



UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT PHYSICAL EDUCATION 2009-2010

Frequently Asked Questions About FITNESSGRAM

1. Why is fitness testing important to me?

The FITNESSGRAM physical fitness assessment is based not on athletic ability, but on good health. No matter what your career path, you will live a happier, more productive life if you are healthy and physical fitness is vital to overall health. FITNESSGRAM provides accurate and reliable information about your physical condition and how it can be improved.

2. Can I “fail” the FITNESSGRAM test?

No. FITNESSGRAM is a tool to help you determine your fitness needs and guides you in planning a personalized physical activity program. The test will not affect your grades in any way.

3. Will my scores be posted or be made public?

No.

4. Will my results be compared to other students?

No. FITNESSGRAM uses Healthy Fitness Zones (HFZ) to determine your overall physical fitness. HFZs are not based on class averages or any other peer comparisons. The standards are set specifically for boys and girls of different ages using the best available research. If your score falls within the HFZ, it means you have achieved the recommended level of fitness for your age. If your score falls below the HFZ, you should engage in activities that will help you improve.

5. What are the “Healthy Fitness Zones” and how are they determined?

FITNESSGRAM’s Healthy Fitness Zones (HFZs) are research-based standards for aerobic capacity; body composition; and muscular strength, endurance, and flexibility. These standards indicate levels of fitness necessary for good health. They have been developed and refined over more than 25 years by the FITNESSGRAM Advisory Board.

A score in the HFZ represents the level of fitness thought to provide some protection from the potential health risks that result from a lack of fitness in this measure. The beginning of the HFZ represents a minimum level of fitness necessary to have acceptable health. These standards reflect reasonable levels of fitness that can be attained by most children that participate regularly in various types of physical activity. Because of this, we recommend that all students should strive to achieve a score that places them inside the HFZ. It is not uncommon for children to achieve the HFZ for some dimensions of fitness but not others. Most children usually have areas that they excel in more than others.

Healthy Fitness Zones differ for boys and for girls, and they differ based on age.

6. What are the FITNESSGRAM Test items?

There are six test items:

- Either the Mile Run (grades 6-12), PACER (20 meter shuttle run, grades 3-5) or the Walk Test
 - Measures aerobic capacity
- Push-ups
 - Measures upper body muscular strength/endurance
- Curl-ups
 - Measures abdominal muscular strength/endurance
- Shoulder Stretch

- Measures flexibility
- Trunk Lift
 - Measures trunk extensor strength and flexibility
- Body Mass Index
 - Measures body composition: appropriateness of weight relative to height

7. How does a fitness report lead to better health and fitness?

The FITNESSGRAM report generated by the FG software provides information about fitness in an easy to read format. More importantly, the report provides personalized tips and suggestions that can help in planning an individualized fitness plan. An accurate assessment of physical fitness is one component of a comprehensive physical education curriculum that incorporates health-related fitness education. The report provides a way for teachers (and parents) to teach children about the importance of being active and fit throughout their life.

8. What can I do to prepare for the fitness test?

- Actively play or move at least **60** minutes at least **five** days during the week. Walk, jog, play tennis, play racquetball, or participate in any physical activity you enjoy.
- Do strength training activities such as sit-ups, push-ups, modified push-ups or climbing activities **2-3** days each week. Begin doing as many repetitions as possible and try to increase repetitions gradually.
- Eat a healthy diet by including more fruits and vegetables and reducing fats and sugars.
- Ask a physical education teacher on your campus for specific tips on ways you can prepare for the FITNESSGRAM test.