



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER FIFTY-FIVE (2025)

REESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENTIAL FITNESS TEST IN THE COMMONWEALTH'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I hereby issue this Executive Order to direct executive agencies to take all actions within their statutory authority to reestablish the Presidential Fitness Test in each of the Commonwealth's public school divisions.

Importance of the Initiative

In May 2022, I made a commitment to Virginians to restore excellence in education. This Executive Order reaffirms that commitment, as physical activity is integral to whole-child wellness and academic excellence. We know that physical wellness is essential for our intellectual, social, and emotional well-being. Regular movement improves an individual's attention span and memory, strengthening young people's resilience and adaptability.

Physical activity plays a vital role in helping students build confidence, communication skills, and a sense of belonging. Through standards-based physical education, students learn to collaborate with others, apply strategies for teamwork and leadership, and make responsible decisions in a variety of movement settings. These learning experiences not only promote physical competence and healthy habits but also strengthen social and emotional skills such as goal setting, problem solving, and resilience, all of which support lifelong health and well-being.

Perhaps the most obvious benefits of physical activity are found in its positive impact on the body. Reestablishing the Presidential Fitness Test will help young people build a baseline for long-term health and wellness and reaffirm that physically active students are more likely to perform better academically and experience greater overall well-being.

For years, researchers have explored the link between physical activity, engagement in youth sports, and academic success. The results of these studies reinforce what common sense tells us

already; that increased physical activity is positively associated with stronger academic performance, and that consistent physical activity improved academic performance.¹

As adults, we understand that every challenge we face, whether it be physical, mental, or emotional, is an opportunity to strengthen our resilience and reaffirm our own capabilities. We must provide our students with opportunities to practice these critical skills—strategic thinking, resilience, adaptability, and confidence—so they are equipped and empowered to navigate the challenges of life.

Directive

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution and the laws of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to §§ 2.2-103 and 22.1-23 of the *Code of Virginia*, I hereby direct:

- I. The Virginia Department of Education (“the Department”) and the Superintendent of Public Instruction to:
 - a. Reestablish the Presidential Fitness Test in accordance with Executive Order 14327 of July 31, 2025, and provide guidance regarding the Presidential Fitness Test from the President’s Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition (“the Council”) when issued to all school divisions.
 - i. Local school divisions should adopt and implement the Presidential Fitness Test by the start of the 2026-27 school year, and the Superintendent and Department shall work with local school divisions to ensure that the Presidential Fitness Test is fully implemented by July 1, 2027, unless earlier directed by federal guidance.
 - b. Review current wellness-related, criterion-referenced fitness assessments to ensure continued alignment with the 2022 Virginia Physical Education *Standards of Learning* (“the 2022 *Standards*”) and the forthcoming program and assessment frameworks to be developed by the Council. Upon release of the Council’s program and assessment guidance, the Department, in conjunction with the Presidential Fitness Test Task Force, shall review existing practices and materials to ensure consistency and alignment with the established statewide expectations.
 - c. Establish a Presidential Fitness Test Task Force (“the Task Force”) by January 1, 2026, which will inform the development of implementation plans and professional development and instructional resources aligned to the 2022

¹ See, e.g. HW Kohl III & HD Cook, eds. *Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School*, Ch. 4: Physical Activity, Fitness, and Physical Education: Effects on Academic Performance (Institute of Medicine 2013),

Standards and Va. Code § 22.1-207. The Task Force shall include geographically diverse stakeholders from across the Commonwealth as well as representatives from the Board of Education and the Board of Health.

- i. The Task Force shall provide a report to the Board of Education, the Board of Health, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction by May 1, 2026, regarding recommendations, including reporting mechanisms for local school divisions to report on whether, and how, they have implemented the Presidential Fitness Test.

Effective Date

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order or directive. Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 4th day of November 2025.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kelly Gee".

Kelly Gee, Secretary of the
Commonwealth