2026 STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Special Olympics Montana

MORE QUESTIONS? CONTACT:
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QUICK FACTS:

ABOUT THIS TOURNAMENT:
~ **950+** athletes and Unified Partners
~ **120** teams
~ **380+** 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. Most positions don't require prior experience; we just need people who 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)
**Unified pairs athletes without intellectual disabilities with Special Olympics athletes. Individuals train and compete together.*

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
Nov 12th
- Doors open at 5 pm with pre-entertainment at High Ore Road.
- Ceremony begins at 6:15pm

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

Premier Sponsor: town pump

WHAT WE NEED: YOU!

We need over 1,000 volunteers to run this tournament. All talents are needed - from competition venues to lunch assistants to photographers. You can volunteer for a couple of hours or a couple of days!!
Volunteer sign-up will be ready on 9/16. At that time, you can visit somt.org to sign up.

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!

GIANFORTE Family Foundation · DENNIS & PHYLLIS WASHINGTON FOUNDATION · BlueCross BlueShield of Montana · Valley Bank Division of Glacier Bank · Benefis HEALTH SYSTEM · LOGAN HEALTH

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 **5,000 athletes** registered in **171 programs** from **132 Montana communities**. Over **6,800 Montana volunteers** help organize and host approximately **95 local, area, and state-level competitions each year.**

Special Olympics Montana

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 disabilites compete alongside those with IDD
* coaches, program coordinators, team volunteers & event volunteers

People commonly refer to Special Olympics using 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.

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

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; YouTube: SpecialOlympicsMT and Instagram so_montana.
You can also reach out to SOMT Marketing and Communications at: 406-315-4200 or hnetz@somt.org