



Adapted Physical Education Guidelines in California Schools

Fact Sheet for APE Specialists

Physical Education is defined as The development of (A) Physical and motor fitness, (B) Fundamental motor skills and patterns, and (C) Skills in aquatics, dance, and individual and group games and sports (including intramural and lifetime sports) and (ii) includes special PE, APE, movement education, and motor development. Code of Federal Regulations 300.17:

Adapted Physical Education is defined as a program to meet the unique needs of an individual with a disability who is unable to fully participate in the general PE program. A credentialed APE specialist who may work collaboratively with other school personnel including general physical education teachers, special day class teachers, and instructional assistants teaches the program. Consultative services may also be provided to school personnel and others, including parents, medical personnel, and social agencies for the purpose of identifying supplemental aids, services, or modifications necessary for successful participation in the general physical education program or specially designed PE program. Frequency and duration of services, and goals and objectives/benchmarks, which are monitored by the APE Specialist, are identified on the IEP. Students receiving APE are counted on the APE specialist's caseload.

Standard 3.3: Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications within the existing general physical education program shall be documented before a child is referred to adapted physical education. When movement skill ability is suspected as contributing to or resulting from a disability, adaptations, accommodation, and modifications, contributing to or resulting intervention or their outcomes be documented for a reasonable period of time should be tried within the general or specially designed physical education program for a child before a referral to APE is made. Appropriate and meaningful intervention strategies should be based upon the child's needs and age and upon the physical education curriculum. It is recommended that interventions and their outcomes be documented for a reasonable period of time.

In some instances, the disability of the child is so apparent that is referral to APE is appropriate without implementations or adaptations, accommodations, and modifications. However, on the IEP, there should be documentation that adaptations, accommodations, and/or modification have been considered. This will meet the letter of the law and will assist in communicating with future examiners and service providers. (Sec 56344.)

Some general physical educators are unclear as to how they can modify instruction, equipment and participation for their students who have mild disabilities. In these instances, the APE specialist may provide consultation to these teachers for the purpose of helping them identify different instructional strategies, modification, and adaptations. Often, students with mild disabilities can participate successfully in general physical education if rules are modified, equipment is changed, the student is permitted to play a specific position on a team, or provided with a peer tutor or "buddy."

Standard 3.7 The Child shall be assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability. The documented reasons for referral, leads to the development of the assessment plan which identifies the areas to be assessed. An APE specialist is part of the multidisciplinary team and may be involved in the assessment if the suspected disability involves physical and movement abilities.

Legal Reference: The pupil is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability including, where appropriate, health and development, vision, including low vision, hearing, motor abilities. Language function, general ability, academic performance, self-help, orientation and; mobility skills, career and vocational abilities and interests, and social and emotional status. (Sec. 56320(f).)

Eligibility: Standard 3.10 A student may be considered for APE services when the IEP team determines that the child is eligible for special education.

Legal Reference: Once the child is identified as having a disability, is determined by the IEP team to be eligible for special education, and the results of assessment indicate that performance in physical education is adversely affected, then specific physical education services must be address as stated in 34 CFR sec. 300, 307. The individual child may be considered for APE

Legal references, standards and material used for this Fact Sheet are taken from the Adapted Physical Education Guidelines for California Schools, April 2003.

services if the IEP team determines that the child is eligible to receive special education and/or related services.

In rare cases, a student may attend an APE class or receive services from an APE specialist as determined through the general education processes of Student Study Team (SST) and/or Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973). When this occurs, special education funding does **not** apply. Therefore, administrators must carefully analyze the effect of such a placement on caseload, consultation time, class size, and general education funds.

When developing an IEP, the APE specialist should make sure the child is identified as having one of the disabilities listed in 20 U.S.C. sec. 1414(b)(4) and (5) Before identifying APE service for that child, the APE specialist must also ensure that the assessment results indicate that performance in physical education has been adversely affected and that the child needs the special education service of APE

Standard 3.13: Once a child is identified as having a disability and is determined to be eligible for special education by the IEP team; specific physical education services must be identified after considering a full continuum of program options. APE is one program option, which is listed as a designated instruction and service in the California code of Regulations (5CCR3051) and is therefore subject to the following requirements:

(a) General Provisions.

(1) Designated instruction and services may be provided to individuals or to small groups in a specialized area of educational need, and throughout the full continuum of educational settings.

(2) Designated instruction and service, when needed as determined by the individualized education program, shall include the frequency and duration of service.

(3) All entities and individuals providing designated instruction and services shall be qualified. (Refer to 5 CCR sec. 3051.5 for statute regarding credential requirement)

One of the conditions states must meet, in order to receive federal funding for special education, is to provide for education in the least restrictive environment. This is defined, in general, as:

To maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and service cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (20 U.S.C. sec.1412(a)(5).)

Standard 4.10: A triennial assessment is conducted at least once every three years but may not require additional testing. One of the most significant changes in IDEA relates to how the evaluation process should be viewed. For example, over the years, the required 3-year re-evaluation has become a paperwork-intensive process, driven as much by concern for compliance with the letter of the law, as by the need for additional evaluation information about a child. If there is not need to collect additional evaluation information about a child's continuing eligibility for special education, and necessary evaluation activities should focus on collecting eligibility for special education, any necessary evaluation activities should focus on collecting information about how to teach and assist the child in the way he or she is most capable of learning, (Sec. 56381(a).)

Thus, the statute requires that existing evaluation data on a child be reviewed to determine if any other data are needed to make decisions about a child's eligibility and services. If it is determined by the IEP team and other qualified professionals that additional data are not needed, the parents must be notified of the determination that no additional tests, assessments or data is needed, the reasons for it, and of the parent's right to still request an evaluation. No further evaluations will be required at the time unless requested by the parents. (Sec. 56381(a).)

At times, the nature of the disability is such that within the past three years there have been no changes. When this occurs, the nature of the assessment needs to focus on the student's present levels of performance and not on re-establishing the existence of the disability for the purpose of eligibility. Parents must give permission to waive the three-year evaluation (Sec. 56381 (d).)

Reporting Progress

Standard 4.7: Progress toward IEP APE goals and benchmarks will be reported to parents during required school reporting periods. Children with disabilities must receive written progress reports, which indicate the progress they are making toward the attainment of goals and supporting benchmarks and short-term objectives at least as often as their non-disabled peers receive report cards. (Sec. 56345(a) (9)(10).) General education teachers send progress reports as well as report cards home to parents. Each LEA (Local Educational Agency) has an established schedule and the APE specialist is advised to adhere to it as should the other special educators.

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