

# California After School Physical Activity Guidelines



# **California After School Physical Activity Guidelines**



## Publishing Information

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*California After School Physical Activity Guidelines* was developed by the After School Programs Office of the California Department of Education (CDE), under the leadership of Nancy Gelbard, Education Programs Consultant, in partnership with the California After School Resource Center (CASRC). The publication was edited by John McLean, working in cooperation with Joshua Brady, Education Programs Consultant in the After School Programs Office, Learning Support and Partnerships Division. It was prepared for printing by the staff of CDE Press: Cheryl McDonald created and prepared the cover and interior design; Jeannette Reyes typeset the document. It was published by the Department of Education, 1430 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-5901. It was distributed under the provisions of the Library Distribution Act and *Government Code* Section 11096.

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# A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

I am proud to present the California After School Physical Activity (CASPA) Guidelines. These guidelines will make available to after school providers a resource for implementing physical activity in their after school programs.

Our health is intimately linked to the foods we eat and to our physical activity. Regular participation in physical activity contributes to the social and mental well-being of children and to their academic success. In today's society, where obesity in children is on the rise, physical activity is an essential component of children's lives.

After school staff have the power to make daily physical activity accessible and engaging, and to help all youths in after school programs discover the many joys and benefits of physical activity. The CASPA Guidelines can help staff achieve these goals. I hope that everyone involved in California's after school programs—staff and children alike—will benefit from the application of these guidelines.



**JACK O'CONNELL**  
*State Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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# Introduction

**A**fter school staff have the power to make daily physical activity accessible and engaging for every student and to help all youths in after school programs discover the many benefits and joys of physical activity. The intent of the California After School Physical Activity (CASPA) Guidelines is to create high-quality physical activity programs that expand learning opportunities of the regular school day. The CASPA Guidelines can help achieve these goals.

Regular physical activity has a positive impact on both academic success and health—and when combined with good nutrition, it can play an important role in reducing the obesity epidemic. Thirty-three percent of California’s youths are overweight or obese. Overweight children are at greater risk of developing chronic health problems—including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, and heart disease—and they face serious health consequences as they grow into adulthood. Physical activity helps counteract overweight and obesity.

The CASPA Guidelines were developed as a result of *Education Code* Section 8484.8, which required the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop voluntary after school physical activity guidelines for CDE-funded after school programs. CDE-funded programs include the state-funded After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program, and the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs) and 21st Century High School After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs) programs.





The CASPA Guidelines were developed under the leadership of the CDE After School Programs Office in partnership with the California After School Resource Center (CASRC). The CDE and CASRC appointed and convened the After School Physical Activity Expert Panel (Expert Panel) to develop the CASPA Guidelines. The Expert Panel, which was composed of highly respected state and national researchers and authorities, based its recommendations on current data and research.

## **Effects of Physical Activity on Academic Achievement and Behavior Management**

Research shows that physical activity improves academic performance and decreases behavior problems. Schools that offer physical activity have higher reading, writing, and mathematics test scores—even when physical activity leaves less time for academic instruction. From 1999 to 2001, schools with the greatest percentages of students who engaged in physical activity had the highest Academic Performance Index (API) scores. Physical activity also reduces disruptive behavior and improves students' ability to focus and concentrate, which can help after school staff with behavior management. Studies show that students who participate in daily physical activity are better prepared to focus on tasks and to learn.

## **Physical Activity and Health**

Physical activity positively impacts physical, social, and emotional health and can reverse harmful trends in the health status of children and adolescents. Youths growing up in the United States today are part of the first generation expected to have shorter life spans than their parents. This is largely due to dramatic increases in childhood overweight and chronic health conditions, including type 2 diabetes. Nearly one-half of children and adolescents in the United States are overweight or obese ( $\geq 85^{\text{th}}$  percentile Body Mass Index [BMI] for age). Almost two-thirds of African American and Hispanic American youths are overweight or obese. Type 2 diabetes used to be called “adult-onset diabetes,” but it is no longer solely an adult disease. Childhood cases of type 2 diabetes rose 33 percent from 1992 to 2002. As is the case with overweight, certain ethnic groups have higher rates of type 2 diabetes. In some states, African American youths account for 70 to 75 percent of new childhood type 2 diabetes cases and Hispanic American youths account for 31 percent of new cases.

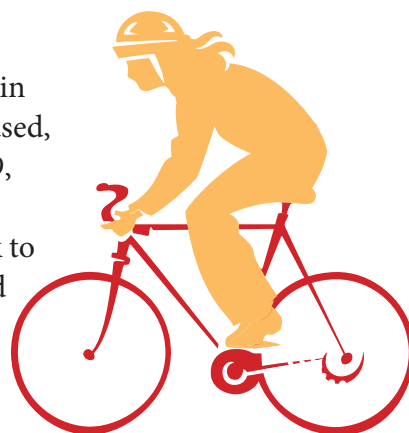
Physical activity reduces the risk of overweight and chronic health conditions and can reverse these trends. Studies show that adding physical activity during the school day and after school can significantly decrease overweight and the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In addition, individuals who are physically active as youths tend to be physically active adults, meaning that health benefits from physical activity can continue throughout a person's life.

Physical activity also positively affects students' mental health and emotional well-being. Research shows that participating in physical activity increases adolescent girls' self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. Research also shows that when adolescent boys and girls increase their physical activity, they feel more confident in their academic, athletic, and social abilities. The reverse is true as well: when adolescents decrease the amount of physical activity in which they participate, they feel less confident in their academic, athletic, and social abilities.

### **Current State of Physical Activity for Youths**

Not surprisingly, the amount of physical activity in which youths participate has dramatically decreased, and childhood overweight has increased. In 1979, 42 percent of youths biked or walked to school. Currently, only 16 percent of youths bike or walk to school. Less than one-half of adolescent boys and less than one-third of adolescent girls currently meet the 60 minutes of daily physical activity recommended by the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC). Very few schools in the United States offer daily physical education: 3.8 percent of elementary schools, 7.9 percent of middle schools, and 2.1 percent of high schools. After school programs could provide youths with daily access to physical activity.



### **Recommended Amounts of Physical Activity: How Much Is Enough?**

The CDC recommends that all youths participate in at least 60 minutes of developmentally appropriate moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) each day. Ideally, youths would have opportunities to be physically active in multiple areas of their lives—at home, at school, and in their communities. However, since this is often not the case, after school programs should offer 30 to 60 minutes of daily physical activity. For more information about the recommended amounts of after school physical activity, please refer to Guideline 7.

## Benefits of Physical Activity

Physical activity positively impacts multiple areas of development. The benefits of physical activity include:

- improved academic performance;
- improved brain function, including the ability to concentrate and focus;
- healthy growth and development;
- lower risk of becoming overweight;
- lower risk of developing chronic health conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure;
- reduced stress and symptoms of depression and anxiety;
- increased feelings of self-worth and self-esteem.

## Importance of Collaboration: Getting Everyone Involved

Providing high-quality after school programs is a collaborative process. This is especially true of after school physical activity programs because schools and other community partners can help secure funding, facilities, equipment, physical activity specialists, and other resources that contribute to the quality of a physical activity program. There are many potential partners who can help after school programs implement the CASPA Guidelines and make daily physical activity a reality for California's youths. The state's publicly funded after school programs are encouraged to collaborate with regular-school-day staff, parents and students, government agencies, and community and private-sector organizations. These partners can help implement and evaluate physical activity programs and policies that meet the CASPA Guidelines.

The guidelines contain recommendations about finding resources and working with many different types of partners. Forming after school collaboratives to implement and evaluate these guidelines will elicit support for physical activity programs and will also help secure resources, implement high-quality methods, and provide a variety of physical activity opportunities. For more information about forming collaboratives and partnerships, please refer to Guideline 10.

## Summary of the Guidelines

The following is a summary of the ten CASPA Guidelines that after school programs can follow to implement high-quality physical activity.

**1**

### Create an after school physical activity culture that fosters youth development.

- 1.1 Integrate the eight keys to quality youth development into after school physical activity (Almquist et al. 2005).

**2**

### Develop and implement after school physical activity policies.

- 2.1 Develop clear physical activity policies to implement the CASPA Guidelines in after school programs.
- 2.2 Participate in the development and implementation of local school wellness policies required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- 2.3 Provide one trained staff member for every 20 students participating in physical activity during after school programming.
- 2.4 Address concerns about liability by offering some protection to organizations or individuals who provide programs, time, or space for physical activity.

**3**

### Plan and evaluate after school physical activity.

- 3.1 Review California Physical Fitness Test results, physical education standards, and program evaluation results to help plan after school physical activity.
- 3.2 Track and monitor the number of physical activity program minutes that are planned and completed in after school programs.
- 3.3 Track staff participation in physical activity training programs and continuing education.

**4**

### Build and maintain a strong infrastructure for after school physical activity.

#### Facilities

- 4.1 Have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities.
- 4.2 Create policies that assist in the implementation of joint-use agreements, allowing after school programs to have access to both school district and community facilities.

- 4.3 Maintain safe after school sites that are easily accessible by walking, biking, or taking public transportation and that are located near or connected to other community destinations.

#### Equipment

- 4.4 Acquire, maintain, and store equipment that can be used to support a variety of age-appropriate physical activities, and replace equipment when needed.

#### Safety

- 4.5 Perform a daily facility inspection and provide ongoing supervision before, during, and after physical activity.
- 4.6 Perform regular inspections of physical activity equipment and maintain proper storage of such equipment.

#### Sustainability

- 4.7 Develop a community collaborative to implement physical activity programs.
- 4.8 Obtain funding for physical activity programs by using strategies that include community collaboration and resources.
- 4.9 Develop proven methods for researching and writing grant proposals that can secure funding for physical activity programs.
- 4.10 Promote after school programs and help build community awareness of them through a variety of means.

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## 5

### **Ensure that all directors and staff members support and promote after school physical activity programs.**

- 5.1 Provide administrative leadership for physical activity in after school programs.
- 5.2 Provide all after school program staff with training in the implementation of physical activity.
- 5.3 Provide staff with opportunities for continuing or advanced education in physical activity.
- 5.4 Serve as physically active role models for students.

**6****Develop and maintain high-quality after school physical activity.**

- 6.1 Incorporate a wide variety of physical activities to achieve all-around fitness and to build multiple movement skills.
- 6.2 Include structured physical activity that accommodates the needs and interests of all participants.
- 6.3 Ensure that all physical activity is developmentally appropriate and that it meets the needs of all participants.
- 6.4 Include youths in the design and selection of physical activity content.
- 6.5 Encourage after school programs to use physical activity resources, curricula, and programs that are research-based or aligned with credible professional groups.
- 6.6 Ensure that all physical activity choices are safe for every participant in the after school program.

**7****Ensure that all students achieve the appropriate amounts of physical activity after school.**

- 7.1 Provide a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes of MVPA during the after school program.
- 7.2 For students not engaging in physical activity elsewhere, aim to provide the full 60 minutes of recommended MVPA during the after school program.
- 7.3 Arrange the after school schedule to ensure that students do not sit for more than 60 minutes at a time.
- 7.4 Limit recreational “screen time” to 30 minutes and total “screen time” to 60 minutes per after school session.
- 7.5 Offer physical activity at or near the beginning of the after school session.
- 7.6 Whenever possible, use physical activity to reinforce and extend other after school goals and activities.

**8****Ensure that all students are included in after school physical activity.**

- 8.1 Ensure that physical activity is appropriate for youths of different ages, gender, abilities, and cultures by including youths in the development of physical activity content.
- 8.2 Select, adapt, and modify physical activity to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs.
- 8.3 Select and develop physical activity that is accessible and interesting to students of various cultures.

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**9****Connect after school physical activity with the regular school day.**

- 9.1 Develop after school physical activity that supports and reinforces physical education content of the regular school day.
- 9.2 Consult with credentialed physical education teachers to create high-quality physical activity programs.
- 9.3 Collaborate with staff, students, and parents who are involved in the regular school day to create physical activity content and goals that link with the regular school day.

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**10****Build partnerships with the community to support after school physical activity.**

- 10.1 Collaborate with community partners that deliver high-quality physical activity in after school programs.
- 10.2 Work with community-based agencies to provide training and staff development.
- 10.3 Adopt and implement joint-use agreements so that after school programs have adequate space and resources for youths to engage in physical activity.
- 10.4 Explore transportation resources and “active transport” options to ensure that youths have safe, affordable access to after school programs.

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# Detailed Guidelines

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# Detailed Guidelines



## Create an after school physical activity culture that fosters youth development.

### 1.1 Integrate the eight keys to quality youth development into after school physical activity (Almquist et al. 2005).

**Description:** Make youth development an integral part of after school physical activity. Youth development is the natural process through which youths seek ways to meet their basic physical, social, emotional, and educational needs and to build the knowledge, skills, and resiliency necessary to succeed as they grow and develop. Almquist et al. (2005) identified eight keys to help youth organizations foster quality youth development. Effective after school programs are designed so that:

1. youth feel physically and emotionally safe;
2. youth experience belonging and ownership;
3. youth develop self-worth;
4. youth discover self;
5. youth develop quality relationships with peers and adults;
6. youth discuss conflicting values and form their own;
7. youth feel the pride and accountability that comes with mastery;
8. youth expand their capacity to enjoy life and know that success is possible.

**Rationale:** After school staff can play a significant role in helping youths become strong, healthy, happy individuals who can impact their communities. The eight keys to quality youth development can guide after school staff in creating a culture that fosters youth development. Physical activity can support all of these eight keys; for example, team-based physical activity can help youths form quality relationships with peers and adults.

## 2

## Develop and implement after school physical activity policies.

### 2.1 Develop clear physical activity policies to implement the CASPA Guidelines in after school programs.

**Description:** Developing clear physical activity policies will help after school staff implement the CASPA Guidelines. When developing these policies, staff should form partnerships with individuals involved in the regular school day, government agencies, and community organizations to gain support, resources, and valuable input. Policies should be put in writing, and staff members should have training opportunities and continuing support to help them implement the guidelines. Staff should develop policies for all subjects covered in the guidelines—including screen-time limits, required amounts of daily physical activity, emotional and physical safety, program evaluation, staff development and training, physical activity content, inclusion of students with special needs, and joint use of district facilities.

**Rationale:** Clear after school physical activity policies can have a significant, positive impact on the physical, motor, cognitive, social, emotional, and educational development of students. Local after school policies can achieve great success, especially when they are developed and implemented through a collaborative process. A collaborative process provides support during the implementation phase and ensures that all those involved—such as students, parents, after school staff, and community partners—can contribute to the development of policies. Local policies throughout the nation have helped gain the use of school district facilities for after school programs; create safe walking routes to schools; increase physical activity opportunities for youths; and improve the safety of facilities used in after school programs. In addition, policies lay out clear expectations for after school staff, making it easier to implement physical activity programs and defining each staff member’s specific responsibilities.



**2.2 Participate in the development and implementation of local school wellness policies required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).**

**Description:** As required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, all local educational agencies that participate in programs authorized by the National School Lunch Act of 1946 or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 must establish local school wellness policies. Those policies must include goals for nutrition and physical activity. The USDA recommends that students should have a variety of opportunities to be physically active before and after school. Therefore, after school staff participation in the development and implementation of such policies is an important part of creating environments in which youths can be physically active.

**Rationale:** After school staff participation in developing and implementing local school wellness policies can help secure facilities, equipment, support, and funding for after school physical activity. Additionally, after school staff involvement in the development of these policies can help build awareness of local after school programs and can help build partnerships with individuals involved in the regular school day, government agencies, and community-based organizations.

**2.3 Provide one trained staff member for every 20 students participating in physical activity during after school programming.**

**Description:** Students benefit from the structure that after school programs provide. All after school programs funded by the CDE must maintain a student-to-staff ratio of no more than 20 to 1 for the entire program. The same ratio should be used for the physical activity component of each after school program. Adult supervision of physical activity ensures that all activities are safe, age-appropriate, and engaging for all students.

Having more than one adult for every 20 students can further enhance physical activity programming, because structure, positive feedback, and attention from adults can help students feel more comfortable and confident about being physically active. Community partnerships can help identify additional staff members and volunteers for after school programs. For more information about partnerships and collaborations, please refer to Guideline 10.

**Rationale:** Class size is an important determinant of the quality of physical education in school. A recent community-level intervention study found that students who participate in physical activity in classes with fewer than 20 students were more physically active than those in larger classes. As class size increases—and therefore the student-to-staff ratio increases—a staff member is less able to maintain the order and structure necessary for providing high-quality physical activity instruction. By ensuring that no more than 20 students are present for each after school program staff member, students may receive the supervision and guidance necessary for high-quality physical activity programming. Appropriate student-to-staff ratios will support and enhance both structured and unstructured physical activity and should increase the likelihood that students will achieve recommended amounts of MVPA.

#### **2.4 Address concerns about liability by offering some protection to organizations or individuals who provide programs, time, or space for physical activity.**

**Description:** Concerns about legal responsibility for property damage or personal injuries can discourage schools, workplaces, community-based agencies, and youth programs from offering physical activity. However, there are several ways to ensure that concerns about liability are not a barrier to offering physical activity programming. Liability protection specifies the amount of financial and/or legal responsibility that schools, community organizations, and other agencies would bear in cases of injury or damage. Partial liability protection also limits an organization's responsibility—but unlike full protection, it does not cover negligence or intentional wrongdoing by the organization. It is essential to make sure that organizations and individuals who provide programs, time, or space for physical activity are protected from some potential legal issues.

**Rationale:** Liability concerns are commonly cited barriers to promoting physical activity in extracurricular programs and work sites. However, joint-use agreements between schools and local parks-and-recreation departments have successfully addressed and overcome these barriers. Liability considerations and insurance coverage are well integrated into the culture and practice of schools and municipal agencies. Partial liability protection can also have value for schools and other public entities that do not offer after school physical activity opportunities because of legal concerns or inability to afford liability-insurance premiums.

**3****Plan and evaluate after school physical activity.****3.1 Review California Physical Fitness Test results, physical education standards, and program evaluation results to help plan after school physical activity.**

**Description:** All California students in grades five, seven, and nine take the California Physical Fitness Test. Results from this test are easily accessible through the CDE Web site (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/pf/>). These results can be used as a benchmark for the fitness levels of students participating in after school programs and can track improvements in fitness levels annually. By reviewing these data annually, programs can assess fitness areas in which improvement is needed and can plan programs accordingly.

Physical education standards are another key resource for guiding physical activity programs. Just as learning lifelong mathematics skills is important, so is learning lifelong physical activity skills. The California Physical Education Model Content Standards outline the skills and knowledge that youths need to stay active throughout their lives. These standards can be used to incorporate essential skills into after school physical activity. The standards can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fd/documents/pestandards.pdf>.

After school programs may also perform their own evaluations of their physical activity programs. Eliciting support from and collaboration with the community can help with this process. Results from evaluations of after school physical activity can also assist staff in planning or adjusting programs. For example, if evaluation results show that there is not adequate space for physical activity, an after school program could contact a community-based organization such as a YMCA or recreation center to inquire about using the organization's facilities.

**Rationale:** The California Physical Fitness Test is administered to all students in grades five, seven, and nine. Test results for schools, school districts, counties, and the state are available on the CDE Web site. Results can also be broken down by gender and ethnicity. Although some students who are enrolled in after school programs are not tested, results for those who are enrolled may show fitness skills that students struggle with—and after school programs can use test data to incorporate physical activities that develop those skills.

As stated previously, other sources can be used to guide physical activity program planning. Physical education standards can be used to plan physical activity content that aligns with the standards. Program evaluation results can be used to identify areas of success and areas that need improvement, and they can help after school programs create and revise physical activity goals.

### **3.2 Track and monitor the number of physical activity program minutes that are planned and completed in after school programs.**

**Description:** After school programs should develop a process for tracking the number of minutes (planned as well as completed) that students spend being physically active in the after school program. Staff should keep track of how much physical activity was planned during the after school program and how much physical activity was actually completed on a daily and weekly basis. Keeping track of planned minutes versus completed minutes is important for creating and maintaining a high-quality physical activity program. Individual student minutes do not need to be tracked, although keeping personal logs for students can serve as an incentive and as motivation for them (see Guideline 8).

Biannual reviews of these records can help staff assess areas in which students need improvement. Staff members should take notes about challenges and successes in completing the planned minutes and should evaluate these notes during the biannual reviews. Additionally, staff should think of ways to overcome challenges and build on successes. For example, if behavior-management issues led to the completion of only half the amount of planned physical activity, a staff development session about managing groups during physical activity might improve the program.

**Rationale:** After school programs can be a significant source of physical activity in the daily lives of participating students. After school programs can provide MVPA that may be lacking in schools' physical education classes. It is important to track both the planned time and the actual time spent on physical activity in after school programs. It is also important to think about why the actual time spent on physical activity might be less than the planned time. Future policy and program decisions may be influenced by the data that are gathered and by staff input on this subject.

**3.3 Track staff participation in physical activity training programs and continuing education.**

**Description:** All after school programs funded by the CDE should provide staff training and development. Currently, after school program directors track all training and continuing education programs attended by their staff members to demonstrate that this requirement is being met. Staff personnel files could contain a folder or sheet clearly documenting all training received by each staff member. Certificates received through training programs could also be kept in personnel files. Program directors should review those files annually to ensure staff members are receiving adequate training. Staff should attend at least one physical activity training session or staff development program per year. Additionally, program directors should encourage staff members who attend training programs to share newly obtained knowledge with other staff.

**Rationale:** Currently, program staff members are required to receive training—which may include physical activity training. After school programs should be able to demonstrate that their staff members are trained to guide students in safe, age-appropriate, and engaging physical activity. Higher levels of physical activity are associated with better academic performance and healthy development. Well-trained after school staff are a critical part of increasing physical activity levels and academic achievement.

**4**

**Build and maintain a strong infrastructure for after school physical activity.**

**Facilities**

**4.1 Have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities.**

**Description:** After school programs should provide access to different types of indoor and outdoor facilities that support multiple types of physical activity. These facilities include school classrooms and multipurpose rooms; soccer, baseball, and other playfields; parks; and other community facilities. Such facilities need to provide equal access for all people. Additionally, each facility should have a designated area where staff can implement the daily



schedule of events; a location where students can check in, check out, and get information; access to restrooms and drinking fountains; storage space for bicycles and skates and program equipment and supplies; areas that help with the distribution of healthy snacks; and other elements that make the facility conducive to physical activity.

**Rationale:** In 2006, less than half of California’s public schools offered intramural activities or physical activity clubs, and 35 percent of those activities and clubs required a fee for participation. After school programs that receive state and federal funds are required by law to operate on every regular school day—even when there is inclement weather or unhealthy air. Therefore, after school programs need appropriate facilities to make physical activity available to all youths, regardless of environmental conditions or the students’ ability to pay for services. Facilities used in after school programs also must be accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or other special needs. Most important, staff must ensure that all facilities are safe.

**4.2 Create policies that assist in the implementation of joint-use agreements, allowing after school programs to have access to both school district and community facilities.**

**Description:** Collaboration is essential for the funding and implementation of after school programs. Most communities have a variety of facilities that can accommodate the needs of students participating in physical activity. These facilities may be operated by school districts, government agencies (city, county, state, or federal), or community-based organizations. Joint-use agreements enable these facilities to be used optimally and to meet the needs of students and families.

**Rationale:** Facility use is one of the most effective ways to meet the needs of the students who participate in after school physical activity programs. Securing proper facilities is often a collaborative process that involves joint-use agreements. A joint-use agreement is essentially an agreement between two or more organizations that will share space, resources, and/or facilities. This type of agreement allows all students—including those with socio-economic or other limitations—to have access to facilities that foster healthy, active lifestyles.



**4.3 Maintain safe after school sites that are easily accessible by walking, biking, or taking public transportation and that are located near or connected to other community destinations.**

**Description:** After school programs should use easily accessible facilities to increase and sustain program participation. Facilities should be close to or located in schools, parks, community centers, social-services buildings, and other neighborhood destinations. These facilities need to have safe and adequate streetscape infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, crossing signals, bike paths, public transit stops and shelters, sufficient lighting) to ensure that participants have safe access to after school program activities. Forming community partnerships can help ensure that students have safe and easy access to after school programs. For more information about community partnerships, please refer to Guideline 10. Additionally, establishing walk-to-school programs can help students who attend after school programs. Information about walk-to-school programs is available at <http://www.caphysicalactivity.org>; <http://www.cawalktoschool.com>; and <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk>.

**Rationale:** To increase physical activity among after school program participants, it is important to provide opportunities for active means of transportation such as walking and biking. Offering after school programs in facilities that have safe and adequate surrounding streetscape and community connectivity should make it easier for students, their families, and community partners to participate in physical activity.

### **Equipment**

**4.4 Acquire, maintain, and store equipment that can be used to support a variety of age-appropriate physical activities, and replace equipment when needed.**

**Description:** After school programs should acquire or have access to a variety of equipment that facilitates many types of physical activity in both competitive and noncompetitive environments. This equipment needs to be properly maintained and stored, and it should be replaced when it no longer works properly or safely. Using worn or damaged equipment may result in improper use or injury. Additionally, improperly stored equipment is more likely to be damaged or vandalized. Programs should have dedicated storage space for equipment, and staff should keep equipment clean and neatly stored.

Staff should also ensure that equipment is accessible to students of varying abilities, is age-appropriate, and offers a balance of challenge and success, newness and familiarity. This equipment may support participation in sports, dance and fitness classes, recreational and cultural games, teambuilding exercises, and other activities. Staff members and students should be instructed in the proper use of the equipment in order to avoid damage or injury.

**Rationale:** Proper equipment is necessary to ensure the success of physical activity programs and the safety of all participants. Equipment can help students develop and expand physical activity skills that they can use in after school programs and in their communities. In addition, appropriate equipment can increase students' familiarity with physical activity options from a variety of cultures. Equipment that is not maintained or stored properly—or replaced when necessary—can hinder the implementation of physical activity in after school programs and can also be a safety hazard.

## Safety

### 4.5 Perform a daily facility inspection and provide ongoing supervision before, during, and after physical activity.

**Description:** It is unrealistic to expect that every possible problem or safety issue can be prevented. However, a daily inspection of the facility and proper supervision before, during, and after physical activity can help a program maintain a safe environment. Staff should try to foresee all physical activity that may be offered during the after school hours and should plan the use of the facility accordingly. Staff should also establish buffer space between different activities and should be aware of obstructions such as walls, furniture, equipment, drinking fountains, poles, supports, sprinklers, holes in playfields, glass, and debris. Safety issues can arise when activity areas overlap or when several activities occur simultaneously. Staff should receive thorough training about how to maintain safe facilities. Additionally, unsafe conditions should be reported immediately to appropriate individuals, and any unsafe areas should be avoided until repairs are completed.

**Rationale:** Maintaining safety is an essential element of all after school programs—and it is especially important when implementing physical activity. Preventing injuries must be a high priority. It is important to perform daily inspections of all facilities because facility conditions change over time (e.g., due to weather and frequent use of the facilities). If a facility is unsafe, it should not be used until any necessary repairs or changes have been made.

**4.6 Perform regular inspections of physical activity equipment and maintain proper storage of such equipment.**

**Description:** Program staff should be aware of dangers that can result from lack of maintenance and the improper use and storage of physical activity equipment. Equipment and storage areas should be inspected regularly, particularly prior to use. Do not use worn, torn, broken, or otherwise damaged equipment. Proper storage and maintenance will prolong the life of physical activity equipment and will help ensure its safe use. It should also be noted that handmade or homemade equipment may have inherent safety issues, so these types of equipment should be used only in accordance with school district policies.

**Rationale:** After school staff need to be properly trained in the use and care of physical activity equipment. Lack of training may result in injuries, legal problems, or equipment that is not being used to its potential. Safety is an essential part of implementing physical activity in after school programs.

### **Sustainability**

**4.7 Develop a community collaborative to implement physical activity programs.**

**Description:** A community collaborative involves two or more organizations working toward common goals. Collaboratives are essential to the success and sustainability of after school programs. They can be established by working with health-related organizations; creating joint-use agreements with local government agencies; identifying and using regional or county health and education resources; collaborating with private-sector companies and organizations; and by taking other actions. Additionally, there are many for-profit and nonprofit organizations that can serve as partners in implementing physical activities in after school programs. Examples include local universities and colleges, national health organizations (the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, and others), and health care providers.

**Rationale:** Collaboration improves the quality and variety of programming that can be offered to students. Partnerships also help account for the matching funds required by many grant-funded after school programs. Additionally, all after school programs funded by the CDE are encouraged to collaborate with the schools their students attend, as well as parents, government agencies, community organizations, and private-sector companies and organizations.

**4.8 Obtain funding for physical activity programs by using strategies that include community collaboration and resources.**

**Description:** To maximize resources that are dedicated to physical activity in after school programs, and to help obtain funding, programs should establish community collaboratives and should rely on other resources. Partnerships with community-based, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations can result in greater access to general funds, grants, foundations, scholarships, donations, and endowments.

**Rationale:** All after school programs funded by the CDE are encouraged to collaborate with the schools their students attend, as well as parents, government agencies, community organizations, and private-sector companies and organizations. Collaborating with various organizations to obtain funding can help ensure program sustainability.

**4.9 Develop proven methods for researching and writing grant proposals that can secure funding for physical activity programs.**

**Description:** After school programs should diligently pursue funding available through grants, foundations, scholarships, donations, and endowments. Program directors can learn effective techniques for fund-raising and writing grant proposals. Additionally, community partners and parents may be good resources for identifying funding opportunities and for assisting with grant proposals.

**Rationale:** It is difficult to secure ongoing funding for after school programs. Although some funds are supplied on an ongoing basis, many serve only as “seed money” that helps establish programs without supporting them in the future. Developing and implementing proven fund-raising methods can help after school programs provide high-quality physical activity on an ongoing basis.



**4.10 Promote after school programs and help build community awareness of them through a variety of means.**

**Description:** After school programs should use a variety of means (e.g., newsletters, e-mails, special events, and contacts with the media) to promote the value of and the need for regular physical activity. Program directors should regularly contact school boards, city councils, county and regional officials, local businesses, and other community decision makers to inform them about program growth, content, and successes.

**Rationale:** Program promotion can help provide sustainability and support for physical activity in after school programs. There is considerable power in “positive press.”

**5**

**Ensure that all directors and staff members support and promote after school physical activity programs.**

**5.1 Provide administrative leadership for physical activity in after school programs.**

**Description:** After school program directors, managers, supervisors, and coordinators need to provide support and leadership for their staff members to ensure consistent adherence to physical activity policies. Implementing the CASPA Guidelines will require appropriate facilities, equipment, program materials, and staff training. Directors should ensure that physical activity policies are in place and are clearly communicated. They should also procure resources to adequately support the policies. Staff should be evaluated on physical activity policy implementation. For more information about after school physical activity policies, please refer to Guideline 2.

**Rationale:** Effective leadership is essential in all organizations, and after school program directors can take specific actions to support the implementation of physical activity policies.

**5.2 Provide all after school program staff with training in the implementation of physical activity.**

**Description:** Program directors need to ensure that all after school staff receive basic instruction in how to implement physical activity. Staff development provides the skills needed to deliver safe, purposeful, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate physical activity. For information about training and staff development opportunities in California, please visit the CASRC Web site at <http://www.californiaafterschool.org>.

**Rationale:** Staff development is cited as the most important strategy for improving school-day physical education programs, so it is reasonable to assume that training is equally important for staff in after school programs. Staff development programs should provide all after school staff members with basic skills for planning, organizing, and implementing physical activity programs for youths.

**5.3 Provide staff with opportunities for continuing or advanced education in physical activity.**

**Description:** Initial staff development programs provide basic skills, but staff members need continuing education to build advanced skills, provide a variety of activities, and stay current with best practices. Continuing education can help after school staff integrate physical activity with music, art, and other activities, including sessions that teach social skills and conflict resolution. Physical activity can help reinforce content knowledge in multiple subject areas. Advanced education can teach staff how to provide physical activity for students with varying skills and abilities and for students with special needs.

**Rationale:** An initial staff development program for implementing physical activity is just a beginning. After school program staff need to expand their skills and learn more activities, and they should learn how to provide appropriate physical activity for all students—including students with special needs. Thus, staff need opportunities for continuing or advanced education in physical activity. The integration of physical activity with other components of after school programs can help promote the idea that physical activity is an important life skill.

#### 5.4 **Serve as physically active role models for students.**

**Description:** After school program directors should encourage all staff members—including those not directly responsible for implementing physical activity for youths—to adopt physically active lifestyles. After school staff members who engage in regular physical activity serve as role models for students.

**Rationale:** Regular physical activity provides numerous health-related benefits, including reduced absenteeism, lower medical costs, and improved performance at work. Public health authorities recommend at least 30 minutes of daily MVPA. Promoting physical activity among all staff members may help create an organizational climate that supports physical activity. Additionally, students are more likely to be physically active if staff members serve as active role models.

Although after school staff members may engage in some physical activity while administering programs for youths, they should also set goals for being physically active outside their after school settings.

## 6

### **Develop and maintain high-quality after school physical activity.**

#### 6.1 **Incorporate a wide variety of physical activities to achieve all-around fitness and to build multiple movement skills.**

**Description:** One of the best aspects of physical activity is that it can take many different forms. The complexity, type, intensity, and duration of the activity can vary greatly. Staff should carefully consider the purpose of each activity as well as the unique needs, interests, and developmental levels of the students involved in the activity. Each type of physical activity has a different purpose and addresses different needs, so incorporating a variety of physical activity is important for helping students develop a range of physical activity skills.

**Rationale:** Different types of physical activity are needed to address the many components of fitness and development. In addition, it is important to offer a variety of physical activity options to accommodate differences in



each student's gender, culture, background, and individual preferences. To achieve the many benefits of physical activity, after school programs should offer sports, exercise, and recreational activities that variously emphasize endurance, aerobic capacity, muscle strength, and flexibility. Research suggests that participation in a wide variety of physical activity can provide significant benefits to a person's physical, cognitive, motor, social, emotional, and educational development.

## 6.2 Include structured physical activity that accommodates the needs and interests of all participants.

**Description:** After school programs should offer a full range of physical activities. Activities should be planned, structured, and organized with clear objectives. Students should have the opportunity to choose activities that best meet their needs, interests, and desires. Program staff can help guide student choices, and staff members should be fully engaged when leading activities.

**Rationale:** Structured activity and student choices are important aspects of after school physical activity programs. Research suggests that all types of physical activity belong in after school programs. These activities should be part of a comprehensive program that includes planned, sequential strategies and activities to promote optimal physical, motor, emotional, social, and educational development. Establishing realistic goals is an important step in the design and implementation of physical activity in after school programs. Students are more likely to participate in physical activity if they have choices that appeal to them. Programs should offer physical activity choices that vary by intensity, duration, and type (e.g., competitive versus noncompetitive, group versus individual, strength versus flexibility). The wider the variety, the greater the chance that students will find physical activities in which they want to participate and in which they will continue to participate throughout their lives—regardless of changes in their health status, environment, or socioeconomic condition.

It should be noted that in California, the use of physical activity as punishment is against the law. Experts state that this practice creates negative associations with physical activity and causes an aversion to participation. Similarly, disciplining students by withholding recess or other breaks that involve physical activity deprives students of opportunities to establish active recreational habits. After school programs should avoid these practices.

**6.3 Ensure that all physical activity is developmentally appropriate and that it meets the needs of all participants.**

**Description:** There are some types of physical activity that are not appropriate for all children or all adolescents. Children of the same age often display different levels of developmental maturity and therefore require different activities. When selecting activities for an after school program, staff members should consider each student's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. It is especially important to ensure that physical activities are adapted and modified to meet the needs of students who have disabilities or other special needs.

**Rationale:** When selecting activities for after school programs, staff members need to consider the developmental level of each student and should select developmentally appropriate activities. Physical activity can place physical, intellectual, social, and emotional demands on children and adolescents, so planners must be aware of how these demands may affect children and adolescents who have varying developmental levels. The selection of developmentally appropriate activities will reduce the likelihood of physical injuries and will increase the likelihood that students will actively participate in the program. Examples of steps taken to account for different developmental levels include grouping students according to body size and physical ability; adapting rules and equipment; adjusting the duration of activities to correspond with the developmental levels and attention spans of participants; and adapting activities to ensure greater levels of success among participants.

**6.4 Include youths in the design and selection of physical activity content.**

**Description:** Program directors should encourage youths to participate in the design and selection of physical activity content. This can be done in a variety of ways, including verbally asking students about their interests; creating and distributing a simple, written survey of the students' activity preferences; and creating a youth task force on after school physical activity planning and evaluation.

**Rationale:** Including youths in the design and selection of physical activity content will help ensure that the content meets the needs and interests of after school program participants. In addition, youths are more likely to participate and stay interested in physical activities that they choose and help to plan. Involving youths in the development process can make them feel more confident and comfortable about being physically active, and it can foster their group and collaborative skills.

**6.5 Encourage after school programs to use physical activity resources, curricula, and programs that are research-based or aligned with credible professional groups.**

**Description:** Program directors should identify multiple sources of authoritative guidance on the selection of after school physical activities and curriculum materials. This information can help program staff understand issues involving the type, intensity, and duration of an activity. It can also be used to identify activities most closely aligned with specific program goals, and it can help programs address related questions about children, adolescents, and physical activity.

Two CDE publications are recommended as foundations for planning after school physical activity programs: *Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*; and *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. Two other key documents support the role of physical activity from a “whole and healthy child” perspective: *Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*; and *Health Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. To access these documents, please visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/BE/ST/> or <http://www.californiaafterschool.org>.

**Rationale:** There is growing research related to physical activity programs; however, additional research-based physical activity guidelines for youths of all ages are needed. Physical activity resources that are based on research and standards might seem difficult to find, but the CASRC has a growing library of physical activity resources that individuals and organizations may borrow free of charge. All resources in the CASRC library have been reviewed rigorously and are based on research and established physical education standards. Further information is available at <http://www.californiaafterschool.org>.

**6.6 Ensure that all physical activity choices are safe for every participant in the after school program.**

**Description:** Providing a safe environment is essential for youths to play actively. Programs should be designed to ensure that participants at all levels of experience can be and feel successful and safe. Program rules regarding behavior, procedures, and other items should be established early and enforced consistently to create a safe physical and emotional environment.

Students should be encouraged to put forth good effort. Program staff should show participants that they will be coached rather than criticized and that it is acceptable to make mistakes during physical activities. All physical activity must be conducted with proper equipment, in an appropriate environment, and in a developmentally appropriate manner.

**Rationale:** Experts continue to emphasize the need for increased physical activity for children and adolescents—and they stress the importance of maintaining safety in physical activity programs. These recommendations follow the premise that emotional and physical safety establish a foundation for young people to take risks and to learn from success and failure. When young people feel safe in physical activity programs, they will trust program staff to protect them from harm and they will understand that they will be accepted and supported by their peers. As a result, participants will be more fully engaged in physical activities and will be more likely to experience the physical and developmental benefits of the activities. If youths do not feel physically and emotionally safe when participating in activity, the potential for physical or emotional harm may outweigh any intended positive results of the experiences.

## 7

### Ensure that all students achieve the appropriate amounts of physical activity after school.

#### 7.1 Provide a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes of MVPA during the after school program.

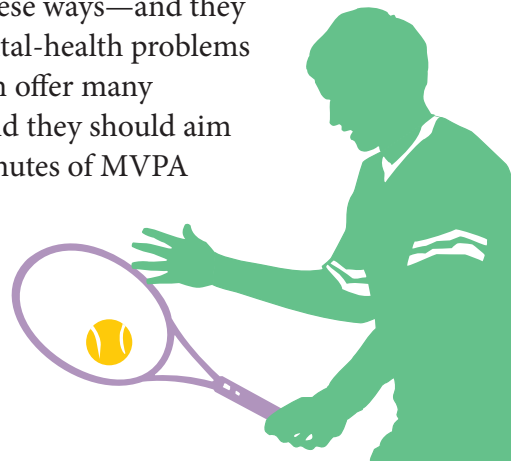
**Description:** In the United States, experts recommend that youths engage in a minimum of 60 minutes of MVPA each day. However, that total may not be feasible for all after school programs. Therefore, programs should ensure that all children engage in a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes of MVPA when the program is in session. It is possible to accumulate 30 to 60 minutes of MVPA with two or three separate activity periods; the MVPA does not need to occur during one session, and it does not necessarily need to be structured activity. To achieve 30 minutes of MVPA, 45 to 60 minutes of program time should be scheduled because students are not continuously active.

**Rationale:** Although it is desirable for after school programs to provide the 60 minutes of recommended MVPA, this may not be possible. The responsibility for ensuring that young people engage in 60 minutes of MVPA each day should be shared by parents, schools, community groups, and after school programs. Research suggests that most MVPA is achieved after school and that the use of after school time for physical activity is a good predictor of MVPA. It is reasonable for after school programs to provide at least 30 minutes of MVPA per program day. Without that time, many youths will have no other opportunities to be active after school. After school physical activity gives students an energizing change of pace from a long day focused on academics.

**7.2 For students not engaging in physical activity elsewhere, aim to provide the full 60 minutes of recommended MVPA during the after school program.**

**Description:** The recommended goal for after school programs that serve students who are unlikely to obtain physical activity elsewhere is to provide 60 minutes of MVPA each day. Because young people’s physical activity is intermittent, not continuous, programs that include students who have limited access to physical activity opportunities (particularly low-income youths) need to schedule 90 to 120 minutes of after school time for physical activity. Some of this physical activity time can be integrated with other enrichment activities.

**Rationale:** Many students in California receive a limited quantity of—and limited quality in—physical education during the regular school day; they are not provided with recess, they have limited access to recreation facilities, and they often lack opportunities to play outdoors. Low-income students are most likely to be disadvantaged in these ways—and they face higher risks of physical and mental-health problems as a result. After school programs can offer many opportunities for physical activity, and they should aim to provide these students with 60 minutes of MVPA per program day.



**7.3 Arrange the after school schedule to ensure that students do not sit for more than 60 minutes at a time.**

**Description:** When planning after school program schedules, directors need to consider students' limited attention spans, their need for variety, and the health risks related to prolonged sitting. Sedentary activities such as sitting should last no longer than 60 minutes at a time. If extended periods of sitting are needed, students should have a 5- to 10-minute physical activity break at least once every hour.

**Rationale:** Prolonged sitting, especially when watching television, is a risk factor for overweight and obesity. Children have limited attention spans and need content and activity changes more frequently than adults. After school programs that present a variety of activities are more likely to experience success with each activity. Periodic breaks appear to improve students' concentration. It is realistic for most programs to ensure that students do not sit for more than 60 minutes at a time. Shorter program activities may be preferable for younger children since attention spans vary by age and by individual.

**7.4 Limit recreational "screen time" to 30 minutes and total "screen time" to 60 minutes per after school session.**

**Description:** Screen time—which includes watching television and DVDs, using computers, and playing video games—should be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes per after school session. Most screen time should be academically oriented, and no more than 30 minutes of the total time should be recreational. Academic screen time (e.g., using a computer to write a book report) is directly related to subjects that students learn in school. Recreational screen time is purely for entertainment. Ideally, after school programs should offer screen time that focuses only on academics.

It should be noted that some after school programs use DVDs when providing instruction in dance, yoga, aerobics, and other physical activities. As long as the purpose of a DVD is to get students physically active—and as long as students are physically active while watching the DVD—that time would not need to be considered part of the 60-minute limit of total screen time, and it could be counted as part of the recommended amount of MVPA.

**Rationale:** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a two-hour-per-day limit on television viewing, but the average American child watches three to four hours per day. Recommendations concerning screen

time in after school programs have not been established. However, research shows that children watch television and participate in recreational screen-time activities excessively—and therefore it is recommended that after school programs offer screen time focusing only on educational or physical activities.

**7.5 Offer physical activity at or near the beginning of the after school session.**

**Description:** Programs should provide at least some physical activity at or near the beginning of the after school session. If physical activity time is broken up into two or more periods, one of those periods should be scheduled for the beginning of the after school session.

**Rationale:** After sitting for nearly six hours in classrooms, youths want and need to be physically active. Physical activity improves mood and concentration, so providing physical activity at the beginning of the after school session is likely to enhance student performance on other tasks and activities in the after school program and to ensure that scheduled physical activity time is not missed or skipped.

**7.6 Whenever possible, use physical activity to reinforce and extend other after school goals and activities.**

**Description:** Physical activity can be used to meet multiple goals in after school settings. It can be integrated with music and art, and it can be used to teach social skills and conflict resolution. Physical activity can also teach skills or reinforce content knowledge in other academic and enrichment areas. To accomplish these goals, program staff might need additional training, additional curriculum materials, or both.

**Rationale:** Using physical activity to teach skills or reinforce knowledge in other subject areas increases opportunities for physical activity in after school settings. Younger children rely on sensorimotor learning; therefore, teaching through physical activity may improve learning. The integration of physical activity with other activities in after school programs helps promote the concept that physical activity is an important life skill. Examples of evidence-based curricula that use physical activity to teach academic content are available at <http://www.californiaafterschool.org>.

**8****Ensure that all students are included in after school physical activity.****8.1 Ensure that physical activity is appropriate for youths of different ages, gender, abilities, and cultures by including youths in the development of physical activity content.**

**Description:** To ensure that physical activity is available to every student—regardless of a student’s age, gender, physical or mental ability, cultural background, or health status—include youths in the development of physical activity content. This can be done in a variety of ways, including orally asking students about their interests, creating and distributing a simple survey containing activity choices, or creating a youth task force on after school physical activity.

**Rationale:** An excellent method for ensuring that physical activity content meets the physical, motor, emotional, social, cultural, and educational needs of all students is to include youths in the development of the content. By doing so, program staff can gain a better understanding of the students’ individual backgrounds and needs, and students can become more confident about participating in physical activity—which is especially important for students who have had negative experiences with physical activity.

**8.2 Select, adapt, and modify physical activity to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs.**

**Description:** After school programs should provide all students, including those with special needs, with equal opportunities to participate in age-appropriate physical activity. When planning and implementing physical activity, program staff should consider all students’ physical, developmental, social, emotional, and educational needs. Physical activity should be adapted and modified so that students with different physical skills, mental abilities, and health statuses can successfully participate. It may be necessary to adapt and modify equipment, boundaries and playing areas, rules, prompts and cues, actions, and times when activities occur. Adaptations and modifications should be based on students’ needs and interests. This will result in safe, successful, enjoyable, and valuable physical activity for each student. Regular-day special education teachers can be valuable contacts



for determining adaptations and modifications that might be needed for an individual student or for a specific disability.

**Rationale:** After school programs can provide all students with the benefits of physical activity. Adapting and modifying physical activity for students with special needs makes physical activity more accessible for these students. After school staff play an important role in helping each student discover enjoyable types of physical activity—which can give students with special needs more confidence about being physically active with their peers. In addition, offering students physical activity that meets their individual needs and appeals to their interests can help cultivate lifelong participation in and commitment to physical activity.

### 8.3 **Select and develop physical activity that is accessible and interesting to students of various cultures.**

**Description:** After school programs should consider students' varying cultures when selecting and developing physical activity. A student's culture consists of his or her gender, religion, ethnicity, beliefs, customs, values, thoughts, actions, and communication style. Program staff should make concerted efforts to get to know all students and learn about their cultures so that physical activity will be interesting and will not pose any cultural barriers.

**Rationale:** Although students in California's after school programs are culturally diverse, they have similar needs for physical activity. Choosing and developing physical activity that is respectful of all students' cultures can help get more students physically active in after school programs. Students are more likely to participate in physical activity that is meaningful and interesting to them, and learning about students' cultures can help staff create meaningful and interesting physical activity for all students. On the contrary, physical activity that is not sensitive to various cultures can contain barriers to participation. For example, a student may come from a culture that has different expectations for boys and girls—especially regarding physical activity—and a female student from this culture could feel uncomfortable about participating in certain activities due to these expectations. Adapting the activity or offering other activity options would make physical activity more accessible to this student. Effective programs can select and develop physical activity that welcomes students of all cultures.

## 9

## Connect after school physical activity with the regular school day.

### 9.1 Develop after school physical activity that supports and reinforces physical education content of the regular school day.

**Description:** Provide physical activity that allows students to practice skills they learn in regular-school-day physical education classes. The content of regular-school-day physical education is based on the *Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools* (as introduced in Guideline 6.5). Programs should become familiar with these standards and incorporate some of the skills from the standards into after school physical activity content. Staff should choose skills that meet the current physical, developmental, motor, social, emotional, and educational needs of the students in the program. As students progress, programs should build on the students' current skills by incorporating more challenging skills from the standards into physical activity content.

**Rationale:** After school programs give students the opportunity to further develop the skills taught during the regular school day. The CDC recommends that after school physical activity programs enable students to practice skills learned in physical education classes. Because some students do not receive daily physical education during the regular school day, after school programs may be the only place where the students can regularly engage in physical activity and develop physical education skills.

Standards-based physical education instruction provides a comprehensive description of, and process for, what students need to know and what they should be able to do at each grade level. Standards provide after school programs with significant guidance on sequential, focused, and explicit learning activities. Aligning after school physical activity content with learning that takes place during the regular school day has a positive impact on all students. After school programs that link with standards-based instruction show promising results in their students' knowledge, skills, and interest in physical activity.

**9.2 Consult with credentialed physical education teachers to create high-quality physical activity programs.**

**Description:** Credentialed physical education teachers are a valuable resource for developing after school physical activity. They can help align after school physical activity with the instructional goals and standards of the regular-school-day physical education program. They can also provide leadership and technical assistance for appropriate instruction and practices, and they can provide guidance on how to evaluate after school physical activity programs.

If the school closest to an after school program does not have a credentialed physical education teacher, program staff can contact the school district or county office of education. Almost all district and county offices have a physical education specialist who may be able to provide guidance on developing high-quality after school physical activity.

**Rationale:** Credentialed physical education teachers are uniquely positioned in the school community to serve as resources for after school physical activity programs. Physical education teachers understand the school environment, the community, and the content, instruction, and assessment of physical activity. Furthermore, they understand the characteristics of the students in their schools, and they often interact with the students' parents. Physical education teachers have knowledge and understanding that can help create high-quality after school physical activity components.

**9.3 Collaborate with staff, students, and parents who are involved in the regular school day to create physical activity content and goals that link with the regular school day.**

**Description:** After school program staff should learn about school events, student clubs, and school goals so that after school physical activity can be linked with these events, clubs, and goals. Effective methods for collaboration include participating in the development and implementation of the school's wellness policy; attending school staff meetings; contacting student clubs; and attending parent-teacher group events such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO) meetings.

**Rationale:** Collaborating with people involved in the regular school day can help build support for the after school program and can enhance goals of the regular school day. Getting involved in school-day events or extending

those events to the after school program can help create more opportunities for students to be physically active. For example, if a school is having an assembly during the school day that features dance performances, the after school program could provide opportunities for students to practice dance in preparation for the assembly. Contacting student clubs can build student interest in after school programs and can bring new ideas and activities to after school programs. After school programs can also help schools work toward specific goals. For example, if a school has a certain attendance goal, an after school program can help students reduce their chances of getting sick and missing school by fostering regular physical activity and by teaching sound nutrition habits. Additionally, parents who are involved in the regular school day can be valuable resources for collaboration. For example, the local PTA or PTSO may hold a fund-raiser such as a walk-a-thon in which the after school program could participate.

## 10

### Build partnerships with the community to support after school physical activity.

#### 10.1 Collaborate with community partners that deliver high-quality physical activity in after school programs.

**Description:** Many community-based organizations and agencies—such as Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and local parks-and-recreation departments—promote physical activity and incorporate it into their programming. After school programs can partner with local agencies to offer youths a wide range of sports and other physical activities. Even with limited space, after school programs can work with community partners to engage youths in a variety of physical activities, such as yoga, dance, soccer, tennis, team sports, and martial arts.

**Rationale:** With less physical activity being offered during the regular school day, after school hours are well suited for providing youths with physical activity experiences that inspire them to grow and explore. Community organizations can offer leadership and expertise to provide quality after school physical activity.

## 10.2 Work with community-based agencies to provide training and staff development.

**Description:** After school program directors are responsible for ensuring that all after school staff receive basic instruction in implementing physical activity. High-quality staff development provides the skills needed to deliver purposeful, enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, and safe physical activity. Community-based organizations may have existing training programs in which after school staff can participate, or they may be able to provide training upon request. Additional information about staff training and development is available in Guideline 5.

**Rationale:** Staff development may be the most important factor for improving schools' physical education programs, so it is reasonable to assume that training in physical activity is equally important for staff in after school programs. Initial staff development programs should provide all after school staff with basic skills in planning, organizing, and implementing physical activity for youths because physical activity can be integrated with other program components.

## 10.3 Adopt and implement joint-use agreements so that after school programs have adequate space and resources for youths to engage in physical activity.

**Description:** After school programs often take place in schools or other community-based settings; however, not all programs provide space for youths to be physically active. Although many activities do not require a lot of open space, joint-use agreements can help make it possible for schools, cities, and community programs to provide youths with adequate space and facilities for high-quality physical activity. Joint-use agreements allow two or more entities (organizations, individuals, or both) to document issues such as who will pay for facility maintenance, the hours that will be available to each user group, and who will be responsible for supervising youth activities.

**Rationale:** In the United States, between one-third and one-half of all after school programs rely on shared or borrowed space. Joint-use agreements allow two or more entities to determine and document the details of providing physical activity in after school programs.

**10.4 Explore transportation resources and “active transport” options to ensure that youths have safe, affordable access to after school programs.**

**Description:** Lack of transportation and inadequate or unsafe means of getting to destinations can be a barrier to youth participation in after school programs. Students who rely on school buses for transportation may not be able to participate in after school programs because school busing may be limited. Other students may not have safe ways of getting to after school programs that are located away from school sites. Partnerships involving after school programs, local transportation authorities, school bus systems, pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups, and other community-based agencies can help reduce these barriers. Implementing Safe Routes to School programs can improve connections between schools and community centers, parks, and other after school program sites. These programs can help schools coordinate “walking school buses” or “bike trains,” which involve adults who chaperone groups of youths to and from after school programs and which can increase students’ daily physical activity. Information about walk-to-school programs is available at <http://www.cawalktoschool.com>; <http://www.caphysicalactivity.org>; and <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm>.

**Rationale:** After school programs may provide youths with their best opportunities to engage in physical activity. For some youths—particularly those who rely on public transportation, who cannot walk or bike safely to destinations, or who do not have adults to transport them to and from activities—providing transportation options may allow them to participate in physical activities that otherwise would not be available to them.



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