



**Department of
Education**

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New York City Department of Education

Report on Physical Education

Pursuant to Local Law 102 of 2015

December 11, 2020

Report Pursuant to Reporting Requirements in Local Law 102 of 2015

Background

Local Law 102 enacted in 2015 requires the Department of Education of the New York City School District to submit to the City Council an annual report concerning Physical Education (PE) for the prior school year. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on school scheduling in spring 2020 and DOE capacity, as well as necessary changes to the compilation and analysis of the data, caused a delay in the release of the 2019-20 report.

This report provides information about the provision of Physical Education instruction, including the average PE class size, average frequency and average total minutes per week of PE as defined in Local Law 102, Adapted PE and the granting of PE substitutions, as reported through the STARS database for the 2019-20 school year. The report also includes information regarding the number and ratio of licensed PE instructors, PE teacher participation in professional learning and designated Physical Education instructional space.

Schools self-report their scheduling information in STARS. With the shift to remote learning in March 2020, NYSED waived instructional seat time requirements for all academic subjects for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. As a result, PE instructional data in this report are reported for all grade levels as of the mid-year of the 2019-20 school year. The mid-year data includes instruction that was received, as well as instruction that was scheduled for the remainder of the school year, as of February 26, 2020, prior to the disruptions of COVID-19.

Data are gathered from various sources, including the Division of Human Capital, the Division of School Climate & Wellness, Division of School Planning & Development, and the Division of Teaching & Learning.

Introduction: The DOE's Commitment to Physical Education

Physical Education is an academic subject, and New York State mandates that all students receive PE instruction each year from kindergarten through high school. This requirement reflects a growing body of evidence that healthier students are better learners and that all students need and deserve quality Physical Education so that they can learn the skills and knowledge necessary to care for themselves and others. Research shows that physically active students do better in school and learn skills that can keep them healthy for their entire lives. In New York City, we understand that PE is a critical component of students' academic success as well as their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The beneficial role of Physical Education for our students, and the City's progress over the past five years to revitalize PE, are even more relevant in 2020-21 as the City grapples with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our collective health and well-being. The DOE has made

enormous strides toward establishing PE in New York City, with more certified teachers, new curriculum and instructional resources, vibrant professional learning communities, a deeper understanding among school leaders about the role of PE in students' development, and dedicated PE support staff to work alongside administrators and teachers.

As a result, school communities were better prepared to continue providing students with Physical Education in the midst of the pandemic; the DOE was also able to quickly pivot to providing schools with the PE guidance, resources and supports necessary for the shift to remote learning in Spring 2020 and school reopening in Fall 2020. Drawing on DOE, school-based, and partner resources and digital platforms, and in a testament to educators' resourcefulness throughout the City, PE teachers at all grade levels adapted instruction to remote and blended learning environments so that students could continue to benefit from PE. Although many of our annual PE indicators were disrupted by school closures and other effects of the pandemic, we still see sign of progress, including continued gains in the percentage of students receiving the required amount of PE. This report, in accordance with Local Law 102, provides a summary of key findings from the 2019-20 data, and information about steps the DOE will take to continue moving into compliance.

PE Works

Long before a virus further exposed the grave consequences of existing health disparities in our communities, City Hall and DOE invested in establishing PE as a foundational component of students' educational experience, recognizing that schools needed additional, dedicated support to overcome long-standing barriers to providing Physical Education. In 2015-16, DOE launched the multiyear PE Works initiative, led by the Office of School Wellness Programs, with a pilot in eight districts that subsequently expanded Citywide in 2016-17. PE Works sought to improve the amount and quality of PE, especially in elementary schools where PE historically had been the most lacking, by helping school leaders establish and sustain comprehensive PE that meets State requirements via four key areas:

- **Scheduling, Programming, and Space:** To ensure that more students consistently receive the required amount of PE in an appropriate setting, DOE worked with every district school to complete a needs assessment to identify strengths, systemic barriers, and challenges, and then create a multiyear action plan in collaboration with teachers and administrators. OSWP provided technical assistance, resources and services to improve PE scheduling, trained school staff on student programming, and worked with schools to ensure that PE spaces are safe and supportive.
- **Staffing:** To ensure that students receive PE from a qualified, prepared teacher, the DOE filled PE staffing gaps by providing "jump-start" funds for certified PE teachers in elementary schools without one, recruiting qualified candidates and supporting schools in hiring, as well as developing teacher leaders at all grade levels, building PE teacher pipelines, and retaining PE positions. Vibrant professional learning communities

contribute to engaging and empowering PE teachers so that they can learn from one another and be recognized for their contributions.

- **Rigorous Instruction:** To establish Citywide expectations for standards-based, inclusive, relevant, skills-based instruction, DOE published the first-ever New York City K-12 PE Scope and Sequence in 2019 to provide all schools with a sequential, standards-based guide to curricula and instruction. Free professional learning, six-week coaching cycles to provide teachers with individualized support, and supplemental instructional resources provide teachers with ongoing support to develop their practice and improve PE instruction.
- **Community Building:** To engage families, students and school communities in valuing and promoting PE and physical activity, DOE funded activity programs and School Wellness Council grants, as well as events and partnerships that provide students with opportunities to engage in wellness activities beyond PE class. School Wellness Councils are school-based advisory groups, recommended in the DOE's Wellness Policy, that work together to promote a healthy school community with strong PE and Health Education. DOE also launched a District Wellness Advisory Council with family, teacher, administration, and student representation to provide input on PE and physical activity resources and DOE wellness policies.

To learn more about PE Works and the impact on school communities, visit the [PE Works webpage](#).

Context: COVID-19 and the Impact on Physical Education in 2019-20

As with all aspects of life and school, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant effect on Physical Education in 2019-20. Quarantines, school shutdowns, and a move to remote learning, although necessary for public health and safety, have a two-fold impact on our students' ability to be physically active, as they restrict options for in-person PE and activity in school and can lead to increased sedentary time both in school and at home.

COVID-19 restrictions also affected the in-person instructional support and professional learning training that DOE was able to provide to schools and PE teachers in Spring 2020, and curtailed the DOE's ability to assist with PE teacher recruiting and hiring for the remaining 24 schools with elementary grades that did not have a certified PE teacher on staff.

To help schools continue to provide quality PE to students during remote learning, DOE's Office of School Wellness Programs developed a robust collection of remote PE lessons for teachers, transformed our professional learning communities into online sessions, and worked with our strategic partners to offer high-quality online resources and activities for educators and families. These resources continue to serve educators and school communities as the DOE reopened schools and moved into blended learning models in 2020-21. Examples include:

- New Online Professional Learning Communities that attracted 1,099 PE teacher participants from April to June 2020 to network and share remote learning resources and strategies while school buildings were closed due to COVID-19.
- 100 standards-based PE remote learning lessons for each grade band and a vetted, comprehensive list of free online PE and physical activity resources from trusted local and national partners to ensure that PE teachers at all grade levels had the instructional resources necessary to provide students with quality PE experiences in the virtual learning environment.
- [NYC Physical Education Return to School Guidelines: How to Safely Provide PE for All Students](#), comprehensive guidance on foundational lesson plans, policies, and practices for administrators and teachers to provide safe, online and in-person PE instruction and physical activity to students in alignment with State and National standards, under physical distancing restrictions, and in compliance with CDC school reopening guidance.

PE is essential for students to re-establish healthy habits in order to rebound physically and mentally from the trauma, isolation, and increased sedentary time they experience as a result of COVID-19. Now more than ever, students need to learn and apply the physical, cognitive and social-emotional learning (SEL) skills and positive attitudes acquired through PE, as well as the skills needed to safely be active during a pandemic.

Summary of 2019-20 Key Findings

Note: Due to the disruptions of COVID-19, including NYSED’s waiving of instructional seat time requirements for all academic subjects for March-June 2020, data reported in the 2019-20 PE report is based primarily on mid-year data. Mid-year data includes instruction that was received, as well as instruction that was scheduled for the remainder of the school year, as of February 26, 2020.

Int. No 1298-A specifies that the report shall include:

- i. The total number of students and average physical education class size.

Grade Span	Total # of K-12 Students	Average PE class size
ES (K-5)	394,787	16.9
MS (6-8)	201,566	33.5
HS (9-12)	270,077	29.3
Total (Citywide)	866,430	24.0

* Enrollment data as of 2/25/20.

See Appendix A

- ii. The average frequency and average total minutes per week of physical education instruction provided to students. *Note: This data is based on instruction that was received, as well as instruction that was scheduled for the remainder of the school year, as of February 26, 2020.*

Grade Span	Average days per week	Average minutes per week
ES (K-5)	4.4	125.2
MS (6-8)	2.3	112.5
HS (9-12)	3.4	168.0
Total (citywide)	3.6	135.6

See Appendix A

- iii. The number and percentage of students who are receiving the required amount of physical education instruction. *Note: This data is based on instruction that was received, as well as instruction that was scheduled for the remainder of the school year, as of February 26, 2020.*

Grade Span	# of students receiving the required amount of PE instruction	% of students receiving the required amount of PE instruction
ES (K-5)	322,853	81.8%
MS (6-8)	179,152	88.9%
HS (9-12)	246,482	91.3%
Total (citywide)	748,487	86.4%

See Appendix A

- iv. The number and percentage of students who have an individualized education program (IEP) that recommends adapted physical education (APE), disaggregated by classification of disability.

Grade Span	# of students with APE recommendation on IEP	% of students with APE recommendation on IEP
ES (K-5)	4,086	1.0%
MS (6-8)	1,659	0.8%
HS (9-12)	2,211	0.8%
Total (citywide)	7,956	0.9%

See Appendix B

- v. The number of designated full-time and part-time certified instructors providing physical education instruction; the ratio of full-time certified instructors to student; including whether such instructor is a full-time certified instructor, part-time certified instructor, or uncertified instructor; the number of certified instructors who have received professional development concerning physical education instruction provided by the department in the preceding two school years; and the total number of certified instructors who attended multiple sessions of professional development concerning physical education instruction provided by the department in the preceding two school years, disaggregated by the number of trainings attended.

There were 2,915 full-time and 38 part-time teachers with physical education licenses in 2019-20 and a full-time teacher with physical education license to students ratio of 1:323.

2,220 full-time and part-time teachers with physical education licenses attended at least one professional development event in the preceding two school years. 1,729 full-time and part-time teachers with physical education licenses attended more than one professional development event in the preceding two school years.

See Appendix C and D

- vi. Information on all designated indoor and outdoor facilities used by the school for physical education instruction including, but not limited to: (a) Information on all designated physical education instruction spaces inside or attached to the school including (i) the size of the space in square feet; (ii) whether the space is used for any purpose other than physical education instruction; and (iii) whether the space is used by any other schools including co-located schools in the same building and the names of such schools; (b) Information regarding all off-site indoor and outdoor

spaces that are used by the school for the purpose of physical education instruction, including but not limited to (i) the name and the location of the off-site space or facility; and (ii) whether the space is being used by any other schools including co-located schools in the same building and the names of such schools.

Room Function	# of rooms*
GYMNASIUM	2,208
OUTDOOR YARD	2,417
MULTI-PURPOSE CLASSROOM	868
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM	250
DANCE ROOM	784
AUXILIARY EXERCISE ROOM	386
WEIGHT ROOM	468
MULTI-PURPOSE NON CLASSROOM	460
ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION	89
SWIMMING POOL	146
GYM/AUD/CAFETERIA	32
GYM/AUDITORIUM	111
GYM/CAFETERIA	43
TOTAL	8,262

* Rooms are counted in the table above as many times as they are co-shared by schools. Thus, rooms that are used by more than one school for physical education will be counted multiple times.

See Appendix E

- vii. Information regarding the department’s supplemental physical education program, including but not limited to, “Move to Improve.”

Move-to-Improve is a K-5 physical activity program that is designed to create and support an active learning environment in the classroom and school community. Move-to-Improve activities blend academics and physical activity into educational lessons that support New York State PE Learning Standards and are integrated with Next Generation Learning Standards.

Schools with a comprehensive PE program, led by a certified or designated PE teacher, can become a Move-to-Improve All-Star school by training at least 85% of their eligible teachers in Move-to-Improve, maintaining that percentage of trained teachers each year, and implementing Move-to-Improve in their classrooms.

727 (91.1%) schools with elementary grades achieved Move-to-Improve All-Star status in 2019-20.

See Appendix F

- viii. The number of students who were permitted a substitution by the department.

7,824 students were granted a PE substitution in 2019-20.

See Appendix G

- ix. A cross-referenced list of schools, including co-located schools, that share certified instructors with at least one other school and the number of certified instructors that are shared.

20 schools shared teachers with Physical Education licenses with at least one other school in 2019-20. 11 teachers with Physical Education licenses were shared across these 20 schools.

See Appendix C

- x. A description of the department's physical education scope and sequence, including the topics covered by such physical education scope and sequence; whether the department's physical education scope and sequence satisfies the requirements for physical education instruction pursuant to the New York state education department regulations; and the date of the last assessment and update of the physical education scope and sequence.

See Appendix H

- xi. Whether students with disabilities whose individualized education program recommends adaptive physical education are provided adaptive physical education and the number of students with disabilities whose individualized education program recommends adaptive physical education who receive adaptive physical education

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on 2019-20 data collection, this report includes students who were enrolled in the same school across all academic terms as of February 26, 2020 in the 2019-20 school year. Data on students with disabilities and English language learners are as of February 26, 2020 in the 2019-20 school year. Active IEPs with a recommendation of APE as of March 16, 2020 were included.

78.6% of students who have an IEP with an Adapted Physical Education recommendation received the required amount of PE instruction in 2019-20, lower than the rate for all students citywide (86.4%).

Due to data collection limitations in 2019-20, we can report on the number and percentage of students with a recommendation for Adapted PE who received the required amount of PE instruction, but not the specific provision of APE during the 2019-20 school year. We will work with schools to improve data collection for APE.

See Appendix B

- xii. If the department is not in full compliance with physical education requirements pursuant to the New York state education department regulations, steps the department will take to achieve full compliance.

To ensure that we continue to progress toward meeting State requirements for all NYC public school students in this unprecedented time, DOE will support schools in the following ways:

- ***Expectations and policy:*** City Hall, DOE leadership, superintendents, Borough/Citywide Offices (B/COs) and principals continue to promote and reinforce consistent expectations, policy and messages about the importance of:
 - *PE for students' academic success, health, safety and well-being.*
 - *Providing students with quality PE that meets NYSED requirements, including students mandated for Adapted PE.*
 - *PE as an academic subject that must be prioritized equally with other NYSED-mandated subjects; to that end, maintain PE as a Top 10 item on the Chancellor's Compliance Checklist and provide academic policy guidance specific to the challenges of 2020-21.*
 - *PE and physical activity for students' resiliency and recovery from the effects of COVID-19, ensuring that school administrators, teachers, superintendents, Borough/Citywide Offices, and families and caregivers receive consistent, accessible information and resources about how PE and activity can support young peoples' physical, mental and emotional health.*
- ***Staffing:*** DOE will continue to create and sustain a vibrant community of physical educators who are well-prepared and well-supported in providing students with inclusive and standards-based instruction that meets Physical Education requirements:

- *Help schools retain highly qualified PE teachers, including those originally funded by PE Works, so that all elementary schools have a certified PE teacher, and maintain PE positions and assignments, including creating and staffing new PE positions where necessary.*
- *Preserve a pipeline of qualified teacher candidates by continuing DOE’s partnership with local post-secondary institutions to offer alternative PE certification programs in SY 2021-22.*
- *Work with DOE superintendents, Borough/Central Offices and school leaders to ensure appropriate teacher-to-student ratios for PE.*
- *Maintain sufficient DOE Central PE-support staff to ensure continued progress in making quality PE part of every students’ academic experience.*
- ***Rigorous instruction:*** *To support school administrators and teachers in providing high quality and rigorous academic PE classes, DOE will continue to develop and promote the use of free curricular, instructional and professional learning resources that meet State and National standards, including:*
 - *The DOE’s first-ever K-12 Physical Education Scope and Sequence to help teachers provide sequential, standards-based instruction for all students; continue to promote the Scope and Sequence, and train teachers on how to use it.*
 - *Professional learning opportunities, teacher leadership training, and Professional Learning Communities to ensure ongoing instructional improvement; expand online and remote options, especially in response to the challenges of 2020-21.*
 - *Make more DOE- and partner-developed curricular resources available online for teachers to use in both in-person and remote instruction, such as the PE Instructional Toolkit and PE Return to School Guidelines.*
- ***Scheduling, programming, and space:*** *Working with DOE administrators, superintendents and B/COs, continue to provide policy guidance and technical assistance to schools to:*
 - *Program students to meet PE requirements (including time and frequency after SY 2020-21), including students mandated for Adapted PE.*
 - *Capture scheduling information accurately in DOE’s data management systems, including information about the provision of Adapted PE.*
 - *Develop solutions for PE space challenges; continue the City’s commitment to bring designated PE space to schools Citywide, including support for Outdoor Learning.*
- ***Elementary PE time and frequency:*** *Continue to increase the number of elementary schools that achieve All-Star status in the DOE’s Move-to-Improve program, which allows All Star schools to use Move-to-Improve activities to supplement their PE program to meet State PE requirements.*

- **Community Building:** *Maintain and continue to develop partnerships with school- and community-based organizations and stakeholders in order to expand the role that communities play in supporting PE and physical activity as integral to student health.*
 - *Continue to fund, support, and strengthen School Wellness Councils, school-based advisory groups recommended in the DOE's Wellness Policy, to support schools in assessing and improving their PE, Health Education and student wellness programs.*
 - *Empower student wellness advisory groups and families to advocate for PE.*

Appendices

These Appendices are provided as excel tabs in the 2019-2020 Local Law Physical Education Excel Report:

Appendix A: PE Instruction-School-Level; PE Instruction-District-Level; PE Instruction-Borough-Level

Appendix B: APE-School-Level; APE-District-Level; APE-Borough-Level;

Appendix C: Licensed PE Teachers

Appendix D: PE Professional Development

Appendix E: PE Space

Appendix F: Supplemental Programs

Appendix G: Substitutions-School-Level; Substitutions-District-Level; Substitutions-Borough-Level

Appendix H: PE Scope and Sequence