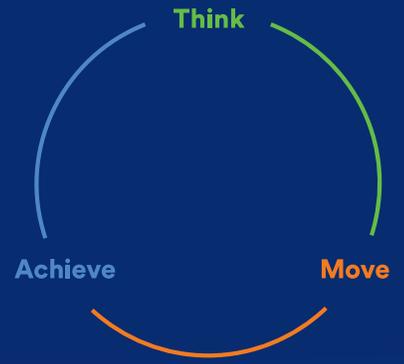


PE STORIES OF CHANGE SPRING 2018 WORKS



PE Works is Mayor Bill de Blasio's unprecedented multiyear investment to revitalize physical education (PE) for every student in NYC public schools. Prior to 2015, the quantity and quality of PE varied from school to school, and very few elementary schools met State PE requirements with certified PE teachers. Building on an eight-district pilot in 2015-16, the New York City Department of Education set out to revitalize PE Citywide in 2016-17 with funding and support in three areas: investing in teachers, building PE into school environments, and developing communities that are proud of PE.

PE Works *Stories of Change* feature principals and staff who are making changes so that PE is a meaningful part of each child's school experience. Their work marks the beginning of developing a physically literate, health-centered generation of New York City students. For this story, we visited PS 128, The Audubon School in Manhattan's District 6 (pictured below).



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Improving Physical Education Class

When PE Works, a physical education (PE) revitalization effort for New York City students, launched in several districts in 2016, Principal Cary Pantaleon at PS 128 called PE Works staff to seek out the most up-to-date PE curriculum recommendations for her teachers. Over the next few years, Instructional Coach Ronny Rodriguez collaborated closely with Ms. Pantaleon to make PE shine at PS 128. Said Mr. Rodriguez, "When I first came to the school, Ms. Pantaleon was absolutely committed to making sure PE class was high quality and consistently offered across grades, which is a scheduling challenge for a lot of schools."

Together Ms. Pantaleon and Mr. Rodriguez reviewed scheduling and PE practices to make sure the school's nearly 600 students got the most out of PE classes with Ms. Jodi Krakower, a State-certified PE teacher, and Mr. Ruben Betancourt, a deeply committed veteran teacher. With Mr. Rodriguez's recommendations, Ms. Pantaleon aligned class schedules so that both PE teachers taught the same or similar grade levels at the same times, which made sharing the gym safer and easier. It also fostered collaborative teaching, as both teachers could plan units, share lesson plans, and integrate classes in the same activities and routines.

As a leader who always supports PE, Ms. Pantaleon encouraged her PE team to supplement attendance at Citywide workshops with a six-week coaching cycle of onsite professional learning. Mr. Rodriguez joined the teachers periodically throughout the spring to model lessons and offer strategies on PE class management, maximizing class time

to be able to cover all of the concepts and skills students should learn. In addition to participating in PE professional learning communities and Pathways workshops to stay current on content, the coaching cycle gave PS 128's PE team specialized attention on improving practices for covering physical education standards. The PE team developed warm-ups that aligned to the target skill of the day's lesson, and practiced smooth student transitions between fitness stations using music to match the activity.

PE teachers also outfitted fitness stations with Move-to-Improve activity cards to keep students moving during short waits at fitness stations. Move-to-Improve is a classroom-based physical activity program for teachers to use daily as a supplement to PE classes. PE Works staff trained Ms. Krakower and Mr. Betancourt to turnkey Move-to-Improve to PS 128's classroom teachers so students can remain active throughout the entire day.

Third-grade teacher Mr. Brent Tupa said it took some time to build his comfort level with using Move-to-Improve, especially playing music in his classroom. However, he started slow with some lower-energy demonstrations, and expanded his repertoire after seeing how well the kids responded with both behavior and learning. To help all classroom teachers integrate Move-to-Improve into regular school-wide practice, the administration embedded Move-to-Improve activity time in teachers' schedules in the 2017-18 school year, demonstrating a commitment to better ways to learn.

Move-to-Improve—a New Way of Learning

To see Move-to-Improve in action, visit Mr. Brent Tupa's third-grade class, as he turns on the music for "Alley Cat," and reminds students that dance is physical exercise that gets your heart pumping. Students jump to it, extending their right foot and tapping their toes in unison, as both Mr. Tupa and Ms. Maryury Sanchez, a paraprofessional, lead the dance. Mr. Tupa then guides students through inhaling and exhaling deeply, showing them the importance of breathing. This MTI cool down, using social-emotional learning techniques, helps students recognize how to use breathing to calm the body down and focus the mind. The cool down leads into a pop quiz, in which Mr. Tupa reads aloud a Shel Silverstein poem from an interactive whiteboard. Students climb in place unless

they hear a verb, in which case they hop. Wait, how did both the principal and assistant principal's names get in this Shel Silverstein poem?! In a quiz using Move-to-Improve, laughter is encouraged. Mr. Tupa concludes with a true-false activity. In response to a range of math and social studies statements, he instructs students to do five jumping jacks if the statement is true and five squats if it is false. "If we have 20 students present today, we have 39 legs." "South America is the second largest continent." Students squat accordingly. Then Mr. Tupa asks students clarifying questions to debrief. After squats, one student confidently informs the whole class that South America is, in fact, the fourth largest continent. Students are not only happy to move, but proud to show what they know.



Assistant Principal Chao, Principal Pantaleon, and Assistant Principal Corporan in front of MTI All-Star Banner



The Joys of an Active Community

Several years ago, Assistant Principal Yvette Corporan and Mr. Dave Crenshaw, a former student who volunteers at the school, recognized the potential of a before-school activity program to boost attendance and engagement while giving students the opportunity to practice PE skills. Originally, they started a running program for students in grades K-2. Inspired by its success and with the help of partners and staff volunteers, PS 128 launched two more programs for students in grades 3-5, and morning running has become a fun and healthy school tradition. “We see more energetic children. They can’t stop talking about the running program. Parents tell us that the kids are waking their parents up in the morning to bring them to school. So that was a big impact with more students being on time,” says Ms. Pantaleon.

PS 128 fosters a PE-supportive community in and around the building, where you can see the pride families, students, and staff have when they walk by and point out their

MTI All-Star Banner. You can feel the energy from more than 150 families who attended a recent parent fitness night. You can hear the student buzz in anticipation of Sports Day, not just because it features a basketball game, but because a volunteer DJ is there to spin so students can dance on the sidelines. Even the laughter of two teachers meeting in the hallway during a monthly staff wellness challenge, requiring each to stop and do 10 squats, knees over toes, shows an undeniable commitment to creating an environment where PE can thrive. Students not only learn PE skills in class, but use those skills and see them being used throughout the day in enjoyable and engaging ways. “By providing more PE time and extracurricular programs, we have noticed students placing more emphasis and focus on academics. We’ve seen a 21% drop in student incidents and much more positive behavior,” says Ms. Pantaleon. PS 128’s leadership and staff make the time, atmosphere, and community for kids to learn how to move their bodies, set goals, and find activities to enjoy for a lifetime.

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