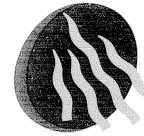


25 SEP 2006



**Queensland
Government**

Department of
Education, Training and the Arts

Dr Ian Holland
Secretary
The Senate Environment, Communications,
Information Technology and the Arts
Reference Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

Thank you for your letter dated 3 August 2006 seeking advice from the Department of Education and the Arts on the nature of sporting activities for school-aged children. These responses are relevant to government schools only.

Question 1 – *what physical education classes are required and what are available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?*

- Implementation of the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education (HPE) syllabus, developed by the Queensland Studies Authority, is mandatory in all state schools. The syllabus outlines indicative time allocations required in this area to be an average 60 hours per year, or approximately 90 minutes per week, from Years 1 to 10, however, individual schools make decisions about scheduling specific activities.
- Senior Physical Education may be offered as an elective subject for students in Years 11 and 12. This syllabus outlines the minimum number of hours dedicated to this course of study is 55 hours per semester, or approximately 165 minutes per week, in Years 11 and 12.
- Some schools may offer other school-based physical education and sports programs that are additional to those outlined in these syllabuses.

Question 2 – *what proportion of physical education classes are required to involve exercise activity?*

- While the Years 1 to 10 HPE syllabus does not prescribe the proportion of time that students are meant to be engaged in physical activity, it states that 'a significant amount of time should be allocated to learning experiences that actively engage students in physical activity'. This key learning area emphasises the use of physical activity as the medium for learning.
- The senior syllabus indicates that at least 50 per cent of the subject's timetabled school time is to be devoted to students' performance in physical activity.

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Question 3 – *what school sport during regular school hours is required, and what is available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?*

- Schools with an enrolment greater than 300 are to provide inter-school sport teams. This is a departmental requirement.
- The State is divided into 12 school sport regions and subsequently into 132 school sport districts (according to geographic location).
- These districts conduct school sport programs to suit the local situation. This has resulted in a variety of type and varying frequency of events. Remoteness and isolation factor heavily on the programs available in country areas.
- There is wide participation across the State in a range of sports and a range of year levels and gender combinations.
- Some school sport districts conduct weekly competitions throughout the year while more remote districts may run week-long sport camps once a term.
- Most interschool competitions incorporate Years 5–12 (10–19 years of age in the year of competition). For those students who do not compete at the inter-school sport level, schools offer intra-school sport programs at year levels of their choosing.
- Queensland also supports a highly structured regional representative program (non-compulsory). These are held over a 3/5 day period, incorporating school time and a weekend. These programs involve each of the 12 school sport regions selecting regional teams to compete at state championships.
- There are 49 state championships rostered throughout the State, involving 22 different sports each year in a range of age groups, generally at the 12 year, 15 year and 19 year age levels.

Question 4 – *what other obligations are there to participate in school-organised sporting activity outside regular school hours?*

- There are no obligations for government school students to participate in school-organised sporting activities outside regular school hours.
- Where a local area chooses to conduct an 'out-of-regular-school-hours program', students participate by choice. The representative program, as described above, is a program that parents and students also participate in by choice.

Question 5 – *in each of the above cases, what is included in the meaning of sport, physical activity or exercise?*

- School sport – refers to:
 - a competitive activity that requires formal rules of play, and is regulated and supervised by school personnel
 - a regular weekly team competition with surrounding schools in an organised district
 - a regular weekly competition conducted within the school (intra-school)
 - an occasional competition through statewide school-based events organised by the relevant school sport committee
 - an opportunity for students to attend special event days/weeks/camps involving nearby schools
 - an opportunity for students to participate in elite level events at the district, region, state, interstate and international arena.

- Physical activity – refers to any form of physical movement or exercise that is at least moderate intensity, such as walking, running, swimming, or other sports. This information above refers to planned, as opposed to incidental, physical activity.
- Physical education – refers to planned teaching and learning that is focused on the development of the fundamental knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for participation in physical activity. It is focused on maximising participation and enjoyment of physical activity, developing an appreciation for skilled performances as well as promoting a sense of health and wellbeing.

Question 6 – *in each of the above cases, who determines whether schools and students are complying with the relevant policy?*

- The requirement regarding inter-school sport teams for schools with an enrolment greater than 300 is monitored by each of the education district executive director, schools (EDS). Schools are responsible to the EDS of the district in which they are located.

Question 7 – *does the regulation of any of the above matters vary according to the type of school (for example, public, Catholic or other private)?*

- The requirement as detailed above (Question 1) is relevant to government schools only. There are no departmental requirements for non-state schools in relation to school sport.
- However, the majority of non-government schools voluntarily participate in weekly competitions, as well as the representative school sport programs.
- In country areas, the involvement of the non-government sector enhances the weekly interschool sport competition for all schools.

Please feel free to contact either Ms Jacky Dawson, Manager, Curriculum Branch on telephone (07) 3237 1109 or Ms Mary Summerson, Manager, Queensland School Sport Unit on telephone (07) 3350 7829 should you require further information.

I trust this information is of assistance to the committee in its investigations.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Hunter
Director-General

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