LAUNCH NEBRASKA

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Health and Physical Education Re-Opening Guidance

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The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed how schools operate but it has also brought to the forefront the importance of prioritizing the health and well-being of all students. As schools prepare to create a new model for learning in fall, finding new ways to support students' physical, mental, social, and emotional health is paramount.[1] As we begin planning for the 2020-2021 school year, please take into consideration the following elements for planning health and/or physical education (HPE).

This document has been written with three return-to-school scenarios in mind:

- Schools are open but operating on a blended (at-home and in-school) model that allows for staggered, partial, or otherwise adapted schedules

- Schools are open but with stringent hygiene and physical distancing protocols in place

- Schools are not open and teacher-directed, at-home learning continues

Regardless of the scenario, this document is intended to create intentional thought and planning around how HPE curriculum and health promoting opportunities can be safely and effectively delivered during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Physical Education vs Physical Activity

SHAPE America defines *Physical Education* as an academic subject that provides a planned, sequential, K-12 standards-based program of curricula and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge and behaviors for healthy, active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence. A quality physical education program provides learning opportunities, appropriate instruction, meaningful and challenging content for all children. Physical education teachers assess student knowledge, motor and social skills, and provide instruction in a safe, supportive environment.

Physical activity is any bodily movement that results in energy expenditure. This can be in the form of recess, intramurals, or recreational endeavors. When teaching online, we need to remember that physical education should not be confused with stand-alone physical activity.   Physical education offers the best opportunity to provide physical activity to all children and to teach them the skills and knowledge needed to establish and sustain an active lifestyle.[2]

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1   SHAPE America. School Reentry Considerations: K-12 Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity. **https://issuu.com/shapeamerica/docs/school_rentry_considerations_k-12_pe-health-pa/1?ff&backgroundColorFullscreen=%2363c4ee**
2   SHAPE America. Is it Physical Education or Physical Activity? Understanding the difference: **https://www.shapeamerica.org/publications/resources/teachingtools/qualitype/pa_vs_pe.aspx**

Assessing Skills

Health and physical education share the importance of skill development. An essential question is, how do we assess those skills in a remote learning or blended learning environment? As you will see described in #2 of the table below, there are a variety of options available to assess and continue learning in a virtual environment. The **Physical Activity Learning Types** document is written for physical education; however, the learning activity tables can be applied to health skills as well. OPEN has also provided **depth of knowledge question stems for physical education** that can provide additional options to evaluate learning. **SHAPE America's Teacher Workbook** also provides some assessment planning guidance.

Even if your school is projected to teach in-person with additional safety precautions, you might be asked to provide resources virtually for students at risk that are not returning in person; or may have an unplanned building closure that leads to a short period of remote learning. As you begin your planning, please take the following tips into consideration.

Tips to Teaching in A Remote/Blended Environment	
1	**Assess your curriculum -** Look at your curriculum map or scope and sequence for the year and identify the units, standards, skills, activities, and assessments you do by quarter. What ones are necessary to be completed in person, which ones can be converted into an online format for virtual or at home learning? There may be things you have already done that can easily be adapted for students to complete at home or online. Don't be afraid to involve your students in the decision-making and evaluate what worked and didn't work in the Spring.
2	**Mix it up –** Come up with different ways for students to demonstrate their learning. Can they make a slideshow or a video? Can they use video chat services to have discussions? Can they create a poster or presentation to share when they return to class? Be creative and think outside of the box for your content. Remember, skill demonstration does not have to be in-person only. Students can demonstrate a skill through a variety of methods. This is a great time for them to try new things and gain different experiences.
3	**Revisit skills –** When possible, try to make independent work a time to practice skills that were already previously taught. This might be easier if remote learning is for a short period of time or alternating with in-person sessions. For Physical Education, how can you tie in social emotional learning, psychological effects of exercise, and benefits of movement into your blended learning?
4	**Create normalcy –** What are your normal routines? How can you translate that into an online environment? This will help students feel there is some familiarity while realizing we're still a class even when the medium is online. This can also assist with the ease of transitions from in-person to remote and back to in-person as necessary. This could be a mindful minute or reflection activity as well.
5	**Have a plan –** Once you've figured out how and what you are going to teach, be sure to explain it to parents and students. We know the schedule can be a combination of in-person and virtual, so explain how this will look to students so the transition is smooth. Explain where they can find materials, how they will submit their work (e.g. when you return to school), and what to do if there is a problem (e.g. internet goes down, they cannot find an assignment). If not all families have access to internet or computers at home, how will they be included and communicated with? Communicate with your building and fellow teachers with an attempt to streamline or use similar apps for parent communication. Also, examine different mediums for delivering instruction. Learn the 'How-To's' for making proper demonstration videos, screen recordings, flipped lessons, etc.
6	**Work together –** We have a great support system at the local, state and national level within the HPE community! Work with any PTs or OTs for virtual learning options for individuals with disabilities. Can you partner with any community organizations that offer virtual opportunities? Utilize your ESU, the NDE, SHAPE Nebraska, other HPE teachers, technology specialists, and SHAPE America. Share resources or ideas, ask questions, learn new technology skills, and encourage one another.
Adapted from the ASCD article: *Transitioning to Online Learning: Pro Tips on What You Need to Know and SHAPE America's* **Tips to Teaching in a Remote Environment**	

Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion

When preparing lessons, assessments, and activities, no matter the platform that school is being delivered, please consider the following questions posed by SHAPE America[1]:

Specific considerations related to equity, inclusion, and accessibility:

- The number of students who have access to the internet or a device at home to complete assignments for schools operating under a distance learning or hybrid learning model
    » Is there only one computer that is shared in the household?
    » Will students be completing assignments primarily from their cellphones?
    » Are there other siblings in the home and how old are they?

- The demographics or specific circumstances of your students
    » Are parents or family members working from home?
    » Have parents or family members lost their jobs?
    » Do any of your students have difficult home lives (e.g. history of abuse, parental substance abuse, etc.)?
    » What is culturally important or relevant to my students right now?
    » Have any of my students lost loved ones due to COVID-19?
    » How do my own experiences differ from those of my students?

- Access to materials/equipment at home
    » What materials can my students use at home to complete assignments?
    » Are there materials that I consider to be "easily accessible" (i.e. laundry basket, socks, toilet paper, towels) that my students might not have access to?
    » Can I do an "at-home inventory check" with my students prior to school? (*see SHAPE America's guidance for additional details*)

- Students with IEPs or 504 plans
    » What students in my class have disabilities or specific needs?
    » How can I meet their needs (i.e. closed caption, providing materials ahead of a scheduled meeting time, sending recordings of meetings afterwards, visual aids, etc.)?
    » Can any of the accommodations or modifications be used for all of my students?
    » Will wearing face coverings impact students' ability to interpret emotions and facial expressions and ability to hear speech?

- English-language learners (ELL)
    » How will I make assignments available?
    » How will I communicate with parents?
    » What additional aids will I need to help students understand assignments?
    » Can I use an ELL teacher as a resource for help?
    » Will wearing face coverings impact students' ability to hear speech and understand what is being said?

Social and Emotional Learning

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed unprecedented stress on all Nebraskans. Student's pandemic experience may look and feel different from your own. As a result, young people are learning to manage complex emotions like anxiety, loneliness, fear, and grief. Moreover, many of our students may have experienced physical and psychological trauma due to illness, food insecurity, social isolation, depression, and loss. With students returning to school, it is vitally important that each person is welcomed into a safe and supportive learning environment and are equipped with the necessary skills to support their own health and well-being during these uncertain and difficult times. With that said, teachers and school leaders should recognize how these feelings and trauma might affect student learning when preparing for the school year. Reinforcing these skills will also help them to develop resilience and abilities to deal with future struggles.[3,1]

The following guidelines help to ensure our focus is on holistic learning and development for all students:

To foster a sense of physical and emotional safety, educators can:	
• Focus on joy of movement rather than compliance • Set and keep a routine • Promote self-awareness through feelings charts • Get creative about ways for students to connect emotionally and build skills like communication, cooperation, teamwork, and responsibility while still following proper physical distancing guidelines.	• Use mindfulness and breathing exercises to support self-awareness and regulation • Encourage students to ask questions and self-advocate • Be culturally responsive, fostering cultural pride and self-pride by weaving cultural knowledge into teaching • Get to know your students' pandemic experiences and consider **trauma-informed teaching practices** for return to school learning
To foster a sense of belonging, educators can:	
• Increase focus on student voice and advocacy for their own learning • Greet students by name and create safe and upbeat connections – like air high fives • Embed a sense of responsibility by assigning class management roles • Foster opportunities for choice, collaboration, and connection by listening, noticing, and responding with care	• Help the students feel connected by encouraging circle time, show and tell online, or storytelling • Make time to ask about students' extracurricular interests • Consider that technology is not available to everyone. Ensure that whatever learnings are to be done online are accessible for all students (e.g. captioning on videos, descriptive videos, readable PDFs)

3　　　PHE EPS Canada. COVID-19 Pandemic: Return to School Canadian Physical and Health Education Guideline. May 26th, 2020

To foster a sense of hope, educators can:	
• Encourage students to get fresh air and move when possible • Explore individual students' talents and strengths • Give positive affirmation to all students equally	• Encourage students to discuss things that bring them joy • Foster engagement in school and community activities • Make time for acknowledging gratitude and celebrating success

To foster a sense of mastery, educators can:	
• Encourage student ownership of their learning and physical literacy journey • Give students the chance to share what they've learning or a chance to teach their classmates • Place the student's needs at the center of all pedagogical decisions • Utilize existing supports, such as **MTSS**, for modifying programming as necessary to ensure students of all abilities can participate meaningfully	• Highlight each students contribution to learning • Support social and emotional learning • Meet students where they are; formatively assess movement skills, and have students self-assess cognitive and emotional domains • Be aware that students may move, think, feel, and act differently now and may need time to relearn skills • Use a flipped classroom model to encourage a sense of control and shift the focus from direct instructional delivery of information to guiding students' acquisition of knowledge and skills while exploring content together

Adapted from the guidance: Return to School Canadian Physical and Health Education Guidelines: https://phecanada.ca/activate/return-school-phe-guidelines, Page 9.

Safety Considerations for In-Person Learning

The following questions were created for each school to answer based on their ability and needs for meeting the **CDC guidelines**. How you answer these questions will also depend on the number of cases your community is experiencing at that time.

A few terms to know:

- **Cleaning** – is using soap and water, typically part of your routine cleaning.

- **Disinfecting** – requires **EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19** which is advised for surfaces that are touched by multiple people.

A resource with sample activities compared to SHAPE America's Grade Level Outcomes can be found on **SHAPE Americas RE-entry website**.

Physical Education:

- How do you ensure that physical distancing (at least 6ft apart) is practiced? Remember, research is still in place to determine the spread radius for a body in motion. How do you define spaces and boundaries for small sided games to ensure physical distancing (e.g. tape, rope, signs)?

- How, who and how often is the equipment and frequently touched areas used for P.E. disinfected between uses? (follow **CDC cleaning and disinfecting guidance**)

    » Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.

    » Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.

    » Areas that have not been used in the past 7 days do not need disinfected.

    » Develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.

- How can you ensure proper ventilation and airing out of gymnasium or area after disinfecting? If opening windows is not an option, then is a fan available?

- How can you reduce the use of equipment and/or equipment sharing during physical education? Can each student be checked-out equipment for the necessary duration of time? What lifetime activities can be focused on that avoid interaction, maintain physical distancing, and reduce use of equipment sharing (e.g. tennis, biking, geocaching, outdoor education)?

- Can physical education be held outdoors with minimal equipment?

- Are facemasks required to be worn when feasible? If so, when during physical education is it not feasible to wear a mask? What are some activities you can do that are not cardio heavy if facemasks are required at all times?

- Can students bring their own water bottles to ensure hydration and reduce drinking fountain use?

- Do you have the ability to sanitize or wash hands before and after physical education? How do you maintain supply of sanitizer?

- If blended: How can you keep/manage student learning at school and at home simultaneously?

Locker Rooms/Showers:

- Are the use of locker rooms necessary? Can students not dress out and simply ensure proper footwear is worn?

If locker rooms are necessary then:

- How and who cleans or disinfects the locker room, showers, and all contents after use? Are the students required to empty lockers out each day for disinfecting?

- How can you ensure proper ventilation and airing out of locker rooms after disinfection? If opening windows is not an option, then is a fan available?

- How do you ensure that physical distancing following the 6ft rule is practiced while using the locker room and showers? Are multiple locker room or rest room spaces available to spread out students during use?

Weight rooms:

- How do you ensure that physical distancing (6ft apart) is practiced? (e.g. Tape/floor markings, spacing of equipment, smaller groups) Can you avoid lifts that require a spotter or spot from each end of the barbell in order to better maintain physical distancing?

- How can you ensure proper ventilation and airing out of weight rooms after disinfection? If opening windows is not an option, then is a fan available?

- How and who ensures the cleaning or disinfecting of weights after use?

  » Clean equipment after each use (follow CDC cleaning guidelines)

- How and who ensures the cleaning or disinfecting of area and mats after use?

  » Disinfect area after each class or group is finished, before the next enters (follow CDC cleaning guidelines).

- How to ensure that enough cleaning supplies and PPE are available?

- Can students all be required to bring their own water bottles to reduce the use of drinking fountains?

- Do you have the ability to sanitize or wash hands before and after using the weight room? How do you maintain supply of sanitizer? What do you do about sink availability?

Swimming Pools:

- How do you ensure that physical distancing (6ft apart) is practiced? Can you determine class size based on the number of lanes the pool has (recommended 1 student per lane if using the full length of the pool)? Do you have lane ropes to separate each lane and student?

  » Avoiding group events, gatherings, or meetings both in and out of the water if physical distancing of at least 6 feet between people who don't live together cannot be maintained (i.e. swimming lessons, community free swim hours).

- What equipment is needed for class (e.g. goggles, kickboards, pull buoys, noodles)? Can each student be checked out their own equipment?

  » Discouraging people from sharing items that are difficult to clean, sanitize, or disinfect or that are meant to come in contact with the face (i.e. goggles, nose clips, and snorkels).

- How, who and how often is equipment and locker rooms sanitized after use? (follow CDC guidelines for pools: **https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html**)

- Are facemasks required to be worn when feasible? If so, can facemasks be worn up until the point of entering the water?

  » Masks are not advised in the water as the fabric swells and makes breathing difficult.

Health Education:

- How do you ensure that physical distancing (6ft apart) is practiced (e.g. desk/table spacing or markings, individual work, outdoor classrooms)? Will your school need to break class into cohorts, or reduce class size?

- Can you make packets or folders for each student to avoid or reduce sharing of paper, books, pencils, among other items? Do you have access to digital books?

- How will life skills and skill-based learning look while practicing healthy behaviors?

    » Do you teach CPR? If so, do you have enough mannequins, first aid equipment, one-way-valve pocket masks, AEDs for 1:1 equipment to student ratio? How can you ensure that mannequins and AED are disinfected between each use?

        ◊ It is advised that one time use equipment (gloves, gauze, etc.) are not shared and be removed properly and disposed of after one use.

- How and who will ensure cleaning or disinfecting of classroom space and equipment between class use?

- How can you ensure proper ventilation and airing out of the classroom after disinfection? If opening windows is not an option, then is a fan available?

- If blended: How can you keep/manage student learning at school and at home simultaneously?

Additional Resources:

NDE Digital Resources for PE and Health: **https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/DigResources-4-PE-WithLinks.pdf**

Health and PE Professional Development Menu: **https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Online-Professional-Development-Opportunities-2.pdf**

E-Learning Guidance: **https://www.education.ne.gov/educational-technology/e-learning-days/**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance and Considerations

- **Interim Guidance for Schools and Day Camps**
- **School Decision Tool**
- **Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes**
- **Considerations for Schools**

CASEL: **An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning**

American School Counselor Association and National Association of School Psychologists: **School Reentry Considerations for Supporting Student Social and Emotional Learning and Mental and Behavioral Health**

The PLAY Sports Coalition and National Council on Youth Sports: **Return to Play Considerations**

National Federation of State High School Associations: **Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities**

Aspen Institute: **Return to Play, COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool**

Kaiser Permanente Playbook for School Reopening: **https://thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/get-inspired/coronavirus-response/schools-reopening-playbook/**

SHAPE America Teacher Workbook: **https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/reentry/K-12_School_Reentry_Teaching_Strategies_Workbook_FINAL.pdf**

Amaze Health Education Teacher Resources: **https://amaze.org/**

SHAPE America Reentry Sample Activities and Resources: **https://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/Reentry/appendix_k-12-physical-education-in-school-instruction-with-physical-distancing-supplement_k-2.aspx**

SHAPE America PE Standards and CASEL Competencies Crosswalk: **https://www.shapeamerica.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=DL-SEL-CRSWLK&Category=DOWNLOAD**
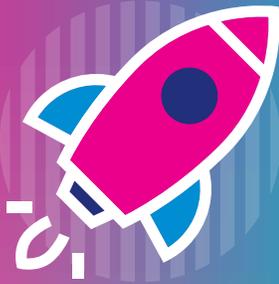
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