

Schools for All Children

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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The Los Angeles Unified School District's Position Paper Adapted Physical Education

BACKGROUND

The many benefits of physical activity have been documented through years of research. These benefits include increased muscular strength, stimulation of bone growth, cardiovascular fitness, and flexibility or range of motion, which enable the body to move and function more efficiently and contribute to personal health. In addition, individuals can attain higher levels of functional movement, fundamental movement patterns and sport skills through physical activity. The attainment of these skills and patterns promotes a higher quality of life and greater opportunity for social interaction with others.

Quality physical education programs provide opportunities for students to attain movement skills and knowledge that can be applied to physical activities across the lifespan. Current research indicates that physical activity helps contribute to increased academic performance, reaction time and brain stimulation. The President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sport (1999) has published a position statement regarding physical activity and individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities, for the most part, can gain very similar benefits from physical activity and the accrued physical fitness as people without disabilities.

All children, unless specifically excused or exempt, are required participate in a physical education program. See Cal. Educ. Code § 51222 and exemptions in Cal. Educ. Code § 51241. The IDEA and federal regulations define "special education" as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction in the classroom *and instruction in physical education*. 20 U.S.C. § 1401(29); § 34 C.F.R. § 300.26. Like all special education, physical education should be provided in such a manner that promotes maximum interaction between children with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

California Code of Regulations, Title 5, section 3051.5, provides:

“Adapted physical education is for individuals with exceptional needs who require developmental or corrective instruction and who are precluded from participation in the activities of the general physical education program, modified general physical education program, or in a specially designed physical education program in a special class. Consultative services may be provided to pupils, parents, teachers, or other school personnel for the purpose of identifying supplementary aids and services or modifications necessary for successful participation in the regular physical education program or specially designed physical education programs.”

PURPOSE

The purpose of this segment of the document is to identify program guidelines that clarify the array of physical education services provided to students with disabilities within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Service Delivery models (SEE APPENDIX A) for APE will be described and aligned with the three-tiered models of prevention and intervention. In addition, this paper will describe the expectations for service completion.

Section I: Prevention Pre-Referral Services within General Education

Section II: Adapted Physical Education Intervention within Special Education

Section III: Adapted Physical Education Service Completion Guidelines

ELEMENTS

Adapted Physical Education (APE) is an instructional program within the spectrum of physical education options, which is taught by a credentialed APE Teacher. The teacher provides curriculum-based and prescriptive instruction for students identified as eligible for service. Each teacher works within a comprehensive service delivery model that complies with legal mandates and best meets the needs of the child. In addition, services may be supplemented through collaboration with a variety of team members (such as teachers, speech specialists, psychologists, parents, occupational therapists and physical therapists, medical personnel, and others) to provide an integrated and consistent program for students with disabilities.

Instruction in APE provides the foundation for learning and performing psychomotor skills, so that students with disabilities can more fully, safely and with satisfaction participate in movement programs, recreation, sport and physical fitness activities with their non-disabled peers. The APE Teacher teaches in all domains of learning with an emphasis on the psychomotor area. Instruction is provided in communication, cognitive, social, behavioral, perceptual and daily living domains in the context of gross motor skill development. Student preferences and interest are considered in program planning as well as coordination of services and resources.

POSITION

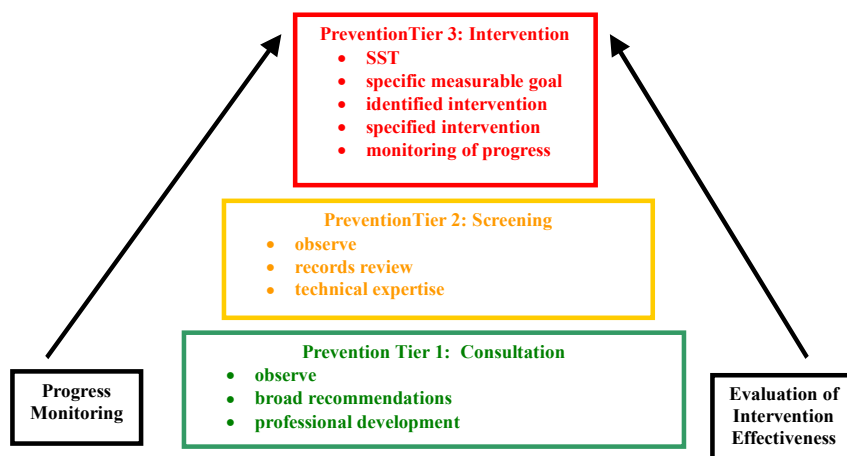
The District believes that in an effort to ensure a successful school experience for all children that:

1. All special education students with significant gross motor delays be provided with physical education intervention programs.
2. The gross motor needs of this group of students be addressed early in their education.
3. Students with significant motor delays be referred for an APE evaluation only after they have had the opportunity to:
 - Participate in an intervention program for a specified period of time;
 - Have their progress assessed and monitored; and
 - Have their response to the provided interventions be evaluated.
4. All students eligible for APE services be provided with a strategy for successful attainment of goals and objectives for re-entry to the general physical education program.
5. Wherever possible, students receiving APE services have the opportunity to participate with their non-disabled peers.

SECTION I: PREVENTION AND PRE-REFERRAL PRACTICES IN GENERAL EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) defines many parameters of the referral, assessment, and review processes. Although screening pertains to all children, no state or federal statutes or regulations define the term “screening,” and many interpretations exist regarding its definition. Often, the purposes of screening within general education are to identify other adaptations, accommodations, or modifications, or to determine whether formal assessment is needed for the purpose of identifying a child's needs and potential special education services.

A Three-Tiered Model of Prevention and Pre-referral Practices in General Education (For Students with Gross Motor Weaknesses)



Prevention Tier 1: Consultation

Within the Tier 1 level of services, the APE teacher may provide informal consultation to school staff, classroom teachers and general physical education teachers for the purpose of helping them identify different instructional strategies, modifications, and adaptations. Often, students with mild disabilities can participate successfully in general physical education if rules are modified, accommodations are made and/or equipment is changed, or provided with a peer tutor or "buddy" (SEE APPENDIX B).

Prevention Tier 2: Screening

Within the Tier 2 level of services, the APE teacher may screen a child to assist school staff in determining the appropriate level of intervention for that child. Screening should not be confused with assessment, as placement decisions in special education cannot be based upon information obtained from screening. Care must be exercised not to single the child out when screening, as this is assessment and would require an assessment plan.

The screening process could include:

- Review of school records.
- Consultation with the classroom teacher or other school staff.
- Parent interview/report.
- Student Study Team action plan or 504 accommodation plan.
- Observation of an entire class.
- Physical Fitness Test Results.

Screening may entail a review of any general education program, such as a teacher's class or an entire grade level. All individuals in the class or grade level are seen for brief periods of time. Since all members of a given group receive the same treatment, this type of screening is not considered to be individual in nature, as it does not target a specific child. It is important to ensure that children are not singled out.

Information obtained from screening can be used to determine the need for a referral to APE or to identify other adaptations, accommodations, or modifications needed for a child to participate in the general physical education program. It is recommended that interventions and their outcomes be documented for a reasonable period of time.

Prevention Tier 3: Intervention

Within the Tier 3 level of services, the APE teacher may utilize the screening observations to assist school staff with the SST process, monitor student progress, and identify specific interventions.

After reasonable interventions have been attempted and documented, a determination may be made that a formal APE assessment is appropriate to determine the child's needs. If the intervention is successful then there is no need to progress to Section II.

In some instances, the disability of the child is so apparent that a referral to APE is appropriate without implementation of adaptations, accommodations, and modifications. However, on the

IEP, it should be documented that these have been considered. This will meet the letter of the law and will assist in communicating with future examiners and service provider.

Specially designed physical education is an instructional program based on the District's Adapted Physical Education curriculum and designed for children with disabilities who are placed in a Special Day Program and cannot benefit from participation in general physical education. Goals may or may not be identified for these students. An appropriately credentialed APE teacher and/or a special day program teacher shall teach specially designed physical education for severely handicapped students.

Many children with disabilities can participate in the general physical education program because their disability requires only minor adaptations, or does not affect their performance in physical education at all. Students with disabilities must have the opportunity to be successful in general physical education, until it is determined that they cannot access the curriculum. Sometimes, assessment results indicate that general physical education will not be safe or appropriate for an individual with a disability. However, when interpreting assessment information, it is recommended that the IEP team, with significant input from the APE teacher, consider actual outcomes of opportunities the student has had to participate in general physical education.

SECTION II: ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION INTERVENTION MODELS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

If the student is eligible for special education under IDEA, and is enrolled in general or specially designed physical education, an IEP team meeting may be held to determine appropriate adaptations, accommodations, or modifications to attempt within the current physical education setting.

There are no specific placement criteria established in federal or state statutes or regulations for APE services. Frequently, poor performance on motor tests indicates that the pupil is demonstrating difficulty with movement skills or performance. Scores and age-equivalents used to indicate poor performance are: a raw score which falls 1.5 standard deviations below the mean, a raw score which ranks at the 7th percentile or below, or an age equivalent which indicates the child is functioning at 30% below chronological age.

Sometimes, the nature of disability is such that even though the student performs within normal limits on standardized motor tests or on developmental scales, performance in physical education continues to be adversely affected. In these specialized cases where a child's disability interferes with educational performance in physical education, the IEP team, with direct input from the APE teacher, may determine that APE services are appropriate.

Students with disabilities, which are temporary in nature, are not eligible for special education and/or related services as the disability will diminish significantly or will disappear over time. Some examples are broken bones, pulled ligaments and muscles, and infections. Since APE is a special education service, children with temporary disabilities are not eligible for APE services. However, some students with temporary disabilities may need accommodations within general or specially designed physical education.

It is recommended that general and adapted physical educators use a collaborative and/or consultative approach to provide the maximum amount of joint participation between disabled and non-disabled children.

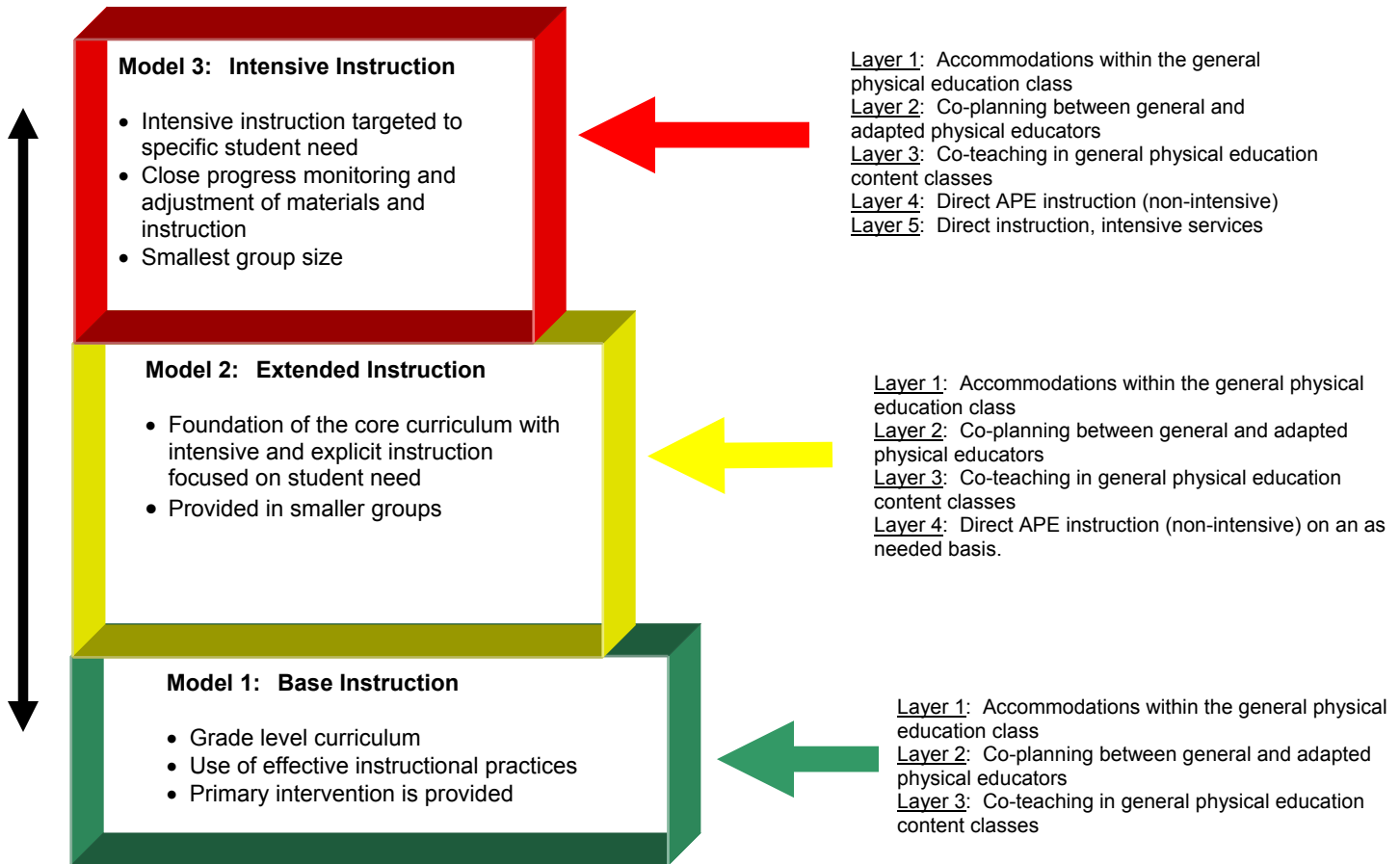
The general classroom teacher, general physical education teacher, or special day program teacher should be aware of the goal(s) stated on the IEP and should reinforce skills taught by the APE teacher. The IEP team should indicate on the IEP how coordination would occur between school personnel.

It is the responsibility of the District to ensure that all students receive the appropriate number minutes of physical education instruction inclusive of APE instruction. Elementary students are to receive 200 minutes of physical education instruction every 10 days and secondary 400 minutes every 10 days. (Cal. Educ. Code § 56345.)

Dynamic Continuum of Instruction Model (For Students with Gross Motor Disabilities)

Layered Special Education Services

Adapted Physical Education services are gradually layered on as student need intensifies



MODEL 1: BASE INSTRUCTION

Grade level curriculum
Use of effective instructional practices
Primary intervention is provided.

Base instruction is grounded in grade level physical education standards (APPENDIX C) and uses District approved curriculum and instructional strategies. It is premised on the concept that lifelong learning is as relevant to physical education as it is to other areas of instruction. A physically educated person is one who has mastered the necessary movement skills to participate confidently in many different forms of physical activity, values physical fitness, and understands that both are intimately related to health and well-being.

Instruction

Base instruction consists of the use of research-based curriculum and strategies in grade level physical education standards that are effectively delivered. Base instruction includes the use of accommodations as outlined in a student's IEP. This provides opportunities for students with disabilities to:

- Access grade level physical education curricula;
- Access content instruction from general physical education teachers;
- Integrate with non-disabled peers wherever possible.

Intervention

Intervention is provided during the regular instructional period. It is designed to be immediate, related to the California Physical Education Content Standards, and based on ongoing progress monitoring and documentation. It consists of opportunities for remediation, provision of immediate and corrective feedback and prompting, and active engagement in learning.

Adapted Physical Education Service Description

APE services are layered and may consist of any or all of the following:

- Layer 1: Accommodations within the general physical education class
- Layer 2: Co-planning between general and adapted physical educators
- Layer 3: Co-teaching in general physical education content classes

Example: A student receives APE support through the instructional accommodations and modifications prepared during co-planning, participates in one (or more) co-taught physical education class(es) per week.

For students receiving instruction in the alternate curriculum, this model may include a trans-disciplinary related services team approach to classroom-based services that support the functional areas of: communication, self-care/independent living, motor skills/mobility, functional academics, vocational, social/emotional and recreation and leisure.

School-wide professional development support inclusive of parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators is part of this service delivery model.

MODEL 2: EXTENDED INSTRUCTION

California Physical Education Content Standards with intensive and explicit instruction focused on student need.

Instruction provided in smaller groups.

Extended instruction is that which is provided above the base program. It refers to the provision of additional support and services beyond the instruction and interventions embedded in the core physical education curriculum.

Instruction

As in Model 1, Model 2 instruction is based on the foundation of research-based instructional practices effectively delivered in physical education performance standards with the use of accommodations or modifications as outlined in a student's IEP.

Intervention

The instructional strategies listed in Model 1 provide methods for meeting the needs of a number of students at risk for physical education failure. Instructional support through the use of co-teaching and co-planning provides a higher level of support to students.

Adapted Physical Education Service Description

APE services are layered and may consist of any or all of the following:

- Layer 1: Accommodations within the general physical education class
- Layer 2: Co-planning between general and adapted physical educators
- Layer 3: Co-teaching in general physical education content classes
- Layer 4: Direct APE instruction (non-intensive) on an as needed basis.

Example: A student receives APE support through the instructional accommodations and modifications prepared during co-planning, participates in one (or more) co-taught physical education class per week. The APE teacher provides pullout intensive instruction on an as needed basis.

MODEL 3: INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION

- Intensive instruction targeted to specific student need
- Close monitoring of progress and adjustment of equipment and instruction
- Smallest group size

For children who are unable to successfully participate in the general physical education program, direct services provided by an APE teacher may be required. Students assigned to this level demonstrate severe deficits requiring more specialized, intensive instruction. Inclusion in activities with non-disabled peers should be addressed whenever and wherever possible.

Model 3 instruction continues to focus on grade level physical education standards and is built on instructional strategies unique to gross motor skill remediation. Instruction is provided at the highest level of intensity, frequency, and duration and is provided in an environment with a lower teacher-student ratio.

Intervention

Intervention is intensive, provided in smaller groups and tied to specific areas of student need as identified through ongoing progress monitoring.

Adapted Physical Education Service Description

APE services are layered and may consist of any or all of the following:

- Layer 1: Accommodations within the general physical education class
- Layer 2: Co-planning between general and adapted physical educators
- Layer 3: Co-teaching in general physical education content classes
- Layer 4: Direct APE instruction (non-intensive)
- Layer 5: Direct instruction, intensive services

Example: A student who receives APE services can be scheduled for APE direct instruction on a regular basis. Inclusion in activities with non-disabled peers is addressed whenever and wherever possible.

SECTION III: ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICE COMPLETION GUIDELINES

Dismissal from Adapted Physical Education may be determined if any of the following applies:

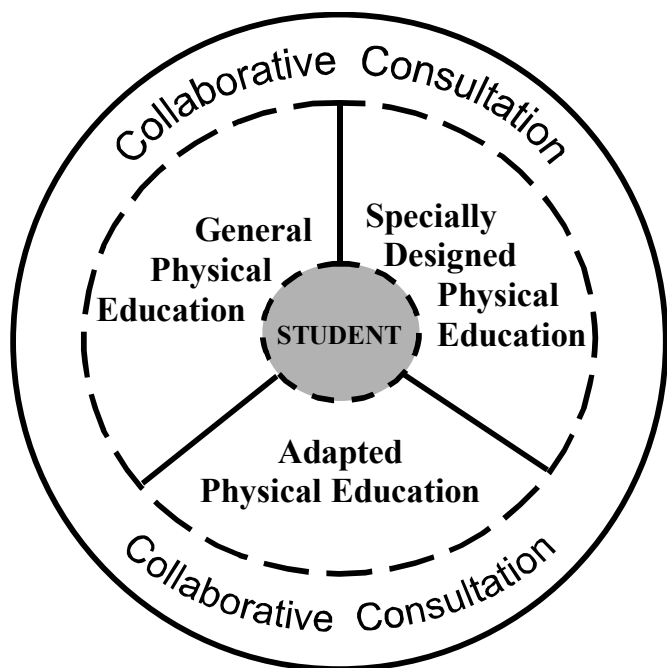
1. The student's gross motor deficits no longer negatively affects his/her educational performance in general physical education or specially designed physical education program.
2. The student no longer requires Adapted Physical Education as a related/DIS service in order to benefit from his/her special education program.
3. The student consistently demonstrates behaviors that inhibit progress in gross motor development, such as a lack of cooperation, motivation, or chronic absenteeism. In these circumstances the IEP Team should consider the initial eligibility decision since these behaviors may reflect social maladjustment, environmental, cultural, or economic factors rather than an actual disability. The IEP team may also explore alternative services or strategies to remedy interfering behaviors or conditions.
4. The student's needs will be better served by an alternative program and/or service, as determined by the IEP team.
5. He/she graduates from high school or has met the secondary physical education requirement (barring health issues that indicate continued services are necessary to maintain quality of life).
6. He/she reaches the age of 22 years.

APPENDIX A

PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

General Physical Education: Movement activities are provided by the general PE teacher and may include accommodations, adaptations, or modifications, which are made by the general PE teacher.

Specially Designed Physical Education: Is an instructional program based on the District's Adapted Physical Education curriculum and designed for children with disabilities who are placed in a Special Day Program and cannot benefit from participation in general physical education. Goals may or may not be identified for these students. An appropriately credentialed APE teacher and/or a special day program teacher shall teach specially designed physical education for severely handicapped students.



Adapted Physical Education: APE is a physical education program for children with disabilities who have needs which cannot be solely met in general or specially designed physical education. It is taught by a credentialed APE teacher either independently, with or without aides, or in a team teaching situation with either a general or special educator. Frequency and duration of services, and goals and objectives/benchmarks, which are monitored by the APE teacher, are identified on the IEP.

Collaborative Consultation: Collaborative consultation in and of itself is not a service. It is a process by which an APE teacher works, with other members of the IEP team, to plan individualized instruction. Collaborative consultation results in a program that is consistent with the curriculum, setting, and needs of the student and is coordinated with other services and educational activities in which the student participates.

APE Collaborative Consultation could be identified on the IEP as a service that is provided on behalf of the student and assists the student in participating in the less restrictive settings of General or Specially Designed Physical Education.

APPENDIX B

Sample Adaptations in the General Physical Education Program.

Category	Examples
Formation (including space, placement within group, and boundaries of the activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a student with asthma, obesity or reduced stamina to infield positions during softball unit. • Place hard of hearing student near instructor when verbal instructions are given. • Reduce the court or field size for student with asthma, obesity, or reduced stamina.
Change form or language used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use gestures and demonstration to augment verbal communication. • Provide written list of tasks or steps to a student with attention or auditory memory difficulties. • Assign a peer helper to a student with attention, communication, or reading difficulties.
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lighter or smaller sports equipment for a student with reduced strength or small stature. • Make multiple pieces of the same equipment available to increase practice time for students. • Use equipment that moves at a slower speed when students are learning a new skill.
Task or objective (alter skill level to be taught or practiced during lesson)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of repetitions of an exercise for student with reduced strength or mild physical disability. • Set goals for improving individual performance rather than comparing performance with other students. • Allow for additional trials for student with lower skills or mild physical disability.
Environment including social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a peer helper to a student with attention, communication, or reading difficulties. • Teacher selects teams. Do not allow student captains to "choose" teams in front of group. • Provide specific feedback and positive comments from peers or teacher.
Players (number, groupings of individuals or organize class into stations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher structures groups to ensure equality and opportunity to contribute/participate. • Assign peers to model, assist, or augment participation.
Rules (including game rules and class rules.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alter rules for inclusion rather than exclusion. • Alter dress code rules during outdoor activities for student who is sensitive to the sun.

<p>Sport specific participation in physical education example</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A student with Down Syndrome and the associated cervical vertebrae defects does not participate in diving, gymnastics, wrestling, or other activities that may put pressure on the neck. However s/he may have the ability to participate in all other physical education curricular areas. • A student with uncontrolled seizure disorder does not participate in activities around water, heights or involving moving equipment (e.g., roller skates or bicycles). However s/he may have the ability to participate in all other physical education curricular areas.
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Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools

An Essential Discipline

Physical education is an integral part of the educational program for all students. It teaches students how their bodies move, how to perform a variety of physical activities, the health-related benefits of regular physical activity, and specific skills that will allow them to adopt a physically active, healthy lifestyle. It also provides learning experiences that meet the developmental needs of students. With physical education, students become confident, independent, self-controlled and resilient; develop positive social skills; learn to set and strive for personal, achievable goals; learn to assume leadership, cooperate with others, and accept responsibility for their own behavior; and improve their academic performance.

The model content standards provide opportunities for teachers to reinforce student learning in all areas of the curriculum. In addition, the standards create opportunities for linking the content in English-language arts, science, mathematics, and history-social science with the content in physical education, thereby establishing and emphasizing the many connections between the subjects.

Highlights of the Standards

The *Physical Education Content Standards* will assist schools in establishing specific learning goals and objectives for physical education. A sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum should be designed and implemented to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain a physically active, healthy lifestyle.

There are five overall model content standards for elementary and middle school children. They are:

- Standard 1: Demonstrate motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Standard 2: Demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies as they apply to learning and performance of physical activities.
- Standard 3: Assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance.
- Standard 4: Demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.
- Standard 5: Demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies as applied to learning and performance of physical activity.

In the elementary grades, the specific content standards emphasize how students move in their environment, moving through space and time, how they (student and a partner) move in space together, continuity and change in movement, manipulating objects in time and through space, and manipulating objects with accuracy and speed.

In middle school, the specific content standards emphasize working cooperatively to achieve a common goal, meeting challenges and making decisions, and working as a team to solve problems.

For high school youth there are only three overall model content standards. They are:

- Standard 1: Demonstrate knowledge and competency in motor skills, movement patterns and strategies needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Standard 2: Achieve a level of physical fitness for health and performance while demonstrating knowledge of fitness concepts, principles, and strategies.
- Standard 3: Demonstrate knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies as they apply to learning and performance of physical activity.

The high school experience represents the culmination of physical education. From kindergarten through fifth grade, the content is delivered in small pieces to best facilitate learning at the appropriate developmental level. In sixth through eighth grade, consolidation of content occurs and student skills are refined, representing a natural progression of skill sophistication. When students reach ninth grade, they are ready to integrate all that they know with all that they can do. They experience higher order thinking and increased skill performance. For this reason, the five elementary and middle school model content standards have been combined into the three high school model content standards seen above.

To fulfill the requirement for high school graduation, students must take two years of physical education in high school. In this publication, these two years are referred to as

Course 1 and Course 2. The content of these courses will be selected from activities required by the *California Code of Regulations Title 5, Section 10060*.

In addition to Courses 1 and 2, Elective Courses 3 and 4 are available to students. All schools are mandated by *Education Code* to provide physical education elective courses for students after they have completed the two years required for graduation.

Course 3 electives allow students to explore a variety of different lifelong activities in search of one they really enjoy. Course 4 electives are designed as a continuation of Course 3 and are intended for students who wish to pursue advanced knowledge and skills. Students who take Course 4 have completed Course 3 and want an intensive experience in an activity that they are committed to for a lifelong activity.