

To: RSU #24 School Board

From: Sue Leighton, Special Education Director

RE: Request for Permission to Apply and Accept Special Olympics Grant Funds to Support an RSU #24 Unified Basketball Team

Date: October 27, 2016

Michelle Withee is our new Special Education teacher at Sumner High School. Michelle has been a coach for Special Olympics for several years and has served as a member of the Area Management team. She is interested in renewing our district's participation in Special Olympics activities. The first activity would be to develop a Unified Basketball team. The team consists of students with disabilities (Unified Athletes) and without disabilities (Unified Partners), who play together on the court, always with a 3:2 ratio of Athletes to Partners. In year 1, the plan would be to practice for two hours weekly and then play in a tournament at UMO in March as a way to get started. Next year, we would have an increased schedule of games. Michelle is certified as the coach and another adult would need to assist her. Jackie Thurber, the Special Education Life Skills program teacher is willing to do so. As a means of support, Special Olympics provides grants to start Unified teams. The first year the grant is up to \$2500.00 and the second year it is up to \$2,000.00. Grant funds would pay for team equipment, transportation, and coaches. Our request is for the \$2,500.00 grant to start the program this year. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Leighton
Special Education Director