

AccelerateED Task Force DRAFT Guidance and Recommendations for 2020-21 School Year – Suggestions/Feedback

Overall comments:

- Health and nutrition education provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice healthy behaviors and teaches students how to recognize the influence of responsible decision-making on quality of life. By providing effective health education programming, schools can help students develop health literacy skills, so they are able to access information, resources, and services in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The development of these skills by students is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Physical education, dance and health education are critical to a well-rounded education. These content areas should not be eliminated or time of instruction decreased.
- Now more than ever, schools need to provide outlets for physical activity outside of dance and physical education, which includes recess, movement in the classroom, dance teams, etc.
- Social and emotional learning (SEL) is imperative for students, especially now, and SEL is flawlessly embedded in the physical education, dance, and health curriculums.

Suggestions/Feedback specifically related to physical activity:

- As it relates to **Playground and Recess** mentioned on page 27, encourage school districts to maintain the evidence-based best practice of scheduling at least 20 minutes of daily recess for grades K-5.
- As it relates to **Ensuring a Well-Rounded Education**, specifically **Physical Education**, on page 30, encourage school districts to maintain, when feasible, the state mandates outlined by [the South Carolina Students Health and Fitness Act of 2005](#), including scheduling at least 150 minutes of physical education (at least 60 minutes) and physical activity (at least 90 minutes) a week for grades K-5.
- In addition to **Ensuring a Well-Rounded Education**, as it relates to the suggestion from the draft below, include an example of where math, science, social studies, and English language arts incorporate and enhance instruction in art, music, and physical education to **truly** develop greater opportunities for cross-curricular and interdisciplinary planning and instruction by teachers.

Develop greater opportunities for cross-curricular and interdisciplinary planning and instruction by teachers. For example, art and music can incorporate and enhance instruction in math, science, social studies, and English language arts.

- As it relates to **item c** in **Class Size Caps** under **Model 1: “Traditional” Scheduling** on page 33 (and listed below), prevent the unintended consequence of taking time away for physical education by utilizing gyms.

Schools should increase utilization of large spaces throughout the entire school day. These spaces include atriums, auditoriums, cafeterias, gyms, and- when weather permits- outside spaces

The following suggestions relate to **Appendix I – SCDE Recommendations for Physical Education and Physical Activity**:

List SHAPE America’s [*School Reentry Considerations - K-12 Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity*](#) as a resource.

Physical Education

Expand *consider activities that require limited or no equipment (lifetime fitness, health-related fitness)* to include the following, per the SC Students Health and Fitness Act of 2005:

Fitness testing of students continues to occur, at a minimum, in grades 5, 8, and in high school physical education course required for graduation. Individual student fitness reports are shared with parents/caregivers.

Physical Activity

Expand *to opportunities before, during and after school (recess, intramurals, classroom activity/movement, walk/run clubs, etc.)* to include the following, in alignment with the SC School Boards Association’s Model Local Wellness Policy (ADF):

Schools promote and ensure varied physical activity opportunities such as before, during, and afterschool; staff involvement; and family and community engagement, that are in addition to, and not a substitute for, quality physical education.

Include the following, in alignment with the SC School Boards Association’s Model Local Wellness Policy (ADF): Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks, or physical education) will not be withheld as punishment for any reason.

Suggestions/Feedback specifically related to staff wellness:

Schools should continue to offer staff wellness programs such as weight management, physical activity programs, health assessments, and implement other strategies and share resources to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Also addressing stress management programming and social emotional wellbeing will need to be emphasized as staff are also coping with changes and additional life stressors with school re-entry.

When feasible the district will also offer professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and understand the connections between health and academics. These opportunities and programs can be offered virtually, and there are many resources to assist schools with promoting physical, mental and emotional health to their staff in a safe and effective way:

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/covid19-resources.aspx>

<https://www.healthiergeneration.org/campaigns/covid-19#educators>

<https://casel.org/covid-resources/>

Suggestions/Feedback specifically related to nutrition and nutrition education:

Nutrition and nutrition education are essential components of health and overall well-being during the COVID epidemic. As plans are developed to transition back to school, it is essential to ensure that staff, students and families are provided with nutrition resources to maintain optimum health and well-being. Eventually, what happens in the home could very well be transferred to school impacting the entire school population.

Proper nutrition is especially important to prevent the exacerbation of pre-existing conditions that result in more severe COVID complications. Diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and excess weight are conditions that make one more susceptible to COVID 19. Nearly 50% of the patients who did not recover from COVID 19 had three pre-existing conditions, all of which could be controlled or lessened by proper nutrition and nutrition education.

As appropriate, nutrition education should be a component of all re-entry plans to ensure that staff and students are healthy and ready to teach and learn, respectively.

Resources to support nutrition and nutrition education are below:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/nutrition-education-resources-materials>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/nutrition-education-materials>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/partnerships/provide-nutrition-education>

<https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/basic-nutrition/printable-materials-and-handouts>

<https://www.healthiergeneration.org/campaigns/covid-19>

<https://www.healthiergeneration.org/search>

<https://www.eatright.org/>