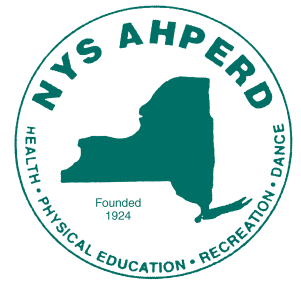




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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Vital but Invisible

"What is essential is invisible to the eye." These are not my words, but those of Antoine de Saint Exupery author of *The*

Little Prince. With apology to the author—I would add that a person's health is essential, yet invisible to the eye. Certainly, obesity is not invisible to the eye, yet the causes and depths of this problem remain invisible to most educators, communities and leaders. Does time mask obesity? What causes people to not see an essential need—our health?

The Manual of School Laws of the State of New York, to January 1887 makes reference to the health of students. For example, Section 87... "A teacher has the right to prohibit the use of tobacco on school premises." Furthermore, "The teacher has the right to adopt any and all means and wholesome regulations for the conduct and management of school....for classes, recitations, study and recreations..." Children had rights, too. "1. Children have a right to plenty of fresh air...and 3. A right to be cheerful and happy" What has changed since enacting those laws?

Turn the pages of time fast forward to the 1970's, the 1980's and the present day.

In his book *Fat Land*, Greg Critser takes you through a critical analysis, groundbreaking research and a review of the last thirty years. *Fat Land* contains a wealth of knowledge that is frightening. America's obesity epidemic is a systemic problem. The problem and the solution lie before us, but many do not see it. What caused the obesity epidemic?

In uncomplicated terms, many have increased caloric intake and limited physical activity. A simple meal at McDonalds changed from 590 calories to the present day total of 1550 calories, (Critser, p.28.) The author identifies hidden contributors to the obesity problem: particular food additives, media messages and vending

machines in schools. High fructose corn syrup and palm tree oil have changed the way foods tasted and increased the caloric value of different food groups. Fast foods have used media messages, such as "Super Size" me, urging one to eat more. Vending machines, which contain soft drinks and non-nutritional snacks, are present in schools. Not only do we eat more, but there are hidden additives exacerbating the obesity epidemic.

Critser suggests schools offer promise as a possible battle ground to combat childhood obesity. He also notes that there is a need to reinvest in traditional public school physical education. Let me share some observations of what is happening in schools.

What is frightening is the obsessive focus on test scores, which comes from internal and external political pressure. The development of the whole child including mind, body and spirit has taken a back seat to the unbridled push to increase test scores. School reform efforts are a visible priority of schools, communities and leaders.

According to research, there is a positive correlation between cognition and physical activity. Improved cognition is well documented by Shepard (1994, 1997, and 1997) in *Pediatric Science* and most recently by the California Department of Education (2001). If principals and schools truly want to raise scores, then increase physical activity. Test scores will rise.

Health education, physical education, athletics and intramurals must work together. They are essential interventions to childhood obesity,

Are there blockades? Are physical education programs adequate? What is quality programming? How can programs be held accountable? How does essential become visible to the eye? What is quality physical education and health education?

Physical education, out of societal necessity, perpetuated questionable practices that left emotional scars on some adults. Each adult's memory of physical education is far different than that of the current and practicing professional. Mental images are powerful and invisible deterrents to change

Editor's Column - "Welcome"

Even though it is already November, I'd like to welcome you back to another exciting school year! By now, you have already moved forward with your own district's 2003-04 school plans for physical education and health. Many of you were in attendance at our State COA Conference held at the Villa Roma from October 19-21. The conference was a big success, thanks to the outstanding work done by the conference committee! Of particular interest to me was the state physical education assessment presentation. The CD will be available to school districts very soon. In my opinion, this assessment tool will drive our future work together as a state organization. New York State has taken the lead in physical education programming through the leadership of NYSAHPERD, COA, and many other professionals who have contributed to the Goals 2000 project and the completion of the state assessment tool.

In this issue of the Times, we have included news about a grant that is available through the National School Fitness Foundation. Take advantage of this special opportunity to get state of the art fitness equipment for your district. Also available to you is a sample of a PEP grant proposal from my school district. We were not one of the successful schools, but I still would like to share with you a sample of what was submitted. Visit our website at www.nysahperd.org/coa and click on PEP grant sample. Our district hired a grant writer to write the proposal, but there was a significant amount of work necessary from the physical education department to complete the proposal. Take a look and let me know what you think (tstewart@rhnet.org).

You need to be aware of the status of Middle-Level Education in New York State and its impact on health and physical education in our middle schools. Through the leadership of NYSAHPERD, a position paper was sent to the Board of Regents and Commissioner Mills, advocating for your school's health and physical education program. I urge you to visit the NYSAHPERD website for up-to-date information (as follows):

- What's happening and why
- The position paper and talking points
- How you can impact the decision making process
- Advocacy strategies
- Guiding principles for successful advocacy

Also, pay close attention to Bob Zifchock's President's Message! This past summer, Bob presented testimony (in Albany) on behalf of quality physical education in New York State and the child obesity problem. He presented to the New York State Assembly and Senate (standing committee on children and families). You should also know that Assemblyman Felix W. Ortiz introduced a bill that would increase the minimum requirements for physical education in all New York State schools. For more information, click on www.nysahperd.org.

Great Opportunity!

NSFF Looking for School Districts in New York to Participate

The National School Fitness Foundation is looking to provide qualified schools in New York with the L.I.F.T. Program, valued at more than \$215,000 at no charge, as long as they follow the Foundation's guidelines. "We want to provide America's youth with the means to become and stay physically fit," said NSFF President Cameron Lewis. "Our passion is to L.I.F.T. students to healthier, happier lives."

To receive the Leadership in Fitness Training (L.I.F.T.) Program--free of cost, schools must simply provide adequate space, appropriate flooring, willing faculty, and all health-related data collected in the facility. The Foundation evaluates the data in order to track fitness improvements and to help advance the health of future generations.

Schools that receive the L.I.F.T. America Program are equipped with age-appropriate resistive and aerobic fitness equipment, a high-tech computerized assessment kiosk, a proven physical education curriculum, ample first aid supplies and faculty training and certification.

The Program utilizes a scientifically proven super circuit, which combines aerobic and strength training. The benefit to participants is improved body composition (more lean body mass and less fat mass) and enhanced self-confidence. Some schools with the L.I.F.T. America Program have reported 23 percent gains in muscular strength. The end result for schools is the contribution of a cutting-edge Health and Wellness Physical Education Center, which can also be used to benefit the community. The Foundation encourages schools to open the Center's doors and invite the community to workout.

Schools that choose to open their Centers to the public can keep all profits generated from the sale of memberships. Thousands of children and adults in 17 states are already benefiting from the L.I.F.T. America Program. Currently, 278 high schools/middle schools and 22 elementary schools have the Program. The Foundation recently provided the first elementary school with the L.I.F.T. America Program on 23 April 2003.

A representative from the NSFF will be on hand at our COA Conference in October.

For more information contact:

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E-Mail: mailto:btaylor@nsff.net

For more information about NSFF: Visit: <http://www.nsff.net/>

— Presidents Message continued from front —

Continued from cover...

Quality physical education is fundamentally different today than it was years ago. The New York State Education Department and field agents have developed tools to standardize assessments in the following areas: application of fitness principles, skills, strategy and rules; performing, creating and responding; and personal/social responsibility and safety. Students will have to show proficiency and competency in nine different recreational activities at the commencement level. What is embedded within the competencies and proficiencies?

Cognition, as well as skills and fitness testing, will become integral components of a sequential physical education program. The New York State Assessment Committee has developed standards for physical education that will solidify assessing students across the state. Fitness-based programs will integrate the concepts of personal fitness: body composition and weight control,

muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, cardiovascular fitness, stress management and nutrition. All of which are critical life skills to the purpose that students will truly be able to graduate as Physically Educated People.

Programs can be held accountable as a result of the newly created assessment tools. Data driven decisions will be possible, elevating physical education to the category of core curricula programming. This becomes paramount if the quality of life in our Nation is to improve. The question becomes: what is the purpose of knowledge, if people do not possess the stamina and health to pursue their dreams?

Quality health education is also very different today than it was a few years ago. Reform efforts are changing the way health education is delivered. It is standards-based, skills-driven, science-based, learner-based, and held together by what is called the Navigational Stars Initiative. Functional knowledge includes physical activity, nutrition,

tobacco, HIV/AIDS, family life and sexual health and injury and violence instruction. Seven skills include the overall encompassing skills of self-management, relationship management, stress management, communication, decision making, planning and goal setting and advocacy. Health education is an essential component in battling childhood obesity.

The school bell is about to ring open a new year. Let's loudly ring that bell to gain attention of educators, communities and leaders. Let's find those gifts that each child has and find the means to fully develop them. Let's reduce obesity through visible and essential programming in physical activity and nutrition. A person's health is essential, let's make it visible to the eye.

Get, be and stay well.

Bob Zifchock

Q&A:

Have a question? Send your email to tstewart@rhnet.org

Q: If a student transfers to us in the 11th grade and he already has two credits in P E, would he still have to take PE in grade 11 and grade 12?

A: Part 135.4 specifically states that physical education must be taken during each of the two semesters throughout the grade 9-12 high school years.

Physical Education credit may not be advanced. Each pupil must attend, participate, and pass physical education during both semesters of each school year in order to accumulate the necessary 2 units of credit required for graduation. Subsequently, the pupil you are referring to must attend, participate, and pass physical education during the

remainder of his/her high school years.

Q: We are hiring a new physical education teacher this year. We already have a male PE teacher in the building

and will be looking for a female. We want to make sure that we have appropriate supervision in the locker room, etc. Should we list the position as "female PE teacher?"

A: Unless the job requires it specifically, you cannot list a job (or hire someone) based on gender. For example, a washroom attendant can be listed as male/female for obvious reasons. Teaching is not a position that requires one specific gender over the other. Duties such as supervision of the locker room or coaching a specific gender are certainly not requirements for teaching physical education. Check with your human resources department for all hiring practices.

Q: Where are we with the physical education assessment tool (CD)?

A: The statewide assessment committee will have the CD-ROM completed and in

the hands of school districts this school year. The State Education department originally planned on "rolling out" the CD-ROM through a statewide teleconference. These plans may have to be altered due to limited funding. There are plans for regional informational workshops designed to assist teachers with the implementation of the CD-ROM. These workshops will include strategies and guidelines for both teachers and administrators. To date there is no time line set for the regional workshops.

Sara Doolittle and Tom Fay are currently completing the CD-ROM. Once it is completed the State Education Department will review it. The plan is to produce 10,000 copies, enough for each school district to receive at least one copy free of charge. The district can then replicate as many copies as they wish.

2003 COA Award Winners

(Presented at the Anne Mackey Luncheon, October 20)

Zone Awards

- Chapter 2:* Frank Owens
- Chapter 2:* Ron Grastorf
- Chapter 3:* Brad Hamer
- Chapter 4:* Michael White
- Chapter 5:* Tom Stewart
- Chapter 8:* Andy Herman
- Chapter 10:* Carl Normandin
- Chapter 11:* Peter Blieberg

COA Special Service Award

Dennis Fries, Harold Fried, Mary Berhang

Director of the Year

Ronald Woodruff

Ellis Champlin Award

Eric Malmberg



From Left to Right: Denny Fries, Harold Fried, Mary Berhang, Bob Zifchock



Ronald Woodruff (L), Bob Zifchock (R)



Eric Malmberg (L),
Bob Zifchock (R)

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