

FITNESSGRAM Parent Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian:

** This parent's letter is lengthy but we are requesting that you please read this parents letter in its entirety due to its importance.*

As a part of your child's P.E. program this year, we are focusing on the five components of fitness (Cardio, Endurance, Strength, Flexibility, and Body Composition). Throughout the year students will be taught what each component is, how it is useful and why it is important. Each class is being taught a chant to help remember the five components, along with participating in the FITNESSGRAM assessments. Many schools, in the district, state and over 10 million students nationwide, will be participating in the FITNESSGRAM fitness assessment. FITNESSGRAM assessments measures health-related fitness for youth ages 10-17.

Students in grades 1-3 will be participating in a "Get Fit" Challenge during class time. Get Fit challenge is based on the ACTIVITYGRAM, which is in direct correlation to the FITNESSGRAM assessment. This program is a collection of activities, movements, and exercises to education students about different ways to stay active in and out of Physical Education. At the completion of the "Get Fit" challenge each student in grade 1-3 receive a "Get Fit Award" personalized with their name, grade level, date and teacher's authentication signature.

Students in grades 4-8 will be creating a S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timely) goal which allows each to set personalized goals for themselves and work towards accomplishing those goals throughout the year in Physical Education. Students will accomplish these goals by participate in the FITNESSGRAM assessments during the Fall and Spring. Testing at the beginning and the end of the year will provide growth data through physical fitness level within physical education. Students will receive 10 participation points at the end of the year for completing and participating in the FITNESSGRAM fitness assessments.

The FITNESSGRAM physical fitness assessment measures aerobic capacity, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition. We ask that, as parents, you encourage your child to participate with his/her best effort and to the best of their ability. The FITNESSGRAM assessment is a measure of good health as opposed to athletic ability. Each student will be assessed using the following assessment components:

- **PACER:** (Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run): Is progressive in intensity, provides a built in warm-up, and allows students to learn how to pace themselves. Students will run with the pace of the FitnessGram music CD, and must reach the end of the 15- 20 Meter marker on the other end before the test beeps. Students are allowed two misses before the test is ended Students are allowed to end their own test any time before the two misses are obtained.
- **Push-Up:** Students will begin with hands on the mat in a prone position. Students will attempt a push-up with their elbows reaching an angle of 90°. Students will follow the cadence on FitnessGram CD holding the down position for 1 second before returning to straight armed positions. The test continues until the student obtains two misses, or choose to end the test themselves.

- **Curl-Up:** Students will lay in the supine position on a mat with their feet on the mat and their knees at a 140 degree angle, arms are straight and parallel to their bodies, with their palms of hands on the mat. This test measures abdominal strength and endurance, which are both needed for good posture, a correct pelvic alignment, and lower back health.
- **Back-Saver Sit and Reach:** With contributions from a nearby school, CCA will manage to do this test using a four person sit-and-reach box. Students will sit with one foot touching the box while having a straight leg, while the other is in a bent position next to it. Students will then place hand over hand and push the place marker as far as possible while keeping their leg straight, and hands on top of one another. Students are asked to stretch before this test, and are given two attempts on each leg.
- **Body Composition;** also known as Body Mass Index: The relative proportions of muscle, bone and fat. This test provides an indication of the appropriateness of a child's weight relative to height, not the percentage of fat. The formula that is used in determining BMI is as follows $\text{Weight} / \text{Height}^2$. Students will participate in height and weight measurements/body composition analysis in a secure environment at school. Students will remove their shoes and stand up straight backed up to a measuring scale to obtain the height, and weight. This ensures the students do not see their weights, which are recorded only on the teacher master copy. Students can ask for personal weights in private to ensure privacy and prevention of discomfort. Helpful link: <http://www.tanita.com/es/living-healthy/>

One goal is to help young children set realistic standards for their own healthy weight and avoid the overemphasis on leanness that is often displayed by our culture. Through classroom presentations and individual discussions, we will set a tone of acceptance for different body types and acknowledge the role of genetics in obesity and body composition. With greater tolerance for variations in fitness levels, children can better determine the relationship of their body composition to health without fear of ridicule.

Students will have an option to opt out of the WEIGHT portion of the test if they choose to. Keep in mind that the FITNESSGRAM assessment program is not able to adjust scores accordingly without all required information ie: gender, age, height and weight. Without all data results may not be the most accurate, leaving the Healthy Fitness Zone scores skewed or invalid.

A confidential FITNESSGRAM report will be provided for each student to take home in an envelope at the end of the testing session. This report will include your child's scores, information on the FITNESSGRAM Healthy Fitness Zones, and how to understand the scores. The Healthy Fitness Zone represents the level of fitness needed for good health. The information on the private report will not be displayed or made public. FITNESSGRAM reports provide a way for parents, guardians and teachers to emphasize for students the importance of being active and fit throughout their lives. Each individualized report provides information about a student's overall fitness in an easy-to-read format and provides personalized tips and suggestions that can help in planning individualized fitness plans.

Students are also explained the importance of personal best. If students are caught, or the teacher is made aware of other students, “making fun” of school mates scores they are written an automatic CAP 1. This is due to the fact all students have equally being given up to 3 verbal reminders of this policy during class and testing periods.

For more information regarding the FITNESSGRAM assessment or your child’s wellness, please refer to www.FITNESSGRAM.net/fagparents. If you have other questions, please contact your child’s physical education teacher, Ms. Rutz.

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