• Females demonstrated higher achievement than males, particularly at higher fitness levels.

Eastin pointed to physical education as a primary source for promoting physical fitness. “Every student in California should have quality physical education experiences from kindergarten through high school,” Eastin said. “The goal of these programs should be to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to participate in health enhancing physical activity throughout their lives.”

The California Education Code mandates physical education for all students in grades one through nine, plus one additional year in high school. Students in grades one through six are required to have 200 minutes of physical education every 10 school days, and students in grades seven through twelve are required to have 400 minutes every 10 school days. Specific recommendations for teachers, students, and their families are available on the CDE Web site at:
http://www.cde.ca.gov/cyfsbranch/lsp/health/pecommunications.htm

Families are encouraged to plan activities that include opportunities for all family members to be physically active together. Health-related fitness assessment results can be used as a tool to help students understand, enjoy, improve, and maintain their physical health and well-being.

In 2001, more than one million students participated in statewide physical performance testing mandated by Assembly Bill 265 in 1995. The law requires that school districts annually administer a physical fitness test designated by the State Board of Education to all fifth, seventh, and ninth graders.

The Fitnessgram, developed by the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research, assesses six major health-related areas of physical fitness including aerobic capacity (cardiovascular endurance), body composition (percentage of body fat), abdominal strength and endurance, trunk strength and flexibility, upper body strength and endurance, and overall flexibility. A score of 6 indicates that a student is in the healthy fitness zone in all six performance areas, and meets standards to be considered physically fit.

Fitnessgram results from the 2001 administration indicated that 23 percent of California’s fifth, seventh, and ninth graders tested could be considered physically fit. Detailed 2001 physical fitness results for schools, districts, countries, and the state are available on the CDE Web site:
http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/pe/pe.html

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Attachments: 3 charts

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