 Commission scolaire English-Montréal English Montreal School Board		
POLICY:	PHYSICAL EDUCATION SAFETY	CODE: PS-13
Origin:	Pedagogical Services	
Authority:	Resolution #98-12-16-9	
Reference(s):		

RATIONALE

Physical Education encourages students to gain greater self-control by providing them with many opportunities for expanding or refining their range of body movements. The program is designed to enable all students, without exception, to experience a variety of activities including sports, games, self-expression and physical fitness. By interacting with the various contexts in which these activities are held, students gain a better understanding of time, space, objects and other individuals. In this way, physical education encourages students to take responsibility for their own health and recreation both in and out of school and in later years.

Proper safety procedures have always been an integral part of the Physical Education program. Safety measures and safety rules help both the teachers and students to be responsible for their actions. Yet, despite all precautions, the risk of injury while participating in physical activities remains. Physical Education teachers are strongly encouraged to make certain that all students are thoroughly familiar with the basic principles of safety, that is, they must know safety rules and the proper conduct of activities, and be able to control hazards and risks. (Appendix 1)

OBJECTIVE

This safety guide for Physical Education classes and extra curricular activities is provided to help schools ensure better safety for their students when activities take place. (Appendix 2)

PRINCIPLES

Those who are responsible for administering the Physical Education program and the school intramural and interscholastic programs are in strategic positions to control and reduce accidents. It is extremely important that these people *initiate* proper safety procedures. Their responsibility lies in making certain that proper safety policies and procedures have been established and are followed.

Of all the principles related to accident prevention, risk recognition is probably the most significant. One must possess a clear understanding of the hazards and potential dangers of an activity before one can establish controls. It should not be presupposed that participants are aware of the inherent danger of certain activities. It has been established without question that effective leadership reduces accidents.

Classes should be organized to follow recognized Physical Education principles:

1. warm-up and conditioning exercises;
2. review (including all appropriate safety procedures);
3. new skills;
4. cooling down.

EMERGENCY PLAN

1. The school should establish an emergency plan to be followed in case of accident. This plan should be developed by the governing board in collaboration with the school principal, and, where applicable, the Physical Education teacher. School staff and students should be made aware of the plan.
2. The school should establish an evacuation plan for spectators and participants when hosting an intramural or interscholastic sporting event in the school.

USE OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

When students are in the gymnasium, palestre, or locker room area, a teacher must be present. If a teacher is not present, the students should wait in the corridor.

1. Locker rooms and equipment room doors must be locked whenever possible for safety reasons as well as to minimize stealing and vandalism.
2. During classes, equipment that is not being used must be placed in such a way that there is no danger to the students and the equipment does not obstruct or restrict their movement.
3. No student is permitted to use a piece of equipment or installation until he/she has been taught its proper use and potential hazards of such use.
4. Students must never use equipment until they have been properly warmed up and have been given permission.
5. Students must be taught the proper assembly and disassembly of equipment.

GENERAL MEDICAL CONCERNS

1. A first-aid kit should be available in the gymnasium. It should be verified regularly by the school nurse, and should be replenished on a regular basis.
2. The Physical Education teacher should be advised by the school nurse regarding:
 - a. any students who may have a physical, sensorial, gross or fine motor problem which may affect their performance of specific sports skills;
 - b. any students who have a life-threatening allergic condition which may require prompt medical attention.
3. The Physical Education teacher should be aware of the student who is over-anxious to return to activity after injury or surgery. The student must present a note from the doctor stating that the student is ready to participate.

MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

A school should recognize three (3) basic types of exemptions. These are:

1. *Long-Term Exemptions*

Long-term exemptions pertain to students with severe medical problems who are restricted from Physical Education for the duration of the year.

In the case of these exemptions, the teacher should be made aware of the problem the student has. A doctor's certificate must be produced stating that the student should refrain from the Physical Education class for the whole year.

In these cases, the doctor should receive a list of activities offered in the course and be requested to indicate those activities that are appropriate for the student concerned.

Should a doctor confirm that the student cannot participate in any form of activity, it is suggested that the student be registered for another course or be given assignments that involve physical activity in an administrative or supportive role.

2. *Medium-Length Exemptions*

Medium-length exemptions pertain to students who are incapable of participating in Physical Education for a period ranging from two weeks to over half the course.

In the case of these exemptions, the administration must receive a medical certificate stating the length of time that the student is unable to participate.

3. *Short-Term Exemptions*

Short-term exemptions involve exemptions from Physical Education anywhere from one (1) or two (2) classes to a period of approximately two (2) weeks.

These exemptions require a note from a parent or guardian providing the reason for the exemption.

Students who repeatedly produce notes from their parent or guardian exempting them from their Physical Education class should be reported by the teacher to the school principal for follow-up.

All notes provided by the students should be kept on file for future reference as needed.

STUDENT DRESS


In all Physical Education activities:

1. Proper clothing must be worn so that students can move freely.
 - a. A student should wear shorts, a T-shirt, running shoes and sweat socks. Cut-off jeans, nylons, or pantyhose are not permitted. Sweat suits, track suits, gymnastic or dance leotards are optional.
 - b. For swimming classes, a bathing suit must be worn by all students.
 - c. In a sauna, students must wear a bathing suit.
 - d. Outdoors, students should wear layered clothing appropriate for seasonal weather. Proper footwear is essential for safety and traction.
- N.B.** Where problems may occur regarding appropriate clothing due to religious or ethnic situations, the school should contact Community Services or the specific religious or cultural community for acceptable clothing guidelines.

2. Street shoes are not permitted in any indoor Physical Education area. Running shoes (sneakers) with good traction soles are recommended.
3. Jewellery must be removed for all activities.
4. Chewing gum is not permitted.
5. Hair must be tied back (if long), and fingernails should be cut to a reasonable length.
6. Protective equipment must be worn, if indicated.

INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

1. Students must be informed of such policies as these affect them, particularly regarding safety rules. Students should be frequently reminded of the importance of these rules.
2. The students must be taught to respect the use of the facilities by being made aware of the importance of proper conduct and diligent use of equipment and facilities.
3. Students must be made conscious of personal safety as well as the safety of their classmates.
4. Students must receive a written copy of the rules which apply to the use of the Physical Education facilities and the use of equipment. (Rules #5, 7 and 8)

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PURPOSE

1. To provide a standard of approved safety procedures.
2. To assist the Physical Education teacher in providing a safe program in a safe environment.

ACCIDENTS

In the event of an accident, the following steps should be taken by the Physical Education teacher:

1. Take whatever first-aid steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the student.
2. Inform the administration immediately.
3. See to it that the school accident form is duly completed.
4. Maintain a copy of the accident report in the Physical Education office.

FACILITIES

1. *Safety Procedures*

In collaboration with the school principal, the Physical Education staff and the coaching staff should establish the safety procedures for each activity on an annual basis.

2. *Preventative Measures*
 - a. No glass or similar breakable objects are permitted in any Physical Education area. Similarly, no eating or drinking is permitted.

- b. All Physical Education surfaces should be cleared of any water that may have been dropped or leaked.

3. *Security*

- a. The Physical Education teachers are responsible for the efficient and successful management of the equipment room.
- b. The equipment room must be a secure place with provisions for locking doors and windows.

4. *Maintenance*

The equipment room must be kept as neat as possible to prevent breakage of equipment or injury to students if they have to enter the room to get equipment.

EQUIPMENT

1. *Issuing Equipment*

- a. It is essential from the standpoint of economy and efficient management to account for every piece of equipment issued.
- b. Portable equipment must be marked so that it is easily identifiable as school property.

2. *Cleaning and Storing*

- a. At the end of each session, equipment should be cleaned, repaired and then stored.
- b. Footballs, basketballs, mats, and other leather or synthetic equipment should be cleaned once a year with saddle soap or other cleansing agents for leather.

3. *Repairing Equipment*

- a. The Physical Education teachers must check equipment frequently for breakage. Damaged or broken equipment must not be used.
- b. Inform the caretaker of repairs necessary to the facility or equipment. Follow up to ensure that repairs are completed.
- c. Repairs involving safety should be made by a qualified repairman.

4. *Inventory*

The inventory of equipment and supplies on hand should be done periodically. At least once a year determine what should be discarded, cleaned, repaired, laundered, or replaced because of breakage, loss or theft.

APPENDIX I

SAFETY CODES

Physical Education teachers are encouraged to follow these 12 safety codes¹:

1. Operate and teach at all times within the scope of his/her employment, as defined by the rules and regulations of the School Board.
2. Provide the safeguards designed to minimize the dangers inherent in a particular activity.
3. Provide the amount of supervision for each activity required to ensure maximum safety of all the students.
4. Inspect equipment and facilities periodically to determine whether or not they are safe for use.
5. Notify the proper authorities concerning the existence of any dangerous condition if it continues to exist.
6. Provide sufficient instruction in the performance of any activity before exposing the students to its hazards.
7. Be certain that the task is one approved by the School Board for the age and achievement levels of the students involved.
8. Do not force a student to perform a physical feat which the student obviously feels he or she is incapable of performing.
9. Act promptly and use discretion in giving basic first-aid to an injured student.
10. Exercise due care in practicing his/her profession.
11. Act as a reasonably prudent person would under the given circumstances.
12. Anticipate dangers which should be apparent to a trained intelligent person (a legal principle known as 'foreseeability').

¹ Safety - Cycle 2, Physical Education for Elementary Schools, Ministère de l'éducation, 1986.

APPENDIX 2

REFERENCES

For safety rules regarding certain sports and extra-curricular activities, please consult:

Safety Guide of Certain Sports and Extra Curricular Activities (for teachers, animators & school administrators), published by the *Conseil scolaire de l'île de Montréal*.

For helpful hints on safety in the Physical Education program, please consult:

1. Document d'information, Sécurité dans les activités physiques en Milieu Scolaire, Ministère de l'Éducation 1994 (16-2001)
2. Safety Guide - Cycle 2, Physical Education for Elementary Schools, Ministère de l'Éducation (pages Y6 - Y8).