

Fact Sheet

Physical Education and Activity

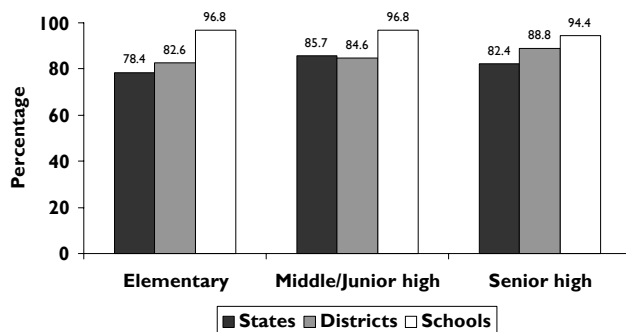
From CDC's School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS) 2000

About SHPPS

SHPPS is a national survey periodically conducted to assess school health policies and programs at the state, district, school, and classroom levels. Results from SHPPS 2000 are published in the *Journal of School Health*, Volume 71, Number 7, September 2001.

Physical Education Requirements

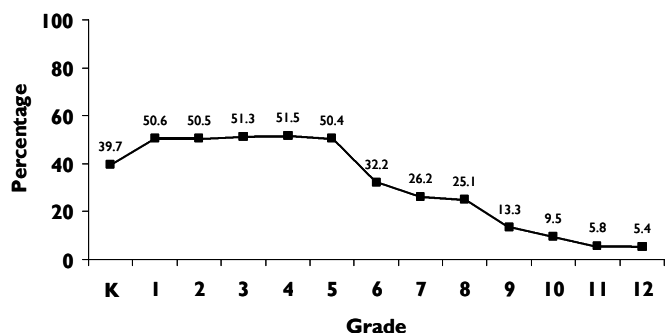
Percentage of States and Districts Requiring Schools to Teach Physical Education and Percentage of Schools Requiring Students to Take Physical Education, by School Level



- 8.0% of elementary schools (excluding kindergarten, which has requirements that are consistently lower than those for grades 1 through 5), 6.4% of middle/junior high schools, and 5.8% of senior high schools provide daily physical education or its equivalent (150 minutes per week for elementary schools; 225 minutes per week for middle/junior and senior high schools) for the entire school year for students in all grades in the school.
- 16.7% of elementary schools exempt students from required physical education courses for one or more of the following reasons: high physical competency test scores, participation in other school activities, participation in community sports activities, and participation in community service activities.

- 25.3% of middle/junior high schools and 40.0% of senior high schools exempt students from required physical education courses for one or more of the following reasons: high physical competency test scores, participation in other school activities, participation in community sports activities, participation in community service activities, enrollment in other school courses, participation in school sports, and participation in vocational training.
- Among schools that require physical education, 41.9% have a maximum allowable student-to-teacher ratio for required physical education. The average maximum allowable ratio is 28:1 for elementary schools, 31:1 for middle/junior high schools, and 33:1 for senior high schools.
- 84.0% of elementary, 77.4% of middle/junior high, and 79.5% of senior high schools follow national or state physical education standards or guidelines.

Percentage of Schools that Require Physical Education, by Grade



Course Characteristics

- Among schools that require physical education, 98.2% teach group or team activities, 97.4% teach individual or paired activities, 69.3% teach dance activities, and 12.5% teach aquatic activities.
- Among schools that teach group or team activities in required physical education, the most commonly taught activities are basketball (95.6%); baseball, softball, or whiffleball (93.4%); volleyball (92.6%); soccer (90.7%); and in elementary schools, tag (91.2%).
- Among schools that teach individual or paired activities in required physical education, the most commonly taught activities are walking, jogging, or running (96.3%); jumping rope (90.3%); and track and field (74.3%).
- Required physical education is taught only by physical education teachers in 69.8% of elementary schools that require physical education, in 64.2% of middle/junior high schools that require physical education, and in 61.2% of senior high schools that require physical education.

Coordination, Professional Requirements, and Staff Development

During the two years preceding the study:

- 68.6% of states, 62.2% of districts, and 85.5% of schools have someone who oversees or coordinates physical education.
- 80.6% of schools require newly hired physical education teachers to have undergraduate or graduate training in physical education or a related field, and 73.2% of schools require newly hired physical education teachers to be state-certified, licensed, or endorsed in physical education.
- 66.0% of states and 80.7% of districts provided funding for or offered staff development on physical education topics to those who teach physical education.
- 89.3% of schools had physical education teachers who received staff development on at least one physical education topic.

Student Assessment and Grading

- In 76.8% of schools, teachers had students take skills performance tests in at least one required physical education course; in 76.5% of schools, teachers had students take physical fitness tests; and in 43.9% of schools, teachers had students take written tests of knowledge related to physical education.
- Grades in required physical education courses are counted the same as other subjects for academic recognition in 51.0% of elementary schools, 74.8% of middle/junior high schools, and 77.7% of senior high schools.
- 9.0% of elementary, 20.5% of middle/junior high, and 91.3% of senior high schools that give grades for physical education require students to repeat required physical education courses if they receive a failing grade.

Recess and Extracurricular Physical Activity

- 71.4% of elementary schools provide regularly scheduled recess for students in all grades kindergarten through 5.
- 49.0% of all schools offer intramural activities or physical activity clubs for students. At least one-half of these schools offer baseball, softball, or whiffleball; basketball; football; and soccer to boys; and baseball, softball, or whiffleball; basketball; and volleyball to girls. Among schools offering intramural activities, 14.7% provide transportation home for students who participate.
- 99.2% of co-ed middle/junior and senior high schools offer interscholastic sports. More than one-half of these schools offer basketball, cross country, and track and field to both boys and girls; and fast- or slow-pitch softball and volleyball to girls only. Among schools offering interscholastic sports, 21.5% provide transportation home for students who participate.
- Physical activity facilities are used for community-sponsored sports teams, classes, "open gym," or unsupervised programs for children in 71.6% of schools and for adults in 56.6% of schools during one or more of the following times: before school, after school, evenings, weekends, or during school vacations.

For additional information on SHPPS, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adolescent and School Health, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, Mailstop K-33, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717, telephone 888-231-6405, <http://www.cdc.gov/shpps>.