

**Virginia Board of Education  
Physical Education Program Guidelines  
For Public Elementary and Middle Schools**

**I. Introduction**

The 2012 General Assembly approved HB 1092 requiring the Virginia Board of Education to develop physical education program guidelines for public elementary and middle schools in collaboration with the American Heart Association; the American Cancer Society; the American Academy of Pediatrics, Virginia Chapter; the Virginia Association of School Superintendents; the Virginia School Boards Association; and other interested stakeholders.

These guidelines pertain to physical education, which should not be confused with physical activity. Physical education is a planned, sequential, quality instructional program that helps students learn the skills necessary for performing a variety of physical activities and understand the benefits of achieving and maintaining a physically active lifestyle. By contrast, physical activity is any bodily movement that is produced by the contraction of skeletal muscles that increases energy expenditure.

**II. Guidelines**

Physical education programs should:

1. Provide students with an opportunity to learn health-enhancing concepts and skills.

Indicators:

- In accordance with the Standards of Quality, § 22.1-253.13:1 (D) of the Code of Virginia: Local school divisions shall implement a program of physical fitness available to all students with a goal of at least 150 minutes per week on average during the regular school year. Such program may include any combination of (i) physical education classes, (ii) extracurricular athletics, or (iii) other programs and physical activities deemed appropriate by the local school board. Each local school board shall incorporate into its local wellness policy a goal for the implementation of such program during the regular school year.
- Schools offer instructional periods of physical education in elementary and middle schools consistent with the provisions of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8 VAC 20-131 et seq.);
- Qualified health and physical education teachers provide instruction for all students, including students with disabilities; and
- Schools provide adequate equipment, technology, and facilities that provide healthy, safe, active, and equitable learning experiences.

Guidance:

All elementary and middle school students in Virginia have the opportunity to benefit from physical education. Students with special needs receive physical education instruction in the least restrictive environment, and physical education is available equally to children with disabilities and children without disabilities.

Students are taught by qualified health and physical education teachers who deliver instruction that supports learning for all students. Schools provide adequate facilities and equipment, adequate time for instruction, and class size that supports high-quality instruction and ensures student safety.

2. Ensure meaningful content and skills are included in the physical education curriculum.

Indicators:

- School division curricula are based on the *Physical Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools*, which identifies the concepts, processes and skills for physical education in kindergarten through grade twelve.
- Physical education standards are grouped into five strands:
  - a. Skilled Movement;
  - b. Movement Principles and Concepts;
  - c. Personal Fitness;
  - d. Responsible Behaviors; and
  - e. Physically Active Lifestyle.
- School divisions adopt an instructional sequence and program that best serves their own students.

Guidance:

The *Physical Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* establish minimum expectations for what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade or course in physical education and are intended to support the following goals for students:

- Demonstrate competence in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities. (Skilled Movement)
- Apply movement principles and concepts to learning and developing motor skills and specialized movement forms. (Movement Principles and Concepts)
- Achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of personal fitness. (Personal Fitness)
- Demonstrate responsible personal and social behaviors in physical activity settings. (Responsible Behaviors)
- Demonstrate a physically active lifestyle, including activity within and outside of the physical education setting. (Physically Active Lifestyle)

Additional information about the *Physical Education Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools* and related resources are available at

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/physed/index.shtml>.

3. Ensure students are taught by qualified health and physical education teachers.

Indicators:

- Health and physical education teachers meet or exceed the [\*Standards of Professional Practice for Teachers of Health and Physical Education\*](#).
- Health and physical education teachers are supported through regular, high-quality professional development opportunities.

Guidance:

Effective classroom management techniques and engaging instruction are used to maximize student learning time. Instructional planning begins with a curriculum scope and sequence that is aligned to the Standards of Learning; connects instruction with prior learning; makes topics

relevant to students' lives and experiences; and ensures mastery of knowledge, concepts, and skills.

Delivery of instruction in physical education includes strategies, resources, materials, and tools for the sequencing of learning experiences that are designed to engage all students in active learning.

4. Encourage students to be physically active and become physically fit for life.

Indicators:

- Curricula provide students, teachers, and parents with the necessary information to design an individualized program of fitness.
- Daily physical activity outside of physical education is encouraged.

Guidance:

A well-designed physical education curriculum integrates fitness education and provides students, teachers, and parents with the necessary information to design an individualized program of fitness for each student. Students who participate in physical education programs that promote personal fitness and encourage daily physical activity will be more likely to become physically fit and responsible in their physical activity choices and behaviors for a lifetime.

### **III. Virginia Laws and Regulations Related to Physical Education**

#### **Code of Virginia**

Virginia Standards of Quality

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/quality/index.shtml>

[§ 22.1-200](#). Subjects taught in elementary grades.

[§ 22.1-207](#). Physical and health education.

[§ 22.1-253.13:1](#). Standard 1. Instructional programs supporting the Standards of Learning and other educational objectives.

#### **Regulations**

*Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*

[8 VAC 20-131-80](#). Instructional program in elementary schools.

[8 VAC 20-131-90](#). Instructional program in middle schools.

[8 VAC 20-131-240](#). Administrative and support staff; staffing requirements.

### **IV. References and Resources**

Governor's Healthy Virginians Web site:

<http://www.healthyvirginians.virginia.gov/index.cfm>

Joint Committee of the Board of Education and Board of Health Final Report, September 2004: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/VA\\_Board/BOE-BOH-Report.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/VA_Board/BOE-BOH-Report.pdf)

Scorecard for the Governor's Nutrition and Physical Activity and Program:

<http://www.virginia.gov/doe/login.html>

Superintendent's Memo No. 7, May 20, 2005, Local Wellness Policy Requirement:

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2005/reg007.html](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2005/reg007.html)

Virginia Department of Education Health Education, Physical Education, and Driver Education Web site: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/PE/>