FAQ

What are the components of the Mind Body Program (MBP)?
Students participate in the MBP from 9th-11th grades. The Upper School MBP has two components. The first is a Fitness Lab that meets once a week throughout the year. The second is an activity component, which can be fulfilled through an activity class (2 to 3x per week), a dance class (2 to 3x per week), or a CSUS sports team (5 to 6 x per week). Upper School students who are part of a CSUS sports team get a study hall (9th graders) or free period (10th and 11th graders) during the part of the day when they would normally be in their activity class.

What are the values of the Mind Body Program (MBP)?
The MBP believes in the connection of a healthy mind and a healthy body. The MBP educates the students in all aspects of living a healthy lifestyle and provides the data to back up the claims. In the Upper School, we integrate what students learn in our Fitness Labs to all activity aspects of our program (dance, athletics, activity classes). We introduce them to a variety of activities that encourage lifelong fitness. Technologically, we have the means to use objective data (pedometers, heart rate monitors) to assess and help our students understand the benefits of maintaining cardiovascular endurance. Furthermore, bi-annually, our students are given a health risk appraisal that provides opportunities for them to objectively address their fitness levels honestly and confidentially. Each year, our MBP faculty continues to educate themselves through professional growth to stay current with the latest trends, research, etc.

We continue to be trailblazers in the area of fitness and the development of our MBP. Peer schools frequently contact our Department Head to discuss our program; currently, at least two peer schools are using our MBP as a model. You can learn more about the mission and values of the MBP here: http://www.csus.org/athletics/mind/body_program

Many high schools only require two years of Health/Fitness/PE but CSUS requires three years in the Mind Body Program. Why?
Repetition is key to the MBP curriculum. While obesity is not a problem at CSUS, nationwide it is an issue, and we feel it is our civic duty to educate our students on the pitfalls of not staying active. As such, it is our job to introduce and prepare the student for a lifetime of myriad activities. Throughout the three-year process, we are able to educate them and provide time to experience activities and develop neuromuscular connections that will prepare them for the end goal of creating their own individual fitness plan (IFP). Firsthand observations and knowledge have shown us that freshman and sophomores who would like to work out on their own are not educated enough, nor developmentally prepared, to do so. By the end of junior year, we feel that our students are prepared to make smart choices about their health and fitness. Lastly, as shown in the reflection sections of the IFP that juniors write, the majority of students admit that if the MBP were not a three-year requirement, they would have prematurely stopped physical activities. Research indicates that a daily exercise routine enhances brain development as well as improvements in attention, memory, focus, and quality of sleep. We are proud that our program leads to healthy bodies and healthy minds.

My student participates in a Club sport outside of school. Can my student get an exemption for the Activity component of the Mind Body Program?
We do not allow students who participate in sports outside of CSUS to get exemptions for the Activity portion of the Mind Body Program until 11th grade. The student applying for the exemption has the opportunity to apply the last trimester of 10th grade. A committee of administrators and faculty members vet
all applicants to determine recipients of the exemption. There is overwhelming empirical evidence that sport specialization is injurious for high school age students psychologically, physiologically, and socially. Sport specialization can negatively impact athletes’ health as well as their longevity in a chosen sport. For this reason, the MBP and Athletics program cannot support sport specialization. We continue to monitor peer-reviewed research on this topic. We will reevaluate our program when this research no longer recommends the benefits of cross training and introducing the athlete to a wide range of activities.

But my student is practicing 10-15 hours outside of school every week for their club sport. Clearly they are doing as much (if not more) than CSUS athletes who benefit from getting a study hall or free period instead of taking an activity class. Why can’t my student get a free or study hall? At the very least, can they do an “independent study”?

There are a number of reasons that we do not allow such an exemption until 11th grade:

1. No Crystal graduation requirements, in any department, can be fulfilled via non-CSUS classes. Crystal has concert violinists and other students who practice for 15-20 hours per week outside of school, however we do not grant exemption from our Fine Arts requirement even though that student shows proficiency in Fine Arts and clearly is practicing more than is required for an Instrumentals class. The reasons we do not grant exemptions for Fine Arts students, or for MBP students, who are playing on a Club team, is out of fairness and consistency.
2. We are only able to grant activity exemptions for students who participate on our sports teams because we directly supervise those sports, thus we can accurately attest to the numbers of hours of participation in the sport.
3. This policy also incentivizes students to participate on our sports teams. As a small school, we depend on student athletes participating on multiple teams.

While it is challenging for Club athletes, many of our students are devoted to outside-of-school activities that can take 10-15 hours per week (be it a sport, fine art, part-time job, etc.). These students are able to handle both their CSUS and outside commitments without getting exempted from 2 to 3 hours of the MBP activity component each week.

What do CSUS alumni say about their experience with the MBP while playing Club sports?
A number of students each year play competitive Club sports while completing the MBP program. One recent alum wrote: “The MBP taught me to train smarter: to get the most out of practices and translate that performance to matches. But the program has proved useful in life after club sports; as a college student, eating healthily and exercising can seem impossible, but the MBP gave me the skills and resources I still use to make informed choices about my lifestyle.”