

Best Practices in Physical Education

Granite School District, Salt Lake City, Utah

<http://www.graniteschools.org/C3/C1/Best%20Practices%20in%20Physical%20Edu/default.aspx>

The following Best Practices are recommended guidelines for secondary physical education in Granite School District. The purpose is to provide guidance for teachers, counselors and school administrators who are involved in providing a high quality physical education program that meets the needs of all students and not just the athletically gifted. These practices are not all-inclusive but attempt to identify components of the physical education program that may be misunderstood. If there are questions, the District Physical Education Specialist is available at a school's convenience.

Philosophy:

Physical Education is a vital part of the total school curriculum, reflects national standards and meets the requirements of the State CORE Curriculum. All activities are coeducational, course specific and offer success to students of all ability levels.

Disclosure Statements:

Disclosure statements are written to the student as a welcome to the class. They are written in the second person with many "we", "our" and "us" pronouns being used. Clear statements of class procedures, discipline, and activity descriptions are outlined with a definite tie to past experiences in physical education.

Class Size:

The enrollment in physical education classes is kept consistent with enrollment figures in academic areas. A physical education class is 1.33 the goal number for classroom courses. For instance, if the goal for the academic classes at a school is 35 students per class, the maximum number of students in gym classes is 47.

Class Enrollment:

In junior high school, physical education classes are offered to seventh, eight and ninth grade students. The class structure never combines the grades for the physical education experience. In order to keep enrollment numbers down, students are allowed to register for only one physical education course per semester. For coeducational P.E. to succeed the numbers of boys and girls enrolled are similar.

Facilities:

Gymnasiums and locker rooms are clean and well-lighted. Bulletin boards are placed in high traffic areas and present information about healthy habits and community recreational and fitness activities. Tack boards are available for posting visual cues for motor skill development on brightly colored posters. For safety and liability purposes physical activities are never conducted in hallways or classrooms and equipment is periodically checked for proper and safe operation.

Instructional Units:

Goals and objectives for instructional units are based on the State CORE and individual needs and abilities of students. A wide range of activities, with valid student input, are offered with formal skill instruction, ability grouping and pre and post testing as integral parts of all units. In addition, writing in various forms is required in all physical education classes.

Fitness Activities:

Students participate in activities that are designed first and foremost to help them understand the concepts and components related to the different elements of physical fitness. Development of these concepts is individualized for each student and incorporated into daily lessons. Fitness is the common thread running through all physical education activities.

Inclusion:

Activities are selected and instructional strategies are implemented to provide for the inclusion and success of all students in the class. Students are ability grouped to provide for fair competition and appropriate challenges.

Knowledge:

Activities are accompanied by information and assessment relating to scientific bases for movement skills, proper diet and fitness concepts. Rules and tactics in various sports are also taught and assessed.

Social Development:

Students work together in competitive and cooperative activities to attain common goals. They learn respect for and ethical treatment of others through interaction in activities and by following the rules of sport. Opportunities which build communication and leadership skills are provided for all students and not just the "athletically gifted".

Basic Literacy:

All curricular areas are responsible for improved reading and writing skills. The main thrust of physical education is and always will be activity, but reading and writing to increase knowledge and expand P.E. experiences are essential components of the program. Research reports of sports-related subjects, written portfolios, and activity journals are just three examples of writing assignments suitable for physical education students.

Nutrition Education:

With the nation and state suffering from obesity and seeing epidemic proportions of Type II diabetes in student populations, proper nutrition information accompanies all units in physical education. Collaboration with the health education teacher is helpful and recommended.

Fitness Testing:

Fitness testing is used as individual information for students in providing baseline measures for individual fitness plans and as an indicator of progress from the beginning to the end of a program. Physical fitness tests are not used for assigning grades.

Dodge Ball:

Any form of dodge ball is not permitted in physical education classes. Inclusion, respect for others and the building of self esteem are goals that are always considered when selecting activities for physical education instruction.

Technology:

Teachers utilize technology in the teaching process whenever possible. Heart rate monitors, body mass analyzers, pedometers and computer software are examples of possible tools utilized in the physical education curriculum

Assigning Grades:

With the emphasis on building positive attitudes toward physical activity in adulthood, students are graded on individual progress toward their goals relative to curriculum content. Multiple assessment strategies are utilized such as observation, improvement based on pre and post testing of knowledge and skills, written exercises utilizing portfolios, journals and reports, check lists, rubrics, group projects and demonstrations. Subjective evaluations considering effort and attitude are also included in the grading process as is the respectful treatment of others in the class. All students are evaluated on an individual basis and have legitimate opportunities to earn an "A" grade.

Waivers and Assigning Credit:

Granite District students are required to take three semesters of physical education. Fitness For Life is required of all students and the only substitute for the class is a passing score on the Fitness For Life Competency Test offered through the district office. Participation on interscholastic athletic teams and involvement in athletics classes absolutely do not fulfill the Fitness For Life requirement. The only waiver for physical education credit is for an injury, illness or disability which totally prevents regular participation in a class. A letter signed by a physician is necessary for this waiver.