

Moving into the Future

National Standards for Physical Education

SECOND EDITION



TM



National Association for Sport and Physical Education
an Association of the American Alliance for Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

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National Standards for Physical Education

Second Edition



Developed by the
National Association for Sport and Physical Education,
an association of the American Alliance for Health,
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance



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Appreciation is extended to the many professionals who have reviewed the drafts of this document and contributed to its revision.

About the cover...

The figure on the cover is a solid geometric shape called an icosahedron. It has 20 sides and provides a basis for the symbolic representation of human movement, called labanotation. The human figure inside the icosahedron demonstrates that the motion of a person can be described by using the planes of the shape as reference points in describing range, direction, quality, and form of physical movement. This symbolic description allows the recording of movement patterns so that they may be repeated later or learned by multiple performers. We have based the design of this book on the icosahedron because such recording of movement in order to reproduce performance is especially important in forms such as dance, figure skating, gymnastics, diving, and synchronized swimming, but it may also be used to describe *any* movement.

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Preface

In 1986, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) appointed the Outcomes Committee to answer the question, What should physically educated students know and be able to do? The “Outcomes Project” culminated in the development of a definition of a physically educated person that included five major focus areas.

To pursue a lifetime of healthful physical activity, a physically educated person:

- *has* learned skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities;
- *knows* the implications of and the benefits from involvement in physical activities;
- *does* participate regularly in physical activity;
- *is* physically fit;
- *values* physical activity and its contribution to a healthful lifestyle.

This definition was expanded to 20 outcome statements that also included sample benchmarks for selected grade levels. The work of this committee resulted in publication of the *Outcomes of Quality Physical Education Programs* (1992). Following this publication, NASPE appointed the Physical Education Standards and Assessment Task Force to develop content standards with assessment material based on the outcomes document.

The work of the task force, which began in the spring of 1993, reflected the national education reform movement, particularly efforts to establish national content standards for each area of the school curriculum. This movement to clarify and establish important educational goals provided the impetus and direction for much of the work of the task force. To make the physical education materials parallel to materials developed for other content areas, the task force undertook the identification of “content standards” and further clarification of the content in physical education before addressing the issue of assessment. The resulting document, *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education* (1995), which included assessment guidelines, was designed to expand and complement the physical education outcomes document.

Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education was the result of a purposeful process of consensus building that included a variety of efforts designed to obtain a broad range of expertise and reaction. Input was solicited and received from many NASPE members and structures (e.g., Council on Physical Education for Children, Middle and Secondary School Physical Education Council, Curriculum and Instruction Academy). The process also included presentations at the 1993 and 1994 AAHPERD national conventions, at each of the six district AAHPERD conventions, and at many state AHPERD meetings; reviews by selected leaders in the physical education profession; and consultation with educational representatives from other subject areas (e.g., mathematics, arts, science) and educational organizations (e.g., Council of Chief State School Officers, principals’ associations, Association of Colleges of Teacher Education).

Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education: A Guide to Content and Assessment was published in 1995 and has been used by teachers, schools districts, and states to guide development of curricula, instruction, and assessment. To ensure that NASPE materials are up to date and reflect current knowledge, research, and practice, NASPE regularly reviews and revises all major documents. Therefore, in the summer of 2002, NASPE appointed the K–12 National Physical Education Standards Review Committee to review the standards and consider questions, recommendations, and problems forwarded by teachers, teacher educators, and others. The committee drafted a document that was reviewed by leaders in the profession and practitioners in the field. A revised document became the focus of an open forum at the 2003 AAHPERD national convention, and a final revision was produced as a result of the review process. This document, the second edition of *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education*, reflects current thinking on what students should know and be able to do as a result of a quality physical education program.

Let the Experts Do the Work for You!

NASPE Offers Physical Education Workshops and Consultations

Provide your staff and members with the latest professional resources in curriculum development, instructional practices, and student assessment. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has the knowledge, experts, and capabilities to meet your specialized needs.

PIPEline (Program Improvement for Physical Education) **Workshops**. These are complete, one-day workshops developed and presented by specialists in curriculum development, instructional practices, and student assessment in physical education. They are designed to help teachers improve their programs and provide quality instruction consistent with the National Standards for Physical Education and national perspectives on quality physical education. Developed by specialists, the workshops reflect the most current research and best practices for planning and delivering quality physical education. Workshops are presented by recognized leaders in the field, including district and national Teachers of the Year and curriculum and instruction specialists who are experienced, dynamic clinicians. The three focus topics are curriculum development (K-12), instructional strategies (elementary or secondary), and student assessment (elementary or secondary).

Workshops are all-inclusive: NASPE provides the clinician, all materials, a notebook for every participant, suggestions for district follow-up, and options for consultation. We bring the entire workshop to the local school district or host site. All the host needs to do is provide the participants and a site, along with audiovisual and activity equipment.

These full-day workshops are perfect for school district professional development and in-service days as well as pre-conference workshops and university seminars for physical education majors. Many school districts are budgeting for one, two, or all three workshops in their PEP grant proposals as a way to provide comprehensive professional development for their physical educators. Each workshop is designed for 20 to 50 participants, and the cost is \$3,000 per workshop. For information and scheduling, contact Diane Raynes at draynes@aahperd.org or 1-800-213-7193 ext. 414.

Physical Best. This K-12 health-related fitness education program is partnered with The Cooper Institute's FITNESSGRAM/ACTIVITYGRAM assessment. The Physical Best program emphasizes teaching health-related fitness concepts and attitudes through activity in a manner that is inclusive of all children and enjoyable and that promotes a physically active lifestyle. This purpose is carried out through teacher resources (books and CD-ROMs) and professional development. A menu of half-day and full-day certification workshops for K-12 classroom teachers and physical educators and in-services range in pricing from \$750 + trainer expenses for a half-day in-service to \$160 per participant for a full-day certification training.

ProLink. Whether you need help preparing NCATE, SMPRC, or NCACE folios and rejoinders or reviewing your physical education, sport management, or coaching education programs, NASPE can help connect you with the experts you need. ProLink also offers help in writing new curriculums, reviewing manuscripts in development, providing consulting referrals, or making advocacy presentations. For more information about ProLink services, contact Chris Brophy at cbrophy@aahperd.org.

Teachers of the Year. The NASPE district and national Teachers of the Year (TOYs) are available to present sessions on quality physical education, covering appropriate instructional practices, assessment strategies, and meaningful physical activity focused on meeting the K-12 National Standards for Physical Education. Contact Diane Raynes at draynes@aahperd.org.

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Introduction

Role and Purpose of Standards

Are our children ready to meet the demands of the 21st century? What do children need to know and be able to do in order to prepare for their futures? These questions and others prompted parents, educators, business leaders, and politicians to review critically the education system in the United States. As a result, over the past two decades American education has undergone unprecedented reform in an effort to ensure that graduates will be prepared to take their place in society, compete in a global economy, and live healthy, productive, satisfying lives. Educational reform received support at the highest levels of government when President George H. W. Bush and the nation's governors met at a historic Education Summit in 1989. This led to the announcement of education goals for the nation and the establishment of the National Education Goals Panel to measure progress toward these goals. The national standards movement did not approach the task of educational reform through the establishment of a national curriculum or a predetermined course of study; rather, it spoke of competencies, defining *what a student should know and be able to do*. This represented a new way of thinking, a paradigm shift, about American students. The expectation is that all students in every school should be able to reach these standards with adequate support and sustained effort. With the passage of Goals 2000: Educate America Act in March 1994, education standards were written into federal law. Title II of the act addressed the issue of standards. It established a National Education Standards Improvement Council (NESIC), which had, among its other responsibilities, the job of working with appropriate organizations to determine the criteria for certifying voluntary content standards, with three objectives in mind: (1) to ensure that the standards were internationally competitive, (2) to ensure that they reflected the best knowledge about teaching and learning, and (3) to ensure that they had been developed through a broad-based, open adoption process. In effect, standards became the cornerstone of the education reform movement.

The framework that initially emerged suggested two kinds of standards: content and performance. Discovering that there was not clear agreement on definitions of these types of standards, the Technical Planning Group of the National Education Goals Panel sought to provide specific descriptions of each type of standard. Content standards were defined as “what students should know and be able to do.” They identified the knowledge and skills essential to a discipline that students were expected to learn. A performance standard described “how good is good enough” to indicate the levels of achievement that students were expected to attain in the content standards.

When the NASPE content standards were first published in 1995, performance standards linked to content standards were not yet available. Professional organizations developing standards were concentrating their efforts on specifying what students should know and be able to do. It was recommended that content standards be developed to include examples of possible assessment activities and the specification of the nature of the evidence proposed as necessary to show that the content standards were met. The



specification of performance standards became part of a process whereby assessment of student work (performance) regularly collected over time would be part of the basis for establishing performance levels. As a result, the first edition of *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education: A Guide to Content and Assessment* included assessment examples to demonstrate achievement of the content standards. However, in the past eight years there has been extensive work by scholars and practitioners in developing assessment tools to match the content standards. As a result, this second edition of *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education* does not include assessment measures. Rather, it provides sample performance outcomes that represent examples of student behavior demonstrating progress toward achieving the standards at each grade-level range. Assessment resources are provided in the appendix.

Current Education Climate

There has been serious national concern over what has been described as an achievement gap between white, economically advantaged students on the one hand and students of color, immigrant children, students with disabilities, and students from economically disadvantaged families on the other. Federal initiatives call for strategies “to close this achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice so that no child is left behind.” As a result, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) became law in January 2002 (Public Law 107–110).

Although NCLB does not address physical education and health education specifically, it has implications for K–12 educators in all disciplines. The law requires that schools demonstrate steady gains in student performance and close the gap in achievement between and among all students. We will begin to see new, inclusive ways of teaching and learning implemented across all content areas. NCLB’s emphasis on accountability for student learning reinforces the importance of having national standards. NCLB means that no child should be left behind in any discipline, including physical education.

Current Public Health Concerns

Among children and teens aged 6 to 19 years, 15 percent (almost 9 million) are overweight, according to the 1999–2000 data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or triple what the proportion was in 1980. The CDC estimates sick care costs associated with obesity, such as diabetes and heart diseases, at \$100 billion a year, about 8 percent of the national health care budget.

The lack of physical activity among Americans of all ages is so critical that it is considered a major health risk factor. Physical inactivity is associated with many diseases, including stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, various cancers, diabetes, depression, and obesity. Inactivity and poor diet cause at least 300,000 deaths a year in the United States—more than the number of deaths caused by infectious diseases, firearms, motor vehicle crashes, and illicit drug use combined. *Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996) reports that Americans become increasingly less active with each year of



age. Research links inactivity among children to sedentary living among adults. Thus, it is critically important that children and teens become more active.

Instructionally Aligned Physical Education

What is worth teaching and learning in physical education? The NASPE content standards define student learning, what a student should know and be able to do as result of a quality physical education program. In addition, the standards provide a framework for the development of realistic and achievable expectations for student performance at every level. These expectations are the first step in designing an instructionally aligned program focused on student learning and achievement.

We know that learning is most effective when learning goals match both assessment and instructional practices. This suggests that you “tell students what is important for them to know and be able to do, teach them what you told them they would learn, design appropriate tasks that allow them to practice what you taught them, and assess them on what they have been practicing” (Tannehill, 2001, p. 19). For example, if you want kids to learn to skip, teach them essential components of skipping, let them practice skipping, and then assess how well they can skip.

A significant benefit to physical education based on the delineation of a comprehensive set of nationally accepted standards is reforming the uninformed idea that physical education is an “academically soft” area of study. The standards demonstrate that physical education has meaningful and significant content. They describe achievement, show that knowledge and skills matter, and confirm that mere willing participation is not the same as learning. They justify the academic standing and inclusion of physical education in the curriculum. And they further indicate that all behaviors associated with physical education can in some way be measured—if not always on a numerical scale, then by informed professional judgment. The standards support participation of physical educators as full partners in school reform efforts, bringing accountability and rigor to our profession.

Assessment is the process of gathering evidence about a student’s level of achievement in a specified task and making inferences based on that evidence for a variety of purposes. Educators must be able to assess individual achievement; otherwise, it will be impossible to know whether the standards are being met and if students are learning. Whereas a broad range of assessment techniques (measurements) could well be used to determine whether a given standard is being met, assessment should (1) reflect the subject content that is most important for students to learn, (2) enhance learning through a connection with instruction, (3) provide reliable evidence of student performance, and (4) yield valid inferences about student learning. In effect, assessment serves to reinforce the standards movement. It is the “glue” that holds the standards framework together. It informs teachers about student progress and gives direction to planning the “next lesson.” Too often, assessment is seen as solely for the purpose of determining a student grade. Narrowly identifying grading as the singular purpose of assessment contributes to inappropriate assessment practices and poor instruction in general. The primary goal of



assessment should be seen as the enhancement of learning, rather than simply the documentation of learning. Several documents have been developed by NASPE to assist teachers in designing or adopting assessment tools to measure student learning in their classes, such as the NASPE Assessment Series and *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education: A Guide to Content and Assessment* (1995). Additional work to develop specific assessments for the national standards continues.

Because the standards are consensus statements about what a student should “know and be able to do,” they provide a basis for instruction, student assessment, and evaluation of programs at national, state, and local levels. The reform movement in education includes promoting change in assessment approaches to programs that more fully integrate assessment with the teaching process; such approaches support and facilitate student learning and provide meaningful information about student achievement.

If all students are to become physically educated, assessment practices must support both the instructional strategies utilized in physical education and the learning of each student. This link between instruction and assessment as inseparable components of the school physical education program is critical. When done appropriately, assessment of student progress will further learning. The instruction and assessment process should be dynamic and continuous, yielding information about student progress toward the achievement of the content standards in physical education and facilitating their achievement. When the information gathered through assessment to communicate student learning is consistent with learning goals and is used appropriately to guide teaching, it can enhance learning as well as document it. This requires that we embrace a new philosophy of the instruction and assessment process—one that ensures that physical education will not fall short of achieving new visions of excellence as sought in educational reform.

Vision for Physically Educated Persons

All children and youth will display the skills and practices of a physically active lifestyle, knowing the benefits of their choice to be involved in physical activity. They will be physically fit and have a mindset that values physical activity and its benefits in sustaining healthy lifestyles.

Beliefs

Providing children and youth with physical activity opportunities both in and out of school is critical. Helping them develop the knowledge and skills to select and participate in physical activity safely, competently, and with personal satisfaction is a responsibility of physical education. Physical education should also be a place where students learn to value physical activity (Siedentop, 1996).

One of NASPE’s key beliefs is that every student in our nation’s schools, from kindergarten through grade 12, should have the opportunity to participate in quality physical education. It is the unique role of quality physical education programs to help all students develop health-related fitness, physical competence, cognitive understanding,

and positive attitudes about physical activity so that they can adopt healthy and physically active lifestyles. Quality physical education programs are also important because they provide learning experiences that meet youngsters' developmental needs, which in turn helps to improve their mental alertness, academic performance, and readiness and enthusiasm for learning.

According to NASPE guidelines, a high-quality physical education program includes the following components: opportunity to learn, meaningful content, and appropriate instruction.

Opportunity to Learn

- Instructional periods totaling a minimum of 150 minutes per week (elementary) and 225 minutes per week (middle and secondary school)
- Qualified physical education specialists providing a developmentally appropriate program
 - Related NASPE document that lists qualifications for teachers in physical education: *National Standards for Beginning Physical Education Teachers*, 1995
- Adequate equipment and facilities
- Related NASPE documents that ensure students the “opportunity to learn” in physical education: *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary Physical Education*, 2000; *Physical Education Program Improvement and Self-Study Guide for Middle School*, 1998; and *Physical Education Program Improvement and Self-Study Guide for High School*, 1998

Meaningful Content

- Instruction in a variety of motor skills that are designed to enhance the physical, mental, and social/emotional development of every child
- Fitness education and assessment to help children understand, improve, and/or maintain their physical well-being
- Development of cognitive concepts about motor skill and fitness
- Opportunities to improve their emerging social and cooperative skills and gain a multicultural perspective
- Promotion of regular amounts of appropriate physical activity now and throughout life
- Related NASPE documents that specify what students “should know and be able to do” relative to physical activity and exercise: *Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education*, 2nd edition, 2004; *Concepts & Principles of Physical Education: What Every Student Needs to Know*, 2003; *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*, 2002; and *Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children Ages 5–12*, 2004

**Appropriate Instruction**

- Full inclusion of all students
- Maximum practice opportunities for class activities
- Well-designed lessons that facilitate student learning
- Out-of-school assignments that support learning, practice, and establishing life-long habits
- No use of physical activity as punishment
- Use of regular assessment to monitor, reinforce, and plan for student learning
- Related NASPE documents that offer appropriate instructional practice at elementary, middle, and high school levels: *Appropriate Practices for Elementary School Physical Education*, 2000; *Appropriate Practices for Middle School Physical Education*, 2001; and *Appropriate Practices for High School Physical Education*, 2004

Taken together, the documents included in this list describe standards for quality physical education at elementary, middle, and high school levels, in addition to standards for those training to teach physical education in our nation's schools.

Physical education is an integral part of the total education of every child from kindergarten through grade 12. Quality physical education programs are needed to increase the physical competence, health-related fitness, self-responsibility, and enjoyment of physical activity for all students so that they can be physically active for a lifetime. Physical education programs can provide these benefits only if they are well-planned and well-implemented so that they include the following:

- **Skill development**
Physical education develops motor skills that allow for safe, successful, and satisfying participation in physical activities.
- **Regular, healthful physical activity**
Physical education provides a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities for all children and youth. It encourages young people to choose to be physically active and aware of the benefits of such a choice.
- **Improved physical fitness**
Quality physical education improves cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, muscular endurance, and body composition.
- **Support for other subject areas**
Physical education reinforces knowledge learned across the curriculum and serves as a laboratory for application of content in science, math, and social studies.



- **Self-discipline**
Physical education facilitates development of responsibility for personal health, safety, and fitness.
- **Improved judgment**
Quality physical education influences moral development. Students learn to assume leadership, cooperate with others, and accept responsibility for their own behavior.
- **Stress reduction**
Physical activity becomes an outlet for releasing tension and anxiety and facilitates emotional stability and resilience.
- **Strengthened peer relations**
Physical education is a major force in helping children and youth socialize with others successfully and provides opportunities to learn positive social skills. Especially during late childhood and adolescence, being able to participate in dances, games, and sports is an important part of youth and peer cultures.
- **Improved self-confidence and self-esteem**
Physical education instills a stronger sense of self-worth in young people based on their mastery of skills and concepts in physical activity. They become more confident, assertive, independent, and self-controlled.
- **Experiencing goal setting**
Physical education gives children and youth the opportunity to set and strive for personal, achievable goals.

New Research to Support Physical Activity

The landmark *Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996) identified the substantial health benefits of regular participation in physical activity; they include reduced risks of dying prematurely from heart disease and of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, and colon cancer. According to the Surgeon General, the health benefits of physical activity are not limited to adults. Regular participation in physical activity during childhood and adolescence helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints; controls weights; builds lean muscle; and reduces feelings of depression and anxiety.

In 1998, NASPE introduced the first-ever physical activity guidelines for children 5 to 12 years of age, calling for a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity per day. That recommendation was recently revised to include a minimum of 60 minutes and up to several hours of physical activity per day (National Association for Sport and Physical





Education, 2004). These recommendations are not surprising given that inactivity has contributed to the recent epidemic of obesity in the United States and that sedentary living is a known threat to health. In 2002, NASPE completed its lifespan physical activity recommendations by releasing physical activity guidelines for babies, infants, and toddlers (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2002). Adopting a physically active lifestyle early in life increases the likelihood that infants and young children will learn to move skillfully. Promoting and fostering enjoyment of movement and motor skill confidence and competence at an early age helps to ensure healthy development and later participation in physical activity.

It is hard to change sedentary habits that have been formed. Experts agree that childhood is the time to begin development of active lifestyles, and adolescence is an important time to prevent the decline that traditionally is observed in physical activity levels. Therefore, it is important to equip our young people with the fitness levels, knowledge, motor skills, and personal/social skills they need to be active now and in the future.

There is a relationship between habits in early life and physical activity in adults. In a recent study, Taylor, Blair, Cummings, Wun, and Malina (1999) analyzed various components of activity during childhood and adolescence and compared them to activity habits in adults. A positive relationship was found between teen skill level and adult activity levels, as well as between participation in team sports as preteens and adult activity levels. Providing young people with quality physical education to improve their skills and confidence appears to have positive consequences for later activity.

Explanation of the Standards Revisions

The purpose of this document is to present revised content standards for what a student should know and be able to do as a result of a quality physical education program. The K–12 National Physical Education Standards Revision Committee attempted to remain true to the original standards while addressing concerns and problems associated with their implementation. The revisions, designed to update the standards, are not major yet reflect current beliefs. The resulting document reflects the following changes:

- Grade levels have been grouped into grade-level ranges representing grades K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 so that the ranges are consistent with developmental patterns of children and youth, reflect organizational patterns in public school settings, and align with other content areas.
- For clarity, this document is developed around the six content standards, with sub-sections for each grade-level range. The grade-level ranges, in turn, contain two sections: student expectations and sample performance outcomes.

Content standards	Six content standards for grades K–12 describing what learners should know and be able to do
Student expectations	Grouped grade-level delineations for each standard, reflecting what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade-level range (e.g., K–2)
Sample performance outcomes	Examples of student behavior at each grade-level range that demonstrate progress toward achieving the standards

- Because of all we know about the importance of leading a physically active lifestyle, and in the interest of placing physical activity at the forefront of our work, an “introductory stem” was added to the definition of a physically educated person that reads, “. . . to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.”
- Because of confusion over the previous terminology in Standard 1 of the first edition (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 1995) and in the interest of focusing on skills that support all movement forms, the standard has been revised to read, “Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.”
- In the interest of focusing the learning and application of concepts and principles across all aspects of physical education content, Standard 2 was modified to reflect a broader scope, by stating, “Demonstrates understanding of movement