

## FACT SHEET

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION



## What Are the Challenges Around Physical Education (PE) in Schools?

- ❖ Required PE minutes (per law in many states) are not being met.
- ❖ There are too few certified PE teachers; in elementary schools, classroom teachers often teach PE; in middle/high schools, classes may be as big as 60-70 children per one teacher. PE teachers are most qualified to teach PE.
- ❖ Facilities and equipment are not adequate for each student to actively participate in PE.
- ❖ Students are active for a very small amount of time in PE class.
- ❖ Schools may not have PE curriculum.

## What is the Ideal?

- ❖ Instructional periods that meet the state's PE laws.
- ❖ Qualified PE teachers teaching PE and providing training to classroom teachers who are teaching PE.
- ❖ A teacher-to-student ratio consistent with other subject areas and/or classrooms.
- ❖ Adequate equipment and facilities for each student to actively participate during PE class.
- ❖ Quality instruction that meets the state's PE content standards and supports lifelong physical activity.
- ❖ Students are physically active for a majority of the class period.
- ❖ Schools have PE curriculum that meets the state standards.
- ❖ Students have experiences in a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills, physical fitness, rhythm and dance, games, team, dual and individual sports, tumbling and gymnastics, aquatics, etc.
- ❖ Students acquire skills and learn the benefits of being physically active throughout life.

## What is Physical Education?

*Physical Education (PE) is planned instruction that builds motor skills and teaches movement concepts and the health benefits of regular physical activity so that youth will be physically active throughout their lives. Physically fit students perform better in school.*

## PE requirements in California:

*Elementary Schools:  
200 minutes of PE  
per 10 day period.*

*Middle and High Schools:  
400 minutes of PE  
per 10 day period.*

**What does your LSWP say about PE?**

**What Can Parents Do?**

- ❖ Ask your children:
  - How many days a week they get PE and how long it is?
  - If they are physically active during PE (moving around versus sitting)?
  - If the PE activities include all students?
  - If they like PE?
  - How many students are in their PE class?
  - What waivers are granted to exempt students from PE (middle and high school level)?
- ❖ Find out who teaches PE in your child's school.
- ❖ Familiarize yourself with the PE standards for the grades in your school.
- ❖ Find out if the amount of PE your child receives meets the state's required minutes of instruction.
- ❖ Speak to school administrators about the link between fitness and academics.
- ❖ Raise funds for PE curriculum or athletic equipment.
- ❖ Inquire about professional development opportunities and certification of teachers.

**Additional Resources**

*California Physical Education Model Content Standards,*  
*California Department of Education*

Describes what students should know and be able to do in physical education based on grade level.

[www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fdl/documents/pestandards.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fdl/documents/pestandards.pdf)

**Quality Physical Education: How Does Your Program Rate?**

*National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)*

This brief tool allows you to evaluate your PE program's strengths and weaknesses and prepare a plan for improvement.

[www.ncpe4me.com/pdf\\_files/PE\\_checklist\\_2006.pdf](http://www.ncpe4me.com/pdf_files/PE_checklist_2006.pdf)

**Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

A tool for assessing written PE curricula to assess quality of PE.

[www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/pecat/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/pecat/)

**National Standards for Physical Education, NASPE**

Information and resources on what students should know and be able to do as a result of a quality PE program.

[www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)