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PRESS RELEASE

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PIAA partners with Special Olympics

MECHANICSBURG, PA: The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) is pleased to announce its partnership with Special Olympics of Pennsylvania to assist PIAA member schools in providing athletic opportunities for athletes with disabilities.

Today's announcement was part of the ceremony to promote the first ever Unified Soccer Championship at Frankford High School Memorial Stadium. The Championship was the first ever Unified Soccer course and featured athletes and partners from 10 high schools across the city of Philadelphia. Mr. Matthew Aaron, CEO of Special Olympics Pennsylvania, and PIAA Executive Director, Dr. Robert A. Lombardi, believe that this cooperative effort will assist both groups in providing athletic experiences for all students in each school's community.

Today's historic event was hosted by the Special Olympics of Pennsylvania at Frankford HS and was attended by the Director of Special Olympics Pennsylvania's Philadelphia program, Barbara Chavous; Philadelphia Councilwoman, Blondell Reynolds Brown; Superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia, Dr. William Hite; PIAA District XII Chairman, Robert B. Coleman; PIAA Chief Operating Officer, Mark E. Byers, PIAA Assistant Executive Director, Patrick B. Gebhart; Special Olympics Pennsylvania Co-ordinator of Officials, Randy Pritzger; and many other integral representatives of the national Special Olympics organization as well as many prominent local, state and national elected officials.

"Today was a great day for athletics in the state of Pennsylvania", commented Dr. Lombardi, "and it was a day where we hope to build a tremendous partnership with the Special Olympics to promote the educational values of athletics for all students in our schools and their communities."

ABOUT PIAA: Beginning in Pittsburgh, on December 29, 1913, PIAA was given the privilege of serving its member schools and registered officials by establishing policies and adopting contest rules that emphasize the educational values of interscholastic athletics, promote safe and sportsmanlike competition and provide uniform standards for all interscholastic levels of competition.