



Physical Education

How Can You Help?

Physical education should be an enjoyable experience for all students. Students should be active for most of the time (at least 50%) during their physical education classes.¹⁻³ Supporting schools to establish daily physical education can provide students with appropriate knowledge, skills, behaviors, and confidence to be physically active for a lifetime. In addition, physical education can help improve students' academic achievement such as grades and test scores.^{1,2,4}

What's Happening at School?

Knowing the answers to the following questions can help you support physical education in your child's school. If you don't know the answers to these questions, check out the school handbook or school website, attend a school wellness meeting or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, or simply ask your child's teacher.

1. Does the school or district have policies about providing daily physical education to all students K-12? If yes, what are they?
2. Does the school or district have policies about not allowing other classes or activities (e.g., sports, band) to replace physical education?
3. Does the school or district have policies about not having to take physical education for early graduation, health issues, or disabilities (e.g., waivers, exemptions)?
4. Is the curriculum for physical education based on national or state standards for physical education?
5. Is physical education taught by a certified or licensed physical education teacher?
6. Is there enough equipment and space for physical education?
7. Are students active most of the time they are in physical education class (at least 50%)?
8. Is the physical education teacher able to make adaptations for students with disabilities?
9. Are there opportunities for parents to help with and participate in physical education class?
10. Does the school participate in **Active Schools**, the national physical activity and physical education solution to ensuring that 60 minutes of physical activity is the new norm for schools?





Ideas for Parents

You can be involved in your child's school by **attending** meetings, workshops, or training events offered by the school; **communicating** with school staff and other parents; **volunteering** for school events or in your child's classroom; **reinforcing** healthy messages and practices your child learns at school; **helping** make decisions about health in the school; and **being part** of community activities supported by the school. Here are some specific ideas for how you can support your child's school in providing physical education.

- Join the school or district committee (e.g., wellness committee) that sets the policies for health and wellness, and work to include language about physical education.^{1,5}
- Participate with the school or district curriculum committee. Encourage the committee to use the **Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT)** to assess physical education curricula for all grade levels.
- Volunteer to help with physical education class.
- Offer to help with activities, such as the annual field day.
- Donate equipment to be used in physical education classes.
- Ask the physical education teacher to provide information about physical activities you can be doing with your child at home, as well as helping them practice what they learn in physical education class.⁵
- Help raise money through healthy fundraising to support the physical education program at your school.
- E-mail or discuss the importance of physical education with other parents.
- Sign up to champion your school's **Active Schools** team. If your school doesn't have a team, then encourage your physical education teacher to enroll and get involved.



Check out additional resources for parents related to the school nutrition environment and services, physical education and physical activity, and managing chronic health conditions at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/P4HS.htm>.

REFERENCES

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School health guidelines to promote healthy eating and physical activity. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2011;60(RR05):1-76.
2. Institute of Medicine. *Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2013.
3. SHAPE America. (2015). *The essential components of physical education*. Reston, VA: Author.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Health and Academic Achievement*. Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2014.
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health*. Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2012.

