

Culture and Character: Promoting Adventure and Fitness

Overview

Expeditionary Learning promotes a spirit of adventure. Academic and physical challenges push students to pursue excellence and assume responsibility for their own learning. The physical education program places a strong emphasis on personal fitness and nutrition, enhances the school's Expeditionary Learning culture, and promotes character development. Physical education teachers rely on coaching, framing, and debriefing to help students be successful. Teachers help students understand the connections between physical challenge and academic challenge. Students accomplish more than they think is possible.



BENCHMARK 4:

PROMOTING ADVENTURE AND FITNESS

A. Adventure

1. School leaders and teachers experience physical and intellectual adventure through Outward Bound courses, summits, and school-organized wilderness experiences.
2. Many learning expeditions incorporate physical adventure and challenging fieldwork.
3. Physical adventure and challenge (e.g., ropes courses, adventure curricula, camping trips, etc.) are explicitly connected to academic challenge.
4. Learning expeditions engage students in intellectual adventure; they motivate students to take different perspectives, defend positions, and pursue their own interests.
5. Teachers provide students with opportunities to experience success and failure through adventure, and to learn from both.

B. Physical Education and Fitness

1. Physical education instruction builds character; it engages all students in perseverance, personal fitness, challenge, collaboration, and adventure.
2. Outdoor education programs, ropes courses, and team and individual sports are explicitly connected to and reinforce the school's character traits.
3. Physical education teachers focus on students' strengths and help each student experience success.
4. When possible, teachers link fitness and physical challenge to academics through projects, expedition content, and reflection.

C. Safety

1. The school has policies and protocols to ensure that physical education classes, adventure programming, and fieldwork are physically and emotionally safe.