



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Bureau of Special Education
Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

Adapted Physical Education

Frequently Asked Questions

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What does federal law say about physical education for students with disabilities?

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Is there a requirement that a certified adapted physical educator (CAPE) deliver adapted physical education?

Must adapted physical education always be provided in a self-contained, pull-out class?

If a student receives self-contained adapted physical education, does the student have to go to general physical education also?

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Can adapted physical education services be given during the general physical education class?

What does federal law say about physical education for students with disabilities?

In Section 300.108, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) states the following: Physical education services, specially designed if necessary, must be made available to every child with a disability receiving FAPE, unless the public agency enrolls children without disabilities and does not provide physical education to children without disabilities in the same grades.

Is the LEA responsible to provide physical education for students with disabilities?

Each child with a disability must be afforded the opportunity to participate in the general physical education program available unless the child is enrolled full time in a separate facility. If the IEP team has determined that the student is in need of adapted physical education, the LEA must provide the specially designed physical education instruction.

Is adapted physical education a direct service?

Yes, according to IDEA Adapted Physical Education is a direct service. It is up to each LEA to ensure that it is reflected appropriately in each student's IEP.

Is there a requirement to determine an IEP goal related to adapted physical education?

Yes, just like any other direct service, the IEP team must consider the areas of need for each student and determine appropriate IEP goal(s) goals based on assessment.

Is there a requirement that a certified adapted physical educator (CAPE) deliver adapted physical education?

No, in Pennsylvania there is no requirement for any specialized certification related to adapted physical education. Certified physical education teachers can provide Adapted Physical Education to students with disabilities.

Must adapted physical education always be provided in a self-contained, pull-out class?

Although adapted physical education could be provide in a self-contained, pull out class, the IEP team should begin with less restrictive options. The IEP team should begin with the general physical education classroom and consider what supplementary aids and services could be provided, before recommending placement in a more restrictive setting.

If a student receives self-contained adapted physical education, does the student have to go to general physical education also?

This is an IEP team decision. A student could receive adapted physical education and participate in general physical education. It would be similar to a student receiving specialized reading instruction and still participate in the general education reading class.

How is it determined that a student needs adapted physical education?

This determination should be made using assessments aligned to the PA Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education. The assessment should be completed by a physical education teacher with input from other team members.

Is there an adapted health curriculum for students with disabilities?

All students, including students with disabilities, are instructed according to the PA Academic Standards for Health, Safety, and Physical Education. It is up to each LEA to determine the appropriate curriculum; the IEP team determines any appropriate adaptations and/or modifications.

Can adapted physical education services be given during the general physical education class?

The IEP team determines how and where services are delivered. A continuum of services should be considered to meet the needs of the student. This continuum could include the general physical education class with or without supports, consultation within the general physical education classroom, co-teaching, etc.