



**Summary of Key Considerations
for the further development of the renewed Grade 11 and 12 Health and Physical Education
Courses (Health for Life, Exercise Science, Recreation and Fitness Leadership)**

**Prepared by: Ophea and OASPHE
in response to the Ministry of Education's Proposed Revisions
May 22, 2009**

Ophea (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting schools and communities through quality program supports, partnerships and advocacy. Ophea is led by the vision that all kids will value, participate in, and make a lifelong commitment to healthy active living.

OASPHE (Ontario Association for the Supervision of Physical and Health Education) are educators who provide a strong voice to lobby policy makers and advocate for the development and delivery of quality curriculum in Health and Physical Education. This will provide students with opportunities to develop the skills to make a lifelong commitment to daily physical activity and make healthy lifestyle choices

Ophea works in partnership with several organizations including OASPHE, The Nutrition Resource Centre, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, The Lung Association, and others to provide essential supports for educators to implement the current Health and Physical Education Curriculum, and as a result has gleaned significant learnings which have been reflected in our response to the draft of the renewed Health and Physical Education Curriculum Grades 1-12.

As the joint subject associations for Health and Physical Education, Ophea and OASPHE are collaborating to develop a coordinated response to the Ministry of Education's H&PE Feedback Survey on the renewed Grade 11 and 12 (i.e. Health for Life, Exercise Science, Recreation and Fitness Leadership).

Ophea and OASPHE have had the opportunity to provide input to the Ministry of Education at various stages throughout the process of curriculum review and are pleased to see that many of the considerations identified in the summary of the findings from a 2006 survey conducted by OASPHE in 2006 entitled, *What do secondary educators think of the Ontario H&PE Curriculum?** and *Key Considerations for the renewal of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum* developed by Ophea, March 2008 * have been reflected in the draft of the Grade 11 and 12 Courses.

* Note: These documents can be accessed from <http://www.ophea.net/advocacy.cfm> and www.oasphe.ca)

Specific considerations to inform the continued development of the revised Grade 11 and 12 H&PE Courses were provided to the Ministry of Education via an online survey on May 22, 2009. PDF versions of the Ophea/OASPHE survey response is available at www.ophea.net/advocacy.cfm. A summary of key considerations is provided below.

1) Health and Physical Education is an essential and necessary aspect of student achievement and the overall healthy development of children and youth.

Innovative and flexible implementation models for a comprehensive Health & Physical Education program in Ontario's secondary schools - including quality curriculum and other school and community based opportunities- should be investigated in order to ensure that all students have access to, and will participate in, daily healthy active living opportunities.

2) The renewed Grade 11 & 12 H&PE Courses have the potential to positively impact health and learning outcomes for Ontario's youth and to ensure student success. It is essential that educators be supported to implement the Grade 11 and 12 H&PE senior courses.

While educators responsible for Health and Physical Education at the secondary level are generally specialists, they may lack current knowledge and expertise to teach the Grade 11 and 12 senior courses, particularly Health for Life. This may result in a lack of comfort in teaching these courses and as a result, they may not be offered to students. A provincially coordinated support strategy led by the provincial subject associations for Health and Physical Education (Ophea and OASPHE) is needed to ensure the consistent implementation of the renewed H&PE curriculum across the province.

3) The positive outcomes of Health and Physical Education can only be fully realized if Health and Physical Education is implemented within the context of a healthy school.

Specifically, we recommend that the connections between Health and Physical Education and Healthy Schools (as outlined in Foundation for a Healthy School) need to be strengthened. For example:

- Include reference to all components of Healthy Schools (i.e. high quality instruction and programs, healthy physical environment, supportive social environment, community partnerships) in the introduction and where possible within the expectations (i.e. there is strong potential for connections in the Recreation and Fitness Leadership Course).
- Include additional details regarding the importance of a shared responsibility to ensure healthy active living for children and youth. Since the newly-released Ontario Public Health Standards direct public health to support school boards and schools, we recommend a specific reference to the role of public health in supporting healthy schools.
- Include additional examples related to healthy schools through the student talk and teacher prompts particularly in the *Promoting Healthy Living* sub-strand of the Health for Life course.
- Consider strategies to ensure alignment of key messages between Health and Physical Education and other curricula which address similar topics (e.g. Sciences, Family Studies) in order to reinforce and increase exposure to key messages among secondary students.

Implementation of the H&PE Curriculum within the context of a Healthy School can be a key strategy to address the objectives of other key provincial strategies including the Ministry of Education's core priorities: high levels of student achievement, reduced gaps in student achievement, and increased public confidence in publicly funded education; other education sector priorities including School Improvement, Character Education, Student Success, Think Literacy, and Safe Schools, and other Government priorities including the newly released Poverty Strategy; Roots of Violence; Childhood Obesity Strategy; Diabetes Strategy; and others. Linkages should be made wherever possible between the H&PE Curriculum and these other initiatives in order to maximize resources and ensure maximum impact on the health and learning of Ontario's students.

4) Key strengths of the draft revised Senior Courses are:

1. Ophea and OASPHE are pleased to see that the changes recommended in the OASPHE 2006 survey are reflected in the draft Health for Life Course in that an overall expectation with an active participation component was included, and the expectations in the strand Healthy Communities were revised to be more relevant for students at this level.
2. The reorganization of the strands and sub-strands in the draft Exercise Science Course (e.g., moving Human Performance to the Motor Development and Human Performance Strand) and the addition of examples clarifies and “cleans-up” the content and context of the expectations.
3. While maintaining an active leadership focus the draft of the Recreation and Fitness Leadership Course has realigned and re-named some of the strands and sub-strands and reduced the number of expectations – all positive changes. The shift away from fitness towards wellness is also appropriate and reflects the philosophy and vision of Health and Physical Education.

5) Key considerations for the further development of the draft revised Senior Course are:

1. The vision and goals of the H&PE Curriculum do not fully incorporate the scope of learning in the three senior courses for Grades 11 and 12. Modifications are needed either to the courses to better reflect the vision and goals or modifications are needed to the vision and goals to better incorporate the key components of the senior courses.
2. Key considerations for the further development of the **Health for Life** course are:
 - The addition of the overall expectation with an active participation component “demonstrate an ability to develop and implement a personal wellness plan” needs to be clarified through the language of the overall and the supporting specific expectations to indicate that these require students to be physically active (specific recommendations were made in the survey response to the Ministry).
 - The Healthy Schools “lens or perspective” should be highlighted to a greater extent in this course particularly in the strand Healthy Communities.
 - The examples, teacher prompts and student responses need to better incorporate the Living Skills, and major lenses such as the aboriginal and anti-discrimination.
 - The knowledge and skills required in parts of the course should be modified to be more age/grade appropriate, e.g., in the sub-strand Consumer Health, there was some doubt regarding the students’ abilities to “evaluate” in the three specific expectations
 - Of the three senior course this one has the least amount of resource support available for teachers.
3. Key considerations for the further development of the **Exercise Science** course are:
 - The course title needs to be modified to more accurately reflect the course content.
 - The strand Physical Activity and Sport in Society should more explicitly include a Canadian perspective. This is also a great opportunity to reflect francophone and Aboriginal culture.
 - The linkages to the Living Skills and the major lenses, Environment, Aboriginal and Anti-Discrimination are unclear.
 - The content is very broad (i.e. there are three university courses related to just the content of the Basis of Movement strand). Direction and guidance is necessary through the examples to limit the scope of what is to be covered within each strand (i.e. so that teachers don’t delve too deeply in some areas and not deeply enough in others). Educators often focus on the Basis of Movement expectations and skim over the strands, Motor Development and Human Performance, and Physical Activity and Sport in Society.
 - There is a fair amount of support for teachers to implement this curriculum (i.e. Thompson text)
 - Recommend that it become a pre-requisite for university H&PE/Kin programs

4. Key considerations for the further development of the ***Recreation and Fitness Leadership*** course are:
 - The title and description require modification since the emphasis is not on fitness, but on wellness instead, specific suggestions are reflected in the survey response to the Ministry.
 - The re-organization in the Mentorship strand is positive – however more direction is necessary in either the wording of the expectations and examples or in the addition of teacher prompts and student responses to direct student learning towards the practical application of their mentorship knowledge e.g., mentor junior classes as the students work through their healthy active living plans
 - It is important that this course continues to include a very practical application of the students' knowledge and skills. To accomplish this, a reduction in the number of expectations to provide the time necessary to allow for the application of theory in a practical setting may be required.
 - Presently the examples do not include references to healthy schools and communities, however there are a variety of places that they could be incorporated, in particular in the Leadership and the Facilitation of Recreation and Leisure strands
 - **There are limited opportunities for francophone Ontarians to participate in sport and physical activity in French-** Through the Politique d'aménagement linguistique (PAL), French-language schools are responsible for the development of francophone culture and identity, therefore in order to continue to build francophone culture and identity through physical activity, it is recommended that the French H&PE curriculum consider a social-construct approach that supports student engagement with their peers and community to promote lifelong participation in physical activity, presented within the context of the TGfU and transferable skills philosophy. This social-construct approach also supports the "supportive social environment" component of a Healthy School philosophy.
5. Recognizing that there is flexibility allowed between the French and English curriculum policies for all subjects to reflect francophone cultural differences (85% of the content must be consistent between the English and French policies) ***Ophea and OASPHE strongly recommend that the overall expectations and support information for the English and French curriculum policies be as consistent as possible.*** However, since the draft is only available in English at this time, specific comments are not possible.