



## Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) Policy Continuum

**Policy is important** for codifying, sustaining, and providing accountability for efforts to infuse physical activity into the school setting. However, in drafting policy language, it is often necessary to make tough decisions between what is best practice and what is realistic for a given school, district, or state.

This tool, a policy continuum, aims to address this problem **by identifying meaningful steps along a path toward optimal policy**. The continuum is divided into sections based on the five components of a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP), as defined by the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE).

### Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program Components:

- Physical Education
- Physical Activity During the School Day
- Physical Activity Before and After School
- Staff Involvement
- Family and Community Involvement

Within each CSPAP component, **the tool identifies key policy items and provides several options for policy language** that range from a “meaningful step in the right direction” to optimal policy reflecting evidence-based best practice. Because physical activity policy can be enacted at the local, district, and/or state level, the policy language in this tool is general, and is intended to be adapted for any of these applications. When drafting policy at the school or district level, physical activity language should be coordinated with or integrated into the district’s federally required wellness policy.

Policy is only effective when it is well implemented. To ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved from a CSPAP policy, this tool also provides suggestions for monitoring progress and requiring accountability for implementation. For more information on CSPAP and physical activity policy, please refer to:

- National Association for Sport and Physical Education Advocacy Toolkit  
<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/advocacy/governmentRelations/toolkit.cfm>
- CDC School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity  
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm>
- Database of State Legislative and Regulatory Action to Prevent Obesity and Improve Nutrition and Physical Activity  
[http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DNPALeg/?s\\_cid=govD\\_dnpao\\_085&source=govdelivery](http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DNPALeg/?s_cid=govD_dnpao_085&source=govdelivery)

Components of a CSPAP	COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM				Options to monitor for accountability
	★ A meaningful step in the right direction	★★	★★★	★★★★ Optimal Policy	
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>					
<b>Teachers</b>	Physical Education (PE) shall be taught by a certified/ licensed teacher who has received professional development on PE.	Physical Education shall be taught by a certified/ licensed teacher who has received professional development on PE and has oversight / guidance from a certified PE professional.	Physical Education shall be taught by a certified/ licensed physical education teacher.	Physical Education shall be taught by a certified/ licensed physical education teacher. PE teachers shall receive annual professional development specific to PE/PA content.	<p>Require PE teacher certification status in the school profile or report card.</p> <p>Require professional development records.</p> <p>Require assessment of staff performance on teaching the curriculum and achieving grade level benchmarks.</p>
<b>Amount, Frequency, and Intensity: Elementary</b>  <b>Examples:</b> Florida – Statute <a href="#">1003.455</a> Texas - Code <a href="#">28.002</a>	All students shall be provided physical education two days/week, or the equivalent of at least 60 minutes per week, for the entire school year. At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA).	All students shall be provided physical education three days/week, or the equivalent of at least 90 minutes per week, for the entire school year. At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA).	All students shall be provided physical education four days/week, or the equivalent of at least 120 minutes per week, for the entire school year. At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA).	All students shall be provided daily physical education, or the equivalent of at least 150 minutes per week, for the entire school year. At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA).	Require a report on the quantity of PE in the school profile or report card.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONT'D

**Amount, Frequency,  
And Intensity:  
Secondary**

**Examples:**

Oregon - [HB3141](#)  
Texas - Code [28.002](#)

**Middle School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for 1 of 2 or 2 of 3 full years of middle school.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**High School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for 1 full year. PE shall be provided daily, or the equivalent of 225 minutes/wk, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

PE shall be exclusive of health education.

PE shall be available for all 4 years of high school, and there shall be no maximum placed on the number of PE hours that a student can participate in.

**Middle School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for all years of enrollment in middle school.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**High School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for 2 full years. PE shall be provided daily, or the equivalent of 225 minutes/wk, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

PE shall be exclusive of health education.

PE shall be available for all 4 years of high school, and there shall be no maximum placed on the number of PE hours that a student can participate in.

**Middle School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for all years of enrollment in middle school. PE shall be provided 3 days/week, or the equivalent of 135 minutes/week, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**High School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for 3 full years. PE shall be provided daily, or the equivalent of 225 minutes/wk, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

PE shall be exclusive of health education and shall be available for all 4 years of high school, and there shall be no maximum placed on the number of PE hours that a student can participate in.

**Middle School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for all years of enrollment in middle school. PE shall be provided 5 days/week, or the equivalent of 225 minutes/week, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**High School:** All students shall be required to participate in physical education for 4 full years. PE shall be provided daily, or the equivalent of 225 minutes/wk, for the entire school year.

At least 50% of physical education class time should be spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

PE shall be exclusive of health education and shall be available for all 4 years of high school, and there shall be no maximum placed on the number of PE hours that a student can participate in.

Require a report on the quantity of PE in the school profile or report card.

# COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONT'D					
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Curriculum</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Example:</b> Alabama - <a href="#">Alabama Course of Study – Physical Education</a></p>	Each school district shall adopt a sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum for grades K-12, with grade level benchmarks.	Each school district shall adopt a curriculum that aligns to state or National Standards for Physical Education for grades K-12, with grade level benchmarks.	Each school district shall adopt a curriculum that aligns to state or National Standards for Physical Education for grades K-12, with grade level benchmarks. The curriculum shall be reviewed every 4 years.  Annual training in the curriculum shall be provided to staff.	Each school district shall adopt a curriculum that aligns to state or National Standards for Physical Education for grades K-12, with grade level benchmarks. The curriculum shall be reviewed every 2 years.  Annual training in the curriculum shall be provided to staff.	Require use of CDC's PECAT tool to evaluate the PE curriculum.  Require assessment of staff performance on teaching the curriculum and achieving grade level benchmarks.
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Assessment</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Example:</b> Georgia - Code <a href="#">20-2-776</a> California – <a href="#">Ed Code 60800</a> Texas – <a href="#">Code 38.101-106</a></p>	Student achievement shall be assessed based on the PE standards, and a written PE grade shall be reported for students according to the districts' grading schedule.  Fitness assessment shall be performed using a valid and reliable tool.	Student achievement shall be assessed based on PE standards, and a written PE grade shall be reported for students according to the districts' grading schedule.  Fitness assessment shall be performed, using a valid and reliable tool, and used to track student progress.	Student achievement shall be assessed based on PE standards, and a written PE grade shall be reported for students according to the districts' grading schedule.  Fitness assessment shall be performed, using a valid and reliable tool, and used to set student goals and track progress towards those goals.	Student achievement shall be assessed based on PE standards, and a written PE grade shall be reported for students according to the districts' grading schedule.  Data from assessment of student achievement shall be used to improve the PE program.  Fitness assessment shall be performed, using a valid and reliable tool, and used to set student goals and track progress towards those goals.  Results of the fitness assessment shall be reported to parents.	Require inclusion of a PE grade on student report cards.  Require reporting of fitness assessment results to parents. (ex: FitnessGram parent report)

# COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONT'D					
<p><b>Class Size</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> South Carolina - Code <a href="#">59-10-10</a></p>	PE classes shall have a pupil-teacher ratio comparable to that in the classroom context.	PE classes shall have a pupil-teacher ratio comparable to that in the classroom context.	PE classes shall have a pupil-teacher ratio comparable to that in the classroom context.	PE classes shall have a pupil-teacher ratio comparable to that in the classroom context.	Require a report of class size in the school profile or report card.
<p><b>Waivers/Exemptions</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> Arkansas - Code <a href="#">6-16-132</a></p>	Waivers, exemptions, substitutions, and/or pass-fail options for physical education are prohibited. Accommodations will be made for those with medical, cultural, or religious considerations.	Waivers, exemptions, substitutions, and/or pass-fail options for physical education are prohibited. Accommodations will be made for those with medical, cultural, or religious considerations.	Waivers, exemptions, substitutions, and/or pass-fail options for physical education are prohibited. Accommodations will be made for those with medical, cultural, or religious considerations.	Waivers, exemptions, substitutions, and/or pass-fail options for physical education are prohibited. Accommodations will be made for those with medical, cultural, or religious considerations.	
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE SCHOOL DAY					
<p><b>Amount of Physical Activity (outside of Physical Education)</b></p> <p>Opportunities for physical activity (PA) may include: Recess, Physical activity breaks, Classroom-based physical activity.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Nevada – <a href="#">Nevada State School Wellness Policy</a> North Carolina – <a href="#">NC State Board policy GCS-S-000</a> Iowa - Code <a href="#">256(11)6</a></p>	Students shall be provided with at least 20 minutes/day of physical activity, not including time spent in Physical Education. This time may be accumulated throughout the school day.	Students shall be provided with at least 30 minutes/day of physical activity, not including time spent in Physical Education. This time may be accumulated throughout the school day.	Students shall be provided with at least 40 minutes/day of physical activity, not including time spent in Physical Education. This time may be accumulated throughout the school day.	Students shall be provided with at least 45 minutes/day of physical activity, not including time spent in Physical Education. This time may be accumulated throughout the school day.	Require a written physical activity plan to be included in the school profile or report card.
<p>Note: More detailed policy language for recess, PA breaks, and classroom-based PA can be found in the rows below. Minute allocations for each of these types of PA are meant to be a part of, not in addition to, the minute allocations described in this row.</p>					

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE SCHOOL DAY CONT'D					
<p><b>Classroom-Based Physical Activity</b> Physical activity integrated into the classroom setting and supervised by the classroom teacher. The goal of this activity can be simply a break from academics or to teach academic content via physical movement.</p> <p><b>Example:</b> South Carolina – <a href="#">Ravenswood (SC) District Wellness</a> Tennessee - <a href="#">Coordinated School Health</a></p>	<p>Teachers shall include planned student movement during instruction. (i.e. standing up and moving among easels, learning centers, etc.)</p>	<p>Teachers shall include planned student movement during instruction every day and at varied intensities.</p>	<p>Teachers shall integrate physical activity with academic lessons 3 days/week, for 15 minutes each day.</p>	<p>Teachers shall integrate at least 15 minutes of physical activity with academic lessons each day.</p>	<p>Require planned physical activity to be recorded in daily instruction logs or lesson plans.</p>
<p><b>Recess (Elementary)</b> Daily scheduled period of time allocated for students as a break from academic rigor. Typically students are allowed to move outside to engage in physical and social activities when weather permits.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hawaii - <a href="#">Hawaii Wellness Guidelines</a> Nevada - <a href="#">Nevada State School Wellness Policy</a></p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least 20 minutes each day of active recess.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least 20 minutes each day of active recess.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least 20 minutes each day of active recess.</p> <p>Recess shall be scheduled before lunch periods.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least 20 minutes each day of active recess.</p> <p>Recess shall be supervised by staff trained in facilitating active play.</p> <p>Recess shall be scheduled before lunch periods.</p>	<p>Require inclusion of recess in master school schedule.</p>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE SCHOOL DAY CONT'D					
<p><b>Physical Activity Breaks (Secondary)</b> Breaks from academic content designed to provide opportunities for physical activity. These breaks can take the form of recess, classroom-based physical activity or drop-in recess.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Hawaii - <a href="#">Hawaii Wellness Guidelines</a>  Nevada - <a href="#">Nevada State School Wellness Policy</a></p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least one physical activity break* daily. (ex. active attention reset or “open gym”)</p> <p>*Moving between classes shall not be counted as a physical activity break.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least two physical activity breaks* daily.</p> <p>*Moving between classes shall not be counted as a physical activity break.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least one physical activity break* for every 60 minutes of academic instruction, daily.</p> <p>*Moving between classes shall not be counted as a physical activity break.</p>	<p>Schools shall provide at least one physical activity break* for every 60 minutes of academic instruction, daily.</p> <p>*Moving between classes shall not be counted as a physical activity break.</p>	<p>Require inclusion of physical activity breaks in master school schedule.</p>
<p><b>Safe Facilities and Equipment</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> South Carolina - <a href="#">Code 59-10-60</a></p>	<p>Facilities shall be available for active play.</p> <p>The ratio of supervisors to students shall not exceed 1:90. For students with special needs, the ratio shall not exceed 1:16.</p>	<p>Facilities shall be available for active play.</p> <p>Equipment shall be age-appropriate, inviting, and available in sufficient quantities for all students to be active.</p> <p>The ratio of supervisors to students shall not exceed 1:90. For students with special needs, the ratio shall not exceed 1:16.</p>	<p>Facilities shall be available for active play.</p> <p>Equipment shall be age-appropriate, inviting, and available in sufficient quantities for all students to be active. Equipment shall be inspected regularly (at least weekly) for safety and replaced as needed.</p> <p>The ratio of supervisors to students shall not exceed 1:90. For students with special needs, the ratio shall not exceed 1:16.</p>	<p>Indoor and outdoor facilities shall be available so that physical activity is not dependent on the weather.</p> <p>Equipment shall be age-appropriate, inviting, and available in sufficient quantities for all students to be active. Equipment shall be inspected regularly (at least weekly) for safety and replaced as needed.</p> <p>The ratio of supervisors to students shall not exceed 1:90. For students with special needs, the ratio shall not exceed 1:16.</p>	<p>Require a report of supervisor:student ratio in the school profile or report card.</p> <p>Require a documented inventory/inspection schedule for physical activity equipment.</p> <p>Require inclusion of indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities in school renovation/construction plans.</p>

# COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL					
<b>Extracurricular Sports, Clubs, and Activities</b>	Physical activity clubs and intramurals shall be available to select grades*, directed by volunteers.  * including students with unique needs	Physical activity clubs and intramurals shall be available to all students* in select grades, directed by professional educators, with access to adequate facilities and equipment.  *including students with unique needs	Physical activity clubs and intramurals shall be available to all students*, directed by professional educators, with access to adequate facilities and equipment.  *including students with unique needs	Physical activity clubs and intramurals shall be available to all students*, directed by professional educators, grouped by age and skill level, with access to adequate facilities and equipment.  *including students with unique needs	Require report on availability of physical activity clubs and intramurals in school profile or report card.
<b>Active Transport to School</b>	Each school shall promote strategies/events designed to generate interest in active transport to school. (ex. walk to school day)	Each school shall promote strategies/events designed to generate interest in active transport to school. (ex. walk to school day)  Each school shall partner with local government and community-based agencies to support active transport to school by reducing/eliminating hazards and increasing accessibility (i.e., bicycle parking).	Each school shall partner with local government and community-based agencies to support active transport to school by reducing/eliminating hazards and increasing accessibility (i.e., bicycle parking).  Each school shall organize or facilitate ongoing active transport activities, such as “walking school buses” or “bicycle trains.”	Each school shall partner with local government and community-based agencies to implement a comprehensive active transport program (i.e. Safe Routes to School Program).	Require report on availability of active transport program in school profile or report card.
<b>Access to School Grounds/Facilities</b>	All schools shall allow students access to school grounds and/or facilities for a period of time before and/or after school.	All schools shall allow students access to school grounds and/or facilities for a period of time before and/or after school for the purpose of free play.	All schools shall promote student access to school grounds and/or facilities before and/or after school, offering opportunities for unstructured free play and structured physical activities.	All schools shall promote student access to school grounds and/or facilities before <b>and</b> after school, offering opportunities for unstructured free play and structured physical activities.	Require report on availability and/or access to school grounds and facilities in school profile or report card.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CONT'D					
<p><b>Before and After School Programs</b></p>	<p>Each school shall allocate time for physical activity during school-based morning and after school programs.</p>	<p>Each school shall dedicate at least 20% of morning or afterschool program time to physical activity.</p>	<p>Each school shall dedicate at least 30 minutes of morning or afterschool program time to physical activity.</p>	<p>Each school shall dedicate 30-60 minutes of morning or afterschool program time to physical activity, ensuring that students are moderately to vigorously active for 50% of the physical activity time, and are not sitting for more than 60 minutes at a time.</p>	<p>Require report on amount of physical activity in before /after school programs in school profile or report card.</p>
<p><b>Interscholastic Sports</b></p>	<p>Each school shall make interscholastic sport opportunities available to all students.</p>	<p>Each school shall make interscholastic sport opportunities available to all students.</p> <p>Interscholastic sport coaches shall be certified to coach.</p>	<p>Each school shall make interscholastic sport opportunities available to all students.</p> <p>Interscholastic sport coaches shall be certified to coach.</p> <p>An athletic trainer shall be required to be present at all practices and games.</p>	<p>Each school shall make interscholastic sport opportunities available to all students, and shall implement an interscholastic sport participation policy that addresses academic eligibility and adherence to school and program rules.</p> <p>Interscholastic sport coaches shall be certified to coach.</p> <p>An athletic trainer shall be required to be present at all practices and games.</p>	<p>Require report on availability and status of interscholastic reports in school profile or report card.</p>

# COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM

STAFF INVOLVEMENT					
<b>Staff Wellness</b>	Each school shall encourage staff to participate in daily physical activity for $\geq$ 30 minutes.	Each school shall encourage staff to participate in daily physical activity for $\geq$ 30 minutes.  Each school shall allow staff to use school spaces and facilities for physical activity during out of school time.	Each school shall encourage staff to participate in daily physical activity for $\geq$ 30 minutes.  Each school shall offer physical activity programs to staff and allow staff to use school spaces and facilities for physical activity during out of school time.	Each school shall encourage staff to participate in daily physical activity for $\geq$ 30 minutes, and provide staff the opportunity to participate in paid physical activity time.  Each school shall offer physical activity programs to staff and allow staff to use school spaces and facilities for physical activity during out of school time.	Require documentation of staff opportunities for physical activity, possibly including participation logs.
<b>Withholding Physical Activity/Physical Activity as Punishment</b>  <b>Examples:</b> Hawaii – <a href="#">Hawaii Wellness Guidelines</a>  North Carolina - <a href="#">NC GSC-S-000</a>	Using physical activity as punishment, or withholding physical activity/physical education time for behavior management shall be prohibited.	Using physical activity as punishment, or withholding physical activity/physical education time for behavior management shall be prohibited.	Using physical activity as punishment, or withholding physical activity/physical education time for behavior management shall be prohibited.  Withholding physical activity/physical education time for the purpose of making up student work shall be prohibited.	Using physical activity as punishment, or withholding physical activity/physical education time for behavior management shall be prohibited.  Withholding physical activity/physical education time for the purpose of making up student work shall be prohibited.	Require documented plan from each district/school for how they will enforce and make teachers aware of this policy.

# COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY CONTINUUM

STAFF INVOLVEMENT CONT'D					
<p><b>Professional Development for Staff</b></p>	School staff shall be encouraged to integrate physical activity into their academic lesson plans.	School staff shall be provided resources to integrate physical activity into their academic lesson plans.	<p>School staff shall be provided resources to integrate physical activity into their academic lesson plans.</p> <p>At least one professional development event each year shall include instructional strategies for assessing physical activity knowledge and skills and promoting physical activity.</p>	<p>School staff shall be provided resources to integrate physical activity into their academic lesson plans.</p> <p>Each school shall identify a coordinator for professional development related to physical activity, distribution of resources, and inclusion of physical activity discussions in ongoing planning meetings.</p>	<p>Require documentation that professional development was provided.</p> <p>Require report from school physical activity coordinator.</p>
FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT					
<p><b>Joint or Shared-Use Agreements</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b>  <a href="#">Corning Union Elementary School district Joint Facilities Agreement</a></p> <p>NPLAN  <a href="http://www.nplanonline.org/childhood-obesity/products/nplan-joint-use-agreements">http://www.nplanonline.org/childhood-obesity/products/nplan-joint-use-agreements</a></p>	Each school shall inform community members of the availability of their outdoor recreation spaces for use outside of school hours.	Each school shall actively promote community use of their outdoor recreation spaces outside of school hours.	Each school shall actively promote community use of their outdoor and indoor recreation spaces outside of school hours.	Each school shall enter into joint use agreements for community use of school facilities and school use of community facilities for physical activity programming.	Require copy of joint use agreement and schedule/calendar of joint use events.

**About this Tool**

This policy continuum was developed to further implementation of the 2008 National Physical Activity Plan.

The 2008 National Physical Activity Plan lays out a cross-sector roadmap for getting America moving. In the education sector, the Plan describes five strategies that can help America’s children become more physically active. Several of these strategies involve the development and implementation of strong physical activity policies that will support schools in providing students with the physical activity they need for good health and learning.



The following individuals have contributed their time and expertise to development of this guide:

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