



Physical Education for the Twenty-First Century

In the United States today, colleges and universities with programs in Education have updated their curriculum for Physical Education (P.E.) teachers. These improvements show P.E. teachers how to be more creative in promoting lifelong fitness. Comprehensive P.E. curriculums presently include frequent assessments and proper lesson planning to support the continued development of students' physical skills. Making efficient use of limited space, time and equipment are the ready tools of the "New" P.E. Teacher.

In the past, United States P.E. programs focused on sports skills and athletic performance: how many push-ups could you do and how fast could you climb the rope, in front of your idle-sitting peers. Students who did not meet these out of touch athletic standards associated their failure with an overall inability to be physical active. This often led to a negative outlook on their personal health, lasting into adulthood.

The positive shift to a more inclusive and comprehensive Physical Education approach does more than just eliminate old ideas such as bombardment games, e.g. dodgeball, and elimination games, e.g. tag, and even "duck, duck, goose." It transforms the foundations of Physical Education into fitness, body awareness, and wellness programs for sustained healthy living. New P.E. programs now focus on allowing each lesson to stimulate all three domains of learning:

- Cognitive (mental knowledge);
- Affective (emotional growth); and,
- Psychomotor (physical skills).

Teachers trained in the new curriculum deeply instill in students the tools to have healthy habits for life through the unique Cognitive/Social environment that only a P.E. class provides. The result is more and special opportunities for young people to gain confidence.

A few examples of the components of these new P.E. programs for Elementary, Middle and High School follow.

"Physical Education is a unique and important component in educating the whole student at Eagle Academy. We have a full understanding that our academic constructs have a greater meaning when they are taught across the cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor domains. It is only physical education that consistently contributes to cooperative learning and differentiated instruction on a daily basis. Our school focuses on this balanced learning opportunity, and embraces this instructional need for our young men".
--David Banks, Founding Principal, Eagle Academies for Young Men

Elementary School

- Spatial awareness and simple motor skill development
- A variety of opportunities to be active, such as Dance, Pilates, Sport & Yoga – An Introduction
- Nutritional Instruction – An Introduction
- Custom activities designed to complement classroom curriculum
- Health curricula associated with social development and interaction

Middle School

- Modified fitness games/sports
- A variety of opportunities to active - Intermediate
- Student-led or created games
- Self-assessing tools
- Health curricula associated with the physical and mental maturity of adolescents - Intermediate

High School

- Opportunities to be as active as possible to maintain health
- Opportunities to lead peers in advanced movement: Yoga, Dance, Tai Chi
- Opportunities to create games/fitness routines
- Orienteering skills, e.g. hikes, bike rides
- Health curricula associated with adolescent physical and mental maturity - Advanced

What's needed?

Elementary School: multipurpose room, auditorium stage, cafeteria or empty (sans furniture) classroom with floors made of wood, rubber, or even traditional classroom linoleum tile (lights and windows protected). Chalk boards and /or dry erase boards help with instruction. Common implements for elementary P.E. include scarfs, bean bags, hoops, and various sized and shaped balls.

Middle & High School: access to gymnasias, courts, fields, and nature in addition to a multipurpose room, auditorium stage, cafeteria or empty (sans furniture) classroom with floors made of wood, rubber, or even traditional classroom linoleum tile (lights and windows protected). Chalk boards and /or dry erase boards help with instruction. This will help students use the skills they developed earlier in both games and sports as well as in general fitness routines and lifelong fitness activities.

The P.E.P. Way:

Led by certified and experienced physical educator Brian Semonian, the New York based, non-profit organization and its staff of licensed teachers and instructors craft custom classes and programs based on each school's needs through the above "New" approach. With contract and volunteer licensed professionals, we are bringing the best of Physical Education back to the schools of New York City in order to re-establish a complete comprehensive learning environment that gives our children the best possible chance to succeed in life.