

Supporting the Common Core in Health and Physical Education

With support and appropriate adaptations, health and physical education teachers can contribute to the collaborative effort to prepare all students for college and careers.

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Implementing the Common Core State Standards presents a unique set of concerns and opportunities for all teachers, including those in health and physical education. Teachers are concerned about having sufficient time, resources, information, and support for successful implementation of the Common Core. Those concerns are balanced by new opportunities to engage and collaborate with colleagues, improve effective delivery of instruction within individual content areas, and share responsibility for students' achievement. Principals are instrumental in minimizing concerns and fostering collaboration among teachers of all disciplines so that they can succeed in developing the knowledge and skills students need to be successful in college and careers.

Specifically, principals can support health and physical educators by facilitating collaboration among teachers of all subject areas and recognizing everyone's unique contribution toward successful implementation of the Common Core. Fundamentally, the standards are about delivering quality instruction, clearly identifying what students should know and be able to

do, providing robust learning experiences, and measuring progress toward those goals. Health and physical educators can and should participate in this collective opportunity to improve student success by providing learning experiences complementary to those in the other disciplines. Although state and national content standards specify the primary guidance for health and physical educators, the learning experiences outlined in the Common Core can provide methods and evaluation tools for identifying whether or not students are progressing toward those discipline-specific standards.

Administrators also can support health and physical educators by giving them the flexibility to interpret the Common Core in a manner that is meaningful within their instructional content. The standards state that the math and literacy benchmarks should be addressed across content areas, where appropriate. For example, health and physical educators should be able to use content-specific text to guide students in developing academic habits of mind through reading and interpreting domain-specific texts, including play books,

court boundaries, procedural manuals, heart rate graphs, trail maps, and safety rules—in the process of meeting the academic standards for physical education classes. Likewise, other teachers can use health and physical education text or data within their subject areas. For example, a math teacher could analyze and interpret the heart rate data collected in physical education classes.

Finally, school administrators can support how health and physical educators implement the Common Core by providing appropriate professional development. Not all teachers are equally prepared to successfully implement the standards. Some may need to begin with gaining an understanding of what standards are and how they support learning. Others may be ready to engage in purposeful reading and writing, and still others may be prepared to lead vertical and horizontal collaboration efforts to address the Common Core across grade bands and content areas through aligned learning products.

For example, the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)



offers an eight-part webinar series, *Connecting Health and Physical Education to the Common Core State Standards*, that provides an overview of the standards and guides teachers in achieving health and physical education outcomes by using teaching methodologies identified in the Common Core. More information is available at www.aahperd.org/whatwedo/prodev/common-core-state-standards-webinars.cfm.

Offering health and physical education teachers professional development and encouraging and supporting collaboration among teachers of all subject areas will lead to successful implementation of the Common Core, thereby creating tremendous opportunities for students to gain the necessary knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for college and careers. **PL**

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Adapting the Standards

The language in the Common Core State Standards can easily be converted into student- and teacher-friendly language and can incorporate content-specific texts for physical education, such as:

- Food labels
- Songs
- Videos
- Photos
- Articles
- Fitness logs
- Dances
- Playbooks
- Rule books.

Consider the literacy standards that require students to identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (www.corestandards.org/ela-literacy/rh/6-8/6). Converting elements from the standard into physical education-specific language could look like this:

- Aspects of a text: A specific soccer play performed by a group of players in a video
- Reveal: Identify and understand
- Author's point of view/purpose: The strategy used by the players and the purpose behind it
- New, specific objective for physical education: The learner will identify a play in soccer and understand the strategy used by the players and the purpose behind it.

Consider another example from the English language arts writing standards: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/WHST/6-8/2/d).

- Precise language: Clear and accurate
- Domain-specific vocabulary: Physical education vocabulary (e.g., frequency, intensity, time, and type)
- Topic: Health-related fitness
- New, specific objective for physical education: The learner will use clear and accurate physical education vocabulary to explain health-related fitness.

Source: *National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). Common Core State Standards. Retrieved from www.corestandards.org*