

10.1 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PUNISHMENT

ADMINISTRATOR



Creating Healthy Schools

Implementation for success

To support the policy of not using or withholding physical activity as a punishment, the district/schools will:

- Provide information on the impact of using or withholding physical activity as a punishment;
- Provide training opportunities for staff on alternative punishment behaviors, classroom management techniques and/or student motivation;
- Provide staff with acceptable alternative punishment behaviors; and
- Provide staff with model guidelines for acceptable classroom behavior.

Staff can implement this policy in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- Be consistent in enforcing appropriate behaviors in the school;
- Offer positive feedback to students when they have done something well;
- Give clear, simple direction and set classroom rules;
- Refrain from using sarcasm, arguing with students, and using negative language;
- Start fresh each day with each student;
- Make sure fair punishment is being used across the board;
- Temporarily remove a student from a situation, if needed;
- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in exercise throughout the day in a fun way;
- Talk positively about exercise and physical activity;
- Include students in meaningful discussions about goals and how to reach them;
- Don't reinforce negative behaviors by drawing attention to it;
- Hold students accountable for misbehavior; and
- Wait for students to be attentive before providing directions.

Model Policy:

Our school district cares about the health and well-being of students and understands the influence that physical activity has on academic success and overall student health. Given the significant impact on the development of students' health behaviors, all staff will promote a school environment supportive of physical activity.

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment. Other disciplinary and classroom management alternatives will be used instead.

Evaluation:

In order to meet the requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, the district wellness council and school administrators will be jointly accountable for implementing, enforcing, and evaluating this policy. Evaluation will include reviewing punishment policies and documentation of punishments used. Each school will report annually to the district wellness council on the progress of policy implementation and will include recommendations where further district support may be beneficial. The district wellness council may also request select schools conduct student, family, and/or staff surveys as part of their evaluation process. At the end of each school year, the district wellness council leader will submit an annual report to the superintendent/board of education on the implementation and evaluation of this policy. This report shall be posted on the Internet for easy public access.

Positive physical activity experiences will help students to establish lifelong healthful behaviors.

Rationale:

Withholding or using physical activity as punishment is inappropriate and is an unsound educational practice. Using physical activity as punishment is considered a form of corporal punishment, which is illegal in 29 states but still allowed in Missouri and Kansas. Time spent using physical activity as punishment is time that could be spent in a more constructive manner by instructing students, developing fitness levels or providing positive learning experiences.

The current guidelines for physical activity state that children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Including physical activity during the school day can help children meet this recommendation. Taking away physical activity as a form of punishment is counterproductive to promoting student academic success, health and well-being. Research shows students who have adequate physical activity improve academic achievement and classroom behavior, as well as memory and concentration. In addition, physical activity helps build strong muscle and bones and helps decrease risk of chronic diseases.

When physical activity is used or withheld as punishment, it can be viewed as not enjoyable and a negative consequence. Positive physical activity experiences will help students to establish lifelong healthful behaviors. Educators should use effective, appropriate disciplinary strategies that do not include forcing or withholding physical activity. If physical activity is being used as punishment, administrators should provide teachers and staff with more appropriate disciplinary measures.

Two other versions of this policy item are available for both staff and family to assist with implementation and communication.

Resources:

- National Association for Sport and Physical Education position paper on Physical Activity Used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management can be accessed: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/section6/documents/Physical-Activity-as-Punishment-to-Board-12-10.pdf>
- Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Connecticut State Department of Education, 2009, pg 51: http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SWP/Action_Guide.pdf
- National Association of State Boards of Education: Chapter E: Policies to Promote Healthy Eating, 2nd Ed. 2012: <http://www.nasbe.org/project/center-for-safe-and-healthy-schools/>
- Youth Physical Activity Guidelines Toolkit, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/physicalactivity/guidelines.htm
- 60 Alternatives to Withholding Recess, Peaceful Playground: www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/download/pdf/recess-alt.pdf

¹ CDC Childhood Obesity Facts: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>

² Strong WB, Malina RM, Blimkie CJ, Daniels SR, Dishman RK, Gutin B, et al. Evidence-based physical activity for school-aged youth. *Journal of Pediatrics* 2005; 146(6):732-7