



shapewa.org

# Healthy. Active. Educated.

## Society of Health and Physical Educators

### Physical Education—It’s The Law

#### Physical education requirements. WAC392-410-135.

(1) Grades 1-8. Pursuant to RCW [28A.230.040](#), an average of at least one hundred instructional minutes per week per year in physical education shall be required of all pupils in the common schools in the grade school program (grades 1-8) unless waived pursuant to RCW [28A.230.040](#).

(2) Grades 9-12. Pursuant to RCW [28A.230.050](#), a one credit course or its equivalent shall be offered in physical education for each grade in the high school program (grades 9-12).

#### Basic education. RCW 28A.150.210

(2) Know and apply the core concepts and principles of health and fitness.

#### Requirements for high school graduation. WAC180-51-067

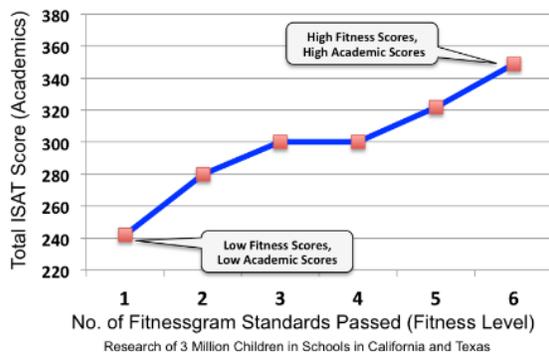
(5) Two **health and fitness** credits (.5 credit health; 1.5 credits fitness). Students may be excused from the fitness requirement under RCW [28A.230.050](#). Such excused students shall be required to demonstrate proficiency/competency in the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement, in accordance with written district policy.

### Physical Education Enhances Academics —The Evidence

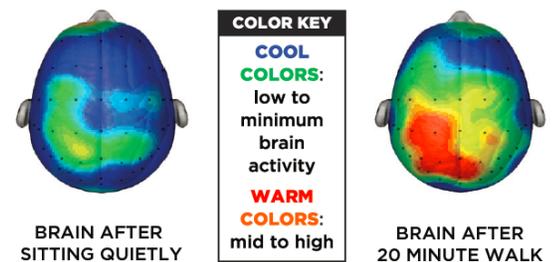
**Exercise improves cognitive function.** The research is unequivocal on this issue and has been reviewed in a number of recent best selling books such as *Spark*<sup>1</sup> and *Brain Rules*<sup>2</sup>. Exercise improves cognition **in two ways**:

- Exercise increases oxygen flow into the brain, which reduces brain-bound free radicals. One of the most interesting findings of the past few decades is that an increase in oxygen is always accompanied by an uptick in mental sharpness.
- Exercise acts directly on the molecular machinery of the brain itself. It increases neurons’ creation, survival, and resistance to damage and stress.

**Strong Correlation Between Higher Fitness Scores and Higher Academic Scores**



Average Composite of 20 Student Brains Taking the Same Test



Hillman, C.H. The Effect of Acute Treadmill Walking on Cognitive Control & Academic Achievement in Preadolescent Children. 2009.

#### Benefits of Quality Health & Physical Education:

- Increases academic achievement
- Increases student attention, concentration, and on task behavior
- Reduces in discipline referrals
- Reduces participation in high-risk behaviors

<sup>1</sup>Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain (2008).

<sup>2</sup>Brain Rules: 12 principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School (2008).

## Comprehensive Physical Education—What Does it Include?

A quality comprehensive physical education program provides learning opportunities, developmentally appropriate instruction, meaningful and challenging content for all children, and should include:

### Fitness Development

Having adequate levels of physical fitness is one of the keys to a healthy life. Physical education provides a structured setting where children's fitness is assessed in order to help children improve and maintain their level of fitness.



### Skill Development

Physical education is where children learn the basic movement patterns that are the core to all sports and physical activities. Studies have shown that adults who have a wide range of physical skills will be more fit and active. A comprehensive physical education program includes instruction in a wide range of lifetime activities.



### Fitness & Health Education

A comprehensive physical education program will also ensure that students have the knowledge needed to stay fit for a lifetime. Exercise anatomy, heart rate response to exercise, components of health-related fitness and nutrition are just a few topics that are taught and assessed in physical education.

### Social Skill Development

Cooperation, teamwork and sportsmanship are a part of all sports and games and they are taught and positively reinforce daily in a quality Physical education program.



## Physical Education or Physical Activity?

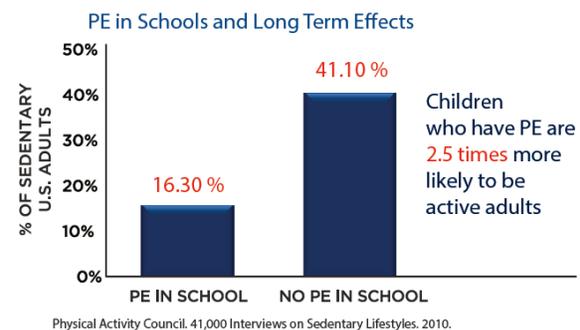
**Physical activity is an outgrowth of a good comprehensive physical education program.**

**Physical activity cannot replace comprehensive physical education. It is just one component of a good physical education program.**

- Physical education offers the best opportunity to provide physical activity to all children while teaching them the skills and knowledge needed to establish and sustain an active lifestyle.
- Physical education teachers assess student knowledge, motor and social skills, and provide instruction in a safe, supportive environment.
- Based on the instructional components and sequence of learning, physical education cannot be compared to or confused with other physical activity experiences such as recess, intramurals, or recreational endeavors.

## Benefits of Quality of Physical Education:

- The opportunity for fitness assessment, goal setting and programs of instruction to realize those goals.
- The opportunity to develop cognitive concepts about fitness and motor skill.
- The opportunity to improve social skills, cooperative skills and respect for others through structured physical activity.
- The potential for students to be encouraged on living an active and a healthy lifestyle.



To learn more about the role of physical education in preparing our youth for the future contact  
SHAPE Washington at [www.shapewa.org](http://www.shapewa.org)