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# Wellness Curriculum Review

— Westwood Public Schools —  
Spring, 2023

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# K-12 Wellness Perspective: Changing needs

Last Review 2011

Historically: Focus on Fitness and on traditional Health Education topics

Now:

Increased focus on:

- SEL competencies
- Mental health skills and strategies
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

# Mental Health Data

(MetroWest Student Health Survey, Fall 2022)

Students reporting stress increases by nearly 1000 percent from grade 6 to grade 12.

Anxiety reported:

22% of MS students

37% of HS students

# The Committee:

The Wellness Review Committee consisted of individuals with varying perspectives:

- Teachers
- Students
- Parents
- School Nurses
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Local mental health professionals
- School Resource Officer (WPD)

# Goal of the Review

Our goal was to generate recommendations that would provide the foundation for updating the Wellness Curriculum:

- Based on State and National Standards
- Consistent with the WPS Strategies for District Improvement
- Based on the changing health needs of Westwood students and families



# Review Process

The review process consisted of the study and analysis of:

- State and National Health and P.E. Standards
- Vertical representations of current curricula
- Health data
- Best practices (including site visits, CTAHPE data)
- Sub-committee work by level or topic

# Findings and Opportunities

Notable needs and opportunities to improve curriculum:

- Lack of formal Health Education content in grades preK-5
- Imbalances delivery timeline for Health Education in middle school
- Lack of structured Health or P.E. in grades 11 and 12
- SEL needs based on student health data

# Recommendations: Overall PreK-12

- SEL
- Culturally Responsive Education
- Developmentally appropriate growth & development education
- Disability awareness education
- Connections to the community





# Recommendations: pre-K through grade 5

- Foundational, class-based health education in grades K-5 to address elementary health standards not currently addressed.
- SEL programming
- Foundational knowledge of growth and development concepts built throughout K-5
- Consider implementation of a K-12 human development curriculum
- Create an updated puberty education program: Update resources and materials used, representation of all genders
- Curricular connections to Adapted P.E. programming and inclusion opportunities.
- Updated “Same and Different” disability education
- Explore possibilities for increasing P.E. meeting times per week



# Recommendations: Middle School

- Disability education in grades 6-8
- P.E.: Individual fitness and self-efficacy.
- Connect health topics to the community (guidance dept., WYFS, etc)
- Health Education: Developmentally appropriate delivery timeline
- CACE: Consumer education, interdisciplinary opportunities with other academic departments, and cultural representation in CACE lessons



# Recommendations: High School

- Meaningful wellness experiences in gr. 11 & 12+ (Independent Participation contract or school sports participation insufficient for DESE P.E. recommendations)
- Authentic fitness opportunities to prepare for adulthood
- Age appropriate health education in grades 11-12
- Cultural representation in P.E. and Health lessons.
- Proactive approaches to teaching explicit strategies and available supports for mental health.
- Disability education in grades 9-12+
- High School Adaptive P.E. offerings and inclusion opportunities
- Increase connections with the community regarding health topics.

# Implementation:

SUMMER 2023:

60 hours (Team of five teachers)

- Revising curriculum maps, lenses checklist, authentic HS fitness

2023-24:

- FOCUS OF DEPARTMENT P.D. TIME: drafting DEI, SEL plans, disability awareness, health education, APE, middle school fitness,

SUMMER 2024: continued work

2024-25: Implementations

# Conclusion:

Standards based

District priorities

Responding to changing needs

Student focused

Resources



# Thank you

“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

– *Jon Kabat-Zinn*

