

Spring 2017

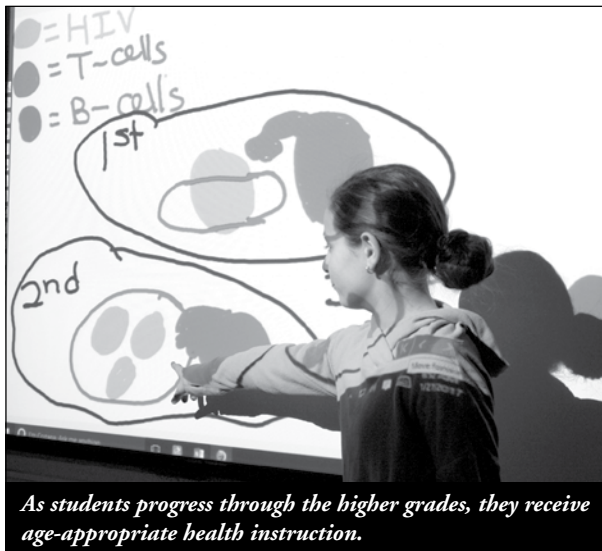
Lynbrook School News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LYNBROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Physical Education, Health and Athletics TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN SUPPORTING Positive Growth

As the 21st-century classroom continues to evolve, the district's Department of Physical Education, Health and Athletics has played an integral role in providing students with a well-rounded education. At the heart of this success is an innovative approach to collaboration within the department, but also with social workers and teachers of varied disciplines across the district to help students develop a strong foundation of physical and mental health.

"It's not any one program that sets us apart, it's the fact that we work together with other departments across every grade level to build a cohesive program. We guide our students to develop healthy habits and life skills to strengthen their bodies, enrich their minds, and build confidence in their abilities," said Thomas Graham, director of athletics, health and physical education.



As students progress through the higher grades, they receive age-appropriate health instruction.

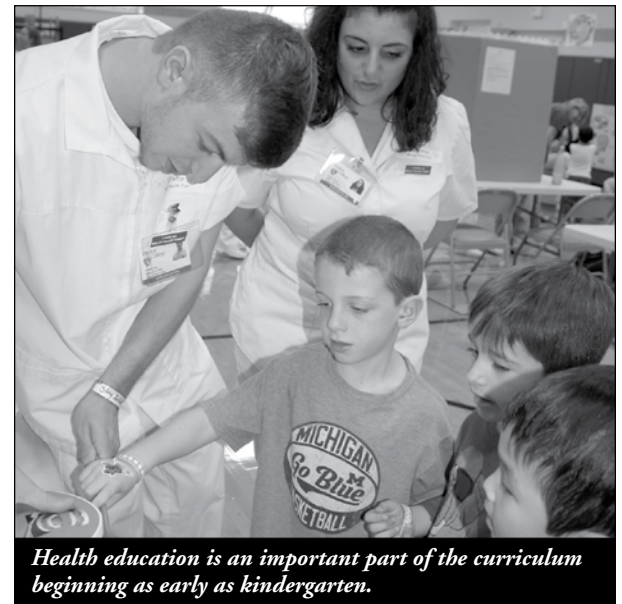
BUILDING HEALTHY BODIES AND MINDS

Regular physical education classes help Lynbrook students develop healthy habits that will stay with them for their entire lives. Physical activity has been proven to strengthen the heart and lungs, control weight, strengthen bones, improve energy levels, prevent cancer and even enhance emotional well-being. But the benefits go beyond just helping students stay physically fit. Physical education also helps them build social skills and develop a healthy mindset, which provide a foundation for academic achievement.

Beginning in the elementary grades, the district's health education program motivates students to improve and maintain their physical, mental and emotional health, prevent disease, and reduce risky behaviors. Age-appropriate lessons at every level of development keep students engaged in open dialogue about topics as varied as nutrition, safety, self-esteem, disease prevention, drug awareness and bully prevention.

As the STEAM movement builds in schools across the district, physical education and health teachers have taken on a creative role in expanding opportunities to help students explore the world of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics, while building a stronger understanding of the power of physical and health education to support academic growth.

"The district's health and physical education classes are intended to empower students with



Health education is an important part of the curriculum beginning as early as kindergarten.

the knowledge and skills they will need to make responsible lifestyle choices that directly impact their health," said Mr. Graham.

AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME

Completing this equation for well-rounded education is the district's athletics program, which provides boys and girls in grades 7-12 with the opportunity to participate in various team sports. For generations of Lynbrook families, athletics has played an important role in supporting individual growth, school spirit and a sense of community.

"Through their participation in athletics, students are given opportunities to develop levels of commitment, responsibility and self-discipline that will serve them well in future years," said Mr. Graham.



- Senior Molly Carter was ranked 19th in the country in Inside Lacrosse magazine's list of Top 50 college freshmen for 2017. She also earned Honorable Mention All-American status.
- Junior Gina Giovinco and senior Erin Loonie both earned All-State honors in the 2016 soccer season.
- Junior Joseph Becker and senior Matthew Swanson qualified to compete at the New York State Wrestling Championships. Swanson earned All-State honors with a third-place finish.
- Senior Erin Montgomery and junior Sophia LoCicero were named to the All-Academic

New York State girls basketball team. Montgomery completed her high school basketball career with 1,017 points and 1,058 total rebounds, setting a school record.

- Jamie Adams was named the boys basketball Conference Coach of the Year.
- Jennifer Kramer was named the 2016 Health Education Teacher of the Year by the Nassau Zone of the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.
- In past years the NYS AHPERD honored Karen Gordon and Dorothy McCarthy as New York State Physical Education Teachers of the Year.

LET'S GET MOVING!

Physical Education Comes of Age in the STEAM Era



IT'S ELEMENTARY

As the STEAM movement takes on a larger role in empowering instruction, the district's physical education program has expanded to incorporate science, technology, engineering, the arts and math into more and more lessons. Nowhere is this STEAM connection more evident than at the elementary level, where teachers have found creative ways to expand the role of physical education to support academic growth.

Take for example the traverse-climbing wall that has been incorporated into multidisciplinary units of study at Marion Street School. Participants work individually, as partners and in small groups to complete exercises that combine physical skills with ELA and math challenges. They also rotate through other stations that help them master new skills while carefully tallying their scores.

At West End School, March Math Madness made students excited about building synergies between basketball and math. Students were split into teams to solve math problems and shoot baskets. As each team solved their



Math is incorporated in many elementary physical education lessons.



The Owl Adventure is one of several physical education electives at the high school.

problem correctly, they moved on to shoot a basket, accumulating points along the way. In addition to dribbling, passing and shooting, teammates had to work collaboratively to solve the math problems as quickly and as accurately as possible.

At Waverly Park School, students combined science, nutrition, physical activity and humanitarian efforts through their participation in Jump Rope for Heart. While studying how the heart functions, they learned the importance of heart-healthy habits, developed empathy for children with special hearts and gained the satisfaction of knowing they could get moving to help others.

In another elementary lesson, students were challenged to build muscular strength, flexibility and aerobic endurance while also building mental muscle. They completed pushups to build muscle strength, practiced yoga poses to increase flexibility, completed jumping exercises for an aerobic workout and exercised their brains by solving math

problems. They also expanded their scientific knowledge as they discovered that one form of exercise is not enough to meet the diverse needs of the body.

ELECTING TO KEEP FIT

On the secondary level, middle school students attend physical education class every other day, participating in a wide array of activities that promote teamwork, build skills and give them a broad range of tools to support a fit and healthy lifestyle.

High school students may choose from a host of electives. In the personal fitness class, ninth-graders learn the basic health and fitness principles as they relate to the individual. The co-ed team sports class allows students to sample everything from basketball, volleyball, racquet sports and lacrosse to fitness technology, adventure education and step aerobics. In strength training and conditioning, participants learn to design a personal fitness and nutrition program. Yoga and mindfulness classes help participants learn yoga postures, meditation and breathing techniques to improve health and reduce daily stress. While stretching the limits of their physical abilities, Owl Adventure encourages students to develop leadership skills, respect the ideas of others, think creatively and take personal responsibility for their behavior. All students in the school also receive CPR training, with annual refresher courses, making them aware of how to respond in emergency situations. The summer evening recreation program encourages students to stay engaged and active over the summer.

Alumni Spotlight

After graduating high school, the Class of 2015 valedictorian Joshua Sarlo took a unique path. With dreams of playing Division 1 hockey in college, the two-time USA Hockey National Medalist took a gap year to play in the North American Hockey League. After a great playoff run with the North Jersey Avalanche in his last year of the youth league, he drew a third-round pick with the NAHL, and was drafted by the Springfield Jr. Blues, where he received honorable mention as the October NAHL Goalie of the Month. He finished the year playing for the Fairbanks Ice Dogs.

"Many hockey players spend a few years in juniors prior to entering college, so this was more of a natural process for me," explained Mr. Sarlo. "The main purpose of the NAHL is to develop players for NCAA Hockey. The NAHL is the second-best junior league in the nation and is famous for producing top level

goaltenders, so this was a perfect fit for me."

Mr. Sarlo credits Lynbrook High School with teaching him the importance of receiving a good education, while enabling him to follow his dreams. In addition to finishing first in his class, he was a member of the National Honor Society and was also a member of the Italian Club and Toy Lending Club, all while juggling the demands of practicing and playing youth hockey games throughout the tri-state region.

"The staff and administration continually supported me and my efforts and I am ever so grateful to them."

Although his future still holds many possibilities, his primary goal is to play Division I hockey in college, while pursuing studies in business and economics.

"Wherever my career takes me from there, I will follow," he said. "Outside of the NHL, I would love to work in the finance field."

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES

A Way of Life

Through a comprehensive K-12 health program, the district helps students develop sound minds and bodies. Encompassing far-reaching topics such as physical activity, nutrition, safety, self-esteem, decision-making, disease-prevention, drug-awareness, stress-reduction, communication skills, bully-prevention and safe use of social media, each lesson gives students new strategies to make healthy choices, not just as children and teenagers, but well into their adult lives. As an added bonus, studies have shown that healthier students have higher attendance rates and achieve better grades.

“Our goal is to create good habits early on that will make healthy behaviors second-nature,” said Thomas Graham, district director of physical education, health and athletics.



In this health class, elementary students play a game that encourages them to make positive choices.

Our goal is to create good habits early on that will make healthy behaviors second-nature.

- Thomas Graham, district director of physical education, health and athletics

BUILDING A FOUNDATION IN FUNDAMENTALS

In the elementary grades, health education is incorporated into regular classroom instruction. Classroom teachers present age-appropriate lessons that provide students a basic understanding of health and safety issues, while helping them develop skills and behaviors that support positive life choices. In addition to the standard state curriculum, the district employs character education programs such as Second-Step, Too Good for Drugs and Character Counts to help students develop coping skills, effectively deal with feelings, set positive goals and develop strong relationship and communication skills—all of which motivate them to improve and maintain their health, prevent disease and reduce risky behaviors.

Fifth-grade boys and girls also receive age-appropriate puberty education, both in the classroom and in special spring workshops, which help them and their parents gain a better understanding of their changing bodies and minds.

Schools also celebrate Health and Wellness Week, giving students further positive reinforcement with health fairs and guest presentations by a variety of health care professionals.

DEVELOPING STRONG MINDS AND BODIES

As students move into their middle school years, they face new challenges as they learn to care for their developing bodies, deal with more complicated social situations and accept new levels of autonomy. The middle school health program, taught by physical education and health teachers, helps students stay on the right path in their expanding world, focusing on alcohol, tobacco and drugs, diseases and

disorders, body image, HIV/AIDS, human development, depression, violence, suicide prevention, peer-pressure, communication skills, self-esteem, decision-making, stress management, diversity and tolerance.

At the middle school health fairs, sixth-graders also gain health-smart insights from Molloy College nursing students and other guest speakers, who conduct presentations dealing with nutrition, technology and sleep concerns, sun safety, personal hygiene, bike and road safety and bullying issues. They also discuss the dangers of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. This partnership has given middle school teachers new resources to reinforce the lessons taught in health classes.



At this middle school health fair, a guest speaker presents a lesson in nutrition.

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALTH

As they enter high school, students continue their health education journey, learning new ways to strengthen body, mind and spirit. In addition to the half-year health education class required for graduation, many physical education classes incorporate health components. In the strength training and conditioning classes, students learn about

physiology, proper nutrition, and the harmful effects of supplements. In yoga and mindfulness classes, they learn yoga postures, meditation and breathing techniques to improve health and reduce daily stress. In the Owl Adventure class, they challenge themselves physically, mentally and socially, using teamwork, cooperation and trust to develop personal and group strengths.

Health teachers work hand in hand with school social workers, tailoring their instruction to key into current challenges surfacing in the community. Social workers visit health classes to give special talks on subjects such as suicide prevention, giving students additional support to deal with tough issues. Through a partnership with the Mora Foundation, students receive additional training in body awareness, with specific emphasis on breast and testicular cancer.

School gardens throughout the district have provided tangible ways to help students understand the importance of proper nutrition, establish a connection to the earth, enjoy the physical benefits of gardening and form a sense of community.

“From kindergarten through high school, every topic we discuss is dealt with in an age-appropriate manner,” said Mr. Graham. “There is much curriculum crossover, with health issues often integrated into the general curriculum. We also work to bridge the gap between home and school, helping students and parents to have candid conversations about tough topics. Everything is geared toward fostering relationships that support healthy choices at every stage of development.”

To further support the home school connection, the district held a Parent University, with evening workshops that gave parents throughout the district an opportunity to discuss an array of health-related issues.

WHY WE PLAY

The Lynbrook athletics program has provided a sense of community pride for generations of Owls players and fans. Anyone who sees the championship banners lining the walls of the high school gymnasium bears witness to the success of generations of teams.

In Lynbrook it has always been about more than just winning—it is about belonging to something greater than one's self and building a sense of commitment and community that comes with perseverance to reach individual and common goals. It's about building skills that will support positive growth and future success, both on and off the playing field.

With 15 middle school teams and 17 varsity and junior varsity teams to choose from, the district's athletics program offers a myriad of opportunities for students of varied athletic interests and abilities. In recent years, the district has expanded interscholastic athletic opportunities at the middle schools to enhance the educational and social experience for a larger number and variety of students. As student-athletes progress to the high school level, participants continue to build skills and acquire greater levels of commitment, responsibility and self-discipline.

In addition, the district offers a Challenger Basketball program, giving middle school and high school students with special needs the advantages that come from belonging to a team, building self-esteem, as well as gross motor skills.

"Our athletics program is very inclusive," said Thomas Graham, district director of physical education, health and athletics. "We give as many students as possible the opportunity to have a team experience."

GO TEAM!

The fall varsity season ended on a high note, with the girls tennis team winning the conference championship and the girls cross-country team clinching the division title. In addition, both the girls and boys soccer teams



Lynbrook High School hosted Soccer Day to raise cancer awareness.



The wrestling team was one of four Lynbrook teams to earn All-Conference honors so far this year, posting its best county finish in more than 30 years.

earned section VIII Team Sportsmanship Awards. The winter teams also finished strong with the girls varsity basketball team and the wrestling team clinching conference titles.

Proving that athletics and academics work hand in hand, 14 fall and winter teams were named Scholar-Athlete Teams by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, with team academic averages of 90 or above.

In addition, athletes earned a total of 78 individual awards.

ACTION HEROES

In Lynbrook Public Schools, student athletes have been putting their physical skills to use to achieve great things for their community. The varsity football team sponsored an exhibition game against Roslyn High School to support a local non-profit that raises money and awareness for hemophilia. Lynbrook Soccer Day brought teams from Lynbrook, Oceanside and Valley Stream together to show their love of soccer while raising cancer awareness. In honor of breast cancer awareness month, the girls volleyball team participated in a Dig Pink volleyball tournament.

LEADING THE WAY

Lynbrook High School students attended the Student Athletes as School Leaders Conference at Hofstra University in February. Organized by the Nassau County High School Principals Association, the Nassau County Physical Education Consortium and the Hofstra School of Education, the conference brought students from around the county together to share ideas about the meaning and significance of leadership. Mr. Graham was one of the featured speakers.

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SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 21

10 a.m. KC Graduation @ HS
6 a.m. NM Graduation @ HS
8 a.m. SM Graduation @ HS

JUNE 22

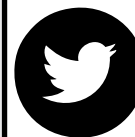
9 a.m. MS Moving Up
11 a.m. WE Graduation @ HS
1 p.m. WP Graduation @ HS
7 p.m. HS Senior Prom

JUNE 23

6 p.m. HS Graduation @ MS

JULY 5

7 p.m. Board of Education
Reorganization Mtg. @ AA



#GIVEAHOOTFOR...

Follow Dr. Burak's Twitter account, @LynbrookSupt. Look for weekly tweets with the hashtag #GiveAHootFor....



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