
**RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY OF HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION
CAPE GIRARDEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE**

DESE Source: Missouri Frameworks for Curriculum Development Fine Arts

Research is clear. The healthy, physically active child is more likely to be academically motivated, alert and successful in school and more likely to establish habits of behavior that will foster good health throughout life thereby enhancing the quality of life. More than twenty-five major reports published recently give a consistent and clear message: children and youth who are physically, emotionally and socially well are better able to benefit from learning experiences provided in school.

Health behaviors, the most important predictors of current and future health status, are influenced by a variety of factors that include awareness and knowledge of health issues, skills necessary to develop healthy behaviors, and opportunities to practice the behaviors.

A major threat to economic competitiveness in our state and in the nation is the health status of the work force. Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; low levels of physical fitness; poor nutrition; accidental injuries; and non-job related stress contribute to lowered health status. Poor worker health status results in loss of work time and increased medical care and insurance costs to treat preventable disease as well as inhibiting the quality of life.

Because health behaviors are learned, they can be shaped and changed. Fostering healthy children is the shared responsibility of families, communities and schools. Planned, sequential, age and developmentally appropriate K-12 curriculum in health education and physical education is necessary for students to become physically educated and health-literate individuals thereby contributing to economic competitiveness and to an enhanced quality of life.

It is the growing belief that any future advances made in improving the nation's health will not result from spectacular biomedical breakthroughs. Rather, advances will result from personally initiated actions that are directly influenced by the individual's health-related attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. School health education and physical education can make valuable contributions in areas such as these and can play an important role in improving the quality of life.

Physical education contributes to the development of a physically educated person who:

- Has learned skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities
- Is physically fit
- Does participate regularly in physical activity
- Knows the implications of and the benefits from involvement in physical activities
- Values physical activity and its contributions to a healthful lifestyle (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 1992)

A Comprehensive School Health Program can play a leading role in enabling students to lead healthy, active lives; now and in the future. The two curricular areas of a Comprehensive School Health Program, health education and physical education, contribute to becoming physically educated and developing health literacy. Quality programs provide students with opportunities to explore concepts in depth, analyze and solve real-life problems, work cooperatively on tasks that develop and enhance their conceptual understanding, and develop physical and social skills necessary for a healthy, active life.