

Dr. Tina M. Bozeman, NBCT
K-12 Coordinator for Physical Education & Health
Public Schools of Brookline
115 Greenough St., Brookline, MA 02445
Office: 617.713.5291

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Curriculum Subcommittee
Public Schools of Brookline
RE: Brookline Health, Physical Education, & Fitness Name Change Request

Dear PSB Curriculum Subcommittee Representatives,

Currently, our K-12 department is represented by K-8 physical education, 7-8 health education, and high school health and fitness. The K-12 health, physical education and fitness teachers and I request your consideration for a name change to *K-12 Wellness Education*. Collectively, we believe *K-12 Wellness Education* would more accurately represent our comprehensive and holistic approach to children's wellbeing and our profession as a whole. Further, the proposed title would serve as a unifying representation of our K-8 programs with our high school program.

Our health, physical education and fitness programs provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed decisions for a lifetime regarding their physical, mental/intellectual, emotional, social, and ethical health. Collaboration with other school and community-based health services supports the efforts of educating and empowering students to access resources and intervention services outside of the classroom. For example, health and physical education teachers work directly with school nurses regarding health screenings and assessments. The guidance and social work departments are invaluable to our mental and emotional health units as they offer support and intervention services, when needed. The BHS Substance Awareness Coordinator and BHS Peer Leaders are integral partners in supporting our substance awareness and relationships units. Our collaborative efforts have further expanded to include community partners such as the Brookline Police Department, Planned Parenthood, and Samaritans Hope (an organization focused on suicide prevention and coping with stress).

By description, wellness education is an integrated and coordinated approach to teaching five dimensions of health education (i.e., physical, mental/intellectual, emotional, social, ethical health). The mission of wellness education is to provide students with age and developmentally appropriate knowledge and skills to develop behaviors and attitudes to be healthy and productive for a lifetime.

Wellness is a common term used in educational and community settings to foster overall health and wellbeing. It represents all aspects of health and resources to support ongoing engagement of a healthy lifestyle. We believe a change to our title will help students to recognize and appreciate the association to wellness outside of the classroom setting. Wellness Education is also a more current title used to describe health and physical education programs, not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the country. More than 27 Massachusetts school districts use wellness as their title or a portion of their title.

While the name change would support our ongoing efforts to improve the image of our programs; the name change would not impact what we teach and how we teach it. We reiterate that we are teaching health and physical education through a coordinated and focused wellness education approach. We genuinely appreciate your attention to our request and look forward to hearing from you regarding your decision.

Sincerely,

Tina M. Bozeman

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