Presidential Fitness School Innovation Challenge

Announcement of Requirements and Rules

Statutory Authority: 15 U.S.C. 3719 (America COMPETES Act)
Total Prize Purse: $10,000,000
Challenge Submission Deadline: February 5, 2027, 5:00 p.m. EST
Challenge Registration: Required prior to the submission deadline, details below

1. Challenge Purpose and Objective

The Presidential Fitness School Innovation Challenge is a national competition designed to spur innovation and expand the range of promising solutions to help schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations bring the Presidential Fitness Test (PFT) to students. The goal is for schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations to create positive experiences around physical fitness, and to identify approaches that can help expand PFT participation nationwide.

The Challenge is grounded in three simple principles: the PFT should encourage students to pursue fitness, recognize effort, and motivate students to improve their own fitness over time. Through two complementary prize tracks, HHS seeks to identify and reward solutions that:

- Increase the number of students who have an opportunity to participate in the PFT;
- Encourage students to pursue personal improvement over time;
- Create welcoming, positive, and motivating fitness experiences;
- Identify effective, replicable, and sustainable approaches for implementing the PFT in different settings and at different scales.

2. Challenge Background

Since the 1960s, the President's Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition (President's Council) has led efforts to promote physical activity through school-based fitness assessments that include Presidential recognition. The current Presidential Fitness Test was reestablished following an Executive Order bringing back the PFT.

Most youth are not meeting the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* recommendation of 60 minutes or more of daily physical activity, including vigorous-intensity, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activity three times a week. In youth, regular physical activity can support physical, mental, and cognitive health, including stronger bones and muscles, improved fitness, and reduced risk for anxiety and depression.

The reestablished PFT provides an opportunity to help schools and communities make fitness visible, achievable, and motivating.

The Challenge website (www.fitness.gov) provides resources to support participation, including exercise protocols, score sheets, and tip sheets for educators. Challenge Participants should use the official PFT materials and protocols made available through the Challenge website.

3. Prize Tracks and Prize Structure

Track 1: PFT Implementation & Innovation — $7,000,000 Prize Pool

(Prizes distributed as cash to the school, school district, local or state education agency, or youth-serving organization)
Track 1 recognizes schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations that demonstrate an effective and innovative approach for implementing the PFT and present a credible pathway for sustaining, replicating, or expanding that approach. This is the Challenge's more rigorous, evidence-based track.

Challenge Participants may incorporate the PFT into an existing physical activity, fitness, or youth-serving program, or launch a new approach as the basis for a Challenge submission. One example could be expanding PFT elements into an existing Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP).

While Participants are not required to have completed a program or new approach at the time of submission, they must be able to show that they have implemented the PFT and put their approach into practice with students. The submission must provide evidence that the approach has been implemented and has potential to increase participation and sustained engagement in the PFT. It must also describe what was implemented, populations reached, outcomes (e.g., educational metrics or participant counts), and how the approach can be sustained, expanded, or replicated elsewhere.

Successful Challenge submissions will describe the likely effectiveness of the plan for sustaining, strengthening, replicating, or expanding the demonstrated approach, and the resources or conditions needed for continued or broader implementation. Examples may include but are not limited to how they will reach more students, strengthen successful elements of their approach, address implementation barriers, or support broader replication or expansion.

Tier	Student Population / Reach	Estimated Number of Prizes	Prize Amount	Total
Tier 1: Local	Fewer than 1,000 students	~ 100	$20,000	$2,000,000
Tier 2: Regional / Mid-Sized	1,000 to 10,000 students	~ 30	$100,000	$3,000,000
Tier 3: Large / Multi-Site	More than 10,000 students	~ 2	$500,000	$1,000,000
Tier 3: Grand Prize	More than 10,000 students	~ 1	$1,000,000	$1,000,000

Track 2: PFT Participation & Equipment — $3,000,000 Prize Pool

(Prizes distributed as redemption codes for use at
https://www.usgames.com/m/programs/presidential-fitness/ Track 2 is for schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations that are administering the PFT and want to help students participate in physical activity to improve their fitness. Participants should show that they are creating a positive PFT experience, reaching students, and have a practical plan for using fitness/sports equipment to support continued physical activity participation and fitness improvement.

Awards will be provided as a redemption code to be used for fitness/sports equipment that can be used by the school, school district, local or state education agency, or youth-serving organization as well as individual items that can be given to students in recognition of their PFT efforts (e.g., ribbons, medals) to be redeemed at https://www.usgames.com/m/programs/presidential-fitness/. The redemption code may be used only for eligible items available at https://www.usgames.com/m/programs/presidential-fitness/ and may not be exchanged for cash. Redemption codes will have an expiration date of 12/31/2027.

Tier	Student Population / Reach	Estimated Number of Prizes	Store Credit Amount	Total
Tier 1: Small	Fewer than 500 students	~ 1,000	$1,000	$1,000,000
Tier 2: Mid-Sized	500 to 1,000 students	~ 500	$3,000	$1,500,000
Tier 3: Large	More than 1,000 students	~ 100	$5,000	$500,000

Additional Information About Tracks and Tiers

- Submissions will be reviewed and scored according to track and population tier criteria.
- A participant may submit to both tracks, but each submission must independently satisfy that track's requirements. Submitting the same narrative to both tracks will not satisfy the requirements.
- Tiers are based on the student population or participant reach covered by the submitted PFT effort, subject to HHS verification.

At a Glance: Which Track Is Right for You?

The Challenge offers two distinct ways to participate. Participants should choose the track that best matches what they want to demonstrate. An eligible organization may enter both tracks only through separate submissions that independently satisfy each track's requirements.

	Track 1: PFT Implementation & Innovation	Track 2: PFT Participation & Equipment
Best for	Schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations that have put a PFT approach into practice with students and can describe its likely potential to be sustained, replicated, or expanded.	Schools, school districts, local or state education agencies, and youth-serving organizations that are administering the PFT and engaging students in physical activity and have a practical plan for using fitness/sports equipment to support continued participation and fitness improvement.
What Participants Should Demonstrate	The PFT has been implemented with students; the approach has been put into practice; and there is evidence of what was implemented, populations reached, outcomes, and lessons learned.	Students are participating in the PFT; the experience is positive and encouraging; and there is a practical plan for using equipment to support continued physical activity and fitness improvement.
Core Question	How was the PFT implemented; what did the Participant learn from this approach, and how could the approach be sustained, replicated, or expanded?	How does the Participant engage students in the PFT and physical activity, and how does equipment support continued participation and fitness improvement?

Prize	Cash prizes	Fitness/sports equipment redemption code to be redeemed at https://www.usgames.com/m/programs/presidential-fitness/
Submission	Evidence-based implementation narrative, up to 10 pages plus cover page (11 pages total)	Simple participation narrative, up to 3 pages plus cover page (4 pages total)
Primary Emphasis	Implementation, evidence and learning, and feasibility of sustainability, replication, or expansion	Student participation and engagement, positive PFT experience, and practical use of equipment to support continued physical activity

4. How to Enter

All registrations and final submissions must be submitted through the official Challenge hub on fitness.gov. Submissions received by email, physical mail, or outside the official website will not be accepted.

Step 1 — Choose a Track

Use the following decision guide:

- Review the above table carefully.
- Participants may enter both tracks only if they prepare two distinct submissions that independently satisfy the requirements of each track.

Step 2 — Designate a Representative

Participants must designate one individual who is at least 18 years old to serve as the organization's authorized representative and primary point of contact. Examples may include a principal, a school district administrator, a program director, or a physical education lead. The representative is responsible for registration and communications with Challenge administrators.

Step 3 — Register on fitness.gov

- Submit the registration and retain the confirmation.
- Note: registration simply tells HHS the Participant intends to apply. **A registration is not a submission;** Participants must still enter a submission to be considered for a prize.
- Participants who register will receive regular updates about the Challenge and reminder notifications ahead of the submission deadline.
- Early registration is encouraged. The final day for registration February 5, 2027, 5:00 p.m. EST.

Step 4 — Implement the PFT and Prepare Your Submission

Use the PFT resources to plan and administer the PFT. Participants are also encouraged to participate in one of the two Technical Assistance Webinars offered. These webinars will provide information about the Challenge, including the prize tracks, PFT resources, submission requirements, and an opportunity to ask questions. Participation in a Technical Assistance Webinar is optional and will not affect a Participant's eligibility or evaluation. Free PFT resources are available on fitness.gov, regardless of registration or submission.

Step 5 — Submit by the Deadline

Log into the Challenge website and submit all required materials no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on February 5, 2027. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted.

5. Submission Requirements

Track 1 — PFT Implementation & Innovation

The written submission may be no more than 11 pages total: one cover page plus an implementation narrative of up to 10 pages. All written materials must be in English, formatted for standard letter-size pages (8.5 x 11 inches), and uploaded as PDF files. Use a widely available font face (e.g., Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Georgia). Use at least 11-point font, except for charts and tables, which must be at least 9-point font.

A. Cover Page — 1 page

- Project title
- Organization name and entrant type
- Primary point of contact and contact information
- Student population/reach and requested tier
- Required terms agreement: **The following exact statement must be included in the cover page**: "I understand and agree that each Participant in the Challenge must comply with all terms and conditions of the Challenge rules, and participation in this Challenge constitutes each such Participant's full agreement to abide by these rules."

B. Implementation Narrative — up to 10 pages

Organize your narrative using the five sections below. Participants are encouraged to use headings, concise bullets, tables, and simple data displays, where useful.

1. Implementation

Describe the physical activity or fitness program, activity, or initiative into which you incorporated the PFT and the setting, the students served, and the steps taken to administer the PFT. This section should describe what you did or are doing, and not what a future implementation plan would look like.

2. Participation and Student Experience

Describe how you encouraged students to participate, try their best, and view the PFT as an opportunity for personal growth rather than a one-time performance assessment. Report the number or proportion of eligible students reached, as appropriate, and describe how you made participation welcoming and motivating.

3. Evidence, Results, and Learning

Explain what happened. Provide practical evidence that supports your conclusions, such as aggregate participation counts, repeat participation, aggregate improvement measures, student or educator feedback, implementation milestones, or other appropriate indicators. Explain what worked, what did not, and what you may change next time. Do not include personally identifiable student information.

4. Replicability and Sustainability

Explain the plan for sustaining, strengthening, replicating, or expanding the demonstrated approach, and the resources or conditions needed for continued or broader implementation. For example, the approach may be used to help reach more students, schools, sites, or grade levels; strengthen successful elements of the approach; address implementation barriers; or sustain the work. Explain how the approach may be adopted or adapted by another school, school district, local or state education agency, or youth-serving organization, as appropriate.

5. Innovation and Usefulness

Explain what is distinctive, especially effective, or useful about your approach to address a challenge, barrier, or opportunity related to PFT implementation, student participation, or engagement.

C. Population / Reach Verification — required, not counted toward narrative page limit

- K–12 schools: provide the NCES School ID or official state/district school code and current enrollment or other documentation requested by HHS.
- School districts, local or state education agencies: provide sufficient documentation to verify the student population/reach represented in the submission.
- Youth-serving organizations: provide a recent de-identified enrollment, participation, or impact record sufficient to verify current youth reach.

Track 2 — PFT Participation & Equipment

All written materials must be in English, formatted for standard letter-size pages (8.5 x 11 inches), and uploaded as PDF files. Use a widely available font face (e.g., Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Georgia) and use at least 11-point font, except for charts and tables, which must be at least 9-point font. The written submission may be no more than 4 pages total: one cover page plus a participation and equipment statement of up to 3 pages.

A. Cover Page — 1 page

- Organization name and entrant type
- Primary point of contact and contact information
- Student population/reach and requested tier
- Required terms agreement: **The following exact statement must be included in the cover page**: "I understand and agree that each Participant in the Challenge must comply with all terms and conditions of the Challenge rules, and participation in this Challenge constitutes each such participant's full agreement to abide by these rules."

B. Participation & Equipment Narrative — up to 3 pages

1. How You Made the PFT Encouraging

Describe the novel steps you used or will use to encourage participation, effort, teamwork, perseverance, and personal improvement.

2. Equipment

Describe a practical plan for using fitness/sports equipment to support students' ability to practice, participate in PFT-related activities, or continue working on fitness after the test.

3. How You Will Keep Students Engaged

Briefly describe how you will encourage students to continue being active and, where feasible, return to the PFT with the goal of improving their own performance.

C. Population / Reach Verification — required, not counted toward narrative page limit

- K–12 schools: provide the NCES School ID or official state/district school code and current enrollment or other documentation requested by HHS.
- School districts, local or state education agencies: provide documentation sufficient to verify the student population/reach represented in the submission.
- Youth-serving organizations: provide a recent de-identified enrollment, participation, or impact record sufficient to verify current youth reach.

6. Challenge Timeline

Date	Milestone
September 16, 2026	Challenge Launch / Registration Opens
Fall 2026	Informational Webinar #1
Fall 2026	Informational Webinar #2
February 5, 2027, 5:00 p.m. EST	Submission Deadline
February 8 – February 26, 2027	Stage 1 — Administrative Review
March 1 – April 5, 2027	Stage 2 — Merit Review and Winner Selection
Spring 2027	Announcement of Winners

7. Evaluation Criteria and Review

The Challenge will use two distinct review stages. Each stage has a different purpose and role, as described below. Only submissions that successfully complete Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 1 — Administrative Review

Following the submission deadline, HHS Challenge administrators or their designees will review each submission for eligibility, completeness, correct prize track and tier placement, required population/reach verification, and compliance with these rules. HHS Challenge administrators or their designees do not score the merits of a submission. HHS Challenge administrators or their designees may determine that a submission is ineligible or noncompliant and therefore will not advance to Stage 2.

Stage 2 — Merit Review and Winner Selection

After Administrative Review, a panel of HHS judges will review and score the submissions using the judging criteria and select the winners. Selected winners are subject to approval by the HHS Award Approving Official. Prize payment or issuance of redemption codes remains subject to completion of all required winner verification and award-processing steps.

Track 1 — PFT Implementation & Innovation Scoring Criteria (100 points possible)

Criterion	Points	What Reviewers Will Look For

Implementation	25	A demonstrated approach for implementing the PFT that has been put into practice with students.
Participation and Student Experience	20	Meaningful student reach and a positive approach that promotes effort, participation in PFT-related activities, and personal improvement.
Evidence, Results and Learning	25	Evidence of what was implemented and what happened, along with thoughtful learning about what worked, what did not, and what could be improved.
Replicability and Sustainability	20	The likely effectiveness of the plan for sustaining, strengthening, replicating, or expanding the demonstrated approach, and the resources or conditions needed for continued or broader implementation.
Innovation and Usefulness	10	A distinctive, especially effective, or useful approach that addresses a challenge, barrier, or opportunity related to PFT implementation or student participation and engagement.

Tier context: Reviewers may consider the Participant's size and operating context when assessing scale and replicability. Small organizations are not expected to demonstrate multi-state reach. Tier 3 Participants should demonstrate how their model works consistently across a larger footprint.

Track 2 — PFT Participation & Equipment Scoring Criteria (100 points possible)

Criterion	Points	What Reviewers Will Look For
Encouragement and Student Experience	50	A positive approach that celebrates effort, reduces unnecessary barriers to participation, and encourages students to pursue personal improvement.
Equipment Use	35	A clear, practical plan for using fitness/sports equipment to support students' ability to practice, participate in PFT-related activities, or remain active.
Continued Engagement	15	A realistic approach for encouraging physical activity and continued engagement after the initial PFT experience.

Track 2 does not award points for national scalability. Submissions are reviewed individually and points will be assigned based on the aforementioned criterion.

8. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive a prize under this Challenge, a Participant must satisfy all requirements in these rules, including the following:

Registration: The Participant must register through the designated Challenge website in accordance with these rules. A Participant may register up until February 5, 2027, 5:00 p.m. EST.

Compliance: The Participant must comply with all requirements of this announcement and submit a complete entry for the applicable track by the deadline.

Eligible Organization: The Participant must be a school, school district, local or state education agency, or youth-serving organization. Eligible entities may include public, charter, private, parochial, Tribal, alternative, and other recognized schools; school districts and local and state education agencies; nonprofit organizations; community-based and faith-based

organizations; libraries, museums, and cultural institutions; parks and recreation programs; youth clubs and associations; and similar entities.

Organizational Standing: An eligible entity must be legally established, officially recognized, accredited, licensed, chartered, registered, incorporated, sponsored by, or otherwise subject to oversight or accountability by an appropriate governmental, educational, corporate, nonprofit, or institutional authority, as applicable.

Tier Placement and Verification: The Participant must be able to verify the student population or youth Participant reach used to determine its prize tier.

U.S. Presence: For a private entity, it must be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States.

Authorized Representative: The individual submitting on behalf of the Participant must be at least 18 years old at the time of submission and authorized to represent the organization.

9. Legal and Administrative Rules

To be eligible to win a prize under this Challenge, a Participant —

a. Shall have registered to participate in the Challenge as an entity under the rules and instructions promulgated by HHS as published in this announcement.
b. Shall have complied with all the requirements set forth in this announcement;
c. Shall be a school, school district, or local or state education agency, or youth-serving organization;
d. In the case of a private entity, shall be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States;
e. Shall not be a Federal entity or Federal employee acting within the scope of their employment;
f. Shall not be an employee of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or any other component of (HHS) acting in their personal capacity;
g. Who is employed by a Federal agency or entity other than HHS (or any component of HHS), shall consult with an agency Ethics Official to determine whether the Federal ethics rules will limit or prohibit the acceptance of a prize under this Challenge;
h. Shall not be a judge of the Challenge, or any other party involved with the design, production, execution, or distribution of the Challenge or the immediate family of such a party (i.e., spouse, parent, step-parent, child, or step-child);
i. Shall be 18 years of age or older at the time of submission.

- A Participant shall not be deemed ineligible because the Participant used Federal facilities or consulted with Federal employees during the Challenge if the facilities and employees are made available to all Participants participating in the Challenge on an equitable basis.
- Participants may not use federal funds from a grant, prize, or cooperative agreement to develop their Challenge submissions or to fund efforts in support of their Challenge submissions.
- Federal contractors may not use federal funds from a contract to develop their Challenge submissions or to fund efforts in support of their Challenge submissions. Costs associated with such activities are unallowable and are not allocable to Government contracts.

- By participating in this Challenge, each Participant agrees to assume any and all risks and waive claims against the federal government and its related entities, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from participation in this Challenge, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.
- Based on the subject matter of the Challenge, the type of work that it may require, and an analysis of the likelihood of claims for death, bodily injury, property damage, or loss potentially resulting from Challenge participation, no Participant is required to obtain liability insurance, demonstrate financial responsibility, or agree to indemnify the federal government against third-party claims for damages arising from or related to Challenge activities in order to participate in this Challenge.
- By participating in this Challenge, each Participant warrants that it is the sole author or owner of, or has the right to use, any copyrightable works that the submission comprises; that the works are wholly original with the Participant (or are an improved version of an existing work that the Participant has sufficient rights to use and improve); and that the submission does not infringe any copyright or other rights of any third party of which the Participant is aware.
- By participating in this Challenge, each Participant grants to HHS an irrevocable, paid-up, royalty-free, nonexclusive worldwide license to reproduce, publish, post, link to, share, and display publicly the submission on the web or elsewhere, and a nonexclusive, nontransferable, irrevocable, paid-up license to practice, or have practiced for or on its behalf, the solution throughout the world. Each Participant retains all other intellectual property rights in its submission, as applicable. By participating in this Challenge, each Participant warrants that there are no legal obstacles to providing these nonexclusive licenses to the federal government. To receive a Prize, Participants will not be required to transfer their intellectual property rights to HHS but Participants must grant the federal government the nonexclusive licenses stated herein.
- By participating in this Challenge, Participants are not granted any licenses to use or rights in any HHS trademarks, including the HHS logo. Participants may not imply endorsement by HHS or the Federal government. Any use of HHS trademarks by Participants is subject to prior, written authorization by HHS and subject to any requirements of the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA).
- Each Participant agrees to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- Each Participant must comply with all terms and conditions of these rules, and participation constitutes the Participant's full and unconditional agreement to abide by these rules. Winning is contingent upon fulfilling all requirements herein.
- As a condition of receiving a cash prize, each Participant selected as a winner must complete and submit all requested winner-verification and payment documents to HHS within 10 business days of formal notification. Failure to return all required documents by the date specified in the notification may be a basis for disqualification.
- By participating in this Challenge, each Participant agrees that HHS may disqualify its submission if, in HHS' judgment, the submission is inconsistent with HHS' public health mission, may be ineffective or harmful, or any other reason deemed necessary.
- HHS reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel, suspend, or modify the Challenge, or any part of it, for any reason, and/or not award any prizes if no submissions are deemed worthy.

Student Privacy, Safety, and Media

Participants are responsible for complying with applicable student privacy, safety, consent, and institutional requirements when conducting Challenge activities and preparing submissions. Unless expressly requested through an HHS-approved process, submissions should use aggregate or de-identified information. Do not include personally identifiable student records, individual health information, or individual student PFT scores.