

Questions and Answers

IL Fitness Assessments and Data Reporting

(updated 3/28/16)

1. How did fitness testing become a requirement in Illinois?

[Public Act 98-0859](#), signed into law on August 4, 2014, created the [Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education](#) (SETFPE) comprised of members representing organizations that represent physical education teachers, school officials, principals, health promotion and disease prevention advocates and experts, school health advocates and experts, and other experts with operational and academic expertise in the measurement of fitness. The SETFPE was tasked with submitting recommendations to the IL State Board of Education (ISBE) on physical fitness assessments as well as the collection and reporting of aggregate student fitness data. The SETFPE submitted its [recommendations](#) to ISBE in April 2015. After seeking public comment, ISBE adopted rules ([Part 1, Section 1.425](#)) which went into effect January 27, 2016.

2. Why must students be tested and districts submit data?

Students shall be tested in an effort to meet State Goal 20, where students achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness. Based upon continual self-assessment, fitness testing can help students identify their fitness levels and set goals for improvement. Gathering this data also enables parents and schools to better understand the health trends within their region and encourage enhancements in a school's physical education program.

3. What are the requirements of the fitness assessment rules?

Starting with school year 2016-17, schools must:

- Ensure that school personnel administering the assessments participate in **training** related to the proper administration and scoring of the assessment by reviewing the chapters of the FitnessGram Test Administration Manual titled "[Test Administration](#)", "[Aerobic Capacity](#)", and "[Muscular Strength, Endurance, and Flexibility](#)" and, if applicable, the [Brockport Physical Fitness Test Manual](#). In regards to the Brockport test, it is also recommended that staff review the "[Profiles, Test Selection Guides, Standards, and Fitness Zones](#)".
- Ensure district maintains **evidence** of individual school personnel's successful completion of the training and make it available to the ISBE upon request.
- Establish procedures and protocols to ensure the **confidentiality** of individual student assessment results consistent with the requirements of the Illinois School Records Act and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- Begin administering the following **four portions of FitnessGram protocols** in the second semester (first and second semesters preferred for pre and post results) and annually thereafter:
 - for [Aerobic Capacity](#) - the [PACER test](#) (recommended) or [Mile Run Test](#) (alternate) or Brockport test (any of the adapted tests for aerobic functioning for students with disabilities) for students in grades 4-12;
 - for [Flexibility](#) - the [Back-Saver Sit and Reach test](#) (recommended) or [Trunk Lift test](#) (alternate), or Brockport test (any of the adapted tests for flexibility or range of motion for students with disabilities) for students in grades 3-12;
 - for [Muscular Endurance](#) - the [Curl-Up test](#) or Brockport test (any of the adapted tests for strength and endurance for students with disabilities) for students in grades 3-12; and
 - for [Muscular Strength](#) - the [Push-Up test](#) or Brockport test (any of the adapted tests for strength and endurance for students with disabilities) for students in grades 3-12.
- By your district's established date, **collect and report** the aggregate data outlined under #6 below. The district in turn must report results electronically to ISBE through the Student Health Data in IWAS by May 1, 2017, and annually thereafter.

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4. Is there a cost for FitnessGram?

While a district may opt to purchase a more complete package from FitnessGram, ISBE only requires use of the free materials which are accessible at: <http://www.pyfp.org/assessment/free-materials.shtml>.

5. Who must be tested, when, and how often?

All students in grades 3-12 must be tested annually in the 2nd semester. However, schools are encouraged to administer assessments at the start of the school year in order to have pre and post test results.

6. What information needs to be reported to ISBE?

Districts must report the following data, in aggregate, to ISBE for each of the four tests outlined under #3 above:

- number of students tested by grade (5, 7 and 10 only) and gender;
- number of students that achieved a healthy fitness zone by grade (5, 7 and 10 only) and gender;
- number of students that were identified as needing improvement by grade (5, 7 and 10 only) and gender; and
- for aerobic capacity only, number of students that were identified as needing improvement-health risk by grade (5, 7 and 10 only) and gender.

Templates for schools to collect and report data to their districts and for districts to collect and report to ISBE will be made available in May 2016.

7. Does the data reported to ISBE contain individual student data?

The fitness data reported to ISBE will not contain any individual student name or assessment results. Only a school's aggregate data of those tested by grade and gender will be reported. For example, if a school had four section of fifth grade, the data submitted to ISBE would only include the total number of students by gender in the fifth grade at that school; the number of fifth grade students by gender at that school identified as demonstrating a healthy zone rank; the number of fifth grade students by gender at that school identified as needing improvement; and, for aerobic capacity only, the number of students by gender identified as needing improvement-health risk.

8. When and how will fitness data be reported to ISBE?

Schools will submit the end-of-year fitness data for grades 5, 7 & 10 to their district (deadline set by the district). By May 1st, districts will submit the aggregate data for each school to ISBE through the Student Health Data in the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system.

9. What tests and protocols are to be used for students with disabilities?

Schools should use the Brockport fitness testing methodologies for any student with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifies the FitnessGram as not appropriate.

10. Can fitness test results be used to grade a student or evaluate a teacher?

Per PA 98-0859, "Fitness scores shall not be used for grading students or evaluating teachers."

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11. Where can I find information about FitnessGram tests and protocol?

Links to websites are provided within answer #2 above.

Free materials – <http://www.pyfp.org/assessment/free-materials.shtml>

Testing-related information – <http://pyfp.org/assessment/index.shtml>

12. What are the requirements around receiving Fitnessgram “training” and for districts to document that “training”?

See answer to #3.

13. What about schools that have a P.E. waiver?

ISBE does not have any waivers that totally eliminate P.E. from the curriculum. For that reason, any district – whether it is offering daily P.E. or a reduced portion of P.E. – must comply with the administrative codes ([27-6.5](#) and [1.425](#)) pertaining to P.E./fitness testing. If some subset of students never participate in P.E. during the entire school year due to exemptions, they would not have to take the assessment, but those who are out only for the duration of their sport season should participate. ISBE has not exempted any student who is enrolled in P.E. from the assessments.

14. What about students in ROTC classes, dance classes or other activities that take them out of P.E? This pertains primarily to high school students under a waiver and only high school students under a 27-6(b) exemption. During the time that the student is participating in P.E., the district should include them in the administration of the assessment. Neither the law nor the rule relieves districts of their duties to assess students in P.E. “part time”. This may mean having more than one window for testing.

15. The fitness testing law applies to public schools. Does it apply to private schools?

No; this law only applies to public schools and possibly charter if the certified charter (agreement) requires that the charter school authorized by a school district use the same assessments as all other schools in the district and that it offer daily P.E.

16. Must a P.E. teacher be high qualified (HQ)?

Per the [Administrative Code](#), ISBE can only require highly qualified (HQ) teachers for “core academic subject areas”. Because P.E. is not listed as a core academic subject areas, the state can only *recognize* a P.E. teacher as HQ, but cannot require that a P.E. teacher be HQ. A school district may however require all of its P.E./health teachers to be HQ.