

PROTOCOLS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

The Physical Education teachers and their students are the major stakeholders in this exercise because it is indeed their reality. To this end, these protocols were developed in collaboration with Physical Education teachers and designed to provide guidance on how to modify curriculum and instruction for physical education during this ever-changing environment.

Purpose

Physical education is a critical part of a well-rounded education. Our intention through these guidelines is to provide key decision-makers with enough information to strengthen every school's ability to facilitate all students' rights' to a well-rounded physical education programme which provides for all students to learn motor skills and gain an understanding and love for physical activity.

It is of paramount importance that there be ongoing communication with parents and guardians through multiple means that have been approved by individual schools (e.g., letters, e-mails, phone calls and video chats). This is a fluid situation and good communication leads to greater cooperation.

Hygiene Protocols

- 1) The changing rooms in schools are too small; therefore, students will have to change well before PE class starts. To eliminate congestion in bathrooms and changing rooms. Students whose classes are timetabled before lunch will change in the morning on arrival at school. Students whose classes are timetabled after lunch will change during the lunch period. Students must change back to school uniform if travelling on public transportation/school buses
- 2) Bathrooms/changing rooms must be sanitized periodically throughout the school day.
- 3) P.E. students will be required to wash their hands before and after the lesson. P.E. teachers will have to monitor this to ensure compliance.
- 4) Students will walk to class while masked but will remove to participate in the PE class. Mask should be kept in a separate container (eg Ziplocked bag)
- 5) Encourage students to bring their own water bottles, filled at home, and labeled. There must be absolutely no sharing.

- 6) Students should be reminded and encouraged to inform their teachers immediately if they find themselves or classmate(s) feeling unwell.
- 7) Class size 15-20 students per teacher – working in small groups (Groups of 4 to 6 for possible contact tracing if necessary) and must work together for duration of lesson).

Equipment and facilities

- 1) All equipment should be disinfected after use. Disinfectant spray will be used to sanitize equipment quickly between lesson e.g. racket handles, balls etc.
- 2) Shared equipment must be sanitized before during and after sessions which means that there will be limitations to using some equipment. Clean the surface (remove dirt and impurities from the surface) before disinfecting to kill the germs. If the surface is not cleaned first, the disinfected is less likely to be effective.

Teaching Processes

- 1) Maintain social distancing when moving students across campus.
- 2) Minimize movement between classes.
- 3) No sharing of personal equipment
- 4) Reorganize classes with a temporary alternative schedule to reduce the student-teacher ratios and have smaller class sizes.
- 5) Mark areas to ensure social distancing on the hard court, playing area or playing field. Define areas for each separate group.
- 6) Accurate attendance register must be kept.
- 7) Consider using the virtual classroom and the 'Flip' classroom to teach the theoretical aspects of the syllabus.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION LESSON

The face to face class session

- 1) Meet students where they are. Be aware that students may move, think, feel, and act differently now and may need time to relearn skills.
- 2) Exercising after students have stayed home for an extended length of time with little to no physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic may pose unforeseen health risks not directly related to the virus.

- 3) Teachers should, therefore, always observe students' physical condition and should have them increase exercise intensity progressively according to their fitness capacity.
- 4) Involve students in the decision-making process.
- 5) Students should be reminded and encouraged to inform their teachers immediately if they find themselves or classmate(s) feeling unwell.
- 6) Provide ongoing accommodations and frequent breaks to students with asthma and other respiratory conditions.
- 7) Encourage students to bring their own water bottles, filled at home, and labeled. There must be absolutely no sharing
- 8) Accurate attendance registers must be kept (by activity group this is important if contact tracing is needed)
- 9) Teachers should ensure that students demonstrate proper social distancing during physical activity.

- 10) Maximize your instructional time by designating multiple stations within your space.

- 11) Contact sports in a physical education setting is typically a team activity in which participants come within 2 meters (6 feet) of each other. Invasion games – activities in which students try to advance into an opponent's territory to score a goal or point – would also fall under this category. Such activities should not be encouraged at this time.

- 12) Activities that involve close, sustained contact between participants and lack significant protective barriers have a high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants. Examples of activities that traditionally do not meet social distancing recommendations include tag, soccer, basketball, hockey, football, netball.

- 13) However, students can still learn and practice the skills that are typically performed in team sports without a partner or by sharing equipment.

- 14) Use wet erase floor markers, floor tape, field paint, and/or chalk so students can have a visual representation of social distancing.

- 15) Divide the children in groups of 4 to 6 to perform a skill. Each remaining in their group and separated by 3ft.

- 16) P.E. teachers should set out cones mat, poly-spots, and/or hula hoops to visually identify areas for physical distancing on the pasture yard court or play area at the beginning of the day/session.

- 17) Contact activities will have to be reduced. Teachers will focus on the individual skills needed in specific sports (e.g.) netball, football hockey rugby and basketball without the contact aspect of the game.
- 18) Classes will focus on individual fitness activities and sport specific skills.
- 19) Physical activities include free hand exercise with focus on training aerobic capacity and individual exercise preferred (circuit training), stretching, aerobics, jogging, dancing, cross country, rounders etc.
- 20) Consider teaching different units at the same time if it is not feasible or practical (due to the amount of equipment available). For example, class/group A is working on meeting outcomes to dribble with their foot while group/class B is working on striking with a long-handled implement.
- 21) There should be formal practical assessment in physical education at all schools, practical assessment is mandatory at the level of CSEC and its' formal use in the lower school will produce a more physically literate student.

The Asynchronous Sessions

- 1) Online learning resources on selected individual exercise using short videos that can be done at home.
- 2) Use YouTube and other virtual teaching tools to enhance the lesson. YouTube is usually blocked so short videos are unable to be watched and used as a teaching tool.
- 3) Teach students to work out a plan for self-training and to extend their learning beyond lessons there encouraging students to participate in physical activities daily and for lifelong health benefits.
- 4) Theoretical section of the syllabus can be adequately covered during the asynchronous session or in the flip classroom.

Special needs students

- 1) It is imperative that school personnel work and communicate with parents. Be mindful that students' progress is very dependent on their home support systems and guardians and caregivers may need additional guidance.
- 2) During this unique time, the class teacher should work closely with the PE teacher to assist with social distancing and sanitizing protocols.

- 3) Teaching groups should be 2-4 and efforts should be made to have students use individual apparatus assigned to them.
- 4) Soliciting the assistance of persons involved in special Olympics to supplement the adult compliment during PE class may be a viable option.
- 5) Physical activities where there is less group contact with equipment include free hand exercise with focus on training aerobic capacity and individual exercise like stretching, aerobics, jogging, dancing. Activities promoting balance, agility training, obstacle courses and circuits are also recommended.
- 6) Be mindful that technology -especially specialized technology is not always available or accessible all students.

Considerations going forward

1. Consider continuing to use a blended or flipped classroom model to maximize continuity of learning.
2. Continue to use the online classroom to send videos and workouts and skills analysis. Online classroom is very useful to teach theory sessions. Nutrition, Body systems, Body parts, Types of movement etc. Encourage other teachers to emphasize the theory more in physical education.
3. Consider formal practical assessment as well as theory in physical education at all schools, practical assessment is mandatory at the level of CSEC and its' formal use in the lower school will produce a more physically literate student.