Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools

Unified Champion Schools Grant Overview & Reimbursements

October 30, 2025

General UCS Info

- Your UCS team consists of Jaclyn Williamson, Katie Telschow, and Andrea Allen
- Please email us at UCS@SONJ.org with any questions
- UCS website (www.SONJ-UCS.org) is your best resource for everything
    - Resources, forms, links to monthly reports, etc.
    - This replaces the UCS Dashboard from past years
    - Link will always be in our email signatures

General Grant Information

- SONJ receives funding from a variety of sources, all of whom have strict guidelines and reporting requirements
- The UCS grant is intended to be seed money
- Once your programs gain momentum, we'd like to see a marked decrease in dependency on SONJ funding
    - Work Unified into budgets
    - Fundraise
- Schools that have been receiving money for more than 5 years will see a significant decrease in funding – if any funding – in the next grant cycle

Grant Overview

- The UCS grant supports intentionally-inclusive programming by reimbursing eligible expenses.
- Your school or district will make purchases, pay invoices, and pay stipends to advisors and coaches.
- After payment is made, you may submit a reimbursement request to SONJ within 30 days
- Schools in good standing are eligible for reimbursement

Grant Standing

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Schools in good standing will:

- Complete required reports on time and completely
- Implement the 3 components of UCS
- Implement a fundraiser to benefit your own Unified initiatives
- Attend any required meetings
- Adhere to the mission and vision of UCS

Our team is here to help, so please don’t hesitate to reach out if you’re struggling with any of our requirements or guidelines.

Non-Reimbursable Items

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Some items are not reimbursable by the UCS grant

- Examples: food, prizes, promotional items, clothes, items for events that are not Unified
- Review the full list on www.sonj-ucs.org
- If you're not sure, ask!

Unified Requirement

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- The UCS grant is intended to support truly Unified programming, which means activities should include an **approximately equal number** of participants with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (Unified partners).
- Reimbursement requests will only be considered for expenses that reflect this balance.
- For example, a bowling practice with 10 athletes and 2 Unified partners would not meet the Unified criteria and therefore would not be eligible for reimbursement.

Pre-approval

Written pre-approval is required for the following:

- **Individual items costing $500 or more.** Bulk orders totaling $500 do not require approval, but single items like a basketball hoop do.
- **Uniform purchases.** Both the design and the purchase must be approved. Uniforms purchased with grant funds must have a SONJ or Unified Sports logo or reference.
- **Items featuring SONJ, UCS, or Unified Sports branding.** Includes logos for Special Olympics, Unified Sports, Unified Champion Schools, etc.
- **Note:** Pre-approvals from previous years do not carry over.
- Request pre-approval by emailing UCS@SONJ.org

General Reimbursement Info

- Download the reimbursement request forms from our website
- PLEASE complete the form electronically.
- Send a separate request for each school, even if we're reimbursing the district
  - Awards are intended for use only by the school named in the award letter and SONJ tracks expenditures by school
  - If you're splitting a cost between two or more schools, explain that in your email
- We strongly discourage individuals making purchases as well as cash payments

Expense Reimbursement

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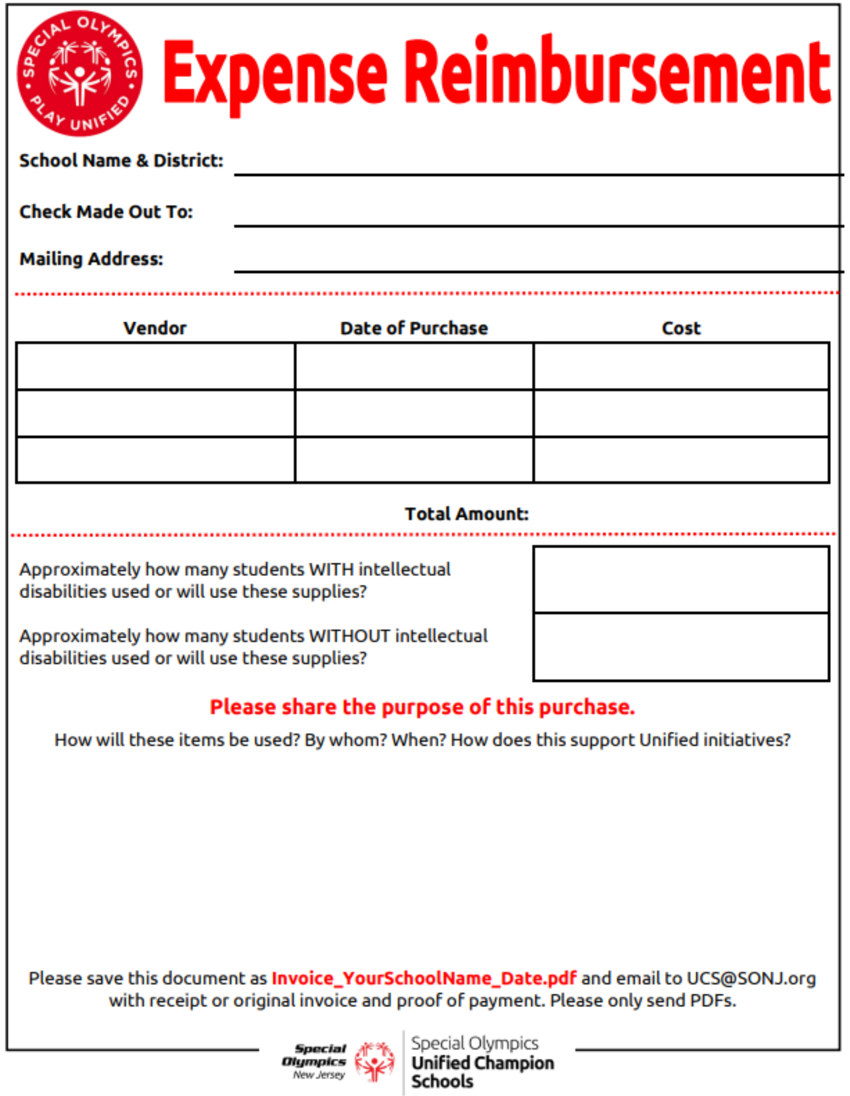

Expense Reimbursement

School Name & District: ____________________

Check Made Out To: ____________________

Mailing Address: ____________________

Vendor	Date of Purchase	Cost

Total Amount:

Approximately how many students WITH intellectual disabilities used or will use these supplies?	
Approximately how many students WITHOUT intellectual disabilities used or will use these supplies?	

Please share the purpose of this purchase.

How will these items be used? By whom? When? How does this support Unified initiatives?

Please save this document as **Invoice_YourSchoolName_Date.pdf** and email to UCS@SONJ.org with receipt or original invoice and proof of payment. Please only send PDFs.

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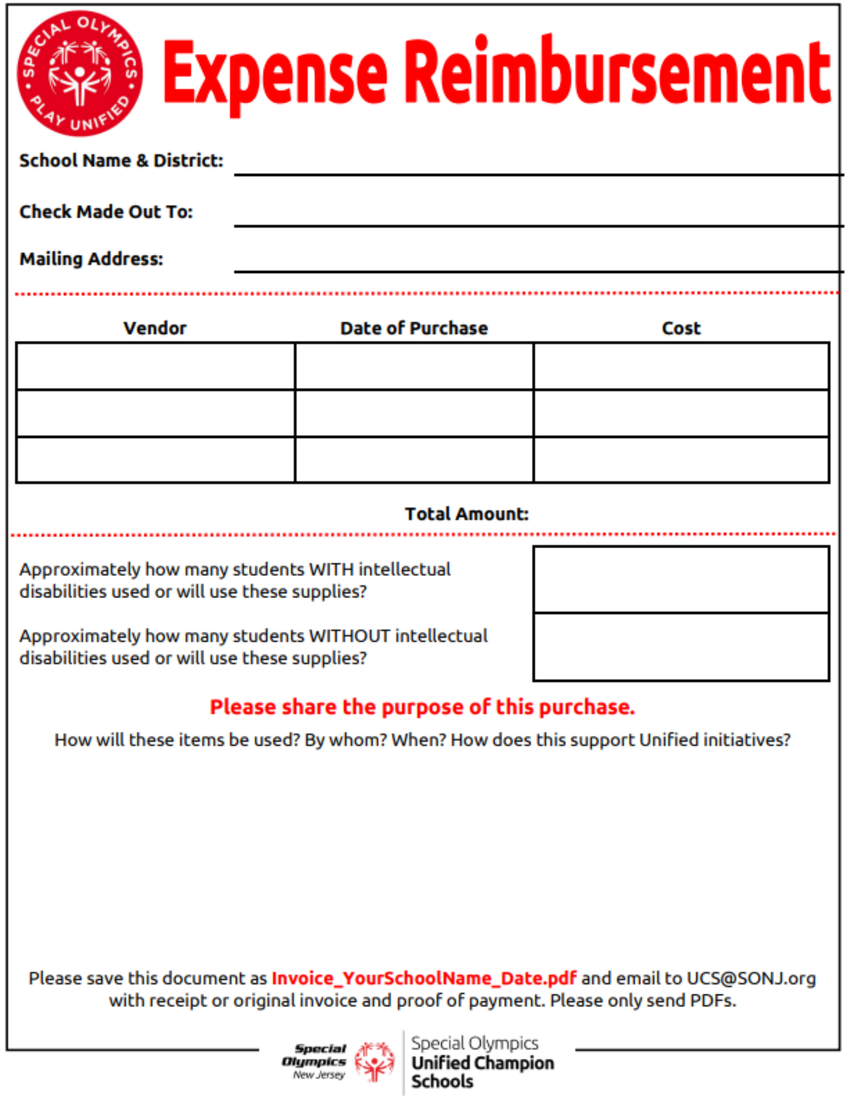
- Download the form from our website
- School Name and District – separate forms for each school, even if we're reimbursing the district
- Check Made Out to – who is SONJ reimbursing?
- Bottom portions – fill these out accurately and completely! Without this info, the form will be returned to you
- Ensure numbers are Unified and reflected in your monthly reports
- Use additional forms if needed

Expense Reimbursement



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Send with:

- Receipt or original invoice
  - Cannot accept quotes, estimates, PO, etc.
- Proof of payment
  - Copy of the check, printout of credit card confirmation, etc.
  - PO indicates intent to pay, not that payment was actually made
- Proof of receipt for Amazon orders
  - "Delivered" page

Notes:

- Wait until you receive the items to submit
- Use this form for everything except stipends
  - Facility rental, transportation, supplies, etc.
- We should see info in your monthly reports referencing what you purchased

Stipend Reimbursement

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STIPEND COVER SHEET

If you are submitting more than one stipend reimbursement request, please include this cover sheet to total your total amounts. Please be sure to also submit an individual stipend reimbursement request form, proof of payment, a detailed list of the individual's role (including dates of events). If you would not like to request reimbursement for employer taxes up to 7.65%, please do not include those amounts.

School Name & District:

Check Made Out To:

Mailing Address:

Individual Name	Type of Stipend (Coach, Advisor, Liaison)	Employer Taxes Not to exceed 7.65%	Total

Total Amount:

Please save this document as Invoice_YourSchoolName_Date.pdf and email to UCS@SONJ.org with receipt or original invoice and proof of payment. Please only send PDFs.

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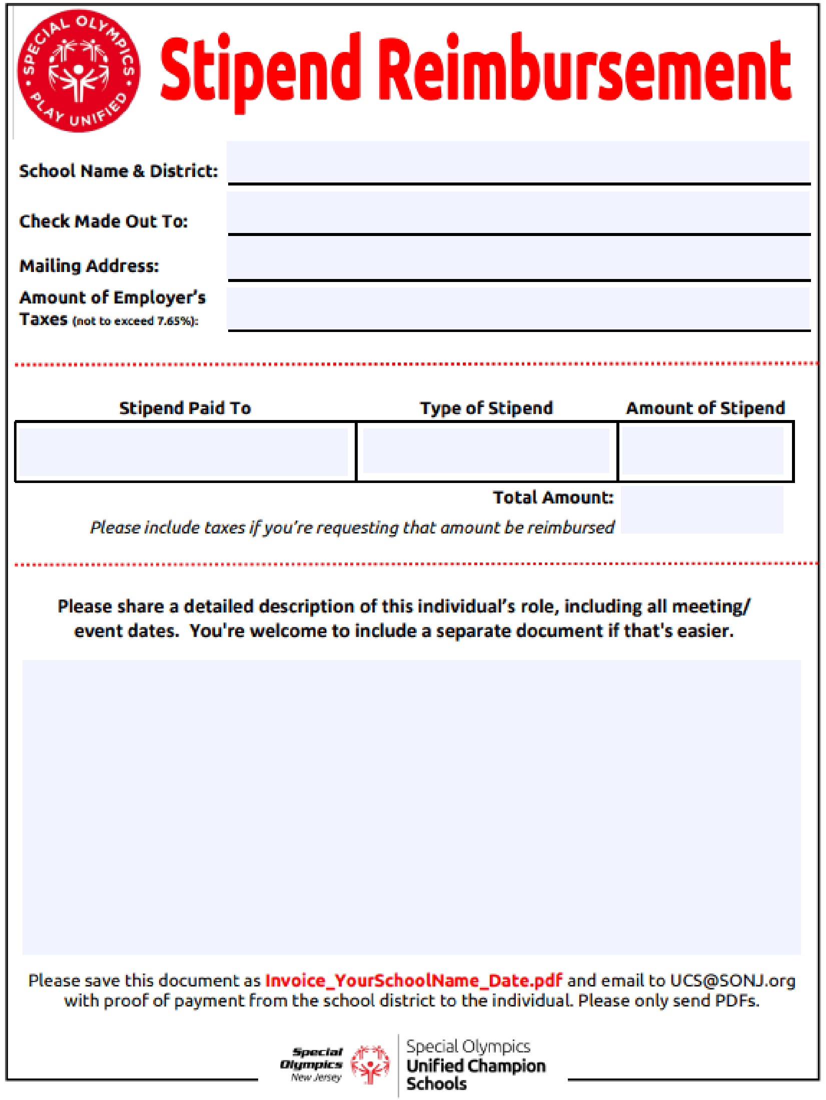
- Use the stipend cover sheet if you're requesting reimbursement for more than 1 stipend
- We created this because we need the total reimbursement amount
- The cover sheet cannot be submitted alone
- If you're requesting reimbursement for employer taxes, we can pay up to 7.65% and this amount must be included in your request
    - This amount comes out of your grant award

Stipend Reimbursement



Stipend Reimbursement

School Name & District:

Check Made Out To:

Mailing Address:

Amount of Employer's Taxes (not to exceed 7.65%):

Stipend Paid To	Type of Stipend	Amount of Stipend

Total Amount:

Please include taxes if you're requesting that amount be reimbursed

Please share a detailed description of this individual's role, including all meeting/ event dates. You're welcome to include a separate document if that's easier.

Please save this document as **Invoice_YourSchoolName_Date.pdf** and email to UCS@SONJ.org with proof of payment from the school district to the individual. Please only send PDFs.

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- Download the form from our website
- Please don't write by hand and then scan
- School Name and District – separate forms for each school, even if we're reimbursing the district
- Check Made Out to – who is SONJ reimbursing?
- Bottom portions – fill these out accurately! Without this info, the form will be returned to you. You're welcome to include a separate document with this information
- One form per person/stipend

Stipend Reimbursement

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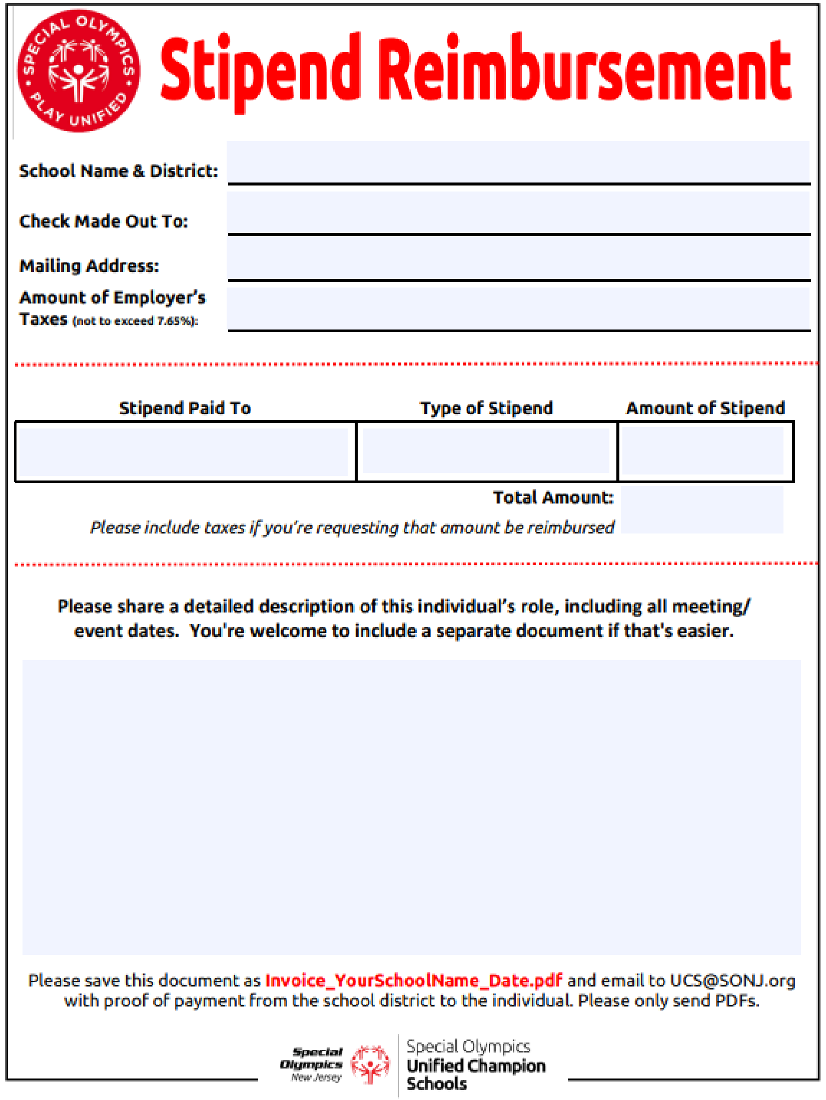

Stipend Reimbursement

SPECIAL OLYMPICS · PLAY UNIFIED

School Name & District:

Check Made Out To:

Mailing Address:

Amount of Employer's Taxes (not to exceed 7.65%):

Stipend Paid To	Type of Stipend	Amount of Stipend

Total Amount:

Please include taxes if you're requesting that amount be reimbursed

Please share a detailed description of this individual's role, including all meeting/ event dates. You're welcome to include a separate document if that's easier.

Please save this document as Invoice_YourSchoolName_Date.pdf and email to UCS@SONJ.org with proof of payment from the school district to the individual. Please only send PDFs.

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Send with:

- Proof of payment
  - Payroll report, copy of check, etc
  - Can't accept timesheets as proof of payment
- Full list of meeting dates, practices, games, etc.

Notes:

- Coaches must have training certificate on file for us to reimburse their stipends
- Can only reimburse stipends for time outside of contracted hours
- Include employer's taxes in total if you want to be reimbursed for them

How you can be helpful

- If you're regularly purchasing items, please consider waiting until you have a stack before sending
- Send as PDF to UCS@SONJ.org with SCHOOL NAME – Reimbursement Request in the subject
    - Must be a PDF! No JPEG
- Your school/district really should not be invoicing SONJ
- Limit your submission to the requested documents
- If there's some special circumstance, please explain it in your email
- If you don't receive acknowledgement of your submission within 2 business days, please follow up.
- If you don't receive your reimbursement within 6 weeks, please follow up.

Deadlines

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- December 15, 2025 – T-Shirt Orders due
  - Note: this amount is deducted from your grant.
- January 20, 2026 – All expenses incurred and paid in 2025 due
- April 20, 2026 – Last day to purchase physical supplies
  - Expectation is that all physical supplies will be delivered by April 20 to allow ample time for use during the school year
  - Items delivered far after this date may not qualify for reimbursement
- **July 3, 2026 – Last day to request reimbursement for 2025-26**
  - Please plan your stipend payouts accordingly!
- July 31, 2026 – Our books close
  - Please let us know far before this date if there's an issue so we can address it before our books close

EOY Submissions

- Reimbursement requests submitted before April 20 will be processed if the school is in good standing at that time
- Requests submitted after April 20 will be processed as soon as all of the school's monthly reports, activity trackers, and the UMass survey are completed.

Most importantly…

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- We’re here to help! Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.
- There’s no question too big or small

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Questions