



Engage • Educate • Inspire

Maine Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

June 19, 2020

TO: Maine School Principals:

I am contacting you on behalf of MAHPERD to let you know that we are dedicated to helping educators provide high quality, equitable, skills based health education and physical education. The pandemic serves to remind us of the necessity and significance of health education and physical education to daily, core curriculum instruction. Healthy students are students who are able to learn.

Empowering K-12 students with the skills needed to make healthy choices that impact themselves, their families and communities will help move us forward and ensure learning continues. Healthy students are students with strength of mind and body.

Health educators and physical educators are committed to mitigating the health impacts of the pandemic - stress, depression, anxiety, trauma, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and isolation. Rest assured, Maine has some of the best and brightest in the nation. These K-12 health educators and physical educators are on the cutting edge and are “giving their all” within their unique roles. They will continue to provide and make progressive steps towards ensuring optimal student health in these times and in the future. MAHPERD believes that all disciplines complement each other and all are vital to educating the whole child.

MAHPERD continues to work with our national association, SHAPE America. They are collaborating with the CDC to set guidelines on health education and physical education for the coming school year. This document is now available here: https://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/K-12_School_Re-entry_Considerations.aspx.

Here are some of the ways that Maine’s health and physical education teachers have been engaging in the education of the whole child since the pandemic began:

- Schools are focusing on the social and emotional health of students, building the skills students need to cope with the stress of the pandemic.
- Reinforcing and teaching skills to develop healthy practices and behaviors including Social Emotional Learning components, instruction in mindfulness; mediation and yoga; stress management; resiliency, courage and grit; self-awareness, and self-management; on-line safety and digital citizenship; and conflict resolution.
- Developmental and age-appropriate assessments are being conducted from K-12 to assess remote learning platforms in Health Education and Physical Education. Examples:
 - Goal-setting calendars which include but are not limited to stress management, meditation, cardiovascular exercise, strength and flexibility routines

- Health and Physical Fitness Journals inclusive of nutrition, sleep, exercise/physical activity, stress management strategies and personal care and caring for others
- A variety of technology platforms are being employed to help health educators and physical educators build their teaching skills and successfully pivot to meaningful, relevant remote teaching and learning to help students thrive.

Examples:

- Virtual, interactive classrooms
- Use of various platforms to work directly with students, such as Zoom or Google Meets
- Classroom zoom meetings for “check ins” and synchronous health education and physical education skill instruction
- Free, vetted Health and Fitness Apps for middle and high school students that enhance skills taught in classes
- Digital resources/books to support health education and physical education curriculums
- Family outreach, examples:
 - Remote learning websites that provide health education and physical education activities, promote health literacy and offer resources for students and families including information focused on personal health
 - High quality standards-based at-home movement and skill-building opportunities including low-tech and no tech options
 - Individualized videos of skill work for parent use with their students in adapted physical education programs
 - Communicating with parent on a regular basis
 - Grade level enrichment activities in health education and physical education

MAHPERD wants to be part of the solution to this health crisis and we extend our assistance in any way that is needed. MAHPERD members (your health education and physical education teachers) are committed to advocating for the development of the whole child. We believe that now more than ever health education and physical education are crucial to the post pandemic recovery when school begins. Please reach out if I can be of further assistance.

My best,



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