



Application of Physical Education Performance Standards for Students with Disabilities

Guaranteeing that physical education services are provided to students with disabilities is a necessity as districts implement regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (commonly referred to as IDEA). IDEA requires that each child with a disability receiving special education services be (a) afforded the opportunity to participate in the general physical education program available to nondisabled children; and (b) provided with specially designed instruction to address the unique needs of the child, if needed. For physical education, specially designed instruction [adapting, as appropriate, to the needs of the child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction; 20 U.S.C. 1401(29)] is delivered through adapted or special physical education services, which can be delivered in the general physical education setting or other more restrictive settings (e.g., adapted physical education classes, one-on-one settings, etc.). Consistent with IDEA's mandate for instruction in the least restrictive environment, removal of children with disabilities from the general physical education environment occurs "only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" [20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5)]. As such, adapted or special physical education services delivered in the least restrictive environment are an appropriate alternative to removal from physical education programming. Some of the elements supporting Georgia's Physical Education Standards of Excellence (GSE) may not be developmentally or functionally appropriate for every child with a disability unless accommodations or modifications are implemented. Physical educators must be committed and prepared to make appropriate modifications to the curriculum and to assessment procedures in order to meet the unique needs of the learner. This provision of appropriate accommodations and modifications to meet individual needs allows for meaningful and relevant physical education experiences in a safe and secure environment.