



Arlington  
Public  
Schools



# Health, Physical & Driver Education BRIEFING REPORT

**NOVEMBER 2020**



---

## HEALTH, PHYSICAL & DRIVER EDUCATION

---

The health, physical and driver education program provides students the knowledge and skills to lead healthy lives. The program introduces fitness, lifelong wellness activities and healthy choices. During the 2019-2020, the COVID pandemic disrupted everything, everyone, and all facets of daily living. The health and physical education (HPE) teachers demonstrated their expertise as health educators providing knowledge and skills to help students through this global pandemic. The HPE teachers provided yoga lessons and personal fitness activities so students could relieve stress and build healthy habits.

In the 2019-2020 school year, 137 health and physical education teachers provided instruction to all students in kindergarten through grade 10. Swim instruction is a popular physical education unit in both elementary and high school curriculum; however, the COVID distance learning impacted the number of students receiving these lessons. Approximately 2,000 elementary and only 1,500 students received aquatic instruction before the buildings closed. Wakefield is the only high school that teaches driver education and was able to continue (new) classroom instruction through the spring semester. However, in-car instruction ceased per VDOE's guidance.

### MAJOR SERVICES PROVIDED

- Develop and implement high quality health, physical education and driver education teaching and learning opportunities
- Assess program effectiveness through data collection and staff discourse
- Plan, implement and provide sustained and relevant professional development for health, physical education and driver education teachers
- Act as a liaison to a variety of school, county, and state groups and committees
- Incorporate walk and bike education into the school curriculum
- Create and promote district-wide walk and bike encouragement programs and resources for schools
- Review materials for curricular programs, including supplementary resources, software and online resources
- Collaborate with APS facilities to design buildings and spaces for HPE instruction and athletics
- Purchase HPE equipment for new schools/programs
- Collect data for the annual student travel tally

### BRIGHT SPOTS

#### ELEMENTARY BIKE PROGRAM

Elementary Bike Program continues to be a unit that teaches safety as well as a lifelong skill which also serves as an effective mode of transportation. In 2019-2020, the program went to six schools to deliver instruction on proper

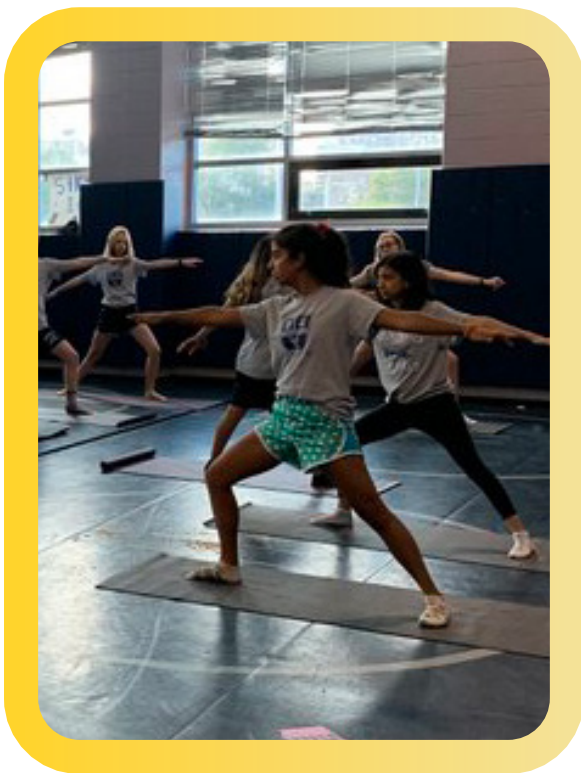
bike and helmet fitting, basic bike maintenance, safe riding skills, understanding traffic signs and signals, hazard avoidance and communicating with other vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians while bike riding.

### WEEKLY HPE STAFF CHECK-INS

The HPE Supervisor and HPE Teacher Specialist conducted weekly TEAMS meeting with each grade level to provide support for teachers, write curriculum and lessons for both virtual and in-person instruction with social distancing, provide information on APS re-opening plans and learning models, and solicit feedback. Teachers from every grade level participated sharing stories of their virtual lessons and student successes. These check-ins are being continued into the current school year with similar functions as well as providing an arena for HPE teachers to discuss the logistics specific to the physical education learning environment.

### WELNET

Welnet is web-based software that APS HPE teachers and students use to assess health and fitness in grades four through ten. This software allows health and physical education teachers to check for student understanding of health and fitness concepts, track student health related habits and behaviors using student behavior logs, and measure the five components of fitness using the functional fitness challenges this school year. These Welnet modules support the whole child framework by promoting the physical health and well-being of APS students.

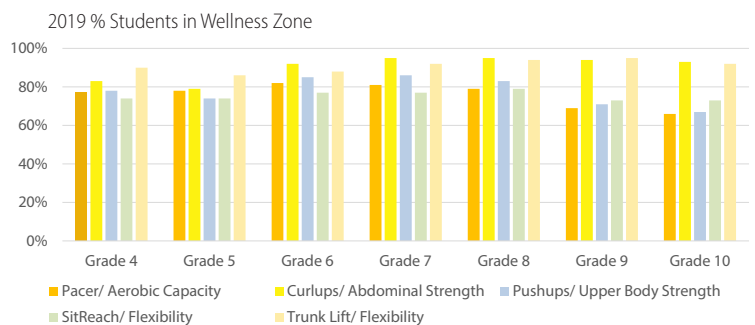


## DATA THAT PROVIDES INSIGHT

The health and physical education office uses a variety of data sources, both local and national. Staff uses information from Arlington's Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), as well as national research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to guide and plan instruction.

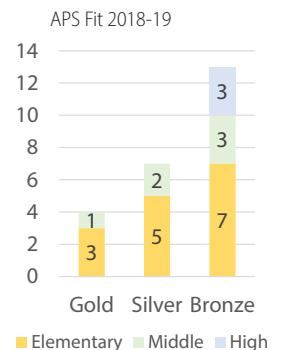
### VIRGINIA WELLNESS-RELATED FITNESS TESTS

Staff uses a series of five fitness assessments to provide students a snapshot of their overall wellness. Due to the COVID closings, students were unable to perform the fitness tests. Below are the results from the 2018-2019 school year that shows middle school students outperforming their peers at both grade levels while scores are the lowest overall in aerobic capacity (Pacer).



### APS FIT

Staff used the Virginia Wellness tests to award points for wellness zone school totals. Based on the 2019-2020 wellness data, there were a total of 24 APS Fit Awards. The chart below shows the number of schools with gold, silver or bronze recognition.



### OPIOID AND E-CIGARETTE CRISIS

Using the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results and given increasing use nationwide, HPE teachers at all grade levels delivered age-appropriate lessons on substance abuse that focused on either prescription drugs, E-cigarettes or opiates. At the secondary level, health teachers invited APS substance abuse counselors to present on the dangers of these drugs.

### PRIVACY & SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

The 2017 YRBS data showed that one in three students in 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade have reported experiencing sexual harassment at school. Using this information along with the 2020 revised FLE objectives, instruction will focus on the importance of privacy and personal boundaries. Staff is fortunate to partner with Arlington's Project PEACE to offer professional learning on these topics, to include consent and the use of technology in partner violence.



Welnet has a behavior log module that allows students to track their daily choices and behaviors for physical activity, sleep, hydration, and nutrition. These behaviors are critical to staying healthy during the pandemic. Tracking information and data in these categories provides insight into how student behavior affects overall health. These student entries identify student patterns of behavior to encourage or correct. Students have the ability to monitor their own personal behaviors and assess how they can maintain or improve those behaviors over time. This module supports the development of healthy habits and the creation of student fitness plans.

### **FUNCTIONAL FITNESS CHALLENGES**

To meet the fitness needs of all health and physical education students in a virtual learning environment, functional fitness challenges were created by Focused Fitness\* and approved as the VDOE's measure of student wellness for 2020-2021. Students will participate in five fitness challenges and with the assistance of their teacher, students will identify an area of fitness that needs improvement or where they would like to improve. The functional fitness challenges allow students to create SMART goals and monitor their progress throughout the year. Students will record pre/goal/post data in Welnet for these five challenges:

1. Step challenge – measures cardiorespiratory endurance
2. Plank challenge – measures muscular strength and endurance
3. Lower back and hamstring challenge – measures lower back and hamstring flexibility
4. Shoulder stretch challenge – measures shoulder and upper arm flexibility
5. Standing balance challenge – measures balance and muscular endurance

*\*Focused Fitness is a company started by physical education teachers that created a dynamic curriculum and resources to teach fitness and health concepts without sacrificing movement or activity in an online product.*

### **SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION**

As the 2020-2021 academic year began, the Virginia Department of Education informed school divisions that the decision to offer/not offer Family Life Education (FLE) is a local decision – and offering it virtually/remotely is also a local decision. With the school year beginning with full-time distance learning, HPE staff reviewed the newly revised FLE Standards of Learning and identified the standards that are suitable for virtual learning. Teachers along with county partners and the School Health Advisory Board's support, created an FLE scope and sequence. This curriculum progression was based on the following criteria adapted from the CDC's Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT)\* and the Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS).

### **WHAT WE LEARNED**

In a review of the 2018 HPE Program Evaluation, one of the recommendations focused on assessing student knowledge and skills. Staff is developing a variety of assessments to measure student learning that include project-based learning, reflections, and exit slips. WelNet has a cognitive assessment module that is used to assess student understanding of health and fitness concepts. The question bank has 1,400 questions for health and physical education teachers to check for student understanding. Teachers may also create their own questions and assessments based on their needs. In this module, Welnet provides historical data, automatic scoring and a variety of reporting options for students, parents/guardians, and health and physical education teachers.

Another 2018 HPE Program Evaluation recommendation was to improve the consistency of health education instruction. The creation of the FLE scope and sequence will assist in providing a uniform delivery of health education since FLE is taught within the health curriculum.

### **MOVING FORWARD**

Since the 2019-2020 school year stopped providing new instructional content for the entire fourth quarter of last year, some students may have missed health education. In efforts to provide missed instruction, health teachers are providing a thorough review of content from the previous grade prior to introducing new content since most health knowledge builds upon previous information.

Professional learning will focus on equity and diversity issues within the health and physical education. Staff will work with APS colleagues to present professional learning opportunities that will utilize case methods to analyze real-life scenarios to experience a variety of perspectives and viewpoints.

