

Selecting and Modifying Objectives for Special Education Students

Ideally, objectives for special education students should be selected from the core physical education curriculum for all students in the school system. Depending upon the capabilities of the student with a disability, objectives selected from the core curriculum may be fewer in number than for typically-developing students. For example, a slow-learning elementary school student with cognitive disability might be expected to attain eight objectives in a school year in comparison to twelve objectives for his/her classmates. In other situations, objectives may require some modification for successful participation. An example of modifying an objective could involve teaching the wheelchair basketball dribble (not more than two wheel pushes per bounce) while other students learn the traditional method of dribbling the basketball.

Advantages of working within the context of the core curriculum when determining objectives for special education students include:

- Inclusion is facilitated. Most students with disabilities prefer to learn the same skills as other children in their families and neighborhoods - they want to "fit in." Students with disabilities may be more readily accepted by other students if they can perform valued physical education skills.
- Teacher expertise is valued. When objectives are selected or modified from the core curriculum, physical educators are in a position to use their expertise by teaching skills they know how to teach.
- Selected objectives are usually feasible and practical to implement. Schools typically have the needed facilities and equipment to facilitate instruction in core curriculum objectives.