



AISD PHYSICAL EDUCATION

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Physical education programs are the cornerstone of an active lifestyle for all students. School programs provide the skills, knowledge and attitudes that help students stay active for the rest of their lives. Encourage your students to actively participate in PE.

State of Texas Requirements

- ✓ All Texas elementary and middle schools must have a coordinated school health program in place by the 2007 school year:
 - Family/community involvement
 - Health education
 - Physical activity and education
 - Nutrition services
- ✓ Middle school students are required to take one semester of PE each year.
- ✓ TEKS-based physical education and health education are required in elementary and high school, and must be offered in middle school.

The New PE

PE is a primary source for movement and skill development – and for nutrition and health education. PE teaches lifelong, individualized fitness concepts.

PE Matters!

- ✓ Kids who are physically active on a regular basis are less likely to become overweight or obese
- ✓ Kids who are obese when they are adolescents have a 70% chance of being obese for the rest of their lives
- ✓ Nearly 35% of all Texas kids are overweight or obese
- ✓ Kids who have physical activity in the school day have an advantage for learning, which increases student achievement
- ✓ Kids who are physically fit have higher self-esteem
- ✓ Kids who value physical fitness and healthy lifestyle are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as underage drinking, smoking, illicit drug use and violence

What is AISD doing to improve student fitness?

- ✓ AISD has developed curriculum based on a wellness/recreation model (vs. traditional athletic model)
- ✓ Middle School students are required to take one semester of PE during each grade (6th – 8th) level.
- ✓ In PE, students learn how to practice a physically-active lifestyle and to understand the relationship between physical activity and health through a lifetime.
- ✓ Middle school students learn about the function of the body, how to measure their own performance, and develop plans for improvement. They learn to use technology (i.e., heart rate monitors) to monitor their performance. They learn activities they find enjoyable that encourage them to be physically active throughout life.
- ✓ Activities range from flag football, jump rope, volleyball and tennis skills to disc golf, orienteering, ultimate Frisbee and lacrosse.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How has today's PE changed?

The old days of PE-- which included running until you were sick, standing around while everyone tried to climb the rope, teachers barking orders at stragglers on the track – are gone. Today, PE classes have become more “student friendly” taking into account the many different fitness levels and interests of students. There are new PE activities – from disc golf, team handball and lacrosse to flag football, tennis and other more traditional activities. Kids participate in a variety of activities for fun and movement – not just for competition.

What should my middle school student be doing each day for PE?

Students should dress out in appropriate gym clothes and footwear. They should do a warm-up activity and at least 50 percent of their PE time should be vigorous activity.

Why is PE so important for middle school students? Students not only get physical activity and learn fitness skills and development, but they also learn about other important health and wellness issues, including body image, fitness concepts and goal setting, negative influences, nutrition, exercise safety and stress management.

If my student participates in athletics or dance, does that qualify for the required one semester of PE each year? Yes, there are approved substitutions to meet the PE requirement. Go to (www.austinisd.org) for an explanation of approved substitutions.

Can students participate in off-campus substitutions? Only 7th and 8th graders can apply for an off-campus substitution. Go to (www.austinisd.org) for a list of approved off-campus substitutions.

In a PE class, can teachers use exercise as punishment? National standards recommend against using exercise as punishment. If this happens at your school, you should contact your principal.

What are the qualifications for PE teachers? AISD only hires certified PE teachers to teach all PE classes.

PARENTS – DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK!

Make sure your student is getting the best PE possible – here are some questions to ask your principal and PE teachers.

- How much “active participation” time does my child get each week?
- What kinds of physical fitness activities do the students participate in?
- What is the average number of students in a PE class?
- Do the PE activities accommodate all physical levels of students?
- Is the teacher sending home information about PE activities to do at home?
- How do PE teachers motivate the “unmotivated” students?
- Is my child receiving health and fitness information as part of the PE curriculum?
- Is the importance of appropriate attire and footwear stressed for PE?
- Are positive social skills practiced (good sportsmanship, assertive vs. aggressive behavior, taking turns, team player concepts, sharing)?

FOR MORE INFORMATION: AISD School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

The AISD SHAC is a school-board appointed advisory group of parents, students, school staff and community members working together to improve the health of all students and families. The SHAC meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the AISD Board conference room. Parents and the public are invited. For more information about school health issues, go to www.austinisd.org/schools/shac.