

The Need for Use of Existing Outdoor Facilities by Hovnanian Elementary School New Milford, New Jersey-Group

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The Mission

- The mission of Hovnanian Elementary School is to instill in its students intellectual discipline, the values of teamwork, personal effort and the rules of community life and tolerance.
- To provide its students with a quality elementary physical education program.

A History of Hovnanian Elementary School in New Milford

Hovnanian Elementary School in New Milford, New Jersey consists of 145-166¹ students from kindergarten through the eighth grades as of May 2006. The students are primarily residents of Bergen County with a small percentage of residents from the Boro of New Milford.

The school was founded in September of 1976 by Mr. and Mrs. Vahakn and Mr. Hasmig Hovnanian². In 1978, when the Hovnanian Elementary School moved to its present location, Mayor DeBari, of New Milford, stated,

“The Hovnanian School has always been a leader in our multicultural society teaching the importance of centuries-old heritage and culture while giving our children a first-rate American preschool, elementary and middle- school education. You [Hovnanian Elementary School] have always created an environment that rewards hard work and emphasizes the importance of remembering the past while embracing our future.”³

The above statement was given at the 25th anniversary of the Hovnanian Elementary School. From its humble beginnings at St. Vartanantz Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey to its present location, Hovnanian Elementary School has and continues to strive to develop positive relationships. A part of its mission, “to instill in its students the values of teamwork, the rules of community life and tolerance”⁴, reflects its commitment to those essential values to the community at large.

The Hovnanian School has developed and maintained a positive community relationship with the New Milford Board of Education for 30 years. During this time, the Hovnanian School and the

New Milford High School have shared a common field, which is the property of the New Milford Board of Education.

The Hovnanian School has developed such enthusiasm from its alumni that they have returned to work hard for their school. They see many positive changes, both in the curriculum and the physical facilities. They want the Hovnanian School to be the best it can be for today's students, and future generations.

¹ new-jersey.schooltree.org/Bergen-County-Schools.html

² <http://www.armenianreporteronline.com/old/04052002/ny-enjoyable.htm>

³ <http://www.armenianreporteronline.com/old/04052002/ny-enjoyable.htm>

⁴ General Outlines for Hovnanian Elementary School's Curriculum 2005-2006

A History of Hovnanian Physical Education Practices in New Milford

For the past 30 years the Hovnanian Elementary School has collaborated and partnered with the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford High School in the use of a formerly unfenced field for the use of educational experiences, primarily physical education. It appears that there was a symbiotic, friendly relationship between the parties directly involved.

The National Standards for Physical Education

Physical activity is critical to the development and maintenance of good health. The goal of physical education is to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

The Purpose of the National Standards Document

Standards Provide the Framework for a Quality Physical Education Program.

What is worth teaching and learning in physical education? The national content standards define what a student should know and be able to do as result of a quality physical education program. They provide a framework for developing realistic and achievable expectations for student performance at every grade level. These expectations are the first step in designing an instructionally aligned program.

Standards Increase the Professional Stature of Physical Education

The national standards demonstrate that physical education has academic standing equal to other subject areas. They describe achievement, show that knowledge and skills matter, and confirm that mere willing participation is not the same as education. In short, national physical education standards bring accountability and rigor to the profession.

A physically educated person:

Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

Standard 2: Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and

tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity.

Standard 4: Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

Standard 6: Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

NASPE Content Standards

"The National Association for Sport and Physical Education appointed the Outcomes Committee to answer the question *"What should students know and be able to do?"* The "Outcomes Project" culminated in the development of a definition of the physically educated person. This definition included five major focus areas, specifying that a physically educated person:

- Has learned skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities
- Is physically fit
- Does participate regularly in physical activity
- Knows the implications of and the benefits from involvement in physical activities
- Values physical activity and its contribution to a healthful lifestyle"

The State Standards for Physical Education

National Standards Provide Guidance for Developing State and Local Standards

States and local school districts across the country have used the national standards to develop and/or revise standards, frameworks, and curricula.

The State Board of Education first adopted the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education in 1996. The New Jersey standards were developed after substantial review of two national documents: *Moving Into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education* (1995) and *The National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy* (1995).

Since that time, the Surgeon General of the United States released a landmark report, *Physical Activity and Health* (1996) that called upon schools to take a more active role in health promotion and disease prevention. Acknowledging that childhood and adolescence may be pivotal times for preventing sedentary behavior among adults, the report recommended that schools make every effort to require daily physical education in each grade and to promote physical activities that can be enjoyed throughout life.

In December 2000, the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education published, Promoting Better Health for Young People Through Physical Activity and Sports. The report to the President reemphasized the need for quality

health and physical education programs in our schools. The report describes our nation's young people as inactive, unfit, and increasingly overweight and explains how the increase in serious health problems, such as diabetes, is a direct result of inactivity and unhealthy eating patterns.

Standards

There are six comprehensive health and physical education standards. The New Jersey Comprehensive Physical Education Standards are comprised of essentially three "content" standards and one "integrated skills" standard. Standard 2.2: requires the Integration of skills focusing on decision-making, goal setting, and effective communication in situations that impact health and safety.

The pertinent standards are listed below:

¹ <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publicationsnationalstandards.html#list>

² Moving into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education, 2nd Edition

STANDARD 2.1 (WELLNESS) ALL STUDENTS WILL LEARN AND APPLY HEALTH PROMOTION CONCEPTS AND SKILLS TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.

Descriptive Statement: This standard aims to increase student knowledge about the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual dimensions of wellness, thus enabling them to make informed choices about their health now and in the future. Wellness can be defined as a way of life that emphasizes health promotion measures such as healthy eating, learning to manage stress, reducing one's risk of contracting a disease, and preventing and treating simple injuries. Taking responsibility for one's own health is an essential step towards developing and maintaining a

STANDARD 2.2 (INTEGRATED SKILLS) ALL STUDENTS WILL USE HEALTH-ENHANCING PERSONAL, INTERPERSONAL, AND LIFE SKILLS TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.

Descriptive Statement: This standard seeks to foster responsible health behaviors through the enhancement of critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, and communication skills used in situations impacting personal, family, and community health. It enables students to locate and evaluate health information and resources and to develop character, leadership, and advocacy skills so they can become more active participants in the promotion of wellness. Competency in these skills enables and empowers students to resist destructive behaviors and seek out positive opportunities for growth and learning. These skills may be cross-disciplinary and should be integrated into each Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Standard.

STANDARD 2.5 (MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT) ALL STUDENTS WILL UTILIZE SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE MOVEMENT TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.

Descriptive Statement: This standard enables students to understand how to move and why it is necessary. When individuals learn to move safely, effectively, and efficiently, and feel comfortable and confident in the performance of motor skills, they are more likely to participate

in health-enhancing forms of physical activity throughout life. In order to meet this standard, students must participate in a wide range of developmentally-appropriate games, sports, dance, and lifetime recreational activities that will help students develop and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

STANDARD 2.6 (FITNESS) ALL STUDENTS WILL APPLY HEALTH-RELATED AND SKILL-RELATED FITNESS CONCEPTS AND SKILLS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.

Descriptive Statement: This standard enables students to understand the components of health-related fitness (cardio respiratory endurance, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength and muscular endurance) and skill-related fitness (speed, agility, reaction time, coordination, and power). Students learn how each component is developed and measured and how to design and implement a personal fitness plan that supports a healthy, active lifestyle.

Statement of the Problem

The problem is essentially two fold. The first deals with the loss of critical friends, the New Milford Board of Education and the adjacent New Milford elementary school. The second part of the problem is the **restriction** from using the outdoor athletic field that is adjacent to both The Hovnanian School and the elementary school.

The Need

In order to engage the students in a “quality” physical education program as mandated by both National and State Standards, the Hovnanian School in an effort to comply has in the past, in agreement with the New Milford Board of Education, provided their students with both indoor and outdoor physical education experiences. Although it is clear, if one reads and re-reads the standards, nowhere in the standards does it state that one **MUST** have or acquire outdoor facilities. Nevertheless it is also clear, regarding the nation’s concern regarding obesity, the dearth of fitness in youth, the AMA, CDC’s and NHI’s challenge to school districts and their physical education departments require schools and their districts to engage our children and youth in lifetime/lifelong physical activities that are aerobic and anaerobic. Where best can many of these activities take place? In the out-of-doors. While under duress one can curtail the scope of possibility, however, it is our hope that the New Milford Board of Education and The Hovnanian School are able to develop protocols that will allow both public and private school districts to work together for the good of the children.

Participation in quality, regularly scheduled, physical education classes allows children to experience what it is to be healthy. To be able to run more than a five to eight second sprint. Experience a full game of softball, tennis, soccer, lacrosse, track and field, flag football among team, dual and individual sports. All children need to have these experiences. Sedentary lifestyles, T.V., video games, and computer use have begun the slow process towards a new tradition, one that is almost void of physical activity. The end result of such behaviors will have catastrophic result for the individual, the family, the community, state and country. So dire are the consequences of such decisions, that the aforementioned federal and private health agencies have signaled warnings against such behaviors. NASPE, COPEC and AAHPERD all professional organizations for the physical educator have held symposia, called for papers and sat in all manner of committees to find better ways to provide physical educators, school

districts, athletic directors, and principals with the most up to date relevant information regarding best practices, methods, assessment and facilities. We now know beyond a shadow of a doubt that a quality physical education program must include in addition to indoor facilities, outdoor facilities. Thus, the subject of this paper is the dire need to ensure use of the adjacent outdoor facility by the Armenian School and the Berkley Elementary School.

Substantiated Research to Support Premise of Position Paper

The State of Washington - outdoor facilities

In chapter 24 of the WAC 388-295-2130, Child Care Licensing Guidebook, the following facts are stated as requirements for a safe and responsible facility for children:

- Total area. Is there sufficient space for the number of children who will be using the area at any one time? (p218)

“For centers [schools] with multiple groups and different ages, outdoor play time scheduling must occur so that:

- Different age groups play in different parts of the play area . . .
- In each group, maximum group size and staff child ratio must meet requirements
- There are at least **75 square feet per child** for the maximum number of children using the outdoor play space [facility] at any one time.” (p221)

Centers must schedule “sufficient” daily outside time for children to get fresh air and engage in active large motor activities. The larger the child, the more outdoor time they require. (p221)

Regarding the unavailability of outdoor spaces the state of Washington, had this to say,

In rare cases, a center may not have a safe and accessible area for outside play anywhere near its site. The department **MAY** [emphasis theirs] approve an indoor play area as an alternative, **IF** [emphasis theirs] the area is large enough and equipped to give the large motor opportunities they require. (p222)

They go on to say however that:

An approved indoor large motor area is **NOT** [emphasis theirs] a substitute for getting the children outside. The center still must get the children outside everyday . . . where the children can run around outdoors. (p222)

SHARED SPACES

“It’s a give-and-take relationship.”¹ Sharing space is nothing new. People have been doing it for centuries. What is new is the idea of communities, schools, municipal recreational programs and the like sharing facilities. A rural community in Illinois, Pontiac Township, discovered that their community recreational center and the high school could acquire a better facility with quality equipment by sharing. They also discovered that going their separate ways, neither would

achieve optimum use of either facility. Sharing facilities enabled the two organizations, the township's high school and recreational center to achieve more with less. "No, it's not our first choice and no, it's not the high school's, but boy, it is a beautiful facility that's well used."

¹ An Adult Sized Guide – The Child Care Center Licensing Guidebook. Ed; The Economic Services Administration division of Child Care and Early Learning. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. DSHS 22-733 TEXT (Rev. 7/03) pp. 218, 221, 222

. . . a February day might see the basketball and volleyball teams run early morning practices before school. Then the physical education classes would take over the field house, before giving way to the sports teams for after-school practice . . . Saturdays . . . play host to a few kids

and their pick-up games. . . by week's end, the needs of every . . . gym rat would be met.² (p70)

As part of an intergovernmental partnership between Pontiac Township High School District 90 and the City of Pontiac the high school is permitted to use the recreational center while the city's parks and recreation department operates and maintains the facility. . . The athletic director must schedule his school's use of the recreational center's field houses around the programming needs of the recreation department.³ (p71)

Sharing facilities can result in the reestablishing of community ties between all sectors of the community. One can think of schools and their facilities, including outdoor fields, as 'community cultural centers.'⁴ (72)

In Medina, Ohio, eight public and private partners came together to create 107,000 square foot recreation center that includes a competition and a leisure pool, cardiovascular fitness and strength training center among other structural amenities.⁵ (p72)

It takes respectful consideration, consistent and dedicated work to share a facility. Both parties need to be keenly aware of the needs of self and the other. Good communication skills are very important to a relationship where sharing is vital to both parties. "It is vital that partnership bonds are forged . . . long before the going gets tough."⁶

Compromise and cooperation are keys to long term success.

N.A.S.P.E./JOPERD

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education, NASPE, is an association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. It is an internationally recognized body that provides oversight, research, as well as lobbying for state and federal support for quality physical education programs across the country and the, PEP (Physical

Education for Progress) Grant, and has set the pace for national trends in physical education. This august body states clearly on its web page that a “**quality physical education**” program is one that includes outdoor facilities. The following is an excerpt from a position paper published in July of 2001:

Quality physical education incorporates practices, derived from current research and documented teaching experiences, into a method of instruction that maximizes opportunities for learning success.¹ (p.1)

¹ Athletic Business. Bynum, Marvin. Shared Destinies. May 2003. P71.

² ibid 70-76

³ ibid 70-76

⁴ ibid 70-76

⁵ ibid 70-76

⁶ ibid 70-76

Citing the outcomes of the on going process to improve and maintain research driven “**quality physical education**” programs, the position paper, notes the following: The Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC), The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) 1995, 2000, have both been recognized for their contributions to the body of knowledge that provides the foundation upon which boards of education and physical education programs and departments can firmly stand. These articles address best practices, methods of instruction, national content standards, and guides to assessment, (Appropriate Practices for Elementary School Physical Education, 2000; Moving into the Future: National Physical Education Standards: A Guide to Content Assessment, 1995)

Written by the Council on Physical Education for Children, in the journal for NASPE in July 2001 published the third part of what is required for a “**quality physical education**” program: Guidelines for Facilities, Equipment and Instructional Materials in Elementary Education.²

It is stated that “In addition to appropriate instructional practices, relevant content and ongoing assessment of student learning, there are other areas critical to the design and implementation of a quality elementary physical education program. The purpose of this document by NASPE is to provide guidelines relevant to facilities, equipment and instructional materials that support and facilitate the design and implementation of quality elementary physical education programs and enhance children’s opportunities to learn.”³

The article is a position paper that lists fourteen items under Guidelines for Facilities. Among them are requirements regarding ample space for a safe environment.⁴

Adequate space, ranging from 110sq. ft. to 150sq. ft. per child for learning movement activities in which children can move freely and safely. . . .⁴

Intact classes should not interfere with one another.⁵

Under the Heading “Features of Outdoor Facilities for Physical Education, it is stated that,

Outdoor Facilities, playgrounds, and/or activity areas for an elementary

physical education class should be accessible for “ALL” [emphasis the writer] children. An outdoor area includes field space and surfaced areas, which allow accessibility and safe participation for “ALL” children.⁵

The April 2003 volume of the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, one of the long standing professional journals in the area of physical education, in the section research works states that:

One of the objectives of the U.S. Department of health and Human Services (1996) is to increase the proportion of people six years of age and older who exercise on a daily basis, at light to moderate levels of intensity for at least 30 minutes.¹

The CDC (1997) is noted in the same article to say,

. . . efforts [must] be made to provide extracurricular activities that meet the needs and interests of all the students. The importance of school-sponsored programs is due to their on-campus accessibilities and the opportunities that they provide for all interested students.²

In the section teaching tips, Editor Susan C. Patersen points out that,

An Elementary Fitness Program may be most enjoyable in the spring or near the end of the academic year, perhaps culminating in a field day. Children are eager to be outside . . .³

Ms. Patersen indicated on page 12 that running “around an oval track or around a field”⁴ adds to the excitement of engaging in collaborations between physical education and academic subjects such as geography and history.

In the September 2004 JOPERD, an article regarding the challenges of childhood obesity was published. Among the challenges presented was the need to improve school physical activity. One usually thinks in terms of simply the use of the gymnasium. However, in order to provide children with a “quality” experience; an experience that fully models what the sporting experience is, requires the use of an outdoor field. As part of the solution to the problem of poor quality physical activity, the writers suggest that schools partner with colleges. We would also include other public and or private school, recreational and exercise centers. Finally the authors suggest applying for grants to purchase necessary equipment to bring physical education out of the late 19th century into the 21st century. Such an endeavor takes time, the cooperation of administrators, teachers and other “critical friends”. “Critical friends” could include partnerships between public and or private schools, municipal recreational centers and exercise centers such as YMCAs.

In conclusion, the authors’ state:

Today’s children and adolescents live in a social and physical environment that makes it easy to over-eat, easy to be sedentary, and inconvenient to be active. It is imperative that society address the environmental factors that underlie these tendencies in order to establish and implement effective solutions.

The prevention of childhood obesity has to be a joint responsibility – Requiring involvement and collaborations between all levels of the government, the community, the media, youth-serving organizations, schools and teachers, health professionals, businesses, child care providers, and parents.

Viewed from the vantage point of striving for the good of society as opposed to running from a health calamity of national proportions, it would appear that cooperation among all necessary partners is of the utmost importance. Children are the ones who will suffer when they are not given the opportunity to experience a varied “quality” physical education curriculum that includes outdoor games and sports. Children are the ones who will benefit when they are given the

opportunity to experience a varied physical education curriculum that includes outdoor games and sports. As social animals that tend, for various reasons-some medical, to spend more and more time inside, we have to begin to pay attention to the negative effects of such a life style.

¹ JOPERD. Jimmy H. Ishee. *Participation in Extracurricular Physical Activity in Middle Schools*. Apr 2003. Vol. 74. No. 4. P. 10.

² *ibid* . p. 10.

³ *ibid* . p. 11.

⁴ *ibid* . p. 12.

⁵ JOPERD. Tonia Van Staveren and Darren Dale. *Childhood Obesity: Problems and Solutions*. Sept 2004. Vol. 74. No. 4. .p. 44, 45, 47

As we mature, we tend not to go out for physical activity. As we marry and produce offspring we tend not go out with them to engage in physical activity or take our children out so that they can engage in physical activity. The result is the beginnings of a tradition that does not seek the out of doors as a place to feel at ease, a place to experience a sense of well being, a place that allows us to engage in a sporting activity as a participant. However, when we from the earliest of ages provide, toddlers to teens with outdoor experiences that follow the national and NJCCS the more probability there is for people who will value outdoor experiences in addition to individual and national health benefits.

Other:

The author of Open Space Preservation: An imperative for quality campus environments, in the Journal of Higher Education lends a full discussion regarding the importance and aesthetics of outdoor space/facilities. In the article, the author states, “open spaces provides emotional relief”.¹ The author further states,

Other functional types of campus open spaces must be maintained for recreational purposes. Playing fields provide areas for active sports. . . ²

Dr. Laurel Gretz-Pisciottano, quotes many experts who state, “the natural sunlight produces enough Vitamin C and D to provide us with great health benefits.”³ Elementary aged children spend less and less time out of doors due to latch key syndrome, T.V., video games, and the like. Physical education curricula, for day care through high school, that incorporate outdoor activities

provides students with physical activity that is psychologically, and sociologically expansive. In an article on self esteem and youth fitness, Kenneth Fox indicates that,

current theory would lead us to believe that unless aspects of fitness have a high social and personal value, and provide opportunities to experience feelings of success and personal value, they will not be central to children's self-esteem structures. This in turn may severely restrict children's attraction to physical activity. . . It would appear that physical education programs have tremendous potential for establishing fitness as a desirable and available attribute for children. A public health perspective of fitness would tend to lean heavily on those aspects of fitness that are more directly linked with health and well-being.⁴

Mr. Fox goes further, stating,

. . . all aspects, including those that are skill related, would appear to have potential for contributing to children's emotional welfare and desire to be involved in exercise and sport as a source of competence.⁵

¹ The Journal of Higher Education. Columbus: Nov 1994. Vol. 65, Iss. 6: pg 645, 25pgs

² *ibid.*

³ Dr. Laurel Gretz-Pisciottano. Springing into Life. Pro-Adjuster: A Wellness Magazine. vol. 1 issue 1. p.11.Sp 2006

⁴ Fox, Kenneth. QUEST, 1988,40. 239

⁵ Fox, Kenneth. QUEST, 1988,40. 239

In Abbott V, the New Jersey Supreme Court specifically stated:

Requests by the Commissioner [of Education] that funds be appropriated to implement educational programs deemed essential on the basis of demonstrated need [documented by local districts] will be the measure of the State's constitutional obligation to provide a thorough and efficient education, and we anticipate that the Legislature will be fully responsive to that constitutional call.

Current social science research has established behavioral and wellness/health related relationships between learning, play, athletic activities, and green space. The State's constitutional obligation to provide "a thorough and efficient education" includes the provision of outdoor recreational facilities.

- * Play is essential for the appropriate cognitive and social development of young children and natural environments facilitate that process.
- * The more children move their bodies, the more they stimulate the brain, i.e., exercise has the potential to increase learning.
- * There appears to be a connection between green space and lower levels of violence among young adults.
- * For many children, hands-on activities in outdoor settings are more effective environments to teach science, math, and multi-disciplinary approaches to problem solving.

- * Recreational programs in schools have been shown to affect children's health, and participation in aerobic activity is associated with enhanced self-esteem and confidence.

In the publication, "Where Do Our Children Play? The Importance and Design of Schoolyards" by Iltus and Steinhagen, (New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center, Newark, NJ, 2003), it is indicated that

The construction of new school facilities throughout New Jersey creates an enormous opportunity to address the need for outdoor facilities in New Jersey's poorest districts. This document summarizes some of the most relevant research on the need for outdoor educational facilities. It provides design guidelines for outdoor spaces for both preschool and elementary schools, and basic principles for design of outdoor facilities for athletics and environmental education for middle and high school students.² (p74).

¹http://www.edlawcenter.org/ELCPublic/AbbottSchoolFacilities/FacilitiesPages/Resources/green_space.htm

² New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center, Newark, NJ, 2003

Conclusion

While access to outdoor facilities by physical education programs is not explicitly addressed by the National and State Standards, it is implicit in their requirements for a "quality physical education program". Research indicates that "skill related" activities contributes to children's emotional welfare, such as, the sense of freedom that one gets when running in an open field; the opportunity to play an age group appropriate regulation soccer, lacrosse, softball, etc. game; participation in a track and field activity or the Presidential Physical Fitness Challenge, which allows children to feel expansive and to develop and improve upon skills, affords them the freedom to explore the possibilities of extending their reach, their grasp, their stride.

The health benefits are many. Access to outdoor facilities for physical education allows children to breathe fresh air. More oxygen to the brain contributes to efficiency, clarity and accuracy of brain function. Improved circulation contributes to overall health and well being. Outdoor activities allow children to take in the vitamin D that we as humans are not able to produce. Given the great concern with childhood obesity and its collateral health challenges, heart disease, diabetes, liver, kidney and joint chronic conditions, it would behoove all concerned to act as critical friends in assuring that all children are afforded varied opportunities to experience both indoor and outdoor exercise and "skill related" activities.

Sunlight has a positive impact on those who participate in outdoor activities resulting in the physiologic processes for calcium absorption resulting in strong bones. It is worth noting the studies regarding sunlight on mood and the sense of well being.

Recommendations:

1. That the two entities in question work together as critical friends to the benefit of both parties involved and especially as it impacts the health and well being of the children.
2. That the private school in question impress on the community the importance of ensuring that all of its community members, particularly the children, be provided with the necessary information to make informed decisions regarding the best ways to obtain and maintain good health.
3. That the children have access to the field to receive a quality physical education experience as noted in research of the field.
4. That the children have access to the field so they can learn the relationship of a healthy body to a healthy diet and lifelong physical activity.
5. Form a partnership committee that meets regularly to prevent scheduling problems and to amiably address problems that slip through the cracks.
6. Begin to think of facilities as multi-use environments maintained by multiple, diverse community partners.
7. A solution is to restore and re-engage The Hovnanian School and the New Milford Board of Education in positive relationships as “critical friends” and regain the use of the outdoor athletic field that is adjacent to both elementary schools for the express purpose of teaching physical education. The field also has great educational value for other academic subjects such as science, math and other academic classes.