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Special Olympics Track and Field Day coming to Upper Grand District School Board

After a three-year hiatus Special Olympics Track and Field Day will return to the County of Wellington for its 19th year on May 17, hosted at St. James Catholic High School in Guelph.

Over 600 participants of all ages and peer coaches from sixty schools will compete in several track and field and adaptive events.

?We are so excited to welcome participants from both Wellington Catholic District School Board and Upper Grand District School Board,? said Nicole Hearn, WCDSB special education resource teacher and event committee member. ?This year our motto is ?Better Together', embodying the fact that we are, after three-years, finally able to come together for this great event.?

Wellington Catholic District School Board, Upper Grand District School Board, Ontario Special Olympics, Community Living Guelph/Wellington and the City of Guelph partner together to provide this event for students of all ages.

Participating schools from Dufferin County include Centre Dufferin District High School, Orangeville District Secondary School, Montgomery Village Public School, and Island Lake Public School.

?Whether an athlete participates on the world stage or more importantly within their community, the significance and benefits remain the same. We are designed to be an engagement gateway and our mandate can only be fulfilled through an insatiable desire to increase our athlete population,? shared Glenn MacDonell President and CEO of Special Olympics. ?Please accept my sincere thanks and congratulations on hosting the 19th UGDSB/WCDSB Special Olympics Track & Field Meet. This event represents the ideal School Board ? Special Olympics relationship. Your discipline and commitment to this event is an achievement all its own.?

Participants will compete in 50m, 100m and 200m races, standing/running long jump, and softball throw, as well as adaptive events for those with physical challenges or young people which include obstacle course, basketball shooting, they shoot/they score, T-ball, Popbottle bowling and a 40m walk/run.

The event brings student-athletes from all parts of Wellington and Dufferin Counties together to provide an opportunity to build new friendships as well as renew old ones.

?Student-athletes take pride in demonstrating skills and representing their schools, the goal of the day is to provide everyone with an opportunity to do just that,? said Hearn. ?I know our WCDSB representatives have been practicing lots and are looking forward to showing off their ability at St. James CHS.?

Well over 50 volunteers make this day possible, including a planning committee which consists of representatives from the Upper Grand District School Board, Wellington Catholic District School Board, Special Olympics Ontario, Community Agencies and volunteers.

?We are so excited to be able to all come together again to compete and celebrate our successes! Our teachers, educational assistants and students work so hard to prepare for this day and we are so thankful for the hours of prep and organization from our Special Olympics volunteers and community who come together to support, plan and organize!? shared Erin Leslie, UGDSB Special Olympics track and field committee member. ?Best of luck to everyone! Have fun, and remember, ?Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt!'?

Opening ceremony will start at 10 a.m. at St. James CHS, all are welcome to attend and cheer on the student-athletes.