

Return to Learn: Launching Instruction for Health and Physical Education

A digital version of this document can be found at <https://sde.ok.gov/covid19-instruction-support>.

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Introduction

This guidance is designed to support educators and school administrators as they plan for various instructional delivery models for the 2020-21 school year. It has never been so important to take time and plan to attend to the goals of supporting students’ academic growth, supporting students’ and educators’ social-emotional well-being, and creating a safe environment for all students and educators.

Teachers and schools should be responsive to their local context and student needs as they develop plans for the 2020-21 school year. Therefore, **please note that the guidance and resources provided in this document are not meant to be a directive or limitation**, but rather a tool. Additional guidance about the planning educators may undertake in preparation for this school year

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can be found beginning on page 38 of [Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools](#).

To provide feedback or make suggestions or requests for future guidance, please consider [completing this survey](#).

Questions to Consider While Planning for Instruction

The current events associated with COVID-19 bring a unique set of challenges to health and physical education teachers. Activity and movement associated with health and physical education are not conducive to social distancing. Educators are grappling with how to remodel entire curriculums that, in the past, have been focused on group activities and equipment sharing. However, with these challenges, there are still opportunities to focus on motor skills, fitness development, mental health and wellness.

The following sections provide guidance to use when planning for instruction this school year.

Instructional Focus and Pacing

What content and skills should instruction focus on this year?

According to SHAPE America, the development of motor skill competence is the highest priority of physical education because of its impact on student engagement, intrinsic motivation, perceived competence, participation in physical activity, and sufficient levels of health-related fitness.¹

Therefore, assess your curriculum and make a [curriculum map](#) (yearly plan) to address all of the [Oklahoma Academic Standards for Physical Education](#), especially motor skills, during the year. Address multiple standards within one lesson. The warm-up and cool-down could address different standards than the main activity. Identify the units, standards, skills, activities, and assessments to be included by quarter.² If curriculum is unavailable, check out [OPEN PE](#) or [PEKansas](#) for free resources that could be modified to reinforce social distancing or blended and virtual learning. Also, OPEN PE has developed a free [curriculum map](#). Create a list of the lessons that can be converted into an online format or are organized in a way to support social distancing in the gym or blended and distance learning.

¹ SHAPE America's Guidelines for K-12 Online Physical Education
<https://www.shapeamerica.org/uploads/pdfs/2020/guidelines/Online-PE-Guidance-Document.pdf>

² Nebraska Department of Education's Health and Physical Education Re-Opening Guidance.
<https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HPE-Fall-2020-Guidance.pdf>

Effective Instructional Routines

How will each student learn the content and skills associated with this discipline, whether through in-person or distance learning?

[Appropriate instruction](#) is one of the four essential components of quality physical education. Delivering appropriate instructional practices and deliberate-practice tasks that support the goals, objectives, and standards can be achieved in-person or with distance learning by focusing on a consistent instructional routine or cycle of learning. Instruction should focus on skill development activities, fitness-related activities, and social-emotional learning opportunities that can be performed during in-person (self-space, stations, or sections), blended, or virtual learning.

The effective cycle of learning for physical education can also be used for health education. The Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) [Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool](#) and the CDC’s [Characteristics of an Effective Health Education Curriculum](#) identify this series of developmental steps (cycle of learning) and state that an effective curriculum builds essential skills — including communication, refusal, assessing the accuracy of information, decision-making, planning and goal-setting, self-control, and self-management — that enable students to build their confidence, deal with social pressures, and avoid or reduce risk behaviors. For each skill, students can be guided through the cycle of learning provided in the table below.

Cycle of Learning	Physical Education	Health Education
Discuss the importance of the skill, its relevance, and relationship to other learned skills.	Incorporate Joey Feith’s “What? Why? And How?” concept and icons to introduce the lesson’s focus.	Incorporate “What,” “Why,” and “How.” into the lesson’s introduction to show students how the skill relates to them and their world.
Present steps for developing the skill.	Utilize OPEN’s Skill Cue Teach Sheets or cues from Essential Elements for Motor Skills Guidance Document .	RMC Health Education provides step sub-skills posters and teaching progressions for essential skills like communication, refusal, assessing the accuracy of information, decision-making, planning and goal-setting, and self-management for grades PreK-12th grade.

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		Example: Lesson 1: Analyzing Influences & You, Learning Activity #2.
Model the skill	Create/use videos or provide step by step, sequential pictures to model the skill.	For an example of how modeling can be implemented into a lesson, refer to the “ Lesson 2: Analyzing Influences & You and Power of Words, Learning Activity #1 ”
Practice and/or rehearse the skill in various scenarios depending on age and using real-life scenarios.	Refer to the master list of skill development activities , integrate self-guided challenges or use skill application to provide students with practice tasks.	See how to provide students with opportunities to practice skills using real-life scenarios with “ Lesson 2: Analyzing Influences & You and Power of Words, Learning Activity #3 ”
Provide feedback and reinforcement	Incorporate QR codes, Flipgrid , Google Jamboard , Edpuzzle , PE Central’s Paper and Pencils Assessments to provide feedback and reinforcement.	Refer to the Cairn Assessment Toolkit for strategies to provide feedback.

This cycle of learning typically happens in 1-2 class periods for older students but younger students need ample time for repetition (multiple learning experiences) and refinement based on teacher feedback during school-based learning. In blended or distance learning, this cycle may need to be completed over multiple asynchronous (on students’ own time)/synchronous (common class time) experiences.

NOTE: For specific guidance related to Special Education and English Language Learner instruction, visit the [OSDE Office of Special Education](#) and [Office of English Language Learner websites](#).

Blended or Distance Learning

How can I adapt my instruction for blended or distance learning approaches?

Some schools are already planning to offer students opportunities to engage in blended or distance learning for a semester or the full school year. When planning for long-term blended or distance learning models, instructional planning considerations above should be leveraged.

For districts using the in-person model, schools and teachers should consider developing week-long distance learning units that can be easily deployed if the need arises. Effective instructional routines can be used with in-person and distance learning environments. Think about these key shifts between in-person and distance learning as you plan:

Key Shifts from In-Person to Distance Learning	
In-Person Learning	Distance Learning
Physical activity and learning happen in school with consistent access to resources and materials	Physical activity and learning happen in a variety of physical environments with varied access to resources and materials
Explicit instruction of skills for new activities modeled by the teacher in a classroom setting	Explicit instruction of skills for a new activity modeled through synchronous sessions or independent viewing of videos or routine guides
Physical activity achieved during regularly scheduled class or recess	Physical activity achieved during synchronous teacher facilitated group sessions or independently through flexible scheduling
Daily interactions with students to understand student progress, struggles, and well-being	Intentionally designed check-ins to understand student progress, struggles and well-being

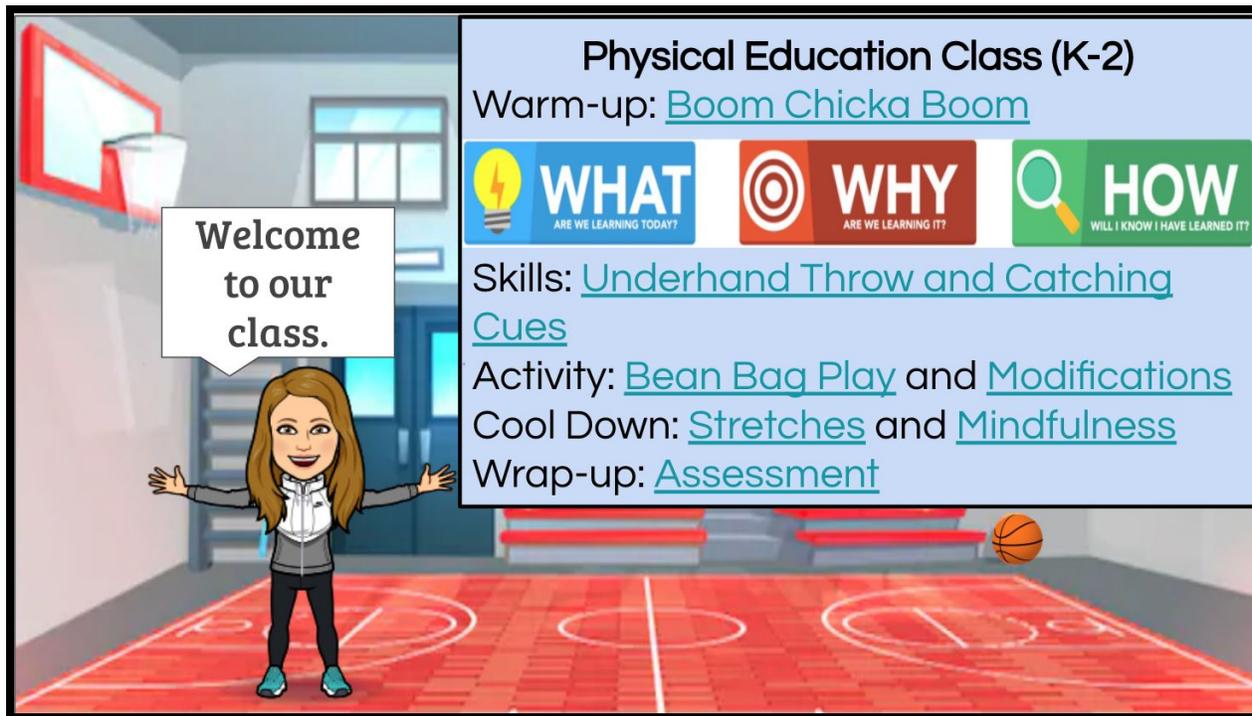
For general guidance on distance learning, reference the OSDE document [Specials Distance Learning for Grades PreK-5](#) and [Grades 6-12](#).

The picture below provides a sample of a digital learning experience that engages students in the **cycle of learning for Physical Education**. Provide hard copies of the cycle of learning slides (found by clicking the linked picture) to students without technology.

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Click on the picture below to begin.



Read [this post](#) to learn more about [Bitmoji Classroom](#).

Additional Considerations:

- Communicate your yearly plan to parents and establish two-way communication.
- Consistently utilize a digital platform for students to submit work, to keep students engaged, and to help with any transitions throughout the year.
- Create normalcy by establishing normal routines (e.g., warm-up, stretching, or cool-down) that can translate into in-person, blended, or distance learning environments you could be teaching in.³
- Include [mindfulness](#) into the routine or in the cycle of learning to support social-emotional learning.
- With blended learning, make independent work a time to practice skills that have been previously taught. This might be easier if distance learning is for a short period of time or alternating with in-person sessions.⁴
- Routines can ease the transitions from in-person to distance learning and back to in-person as necessary.

³ ASCD article: [Transitioning to Online Learning: Pro Tips on What You Need to Know](#)

Additional Resources for Distance or Blended Learning:

- SHAPE America's [Online Physical Education Guidance](#) provides learning activities and assessment ideas.
- Learn about different [mediums](#) for delivering instruction (e.g, [demonstration videos](#), [screen recordings](#), [flipped lessons](#)).⁴
- OPEN PE has [physical activity logs](#) for K-12 students to track physical activity.

Launching Instruction with Digital Tools

For more guidance for effectively implementing virtual instruction, blended learning, or creating digital variations of instruction to enact social distancing, visit [Return to Learn: Launching Instruction with Digital Tools](#). The guidance is organized around the following principles to support all learners:

- select appropriate digital tools and implement with care,
- create clear and effective communication strategies,
- build and maintain community, and
- empower student choice.

Physical Education and Physical Activity Requirement

How can we ensure students are provided physical education or exercise through in-person or distance learning opportunities?

State law, [70 O.S. § 11-103.9](#), is intended to guarantee that all students in full-day kindergarten and grades 1-5 are provided an average of **60 minutes of physical education or exercise** each week and be provided **an additional 60 minutes of physical activity** (physical education, exercise programs, fitness breaks, recess, classroom activities and wellness or nutrition education) each week.

These requirements have assumed that classroom teachers and schools could leverage resources and traditional school scheduling to guarantee that each student is afforded the opportunity to meet these requirements. With varied schedules and resources due to COVID-19 related disruptions, these guarantees may be difficult to enact. Therefore, as educators and schools strive to ensure each student is provided opportunities to engage in physical activity and physical education, it is clear that enactment will look and feel different than what is offered under normal circumstances. Schools

should leverage the input and expertise of the Healthy and Fit Advisory Committee to develop a plan for offering physical education and activities for students in 2020-21.

Considerations for In-Person Learning and Physical Activity

In-person learning experiences can take place in the gymnasium, outside, or in a classroom with protocols to ensure social distancing. Here are a few suggestions and resources to support schools and teachers in meeting requirements:

- Utilize brain breaks (e.g., [Go Noodle](#)) to incorporate physical activity into online or in-person (using social distancing protocols) instruction.
- Use resources like PE [NOW](#) which include choice board activities for students, indoor activity maps and other resources to support physical education and social distancing.
- Use [Rep It Out! From A Distance](#) and other [physical education activities](#) to get to know students and provide physical education opportunities through social distancing.
- Recess can still be safe and it provides an opportunity for students to get physical activity.⁴
- Here are a few examples of [recess games](#) that could be used to ensure social distancing.

For safety considerations for in-person physical education and recess, see pages 13-15 of this document.

Considerations for Distance Learning and Physical Activity

In online environments, physical education teachers can utilize technology (e.g., video recordings, activity logs, heart rate monitors, pedometers, and other activity trackers) to demonstrate skill development or verify participation.⁵ Here are a few suggestions and resources to support schools and teachers in meeting requirements:

- Adapt or develop lessons for blended or distance learning like the example found on page 6 of this guidance.
- Model new skills and activities students can do at home and provide fitness logs that students can use to track their progress and reflect on how it may support their overall physical and mental well-being.
- Encourage the use of [brain breaks](#) during extended synchronous learning sessions across subject areas.
- When communicating daily or weekly schedules to families and caregivers, include time for physical activity and suggestions for activities students can engage in.

⁴ Is it safe to offer recess when schools reopen?

<https://peacefulplaygrounds.com/is-it-safe-to-offer-recess-when-schools-reopen/>

⁵ SHAPE America's [Online Physical Education Guidance](#)

- Provide opportunities for students to design a training program, fitness plan or game for skill development and/or improvement based on a set goal (e.g., improve endurance) or interests.
- For other ideas for K-12 Online Physical Education see [SHAPE America's Online Physical Education Guidance](#).

Classroom Assessment

How will students be provided opportunities to showcase their learning and for teachers to provide feedback to students on their learning?

[Student assessment](#) is one of the four essential components of quality health and physical education. Consider designing new and creative ways for students to demonstrate their learning such as making a slideshow or a video, using video chat services to have discussions, or having students create a poster or presentation to share in-person or on a virtual platform. For more assessment ideas, refer to the [Physical Activity Learning Types document](#) and OPEN's [question stems](#).

Student Social-Emotional Learning and Educator Well-Being

How can instruction in this discipline support social-emotional learning for students?

As students and families are impacted by life-altering events, physical and health education can make a difference through the thoughtful incorporation of social-emotional learning (SEL). The [SEL competencies](#) include: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Physical and health education naturally incorporate social and emotional outcomes in the process of engaging with the subject matter.

Physical education teachers can address [CASEL's SEL Core Competencies](#) through a movement lens which can be less intimidating for some students. The physical education and SEL connection is evident in the [Crosswalk for SHAPE AMERICA National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education and CASEL's SEL Core Competencies](#). The following list of considerations and resources are designed to support physical and health educators as they prepare instruction for the upcoming school year.

- How can I address or teach practices that support all students' social and emotional needs ([CASEL Resource: Teacher Practices](#))?
- How can I help students identify their feelings and teach self-regulation tools to help them cope with stress, anxiety, or trauma ([CASEL Resource: Evidence-Based Programs](#))?
- How can I promote and support educational equity in physical education or health class ([CASEL Resource: Equity Considerations](#))?

- How can I build a classroom community and increase social connectedness through engaging [activities](#) ([CASEL Resource: Culture and Climate](#))?
- What does building a classroom community look like though blended or distance learning?
- Have any students lost a loved one due to COVID-19? How can I provide emotional support to those individuals?

Check out these [social-emotional learning resources](#) from SHAPE America.

NOTE: Consider sharing these documents with families of students: [Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers](#) | [Guidance for Distance Learning Environment: Helpful Tips for Families](#) | [Family Guide to Positive Behavior in Distance Learning Environments](#).

What are ways to ensure regular self-care as an educator?

Before teachers can be expected to provide healthy and safe environments for students, it is important that they also take time to attend to their personal care and well-being. Doing a personal check-in using the questions below can be a good place to start.

- How am I taking care of my physical needs, including getting enough sleep, exercise, and nutrition?
- Do I have a routine? If so, which parts of the routine are working well, and which could be improved on? If not, how can I use a routine to reduce stress and encourage healthy behaviors?
- Do I have a sense of balance between work and other life demands? How can I take steps to “turn off” work and spend time doing other things that bring joy?
- Am I staying connected with friends and family? How do I need to make adjustments given current limitations?

Here are few additional resources to support teacher well-being at this time:

- [Self-Care for Teachers and Educational Professionals](#)
- Free interactive sessions from [Pure Edge](#), to support self-care.
- [Social-Emotional Toolkit for Educators](#)

How can students experiencing chronic stress be supported?

Students are going to have a variety of reactions to the realities of 2020, largely based on where they are in their development and the kind of coping mechanisms they possess. For some, a sudden and drastic change in routine or the anxiety and fear they are experiencing can lead to a loss of previously

acquired developmental skills. Here are a few examples of how to create a safe space for students who may be experiencing chronic stress due to past and recent events:

- Leverage the [SEL Hacks](#) and [read this blog](#) showing how to create a safe, nurturing, relationship-based environment for students both in-person or through distance learning.
- Provide age-appropriate and factual information to students about COVID-19, but try to focus on how [adults are trying to keep them safe](#).
- Consider reactions students may have to the pandemic and ways to support them ([English](#) | [Spanish](#)).
- Consider the effect discussions about the pandemic may have on students who may have experienced the effects of COVID-19 and other diseases in family and acquaintances. Caution should be generously applied in any case where such context may create discomfort or harm for any students.
- Encourage students to verbalize their feelings. Helping them put their emotions into words can give them a sense of control in the situation.
- Help students build connections, with you and with each other. This may be more challenging given the need for social distancing or distance learning, but caring connections with others are more important than ever (see building classroom community resources above).
- Routine and predictability is important. If possible, try to communicate with students about any changes before they happen. Given potentially quick changes that may happen this year, explaining the changes as or after they happen can help students adjust as well.
- Explore [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network Resource Guide for Trauma-Informed School Strategies During Covid-19](#). This document gives deeper insight into Covid-19 related chronic stress and tangible strategies for teachers and administrators.

Equity and Inclusion

What curriculum choices and instructional practices support equity and access to quality instruction?

While the guidance provided throughout this document promotes equitable teaching and learning practices through research-based effective physical and health education, it is important for educators to spend time reflecting on, planning for, and implementing strategies that support more equitable and inclusive learning environments for students in the 2020-21 school year. In addition to the equitable instructional practices referenced throughout the document, the chart below⁶ lists practices to keep in mind given the current realities of returning to school:

⁶ [SHAPE America's Appropriate Instructional Practice Guidelines, K-12: A Side-by-Side Comparison](#)

More Equitable Practices	Less Equitable Practices
All children (boys and girls, high- and low-skilled) have equal opportunities to participate and interact with the teacher (e.g., leadership, playing “skilled” positions, teacher feedback). All children, regardless of developmental level and ability, are challenged at an appropriate level.	Highly skilled children are permitted to dominate activities (e.g., athletes or boys are always picked as team/squad leaders or are permitted to go first in team games or play the dominant positions).
Both boys and girls are encouraged, supported, and socialized toward achievement in all content taught in physical education (e.g., dance is for everyone).	Activities are identified as more appropriate for girls or boys (e.g., dance is for girls, football is for boys).
Teachers create an environment that is inclusive and supportive of all children. Differences are acknowledged, appreciated, and respected.	The physical education environment supports highly skilled children more fully than children with less skill development (e.g., posters on display are predominantly of male professional athletes from the “major” sports).
Teachers intentionally select activities that represent a culturally diverse environment (e.g., dances and games from around the world).	Teachers teach American team sports (e.g., football, basketball, softball) exclusively.
Teachers implement the special education process for students with disabilities as outlined in students’ individualized education programs and/or the school’s accommodations.	Children with disabilities sit out, keep score, or become spectators

Teacher Self-Reflection

Equity-based teaching requires reflection, which involves not just reflecting on your pedagogy and your classroom norms, but also considering how you identify yourself and how others identify you. Before and during the school year, reflect on your own identity, positions, and beliefs in regards to biased and sorting-based routines. Consider examining your physical education or health curriculum and instructional practices for inherent or implicit bias by exploring the following questions:

- Do I withhold making adaptations to lessons or activities for certain groups of students based on assumptions or beliefs about their skill level, fitness level, gender, or some other factor assumed to make them less capable? Are these students marginalized as those who “can’t do

it?”

- Do I select culturally diverse activities?
- Do I find time to provide individual attention to all my students during instruction or when providing feedback?
- Am I providing my knowledge about health and fitness rather than helping students develop their own?

NOTE: Test your own implicit bias and learn about strategies for overcoming these biases using information provided through [Harvard University’s Project Implicit](#).

Creating an Anti-Bias Classroom

Current events addressing systemic racism in our nation remind us to examine our own biases as educators and any bias in our curriculum and instruction. When we create a classroom focused on anti-bias education, we provide opportunities for students to use their lived experiences and interests to deepen their understanding of physical education and health. Physical education curriculum and instruction can support efforts toward anti-bias education by ⁷

- Knowing your students: take time to connect and understand students. Provide virtual “office” hours or before/after school opportunities for students to check-in or share out.
- Provide opportunities for ownership or give students voice and choice. Allow students to share their ideas for routines or activities.
- Allow students to create class expectations at the beginning of the school year and ensure they hold each other accountable.
- Practice democratic principles: implement weekly/monthly class meetings, where students can evaluate their health and physical education class.
- Move away from an authoritative figure to a facilitator in the class. An example of this could be students working with a partner or small group to complete a task or create a game while incorporating critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration or citizenship skills.

For more information on creating opportunities for physical and health education check out these resources provided by Shape America: [The A-Z of Social Justice Physical Education: Part 1](#) and [The A-Z of Social Justice Physical Education: Part 2](#).

⁷ Shape America: [The A-Z of Social Justice Physical Education: Part 1](#)

Safety Considerations: Physical Environment and Supplies

Educators planning for in-person, blended, and distance learning instructional delivery models should always defer to the safety guidelines provided by your school or district. As the Covid-19 situation continuously develops, also consult the current [Oklahoma Department of Health \(OSDH\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) health and safety guidelines.

The following physical education and health classroom safety considerations are not intended to replace a district's emergency or crisis safety plan and are not an exhaustive list of the health and safety needs to be considered. This guidance is also referenced on page 30 of [Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools](#).

- Face masks should be worn by staff and students (particularly older students) when social distancing is difficult. Consult with the school's response team and/or school nurse on proper protocol for wearing face masks when participating in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity or for students with asthma or other related underlying conditions. If masks are required, avoid cardio heavy activities.
- If students are staying in the classroom throughout the day, PE instruction can be delivered if the room is well-ventilated and allows appropriate spacing of 6 feet between students.
- Consider eliminating the use of small communal spaces such as a locker room or weight room. Ask students to wear clothes appropriate for PE participation. Postpone or modify units of instruction that take place in the weight room.

Classroom and equipment-cleaning practices

- Frequently wipe down shared items and high-touch surfaces. Physical education equipment should be disinfected between uses (see CDC cleaning and disinfecting guidance).
- Encourage the use of individual water bottles or clean water fountains frequently.
- Avoid sharing items that are difficult to clean or disinfect (i.e., foam balls, cloth bean bags). Vinyl or plastic materials are easier to disinfect.

Gymnasium

- More space for instruction may be required for PE due to increased respiration when participating in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Research is currently in progress to determine the spread radius for a body in motion.
- Classes should not be combined, and class size should not be increased.

- Match the instructional design to the available space by using squad spots, floor tape or markers, stations and marked-off areas to ensure separation.
- Post signs or use floor markings for traffic patterns, entry and exit procedures.
- Set expectations for entry, exit, bathroom- and water-break procedures.
- Lessons should include no-contact activities and no, or limited, equipment.
- Provide students with their own equipment for class and prohibit sharing of equipment.
- Use disposable objects (i.e., balled-up paper instead of a bean bag).
- Create Physical Education kits (individually labeled bags) for students to use at home or school.
- Create a contingency plan if a student doesn't bring a kit or if equipment is contaminated during class.

Outdoors

- Weather permitting, Physical Education instruction can be delivered outdoors.
- Conduct an assessment of play areas.
- Let administrators know the areas you plan to utilize.
- Mark the field or paint spots on the blacktop to ensure students stay 6 feet apart.
- Establish entry, exit, bathroom- and water-break procedures.
- Teach lifetime activities (i.e., geocaching, tennis, biking, outdoor education) to avoid interaction, maintain social distancing and reduce use of equipment sharing.
- Avoid the use of playground equipment, benches or other permanent structures unless CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting outside areas can be followed.

Safety Consideration for Blended or Distance Learning

Skill development and student engagement using different types of equipment are key components of physical education. With blended or virtual learning, teachers may need to modify the types of equipment students use for at-home use. The following are some considerations:

- Safety considerations are paramount. Plan for anything that could go wrong during distance learning, especially considering that the students might not have adult support and supervision. Document safety considerations in student materials, parent guidance, and teacher lesson plans.
- Be cautious about asking students to use alternative materials in place of physical education equipment that could pose a threat to students (i.e., instead of using scarves for juggling, using plastic shopping bags). Give specific guidance for students not to use plastic bags as it could cause suffocation. Instead, ask students to use a paper towel or tissue paper.

Ongoing Support for Instruction

OSDE will continue to provide ongoing support for instruction during the 2020-2021 academic year. Continue to check the [OSDE Safe and Healthy Schools Website](#) and [sign up for the Health and Physical Education Newsletter](#) to see upcoming professional learning opportunities, office hours, and additional instructional resources.

OSDE Hosted Virtual Meetings

Join OSDE staff, health educators, and physical educators around the state for monthly virtual meetings to gain resources, strategies, and advice for the 2020-21 school year.

Physical Education and Health Virtual Meeting

- Physical Education and Health monthly meetings will occur on the **second Tuesday of each month from 3:30-4:30 p.m.**
- Zoom information will be communicated through the Health and Physical Education Newsletter. Subscribe [here!](#)

Social Media Connections

Facebook

- [Oklahoma PE and Health](#)
- [Elementary PE Teachers](#)
- [Health Teacher Central](#)
- [Distance Learning for Physical Education Teachers](#)

Twitter

- [@ShanaClassen](#)

Contact Information

We are here to help in any way we can. Feel free to email the Director of Health and Physical Education in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction if you have questions or need support.

- **Shana Classen**, Director of Health and Physical Education, Shana.Classen@sde.ok.gov