

Adapted Physical Education

Application of Physical Education Performance Standards for Students with Disabilities: The necessity of assuring that physical education services are provided to students with disabilities is in the implementing regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IDEA requires that each child with a disability be afforded the opportunity to participate in the regular physical education program available to nondisabled children with specifically designed instruction (adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of the child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction) to address the unique needs of the child. Removal of children with disabilities from the general physical education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. At this point, special physical education services and programming may be used as an appropriate alternative. Some of the elements supporting the Standards may not be developmentally or functionally appropriate for every child with a disability unless accommodations or modifications are implemented. Physical educators must be committed and prepared to make appropriate adjustments in the curriculum to meet the unique needs of the learner. Making appropriate modifications to the curriculum to meet individual needs allows for meaningful and relevant experiences provided in a safe and secure environment.

What is Adapted Physical Education?

The National Consortium for Physical Education and Recreation for Individuals with Disabilities (NCPERID) defines adapted physical education as the following:

Adapted physical education (APE) is physical education which may be adapted or modified to address the individualized needs of children and youth who have gross motor developmental delays. This service should include the following:

- **Assessment and instruction** by qualified personnel means that professionals are prepared to gather assessment data and provide physical education instruction for children and youth with disabilities and developmental delays.
- **Accurate assessment data**, including diagnostic and curriculum-based data collected by qualified personnel.
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives / Benchmarks** are measurable and objective statements written by the physical education instructor. The goals and objectives are reflective of the physical education instructional content and monitored/evaluated according to district policy, to ensure that goals and objectives are being met in a timely manner.
- **Instruction in a Least Restricted Environment (LRE)** refers to adapting or modifying the physical education curriculum and/or instruction to address the individualized abilities of each child. Adaptations are made to ensure that each student will experience success in a safe environment. Placement is outlined in the IEP and may include one or more of the following options:

The general physical education setting

The general physical education setting with a teaching assistant or peers

A separate class setting with peers

A separate class setting with assistants

A one-to-one setting between students and the instructor

For all practical purposes, Adapted Physical Education **IS** developmentally appropriate physical education at its finest. It is adapting, modifying, and/or changing a physical activity so it is as appropriate for the person with a disability as it is for a person without a disability.

The APE teacher is a direct service provider, not a related service provider, because special physical education is a federally mandated component of special education services [U.S.C.A. 1402 (25)]. This means that physical education needs to be provided to the student with a disability as part of the child's special education. This is contrasted with physical therapy and occupational therapy, which are related services. These therapies are provided to the child with disabilities only if he/she needs them to benefit from instruction.

Change the word "adapted" to "modified" and you have the idea of Adapted Physical Education. It is **GOOD** teaching which adapts (modifies) the curriculum, task, equipment, and/or environment so that **ALL** students can fully participate in physical education