

Alabama Physical Fitness Assessment Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is fitness testing required?

A. Yes. Pursuant to the *Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2*
(ii) The Alabama Physical Fitness Assessment must be administered to Grade 2-12 students, including students who receive exemptions from the State Superintendent of Education. Fitness data must be reported to the State Department of Education (SDE).

Q. How often is fitness testing required and the testing scores reported?

A. Every year. (See page 7.)

Q. Who will be tested on the Alabama Physical Fitness Assessment (APFA)?

A. Grade 2-12 students who are:

- enrolled in any physical education class that they receive a grade must be tested and their data posted in INow Health. (e.g. students taking physical education electives)
- who have physical education waivers (a granted waiver from the State Superintendent of Education) to substitute marching band (including majorettes, dance team, flag corps), and athletics (including cheerleading) must be tested and their data posted in INow Health.
- JROTC students their data reported in INow Health.

Q. Who may administer the test items?

A. A physical educator trained in APFA test administration must conduct the testing.

Q. Who may post scores into INow Health?

A. INow Health is password protected; therefore only the teacher who has administered the fitness assessment, and is the teacher on record who awards an academic grade for the student may post scores into INow Health. Other teachers may not post scores into INow for other teachers. (Alabama State Board of Education Resolution Data Use and Governance Policy, adopted 10/10/2013).

Q. Who may be trained to assist with the fitness assessment?

A. The following persons may be trained to assist with the fitness assessment:

- Special education aides who accompany students to physical education class;
- Physical education aides;
- Parent volunteers, college students, classroom teachers, and administrators; or
- Other personnel designated by the school principal.

Q. When will testing occur for Grades 2-12 students?

A. Testing will occur for Grades 2-12 students at the following times:

- Pretesting will occur October 1 to December 15
- Post testing will occur March 1 to May 15 with results turned in to the State Department of Education by June 1.
- Testing for students on block scheduling will occur during the semester in which the student is enrolled in a physical education class. Results for fall and spring semesters must be posted into INow Health June 1. No email notification or hard copies need to be sent to the State Department of Education.

Q: Which grades are not to be tested?

A: Grades K and 1 are not to be tested. During Grades K and 1, instruction should focus on development of motor and locomotor skills. At this age, student skill level is not sufficiently developed to allow students to master or understand fitness testing. During Grade 1, instruction should focus on students' becoming familiar with fitness test items and skills by allowing students to practice fitness test items.

Q: What is the testing procedure for Grade 2 students who are seven years old?

A: All Grade 2 students are to be administered the fitness assessment regardless of their age. Report only the Grade 2 students who are 8 years old. When these students are 8 years old in Grade 3 will be their first reporting year.

Q: What is the testing procedure for an eight-year-old student in Grade 1?

A: Do not single out students who are 8 years old in Grade K or 1. Wait until these students are in Grade 2 to assess and report.

Q: Should the fitness score be included on the student's academic report card?

A: No, but results must be placed on STI/INOW.

Q: Should an academic grade be assigned for the APFA?

A: No, assigning an academic grade for the APFA would be an inappropriate practice.

Q: Why is the shuttle run not included in testing?

A: Agility is not a component of health-related fitness and is not to be reported as part of the APFA; however, teachers may elect to include additional fitness assessment items. The addition of these items will not be reported to the state or inserted into STI/INOW.

Q: Does the Confidentiality Agreement have to be signed and given to principals every academic year?

A: Yes.

Q: Why have the standards decreased for male and female students from the percentiles for the President's Challenge Fitness Test?

A: The Alabama Fitness Assessment is a new test based on the Presidential Health Fitness Test and the FitnessGram. The test is criterion-referenced and is not based on percentile scores. The criterion values are based on health-related standards. If students score below the Healthy Fitness Zone they may be at potential risk for future health-related fitness problems. Use the charts in the Alabama Fitness Test Manual, not the Presidential Fitness Test Manual.

Q: What is the procedure for students who move away or into a school during testing?

A: If time permits, teachers may choose to allow the student to make up test components, or code the student as NT (Not Tested). If this code is utilized a brief reason must be indicated in the note section in INow Health. E.g., Student was enrolled as a new student during testing.

Q: Once the test data is posted into INow Health can student's fitness data be tracked from year-t0-year?

A: Fitness test data becomes part of the student's health record and will follow them to any public school in Alabama and allows teachers to track progress.

Reporting Information

Q: What testing data for students from which grades should be reported to the Alabama Department of Education?

A: Test data for students in Grades 2-12, including students with physical education waivers and students enrolled in physical education electives, must be posted into INow Health.

Q: How, when, and by whom will test data be reported?

A: Reporting procedures:

- Teachers must post individual student scores on the Information Now (INow) Health Data Base.
- Only the physical education teacher who administered the fitness assessment for students on their class rolls is allowed to post scores in INow Health.
- Deadline to post testing data for fall (pretest) scores is January 1 of each year, and spring (posttest) is June 1 of every year. (Alabama State Board of Education Resolution Data Use and Governance Policy, adopted

Q: Who should receive the Student Feedback Report?

A: Parents and students should receive the Student Feedback Report, and may access their child's scores through the parent portal of INow.

Q: May the test be modified to accommodate special needs students?

A: Yes, as long as there is physical education goals stated in the IEP, and the IEP team has met with the physical education teacher to discuss modifications and accommodations. Teachers are encouraged to meet with the IEP team prior to testing and be familiar with the IEP prior to testing.

Special Needs and 504 Student Information

Q: Are provisions available for student exemptions from the APFA?

A: Yes. Exemptions may be made for students in the situations listed below. In addition, it is highly recommended that pregnant students not perform any component of the fitness test.

- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans that specify nonparticipation in physical education, or
- Medical exemptions on file with the school nurse or principal for certain conditions such as broken bones or illness.

Sit-and-Reach/V-sit Information

Q: Why are the V-sit and the sit-and-reach tests considered important in determining if a student is healthy?

A: Flexibility is a major component of health-related fitness. The research data shows that poor flexibility can be associated with a number of health problems. It is important for students to maintain an appropriate level of flexibility. As students get older, they tend to lose flexibility, and tasks such as tying shoes and getting in and out of cars and the bath may become difficult without assistance. It is very important for physical education teachers to help students learn about the importance of flexibility training and to work on flexibility in their classes.

Q: Why have the standards increased on the V-sit and sit and reach test for male and female students from the percentiles on the President's Challenge Fitness Test?

A: The V-sit and reach test in the Alabama test is based on health-related fitness standards and is a criterion test as compared to a norm referenced percentile test. The Alabama test does not use percentiles since it is a criterion test. The traditional Presidential Fitness Test uses percentiles such as the 85th percentile as standards for receiving awards. The Alabama test uses a health-related criterion flexibility test and is based on a Healthy Fitness Zone and a Needs Improvement Zone. The goal is for students to score in the Healthy Fitness Zone for flexibility. For this test there is no High Fitness Zone. Feet are established at the 18 inch mark on the yard stick, and for every inch above 18 inches they score +1 inch. One inch below the 18-inch mark would be -1 inch.

Q: Why is there no high fitness zone (HFZ) for the flexibility component (V-sit, Sit and Reach)?

A: It is well established that individuals need a minimal level of flexibility. A review of the literature found that additional amounts of flexibility do not necessarily improve your health-related status. Individuals who are hyper-mobile are not necessarily more physically fit than someone who scores in the healthy fitness zone. The goal is for students to have a healthy level of flexibility; however, individuals are not discouraged from having high levels of flexibility which may be important for performance in activities such as cheerleading, gymnastics, weight training, dance, and martial arts.

Push-up Information

Q: Why do boys have to improve in the push-up test as they age but not girls?

A: As boys get older, they go through puberty and increase their muscular strength and endurance. When girls reach puberty they tend not to increase strength levels and have to work against increases in percent body fat. Physiologically boys should increase their number of push-ups. It is important for girls to be able to maintain their strength and work on increases; however, traditionally we do not see increases in strength in girls as they age.

20 Meter Shuttle Test /Mile Information

Q: If a teacher tests in both the mile and 20 meter shuttle test and a student scores better on one test than on the other, can the better score be recorded?

A: Yes, if time is available and does not take away from quality instruction, the teacher may test both on the 20 meter shuttle test and the mile to provide the student with the best results. The goal is to provide students with the best results possible. Fitness testing should be motivational, and sometimes students have a difficult time in pacing during the mile run. The 20 meter shuttle test helps students work at a prescribed pace. They both measure cardiovascular fitness, but a student will not likely score exactly the same on both tests based on the predication of cardiovascular fitness.

Q: Why is there a significant difference in the number of laps girls are required to perform compared to boys on the 20 meter shuttle test?

A: Several studies have been done looking at comparisons between boys and girls and the 20 meter shuttle test vs. the mile run. The research shows differences for boys and girls and mile run vs. 20 meter shuttle test. The Fitness Gram evaluated hundreds of students and established the criterion scores. Our scores are based on Fitness Gram scores and research related to the Fitness Gram. For younger students, you are encouraged to use the 20 meter shuttle test, since younger students may have a difficult time in pacing themselves. Either test is appropriate in terms of measuring cardiovascular fitness. Both tend to have acceptable validity and reliability as field test items.