

Princeton Charter School

10 Health and Physical Education Curriculum

10.1 Health and Physical Education Program Overview

PCS provides a comprehensive health and physical education program in accordance with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Most health topics are covered in the science curriculum; certain topics such as substance abuse prevention and family-life education may be scheduled during science or physical education class time. Students learn about health promotion and disease prevention, human growth and development, nutritional science (to develop healthy eating habits), accident and fire prevention, and physical activity concepts (to develop physical fitness). Part of the program focuses on nonviolent strategies for conflict resolution. Students learn about the purposes and proper uses of medicines, and also about deleterious effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other mood-altering drugs. Special topics such as prevention of drug and alcohol abuse, prevention of cigarette use, safety training, and information about Lyme disease, AIDS, and HIV transmission are enhanced with presentations by some of the many community services available in the Princeton area. A list of the health and outreach organizations contacted is supplied in the Charter.

Students learn about age-appropriate aspects of human sexuality and family life as part of the health program, provided parents/legal guardians agree to their participation in this part of the program.

Princeton Charter School encourages physical activity every day. The school's daily schedule promotes physical activity throughout the day, through free play between classes as well as organized programs. During the midday recess, as well as during one of the 15-minute breaks, students exercise or participate in fitness activities, sports, or free play. In addition, one 45-minute period per week will be devoted to elements of dance, rhythmic and creative movement, martial arts, team sports or personal fitness programs that develop cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. For example, the students receive instruction in basic skills such as throwing, catching, and running that are common to a range of physical activities. The importance of safety is stressed.

10.2 Partnerships

The Princeton Charter School Founders have identified and contacted a range of local social service and health care providers, all of whom have indicated that their services would be available to the students of Princeton Charter School. These groups are listed below.

- Adopt-a-Cop: Princeton police officers visit schools with a series of lessons/talks about various personal safety topics.
- Carrier Center for Counseling: a private provider of mental and social health services in Skillman which also provides free community outreach programs such as workshops on eating disorders, addiction, anxiety, and depression; it maintains a speakers bureau which provides speakers to community groups.
- CONTACT: a United Way agency serving Mercer County and offering a helpline for adolescents who need referrals or are in need of counseling.
- Corner House: provides preventive and educational training for teachers, youths, and their families, including substance abuse treatments when necessary. Corner House may help schools develop curricula in its area of expertise and trains teachers to identify, access, and use available resources.
- DARE: a substance abuse prevention and education program administered by the Mercer County Sheriff's Department; DARE officers travel to schools to speak with youngsters about the dangers of substance abuse.
- HiTops Teen Health Center: a clinical service provider in Princeton which offers confidential reproductive health care, counseling and referrals for young men and women.
- Lift Inc.: a Mercer County agency which offers counseling services, pregnancy prevention, young family parenting services, tutoring, and other support for teenagers; it also provides referrals.
- Lyme Disease Network provides information on Lyme disease.
- MECHA: an organization which provides generalized counseling for Spanish-speaking persons in the Princeton community as well as translations and interpreting services for Spanish-speakers needing to interact with English-speaking service providers.
- Princeton Medical Center: has outreach services which include information on nutrition, diseases, and health issues. The Community Education Department provides free lectures and screenings to the community and the Public Relations Department provides a speakers bureau.
- YMCA and YWCA: both of these Princeton organizations, which run established after-school day care programs at the local elementary schools, are willing to provide the same to the Princeton Charter School, as well as expand the scope from simple child care to an enriched component.

10.3 New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education

The Princeton Charter School curriculum in Health and Physical Education complies with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education. These standards are listed below, together with some examples of activities associated with each standard.

Standard 2.1 Wellness: *All students will learn and apply health promotion concepts and skills to support a healthy, active lifestyle.*

By the end of 4th grade, PCS students learn about the basic structure of a human body, know responsible health behaviors, understand how some childhood injuries and illnesses can be prevented or treated, and develop personal protection strategies. By the end of 8th grade, students learn about special health needs of adolescents, learn to analyze health benefits or risks of different behaviors, and learn about existing health and help-providing organizations in the community.

Standard 2.2 Integrated Skills: *All students will use health-enhancing personal, interpersonal, and life skills to support a healthy, active lifestyle.*

By the end of 4th grade, PCS students learn to set and track their progress toward personal health and physical fitness goals. By the end of 8th grade, students are able to analyze the effects of behaviors on health and physical fitness and use the analysis for effective decision-making. All students learn different age-appropriate strategies for nonviolent conflict resolution.

Standard 2.3 Drugs and Medicines: *All students will learn and apply information about alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and medicines to make decisions that support a healthy, active lifestyle.*

By the end of 4th grade, PCS students define and understand the proper uses of drugs and medicines, recognize physical and behavioral effects of mood-altering drugs, and understand how drug abuse contributes to illness or injury. By the end of 8th grade, students are able to analyze the effects of chemical substances on human development and behavior, including drug abuse and dependency.

Standard 2.4 Human Relationships and Sexuality: *All students will learn the physical, emotional, and social aspects of human relationships and sexuality and apply these concepts to support a healthy, active lifestyle.*

By the end of 4th grade, students learn about human development from conception to death. In 5th and 6th grades, students learn about the human reproductive system and understand physiological changes that take place during puberty. By the end of 8th grade, students learn about human sexuality, pregnancy, parenthood, and prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases.

Standard 2.5 Motor Skill Development: *All students will utilize safe, efficient, and effective movement to develop and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.*

Throughout, PCS students learn, practice, and refine movement skills; these movements (running, throwing, etc) are used in games, sports, and free play. Students also learn movement concepts appropriate to different dance forms.

Standard 2.6 Fitness: *All students will apply health-related and skill-related fitness concepts and skills to develop and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.*

All PCS students learn age-appropriate techniques for developing cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength/endurance and flexibility, as well as for preventing

sports injuries.

The overall goals of the health and physical education program are:

- to give students a sense of the importance of being generally healthy and fit,
- to provide students the knowledge that will help them to achieve and to maintain a sense of health and fitness,
- and to provide opportunities for all students to engage in fun physical activities and sports.

The health curriculum, described in section 10.3.2 includes topics about safety, first aid/emergency help, nutrition, disease prevention and control, drug and alcohol abuse, family life, and human physiology. The physical education program described in section 10.3.1 includes flexibility and stretching exercises, cooperative games, team sports, creative movement instruction, and the President's Challenge Fitness Program.

PCS understands the importance of short and long term goals in the health and physical education fields for its students. Therefore, PCS will teach students how to develop their own individual health plans including nutrition and exercise plans. By creating comprehensive plans, students will pull together all of the knowledge they have learned throughout the year. The plans will also help create an overall awareness for health and exercise so that students become conscious of these daily needs. PCS students will eventually learn to set and track their progress towards personal health and physical fitness goals. The plans will be reviewed, adjusted, and revised annually.

By the end of the 4th grade, PCS students will develop basic health and nutrition plans. Students will set and track their progress towards personal health and physical fitness goals. Their plans must demonstrate understanding of the importance of eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly.

By the end of the 8th grade, PCS students will complete a specific, comprehensive and detailed exercise and health plan. Students will demonstrate an understanding of nutritional needs of the body, basic food groups, and other vital health factors. Their exercise plans will be appropriate for their age and interests and show awareness of the importance of warm-ups, cool-downs, stretching, cardio-respiratory responses to exercise, and the incorporation of exercises for all the major muscle groups in the body. Student should learn that generally, one can stay healthier by regularly exercising a moderate amount throughout one's life.

Components of a Nutrition Plan

1. Create a healthy diet – For example, students will plan and keep track of the food they eat for a week.
2. Analyze for content – The plans should be balanced among food groups and content such as cholesterol, fiber, fats, and carbohydrates. The plans should contain an appropriate number of calories, and demonstrate some understanding of the body's need for vitamins and minerals.

3. Critique their decisions – For example, is this a healthy diet? Do I need to make adjustments? Where and why?
4. Did the students include new knowledge they learned during the current year?
5. Is the plan well organized and well written?

Components of an Exercise Program

1. Create an exercise program – The program should include how long the student should exercise per day and per week for optimal health. It should include plans for both short-term and long-term gains.
2. Analyze for content – How many calories are burned for certain types of exercise such as running, jumping rope, swimming, or walking? Does the program include strength building, cardiovascular conditioning, and flexibility exercises?
3. Critique their decisions – Is this an appropriate exercise program? Do I need to make adjustments? Where and why?
4. Students will keep track of the progress they have made throughout the year through personal logs which encourage self-competition and improvement. They will compare their progress from the beginning of the year to the end of the year in such exercises as running, doing chin-ups, push-ups or pull-ups, jumping rope, and shooting baskets.
5. Competition with others – Consider the students' ranges in height and weight when competing, not necessarily just their age.

10.3.1 Physical Education Curriculum

From Kindergarten through grade four, the main emphasis is on the development of the students' kinesthetic awareness and kinesthetic skills. Through instruction and practice, students learn to be aware of their body position, balance, tension, and movement. This awareness reinforces their ability to perform locomotive skills such as running and jumping; non-locomotive skills such as stretching and pulling; and manipulative skills such as throwing, catching, and kicking balls. In grades five through eight there is more emphasis on using kinesthetic awareness and skills for sports activities. Both skills and awareness are taught safely and effectively through a number of mediums such as dance, martial arts, free play, games, and team sports. Positive effects from these activities will include cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength/endurance and flexibility, as well as less vulnerability to sports injuries.

The physical education program includes cooperative games, team sports, the skating program, and a creative movement program such as taekwondo, kung-fu, yoga, bushido, or another alternative.

Flexibility Exercises

There are two types of stretching: 1) Static stretching is a very slow, gradual, and controlled elongation of the muscles through a full range of motion. This is the most effective and the least likely to cause injury. 2) Ballistic Stretching, often referred to as dynamic stretching, which incorporates rapid, uncontrolled, bouncing or bobbing motions. This is not very beneficial and can often be unsafe.

Warm-ups are encouraged for all students before any physical activity is performed to reduce risk of injury. Students should be taught and use stretches for the neck, shoulders, lower back, hips, groin, quadriceps, hamstrings, and calves.

Sports and Games

Students will be expected to learn the rules for the various field sports they play, to play the sport, and to show qualities of good sportsmanship. The students be taught the elements of one major sport per year. For example, in 1999-2000 the sports were:

- 2nd grade: kickball
- 3rd grade: soccer skills
- 4th grade: baseball/softball
- 5th grade: basketball/football
- 6th grade: lacrosse/field hockey
- 7th grade: volleyball
- 8th grade: ultimate frisbee

Skills for each sport will be developed over multiple years.

Special Winter Programs

During the winter months Princeton Charter School provides two special programs to enhance the physical education program: ice skating and martial arts/creative movement. The ice-skating program runs for four to six weeks starting shortly after the winter break. This program is followed by at least six weeks of a martial arts/creative movement instruction such as Kung Fu, Tai Kwon Do, etc.

Physical Fitness Challenge Test

One core component of the exercise program will be the “President’s Challenge Fitness Program.” This program includes the following five events:

1. curl-ups (sit-ups),
2. shuttle run (students pick up wooden blocks at intervals of 30 feet for a total run of 60 feet),
3. one mile run/walk (0.25 mile for six- to seven-year olds; 0.5 mile for eight- to nine-year olds),
4. pull-ups (alternative exercise: push-ups),

5. v-sit reach (a stretching exercise, like a sit-up).

All students may not achieve the standards set for awards; nonetheless, students may strive to increase their personal level of achievement throughout the course of the year, and over several years.

10.3.2 Health Curriculum Topics

The health curriculum will include instruction in the following topics.

Accident Prevention and Safety

- School and Playground
- Personal
- Bicycle, Skateboard, Roller Blade, and Motor Vehicle
- Water
- Kitchen
- Ear and Eye Protection
- Fire Drills, Fire Prevention

First Aid/Emergency Help

- Injuries
- Dialing 911
- Fire

Nutrition

- Balanced Diet
- Calories
- Vitamins and Minerals

Disease Prevention and Control

- Hygiene
- HIV prevention
- Lyme disease

Drugs and Alcohol Abuse

- Correct Use of Drugs and Medicines
- Physical and Behavioral Effects of Substance Abuse
- Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse
- Laws Governing Controlled Substances
- Resources for Help and Information
- Illness and Injury Related to Substance Abuse

Family Life Education

- The family
- Growth and development
- Emotions

Individuality
Peer relationships
Human sexuality

Human Physiology, Growth, and Development

The skeletal and muscular systems
The circulatory system
The digestive system
The respiratory system
The nervous system
The reproductive system