



Unified Volleyball Bulletin 2026



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Maine



Special Olympics
**Unified Champion
Schools®**



2026 MPA CO-ED UNIFIED VOLLEYBALL

(Updated 8/18/26)

UNIFIED VOLLEYBALL SEASON

September 4, 2026	Notice of Intent to Participate (Click here for notification form)
September 18, 2026	Intent and Schedules Due
September 21, 2026	First Practice
October 8, 2026	First Countable Match
October 25, 2026	Funding Application Deadline #1 (Click here for funding application)
November 13, 2026	Last Countable Match

Minimum/Maximum Game Requirements:

Minimum number of games: 3

Maximum number of games: 6

Official Lineup:

Six players will be on the court at all times with a make-up of three (3) Unified Athletes and three (3) Unified Partners. The game will end if a team is not able to have the correct number of athletes and partners.

- The serving order and positions on the court, at service, shall alternate Unified Athletes and Unified Partners
- Each athlete and partner must be played at least once during the game. Mass substitutions will be allowed on a dead ball. Unified Athletes may only substitute for Unified Athletes and Unified Partners may only substitute for Unified Partners.

Team Rosters: Teams are co-ed. Each school will be allowed 22 team members and should include an equal number of athletes and partners if possible. This number does include coaches and student assistants. Varsity Volleyball players may coach but are not eligible to play.

Authorization: The MPA Unified Sports Committee shall administer Unified Volleyball and the rules of the National Federation of State High Schools (NFHS) will govern the sport.

Uniforms: Each team must have a home and away jersey (may be reversible). It is recommended that numbers be on the front and back of each jersey.

- **SONA Unified Sports Uniform Branding:** With the goal of increasing brand recognition of Special Olympics Unified Sports®, a set of [Uniform Guidelines](#) and [supporting resources](#) have been finalized by SONA. These guidelines apply to all Unified Sports teams in the SONA region. These guidelines are also in compliance with the NFHS sport rules as a “commemorative patch”. Uniforms, or a visible area of an under layer, should include the Special Olympics Unified Sports® logo. Logo options can be found on the [Resources page for Marketing and Communications – Special Olympics Brand](#) under Special Olympics Unified Sports® and Play Unified.
 - Order of preference (red as primary, all other colors as alternates; 4-line versions not recommended):
 1. Special Olympics Unified Sports circle logo or
 2. 2-Line logo or
 3. 2-Line logo lozenge or
 4. Special Olympics Unified Sports® in text

5. Special Olympics Play Unified logo (white lettered logo is included in blank space)

Meaningful Involvement: All players should have meaningful involvement without any type of individual player dominance. Meaningful Involvement is an effort to **optimize participation by all team members** (athletes and partners) based on the principle that **every player should contribute to the success of the team**. The composition of any team must include players with necessary sport-specific skills. Teams should **not include players who dominate play, exclude other teammates from contributing to the success of the team, or present a health and safety risk on the field of play**. By permitting any player to dominate play, other players' roles and opportunities are greatly limited. This violates both the spirit and intent of the Special Olympics Unified Sports rules and philosophy and will be addressed according to the standards set forth by each sport's rules and governing ordinances.

- If an official determines that a player is dominating play, that official shall sanction the player and/or coach. Consequences for non-compliance are either:
 - Specific Player Sanctions (encourage voluntary substitution, warning, technical foul, ejection)
 - Sanctions will include warning the player and/or coach, citing the player or coach with unsportsmanlike conduct or removing the player or coach from the game.
 - Team Consequences (forfeiture of game, disqualification from tournament)

Unified Sports Player Development Model: MPA Co-Ed Unified Volleyball follows the Unified Sports Player Development Model.

- Teammates of high ability serve as mentors to assist players of lower ability
- Lower ability teammates may not have the necessary sports skills and understanding of the rules
- Rules modifications are made to define player's roles and prevent higher ability players from dominating the game

Equipment/Court:

- Net height will be 7' 1/4" (women's height).
- The ball will be a "soft touch" training ball.

Scoring:

- A team needs to win two (2) of three (3) sets.
- Rally scoring is used awarding a point on every serve.
- A game is won when a team scores 25 points with a two-point advantage rally scoring.
- The third game will score to 15 with a two-point advantage rally scoring.
- After 3 consecutive points for the server, side-out.

Unified Volleyball – General Rules of Play Modifications:

- ***The Unified Sports Committee encourages the outcome of every game to be determined by the Unified Athletes and not the Unified Partners.*** In keeping with this spirit, a Unified partner **MAY NOT** do the following:
 - Unified Partners may not attack the net.
 - Unified Partners may not block at the net.
 - Unified Partners may not serve overhand.

- **Game Play:**

- The service line may be brought in to 14' 9".
- Neither Unified Athletes or Unified Partners may attack the net on serve.
- Spiking is prohibited.

Unified Volleyball – Recommendations Special Notes:

- It is very important that emergency contact information is collected from each team member.
- If possible, athletic trainer coverage is recommended.
- Schools must provide facilities for both male and female athletes.
- Teams should have adequate supervision in both locker rooms.
- Coaches and officials should meet prior to the start of the game to exchange line-ups and player development and individual needs of athletes.

CO-ED UNIFIED VOLLEYBALL CLASSIFICATION

<u>SOUTH</u>	<u>NORTH</u>
1. Morse	
2. Oxford Hills	
3. Scarborough	
4. Thornton Academy	
5. Gardiner	
6. Portland/Deering	