Basketball

High school sports are extremely valuable to students, as they teach many skills that cannot be learned in the classroom. Health is important because it leads to happiness and allows people to perform daily tasks at full capacity. The physical education class in secondary school is essential because many students do not get enough exercise in America. Often they are too busy watching television at home and eating potato chips on the couch gaining weight and losing muscle. One productive way to fix obesity is to incorporate physical education into a required curriculum. On the other hand, the class appears a little repetitive at times if kids receive the same education while playing on school sports teams. Basketball seems to especially teach students about the necessary fitness knowledge needed to stay healthy in life. Basketball also helps athletes learn other social skills necessary in the real world, where collaboration, preparation, and intellect are key. Basketball relates to all three standards required for the second course of physical education.

Standard 1: “Students demonstrate knowledge of and competency in motor skills, movement patterns, and strategies needed to perform a variety of physical activities.” While playing basketball, one must “evaluate the relationships of physical, emotional, and cognitive factors affecting individual and team performance” (1.6). As far as individual skills, confidence can change everything on the basketball court. One of the motor skills that is important as a basketball player is the ability to shoot. In order to shoot, one must demonstrate proper form, timing, and hand-eye coordination. As far as the form, a player must begin with the primary hand under the basketball and the secondary hand off to the side. The player’s primary foot should be slightly ahead of the other and facing toward the basket. As the shooter progresses into the motion, the hands should move straight upwards and end with a flick of the wrist with the primary hand as the secondary hand guides the ball without impeding its forward motion. the legs should be bent at the beginning and finish with a jumping action. Another variable that has the ability to alter an individual’s performance is health. If a player is not up to full strength, he/she will not be able to compete normally. The best way to prevent injuries is to get adequate sleep and to eat a healthy diet. For growing teenagers, this may mean anywhere from eight to ten hours of sleep. As for the food that you eat, it is best to stay away from processed sugars and fats. Calories is a good way to measure how much energy you are consuming because you need to burn off an equal amount to stay fit. Additionally, a cognitive component plays a role in performance, such as whether or not the player got enough sleep the night before the game. If not, he/she might not be able to think fast enough to make the necessary quick decisions. There is also a definite relationship between physical, emotional, and cognitive factors and the performance of a basketball team. It is evident that the success of a basketball team is dependent on its chemistry, health and preparation. It is impossible for a team to function well if everyone is arguing with each other and nobody has the same goals. The best teams are selfless, which means that each player does not care about personal performance, but rather is concerned with the overall team success. This attitude will lead to players who are Basketball also requires one to “analyze situations to determine appropriate strategies to use in combative, gymnastic/tumbling, and team activities“ (1.10). Basketball involves a great deal of intelligence about the game. The rulebook, which includes very specific details, is very important. If not followed properly, consequences could follow. For example, when a shooting foul is committed, the offensive player is allowed two free throws. During the free throw, the shooter is allowed ten seconds before a violation is called that cancels the outcome of the free shot. Also, six other players are allowed to line up around the key, four from the defending team, and two others from the shooting team. A new rule this year, the players surrounding the key with the exception of the shooter may enter upon the release of the shot to rebound. However, if a player moves too soon, the team will be subject to a violation, which means either one more or one less attempt.
Another element of basketball that demonstrates strategy is the art of calling plays. Both on defense and on offense, teams usually have plays and sets to counteract those of the opposite team. These are developed through film study and hours of practice. Such strategy can also be applied to other areas of physical education where close analysis and planning are imperative. An athlete must remain on schedule and develop a consistent workout plan to get maximum results. Basketball demonstrates both relationships to performance and problem-solving ability, which are essential to playing sports or participating in any physical activity.

Standard 2: “Students achieve a level of physical fitness for health and performance while demonstrating knowledge of fitness concepts, principles, and strategies.” Basketball requires exceptional physical fitness, which improves through rigorous practices and tough games. All high school basketball players “participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity at least four days each week” (2.1). Beginning at the start of the school year, basketball players prepare vigorously for the season. Training can involve running on the track, improving strength in the weight room, or practicing skills on the court. Often these activities involve running on the bleachers, using the bench press, and running suicides. These are completed as a team, so players can familiarize themselves with one another. One person spots the other in the weight room and players compete to lift the greatest amount of pounds. When such equipment is not available, push-ups and sit-ups work very well. This preseason program is essential to a players performance during the season because a more fit player will be able to play more of a game without getting tired. Also, a stronger player will be able to rebound and finish at the rim more easily because he will remain more unaffected by contact. After tryouts are held, practice is held five days a week for two or more hours each day. During these practices, the players condition further for the season and begin to work more on individual skills as well as teamwork. A key to improvement is repetition. If a player is struggling with their shot, the best way for them to improve it is to keep trying, and eventually it should straighten out and the distance can be adjusted as well. The final stage is during the season, when often the basketball team plays two or more games per week in addition to regular practices and Saturday workouts. During practices, the team runs different plays so that the team will be ready to execute them in a game. Sometimes it can be difficult to memorize all of the options of a play, but more practice eventually leads to improvement and mastery. A basketball player should also “evaluate the availability and quality of fitness resources in the community” (2.10). Aside from using the school gymnasiums, the basketball teams look for other opportunities to practice in the community. One example is that often the players go running as a team, either on dirt trails in the hills or on routes through the surrounding neighborhood using its sidewalks. When the school gymnasium is not available, the basketball team finds other facilities in the area to use for practice. In addition, players go on their own to local fitness centers where there is abundant equipment with which they can improve. Many high school basketball players in Oakland attend either the YMCA or 24 Hour Fitness, both of which have full size basketball courts, weight equipment and pools. Another instance where basketball involves the community is in the event of a competition between schools. In this case, at least one of the teams travels in order to play a game, which allows them to evaluate the availability and quality of other fitness resources in the community. These events often bring many students from the respective schools, who come to support their classmates. Such interaction creates lasting relationships in the form of rivalries that are an integral part of school pride. This sense of community is essential to a sport that thrives off of community integration. Basketball heavily involves the knowledge of fitness with respect to health and performance.

Standard 3: “Students demonstrate knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity.” The skills that come with learning the game of
basketball can help with all types of physical activity. Students definitely “participate in physical activities for personal enjoyment” (3.1). High school basketball players participate in hopes of having fun. With already busy schedules that include abundant homework time, there is not much motivation to play basketball because it means less free time. However, basketball not only serves as a pathway through which students can enjoy sports, but also as a reliever of stress. At times, high school is difficult both socially and academically, so basketball can act as an activity that takes the mind off of everything else to focus on playing a game. The thrill of winning, comfort of friendships and sense of collaboration are well worth the sacrifice of playing on a high school basketball team. A player can learn many things that are not taught in the classroom through basketball. It also provides an activity that players can continue for the rest of their lives in order to remain healthy and in shape. After some time, players “identify the effect of individual differences, such as age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and culture, or preferences for and participation in physical activity.” In Oakland, basketball is dominated by tall African American male student athletes. However, this archetype changes when viewing other communities throughout the world. No matter where the community, a player can learn about other cultures and how they relate to preferences in physical activity. Basketball is just one case of how sports can be connected with other demographics, such as age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc. Athletes must learn to recognize differences among the populations. Basketball is also a way for different cultures to interact, as games can be universally played throughout the world. In the Olympics, the United States basketball team competes against other countries’ teams for a gold medal. This forms a bond between the players of different nationalities because they share a common interest in basketball. In addition, the fans become connected around the globe as they watch their teams and root for them to win. Basketball introduces new aspects of life that bring them closer to sports in general. This allows them to be more intelligent about the specific physical activity in which they choose to participate. Basketball satisfies the last standard for course two, focusing on fitness concepts, principles, and strategies.

Overall, basketball is a tool for high school students to learn about physical activities while enjoying themselves. Basketball is valuable not just during high school years, but also for the rest of a player’s life. The sport teaches many skills that cannot be obtained in a classroom setting. With respect to high school physical education, playing basketball allows a student to focus on and become involved in one sport at a time. In this way, the athlete knows more about the game than if they were to learn from a teacher. Playing high school basketball is also a choice for the student, who is more likely to participate in physical activity if he/she enjoys it. Therefore, the advanced sports option should continue to be offered for sports enthusiasts who take time out of their busy schedules every day to focus on personal fitness and have fun all at once.