

STUDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM MORE DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

As the new school year begins, students can expect to become more physically active ... and not just during gym class or at recess. A major focus of the new school year is the integration of Daily Physical Activity (DPA) into the curriculum both in the classroom and in other venues. This new approach stems from the Ministry's Healthy Schools Program, which requires that all elementary students take part in twenty minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Kirkland/Englehart Trustee Rick Brassard believes that physical activity will go a long way in ensuring that our new generation of youth become more concerned with their lifestyle. "Research currently suggests that our children lack the level of physical activity required for healthy growth and development," stated Brassard. "As educators, we have a responsibility to help them learn strategies and adopt practices that will allow them to become healthy adults. In past years, we have taken important steps to promote healthy eating habits in our school communities, by encouraging healthy snacks and meals. It is now time to take this a step further and get our youth excited about physical activity. We have provided training to our schools and resources to each teacher as part of our commitment to make this a focus of learning in all areas."

In the past year, the Board has invested in the professional development of 'School Champions' for healthy active lifestyles. Teacher Lori Blair, School Champion at English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard, has participated in this training and is excited to see the DPA introduced in her school community. "The Board has purchased the 'Everybody Move!' program for our schools, which is filled with ideas on how to get our students energized and moving," explained Blair. The package includes music, games, and other resources to encourage active participation by students during different subject lessons. This could occur by teaching a language lesson in the gym using tennis balls with letters on them as students scramble to make words, or in math by answering equations through movement. At ECCS, our student council has also taken the lead with this new Ministry initiative, and will be hosting monthly aerobic assemblies to get everyone moving to music."



Above: Teacher Katheryn Swartz (School Champion) at St. Paul School leads her Grade 4 class in a warmup before their daily rotation in various exercise stations. Below: Teacher Chris Seguin (School Champion) and his students at O'Gorman Intermediate Catholic School take their workout outside this week.



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At O’Gorman Intermediate Catholic School in Timmins, Teacher and School Champion Chris Seguin has also participated in training through the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association and believes that daily physical activity is essential to a child’s growth and development. “The primary goal of education is to help people develop abilities which will allow them to lead enriched lives,” commented Seguin. “Because physical activity has been shown to have a positive impact on a student’s physical, mental and social well-being, we must provide the opportunity for them take part in a wide variety of sports on a daily basis throughout the year. As an added benefit, physical activity has also been shown to have a positive impact on achievement and readiness to learn. With this in mind, in addition to the regular physical education component of the day, class activities will be organized in which students may participate. As well, games will be held during the lunch hour throughout the school year and students are encouraged to come out and have fun playing with their friends.”



As Catholics, we believe the human body shares in the dignity of the image of God. Because God created our bodies, trying to be physically fit is one way we hold our bodies in honour. It is our goal to better fulfil this mission through enhanced daily physical activity as part of our holistic approach to education of nurturing mind, body and soul.

**For more information, please contact
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