Considerations for Physical Education

“The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated the need for schools to consider students’ physical, mental, and social-emotional health above all else.”

– SHAPE America Reentry Considerations

Social Emotional Support:
Physical Education promotes student engagement and well-being.

- Integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into Physical Education is a researched practice that can be expanded to ensure well-being, academic progress and student engagement.
- Physical Educators should make a focused effort to connect with students in a remote learning environment and create opportunities for students to share and collaborate with one another.
- Be patient and expect some regression of social abilities and skill development; students will have probably experienced trauma related to the pandemic.
- Create daily routines to incorporate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills (e.g., instant activities/warm-up, introductions, and closures).

Relevance:
Physical Education is an essential part of a K–12 education.

- Under Washington state law, physical education is part of basic education and a requirement for high school graduation; it is also part of a well-rounded education in federal law (Every Student Succeeds Act).
- To create more scheduling flexibility for districts, OSPI issued an emergency temporary rule change to the weekly minute requirement of WAC 392-410-135, effective August 24, 2020 to December 24, 2020. Please see OSPI bulletin for more information.
- Access to physical education is an equity issue. The Seattle-King County State of Play report reveals that students of color have less access to physical education, physical activity, and sports than white students.
- Students who are more physically active will be healthier during a pandemic.
Integration of Physical Education Standards:

**Plan for curriculum and instruction thoughtfully.**

- Align all physical education lessons and instruction to both [K–12 Standards and appropriate Grade Level Outcomes](#); this practice maintains credibility and importance of content to both administrators and parents.

- Educators may need to shift the focus of their instruction to Standard 3 (health-enhancing fitness), Standard 4 (personal and social responsibility) and Standard 5 (value of physical activity). Where possible, incorporate activities for Standard 1 (motor skills and movement patterns) and Standard 2 (movement concepts) that are safe and appropriate, and meet [Department of Health guidance](#) (for general ideas, see instructional strategies [SHAPE America](#), page 16).

**Instructional Practices:**

**Physical Education supports healthier students.**

- **Chunk remote learning time into sections of instructional time interspersed with student exercise and activity.**

- **Consider flipped classroom, Universal Design for Learning and/or project based learning** to be creative with time and space for instruction.

- **Address all five K–12 physical education learning standards by selecting associated activities that require simple equipment at home** (see creative ideas from Federal Way’s [Dana Henry](#)).

**Assessment:**

**Monitor student growth and development regularly.**

- **Offer feedback, student choice, and self-reflection to improve student development; consider a fitness log** for students to monitor their own physical activity.

**Special Considerations for Physical Education:**

- **Differentiate between physical education and physical activity,** and understand the importance of providing students with opportunities for both.

**Resources:**

- [SHAPE America School Reentry Considerations](#)

- [Department of Health (DOH) K–12 Schools reopening guidance](#) (for any cleaning, disinfecting equipment, distancing students, etc. follow DOH guidance)