

Granite State Unified Champion Banner School Application 2024-2025

Special Olympics New Hampshire (SONH) will recognize and celebrate schools that create an exceptional inclusive school community – a Unified Champion School. A Unified Champion School community encourages collaboration, engagement and most importantly respect by and for all members of the student body and staff.

In 2021, the Granite State Unified Champion Banner School Award was created to recognize exemplary schools in New Hampshire and the inclusive community they foster. Granite State Unified Champion Banner Schools will be recognized annually (*must reapply every four years*).

Schools will have the opportunity to submit an application to SONH and a review committee, made up of already recognized Banner Schools, will determine the 2025 recipients.

Special Olympics New Hampshire Unified Champion Banner Schools are expected to offer the following initiatives Unified Sports, Inclusive Youth Leadership, Whole-School Engagement and create a plan for Sustainability.

We invite your school to apply to be considered for the next class of Granite State Banner Schools!

TIMELINE:

- **April 18:** Application announced
- **May 16:** Applications due
- **May 19-23:** Committee reviews applications
 - Committee comprised of SONH Schools Director and individuals from previously awarded Granite State Banner Schools.
 - May 26 & 27 – SONH schools team reviews recommendations
- **May 30:** Schools will be notified

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please fill out the following application with specific explanations showcasing why your school is a Granite State Unified Champion Banner School. Provide enough information so the Granite State Banner School committee can get a clear picture of your programs. If you need more space, you can add additional pages for your answers.
 - *Please note: Reflection of your body of work can be greater than the 2024-2025 School Year.*
- To become a Special Olympics Granite State Banner School, the nine standards of excellence detailed on the final page of this application must be met. The answers you provide in your application should demonstrate how these standards are met.
- When you have completed your application, please return it to Leisa D'Amour at LeisaD@sonh.org by May 16th. Schools will be notified if they have been selected by May 30th.
- If you are chosen as a Granite State Unified Champion Banner School, your school liaison will work with you to order a banner for your gym and determine a presentation date when your school will be awarded with your banner and a plaque.

Granite State Unified Champion Banner School Application

(Application deadline is May 16th) Check one : New Application _____ Renewal Application _____

Date: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

Applicant name, email and phone number: _____

1. **Unified Sports:** How many interscholastic Unified Sports seasons does your school participate in? _____

- List the sport(s) _____
- Please paint a picture of each sport season, i.e. How often do you practice, do you have post season awards, how many games do you play, does your school host a pep rally, what non sport team building inclusive events do you hold during the sport season, etc. (attach schedule and practice dates to application) _____

- How many athletes participate? How many Unified Partners? (Attach roster) _____
- Name of coach(es) who have received UCS/NHIAA training/Other, please indicate training type and how it relates to coaching Unified Sports _____

- Please provide a statement about how Unified Sports is viewed in your school. _____

- Does your school have a Unified Fitness group and/or Unified Physical Education class? If so, please describe, including size of the group/class and a schedule of meeting/class frequency? _____

2. **Inclusive Youth Leadership:** How many Inclusive Youth Leadership opportunities does your school offer? _____

- List the club(s) _____
- Paint a picture of each club, i.e. How often do they meet, is there anything unique about the club topic/structure, are the goals of the club established by its members (youth), how many people (Athletes/Unified Partners/Faculty/Staff) participate in each club (attach any supporting or supplemental materials: _____



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- How do these offerings provide meaningful involvement in advocacy, education, and decision making for both athletes and Unified Partners? _____

- Please provide a statement about how Inclusive Youth Leadership is viewed in your school. _____

3. **Whole School Engagement:** Does your school hold at least one schoolwide event per year that promotes inclusion and educates students/staff about intellectual disabilities? Please describe your event(s). _____

- How many members of your school community participate in these events and how are they viewed in your school?

- Please provide a detailed explanation about how school wide inclusion awareness event(s) impact your whole school community (students and staff)? _____

4. **Sustainability:** Is your school able to sustain the above three components, without ongoing financial support, or have a plan to do so (could include fundraising, inclusion in the school budget, etc.)? Do you have personnel invested in continuing/ growing these strategies? Describe your plan. _____

Is there any additional information you would like to share that sets your school apart and makes your school, a Granite State Unified Champion Banner School? _____



Granite State Unified Champion Banner School Application Standards

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE THAT MUST BE MET TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY:

Unified Sports (4 Standards)

1. Unified Sports® or fitness is offered in at least two seasons during school year.
2. Unified Sports® offers regular practices, team meetings, and competition similar to other teams in the school.
 - a. *Able to provide detail on practice and game schedules*
3. Each sport is overseen by an adult coach who has received training in Special Olympics Unified Sports®.
4. Unified Sports® is officially recognized by the school as a varsity level sport (or equivalent).
 - a. *Provide detailed examples on how this is displayed. What makes your Unified Sports® exceptional?*

Inclusive Youth Leadership (3 Standards)

5. A Unified Club or student group offers recreational, social and leadership opportunities/training for students with and without intellectual disabilities.
6. The inclusive club/group meets at least once per month throughout the school year.
7. The inclusive club/group has an adult liaison and is officially recognized by the school in a similar style as other clubs/activities.
 - a. *Provide detail on how this is achieved in your school*

Whole-School Engagement and Sustainability (2 Standards)

8. Awareness and educational activities promote inclusion and reach the majority of the school population.
9. The school participates in the SONH Winter Water Sports events and other fundraising opportunities.

Additionally, we welcome a letter of recommendation on your school's behalf from any member from the following groups (*optional*):

- Student: Athlete/Unified Partner, Coach, Parent, Administrator, Faculty/Staff Member

