



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools**

Fundraising and Cool Schools Challenges

UCS Funding

**Special
Olympics**
New Jersey



- To achieve our goal of creating school environments where all students feel accepted, respected, and included, SONJ provides funding to eligible schools to support the implementation of Unified initiatives.
- The SONJ UCS grants are intended to be seed money to get your Unified programs and activities up and running.
 - The expectation is that these programs will be self-funded within 5-7 years.
 - Funding can come from the district, fundraising, or some combination of both

Fundraiser

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- Schools receiving a UCS grant from SONJ are expected to implement a fundraiser
 - This is intended to benefit your own Unified initiatives, but you're also welcome to make a general donation to SONJ
- The type and timing of the fundraiser(s) are up to you
- For the 2025-26 school year, we'll simply ask if your school conducted a fundraiser and how much was raised. We will not require documentation.
- Fundraised dollars may be used however you see fit; guidelines regarding unallowable items do not apply

Cool Schools Challenge

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- Cool Schools Challenges allow UCS schools to participate in select events while raising funds and awareness for Special Olympics New Jersey AND their own school.
- 50% of every dollar fundraised over the registration fee goes back to your school to fund your Unified programming
- Schools have the option to participate in person or virtually.



Cool Schools Challenge Events

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- September – Turnpike 5k in Secaucus
- November - Thanks4Giving Turkey Dash and Splash in Asbury Park
- December – Jingle All the Way 3k – *Virtual Only*
- January – Polar Plunge in Wildwood
- May – Lincoln Tunnel Challenge in Weehawkin
- May – Walk SONJ – Sites across the state

Virtual Cool Schools Challenge



- All Cool Schools Challenges offer the option to participate virtually
 - Jingle All the Way 3k only offers the CSC virtually
- You do not need to travel to the event location to participate or earn your revenue share
- To participate virtually, you have a few options:
 - Schedule a day and time for all registrants to get together and complete an activity
 - This can be the original challenge (a 5k or a polar plunge), an abridged challenge, or your own team-building activity – it doesn't matter to us!
 - Encourage registrants to complete some challenge on their own (a full 5k, just a walk, etc.)
 - Treat this simply as a fundraiser rather than an activity
- Shirts and finishers medals will be shipped to your school for each registrant after the event.

Virtual Cool Schools Challenge

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- One individual should register your team under the event's Cool School Challenge
- Share your team name with your students so they can register as individuals on your team
- Registrants will pay the registration fee and then begin fundraising
- Participate in person with us or “virtually” whenever works best for you
- Your revenue share check will be mailed to your school following the event.