



Alberta School's Athletic Association

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ASAA & Special Olympics Alberta Proudly Hosts Unified Sport High School Student Leadership Conference!

The first ASAA & Special Olympics Alberta Unified Sport High School Student Leadership Conference was held on Fri, 10 February 2023, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at MNP Community & Sport Centre in Calgary. Over 60 participants, including teachers, Educational Assistants, student partners and Unified athletes participated in this fun filled event.

The group had the honour of hearing from Cheryl Bernard, Canadian Olympic Curler – Two-time Olympian, 2010 Olympic Silver Medalist, Co-Chair for the 2024 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games, and President and CEO of Canada's Sports Hall of Fame. During her Keynote, she emphasized the value of sport, and its ability to build leadership in the corporate world by teaching youth skills in teamwork, leadership, and resilience.

Through her mantra in sport, "I never lose, I either win or I learn something", Cheryl imparted that sport teaches you that you can't be afraid to fail. It's the only way you succeed. That's an incredibly valuable lesson because the reality is we lose more than we win in life.

Her final message to youth..."get off the couch, pick up a ball, a bat, a hockey stick, join a softball league, a soccer league, or learn to curl as what you learn from sport will be invaluable for the rest of your life."

The group also learned about starting a Unified program in their school, the importance of diversity in their community as well as sport opportunities in Unified Sport including the sport of Track and Field. Lunch was provided and the group was able to experience the joy of the Unified Sport Program by participating in and coaching a bean bag toss competition which partnered Unified Athletes and student partners.

We are excited about the direction and growth of the Unified Sport program throughout Alberta. Please contact Emily Lines at emily@assa.ca for more information on how to introduce Unified Sport to your school.