



STATE OF VERMONT
Department of Education
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Physical Education Uses Technology to Engage Students

MONTPELIER – Three Vermont schools were granted heart rate monitors and the supporting technology for their physical education programs, the department announced today.

Brattleboro Area Middle School, Charlotte Central School, and Mount Anthony Union Middle School were granted a total of \$23,998 to purchase and implement heart rate monitor equipment and software for middle school physical education.

“The heart rate monitors support a contemporary model of physical education that shifts away from competitive and team sports to one that promotes individual, lifelong fitness for all students,” said Physical Education Consultant Lindsay Simpson. “It has been amazing to watch the student response to this technology. During school visits I have witnessed that students are more engaged and hold themselves accountable for reaching personal goals. The other important aspect is that the heart rate monitors are downloadable, which means teachers can objectively assess student activity level and use the data in mathematics or science lessons.”

Current research also suggests that a fitness-oriented physical education program can contribute to improved academic performance. Aerobic training has been shown to produce many cognitive and behavioral benefits including improved focus, concentration, and impulse control¹. The goals of the heart rate monitor grant program are to:

1. Document and increase the amount of time high school students spend engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity during physical education;
2. Develop student self-knowledge, personal goal-setting and fitness planning skills for lifetime physical activity; and
3. Develop students’ 21st century skills of tracking, interpreting and evaluating personal physical activity effort with objective, technological measures.

The heart rate monitor grants, awarded as a result of a competitive proposal process, are legislated in Act 161 of 2004, an act promoting wellness in Vermont schools. For more information contact Lindsay Simpson, Physical Education Consultant (802) 828-1461 or lindsay.simpson@state.vt.us.

¹ *Active Education: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Research Brief, summer 2009. <http://www.rwjf.org/childhoodobesity/product.jsp?id=48968>