

Administrative Procedure 168

Appendix A – Physical Literacy and Movement

Physical Literacy and Movement

Background

Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) recognizes physical literacy as an essential element of student and staff wellness and acknowledges its role in optimal learning and growth and development.

“Physical Literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.” ([International Physical Literacy Association](#))

We are committed to creating environments that promote physical literacy in schools. This administrative procedure serves to reinforce the importance of physical literacy as a gateway to physical activity and movement within a school environment. It also serves to acknowledge that valuing physical literacy within schools contributes to the healthy growth and development of the whole child.

“...the healing ministry of Jesus is total and comprehensive in scope; it is directed to the health and well-being of the whole person – in all its dimensions (physical, spiritual, mental, emotional and social).” ([Pastoral Letter by the Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops](#))

“Participation in quality physical literacy experiences will produce a number of positive outcomes in each participant’s experience, understanding, and application of movement in a variety of settings. This participation leads to improvements in physical and mental health, increased fitness and enhanced performance through the connection-based and competence-based components...” ([Developing Physical Literacy- Building a New Normal For Canadians](#))

“Physical literacy is lifelong holistic learning acquired and applied in movement and physical activity contexts. It reflects ongoing changes integrating physical, psychological [affective], social and cognitive capabilities. It is vital in helping us lead healthy and fulfilling lives through movement and physical activity. A physically literate person is able to draw on their integrated physical, psychological, social and cognitive capabilities to support health promoting and fulfilling movement and physical activity – relative to their situation and context – throughout the lifespan.” ([SportAUS- Physical Literacy Framework](#)).

Physical Literacy as a Shared Responsibility

Just as EICS views supporting mental health as a shared responsibility, we view developing physical literacy in the same way. We acknowledge the development of literacy and numeracy is dependent upon the support of each of a child's teachers and support staff. We believe the development of physical literacy requires the support of the whole school community.

Physical literacy supports:

- independence and quality of life
- social connections
- a healthy body, mind, and spirit
- Injury prevention
- Personal challenge, play and fun
- Engagement in physical activity for life

Our coordinated support of the development of physical literacy skills is critical for supporting positive health outcomes for our students. It is our shared responsibility to encourage and foster the physical, social, cognitive and emotional benefits of movement in our classes and provide learning opportunities for students to practice their skills and develop a confidence that will carry them into a healthy adulthood.

Physical Literacy & Play

Play is an integral part of every child's healthy development and is embedded as Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. "Children and youth have the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts."

"[Play] energizes us and enlivens us. It eases our burdens. It renews our natural sense of optimism and opens us up to new possibilities...neuroscientists, developmental biologists, psychologists, social scientists and researchers from every point of scientific compass now know that play is a profound biological process." (Play: How it shapes the brain, opens the imagination and invigorates the soul. Stuart Brown)

At the heart of a physically literate student is a love of movement. We can foster this love of movement by providing students with environments that promote play. Play of course, has an emphasis on fun, and supports the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the child.

"Children develop physical literacy when they are given lots of fun opportunities to learn and play using different movement skills. Physical literacy is developed both through unstructured play—where kids can explore different skills on their own—and structured activities—where they can receive teaching and coaching to improve their skills." (Activeforlife.com)

Physical Literacy & Nature

Time spent in natural environments has been proven to be beneficial for both child development and for the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of all age groups. Outdoor learning and play are essential ingredients to a healthy childhood. A growing body of research indicates how learning and playing outdoors can improve cognitive functioning, reduce student and teacher stress, improve attention, boost mental health, raise test scores and ignite a sense of wonder.

“The evidence suggests that exposure to nature is a health and wellbeing promotion strategy that is underutilized... Many people have access to some form of urban park, if not community garden, conservation area, or nature in their backyard... nature interventions may offer opportunities to enhance mood, reduce stress, and promote wellbeing, at relatively low cost. Overall, evidence suggests that connecting with nature is a promising path to flourishing in life.”
(Capaldi, C., Passmore, H-A., Nisbet, E.K., Zelenski, J. M., & Dopko, R.L. 2015. *Flourishing in Nature: A Review of the Benefits of Connecting with Nature and its Application as a Wellbeing Intervention. International Journal of Wellbeing, 5(4), 1-16.*
doi:10.5502/ijw.v5i4.449)

EICS encourages staff to take their students outside into the largest and most beautiful classroom in the world.

Fundamental Movement Skills

Fundamental movement skills are basic movements on land, in the air, in the water and on ice or snow that involve various body parts. These movement skills form the basis of physical literacy and need to be learned and practised by children to build competence in their movements and confidence in their abilities.

Fundamental movement skills include:

- Locomotor skills that enable moving through space, such as walking, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, swimming, skating and climbing
- Non-locomotor skills, such as balancing and stretching
- Skills that enable manipulation of objects, such as throwing, catching, hitting, kicking and dribbling

Working with the Comprehensive School Health Framework, division schools shall:

- Implement a coordinated plan that values physical literacy as it contributes to healthy growth and development of the whole child.
- Provide professional development around physical literacy to gain knowledge and enhance implementation so that the whole school fosters a social and physical environment that supports physical literacy.
- Work together with parent/guardian(s) and community groups to provide consistent messaging around the importance of physical literacy.

This Administrative Procedure uses the “[Physical Literacy- Guide for Schools](#)” document to highlight school areas, components, objectives and key characteristics that are essential for implementing physical literacy within our schools.

CULTURE, ORGANIZATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Leadership

Foster a culture that actively supports a whole school approach to developing physical literacy.

- Embed physical literacy in the school strategic plan, annual implementation plan and other applicable frameworks.
- Comply with mandated or recommended time [allocation for Health and Physical Education, sport and physical activity](#).
- Support staff to attend professional learning for physical literacy.
- Role model a healthy and active life and encourage teachers and students to do the same.
- Promote physical activity, health and wellbeing messages to the whole school community.
- Facilitate an environment where movement, physical activity, and unstructured and structured play are valued and nurtured.
- Seek teacher, student and parent voice on how physical literacy can be developed throughout the school.

Policy

- Support all aspects of physical literacy including the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and cognitive development.
- Involve the wider school community in creating, reviewing and sharing the policy.
- Focus on the individual needs of students using a strength-based and student-centred approach.
- Incorporate the eight key components of this Physical Literacy: Guide for Schools.
- Integrate best practice safety and inclusive principles.
- Include opportunities for staff to develop their physical literacy as part of a staff wellbeing program.
- Ensure all students have the opportunity to be physically active at school every day and are not excluded from Health and Physical Education, recess and any other physical activities. [Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines For Children and Youth](#).
- Ensure HPE, recess and other physical activities are not withheld as punitive measures or in-favour of work completion in other subject areas (e.g., student A will miss PE to finish a test or complete a reading assessment)
- Incorporate physical literacy into other relevant practices.

Environment

Facilitate access to a variety of environments that encourage the development of physical literacy.

- Provide access to a range of facilities and equipment that encourage physical activity before, during and after school.
- Design classrooms that encourage movement and physical activity.
- Provide adequate facilities to promote the use of active travel to and from school by staff and students e.g. bike racks
- Provide access to all weather spaces, including indoor play spaces.
- Ensure the school environment is well maintained, safe and clean.
- Encourage supervisors to support active play and physical activity when students are outside.

CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

Quality Health and Physical Education Program

Provide a quality Health and Physical Education program which encompasses physical literacy.

- Taught by a qualified Health and Physical Education teacher(s).
- Meet Alberta's Physical Education Program of Study curricular objectives. ([Physical literacy and Alberta Program of Studies](#)).
- Include evidence-based teaching and learning methods.
- Inclusive of a diverse range of learning styles and student interests, physical and cognitive abilities.
- Incorporate a balance of non-competitive and competitive activities.
- Use a variety of formative and summative assessment methods providing relevant and timely feedback to students.
- Maximize student participation with 50% of practical classes including moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Provide appropriate and sufficient equipment for all students to be active.

Inclusive Co-Curricular Program

Provide a broad range of sports and physical activities that complements the curriculum and focuses on the development of physical literacy.

- Provide a variety of inclusive, competitive, non-competitive, team and individual sports and physical activities for students.
- Provide a variety of sports and physical activities before, during and after school.
- Support students to lead sport and physical activity initiatives at school.
- Recognize and reward students for participation and achievement.
- Promote a positive attitude towards the development of physical literacy.
- Support students to identify movement opportunities at school and in their local community

Cross-Curricular Approach

Encourage all staff to engage in professional learning to develop physical literacy across all learning areas.

- Incorporate the development of physical literacy into a range of curriculum areas at all year levels.
- Planning the development of physical literacy into curriculum, documents and practice to the same extent as literacy and numeracy.
- Provide professional learning opportunities and resources to staff to ensure physical literacy is incorporated into other learning areas.
- Encourage staff to be positive role models by leading healthy and active lives.
- Encourage staff to provide additional physical activities where appropriate.

PARTNERSHIPS

Families

Encourage families to help students develop physical literacy.

- Promote the importance of physical education, sport and physical activity on academic, health and wellbeing benefits.
- Provide regular information and practical strategies to promote physical literacy and reduce sedentary behaviours at home.
- Promote the benefits of parents being role models in being physically active.
- Encourage parents to be involved in their child's sport and physical activity.
- Promote the benefits of participating in a variety of inclusive, competitive, non-competitive, team, individual and recreational activities.
- Encourage inclusion of people from diverse cultural backgrounds to participate in sport and physical activities and encourage parents to share their culture and experiences.
- Encourage families to communicate with teachers about their child's physical literacy development and outcomes.

Local Communities

Engage with a diverse range of community groups to enhance opportunities for students to engage in physical activity and to develop their physical literacy.

- Promote participation in community physical activities.
- Establish relationships with recreation centres, community sport and physical activity providers to strengthen physical activity opportunities.
- Encourage connections with local health agencies, organizations and businesses to support physical literacy initiatives.
- Advocate for safe play areas and active travel infrastructure.
- Enable access to school sporting facilities outside of school hours.
- Promote health and wellbeing initiatives and messages from and with the local community.

Resources: [Physical Literacy: A Guide for Schools](#)
[Sport Aus Physical Literacy Framework](#)
[Children and Youth Guidelines](#)
[Physical literacy and Alberta Program of Studies Pictograph](#)
[Physical Education Programs of Study](#)
[Physical Education Program Supports](#)
[Physical Education Competencies](#)
[Guide to Education](#)
[Be Fit For Life](#)
[PHE Canada](#)
[Everactive Schools](#)
[International Play Association](#)
[JCSH \(Joint Consortium for School Health\). \(2016, July\). What is Comprehensive School Health](#)
[Sport for Life: Physical Literacy Environmental Assessment Tool \(PLEA\)](#)