

***What constitutes a highly qualified physical education teacher?***  
**(Position paper from NASPE)**

It is the position of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) that it is critical to have highly qualified physical education teachers delivering a standards-based curriculum that will assist children in adopting and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Highly qualified physical education teachers possess the skills and knowledge to facilitate improved teaching practices, strengthen the quality of physical education instruction, and empower students to achieve and maintain healthy, active lifestyles. NASPE acknowledges that highly qualified physical education teachers will be certified to teach by virtue of having completed an accredited physical education teacher education program. Highly Qualified Physical Education Teachers exhibit the following attributes:

- Possess the skills, knowledge, and values outlined in the NASPE *National Standards for Beginning Physical Education Teachers* (NASPE, 2003). Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs are to facilitate preservice teachers' progress toward being deemed "highly qualified" upon entrance into the profession. Physical Education Teacher Education programs should provide preservice teachers with substantial pedagogical and content knowledge bases; afford many opportunities for preservice teachers to participate in an array of field experiences where they can interact with veteran teachers and diverse students at all grade levels while seeing the application of classroom principles; and develop, nurture and reinforce specific professional behaviors that facilitate student learning.
- Base their teaching on the national standards for K-12 Physical Education (NASPE, 2004) in order to provide students a foundation of skills and knowledge that can apply to many activities so that students are willing, able, and interested in seeking a lifetime of physical activity. Highly qualified physical education teachers understand the importance of meeting the needs of all types of learners and will use the outcomes provided in the national standards to elicit ideas for a variety of instructional strategies to do so. By relating the national standards to developmentally appropriate physical activities, highly qualified teachers give a purpose to their curriculum and illustrate that physical education has meaningful, educational, and significant content.

- Establish high expectations for learning within the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains and support student learning through the creation of an environment that is conducive to learning. Highly qualified teachers manage the day-to-day functions that are necessary for classes to run smoothly, as well as plan and deliver instruction of the physical education content. This content includes appropriate practice opportunities that contribute to attainment of specific learning goals. Students are encouraged to be physically active inside and outside of the school setting.

- View assessment as an integral component of the teaching-learning process. Regular, ongoing formative and summative assessments provide students with adequate feedback regarding progress towards the specified learning goals. Additionally, regular assessment provides valuable information about student achievement of the content standards and guides the program evaluation process to affect meaningful curriculum change.

- Demonstrate professionalism and ethical behavior in the learning environment through positive interactions with students, colleagues, administrators, and community members. Highly qualified physical education teachers use sound teaching practices to deliver curricular content, keep abreast of new information in the discipline, and assume leadership roles while advocating for the importance of physical education within the educational process. They seek opportunities to interact and educate members of the family and school community of the value of physical activity in sustaining healthy lifestyles.

- Engage in reflective practices while systematically reviewing their curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment tools. They constantly seek to update and refine their professional credentials. Highly qualified physical education teachers welcome professional development opportunities such as workshops, conferences, field research, and professional projects to increase their knowledge in the field, preserve their abilities as quality teachers, and work with colleagues to the benefit of their students and their profession. They are members of a professional physical education organization and often serve as leaders within the organization.

## **References**

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2003). *National standards for beginning physical education teachers* (2nd ed.). Reston, VA: Author.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2004). *Moving into the future: National standards for physical education* (2nd ed.). Reston, VA: Author.