School Reentry Considerations

**In-School Instruction With Physical Distancing**

## Physical Education - Physical Environment

Select a location for physical education instruction where students and staff can respect physical distancing guidelines and remain 6 feet apart. If available facilities do not have sufficient space, class sizes should be adjusted appropriately to allow for physical distancing of 6 feet apart.

Classes should not be combined, and class size should not be increased for physical education instruction. More space for instruction may be required for physical education class due to increased respiration of students when participating in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

Evaluate available outdoor spaces on school property. When possible, use outdoor spaces for physical education instruction. When outdoors, avoid the use of playground equipment, benches, or other permanent structures.

If students are required to remain in the same classroom for all instructional periods throughout the day, have physical education teachers rotate through classrooms to deliver instruction. Ensure that physical education teachers are familiar with the classrooms and spaces where instruction will be delivered so they may adjust their lessons and activities appropriately based on the space available.

If using the gymnasium or multipurpose room for instruction, keep the doors and windows open if possible, to maximize circulation and air flow to accommodate for increased respiration by students while participating in physical activity. Consult with the school-wide COVID-19 response team to ensure the ventilation system is working properly and to ensure opening doors and windows is safe for students and staff.

Consider postponing or modifying units of instruction that take place in school weight rooms or swimming pools and/or consult local community COVID-19 guidelines on the use of these type of facilities.

Coordinate with classroom teachers and the school-wide COVID-19 response team on a plan for transporting students from the classroom to the physical education space (e.g., gymnasium, outdoors, multipurpose room). Give students guidance on how to safely transition between classrooms while still maintaining physical distancing. Plan time to practice these transitions with students.

Provide visual guides and signs on floors and in hallways to help facilitate physical distancing as students and staff move from classroom to classroom. Ensure that students and staff with disabilities have proper accommodations and guidance to follow these cues.

Advise students to come to school dressed in clothes that are appropriate for participation in physical education, whether indoors or outdoors. It is recommended that schools eliminate the use of locker rooms and the requirement that students must change into a physical education uniform for participation in physical education.

Plan to incorporate marked off areas (e.g., poly spots, cones, visual aids, signs) to ensure physical distancing among students and reduce cross contamination. Sanitize all equipment between class periods.

Consult with the school-wide COVID-19 response team and [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html) on proper sanitation procedures for cleaning high-touch surfaces in your facility (e.g., doorknobs, tables, handles). Surfaces like walls and floors do not require additional sanitation and will only require standard cleaning. Ensure that cleaners and disinfectants are stored properly and out of reach of students.

Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized frequently or deemed out of service. Encourage students and staff to use individual water bottles.

Suggested citation: SHAPE America. (2020). School reentry considerations: K-12 physical education, health education, and physical activity. Reston, VA: Author.

The recommendations and strategies provided herein are obtained based on guidance for schools provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and national recommendations for physical education, health education, recess, and classroom-based physical activity. The COVID-19 outbreak is an ongoing, rapidly developing situation. Educators are encouraged to monitor publicly available information and to always follow federal, state and local health organization guidance and government mandates. This information may vary and will be updated as necessary.