

# SPECIAL OLYMPICS WINS 'PACK THE STANDS' GAME VERSUS TEACHERS

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*Social Media Editor*

A huge Mustang crowd gathered in the main gym to cheer on the Special Olympics team in the annual "Pack the Stands" game as it competed in an exciting game of basketball against a volunteer staff team, Jan. 7. The Special Olympics basketball team practices weekly and competes against other SO teams in both games and tournaments, including this spirit-filled event.



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The game was separated into two halves, with the JV "Gold" team competing the first half, and the varsity "Black" team competing in the second half. Baskets from Emily Deangelo and Andy Anaya boosted the Gold team ahead of the staff, leading them into halftime with a score of 32-14. The second half of the game was even more intense. Baskets by Tim Gibbs and Abby Berg, helped the Special Olympics Black team steal the win. The game ended with a final score of 62-54.

During the event, the dance team performed and cheer supported the team throughout the game from the sidelines. "It was such a fun filled event, that brought sheer joy, excitement, and smiles to all individuals that participated. The numerous amounts of high fives and smiles that were seen that night created such a positive atmosphere and memories to last a lifetime. I am grateful to call myself a Mustang," teacher and Staff team member Brian Smith said.

"My favorite part of competing in the game was being able to play against the teachers. I thought to myself to play loose my last time playing, especially in front of the home crowd for my final year at school," Special Olympics senior athlete Ben Paulson said.

Head coach and Special Olympics organizer, Michael Ackerman, organized the event with the help of other faculty, administration, and Special Olympics members. "I try to consult a group of our athletes and volunteers regarding the concept of the night which provides me with the foundation and direction we would like to go in. I contact the appropriate people that we need to help make the night a success and then it branches out from there," Ackerman said. "It's a lot of work that requires commitments from the whole community to pull off," he added.



Not only did the game recognize the members of the special olympics team, it raised over \$500 worth of raffle tickets. \$227 of which was awarded to the winner of the raffle, leaving the rest to help fund for the Special Olympics program.

*A note from the Special Olympics program:*

Special Olympics is a culture, a culture that continues to grow within the walls of this building. Our goal is to get every student in this building involved with our program in one way or another. Anyone that has any interest in the program please contact [dwain\\_ackerman@ipsd.org](mailto:dwain_ackerman@ipsd.org).

We also have a website <http://meteavalleysspecialolympics.weebly.com/>, follow us on twitter @SOMeteaValley or find us on Facebook "MVHS Special Olympics"