

## **Instruction**

### **Physical Activity**

The Board believes every student shall develop the knowledge and skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, understand the short and long-term benefits of physical activity, and value and enjoy physical activity as an ongoing part of a healthful lifestyle. In addition, staff is encouraged to participate in and model physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

District schools have a responsibility to help students and staff establish and maintain lifelong habits of being physically active. Regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop and implement a comprehensive plan to encourage physical activity that includes the following:

- a sequential program of physical education that involves moderate to vigorous physical activity on a daily basis; teaches knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, and positive attitudes; promotes activities and sports that students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives; is taught by well-prepared and well-supported staff; and is coordinated with the health education curriculum;
- time for all students enrolled in elementary school of not less than twenty minutes in total included in the regular school day devoted to physical exercise, unless altered for a child by a Planning and Placement Team;
- opportunities and encouragement for students to voluntarily participate in before and after-school physical activity programs, such as intramurals, clubs, and at the high school level, interscholastic athletics;
- joint school and community recreation activities;
- opportunities and encouragement for staff to be physically active; and
- strategies to involve family members to be physically active.

The program shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences of gender, cultural norms, physical and cognitive abilities, and fitness levels.

## **Instruction**

### **Physical Activity (continued)**

#### **Physical Education**

Every student in each grade, kindergarten through twelfth, shall participate in physical education, including students with disabling conditions and those in alternative education programs.

A sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum shall be designed, implemented, and evaluated to help students develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives.

Teachers shall aim to develop students' self-confidence and maintain a safe psychological environment free of embarrassment, humiliation, shaming, taunting, or harassment of any kind. Physical education staff shall not order performance of physical activity as a form of discipline or punishment.

Suitably adapted physical education shall be included as part of individual education plans for students with chronic health problems, other disabling conditions, or other special needs that preclude such students' participation in regular physical education instruction or activities.

#### **Assessment**

All students shall be regularly assessed for attainment of the physical education learning objectives. Course grades shall be awarded in the same way grades are awarded in other subject areas and shall be included in calculations of grade point average, class rank, and academic recognition programs such as honor roll.

Health-related physical fitness testing shall be integrated into the curriculum as an instructional tool, except in the early elementary grades. Tests shall be appropriate to students' developmental levels and physical abilities. Such testing shall be used to teach students how to assess their fitness levels, set goals for improvement, and monitor progress in reaching their goals. Staff will maintain the confidentiality of fitness test results, which will be made available only to students and their parents/guardians.

## **Instruction**

### **Physical Activity (continued)**

#### **Exemptions**

Physical education teaches students essential knowledge and skills; for this reason, exemptions from physical education courses shall not be permitted on the basis of participation or an athletic team, community recreation program, or other school or community activity. A student may be excused from participation in physical education only if: 1) a physician states in writing that specific physical activities will jeopardize the student's health and well-being or 2) a parent/guardian requests exemption from specific physical activities on religious grounds.

#### **Educational Reinforcement**

The physical education program shall be closely coordinated with the other components of the overall school health program.

Physical education topics shall be integrated within other curricular areas. The benefits of being physically active shall be linked with the instruction about human growth, development, and physiology in science classes and with instruction about personal health behaviors in health education class.

#### **Extracurricular Physical Activities**

Intramural programs, physical activity clubs, and interscholastic athletics are valuable supplements to a student's education. Schools shall endeavor to provide students with opportunities to voluntarily participate in extracurricular physical activities that meet his or her needs, interests, and abilities. A diverse selection of competitive and noncompetitive, structured and unstructured activities shall be offered to the extent that staffing permits. The primary focus of extracurricular physical activity programs will be on facilitating participation by all interested students, regardless of their athletic ability. Equal opportunity on the basis of gender shall permeate all aspects of program design and implementation.

The District encourages and supports the participation of all students in extracurricular activities; yet such participation is a privilege and not a right. Eligibility requirements and appeal procedures shall be published in the student handbook.

A student with a chronic health problem or other disabling condition shall be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity, including interscholastic athletics, if the student's skills and physical condition meet the same qualifications that all other students must satisfy. The school shall make reasonable accommodations to allow the student to participate.

## **Instruction**

### **Physical Activity (continued)**

#### **Intramural Programs**

Middle and high schools shall offer intramural physical activity programs that feature a broad range of competitive and cooperative activities.

#### **Interscholastic Athletics**

The middle and high school shall offer interscholastic athletic programs that shall adhere to the rules and regulations of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC).

#### **Staffing**

All interscholastic/intramural programs, physical activity clubs, and athletic teams shall be supervised by qualified staff.

#### **Other Opportunities for Physical Activity**

#### **Recess**

Recess in elementary schools provides opportunities for physical activity which helps students stay alert and attentive in class and provides other education and social benefits. School authorities shall encourage and develop schedules that provide time within every school day for preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school students to enjoy supervised recess. Recess shall complement, not substitute for, physical education classes. Staff shall not deny a student's participate in recess or other physical activity as a form for discipline or punishment, nor shall they cancel it for instruction makeup time.

#### **School/Community Collaboration**

Schools shall work with recreation agencies and other community organizations to coordinate and enhance opportunities available to students and staff for physical activity during their out-of-school time.

Schools are encouraged to negotiate mutually acceptable, fiscally responsible arrangements with community agencies and organizations to keep district-owned facilities open for use by students, staff and community members during non-school hours and vacations. School policies concerning safety shall apply at all times.

Student physical activity on school grounds during school hours should be supervised to enforce safety rules and prevent injuries. Supervision shall be by adults trained in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and infection control who have easy access to appropriate first aid supplies. Records shall be kept of all injuries and analyzed at least annually so that patterns of causes can be determined and steps can be taken to prevent further injuries.

## **Instruction**

### **Physical Activity**

#### **School/Community Collaboration (continued)**

Supervising adults shall be informed of any relevant medical guidance on file with the school concerning limits on the participation of individual students in physical activity. Such information will be treated with strict confidentiality.

#### **Physical Activity and Discipline**

School employees (*teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, paraprofessional, coach, or any other individual working in a District school. who in the performance of his/her duties has regular contact with students and provides service to or on behalf of students enrolled in a District school, pursuant to a contract with the Board of Education*) shall not deny a student's participation in the entire time devoted to physical exercise in the regular school day as a form of discipline or punishment, nor should they cancel it for instruction makeup time. In addition, any student in kindergarten through grade twelve shall not be required to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline.

(cf. 3542.34 – Nutrition Program)

(cf. 6142.6 – Physical Education)

(cf. 6142.10 – Health Education Program)

(cf. 6142.62 – Recess/Unstructured Break Time)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes  
 10-16b Prescribed courses of study.  
 10-220 Duties of Boards of Education.  
 10-221o Lunch periods. Recess. (as amended by P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform and P.A. 13-173, An Act Concerning Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools)  
 PA. 06-44 An Act Promoting the Physical Health Needs of Students

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