



Guidance Document

Physical Education Program Checklist

This Physical Education Program Checklist is designed to help school administrators, principals, teachers and parents review their schools' physical education programs to ensure that they are addressing what SHAPE America has identified as the "essential components" of physical education (SHAPE America, 2015).

In [The Essential Components of Physical Education](#), SHAPE America outlines the policies and practices that should be in place in school-based physical education programs. The guidance document defines the four essential components of physical education as policy and environment, curriculum, appropriate instruction, and student assessment.

Use the checklist that begins on p. 3 of this document to identify which policies and practices from the Essential Components are in place in your school district or school, and then use those results to improve the physical education program.

For a comprehensive review of the overall school health environment, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides the [School Health Index \(SHI\): Self-Assessment & Planning Guide 2014](#), an online self-assessment and planning tool that schools can use to improve their health and safety policies and programs. Module 3 of SHI addresses physical education and other school-based physical activity programs, and contains some items that are also included in this Physical Education Program Checklist. The checklist enables school leaders to look closely at physical education program elements. Items included in both tools are identified with an asterisk (*) in the first column.

Before examining your physical education program using the Physical Education Program Checklist, we suggest that you gather and read the documents below to prepare for conducting your analysis:

- [National Standards for K-12 Physical Education](#)
- [State physical education standards](#)
- [State physical education policy](#)
- [The Essential Components of Physical Education](#)

- School district or school physical education policy
- School district or school wellness policy
- School district or school physical education curriculum
- School master schedule
- School district or school employee handbook

After reading the documents listed on page 1, review the checklist beginning on page 3 and indicate whether each program element is in place (Yes), not in place (No) or in progress. For components that are in progress, indicate their degree of completion in the comments field.

Information to address in the comments field could include: timeline for curriculum development or revision, school improvement plan goals and objectives for physical education, target completion dates for local school wellness policy or other policy development, individualized teacher professional-development plans, or a copy of school district or school student assessment and grading protocols. When referencing policies, indicate in the comments field where the policies are located in the school district or school policy manual.

Your responses will identify areas of strength and inform you of areas that need improvement. Once you have documented the program elements that are in place, prioritize the elements that need to be adjusted or improved.

Access [The Essential Components of Physical Education](#) for an in-depth explanation of each of the components.

Policy and Environment	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
Every student is required to take daily physical education, with instruction periods totaling 150 minutes/week in elementary and 225 minutes/week in middle and high school.*	School district or school policy requires all students to take physical education daily.				
	School district policy specifies weekly instruction time requirements for physical education by grade.				
	Elementary school schedule shows instruction periods totaling 150 minutes/week for all grades.				
	Middle school schedule shows instruction periods totaling 225 minutes/week for all grades.				
	High school schedule shows instruction periods totaling 225 minutes/week for all grades.				
	School district or school report card shows annual reporting of physical education minutes of instruction for all grades, K-12.				
School districts and schools require full inclusion of all students in physical education. *	School district or school policy requires full inclusion of all students in physical education.				
	School district or school policy requires that all students with an individualized education program (IEP) must participate in physical education daily.				
School districts and schools do not allow waivers from physical education class time or credit requirements. *	School district or school policy requires that the state-mandated amount of physical education be provided to all students in grades K-12.				

Policy and Environment	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
School districts and schools do not allow student exemptions from physical education class time or credit requirements.	School district or school policy prohibits any student from being exempt from physical education class time or credit requirements for any reason.				
School districts and schools prohibit students from substituting other activities (e.g., JROTC, interscholastic sports) for physical education class time or credit requirements. *	School district or school policy prohibits students from substituting other activities (e.g., JROTC, interscholastic sports) for physical education class time or credit requirements.				
Physical education class size is consistent with that of other subject areas and aligns with school district and school teacher/student ratio policy. *	School district or school policy requires that physical education class size is consistent with that of other subject areas and aligns with school district and school teacher/student ratio policy.				
Physical activity is not assigned or withheld as punishment.	School district or school policy prohibits all school employees from assigning physical activity to students as punishment.				
	School district or school policy prohibits all school employees from withholding physical education, recess or any physical activity from students as punishment.				
Physical education is taught by a state-licensed or state-certified teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education. *	School district or school policy requires that physical education is always taught by a state-licensed or state-certified teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education.				

Curriculum	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
School districts and schools should have a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12 that is sequential and comprehensive. *	Published school district or school physical education curriculum includes grades K-12, and is sequential and comprehensive. Essential elements include:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference and alignment in written physical education curriculum and lesson plans to national and/or state physical education standards. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive learning objectives for grades K-12. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional units of study and corresponding lessons, with aligned student assessments for each lesson. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected instructional strategies and practices that engage students in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) for at least 50 percent of class time. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A listing of books, materials, technology, websites and equipment necessary for learning activities 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tests and other assessments, both formative and summative. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and sequence document for grades K-12. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pacing guide. 				

Curriculum	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
The physical education curriculum is based on national and/or state standards and grade-level outcomes for physical education. *	The school district or school physical education curriculum is published and cites the related national and/or state standards and grade-level outcomes in each lesson.				
The physical education curriculum mirrors other school district or school curricula in its design and schedule for periodic review/update.	The school district or school physical education curriculum is consistent with the design of the curricula for other subject areas.				
	School district or school policy establishes a schedule for periodic physical education curriculum review that is consistent with the review schedule for other subject areas.				
Appropriate Instruction	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
The physical education teacher uses instructional practices and deliberate-practice tasks that support the goals and objectives defined in the school district's/school's physical education curriculum (e.g., differentiated instruction, active engagement, modified activities, self-assessment, self-monitoring).	The school district's or school's physical education lesson plan template requires documentation of instructional practices and deliberate-practice tasks.				
	Physical education lesson plans document formative and summative assessments that align with student objectives for each lesson.				
The physical education teacher evaluates student learning continually to document teacher effectiveness.	The physical education teacher examines and documents evidence of student learning to adjust instruction as necessary.				

Appropriate Instruction	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
The physical education teacher employs instructional practices that engage students in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) for at least 50 percent of class time. *	The physical education teacher self-monitors student engagement in MVPA for at least 50 percent of class time on a regular basis.				
	Principal/supervisor observation of physical education classes includes analysis of student engagement in MVPA for at least 50 percent of class time.				
The physical education teacher ensures the inclusion of all students and makes the necessary adaptations for students with special needs or disabilities. *	The physical education teacher includes strategies for differentiation and modification of lessons in each lesson plan.				
Student Assessment	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
Student assessment is aligned with national and/or state physical education standards and established grade-level outcomes, and is included in the written physical education curriculum along with administration protocols.	Student assessments in physical education align with standards-based grade-level outcomes and are included in the written physical education curriculum.				
	Student assessments in physical education measure student progress in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.				
	Protocols for administering student assessments are defined clearly in lesson plans and are included in the written physical education curriculum.				

Student Assessment	Program Element	Yes	No	In Progress	Comments
Student assessment includes evidence-based practices that measure student achievement in all areas of instruction, including physical fitness.	Student progress is measured using student assessments that address all national and/or state physical education standards and established grade-level outcomes.				
	Student assessment in fitness education corresponds to student learning objectives and established grade-level outcomes.				
	Fitness measurement is not used for grading student progress in physical education.				
Grading is related directly to the student learning objectives identified in the written physical education curriculum. *	The school district's or school's written physical education curriculum provides grading rubrics that are aligned with student learning objectives identified in the written physical education curriculum.				
	The school district or school requires physical education grades to be included on report cards for all grades.				
The physical education teacher follows school district and school protocols for reporting and communicating student progress to students and parents.	The school district or school has established protocols for reporting and communicating student progress in physical education to students and parents.				
	The physical education teacher follows established protocols for reporting and communicating student progress to students and parents.				

Suggested Citation

SHAPE America. (2015). Physical education program checklist [Guidance document]. Reston, VA: Author.

References & Resources

SHAPE America. (2015). [The essential components of physical education \(guidance document\)](#).

CDC. [School health index \(SHI\): Self-assessment & planning guide 2014](#).

SHAPE America. (2013). [National Standards for K-12 Physical Education](#).

SHAPE America. [State physical education standards](#).

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors; National Association of State Boards of Education; American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. (2014). [State school health policy matrix](#).