

# Linking Health & Learning Newsletter

The newsletter for Vermont's Health and Physical Educators and supporters

May 2019

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## Vermont Physical Education Assessment Update

The 2019 Vermont Physical Education Assessment (VTPEA) test window will close on May 31, 2019. At this time, test administrators should be in the process of collecting and loading VTPEA assessment data using data-reporting procedures outlined in the 2019 [VTPEA Test Administration Manual](#). To support educators in VTPEA administration and data reporting, the AOE has set up 'Office Hours'. Office hours are twice a month on Tuesday, Wednesdays, and Thursdays throughout the test window. Educators are asked to register for office hours; once registered a meeting link will be emailed to registrants. Click [here](#) to learn more about VTPEA Office Hours.

## Multiple Behavior Change Interventions: Can High Schools Be an Effective Setting to Promote Healthy Lifestyles?

The April 2019 Journal of Adolescent Health published the article, [Can High Schools Be an Effective Setting to Promote Healthy Lifestyles? Effects of a Multiple Behavior Change Intervention in Adolescents](#), that reports on a year-long study that examined the effects of a multiple health behavior school-based intervention program on adolescents at two Spain secondary schools. One school served as the control school, the other as the experimental school. Student health behaviors, including movement behaviors (i.e., physical activity, sedentary/screen time, and sleep quality and duration), diet, and substance consumption (i.e., alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs) were measured before and immediately after the intervention program. Physical activity and sedentary times were measured by accelerometers, and the rest of the health behaviors by using self-reported scales.

Schools provide the opportunity to adopt a global approach that involves the whole school community to promote healthy lifestyles among adolescents. A school-based, multiple health behavior change intervention program called *Paths to Pyrenees* was conducted by teachers in the experimental school via curricular and extracurricular activities. *Paths to Pyrenees* aimed to empower adolescents to develop health literacy skills through curricular and extracurricular activities. Curricular activities included 12 focused tutorial sessions related to increasing knowledge of health-related recommendations, interdisciplinary project-based learning about healthy lifestyles, and teacher role-modeling healthy behaviors (e.g., participating in physical activity during breaks and eating healthy). Extracurricular actions included four parent sessions or parent/student sessions where different health topics were discussed, and student data was shared and discussed. Opportunities were also provided for families, teachers, and students to participate in various physical activities. Last, health information was distributed at school and community sport events to help promote healthy lifestyles outside of school.

The results of this study showed that multiple health behavior school-based interventions have a greater impact than interventions that focus on a single health behavior. Before the intervention program there were no significant difference between the adolescents at the control and experimental schools. After the intervention, student health behaviors at the experimental school significantly improved in all areas except daily computer time. Both boys and girls from the experimental school reported healthier lifestyle behaviors than their counterparts in the control school.

The multiple health behavior intervention program model can be used in Vermont. School-specific data from the Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey can be used to identify risky health behaviors a whole school intervention program could address. Vaping, opioid use, mental health challenges, poor diet, and lack of physical activity or sleep are just a few common negative health behaviors impacting the health and academic success of many Vermont students. Using the Whole School, Whole Community, and Whole Child Model, school/district Wellness Teams can use this study to create local health intervention programs to support the specific needs of their students.

### **In the Spotlight: Northfield's VTPEA Test Event**

On April 30, 2019, Northfield Schools collaborated with the Norwich University to conduct their VTPEA test event. Norwich University provided the use of the indoor track facility and the service of several Physical Education majors trained to support Northfield Physical Education teachers in the administration of the VTPEA.

Northfield students in grades 7 and 9 completed the state-required physical education assessment in one half-day event rather than over several class periods and got to visit the University. Pre- and in-service physical educators worked together to assess students and collect required test data. Additionally, Norwich students had the opportunity to work side-by-side with Northfield teachers and students, and form a bond that will continue to grow in the future. Below, read comments from students, teachers, and a Norwich University Professor considering the April 30th experience.

- Jessalyn Sweeney (NU, 2013) Northfield Physical Education Teacher  
"Our Northfield PE department is inclusively made up of former Norwich University Physical Education (NUPE) program graduates (Mike Gonneville, NU, 1977; Joseph Bertrand, NU, 2018; and Jessalyn). As a former NUPE student, I enjoyed going to Norwich and working with the current PE professor and students enrolled in the program. We are lucky that the college is right in town and that we can access the many opportunities that Norwich offers. It shows how the two programs (Northfield/Norwich) can collaborate and work together."
- Scott Maxham, NUPE Professor  
"Being an alumni of both Northfield H.S. and Norwich University, this was a wonderful experience for me. For NUPE students, working with Northfield Schools is vital to the growth of our program. Northfield has always offered wonderful opportunities for our program to gain valuable field experience. The Norwich

students completed VTPEA training with Susan Yesalonia and passed the certification test prior to the event. On the day of the event, NUPE students' worked with Northfield teachers and ran all of the FitnessGram assessments for the Northfield students. They did a fabulous job! This is something I hope to continue with Northfield (and other local schools) in the future."

- NUPE student - Jessalyn  
"In the fall, we did a pre-assessment of the fitness tests and throughout the school year the students developed and (hopefully) improved in the four fitness components that were tested (muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiorespiratory endurance and flexibility). Before the event, Professor Maxham and I met a few times to discuss how we wanted to set up the event and how we wanted to go about rotating students through the different assessments. I think all-in-all the event went really well. The students were excited to come to Norwich for part of the day and do the fitness testing. I think that this is something that we will try to keep going in the future."
- NUPE student - Jade  
"Working with the 7th and 9th graders from Northfield Middle/High was a great experience. It gave me practice with fitness testing on the actual age group that is required to be tested for FitnessGram. I got to look for errors that were in play, practice giving instructions, working with a massive group of students. Working with them was fun and gave me more reasons why I want to peruse my dream of becoming a Physical Educator. Being a Northfield High School graduate, it's great to see that Northfield and Norwich have great connection. This connection gives Norwich students the opportunity to go out and work in the school-setting, preparing us for our future. While I was at Northfield, I got to experience a NUPE student, Jess Sweeney, come in and teach. Her enthusiasm and having the connection of my hometown helped me decide that I wanted to be a physical educator."

As you have read, using service-learning to support the development of Vermont's pre-service physical education teachers and to support schools in the administration of a VTPEA test event for students is a 'win-win' experience!

### **New SHAPE America Initiatives**

SHAPE America and Gopher Sport are in a three-year partnership to plan, market and implement two new programs to support health and physical education: the *Big Feats for SHAPE America Virtual Race* and *Health. Moves. Minds.* Both are educational fundraising programs.

The Big Feats Virtual Race is a community-based, service-oriented program designed to engage students, parents, teachers, and the community at large in a 10-week physical activity challenge. The first Virtual Race took place from October 22 – December 31, 2018. Virtual race participants set their own movement and/or distance goals and complete the race on their own time, at their own pace, and at any location they choose. Eighty percent raised during the Big Feats was allocated to 10 schools in high-need areas across the

country, selected through SHAPE America's Impact Schools Grant Program.

Health.Moves.Minds. is a school-based program with both educational and fundraising components. The guidelines for this program will be released in the fall of 2019. It will focus on core areas related to health and wellness and will include new standards-based classroom and event resources for teachers. Students will have the opportunity to raise money to support their own school's health and physical education program. To learn more about these programs visit the SHAPE America website.

### Resources:

- [AOE, Physical Education webpage](#) and [Health Education webpage](#) that includes pertinent information and resources for educators.
- [Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Portal](#) that includes relevant VTPEA information and resources.
- [AOE Research Brief: Proficiency-based Grading Practices](#), a document that provides information about proficiency-based grading.
- [Healthy Lessons](#) website contains dozens of FREE elementary health-related lesson plans as well as fun, online games. It is intended to help both health educators and busy classroom teachers present excellent health lessons to their students. *All lessons correlate to the National Health Education Standards.* Parents will also find a section of relevant health information.
- [HealthSmart](#), a free K-12 health curriculum aligned with National Health Standards as well as the National Sexuality Standards, HECAT, and others. Resources are provided along with instructional guidelines.
- [OPENPhysEd](#), a free resource that includes tools for K-12 Physical Education curriculum, early childhood movement exploration, and after-school physical activity programs.
- [BOKS](#), a free research-based physical activity program that empowers school communities to improve their children physically, mentally, and socially through the power of movement.
- [Weekly Field Memo \(WFM\)](#), a weekly communication from the Vermont AOE to the education community. You may subscribe, unsubscribe, and update your email address for the [WFM online](#).

### Announcements and Professional Learning Opportunities:

- *Members of SHAPE America – 2019 Conference Handouts are available [here!](#)*
- [Vermont Summer Camps](#)
- 2019 SHAPE-VT Conference will be held at the beautiful Killington Grand Hotel, October 24-25, 2019. [Conference proposals](#) being accepted until July 10, 2019.
- [Vermont Higher Education Collaborative](#) summer courses and workshops.
- Governor Opioid Coordination Council - [recommended strategies for 2019](#)
- The [26th Vermont Middle Grades Summer Institute](#)

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