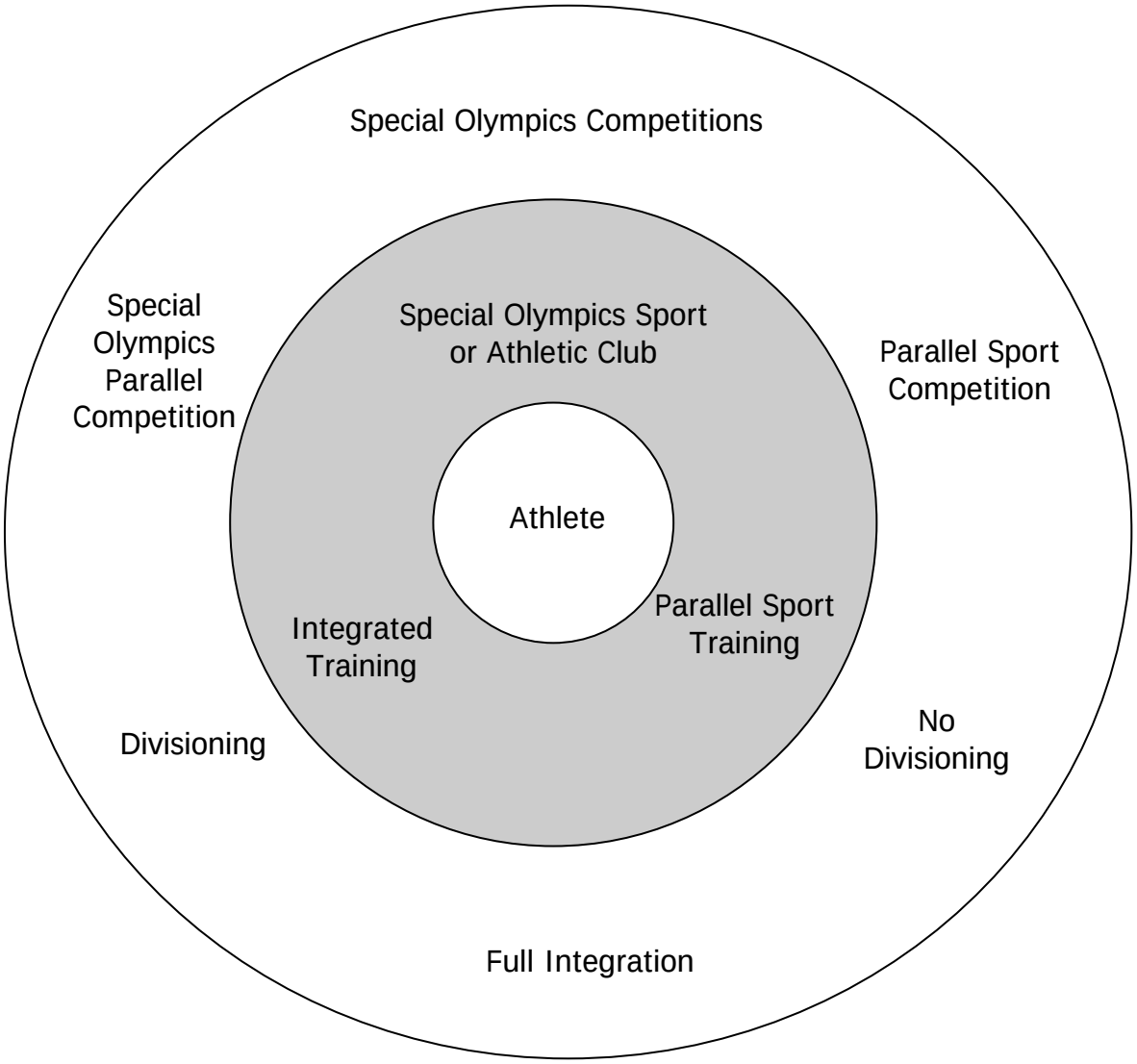

Training Opportunities

Competitive Opportunities

Training Opportunities

Special Olympics Sport and Athletic Clubs:

- Athletic Club
  - An introductory and/or skill upgrading program with emphasis on the development of fitness, basic motor and sport skills.
  - Emphasis on SOC official and demonstration sports targeted for development.
  - Eligible to participate in competitions.

- Sport Club
  - Training in a specific sport for the specified season of the sport.
  - Emphasis on the development of skills specific in a sport.
  - Develop specific sport skills, which lead to a variety of competitive opportunities.
  - Emphasis on SOC official and demonstration sports for development
  - Eligible to participate in the full continuum of competitive opportunities.

Parallel Sport Training:

- A situation where Special Olympics athletes and coaches share joint use of a facility with a generic sport club.
- Eligible to participate in the full continuum of competitive opportunities.

Inclusive Training:

- A situation where an athlete(s) trains with a generic training program.
- Eligible to participate in the full continuum of competitive opportunities.

Competitive Opportunities

Special Olympics Competitions:

- Use Special Olympics rules and incorporate the divisioning process.
- Athletes with an intellectual disability compete directly with athletes with an intellectual disability of the similar ability levels.

Special Olympics Parallel Format:

- Use Special Olympics rules and incorporate the divisioning process.
- Athletes with an intellectual disability compete directly with athletes with an intellectual disability of the same ability levels.

Parallel Sport Competition:

- Using National Sport Governing Body rules.
- Open competition format.
- Athletes with an intellectual disability compete directly with athletes with an intellectual disability, regardless of ability levels.
- The events for athletes with an intellectual disability are run at the same time as the events for athletes who do not have a disability but the two categories are separate.

Full Integration:

- Using National Sport Governing Body rules.
- Athletes with an intellectual disability compete directly against athletes who do not have a disability.

Special Olympics strives to achieve the most inclusive sporting experience for athletes with an intellectual disability.

Special Olympics provides these guiding principles for athletes with an intellectual disability competing in various sport environments.

Category	**Entry Standards**	**Age Category**	**Competition Format**	**Athletes**	**Divisioning**
Special Olympics Competition	No	Yes (if numbers warrant)	Divisioning	Athletes with an intellectual disability compete against athletes with an intellectual disability in their ability level.	Yes - Special Olympics divisioning utilized.
Special Olympics Parallel Competition	No/Yes Entry standards may be used to select athletes even when divisioning is implemented. Important when quotas are low, making division difficult.	Yes	Parallel	Athletes with an intellectual disability compete against athletes with an intellectual disability in their ability level.	Yes - Special Olympics divisioning is utilized.
Parallel Sport Competition	Yes	Yes	Parallel	Athletes with an intellectual disability compete against athletes with an intellectual disability regardless of ability.	No - Open Competitive Format utilized.
Full Integration	Yes	Yes	Integrated	Athletes with an intellectual disability compete against athletes who do not have a disability.	

When Special Olympics partners with another National Sport Governing Body, or Games Organizing Committee, it will establish the following format for inclusion of athletes with an intellectual disability:

- Qualifying standards for athletes to meet prior to selection for the competition.
- Age categories.
- Identify the competition format to be utilized by the National Sport Governing Body and/or the Games Organizing Committee.

Special Olympics will also ensure:

- The rules of the National Sport Governing Bodies/Games Organizing Committee are adhered to by the athletes and coaches.
- The competitive parameters (i.e. round robin, open competition) established by the National Sport Governing Bodies/Games Organizing Committee are adhered to by the athletes and coaches (if a separate technical package is required, the standards established by Special Olympics in the technical package, will be adhered to by the Chapters, athletes and coaches).
- The coach certification requirements established by the National; Sport Governing Bodies/Games Organizing Committee are adhered to by the coaches responsible for coaching athletes with an intellectual disability.