

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: Proficiency-Based Learning Team, Student Pathways Division

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education:

1. Adopt the rewritten national physical education standards. These are learning standards and not professional standards.

SECRETARY’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. Recommend that SBE approves adoption of the 2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

16 V.S.A. § 164 (9), the State Board of Education will implement and periodically update standards for student learning in appropriate content areas from kindergarten to grade 12. Supervisory union boards shall use the standards as the basis for the development and selection of curriculum, methods of instruction, locally developed assessments, and the content and skills taught and learned in school.

Education Quality Standards: Rule Series 2000

2111. Adoption of Performance Standards, Pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 164(9), the State Board will implement and periodically update standards for student learning in appropriate content areas from kindergarten to grade twelve supervisory union and supervisory district boards shall use these standards as the basis for developing and selecting curriculum, methods of instruction, assessments, and the content and skills taught and learned in school.

Related: 2120.6. Curriculum Content Areas, 2120.7. Curriculum Coordination, 2120.8. Graduation Requirements, 2121.2. Staff, 2122.2. Access to Instructional Materials, 2123.2. Development and Implementation of Local Comprehensive Assessment System, 2124.1. Minimum Reporting Requirements

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN VERMONT:

The following data are pulled to highlight the state of physical education (PE) implementation in Vermont. This data is the earliest available and comes from multiple sources (Vermont Agency of Education, Vermont Department of Health, and the U.S. Department of Education) and largely describe PE in state public schools.



School Level

- In 2020, “three-quarters (76%) [of Vermont schools] require physical education teachers to follow a written physical education curriculum, two-thirds (68%) limit class size so they are the same size as other subject areas.” (School Health Profiles*, 2020).
- In 2020, “all schools included students with disabilities in regular physical education courses as appropriate; 84% provide adapted physical education courses.”
- In 2020, “nearly half (44%) allow for the use of waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education requirements.” (School Health Profiles, 2020).
- “Since first asked, having a School Improvement Plan has significantly increased for objectives related to health education, physical education, physical activity, food and beverages available outside the school meal program, counseling, psychological and social services, the physical environment, social and emotional climate, community involvement and employee wellness. However, between 2018 and 2020, fewer SIPs included objectives related to health education (40% vs 29%) and physical education (34% vs 24%).” (School Health Profiles, 2020).

* Data from School Health Profiles represent weighted responses of all Vermont public schools that serve students between the 6th and 12th grades. This data is collected by the Vermont Department of Health.

Teacher Level

- In 2020, “nearly all schools require physical education teachers to be certified, licensed, or endorsed by the state (99%).” (School Health Profiles, 2020).
- In both 2020 and 2021 (most recent years of data collection), there has been a statewide shortage of PE teachers in Vermont (U.S. Department of Education, 2022).
- In 2021, there were 19 Physical Educators granted 1st Year Provisional or Emergency Licenses to teach in the state (VT Agency of Education, 2022).

Student Level

- Based on 2020 data, “all students were required to complete physical education courses in sixth and seventh grades. While more than nine in ten schools required physical education in eighth (98%) and ninth grades (95%), required courses for older students decrease to less than half of all schools requiring physical education among 12th grade students (46%).” (School Health Profiles, 2020)

These figures are captured in [testimony](#) provided for the Vermont legislature in February 2023. See Appendix for more information on national PE research/policy.

INTRODUCTION TO VERMONT EDUCATION STANDARDS:

In the fall of 1996, the State Board of Education adopted Vermont's first Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities. Over the following years, thousands of Vermont educators, parents, and students reviewed the Framework and provided suggested improvements. The goal at that time was to make the standards more useful as guides for

curriculum development. In 2000, the standards were formally revised and again adopted by the State Board. The Grade Expectations (GEs) for Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities were released in 2004. The GEs included grade-level expectations for reading, writing, and math, while the remaining content areas were organized into grade cluster expectations. The Vital Results, another component of the Framework, described the cross-curricular, skill-based standards students were expected to learn and acquire throughout their K–12 education. These expectations for content and skills were intended to serve multiple purposes, such as guidance for teaching, student learning, and local assessment.

As additional new standards were adopted by the Vermont State Board of Education, the Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities became outdated. [The Alignment of Vital Results with Vermont State Board of Education Adopted Standards and Transferable Skills](#) shows the progression of standards that were adopted, starting in 2010 with the Common Core, as well as the alignment of these standards to the Framework's Vital Results. In an effort to avoid confusion and duplicity, the Framework of Standards was retired in 2017.

Vermont has always viewed the adoption of national standards as an opportunity to take advantage of the collaborative efforts and expertise that are part of the development process. Additionally, the abundance of resources connected to national standards provides valuable support for educators as they work to implement new expectations. Finally, new standards incorporate the most current and forward-thinking ideas about what students need to be fully prepared for careers, college, and civic life.

The Vermont State Board of Education adopted the 2013 Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America National Standards for K-12 Physical Education in 2015. Based on the [NASBE State Policy Database](#) (2021), 43 states make reference to the National Physical Education Standards (SHAPE America) in codified or noncodified policy. The implementation and use of these standards can vary from state to state. While some states fully adopt the standards, others may modify or use them as a framework to guide the development of PE learning outcomes. SHAPE National (through correspondence) stated that they, therefore, cannot provide an accurate estimate of what state's standards align to the national standards (as it may be a measure of degree). You can review other state's PE standards on [SHAPE America's website](#). The 2013 SHAPE America National Standards for K-12 Physical Education and related Grade Level Outcomes are currently used in Vermont schools.

SHAPE AMERICA NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION STANDARDS:

SHAPE America released new National Physical Education Standards in March 2024. The standards were rewritten to account for the broader changes within the world of Physical Education (e.g., student centered learning), but also education more broadly in the past decade (e.g., supporting the whole child).

The 2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards differ from the 2013 standards in several ways. The most noticeable difference is the transition from five standards in the 2013 edition to four standards in 2024.

2013 SHAPE America National Standards for K-12 Physical Education	2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards
1. Demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.	1. Develops a variety of motor skills.
2. Applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance. 3. Demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.	2. Applies knowledge related to movement and fitness concepts.
4. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.	3. Develops social skills through movement.
5. Recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.	4. Develops personal skills, identifies personal benefits of movement, and chooses to engage in physical activity.

The ideas within the second and third standards from 2013 have been combined in this 2024 iteration into one standard: “Applies knowledge related to movement and fitness concepts.” The transition to four standards was also done so that these standards are more clearly aligned with the domains of learning: cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and the recently recognized social.

The standard indicators in the 2024 edition are broken down by Grade Span Indicators (K-2, 3-5, etc.), which is a large change from the Grade Level Outcomes that were in the 2013 standards. As stated in SHAPE draft standard materials (Public Review and Comment #3):

The change from grade-level outcomes to grade spans is based on current motor development research that shows development is age-related not age-dependent. Skill development is also dependent on practice opportunities, instruction, and encouragement; therefore, it should not be expected that all students in one grade will be at the same stage of motor development. (SHAPE, 2023, p. 3-4)

This means that there are fewer indicators in this 2024 edition and the indicators are centered more on underlying concepts/skills and not the contexts or finite aspects of skill application found in the 2013 Grade Level Outcomes (e.g., Grade 3, Standard 1, E13: Throws underhand to a *partner or target* with *reasonable accuracy*). The following chart provides a basic comparison between a strand of Grade Level Outcomes (2013) and a single new Grade Span Indicator (2024).

2013 SHAPE America National Standards for K-12 Physical Education Grade Level Outcomes (K-2)	2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards Grade Span Indicator (K-2)
<p>Kindergarten:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs jumping and landing actions with balance. (S1.E3.K) <p>1st Grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates 2 of the 5 critical elements for jumping and landing in a horizontal plane using 2-foot take-offs and landings. (S1.E3.1) • Demonstrates 2 of the 5 critical elements for jumping and landing in a vertical plane. (S1.E4.1) <p>2nd Grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates 4 of the 5 critical elements for jumping and landing in a horizontal plane using a variety of 1- and 2-foot take-offs and landings. (S1.E3.2) • Demonstrates 4 of the 5 critical elements for jumping and landing in a vertical plane. (S1.E4.2) 	<p>1.2.2 Demonstrates jumping and landing in a non-dynamic environment.</p>

At the standard and indicator level, there are also a few broad conceptual shifts in the 2024 standards that will impact how PE is taught. The new SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards are centered around preparing students for their physical literacy journey, which differs from the focus of the previous standards, which was to have students become physically literate. As stated in SHAPE America draft documents (Public Review and Comment #3):

The revised standards focus on the well-being of the whole person and their physical literacy journey. These standards consider the psychomotor, cognitive, social, and affective learning domains essential to facilitating the physical literacy journey of preK-12 learners. The physical literacy journey involves the ongoing acquisition and application of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for engagement in a lifetime of healthful and meaningful physical activity. (SHAPE America, 2023, p. 4)

The new standards and indicators also incorporate a more student-centered vision of PE teaching and learning. This is in part due to this shift in the standards towards preparing students for their own Physical Literacy Journey, as a journey is more personally defined. For example, within Standard 4 (the affective domain) in the 2024 edition, attention is given to choice, reflection, and preparation for life after graduation (e.g., 4.12.6: Sets and develops movement goals related to personal interests). A few other noticeable differences between the newly released 2024 standards and the 2013 edition are:

- Goal setting is introduced at earlier grades.
- Body composition is removed as a factor of physical health from the new standards.

- Food/nutrition is connected to not just health, but also enjoyment in the new standards.
- Problem solving, both independent and collaborative, is focused on in K-5.
- Technology is incorporated in earlier grade spans.
- Fitness activities/skill development is introduced at an earlier age.
- There is more focus on the process of skill development.
- The culture of physical activities (not just dance) is studied at earlier ages.
- The concepts and skills found in Standards 2-4 are more detailed, showing a greater shift in focus towards affective, social, and cognitive dimensions of PE.
- There is a greater articulation of inter- and intra-personal skills in new indicators, including negotiation skills, moving away from more vague concepts like personally responsible behavior found in previous standards.

There are several other differences between the 2013 and the 2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards, but the bullets above capture some of the more salient changes (see also [2024 National Physical Education Standards Educator Toolkit](#)).

CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

If the 2024 SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards were adopted by the Vermont State Board of Education, there would be several implications for the field.

Educator Input: Educators have provided ongoing feedback about the changes to the new standards, starting in 2023 when drafts of the new standards were released and some of these larger shifts in the standards were signaled. Feedback on the standards from PE Teacher Education professors at Vermont State University and Norwich University was also gathered. There have been generally mixed reactions from the field to the 2024 standards, considerations shared by the field include:

- The change from Grade Level Outcomes to Grade Span Indicators may present challenges to PE curriculum design, as curriculum would need to be coordinated in grade bands (e.g., what to teach a Kindergarten student when indicators are set at K-2).
- The dramatic decline in the number of indicators, some believed, would undercut PE educators' ability to advocate for maintaining or adding more PE time for their students.
- PE educators expressed concerns that they are not prepared to assess students on the social competencies found in the new Grade Span Indicators in Standard 3 (e.g., 3.2.1 Recognizes the feelings of others during a variety of physical activity).
- Educators believed that the focus on skills and not the contexts/detailed characteristics of skill application, which is a noteworthy change in the new indicators, would allow more flexibility to teach the skill in those settings/ways that better align to their interests/capacities (e.g., teaching manipulative skills through a range of games/tools).
- The transition of the standards/indicators to supporting students along their physical literacy journey many high school educators in the state felt aligned to how they already teach PE (e.g., engaging in hiking, pickleball, snowshoeing, etc.).

- The movement away from fitness-based measurements and comparisons to fitness standards was viewed by some as taking away from the purpose of PE and that is to address poor fitness. However, others expressed the opposite of this sentiment and appreciated the change, as they noticed that many of their students had lost their love of movement when they were measured against fitness standards that were not meaningful to them.

Also see [How Franklin County schools are teaching students to value a 'lifetime of fitness.'](#)

Policy Implications: Adoption of the 2024 standards will not have a direct impact on policy but may impact the implementation of certain policies/statutes in schools. [16 V.S.A. §906](#) requires that public and approved or recognized independent schools provide students with PE.

Fiscal Implications: There will be a need for professional learning related to the new standards and how to implement them in Vermont classrooms. SHAPE America will release implementation resources, but SHAPE America is a member organization and many of their resources are for members only. There is a cost to be a member of SHAPE America. SHAPE has a strong presence in Vermont and membership is high, but not all educators are members and therefore not all may not have access to all the resources that SHAPE America will release. The Agency of Education will provide guidance and training to the field on the implementation of the new standards, within its capacity, and provide these resources for free to educators.

Educational Implications: There are some broader themes/concepts that are included in this new iteration of the standards that will impact the teaching of PE in the state (as discussed). However, many of the changes at the indicator level align with Vermont’s current educational system:

- The focus in the 2024 standards/indicators on student-centered learning aligns with a number of initiatives that also further personalized and proficiency-based approaches to learning in Vermont (e.g., [Act 77 of 2013](#) and [Education Quality Standards 2120.7, 2120.8](#)).
- Wellness is included as part of the [Vermont Portrait of Graduate](#). An indicator of wellness within the POG is, “Students recognize the value of healthy behaviors and physical activity in promoting health, enjoyment, self-expression, and social interaction.” This goal for students aligns with many of the indicators found in Standard 4 (K-12).

Other Considerations: The Agency of Education will be developing model state-level Proficiency-Based Learning (PBL) Hierarchies for PE now that these standards are released.

Staff Available: Ian Burfoot-Rochford, Health and Physical Education Content Specialist, Proficiency-Based Learning Team, Student Pathways Division.

Resources/Other Information on New Standards and Vermont:

Higdon, B. (November 16, 2023). [How Franklin County schools are teaching students to value a 'lifetime of fitness.'](#)

Morris, S. (January, 2024) 2024: [The year of the standards.](#) p. 7 (Reference to Vermont)

APPENDIX

Physical Education Policy and Research

There are differences between states in terms of what is required in statute for Physical Education and Health Education provision.

- In 2017-2018, every state but Hawaii had written into statute general requirements for Physical Education (PE), i.e., included as a course of study or a topic to be taught in public schools (e.g., [Connecticut](#) and [New Hampshire](#)) ([Child Trends, 2019](#)).
- The topics to be covered in Physical or Health Education as required by statute does range between states, as different topics garner legislative attention and become written into law over time (see [Teboe, 2019](#)). Maine, for example, has in place statute related to teaching about and addressing mental health stigma within Physical and Health Education curricula ([20-A ME Rev Stat § 4712](#)).

Most states do not establish a time requirement for PE in state statute.

- Oregon has written into state statute that students receive 150 minutes of PE per week for the entire school year, and students in grades 6-8 to receive 225 minutes of PE per week for the entire school year ([ORS 329.496](#)).
- In those states where a time requirement for PE is written into law there is a higher probability that students will experience a greater amount of time in PE compared to states where a statute does not exist.
- However, research also highlights that even when statutes are in place for time requirements for PE, compliance to these requirements at the local level are not guaranteed ([Pierkarz-Porter et al., 2021](#); [An et al., 2021](#))

There are several states, like Vermont, that have time requirements for PE written into other forms of state education code/policy that are not found in statute (e.g., SEA Code and State Board Rule,). However, educational governance structures between states are not uniform, whereby, certain powers/processes may be granted to certain bodies (e.g., a State Board or Commissioner of Education) in one state but not in another impacting oversight (e.g., codified vs. noncodified).

- The following chart provides examples of state level time requirements for PE (these examples are not based on credit requirements for PE, but class time requirements written into state policy).*

State	Governance Structure	Requirement
New Hampshire	Local school boards are granted the authority to establish time requirements for Physical Education in K-8 schools (Ed 306.26).	No state level time requirement.
Maine	NA	No state level time requirement.
New York	Board of Regents in New York holds mandate power, as directly written into state law, in determining requirements for Physical Education in the state's schools (Education Law 803 , see also Education Law 207).	8 CRR-NY 135.4 - Commissioner Code (Board of Regents) <i>"all pupils in grades K-3 shall participate in the physical education program on a daily basis. All pupils in grades 4-6 shall participate in the physical education program not less than three times each week"</i> <i>"Secondary instructional program—grades 7 through 12. All secondary pupils shall have the opportunity for regular physical education, but not less than three times per week in one semester and two times per week in the other semester"</i>
New Jersey	Time requirements for all courses of study written into state statute.	NJ Rev Stat § 18A:35-8 (2022) <i>"shall aggregate at least two and one-half hours in each school week, or proportionately less when holidays fall within the week."</i>

* Policy analysis done in 2023 in response to Vermont legislator questions.

Research does not clearly identify a specific duration (amount of time) or dosage (frequency) of PE per week proven to have the greatest all-around effect on student performance and well-being. Across all courses of study, research highlights that time is not the most important educational input for student academic success.

- Students learn at their own pace, curriculum instruction may be too fast or too slow for advancing ALL students' learning (Brown et al., 2014).
- The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on education has pushed further attention away from "seat-time" to "credentials" or "proficiencies." This has been because in part time lost does not clearly articulate the skills and needs of students present after the pandemic nor allows for a path toward addressing "learning loss" that does not include more instructional time (see [State Guidance for Building Resilient and Equitable Education Systems](#)).

There are a number of instructional practices that have been shown to have a strong impact on student learning, which are not seat-time dependent.

- [Mastery learning](#), defined as "the premise that all students can eventually (at their own speed) learn difficult material, this practice calls for all students to learn material at equivalently high (or mastery) levels. It often involves providing formative tests and asking students to repeat lessons until they have mastered them." (0.61 Effect Size) +

- [Outcome based education](#), defined as “developing the outcomes of the education experience and expecting all students to then reach the goals.” (0.97 Effect Size) +
- [Student-centered teaching](#), defined as “learning experiences intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students. It focuses on the needs of students, involves modifications and adaptations, and often is premised on the notion that learners construct their own understanding of the world, and thus must be active participants in learning.” (0.35 Effect Size)+

+ This meta-analysis research includes studies on practices within different subject areas, not PE alone. However, many of these practices are also considered best practices within quality PE programs (see [The Essential Components of Physical Education](#)).

There is a need for better measures of student “success” in PE.

- Fitness or BMI measures, while part of a potential measure of an individual’s health do not provide insights as to the health behaviors of students nor their potential for maintaining healthy levels of physical activity in the future (Safron and Lundi, 2021).
- Measures of BMI and those provided by the FitnessGram, in addition, have also been criticized for their inability to be inclusive of all persons and elevating certain “bodies” while commonly labelling others as “at-risk” (see [LCAS Appendix B:Physical Education/Health](#) and [UVM WIN Research Group](#)).
- The state is currently working towards creating a model PE Performance Assessment that local schools will be able to use to more accurately capture the success and learning of ALL Vermont students in PE (see [Memo: 2022 Physical Education Assessments and FitnessGram](#)).

References

- Brown, P. C., Roediger III, H. L., and McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make it stick: The science of successful learning*. Harvard University Press.
- Kohl III, H. W., and Cook, H. D. (Eds.). (2013). *Educating the student body: Taking physical activity and physical education to school*. National Academies Press.
- Lambert, K., Ford, A., and Jeanes, R. (2022). The association between physical education and academic achievement in other curriculum learning areas: A review of literature. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 1-31.