



Phone: 301-475-5511 ext. 32249; Fax: 301-475-4229

September, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Each year many students undergo personal physical fitness assessments during their physical education classes using tests that are part of a program called "FitnessGram" (1). These assessments teach students about health-related fitness and help them appreciate the importance of staying healthy by exercising and eating well. The assessment shows whether students are in what are called "Healthy Fitness Zones" which represent minimum levels of fitness that can help protect against the diseases that result from an inactive lifestyle.

The following tests make up the fitness assessment in St. Mary's County Public Schools:

1. Push-ups (Upper Body Strength and Endurance)
2. Curl-ups (Abdominal Strength and Endurance)
3. Back-Saver Sit and Reach (Flexibility)
4. Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run or PACER (Aerobic Capacity)
5. Trunk Lift (Trunk Extensor Strength and Flexibility)

In order for Body Mass Index (BMI) to be calculated, height and weight data will be discreetly gathered at the school site so as not to embarrass students in any way, and confidentiality will be respected throughout the process. Please contact your child's Physical Education Teacher if you have any questions about how height and weight are going to be measured at your child's school. Should you not want your student to participate in the BMI phase of the testing, please inform your child's Physical Education Teacher by completing and returning the form below.

The results of the fitness assessments are a personal matter. Students will bring home a copy of their results once the testing is complete. If you see that your child fell short of the Healthy Fitness Zone in one or more test areas, please consider following up on the suggestions provided on the results sheet. You may also wish to share the results with your child's primary health care provider.

Body weight can generally be controlled if there is a balance between what is eaten and the amount of exercise taken. When there isn't balance, there tends to be weight loss or weight gain. This is important because research has proven that individuals who are considered to be overweight or obese are more likely to suffer from certain diseases in later life such as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, liver and gallbladder disease, and stroke. (2)

Teachers will be using a program entitled "PhyshedNhealth", which is an updated version of the software used in the past to record student data. Some participating students will be provided log-in information

and will be able to access the program from any computer, tablet or mobile phone with internet access. Although the initial focus will be the fitness assessment component, they will also be able to access a library of exercise videos and other health-related resources.

Additional information on fitness testing may be obtained from your child's Physical Education Teacher or from the following links:

- (1) FitnessGram <http://www.fitnessgram.net/>
- (2) What is FitnessGram: <http://www.fitnessgram.net/parents-students.asp>
- (3) BMI Percentile Calculator for Child and Teen: <https://nccd.cdc.gov/dnpabmi/Calculator.aspx>
- (4) The Health Effects of Overweight and Obesity, Centers for Disease Control <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/effects/index.html>

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew C. Roper, CAA, Ph.D., Supervisor of Physical Education, Health Education, and Athletics at (301) 475-5511, extension 32122, or at acroper@smcps.org.

Sincerely,



Andrew C. Roper, CAA, Ph.D.,
Supervisor of Physical Education, Health Education, and Athletics

Please detach and return the slip below to your child's Physical Education Teacher ONLY if you **DO NOT** want your child to participate in the height and weight data collection.

----- cut here -----

To Physical Education Teacher:

I _____, Parent/Guardian of _____
Parent/Guardian Name Child's Name

do not want my child to have his/her weight measured as a part of the fitness assessment

Signature Date

ACR/GDrive/FitnessTesting