.
3. Daily participation in class working towards their own skills.
4. Daily participation in class helping their peers. Everyone helps everyone, we are in it to win it together!
5. For students who still require participation in the State Mandated Physical Fitness Test, the FITNESSGRAM will be administered during this class.

Students comprising a Unified PE class



Unified Physical Education is a fully inclusive program. When possible, approximately half the students in this course should be students with a disability; the other half should be students without a disability. A Unified Physical Education course should never be comprised solely of individuals with disabilities, nor should the course be comprised of primarily individuals without disabilities. Please remember that students with disabilities who receive adapted physical education services must receive these services in their least restrictive environment (LRE). The Unified Physical Education course could be the LRE for some students, however, it might not be the LRE for all students with disabilities.

An important underpinning of Unified Physical Education is that all students enter the class on an equitable social footing; for this to occur, ALL students should receive physical education credit. Students without disabilities are not meant to serve as helpers or mentors, but to be equitable classmates. All students should be encouraged to use their unique skills to support one another.

Research from around Southern California on other programs

1. Kasia Givenrod- Brea Olinda HS
 - a. APE teacher teaches the class, she has 2 rosters (one is called Unified PE for the general ed students, the other is called Adapted PE for the APE kiddos)
 - b. 1:1 student ratio
 - c. Students can take the class for elective or PE credit
 - d. Application and interview process to be accepted (gen ed)
2. Kara- Trabuco Hills HS
 - a. Co-taught between Educational Specialist and GenEd PE teacher
 - b. 50% gen ed students, 50% moderate severe special ed
 - c. Students take the class for PE credit, they choose the PE class from the list of PE classes they have to offer.
 - d. They have 2 periods of Unified PE
3. Theresa Boiler- Central Valley school district
 - a. a . APE teacher and gen ed PE teacher co-teach the class
 - b. 1:1 student ratio
 - c. Students take the class as an elective or PE credit
4. Jennifer- Moreno Valley HS
 - a. Gen ed PE teacher teaches the class, APE teacher comes in to support 2-3 days a week
 - b. 2:1 gen ed to sped student ratio
 - c. Students take the class as an elective or PE credit

Resources:

- All graphics and content used is taken from @specialolympics.org
- Videos
 - Garden Grove Unified School District La Quinta High (youtube)
 - Partners PE McKinney ISD (youtube)
 - Central High School United PE (youtube)