

Physical literacy

New physical education standards are rolled out

Physical literacy is the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person, according to the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Within the next three years, the K-12 physical education (PE) curriculum will expand as the updated NYSED Physical Education Learning Standards (2020) are rolled out. With an implementation date of Fall 2023, the standards more closely align with The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America's National Standards.

"The new standards look at physical literacy and on teaching a student how to become a well-rounded individual who understands the connection between their physical, social and emotional well-being," said Kate Huber, school and community wellness coordinator at Erie 1 BOCES. She will work closely with NYSED, NYS AHPERD and other BOCES to provide training and coaching to school districts on the standards.

Dr. Clancy Seymour is an assistant professor and director of physical and health education teacher education at Canisius College, president of NYS AHPERD and serves on the state leadership team of educators who authored the revised standards. "According to the state Department of Health, 33.8% of students are either overweight or obese while one in 10 people including children themselves, suffer from mental challenges serious enough to affect work, school, and family life," said Seymour. "Given these trends, mental health, social-emotional learning, and health-related fitness are major themes embedded within the revised Physical Education Learning Standards. This will empower all students in their individual pursuits of health and physical literacy." In addition, wellness, collaboration, teamwork, critical-thinking and civility among students are emphasized in these new standards.

The PE Standards are organized by six anchor standards that are broadly constructed for all K-12 students to acquire by high school graduation. These anchor standards are further delineated by two through four grade-level strands followed by prekindergarten through grade 12 grade-level outcomes. Physical education curricular decisions in the state remain a local level decision, providing school districts the autonomy to align accordingly to the new Physical Education Learning Standards.

Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

Standard 2: Applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.

Standard 3: Demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

Standard 4: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Standard 5: Recognizes the value of physical activity for overall wellness, enjoyment, challenge, and/or self-expression.

Standard 6: Recognizes career opportunities and manages personal and community resources related to physical activity and fitness to achieve and maintain overall wellness.

"It is crucial that schools continue to support and provide physical education to promote the overall well-being of our students. I look forward to working with school districts to address the needs of the whole child through the implementation the new PE Standards," said Huber.

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