

RECOMMENDATION No. 22

concerning

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
(1947)

The International Conference on Public Education,

Convened at Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bureau of Education, and being assembled on the fourteenth of July for its tenth session, adopts on the nineteenth of July, nineteen hundred and forty-seven, the following recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering that physical education should play an important role at all stages of education;

That it is essential that adolescents should find in the school the possibility not only of intellectual development but also of physical training to round out their education and to enable them to develop harmoniously;

That physical education has for the development of human beings a real value which is not merely physical but also moral and social;

Submits to the Ministries of Education in the various countries the following recommendation:

1) Physical education should be compulsory in all classes of secondary schools, whatever the type of school to which they belong;

2) The physical education syllabus should be the result of collaboration between the representatives of the medical profession, the education authorities and the teachers of physical education;

3) It is highly desirable to undertake and to pursue physiological and psychological research on the value of physical education and on the syllabus and teaching methods used;

4) All secondary school pupils participating in physical exercises should be medically examined regularly, at least once each term, and they should have a supplementary examination before taking part in sports competitions;

5) Pupils exempted from regular courses of physical education on account of their health should be given the benefit of special remedial treatment, based on medical advice; similar appropriate treatment should be provided for all pupils with physical defects;

6) While taking care not to overload the general school syllabus it is important to reserve sufficient time for physical education in the weekly time-table; this instruction should not be limited to lessons in gymnastics or athletics, but should also include periods or half-days in the open air for games and sports;

7) Care should be taken to avoid fixing the physical education lessons at times likely to prove harmful to the pupils' health or at intervals too close to meals, or at periods of excessive heat, etc.;

8) Within the framework of the syllabus and official instructions, it is desirable that teachers of physical education should be free to adapt their programmes to the peculiar conditions of their school and to the sex and capacities of their pupils;

9) It is important that schools should have at their disposal ample and well equipped gymnasia, playing fields and sports grounds, which satisfy the most modern requirements of hygiene;

10) In view of the risks arising from physical education, it is reasonable to expect that pupils and teachers should be covered by compulsory school insurance, and that the latter should, if possible, also be insured against civil responsibility;

11) School gymnastics and sports competitions should be encouraged, provided that they do not develop among the pupils an exaggerated taste for sports and too aggressive a spirit of competition, instead of encouraging the team spirit and fair play;

12) It is desirable that educational authorities should encourage organizations of young people which can supplement the action of the school in physical education;

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13) The teachers in charge of physical education in secondary schools should be specialists, and, as far as possible, they should be capable of teaching another subject if required; the standard of their training should be equivalent to that of teachers of other subjects and should include psychological and pedagogical knowledge as well as the theoretical and practical preparation required for their subject;

14) Given equivalent training, teachers of physical education should enjoy an identical status and a salary equal to that of other secondary school teachers;

15) Teachers of physical education should be given frequent opportunities for professional improvement, by attending special courses and by tours abroad, the expenses of which should be covered by study scholarships;

16) The inspection of physical education should be entrusted to specialists in this branch.