

Polar Plunge and After Splash Bash at Versailles State Park

Cool School Challenge **Team Captain Toolkit**



www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge

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What is the Polar Plunge and After Splash Bash?

The Polar Plunge and After Splash Bash at Versailles State Park has quickly become the winter's "must see, must do" event in Ripley, Ohio and Dearborn Counties. It's the "official" event of winter - it's a spectacle like no other! This event draws over 500 Plungers and spectators, and the annual event promises all the chills and thrills that Plungers have come know and love, and then some.

Plunge participants set a fundraising goal then get pledges from family, friends and colleagues for their commitment to "freeze their fur off" for Special Olympics Indiana—the state's largest and only year-round organization devoted to sports training and competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

You will be plunging into an area of the Versailles State Park lake that the ice has been cut away. The depth of the water is approximately waist deep, so you don't have to go all the way under if you don't want to, but we highly recommend full body submersion! The Dearborn County Water Rescue will be in the water to assist you and keep you safe. All plungers must wear shoes while plunging.

The Polar Plunge and After Splash Bash features a HUGE heated festival tent with great entertainment, local vendor booths, Plunge Food Court, face painting, games, and more. There are also two heated changing tents, so that participants get ready for the Plunge and change after the Plunge to enjoy the After Splash Bash festivities. This is one polar party you don't want to miss!

Each Plunger must raise a minimum of \$99 in pledges and in return will earn the Official Polar Plunge long sleeve t-shirt. As your pledges increase so do the prizes you earn! Being part of the Plunge experience, you are allowing thousands upon thousands of children and adults with intellectual disabilities to experience a brighter tomorrow.

Money raised supports Special Olympics Indiana athletes. There are more than 18,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities who participate in Special Olympics in Indiana. Your efforts help them reach for their dreams as they train and compete in 20 Olympic-type sports—such as track and field, aquatics, equestrian, basketball, softball, alpine skiing, snowshoeing, and ballroom dancing. Special Olympics is about more than just sports...it's about changing lives!

Not only do athletes get in shape and meet new friends while participating in Special Olympics, but they gain the confidence and skills to excel in other areas in their lives. This is only possible because of supporters like you.



What is the Cool School Challenge?

The Cool School Challenge is designed exclusively for school teams to show their school spirit by challenging other schools in the area to brave the icy waters of the lake at Versailles State Park and support Special Olympics Indiana.

What is a Cool School Plunge Team?

Teams are a group of your classmates, teachers, friends, teammates, or family who get together to raise money for the Plunge and enjoy the benefits of our Cool School Challenge program by representing their school.

Cool School Challenge Rules:

- Cool School Teams must have a minimum of 10 to be eligible for team prizes.
- Cool School Teams must pre-register on-line or by mail.
- All Cool School Team members must be pre-registered; no member can be added to the team the day of the event.
- When creating your Cool School Team, the name must read as follows: *School Name-Team Name*.
- Each Cool School Team member must raise a minimum of \$99.
- Participants receive an “official” Polar Plunge long-sleeve t-shirt
- There will be a trophy awarded to the Cool School Team that raises the most money in each division. Divisions are as follows:
 - Division 1: Middle Schools
 - Division 2: High Schools
- The overall highest fundraising school will receive the coveted Cool School Trophy, and “Tundra”, the traveling Polar Bear.



The Role of a Cool School Team Captain:

- Build a team of at least 10 members
- Set a fundraising goal for your team. Remember each team member must raise a minimum of \$99 in order to plunge.
- Provide team members with fundraising tools (provided in this package)
- Coach and motivate your team to success. Generate enthusiasm for the event via email, Facebook, voice mail, texting, school announcements, etc.

How to Be a Successful Team Captain:

- Ask people you like and trust to be on your team
- Have a team kickoff to get things going
- Select a Co-Captain to help you
- Organize your team by forming committees: lay out team fund-raisers on a calendar and discuss responsibilities, delegate, trust and support team members
- Communicate: have regular meetings, create a team newsletter, phone calls or emails with updates, reminders, schedule, etc.
- Keep your team informed
- Motivate, excite, and enthuse your team!
- Consider developing a team theme with t-shirts and costumes
- Have a team captain wrap up party—review team activities, fund raisers, etc. to find out what worked and what can be improved; distribute incentives for your team; you can even have your own awards! Start planning next year!
- HAVE FUN!

Incentives for your Cool School Team

Top Cool School Team per Division: There will be a trophy awarded to the team that raises the most money in each division. Divisions are as follows:

Division 1: Middle Schools

Division 2: High Schools

Overall Top Cool School Fundraising Team: The coveted “Cool School” trophy will be awarded to the school that raises the most money overall.

Overall Top Teacher / Coach: This award will be given to the teacher or coach that shows outstanding fundraising and leadership of the Plunge team by raising the most money in all school divisions.

Overall Star Student: This award will be given to the student who demonstrates an above and beyond effort in all aspects of fundraising and team support.



How to Get Your School Involved

It takes courage, bravery and a little bit of crazy to be a Cool School Plunger. Below are some ideas to help rally your school to help support Special Olympics Indiana!

- Advertise the Cool School Plunge around your school by displaying customizable plunge posters. Contact info@soindiana-rod.org to get these made.
- Host a Cool School Plunge booth during lunch or at a basketball game. Recruit team members or pledges by handing out Plunge materials.
- Host an assembly to inform students about the event and get them excited! We can coordinate an appearance by the Plunge mascot, Ice Rod and representatives from Special Olympics Indiana - Ripley Ohio Dearborn Counties.
- Ask for support by posting your team information on the school's website or intranet with a link to the team page.
- Email students information about the Cool School Challenge and instructions on how to join the team.
- Social Media: use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, etc. to recruit team members and ask for pledges.
- Use the Cool Schools Plunge as a class project or as credit for required Service Learning hours.
- Remember: Your team does not need to consist only of students. Invite your teachers, coaches, advisors, family and friends to join in on the fun!
- Take advantage of #GivingTuesday, the global day of giving, to include families and friends in your fundraising efforts. Encourage them to make online donation or cash contributions to your Cool Schools Plunge team.
- Have Principals, Administrators, Teachers or School Resource Officers challenge the students to reach a certain fundraising goal. If the students reach their goal, reward them by plunging with them, getting a pie (or lots of pies!) in the face, wear a crazy outfit, trade parking spots for a week or any other creative idea!



How to Join the Cool School Challenge

- To form a team, visit www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge and select "Register Now."
- You will be redirected to the Special Olympics Indiana Polar Plunge - Versailles online registration at www.firstgiving.com.
- Select "Register Now." Under the Register Now window, choose participant and enter the number you'll be registering (suggest 1) and click REGISTER.
- Follow the online instructions to complete your registration.
- At the end of your registration, you can join an existing team or create a new team. As the Team Captain, you will want to create a team. Remember when creating your Cool School Team, the name must read as follows: *School Name-Team Name*.
- After registering, you can create your own personalized fundraising page. Send the link out to your friends, family, colleagues - anyone you think will help you reach your goal!
- Recruit your fellow students, friends, teammates, teachers, and coaches to join your team and help raise more funds for your team in support of Special Olympics Indiana. Direct team members to register online by visiting www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge and join the team you created.

For help forming you team contact:

Greg Townsend, Versailles Plunge Director
gtownsend@soindiana-rod.org
812-584-6861

RAISE \$99, GET A COOL PRIZE!
RAISE MORE, GET COOLER PRIZES!

Visit soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge to view prizes.

Event Day Information

- Registration is from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on event day.
- The Plunge begins immediately after the costume contest, approximately 2:00 p.m.
- As the team captain, please complete the “Cool School Registration Form”, collect the “Cool School Team Member Registration Form” and signed waivers (can be downloaded at www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge) from each team member along with all donations, and create a list of t-shirts sizes needed for your team BEFORE arriving at Versailles State Park. Clearly print names and team information on all donations and forms to be submitted.
- Upon your arrival, immediately head to the registration tables under the main tent with everything you’ve collected. To make registration as efficient as possible please only have yourself and one or two helpers approach the registration tables.
- Each participant raising \$85 or more will receive an official Polar Plunge long-sleeve t-shirt.
- Please make sure your student Plungers have brought a parent/guardian signed waiver before allowing them to participate (can be downloaded at www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge).

Things to Bring

- A plastic bag for wet clothes
- A backpack to hold dry clothing and your new t-shirt!
- Clean dry under garments to wear after Plunging
- Two large size towels one to dry with and one to stand on
- A dry partner to hold your valuables while you are in the water
- Water shoes for going into the water, the sand is very cold on bare feet
- A disposable, waterproof camera that you can carry into the Plunge Zone with you...even if your “handlers” can’t get a close-up of you in the water, feel free to ask a fellow Plunger to capture your big moment on film
- Costume for the costume contest and school mascot if you wish



Fundraising Event Ideas

Ice Cream Social - Just about everyone likes ice cream! Host an ice cream social event for your team. You can charge a flat fee, price per ice cream scoop or just set out a jar and ask for donations.

Pizza Party - This is a twist on the usual fundraiser dinner. Decide if you would like to make this a pizza buffet, set a limit on the number of slices per person, or actually sell the pizza "by the slice."

Car Wash -A great team fundraising idea! Get your team together and pick a location with high car traffic. Set up a car wash with a few hoses, sponges, soap, and towels. Don't forget to make sure you have room for cars to line up!

Dessert auction - Ask for donations of baked goods. Label each dessert with the name of the dessert and the cook. Ask your team's most humorous and charismatic person to be the auctioneer who can entertain the crowd and boost the auction prices.

Bake Sale – hold a Friday bake sale at school (with permission) so classmates and faculty can have treats! Make sure to individually wrap items for individual sale.

Freddie the Flamingo – An eight year old boy put "Freddie Flamingos" in people's yards with a note around Freddie's neck asking for a donation to have them removed. He raised more than \$6,000.00.

Restaurant to the Rescue – ask a local restaurant or café to contribute a portion of the proceeds for a day. It could even be a special menu item. Create a sign letting patrons know that the owner will donate half the money if purchased.

Pennies from Heaven – did you know that one milk jug full of pennies weighs 35 lbs? And did you know that 30 lbs of pennies is equal to \$50? Collect pennies – sit out jars, ask neighbors, etc.

Bowl-A-Thon – bowlers get pledges for each pin they knock down, or you can just get a flat donation. This can bring in good money and be fun!

Penny Wars – Set up a challenge for your class to try to collect the most points (pennies). Points are given for pennies and negative points for silver coins and cash. Others can sabotage by placing money other than pennies in the jars. The class with the most points wins lunch at the losers expense. All money in the jars is donated for the Plunge.

Plunge Night at Basketball Game - Designate a basketball game to promote your Cool School Plunge Team. Do a split the pot, sell cookies, or just ask for donations. **We even have a polar bear costume you can borrow!**



Letter Campaign

This is one way to raise a lot of money in a short amount of time! Set aside about four hours one day and you can have it all done. Write personal letters to your family, friends, peers and coworkers and let them know you are plunging. You can also send out an email.

Make it easy for people to donate; consider including a self-addressed envelope (stamped or not) in the envelope when you mail a letter.

Feel free to compose a one page letter you write on your own as if you were sending it individually to a close friend. Use a computer. Copy it twice. Adjust one copy to be sent via email; the other for regular mail.

Send it to everyone who has ever sent you something! For emails, blind copy (bcc) them all. They don't need to know who else is receiving your note; this can result in more than 100 emails.

Early on, make the ask. Don't limit your donors, but ask for a specific range. Ask for "\$10, \$20, \$50 or whatever your budget will allow."

Give a 10 day deadline for response. People will respond when there is a sense of urgency.

Copy the letters and before stuffing into the envelope, handwrite in colored ink, on the top of the letter the person's name and a quick line, "Hope you can support me." Sign it to add that personal touch.

Feel free to use our sample letter/email on the following page. Remember to share sample letter/email with team members to get them started.



SAMPLE DONATION REQUEST LETTER OR EMAIL

Dear [Insert Name]:

I am in the ___th grade at _____ and have committed to join my peers in the icy lake at Versailles State Park to grin & bear it for the athletes of Special Olympics Indiana. On February 17, 2024, my "Cool School" Team will be joining other schools in Ripley, Ohio and Dearborn counties to support a truly worthy cause.

I know – you're probably getting cold just thinking about it! But the cold that I will feel is temporary...the positive impact this will have on the lives of thousands of citizens with intellectual disabilities will last a lifetime. My classmates, teachers and I have been working very hard to raise funds to gain awareness for Special Olympics, and it all comes down to this!

I have set a personal fundraising goal of \$[insert amount], and I need your help to reach it! So no, I'm not asking you to take the Plunge alongside, but instead, I am asking if you will make a donation to Special Olympics Indiana on behalf of me taking the 2024 Versailles Polar Plunge. Any amount would be appreciated – it all goes to a wonderful cause, and every little bit gets me that much closer to my goal.

In order to support my Plunge, please visit **[insert web address]** and click "Sponsor a Plunger." Type in my name, which will take you to my personal fundraising page, and give you the option of making a donation online via credit or debit card.

If you prefer mail, you can make a check payable to "SOIN" and return it to me at **[insert address]**.

If you want to learn more about this wacky winter event, visit www.soindiana.org to find out all the chilly details. Think warm thoughts for me as February 17th approaches. I will do my best to "Be the Bear" and make my supporters proud!

Thank you!!!

[Plunger Name]



Special Olympics
Indiana

HOW TO RAISE \$500 IN 10 DAYS

REMEMBER: A TEAM OF 10 PEOPLE RAISING \$500 EACH WOULD MAKE A TEAM TOTAL OF \$5000!!!!

	Who to Ask	Total Per Day	Grand Total
Day 1	Sponsor yourself for \$25	\$25	\$25
Day 2	Ask 3 family members to each match your personal donation of \$25	\$75	\$100
Day 3	Ask your best friend to sponsor you for \$25	\$25	\$125
Day 4	Ask your boss for a company contribution of \$25 or to match the entire amount you raise.	\$25	\$150
Day 5	Ask 5 local friends to sponsor you for \$10 each	\$50	\$200
Day 6	Ask 5 out of town friends to sponsor you for \$10 each (see enclosed sample letter)	\$50	\$250
Day 7	Ask 5 businesses your frequent (barber, salon, dry cleaner, dentist, lunchtime restaurant) to sponsor you for \$10 each	\$50	\$300
Day 8	Ask 5 co-workers to sponsor you for \$10 each	\$50	\$350
Day 9	Ask 5 neighbors to sponsor you for \$10 each	\$50	\$400
Day 10	Ask 10 people from your church/temple/social club etc. to sponsor you for \$10 each	\$100	\$500

Other Fundraising Ideas and Hints:

#1 Most Successful Idea: Mail a fundraising letter to your friends, family and neighbors with a self-addressed stamped envelope. See our sample letter.

#2: Add the Plunge Logo to your email signature. Be sure to also include the link to you fundraising page to encourage everyone to visit and donate!

#3: Form a team at work or with friends. Select a captain, choose a team theme- like "Super Plungers" and dress up like Super hero's, wear matching shirts or hats and make a statement!

#4: Double your fun: Challenge a friend or colleague to Plunge!

#5: Ask your supporters about matching funds from their employers

#6: Always follow up, via phone and/or email. People will appreciate the reminder.

#7: Send thank you letters to all Sponsors (and include a crazy picture, so they remember you next year!)



Helpful Tips

DO

- Wear your plunging suit under the clothes you wear to the event – then you don't have to change into it just to change right back out of it!
- Choose your "Plunge Day" outfit (or post-Plunge gear) with this in mind – you will be cold and possibly numb, so loose-fitting, easy-on clothes without a lot of snaps, zippers or buttons are best. When your fingers and toes don't work so well, it's not so easy to get some of that stuff back on!
- Bring a loose pair of shoes to wear after the Plunge – something that will slip easily on and doesn't have tricky laces (think Crocs)
- Carpool, or even better, charter a bus with a whole group of friends. The park only holds so many cars
- If you are a veteran offer up some help to the Plunge rookies – first-timers are easy to spot!

DO NOT

- Do NOT dive in – this is a safety regulation and will be enforced by the safety team!!! Beyond that, remember that a Plunge is whatever you want it to be, so there is no pressure to fully submerge yourself. I recommend you do not go into the water above your abdomen. The water is cold (it is January after all!) and will take your breath away
- Do NOT run into the water, there might be things in the water you can not see. You might step on them or kick them and trip
- Do NOT be the first to go into the water if it is your first time. Remember there will be many people behind you and if you get in there and decide you do need out immediately, it will be very difficult to do so quickly





Please support me as I take the Plunge!

Your donation is helping to make a difference in the lives of Special Olympics Indiana athletes whom benefit from this crazy event!

To make a donation visit:

www.firstgiving.com/_____ (Plunger's Name)



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www.firstgiving.com/_____ (Plunger's Name)

YOU PLEDGE AND I'LL PLUNGE!

Help me reach my goal!

My goal is to raise at least \$_____ for the athletes of Special Olympics Indiana and I need your help. Consider making a donation or joining me in taking a chilly dip into the icy cold water of the Versailles State Park lake this February 19th!

To register as a Plunger please visit

www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge

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To register as a Plunger please visit

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2024 Versailles Polar Plunge Donor Receipt
Thank you for your donation!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount: \$ _____ Date: _____

Paid by: ___ Cash ___ Check

*Special Olympics Indiana is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.
Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

2024 Versailles Polar Plunge Donor Receipt
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Address: _____

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Address: _____

Amount: \$ _____ Date: _____

Paid by: ___ Cash ___ Check

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2024 Polar Plunge at Versailles State Park
**COOL SCHOOL TEAM
 REGISTRATION FORM**
 Saturday, February 17, 2024
 Registration 11:30 am to 1:30 am
 Plunge Time 2:00 pm

To learn more please visit www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge

Teams are a group (10 to 20) of your classmates, teachers, friends, sports teammates, or family who get together to raise money for the Plunge and enjoy the benefits of our "Cool School" team program by representing their school.



Please pre-register by February 1st to receive the official Polar Plunge t-shirt!

Mail completed team & team member registration forms and pledges collected (\$85 Minimum Each Plunger) to:
 Special Olympics Indiana, 429 Manchester St., Aurora, IN 47001. OR bring day of event.

School Name _____ Number of Team Members _____

Cool School Team Captain _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Male _____ Female _____

Email Address _____

➔ Check here ___ if your team created and raised funds online at www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge. All team members will be required to sign a waiver at registration table day of event. If team member is under the age of 18, parent will be required to sign waiver. If parent is not going to be present, please download waiver at soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge and bring signed waiver with you.

Raise \$99, get cool prizes! Raise more, get cooler prizes!

\$99 minimum to plunge. Check out the prizes at soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge.

COOL SCHOOL TEAM MEMBER		Student/ Faculty	AMOUNT RAISED
Captain		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
2		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
3		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
4		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
5		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
6		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
7		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
8		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
9		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
10		__Student __Teacher	__Coach
Please make checks payable to Special Olympics Indiana.		Total Raised:	\$

If more there more than 10 members to your team, please copy form and attach.
 Check here ___ if second form is attached.





2024 Polar Plunge at Versailles State Park COOL SCHOOL TEAM MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

Saturday, February 17, 2024

Registration 11:30 am to 1:30 am
Plunge Time 2:00 pm

To learn more please visit www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge



Please pre-register by February 1st to receive the official Polar Plunge t-shirt!

Please return completed registration form and pledges collected to your team captain. OR bring day of event.
Please copy form to add additional donors.

Cool School Name _____

Cool School Team Member's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Male _____ Female _____

Email Address _____ DOB _____ Age _____

→ Check here if you created and raised funds online at www.soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge
All team members will be required to sign a waiver at registration table day of event. If team member is under the age of 18, parent will be required to sign waiver. If parent is not going to be present, please download waiver at soindiana-rod.org/polarplunge and bring signed waiver with you.

DONOR NAME	PLEDGE
<i>Please make checks payable to Special Olympics Indiana.</i>	TOTAL RAISED: \$

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS INDIANA
RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY,
AND PARENTAL CONSENT AGREEMENT ("AGREEMENT")**

In consideration of participating in the **Special Olympics Indiana Polar Plunge**, I represent that I understand the nature of the Polar Plunge event and that I and/or my minor child am qualified, in good health, and in proper physical condition to participate in such Activity. I acknowledge that if I and/or my minor child believe event conditions are unsafe, I and/or my minor child will immediately discontinue participation in the Activity.

I fully understand that the **Special Olympics Indiana Polar Plunge** event involves risks of serious bodily injury, including permanent disability, paralysis and death, which may be caused by my own actions, or inactions, those of others participating in the event, the conditions in which the event takes place, or the negligence of the "releasees" named below; and that there may be other risks either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time; and I fully accept and assume all such risks and all responsibility for losses, costs, and damages I and/or my minor child incur as a result of my and/or my minor child's participation in the Activity.

I hereby release, discharge, and covenant not to sue **Special Olympics Inc., Special Olympics Indiana**, its respective administrators, directors, agents, officers, volunteers, and employees, other participants, any sponsors, advertisers, and, if applicable, owners and lessors of premises on which the Activity takes place, (each considered one of the "RELEASEES" herein) from all liability, claims, demands, losses, or damages on my account caused or alleged to be caused in whole or in part by the negligence of the "releasees" or otherwise, including negligent rescue operations; and I further agree that if, despite this release, waiver of liability, and assumption of risk I, or anyone on my and/or my minor child's behalf, makes a claim against any of the Releasees, I will indemnify, save, and hold harmless each of the releasees from any loss, liability, damage, or cost which any may incur as the result of such claim.

I also grant Special Olympics Indiana permission to use my likeness, image, voice and words on television, radio, film, or in any form to promote activities of Special Olympics Indiana.

I have read this RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT, AND PARENTAL CONSENT AGREEMENT, understand that I have given up substantial rights by signing it and have signed it freely and without any inducement or assurance of any nature and intend it be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law and agree that if any portion of this agreement is held to be invalid the balance, notwithstanding, shall continue in full force and effect.

Printed name of participant

Signature of Participant (only if age 18 or over)

Date:

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian
(If participant under age 18)

Thank you!

The Polar Plunge and After Splash Bash at Versailles State Park creates smiles and laughter, anticipation and pride. It's not just an event, it's an experience like no other. The Polar Plunge is the most successful fundraiser for Special Olympics Indiana, and it's your opportunity to be part of the most enthusiastic crowd around supporting Special Olympics Indiana athletes. Thank you in advance for your efforts in making this the biggest and best year yet!

Greg Townsend
Versailles Plunge Director
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Special Olympics
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