

January 2008

Dear EM-S ISD Parent,

Senate Bill 530 requires beginning with the 2007-08 school year, that the FITNESSGRAM physical fitness assessment be administered to all students in grades 3-12. FITNESSGRAM is a health-related fitness assessment developed by the Cooper Institute for Aerobic Research and is a research-based criterion referenced test.

EM-S ISD considers FITNESSGRAM a quality assessment for three reasons:

1. FITNESSGRAM establishes a baseline of a healthy fitness zone from which students can set goals and check their progress (non-competitive) to plan for lifelong physical activity and to maintain and improve their fitness level. Health-related fitness assessment measures students' aerobic capacity, muscular strength/endurance, flexibility and body composition.
2. FITNESSGRAM provides recommended activity program options that will help students reach healthy fitness zones in those areas where they need to improve.
3. FITNESSGRAM does not place an emphasis on skill or sports-related fitness such as speed measured by an individual's 40 yard dash time. It does not compare students to other students.

FITNESSGRAM tests all students regardless of age, gender, or ability. Students are encouraged to be self-aware of health-related fitness and take responsibility by setting personal fitness goals. When students focus on the process of doing their personal best, a more positive lifelong impact is achieved.

On your child's test day, he/she should wear athletic shorts, a t-shirt, socks, and tennis shoes. If your child forgets proper testing attire, he/she will proceed with the fitness test at a later time.

If you have any questions about the FITNESSGRAM Assessment, please contact Dawna Schweitzer, Coordinator for Science/Health/PE (817.232.0880) or refer to <http://www.FITNESSGRAM.net/texas/>.

Sincerely,

Dawna Schweitzer
Coordinator for Science/Health/PE
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD
817.232.0880

Frequently Asked Questions About FITNESSGRAM

1. Why is fitness testing important to me?

The FITNESSGRAM physical fitness assessment is based not on athletic ability, but on good health. No matter what your career path, you will live a happier, more productive life if you are healthy – and physical fitness is vital to overall health. FITNESSGRAM provides accurate and reliable information about your physical condition and how it can be improved.

2. Can I “fail” the FITNESSGRAM test?

No. FITNESSGRAM is a tool to help you determine your fitness needs and guides you in planning a personalized physical activity program. The test will not affect your grades in any way.

3. Will my scores be posted or be made public?

No.

4. Will me results be compared to other students?

No. FITNESSGRAM uses Healthy Fitness Zones (HFZ) to determine your overall physical fitness. HFZs are not based on class averages or any other peer comparisons. The standards are set specifically for boys and girls of different ages using the best available research. If your score falls within the HFZ, it means you have achieved the recommended level of fitness at your age. If your score falls below the HFZ, you should engage in activities that will help you improve.

5. What are the FITNESSGRAM Test items?

There are six test items:

- PACER Test (20 meter shuttle runs)
- Push-ups (measures upper body muscular strength/endurance)
- Curl-ups (measures abdominal muscular strength/endurance)
- Back Saver Sit and reach (measures flexibility)
- Trunk Lift (measures trunk extensor strength and flexibility)
- Body Mass Index (measures body composition: appropriateness of weight relative to height)

6. What can I do to prepare for the fitness test?

- Actively play or move at least 60 minutes at least five days during the week. Walk, jog, play tennis, play racquetball, or participate in any physical activity you enjoy.
- Do strength training activities such as sit-ups, push-ups, modified push-ups or climbing activities 2-3 days each week. Begin doing as many repetitions as possible and try to increase repetitions gradually.
- Eat a healthy diet by including more fruits and vegetables and reducing fats and sugars.
- Ask a physical education teacher or coach on your campus for specific tips on ways you can prepare not only for the FITNESSGRAM test, but for a good lifetime of good overall health.

FITNESS GRAM Test Items

1. The PACER – Measures Aerobic Capacity

This is a multistage fitness test adapted from the 20-meter shuttle run. The 20 meter PACER (#2) on the CD is used for this test.

2. Body Mass Index (height and weight) – Measures Body Composition

Each student is measured and weighed. Data is entered as feet/inches and pounds. Drop fractions of an inch or pound. Have students remove shoes for this test.

3. Curl-up – Measures Abdominal Strength and Endurance

This is a curl-up with knees flexed and feet unanchored. This test is administered using the curl-up strip. The strip for students that are 10 years old or older is 4.5 inches wide. The Curl-up (#3) on the CD is used to administer this test.

4. Trunk Lift – Measures trunk extensor strength and flexibility

The student being tested lies on the mat in a prone position(facedown). Toes are pointed and hands are placed under the thighs. Place a piece of tape on the floor. The student's eyes must stay focused on the piece of tape as the student lifts upper body off the floor. Measure the distance from the floor to the student's chin. The maximum distance is 12 inches.

5. 90 Degree Push-up – Measures upper body strength and endurance

Student does push-ups using the Push-up (#4) on the CD. Make sure the students are not stopping and are maintaining a rhythmic pace. The students should achieve a 90 degree angle with the elbow on each repetition. Make sure the students maintain correct body position with a straight back and extend arms fully.

6. Back Saver Sit and Reach – Measures flexibility

Use the sit and reach boxes. Your campus has several of these boxes. The students must remove shoes, sit straight, and have head up during testing. You will test the left side first and then the right side. The side being tested has a straight leg. The other leg is bent. The hands should reach forward evenly. Hips must remain square to the box. You record the score for each leg to the nearest half inch. The maximum reach is 12 inches.

