

Procedure: Health and Physical Education

Wellness Practice

The Health and Physical Education staff will participate in the Wellness Practice as identified in Procedure 6700.

Health and Physical Education

The superintendent or designee will adopt and implement a comprehensive physical education curriculum aligned with the Washington State Health and Physical Education K-12 Learning Standards. The physical education program will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

Physical Education Requirements and Waiver Policy

All high school students are required to complete a minimum of three semesters (1.5 credits) of physical education. The district may excuse a student from this fitness requirement under RCW 28A.230.050 on account of physical disability, employment, religious belief, participation in directed athletics or military science or tactics, or for other good cause. Such excused students will be required to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement, in accordance with written District policy.

Although physical disability can be used as a rationale for excusing a student from participation in Physical Education, the district will provide Adapted Physical Education that is aligned to Washington state K-12 Physical Education Learning Standards if physical education is set out in that student's IEP and is specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability.

Professional Learning

The district should offer ongoing in-service and professional learning opportunities for staff in health education, physical education, and physical activity. Professional learning opportunities related to health and fitness are available at: <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/health-and-physical-education/training-and-staff-development>.

Physical Activity in Schools

All schools should participate in a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program. A Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) is a multi-component approach by which schools use all opportunities for students to be physically active, meet the nationally recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day, and develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to be physically active for a lifetime. A CSPAP reflects strong coordination and synergy across all the components: quality physical education as the foundation, physical activity before, during, and after school, staff involvement, and family and community engagement.

Quality Physical Education

Schools should implement a physical education program that includes instruction and practice in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns; knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance; knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness; responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others; and values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

Physical Activity during the School Day

The district recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Schools should encourage teachers to do the following:

- Incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into "core" subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

- Provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Schools cannot use physical activity during the school day as punishment.

Physical Activity Before and After School

The district should offer opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods (e.g., physical activity clubs, intramurals, sports, etc.).

Recess

By no later than the 2024–2025 school year, the district will provide at least thirty minutes of recess for all elementary-school students each school day that exceeds five hours. Schools may provide additional recess time before or after the school day, but that time may not be counted toward the thirty minutes of recess that is required. Additionally, time spent changing into and out of clothes for outdoor play should not be used to meet the thirty-minute requirement.

Recess must be supervised and should be student-directed. Schools should offer opportunities that align with state and national recess recommendations and maintain safe and age-appropriate equipment to use during recess. Schools may also include organized games as part of recess, but they should avoid including or permitting students to use computers, tablets, or phones during recess. Whenever possible, recess should be held outside.

Recess will complement, not substitute for, physical education class.

Schools should not withhold recess as a form of discipline unless a student's participation in recess poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student or others. Nor should schools withhold recess to compel students to complete academic work. Schools should develop alternatives to withholding recess as a form of discipline or as a way to compel students to complete academic work.

The district encourages recess to be scheduled before lunch whenever possible. Scheduling recess before lunch reduces food waste, maximizes nutrition, and allows students to be active before eating. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will place appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms just inside or outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating. Students must use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built into the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria.

Family and Community Engagement

The district should offer opportunities to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing physical education and physical activity in the schools. Schools should ensure that the following occurs:

- Physical education activity ideas are sent home with students;
- Families are invited to attend and participate in physical education activity programs and health fairs;
- School staff are encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for students to participate in physical activity programs.
- Families are actively notified of opportunities and invited to participate in school-sponsored physical activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The district should offer opportunities that focus on staff wellness issues, and/or identify and disseminate wellness resources in coordination with human resources staff.

Active Transport

The district will identify safe and active routes to and from school to promote alternative transport methods for children, such as walking and bicycle programs. The district should encourage this behavior by engaging and promoting activities such as the following:

- Designation of safe or preferred routes to school;
- Promotional activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week;
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area);
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students;
- Promotion of safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper;
- Use of crossing guards;
- Ensuring crosswalks exist on streets leading to schools;
- Documentation of the number of children walking and/or biking to and from school; and
- Creation and distribution of maps of the school environment (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.).

School District Facilities

Access to school sites will be provided through permitting use of facilities to community youth sports groups consistent with the district's facilities use policy and municipal joint use agreements and partnerships with youth organizations so additional opportunities are available for all youth in the community to participate in quality physical activity, fitness, sports, and recreation programs.