

2026 STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



MORE QUESTIONS? CONTACT:
Holly Netz, Marcomm Sr. Director
406-315-4200 | hnetz@somt.org



QUICK FACTS:

ABOUT THIS TOURNAMENT:

- ~ **850+** athletes and Unified Partners
- ~ **120** teams
- ~ **325** coaches and team volunteers
- ~ **200** games played
- ~ **1,000** local volunteers are needed for the tournament
- No experience needed to volunteer!
- Volunteers with all skills are needed, from set-up and tear-down to scorekeepers, marshals, athlete escorts, lunch distribution, and photographers. For most positions, no prior experience is needed; we need people to show up willing to learn and have fun. This is a great opportunity for those working at companies that credit volunteer hours.

WHAT IS HAPPENING:

Types of divisions:

- 5 v 5 (traditional and unified teams)
- 3 v 3 (traditional and unified)
- Individual Skills (compete individually in skills rather than on a team)

WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN:

The tournament is organized and executed by a team of 20+ community leaders who volunteer their time and expertise for three years. Co-Directors for the 2026-2029 tournament are Keith Miller of Butte Public Schools, Maggie Welch of KBOW and local athlete Pam Cloonan. The tournament will bring an estimated \$715,000 in economic impact to the Butte area.

LOCATIONS:

Butte Civic Center

- **Opening Ceremony** November 12, 2026 6:30pm

Competition:

Maroon Activity Center
Butte Central High School
Butte High School
East Middle School
West Elementary School Whittier Elementary School
Civic Center Annex Gym
LDS Church

Opening Ceremony and all games are open to the public. We encourage you to attend and experience our mission of inclusivity, the champion in all athletes, and some GREAT basketball!

Premier Sponsor:



VERBIAGE:

People commonly refer to Special Olympics in these terms. Here are the high points in correct terminology. We appreciate your help dispelling these errors.

Correct v. Incorrect:

- **"The Special Olympics of Montana"** No "the" – It's **Special Olympics Montana**
- Individuals are **"athletes,"** not **"Special Olympians"** or **"kids"**
- Individuals have **"intellectual and developmental disabilities,"** (sometimes referred to as IDD) We do not use **"special needs"** or referred to as **"disabled."**
- **Traditional** versus **Unified** sports/teams: Traditional teams are made up entirely of athletes with intellectual disabilities (IDD). Unified teams are made up of athletes with IDD and individuals without IDD, training and competing side by side.



ABOUT SPECIAL OLYMPICS MONTANA:

Special Olympics Montana (SOMT) is a state-wide non-profit organization that provides year-round sports training, athletic competition, and health-related programming for individuals with intellectual disabilities. SOMT changes lives through the power of sport by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect.



SOMT is an athlete-centered, family-based, volunteer-driven and sponsor-supported movement with over **athletes** registered in **256 programs** from **65 Montana communities**. Over **6,000 Montana volunteers** help organize and host approximately **95 local, area, and state-level competitions each year**.

OUR VISION

Our vision is an inclusive world for all, driven by the power of sport, through which people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live active, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

OUR IMPACT

- ✓ 5,000+ Montana athletes
- ✓ 880+ Unified Partners*
- ✓ 6,500+ volunteers*
- ✓ 17 Olympic style sports
- ✓ 145+ Unified Champion Schools
- ✓ 95+ Yearly Competitions (state and local)

- * intellectual or developmental disabilities
- * individuals without disabilities compete alongside those with IDD
- * coaches, program coordinators, team volunteers & event volunteers

Most people don't know that Special Olympics is more than Sports. Our athlete opportunities include health and fitness programs, athlete leadership training, and whole-school involvement resources.



OTHER COOL THINGS TO KNOW...

Special Olympics athletes must be 8 years of age or older and have an intellectual or developmental disability to participate. **There is no upper age limit!**

There is **no cost to athletes or their families** to participate in Special Olympics.

There is no "off-season."

Athletes train and compete year-round.

SOMT provides **free health screenings** to athletes covering physicals, vision, dental, audiology, physical therapy, podiatry, mental health and prevention/nutrition.

Our **Board of Directors** includes four athletes.

238 Clubs/Programs exist statewide, including traditional athletes, Unified Partners and Unified School programs.

Almost **1,000 athletes** participate in SOMT's General **Fitness and Athlete Leadership Programming**.

Our State Basketball Tournament & Regional Bowling Championships draw as many athlete competitors as our
State Summer Games: 1,050
State Basketball: 823
State Bowling: 1,056

LET ME WIN. IF I CANNOT WIN, LET ME BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT.

—THE ATHLETE OATH

SOMT is accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. and headquartered in Great Falls, MT. To learn more visit www.somt.org; call 1-406-216-5327; or email info@somt.org. Engage with us on Facebook: [specialolympicsmontana](https://www.facebook.com/specialolympicsmontana); YouTube: [SpecialOlympicsMT](https://www.youtube.com/SpecialOlympicsMT) and Instagram [so_montana](https://www.instagram.com/so_montana). You can also reach out to SOMT Marketing and Communications at: 406-315-4200 or hnetz@somt.org