

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM



18% of Alaska high school youth get 60 min of physical activity every day

What Is a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP)?

A Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) is a national framework to help all students reach 60 minutes of daily physical activity, before, during, and after school. Grounded in the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Model, CSPAP is a shared responsibility — not one person's job.

Five Components of CSPAP

Physical Education: Standards-based instruction

Physical Activity During School: Recess, brain breaks, active learning

Physical Activity Before & After School: Out of School Time (OST) programs, sports, active transportation

Staff Involvement: Modeling and championing wellness

Family & Community Engagement: Events, partnerships, cultural connections

CSPAP is not a single program. It is a **coordinated culture of movement** that:

- Builds equity in access to movement
- Supports academic achievement
- Strengthens school culture
- Promotes lifelong health

Identify a champion: any motivated staff member



Secure admin support: protect recess, signal that PA is a priority



Build a small team: even 2-3 people + a community representative

Alaska Youth Presidential Physical Fitness Program

Alaska's Presidential Physical Fitness Program approach embeds fitness testing within a CSPAP model, connecting fitness assessment to broader efforts in PE, recess, classroom activity, and community engagement. By incorporating Native Youth Olympics (NYO) activities alongside the assessment, Alaska's model honors Indigenous culture while building a program that's practical for rural and resource-limited districts.

See back page to learn how your district can join the cohort and help pilot this Alaskan-ized approach.

CSPAP in Alaska

No PE specialist? Limited facilities? Staff wearing many hats?

CSPAP was designed for exactly this context. You don't need a dedicated PE teacher, a gym, or special equipment to build an active school culture. You just need a starting point.

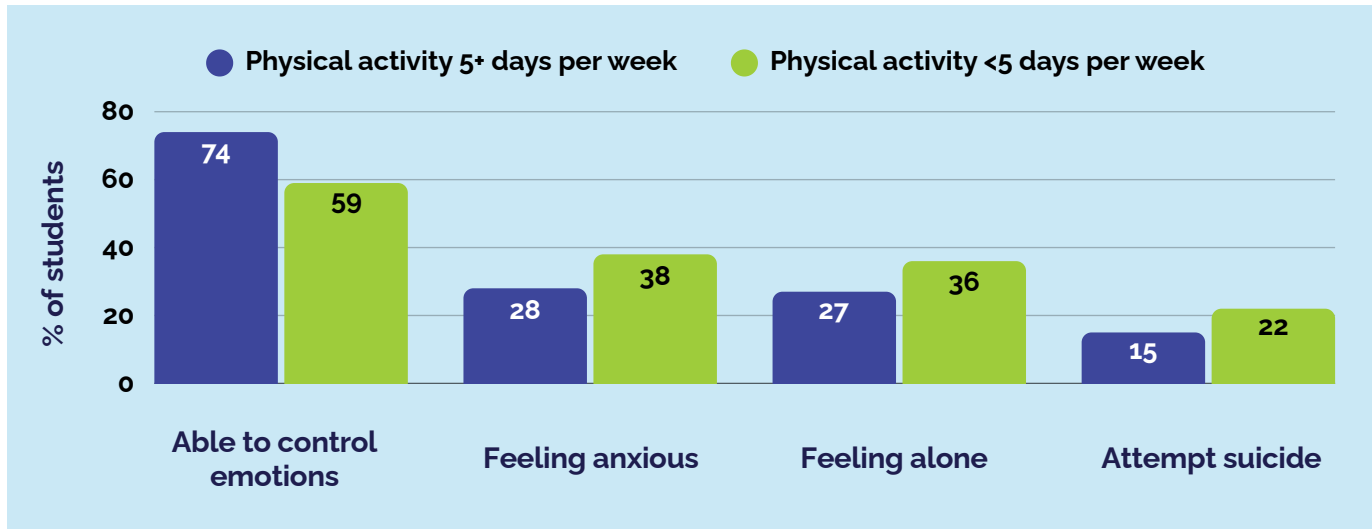
Sources:
2023 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey
SHAPE America shapeamerica.org/cspap

Movement Supports Learning

Physical Activity & Mental Health

Alaska youth who get 5+ days of PA/week vs. those who don't:

17% of Alaska high school students attend PE class all 5 days per week



Physical Activity Improves Learning

Physically active students:

- 20% more likely to earn an A in math or English
- standardized test scores increased 6% over three years
- improved focus and memory

Moderate to high intensity aerobic activity (swimming, running, brisk walking) over several months improves executive function and test performance.

76%

of Alaska schools offer physical activity in classrooms other than PE

Greater aerobic fitness is associated with:

- Better visual working memory
- Faster reaction times
- Spatial reasoning and memory
- Improved cognitive flexibility
- Abstract reasoning



Sources:

2023 Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

2024 School Health Profiles

Herting, Megan; and Xiaofang Chu, 2017. Exercise, Cognition, and the Adolescent Brain. *Birth Defects Res.*, 109(20), 1672-1679. doi.org/10.1002/bdr2.1178

Component 1: Physical Education

PE is a standards-based academic subject, not free play. Quality PE builds the knowledge, skills, and confidence for lifelong physical activity.

Best Practices:

Standards-aligned curriculum at every grade level

Developmentally appropriate for all skill levels

Recommended time:
150 min/week (elementary)
225 min/week (secondary)

>50% of class time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA)

Assessment guides learning and growth, not used for grading purposes

Inclusive - all students participate, including those with disabilities

What to Avoid:

- Grading students on fitness test scores
- Using exercise as punishment
- Allowing PE waivers without alternative physical activity
- Limiting PE to traditional, competitive sports only

Physical Education vs. Physical Activity

Physical Education:

Structured, standards-based education

Physical Activity:

Any movement of the body. In the school context, this is often during recess and classroom-based physical activity

Both are essential. Both count toward the recommended 60 minutes per day.



Component 2: Physical Activity During the School Day

63% of school time is spent sedentary

Active Classroom Strategies

Classroom Movement Breaks

- 3-5 minutes every 45-60 min of instruction
- Energizers to wake students up; calming breaks to refocus

Active Academics

- Active quizzes: students stand or move to answer
- Kinesthetic lessons: act out the water cycle, heart chambers, multiplication

Flexible Seating

- Wobble stools, standing desks, exercise ball chairs, floor seating
- Even standing periodically at a regular desk reduces sedentary time
- Set clear expectations; establish a management system

Recess Strategies

Go for a walk

- Accessible for all skill levels, no equipment needed
- Nature trails, school grounds, or hallways in winter

Dance

- Elevates heart rate, relieves stress, no equipment needed
- Play music and let students move freely
- Partner with cultural organizations to bring traditional Alaska Native dance into schools

Daily Recess

- Minimum 20 min/day for elementary
- Activity zones, equipment, and active supervision
- Secondary schools: offer active breaks during lunch or transitions
- Never withhold recess as punishment
- Recess before lunch helps students eat more at lunch and reduces behavioral issues

Alaska's Physical Activity in Schools law requires that K-8 students be given opportunities for **54 minutes of physical activity per day**, bell-to-bell.



Sources:

Egan, Cate, 2019. "Why We Need to Reduce Sedentary Time In Schools." SHAPE America Blog.

Alaska Statute 14.30.360 Health education curriculum; physical activity guidelines.

<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/statutes.asp#14.30.360>

Component 3: Physical Activity Before & After School

26%

of Alaska students walk/bike to school at least once a week

Best Practices

- Align OST programs with Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards 2.0 — at least 30 min of **Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA)**
 - MVPA = any exercise that significantly raises your heart rate, makes you breathe noticeably harder, and prompts your body to burn more energy
- Offer inclusive intramurals — no tryouts, varied skill levels
- Promote sport sampling over early specialization
- Use shared-use agreements to expand facility access

Types of OST Physical Activity

- **Before/after-school programs and clubs** – offers structured opportunities for movement outside the classroom
- **Intramural and youth sports** — provide additional benefits beyond physical health, including higher self-esteem, fewer depressive symptoms, and stronger social skills.
- **Active transportation** — walking/biking to school adds several minutes of Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity to a student's day

See the Resources list (page 8) for links to implement these programs.

Out-of-school time (OST) — roughly 7:00–8:30 AM and 3:00–5:30 PM — offers flexible, community-connected opportunities to add physical activity beyond the school day.



Component 4: Staff Involvement

Physical activity is a **shared school responsibility**. When staff model movement and champion physical activity, students follow.

Best Practices:

Supply equipment: activity cards, movement dice, yoga mats

Secure administrative support: ensure leadership protects recess time and allows for scheduling flexibility to incorporate physical activity

Provide ongoing professional development

Form a multidisciplinary active school team

Give teachers autonomy to integrate physical activity into their routines

Build in staff wellness opportunities

How Staff Can Support An Active School Culture

- **Morning movement routine:** 5 min of whole-school movement to start the day — dancing, Native Youth Olympics activities, stretching, or a simple exercise
- **Walking staff meeting:** Take a 10-min walk during your next staff meeting
- **Model it:** Do brain breaks alongside students — your participation supports student buy-in
- **Celebrate it:** Highlight physical activity wins in morning announcements and newsletters

20%

of Alaska secondary schools have a written physical activity plan

Physical activity breaks for students during the school day can be a physical activity break for staff, too!



Component 5: Family & Community Engagement

Physical activity shouldn't stop when students leave school. Families and communities extend, reinforce, and culturally ground physical activity habits for life.

Best Practices

- Accommodate diverse schedules: morning, evening, and weekend options for events
- **Communicate in multiple formats** — paper, phone, radio, social media
- **Invite families to lead:** teach traditional games, subsistence skills, cultural dance
- Plan around community rhythms (seasons, local events)
- Develop **shared-use agreements** to open school facilities to the community



Alaska Community Partnerships

Native Youth Olympics

- Partner with local NYO organizers for after-school clubs and community events
- Invite elders and traditional athletes to share the history and values behind the games

Culture Camps

- Partner with groups like the Arctic Education Foundation and local tribal councils
- Culture camps teach subsistence hunting, fishing, traditional arts, plant use, and build community bonds

Tribal Health & Local Recreation

- Invite local sports organizations to co-host events or lend equipment
- Shared-use agreements with gyms, rec centers, and tribal facilities

Alaska Spotlight: Native Youth Olympics (NYO)

- Year-round program serving 2,000+ Alaska youth annually
- Junior (grades 1-8) and Senior (grades 9-12) divisions
- Events: Seal Hop, Kneel Jump, Toe Kick, Two-Foot High Kick, Indian Stick Pull, and more
- Builds leadership, cooperation, respect, and cultural connection
- Can be an after-school club, PE unit, or community event

Alaska Spotlight: Healthy Futures Challenge

- Free Physical Activity Logs — printable and fillable PDF
- Goal: 60 min/day, 16+ active days/month
- **Game Changer Fund:** Mini-grants for physical activity equipment, events, and programs
- **Kicks for Kids:** Free athletic shoes for Alaska youth

See the Resources list (page 8) for links to implement these programs.

Resources

Physical Education

OPENphysed: provides free lesson plans and curriculum modules for Physical Education grades K-12, and resources for active classrooms, active recess, and active homes

SPARK PE: curriculum supports students in the development of physical movement and cooperation skills

SHAPE America: National Physical Education Standards define what a student should know and be able to do as result of a highly effective physical education program

SHAPE Alaska: Alaska Chapter of the Society of Health and Physical Educators

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools: brings youth with and without intellectual disabilities together through education, sports, and youth leadership

Physical Activity During the School Day

CDC Classroom PA Toolkit: Resources and activities for physical activity in the classroom

100 Mile Club: A challenge for students to run or walk 100 miles, with resources for schools

The Walking Classroom: educational podcasts for students to listen to while taking walks as a class

Marathon Kids: a program encouraging kids to run

GoNoodle: Videos to get kids moving and practicing mindfulness

Playworks: Playworks collaborates with schools to train staff or provide recess coaches to facilitate healthy recess.

Peaceful Playgrounds: create a safe play environment, support healthy active kids, and advocate for recess and free play, while reducing playground conflict

Walkabouts Platform: classroom lessons to integrate physical activity into math, ELA, science, and more

Physical Activity Before/After School

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards 2.0 — comprehensive standards for out of school time programs

Safe Routes to School — making it safer and easier for students to walk or bike to school

Active Kids Active Minds — free physical activity program with lesson plans

CATCH After School — nutrition education and physical activity program for after school

Aspen Institute Project Play — building healthy communities through sports

Family/Community Engagement

Healthy Futures Alaska: empowering Alaska's youth to build the habit of daily physical activity

Play Every Day: a public health education campaign to help Alaska children grow up to be a healthy weight through physical activity and drinking water

Native Youth Olympics: celebrates and preserves Alaska Native traditions through athletic competition

ANTHC: tribal health organization designed to meet the health needs of Alaska Native and American Indian people throughout the state of Alaska, along with wellness programs, disease research and prevention, and much more.

CDC Parents for Healthy Schools: resources for creating healthier schools where students are safe, engaged, supported, and challenged

National PTA Healthy Lifestyles: dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement



SIGN YOUR DISTRICT UP FOR THE **ALASKA PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**



A cohort for leaders committed to strengthening their district's physical activity and physical education programs while implementing new Presidential Physical Fitness Testing

About the Cohort

We are now accepting applications for a limited cohort of Alaska-based teams ready to take action on physical activity. This opportunity is designed for schools and districts who are motivated to assess their current efforts, identify areas for growth, and implement meaningful changes. Participants will engage in a series of structured virtual sessions, collaborate with peers across the state, and receive guided support to advance their goals.

Sign Up



Needs Assessment



What To Expect

Safety & Wellbeing Summit

Attend a pre-conference session in Anchorage on September 15, 2026

Cohort Sessions

Participate virtually via Zoom

Peer Learning

Collaborate with other leaders across Alaska

New Strategies

Commit to implementing physical activity in your school or district

Please take this needs assessment to help us tailor the program to the needs of Alaska districts.



ACTION
FOR HEALTHY KIDS