

- Required  
 Local  
 Notice

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Board of Education shall attempt to provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Board's belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program shall contribute to this goal:

1. to aid the development of the entire student so that a well-trained mind may function properly in a healthy body;
2. to encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have a carry-over value for later activities in everyday life;
3. to increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to good health; and
4. to impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body, and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

With these objectives in mind, the district physical education staff will work together with administrators to develop a physical education program that develops each student's flexibility, agility, coordination, strength and endurance incorporating a progression of skills and activities from the simple to the more complex. This program must be flexible enough to accept each student with his/her own pattern of growth and development and include activities that assure both individual and group development throughout the student's school years. Provisions shall be made for students who require a special or adaptive physical education program.

Each student in grades 9-12 shall be required to successfully complete the physical education course during each year of attendance in the district high school in order to qualify for graduation. Two units of physical education are mandated for graduation by the regulations of the Commissioner of Education, and these units are in addition to the 18 1/2 credits necessary for a Regents or local high school diploma. These credits shall be awarded as 1/4 unit per semester. A student who graduates in fewer than eight semesters is not required to continue enrollment in high school for the sole purpose of completing the physical education requirement; however, the student must have successfully fulfilled the physical education requirement each semester up to that time.

Students who are temporarily or permanently unable to participate in the regular physical education program will be provided with adapted activities. Temporary or short-term adaptations shall be made by the physical education teacher in consultation with appropriate medical personnel. Permanent or long-term program adaptations shall be based upon recommendations from the family physician.

Students with disabilities, as classified by the Committee on Special Education (CSE), who are unable to safely or successfully participate in the activities of the regular physical education program will be provided with adaptive physical education. The written individualized education program (IEP) for each such student shall include a prescriptive physical education program. The physical education teacher shall be involved in the development of the IEP.

## **NYSSBA Sample Policy 4316**

School personnel shall have the responsibility of determining the activities appropriate for each student. In no case should the activity exceed the ability level of the student.

Ref: Education Law §§803; 3204(5)  
8 NYCRR §135.4

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## COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

*NOTE: This policy reflects the new requirements for counseling/guidance programs set forth in state regulations 8 NYCRR §100.2(j). The comprehensive developmental school counseling/guidance programs are required to be in place beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. This policy is not required, but all of the actions after the first paragraph, including the advisory council, are required.*

*The first paragraph of this policy and its numbered list is optional, but represents an opportunity to set forth general expectations for counselors.*

*Some differences apply to the New York City School District. Separate plans must be developed for each community school district, the High School Division and the Special Education Division. Annual reports must be presented to the Chancellor. An advisory council must be established for each community school district, and the annual report must be submitted to the Chancellor.*

The district shall provide a guidance program to support students and staff in the pursuit of academic achievement. In general, the Board expects counseling and guidance staff to:

1. Foster a welcoming environment and encourage positive connections with students.
2. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students.
3. Work with students and their families to resolve concerns whenever possible and appropriate.
4. Educate students as appropriate of the responsibilities staff have for reporting incidents.
5. Use their professional judgement, in consultation with administrators and/or the school attorney where appropriate, while observing legal mandatory reporting obligations.

### School Counseling/Guidance Program

*NOTE: For the New York City and Buffalo City school districts, "certified school counselors" are known as "licensed guidance counselors" pursuant to Part 80 of the Commissioner's Regulations.*

The district's counseling/guidance program shall, for all students in grades K-12, ensure access to a certified school counselor, prepare students to participate effectively in their current and future educational programs, and address college and career readiness and academic and social/emotional standards. The program shall include the following:

## NYSSBA Sample Policy 4600

1. For students in grades K-5, the program shall be designed by a certified school counselor in coordination with the teaching staff and appropriate pupil personnel service providers to prepare students to participate effectively in their educational programs, providing college and career information, assisting students with challenges to academic success, such as attendance or behavioral concerns, and making referrals to appropriate professionals for more targeted supports;
2. For students in grades 6-12, certified school counselors shall provide annual individual progress review plans, reflecting each student's educational progress and career plans, and, for students with disabilities, consistent with their individualized education programs;
3. Core curriculum instruction by certified school counselors to address student college and career readiness, academic skills, and social/emotional development;
4. Direct student services, including but not limited to responsive services, crisis response, group and individual counseling, appraisal, assessment and advisement to enable students to benefit from the curriculum, assisting students to develop and implement postsecondary education and career plans, assisting students who exhibit attendance, academic, behavioral or adjustment concerns, and encouraging parental involvement; and
5. Indirect student services such as consultation, collaboration, leadership, advocacy, and teaming, and referrals to appropriately licensed or certified professionals.

### School Counseling/Guidance Plans

A certified school counselor shall develop or direct the development of both district-wide and building-level comprehensive developmental school counseling/guidance plans. Such plans shall be updated annually, and shall be made available for review at the district offices and posted on the district website.

The plans shall include objectives and activities for the counseling/guidance programs, planning for the program's development and maintenance, school counseling curriculum, professional development planning, methods to evaluate the program based on data analysis of program results, and an assessment of resources necessary to support positive student outcomes.

Each plan shall also address the preparation of an annual report on the guidance program outcomes. Such report shall include an analysis of all components of the guidance program required by state regulations and summarized above. This report shall be presented annually to the Board.

School Counseling/Guidance Program Advisory Council

The district shall also establish a counseling/guidance advisory council to annually review the district's school counseling/guidance program plans, and advise on the implementation of the district's counseling/guidance program. The council shall include representative stakeholders such as parents, Board members, building and/or district administrators, community-based service providers, teachers, school counselors, school social workers and/or school psychologists. The council shall meet at least twice a year, and shall submit an annual report to the Board.

Ref: 8 NYCRR §100.2(j)

Adoption date:

### GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

Guidance programs for district students K-5 shall include the following:

1. preparing students to participate effectively in their current and future educational programs;
2. helping students with attendance, academic, behavioral or adjustment problems;
3. educating students to avoid sexual abuse and other forms of child abuse; and
4. encouraging parental involvement in their children's education.

Programs for district students in grades 6-12 shall include the following:

1. an annual review of each student's educational progress (course selection and student scheduling) and career plans;
2. individual and/or group counseling assistance to help students develop and implement post secondary education (college applications, student conferences with college representatives, etc.) and career/employment plans;
3. individual and/or group counseling assistance to help students who exhibit any attendance, academic, behavioral and adjustment problems;
4. career instruction at each grade level from 7-12; and
5. encouragement of parental involvement.

Counselors are available to meet with students individually or in groups to help them with personal concerns, academic planning and career/vocational plans. The counseling center resource library includes college catalogs, reference books and a computerized college/career information system which students may use during, before or after school, or during study hall or lunch.

Other areas for which Guidance is responsible include:

- current employment assistance (part-time jobs, working papers, etc.)
- information on the armed forces;
- providing career information to teachers wishing to use this material in class;
- home instruction;
- report cards; and
- follow-up studies on graduates.

Ref: 8 NYCRR §100.2(j)

Adopted: August 27, 2002

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## HOMEWORK

Homework is recognized and encouraged as an extremely valuable activity and as an appropriate extension of classroom instruction. Homework provides excellent opportunities for developing good study habits, providing for individual differences and abilities, and encouraging self-initiative on the part of the student.

Teachers are cautioned to avoid overloading students with excessively lengthy homework assignments or with overly brief and empty assignments. Planning homework assignments should be given as much care as the planning of any other aspect of a lesson. An assignment important enough to be done must be considered worthy of teacher evaluation.

Homework shall be assigned according to these guidelines:

1. Homework should be a properly planned part of the curriculum extending and reinforcing the learning experience of the school.
2. Homework should help children learn by providing practice in the mastery of skills, experience in data gathering and integration of knowledge, and an opportunity to remediate learning problems.
3. Homework should help develop the student's sense of responsibility by providing an opportunity for the exercise of independent work and judgment.
4. The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments should be based on the abilities, activities, and needs of the student. However, the grade given for the homework is dependent on the student's performance.
5. As a valid educational tool, homework should be clearly assigned and its product carefully and promptly evaluated.

The Board of Education believes that parental involvement in students' homework is essential to making homework an integral part of the educational program. Parents are expected to encourage and monitor homework assignments and, to the extent possible, provide conditions that are conducive to their successful completion.

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## SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The Board of Education recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and President's Day are encouraged.

The Board remains impartial with regard to religion and seeks neither to advance nor inhibit religion. Students, faculty and administration are reminded of the pluralism of religious beliefs and are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others. Therefore, no religious celebrations including organized prayer, bible reading or other activities performed in a religious context may be held on public school property, except to the extent permitted by the Equal Access Act.

Notwithstanding, the Board recognizes that activities related to the celebration of religious holidays present an excellent opportunity to teach about religion and foster respect and understanding among students. In addition, educational goals motivated by secular purposes cannot always filter out religious aspects, and sometimes require the presentation of material with religious themes. Therefore, activities related to the observance of religious holidays will be permitted to the extent that they are conducted in an unbiased and objective manner and focus on the origins of the holiday, its history, and the generally agreed upon meaning of the holiday observance.

In planning activities related to a religious holiday or theme, special effort should be made to ensure that the activity is not devotional and students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overtly religious and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

The display of religious objects or symbols is also prohibited except to the extent that they are used as a teaching aid or resource to provide examples of cultural and religious heritage within the context of a short-term study in the curriculum such as world religions, art or history. Symbols which are secular and seasonal in nature, such as Santa Claus and Easter bunnies, can be displayed in a seasonal context.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs.

Ref: *Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. V. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000) (constitutionality of student-led prayers at interscholastic athletic activities)  
*Lee v. Weissman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992) (constitutionality of clergy-led prayers at graduation ceremonies)  
*Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602 (1971) (constitutional test to determine church-state issues)  
*Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668 (1984) (constitutionality of holiday display)  
*County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union of Greater Pittsburgh Chapter*, 492 U.S. 573 (1989) (constitutionality of holiday display)  
*Florey v. Sioux Falls School District*; 619 F2d 1311 (8th Cir., 1980) (constitutionality of school observance of holidays)



**NYSSBA Sample Policy 4821**

*Matter of Rosenbaum*, 28 EDR 138 (1988) (permissibility of religious music and art in schools)

*Matter of Cromwell*, 72 EDR 116 (1951) (religious holidays in schools)

Adoption date:

**BUILDING LEVEL CELEBRATIONS**

The Averill Park Central School District encourages building level celebrations supported by individual building administration and staff.

In keeping with the Board of Education's and District's desire to keep open communication with the students and parents it serves, the building level administrators or organizers of any such events should include the building level Education Improvement Team in the decision making process regarding these events.