



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Dulaney, Franklin, and Loch Raven high school teams named 2023 Special Olympics Indoor Bocce State Champions**

Towson, Md. – Baltimore County Public Schools teams earned state titles in three of seven divisions at the 2023 Special Olympics State High School Indoor Bocce Tournament.

The teams named state champions represent Dulaney High School (coach: Anita Shaw), Franklin High School (coaches: Anthony Burgos and Maria Powers), and Loch Raven High School (coach: Rob Persing). In addition, Parkville High School (coach: John Cooper) placed third and Catonsville High School (coach: Alicia Brady) placed fourth in their divisions.

“For our first time in the competition, it is a remarkable achievement,” said Brad Kressman, resource teacher for the BCPS Allied Sports Program. “Special thanks to Parkville, Dulaney, Franklin, Loch Raven, and Catonsville for competing this year at the state meet. You represented Baltimore County with class, dignity, and sportsmanship.”

Modeled after the Special Olympics’ “Unified Sports” program, Allied Sports is a totally inclusive program that affords students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports alongside their non-disabled peers. The BCPS Office of Athletics launched the Allied Sports Program in the 1994-1995 school year.

There are three Allied Sports offered by BCPS, one per season. Soccer is offered in the fall, bocce is offered in the winter, and softball is offered in the spring. All team activities are co-ed with the

appropriate rule modifications to ensure a safe and successful experience for all students, regardless of ability.

“Like other interscholastic athletic programs, Allied Sports teaches students good sportsmanship, builds positive self-esteem, develops new sport-specific skills, improves physical fitness, fosters new friendships, and develops the concept of teamwork,” said Kressman.

*(Editor’s note: Photos of the [Dulaney](#), [Franklin](#), and [Loch Raven](#) teams can be found on Flickr.)*

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