OLYMPIC HANDBALL · ELEMENTARY (GRADES 3–5) · SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PACKAGE

Olympic Handball

An 11-week elementary physical education unit for grades 3–5, with adaptations for K–2. Fundamental movement skills, mini-handball and the Olympic values, delivered by our coaches inside your PE schedule.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Handball Rising · a program of New York City Team Handball Club Inc., 501(c)(3), EIN 27-0541418 · NYS Charities Bureau reg. 42-25-63 · NYC FMS vendor VS00085913
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Principal brief

The partnership on one page.

FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FOR PRINCIPALS AND PE TEACHERS · ELEMENTARY

A turnkey Olympic sport unit for your elementary school.

Dear Principal,

Elementary physical education in New York City carries the largest requirement in the system, 120 minutes a week and daily in K–3, often with one certified teacher serving the whole building. I am writing to offer something that adds capacity rather than asking more of it: an 11-week Olympic Handball unit for grades 3–5, delivered by our coaches inside your existing PE schedule, with a version for K–2. Your PE teacher supervises; we bring the curriculum, the coaching and the sport.

What your school receives

- **An 11-week fundamental-movement unit, 45 minutes a week,** built on throwing, catching, bouncing, jumping and dodging, taught through mini-handball with a soft ball, and closing with a festival in which every team plays every game.
- **Full SHAPE America 2024 alignment,** mapped indicator by indicator to 20 Grade 3–5 learning indicators across all four national standards, with K–2 adaptations, and to the New York State PE Learning Standards (2020).
- **Character education built in:** the seven Olympic and Paralympic values in children's language (try hard, be kind, be a good friend) and CASEL-aligned practices in every session.
- **Three challenge levels in every activity,** so a child who has never caught a ball and a child who plays travel soccer are both busy and both succeeding.
- **Assessment and reporting:** week-1 to week-11 growth on five skills, participation, and a one-page summary for the school at the end of the unit.

New York State compliance

- New York State requires physical education daily in grades K–3 and at least three times a week in grades 4–6, 120 minutes a week in both (8 NYCRR 135.4). This unit serves as one of those weekly sessions. It complements your program; it does not replace it.
- Elementary PE may be taught by classroom teachers under the direction and supervision of a certified physical education teacher (135.4(c)(4)(i)). Our coaches work alongside your certified PE teacher, who remains the instructional leader, so every session counts toward the school's program.
- The unit is aligned to the New York State Physical Education Learning Standards (2020), Standards 1–5, and uses the school's own standards-based report-card levels for assessment.

What it asks of your school

A gym, cafeteria-gym or yard; one 45-minute block a week per class; and your PE teacher's presence. No lesson planning, no staff training, no curriculum writing. We bring soft balls, pinnies, cones and goals.

Enclosed you will find a one-page overview for your PE teacher and the complete week-by-week curriculum. I would welcome the chance to walk you and your PE staff through the program in person, in your gym.

In partnership,

Shkumbin "Bini" Mustafa

Managing Director & Head Coach, Handball Rising · President, New York City Team Handball Club · 8× U.S. National Champion · former Team USA athlete

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The unit at a glance

Phases, session rhythm, standards and class management, on one page.

FOR THE PE TEACHER

11	45	1×	25–32
WEEKS	MIN / SESSION	PER WEEK	STUDENTS PER CLASS

THE ARC: THREE PHASES

PHASE 1 · WEEKS 1–3
Explore & Move
Space, locomotor skills, catching and throwing a soft ball, the first rules, the Olympic values

PHASE 2 · WEEKS 4–7
Skills & Mini-Games
Throwing for accuracy, bouncing, jumping and landing, dodging, 2v1 and 3v2 mini-games at three challenge levels

PHASE 3 · WEEKS 8–11
Teams & the Festival
Mini-handball teams, simple tactics, fair play, and a closing festival where every team plays every game

EVERY SESSION, THE SAME 45-MINUTE RHYTHM

Warm-up	Concept	Skill play	Mini-game	Circle
5 min	5 min	20 min	10 min	5 min

Consistent structure means easy classroom management. Students know the routine by week 2.

SHAPE AMERICA 2024, ALL FOUR STANDARDS

S1 Motor skills
Throw · catch · bounce · jump & land · run, dodge, change direction

S2 Movement knowledge
Space & pathways · simple offense and defense · solving game problems

S3 Social skills
Sharing space · following rules · encouraging others · fair choices

S4 Personal skills
Short-term goals · calming techniques · why moving feels good · reflection

20 Grade 3–5 learning indicators mapped week by week, with K–2 adaptations; full crosswalk inside the curriculum.

BUILT FOR AN ELEMENTARY GYM

Soft ball, small goal
Size 0 foam or soft handball; cone or mini goals; no hard throws at people

Four corners
Four stations, 6–8 students each, rotate every 5 minutes

Everyone has a ball
Max touches, zero lines, zero waiting

Freeze & cue
One whistle = freeze; colored cones mark every space

ASSESSMENT: GROWTH, NOT TALENT

3
Levels, not grades
Beginning, developing, secure, against each child's own week-1 baseline

5
Skills tracked
Catch, throw, bounce, jump & land, dodge

1
Report to you
End-of-unit growth and participation summary for the school

0
Students ranked
Nobody is compared with a classmate, ever

Elementary report cards are standards-based; our rubric maps onto the school's own levels.

SEVEN OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC VALUES, EVERY SESSION

Excellence · Respect · Friendship · Determination · Courage · Inspiration · Equality

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The complete curriculum

11 weeks of session plans, standards crosswalk and assessment.

FOR CURRICULUM REVIEW

Executive summary

A note to the principal. This document presents a complete 11-week physical education unit introducing Olympic Handball (European handball, team handball) to elementary students in grades 3–5, with adaptations for K–2. It is built on the fundamental movement skills the elementary years exist to develop, and it is designed to meet and exceed what a New York State elementary physical education class is required to deliver: physical, emotional and social growth, assessed against each child's own starting point.

Why handball for elementary students?

The elementary years are the window in which children either become confident movers or decide they are "not sporty." Handball is unusually well suited to the age because:

- **It is every fundamental skill at once.** Running, jumping, throwing, catching, bouncing, dodging and changing direction all happen in one game, each with an immediate purpose.
- **A soft ball and a small goal take the fear out.** Mini-handball is played with a size 0 foam ball and cone goals. Nobody is hurt, and the ball is easy to catch, so success comes early.
- **Everybody touches the ball.** The ball must be passed; no single child can carry a team. Shy children get the ball as often as confident ones.
- **It is a team from day one.** Children learn to share space, call a teammate's name, wait a turn and cheer a classmate, the social skills that Standard 3 asks for.
- **It is an Olympic sport.** Third graders love that the game they are playing is played in the Olympic Games, and that New York's own champions are teaching it.

Curriculum core pillars

Physical
Locomotor and manipulative fundamentals: run, jump and land, throw, catch, bounce, dodge, with spatial awareness

Emotional
Trying, failing and trying again; calming techniques; naming feelings; a growth mindset in children's language

Social
Sharing space and equipment, following rules, encouraging others, fair choices, first leadership roles

Olympic
Try hard (Excellence), be kind (Respect), be a good friend (Friendship), plus the four Paralympic values

Standards alignment

This curriculum is aligned to SHAPE America's National Physical Education Standards (2024) and mapped, indicator by indicator, to the Grade 3–5 learning indicators, with Grade K–2 adaptations noted. It is also aligned to the New York State Physical Education Learning Standards (2020): Standard 1 (motor skills and movement patterns), Standard 2 (concepts, strategies and tactics), Standard 3 (health-enhancing activity and fitness), Standard 4 (responsible personal and social behavior) and Standard 5 (the value of physical activity).

Grade 3–5 learning indicator crosswalk

The table maps this unit, week by week, to 20 Grade 3–5 learning indicators of the 2024 SHAPE America standards. Where a K–2 class runs the unit, the K–2 adaptation is noted in italics.

INDICATOR	GRADE 3–5 INDICATOR (SHAPE AMERICA 2024)	WHERE IT LIVES IN THIS CURRICULUM
STANDARD 1 — DEVELOPS A VARIETY OF MOTOR SKILLS		
1.5.1	Combines varied locomotor skills in a variety of practice tasks.	Every warm-up; week 3 pathways and speeds; week 6 dodging. *K–2 (1.2.1): single locomotor skills with space awareness.*
1.5.7	Demonstrates jumping and landing in a non-dynamic environment.	Week 5 jump-and-land clinic; week 7 jump-throw introduction. *K–2 (1.2.2): two-foot jumps and soft landings.*
1.5.10	Demonstrates throwing in a variety of practice tasks.	Week 2 throwing shapes; week 4 target throwing; shooting in every mini-game from week 4. *K–2 (1.2.9): underhand and overhand in non-dynamic tasks.*
1.5.12	Demonstrates catching in a variety of practice tasks.	Weeks 1–3 catching progressions; partner passing every week. *K–2 (1.2.8): self-toss and partner catch, stationary.*
1.5.19	Demonstrates dribbling with hands in non-dynamic and dynamic practice tasks.	Week 4 bounce clinic; week 6 bounce-and-go; dribble lanes in mini-games. *K–2 (1.2.6): stationary bouncing.*
STANDARD 2 — APPLIES KNOWLEDGE OF MOVEMENT AND FITNESS CONCEPTS		
2.5.1	Applies movement concepts and strategies for safe movement within dynamic environments.	Week 1 space rules; week 3 pathways; every mini-game. *K–2 (2.2.1): personal and general space.*
2.5.2	Demonstrates knowledge of offensive strategies in small-sided invasion practice tasks.	Week 6 "find the free friend" 2v1 and 3v2; week 9 simple plays.
2.5.3	Demonstrates knowledge of defensive strategies in small-sided invasion practice tasks.	Week 7 "stay between" defense; goalkeeper turns from week 5. *K–2 (2.2.2): chasing and fleeing strategies.*
2.5.4	Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate movement concepts for efficient performance of manipulative skills.	Week 2 throwing cues (step with the opposite foot, point, throw); week 4 catching cues (eyes, hands ready, give).
2.5.5	Demonstrates problem solving strategies in a variety of games/activities.	Week 6 and 9 team challenges; mini-game rule puzzles ("how do we score if nobody can run with the ball?").
2.5.13	Explains the benefits of physical activity.	Week 1 and week 11 circles: how does your body feel after you move? Heart-beat check each session.

Grade 3–5 learning indicator crosswalk (continued)

INDICATOR	GRADE 3–5 INDICATOR (SHAPE AMERICA 2024)	WHERE IT LIVES IN THIS CURRICULUM
STANDARD 3 — DEVELOPS SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH MOVEMENT		
3.5.1	Describes the perspective of others during a variety of activities.	Week 8 goalkeeper empathy circle; week 10 "what did it feel like to lose?". *K–2 (3.2.1): recognizing feelings of others.*
3.5.2	Uses communication skills to negotiate roles and responsibilities in a physical activity setting.	Week 8 team jobs (captain, cone keeper, cheer leader, ball keeper), rotating weekly.
3.5.3	Demonstrates respectful behaviors that contribute to positive social interaction in group activities.	Team promises (week 2); high-five lines after every game; kindness notes. *K–2 (3.2.3): sharing space and equipment.*
3.5.4	Demonstrates safe behaviors independently with limited reminders.	Freeze cue; soft-ball rules; safe-space routines from week 1. *K–2 (3.2.6): why rules keep us safe.*
3.5.5	Solves problems independently, with partners, and in small groups.	Partner and small-group challenges in weeks 3, 6 and 9.
3.5.6	Makes choices that are fair according to activity etiquette.	Self-refereed mini-games from week 7; "call it on yourself" culture. *K–2 (3.2.9): fair choices as directed by the teacher.*
STANDARD 4 — DEVELOPS PERSONAL SKILLS AND CHOOSES PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		
4.5.3	Describes how movement positively affects personal health.	Heart-beat checks; week 11 circle on how moving helps bodies and moods.
4.5.6	Sets observable long-term goals.	My Handball Goal card, set week 4, checked weeks 7 and 11. *K–2 (4.2.6): one short-term goal per session.*
4.5.9	Recognizes personally effective techniques that assist with managing one's emotions and behaviors in a physical activity setting.	Week 7 "reset breath" and count-to-three after a miss; practiced in every mini-game. *K–2 (4.2.9): breathing and counting with the coach.*
4.5.10	Reflects on movement experiences during physical education to develop understanding of how movement is personally meaningful.	Closing circle every session; final reflection in week 11.

New York State Physical Education Learning Standards (2020)

The unit also serves the six New York State standards, which govern the school's own program and report card. The table shows where each standard is addressed; indicator codes follow the State's grade-by-grade format.

NEW YORK STATE STANDARD (2020)	WHERE IT LIVES IN THIS UNIT
Standard 1 · Motor skills and movement patterns	Fundamental and combined skills, e.g. NY.S1.1.2 (mature patterns in isolation) and NY.S1.1.4 (combinations in a variety of activities): weeks 1–7 skill play.
Standard 2 · Concepts, strategies and tactics	Space, pathways, chasing/fleeing, small-sided offense and defense: weeks 3, 6, 7 and 9.
Standard 3 · Health-enhancing activity and fitness	30+ active minutes in every 45-minute session; heart-beat checks; week 11 discussion of why movement matters.
Standard 4 · Responsible personal and social behavior	Team promises, safe-space rules, fair play, self-refereeing, kindness notes: every session.
Standard 5 · The value of physical activity	Closing circles on enjoyment and challenge; the festival in week 11; the invitation to keep playing.
Standard 6 · Careers and community resources	An age-appropriate introduction: who works at the Olympics; where handball is played in New York (the club, the Youth Academy).

Sources: SHAPE America, National Physical Education Standards, 2024 (grade-span learning indicators); New York State Education Department, Physical Education Learning Standards, 2020, and 8 NYCRR §135.4.

Curriculum overview

Phase structure

The 11 weeks run in three phases. Each phase ends with something to look forward to: the first mini-game, the first team, the festival.

PHASE	WEEKS	FOCUS	KEY SKILLS
Phase 1	Weeks 1–3	Explore & Move. What is handball? Space and pathways, running and dodging, catching and throwing a soft ball, the first two rules, the Olympic values in children's words.	Space awareness, locomotor skills, catch, throw
Phase 2	Weeks 4–7	Skills & Mini-Games. Throwing for accuracy, bouncing, jumping and landing, defending by staying between, goalkeeper turns, 2v1 and 3v2 mini-games at three challenge levels.	Throw, bounce, jump & land, dodge, simple tactics
Phase 3	Weeks 8–11	Teams & the Festival. Mini-handball teams with rotating jobs, simple plays, fair play under pressure, and a closing festival in which every team plays every game and every child is recognized.	Teamwork, fair play, mini-handball, reflection

Session structure, every week

Every 45-minute session follows the same five-part rhythm, so children spend their energy on moving rather than on working out what happens next.

TIME	SEGMENT	PURPOSE
0–5 min	**Warm-up**	A tag or chasing game that revisits last week's skill and gets hearts beating.
5–10 min	**Concept**	One idea, shown not told: a cue, a rule, a value, a sport connection. Never longer than five minutes.
10–30 min	**Skill play**	Four corners, four stations, one skill each; rotate every five minutes. Everyone has a ball.
30–40 min	**Mini-game**	A small-sided game that uses today's skill, 3v3 or 4v4 on mini courts with cone goals.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	Two questions and a heart-beat check: What did I get better at? Who helped me today?

Managing an elementary class: organizational strategy

Elementary classes are smaller than secondary ones but younger children need more structure, not less. The model:

- **Four corners.** The gym is divided into four stations of 6–8 children. Groups rotate every five minutes on a whistle; the coach and PE teacher each cover two stations.
- **Everyone has a ball.** One soft ball per child in skill play. No lines, no waiting, maximum touches.
- **Freeze cue.** One whistle means freeze, ball on the floor, eyes on the coach. Taught in week 1, practiced as a game, used every session.
- **Colored spaces.** Every station and court is marked with colored cones; children are sent to a color, not a description.
- **Jobs, not helpers.** From week 8 each team has rotating jobs: captain, cone keeper, ball keeper, cheer leader. Every child holds every job before the festival.

Olympic values & character education

The Olympic Movement's three core values are the moral framework of the unit. With elementary students we use the values' own words and a child's translation next to them, and we practice them every session.

Excellence · "Try hard"
Giving your best effort, compared with yesterday's you, not with a classmate.

In practice: Finishing every rep even when tired · one personal goal on the goal card · celebrating a classmate's first catch

Respect · "Be kind"
Treating teammates, opponents, coaches and the game with care.

In practice: High-five lines after every game · no laughing at a miss, ever · listening when a teammate talks

Friendship · "Be a good friend"
Making real connections through shared challenge.

In practice: Mixed teams in early weeks · team names and cheers · kindness notes read aloud in the circle

The Paralympic values: completing the framework

The four Paralympic values complete the framework and give children language for the hard parts of learning a sport.

Determination
Keep going when it is difficult.
In practice: "I can't do it yet" · the Most Improved award · goal cards

Courage
Be brave enough to try something new in front of friends.
In practice: First goalkeeper turn · first jump-throw · leading a warm-up

Inspiration
Find a role model and become one.
In practice: Olympic stories · cheer leader job · older students visiting

Equality
Everyone plays, contributes and is challenged at their own level.
In practice: Three challenge levels · modified plans so every child, including children with disabilities, is active and included

Accountability framework

Children are accountable to each other, not only to the adults. Two routines make this real:

- **Closing circle.** The last five minutes of every session. Two questions rotate: What did I get better at? Who helped me today? What will I try next week?
- **Kindness notes.** Coaches and the PE teacher note acts of kindness, effort and courage, not athletic performance, and read two or three aloud in the circle. Over 11 weeks, every child is named.

Handball and games children already know

Children arrive knowing tag, dodgeball, basketball and soccer from the playground. Connecting handball to those games removes the fear of a new sport and speeds up learning.

SPORT	WHAT IT SHARES WITH HANDBALL	HOW HANDBALL IS DIFFERENT	DISCUSSION PROMPT
Tag	Running, dodging, changing direction, reading where people are going	In handball you dodge to get free for a pass, not to escape	When you play tag, how do you get away from the tagger? That is how you get open in handball.
Basketball	Passing, bouncing, moving to the ball, teamwork	Smaller, softer ball; a goal with a goalkeeper; you may take three steps without bouncing	What does your team do when one player keeps the ball? How does it feel?
Soccer	Goalkeeper, positions, spreading out, scoring in a goal	You use your hands; the goal is smaller; you throw instead of kick	Where does a soccer goalkeeper stand? A handball goalkeeper thinks the same way.
Dodgeball	Throwing at a target, catching, quick reactions	Nobody is ever the target. You throw at the goal, never at a person	What is the difference between throwing to someone and throwing at someone?

Motor fundamentals & physical development

Elementary physical education exists to build the motor foundations a child will use for life. This unit develops all of them inside a game where each skill has a purpose.

SKILL	HOW IT IS DEVELOPED IN HANDBALL	PROGRESSIVE CHALLENGES
Catching	Receiving a soft ball from self-toss, a partner, a bounce, then while moving	Self-toss → partner, stationary → moving → high and low → from a bounce
Throwing	Overhand pattern: side-on, step with the opposite foot, point, throw, follow through	Underhand roll → overhand at a wall → at a big target → at a goal → while moving
Bouncing (dribbling)	One-hand bounce, eyes up, then walking and jogging	Stationary → walking → jogging → around cones → bounce-and-pass
Jumping & landing	Two-foot and one-foot take-offs with soft, bent-knee landings, then a jump before a throw	Jump and stick → over a line → onto a spot → jump-throw
Dodging & change of direction	Getting free of a defender, cutting to space	Tag games → shadow a partner → cut on a cue → 1v1 get-free
Running (speeds)	Jog, sprint and side-shuffle at the right moment	Red-light green-light → speed changes on a cue → fast-break runs

Three challenge levels in every activity (weeks 4–7 onward)

Children arrive with very different movement histories. Every station from week 4 is set up at three levels; the child chooses, and the coach nudges. Levels are shown with colors, never with words like "low."

Green: getting started

Building the basic pattern. Form, confidence, short distances, a bigger target.

Sample activities: Self-toss and catch · underhand throw at a big target · stationary bounce · 2v1 with no defender pressure

Yellow: building

The pattern is there; add movement and a decision.

Sample activities: Partner passing on the move · overhand throw at a goal with a goalkeeper · walking bounce around cones · 2v1 live

Red: challenge

Combine skills at speed with a defender.

Sample activities: Catch, bounce, throw in one sequence · jump-throw · 3v2 fast break · goalkeeper vs. two shooters

Important: levels are fluid, not fixed. Students are encouraged and supported to move between levels as their skills develop. The goal is challenge, not categorization.

Running the unit in K–2

The same 11-week arc runs in kindergarten through second grade with four changes: the ball is a lighter foam ball; stations last four minutes, not five; every tactic is taught as a game with a story ("find the free friend," "stay between the ball and the castle"); and the festival becomes a fun day with no scores. The K–2 indicators the unit serves (1.2.x, 2.2.x, 3.2.x, 4.2.x) are noted in the crosswalk.

Phase 1: Explore & Move (weeks 1–3)

Phase 1 is an invitation. Children meet handball as an Olympic game, learn the two routines that make everything else possible (freeze cue, four corners) and start catching and throwing a soft ball in low-pressure play.

WEEK 1 Welcome to the Olympic gym

PHASE 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students can say that handball is an Olympic sport and name one thing you do in it.
- Students use personal and general space safely in a moving group.
- Students perform the freeze cue on one whistle.
- Students complete a self-toss catch and a partner catch with a soft ball.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Olympic Nations tag**	Each child is a country. Tag with a safe-zone rule. Introduce the freeze cue and practice it three times as a game.
5–10 min	**What is handball?**	Coach shows the ball, the goal and the three things you do: catch, throw, score. Olympic connection: this game is played at the Olympics; your coaches play it for New York. Values in children's words: try hard, be kind, be a good friend.
10–30 min	**Four corners**	(1) Self-toss and catch. (2) Roll and chase. (3) Partner catch, two hands, close. (4) Roll the ball into a cone goal. Rotate every five minutes on the whistle.
30–40 min	**Pass-and-catch count**	Pairs count catches without a drop. Change partners twice. No goals yet; movement and catching only.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	Heart-beat check. "What game did handball remind you of?" "Who helped you catch today?"

Coach notes, week 1: your only job this week is to make the gym feel safe. Celebrate effort loudly. Never draw attention to a drop. Teach the freeze cue as a game and use it ten times.

WEEK 2 Throwing shapes and the first two rules

PHASE 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students throw overhand with a side-on stance and an opposite-foot step.
- Students can explain the two first rules: three steps, then pass or bounce; nobody goes in the goalkeeper's house.
- Students make a team promise with their group.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Rules in motion**	Coach calls a rule, children act it: "Three steps!" (three steps and freeze), "Goalkeeper's house!" (jump back from the marked zone).
5–10 min	**Throwing shape**	Cues shown, not told: turn sideways, step with the other foot, point, throw, wave goodbye to the ball. Children mirror three times with no ball.
10–30 min	**Four corners**	(1) Overhand throw at a wall target. (2) Partner pass, five steps apart. (3) Bounce the ball to a partner. (4) Throw into a cone goal from close range. Three target sizes at each station.
30–40 min	**Team promise + 3v3**	Groups make three promises (how we treat each other, what we do after a miss, how we celebrate). Then 3v3 pass-only game: five passes = a point.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	Each team says one promise aloud. "Which rule was hardest to remember?"

WEEK 3 Pathways, speeds and getting free

PHASE 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students move through general space on straight, curved and zigzag pathways without collisions.
- Students change speed on a cue: jog, sprint, shuffle.
- Students get free of a partner to receive a pass.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Pathway tag**	Taggers move only on straight lines; runners may use curves and zigzags. Discuss why the runners win.
5–10 min	**Space is a friend**	Cones show that when I move away, a passing lane opens. "Getting free" named and demonstrated.
10–30 min	**Four corners**	(1) Red-light green-light with speed changes. (2) Shadow your partner, no touching. (3) Cone zigzag with a bounce. (4) Pass-and-go: pass, then run to a new cone.
30–40 min	**Move-after-you-pass game**	4v4, cone goals. Rule: you must move after every pass. Points for four passes in a row, bonus for a goal.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"When did you get free today?" Announce: next week we start the skills stations with colors.

Phase 2: Skills & Mini-Games (weeks 4–7)

Phase 2 is about getting better on purpose. Every station now runs at three color levels. Coaches record a quiet week-4 baseline on the five tracked skills and use it to set each child's goal card.

WEEK 4 — Target throwing and the bounce clinic

PHASE 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students throw overhand at targets of three sizes and record their own hits.
- Students bounce a ball with one hand, eyes up, while walking.
- Students set one goal on their My Handball Goal card.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Arm circles and partner toss**	Shoulder circles, arm swings, then easy partner toss to warm the throwing shape.
5–10 min	**Eyes up**	Why we bounce with eyes up: so we can see our friends. Demonstrate and mirror.
10–30 min	**Color stations**	(1) Target wall: green big, yellow medium, red small. (2) Bounce lane: stationary, walking, cone weave. (3) Goal shooting from three distances, soft ball, coach in goal. (4) Catch from a bounce pass. Coaches note baselines.
30–40 min	**Shoot-to-score**	3v3 with a goalkeeper rotation; every child keeps goal for two minutes. A shot must come within five passes.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	Goal cards handed out; each child writes or draws one goal. "What part of your throw got better?"

WEEK 5 — Jump, land and keep goal

PHASE 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students jump and land softly on two feet and on one foot.
- Students take a goalkeeper turn with a ready stance and hands up.
- Students begin to read where a throw is going.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Jumping beans**	Jump over lines, onto spots, and stick the landing with bent knees. Loudest landing loses.
5–10 min	**Soft landings, brave keepers**	Cues for landing (knees bend, quiet feet) and for the goalkeeper (big, ready, hands up, watch the ball).
10–30 min	**Color stations**	(1) Jump-and-stick course. (2) Jump, then throw at a target. (3) Goalkeeper turns: partners throw soft underhand shots, keeper saves. (4) Reaction catch: coach drops or tosses, child reacts.
30–40 min	**Keeper's game**	3v3 with goalkeepers. Goalkeeper earns a point for the team on each save. Rotate every two minutes.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"What was it like to be the goalkeeper?" "How did you help your keeper?"

WEEK 6 Find the free friend: 2v1 and 3v2

PHASE 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students pass to the open teammate in a 2v1 and a 3v2.
- Students dodge to get free and call a teammate's name for the ball.
- Students solve a team puzzle without adult help.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Two-on-one tag**	Two runners and one tagger in a square; runners pass a ball to stay safe.
5–10 min	**The free friend**	With cones: when the defender comes to me, my friend is free. Pass to the free friend. Shown twice, then named.
10–30 min	**Color stations**	(1) 2v1 keep-away, green with a slow defender. (2) 2v1 to a goal. (3) 3v2 to a goal. (4) Team puzzle: get the ball from cone to cone with everyone touching it, no running with the ball.
30–40 min	**Numbers-up game**	Offense always has one extra player (3v2). Change roles every two minutes.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"When did you find the free friend?" Olympic value check: "Show me try hard from today."

WEEK 7 Stay between: defense, resets and the first full mini-game

PHASE 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students defend by staying between the ball and the goal without grabbing.
- Students use a reset breath and count to three after a miss.
- Students play a full mini-handball game with the basic rules.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Shadow shuffle**	Partners mirror side-shuffles; the leader tries to lose the shadow.
5–10 min	**Stay between + reset**	Defense is not grabbing; it is being in the way. Then the reset: after a miss, breath in, count three, next play. Practice the breath together.
10–30 min	**Color stations**	(1) 1v1 stay-between to a cone goal. (2) Intercept the pass. (3) Goalkeeper vs. two shooters. (4) Catch-bounce-throw sequence at a target.
30–40 min	**First full mini-game**	4v4 with goalkeepers on mini courts, all rules: three steps, no goalkeeper's house, pass after a bounce. Children call fouls on themselves.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"When did you use your reset today?" Goal cards checked. Announce: teams next week.

Phase 3: Teams & the Festival (weeks 8–11)

Phase 3 is where the unit comes together. Children join balanced teams, hold real jobs, learn one or two simple plays and practice fair play under a little pressure. It ends with a festival, not a knockout: every team plays every game, and every child is recognized.

WEEK 8 Our team: names, jobs and the first match

PHASE 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students join a balanced team and agree on a name and a cheer.
- Students hold a team job (captain, cone keeper, ball keeper, cheer leader).
- Students play their first team match following their team promise.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Team huddle warm-up**	New teams warm up together for the first time; captains count the stretches.
5–15 min	**Team identity**	Name (an Olympic country or a positive word), a three-word motto, a cheer, and this week's jobs. Jobs rotate every week.
15–30 min	**Team practice**	Teams practice passing circles and a 2v1 finish; coaches circulate.
30–40 min	**First match**	Two 5-minute halves, 4v4 plus goalkeepers. Cheer leaders lead the high-five line.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"What do you already like about your team?" Mottos shared.

WEEK 9 One simple play and good talking

PHASE 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students run one simple play (pass-and-go to the free friend) in a game.
- Students call a teammate's name before every pass.
- Students solve a problem as a team during a timeout.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Captain-led warm-up**	Captains lead this week's stretch sequence; coach watches, does not interrupt.
5–10 min	**Our play**	With cones: pass, run to the open space, receive, shoot. Teams walk it, then jog it.
10–30 min	**Match play with a timeout**	Two short matches. After the first, a two-minute team timeout: What worked? What will we try? Coaches listen, not lead.
30–40 min	**Name-before-pass game**	Every pass must be preceded by the receiver's name. Then a free game.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"Did your play work?" "How did your captain do?" Respect check: "How were you kind to the other team?"

WEEK 10 Fair play under pressure and festival prep

PHASE 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students show fair play when a game is close: calling their own fouls, no arguing.
- Students manage losing with the reset routine and a high-five line.
- Students prepare their team for the festival.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Compliment pass**	Before each pass in the warm-up, say something kind to the receiver.
5–10 min	**Why we shake hands**	A short Olympic sportsmanship story. "Why shake hands when you lose?"
10–30 min	**Close-game challenges**	Short matches that start tied with two minutes left; coach narrates the drama. Reset breaths practiced in the moment.
30–40 min	**Festival prep**	Teams review their play, choose jobs for festival day, practice their cheer. Festival format explained: everyone plays everyone; a Fair Play award alongside the scores.
40–45 min	**Closing circle**	"What would make you proud on festival day, not the score, the behavior?"

WEEK 11 The Mini-Handball Festival

PHASE 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students play in a festival with meaningful challenge for every level.
- Students show 11 weeks of physical, social and emotional learning in one morning.
- Every student receives recognition for growth, kindness or courage.

TIME	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES
0–5 min	**Opening ceremony**	Teams enter with their cheers. Coach honors the Olympic tradition and what the class has done. Handshake line.
5–35 min	**Festival games**	Round-robin: every team plays every team, six-minute games, goalkeepers rotate. Fair Play points recorded by the PE teacher alongside goals. Cone keepers and ball keepers run the changeovers.
35–40 min	**Awards**	Festival champions · Fair Play team · Most Improved · Best Teammate · Olympic Spirit. Every child holds a role in the ceremony.
40–45 min	**Final circle**	"What did handball teach you about yourself?" "What did a teammate do that you will remember?" Coach closes with an invitation: where to keep playing in New York.

> **This is not a tournament.** It is a celebration of 11 weeks of growth. Nobody is eliminated, every team plays every game, and the Fair Play award counts as much as the score.

Assessment & evaluation framework

Assessment is continuous and built into the sessions, so it takes no classroom time. The goal is never to rank children but to document each child's growth across all domains, in the standards-based language elementary report cards already use.

What we assess

DOMAIN	OBSERVABLE INDICATORS	ASSESSMENT METHOD
Physical development	Catching, throwing, bouncing, jumping and landing, dodging; active participation	Coach checklist at week 4 (baseline) and week 11 · station observation · mini-game observation
Emotional growth	Uses the reset routine, keeps trying after a miss, celebrates others, names a feeling	Closing-circle contributions · goal card · coach and teacher notes
Social development	Shares space and equipment, follows rules, holds a team job, calls fouls on self, kind to opponents	Kindness notes · team promise · Fair Play points at the festival
Olympic values	Can say the three values in own words and give an example from class	Circle participation · final reflection

Levels, not grades

Elementary assessment in New York City is standards-based. We report three levels on each tracked skill and domain, against the child's own week-4 baseline, and hand the PE teacher the evidence for the school's own report card.

B
Beginning
The pattern is emerging with support

D
Developing
The pattern is there; adding movement and decisions

S
Secure
Uses the skill in a game, at speed, with a defender

↑
Growth
Every child's movement from week 4 to week 11, the number we care about most

Coach observation checklist

Used quietly in week 4 to set station colors and goal cards, and again in week 11. Never shown to children as a grade.

SKILL	FOUNDATIONAL (1)	DEVELOPING (2)	PROFICIENT (3)
Catching	Traps against body; drops most	Two-hand catch, stationary; some moving	Catches while moving; from a bounce; high and low
Throwing	Faces the target; no step	Side-on; opposite-foot step; some follow-through	Full pattern; accurate at a goal with a keeper
Bouncing	Two hands; loses the ball	One hand, walking, eyes down at times	One hand, jogging, eyes up, around cones
Jump & land	Flat, loud landings	Bent knees on cue	Soft two- and one-foot landings; jump-throw
Dodging / getting free	Stands still; waits for the ball	Moves on a cue	Cuts to space unprompted; calls for the ball

Evaluation & reporting commitment

Every school receives an end-of-unit summary: participation and active-minute rates, class-level growth on the five skills from week 4 to week 11, Fair Play results from the festival, and a few anonymized lines from the final circle. It is written so a principal can read it in two minutes and a PE teacher can paste it into the department's records.

Safety, equipment & logistics

Safety protocols

- Every session begins with a warm-up game; no throwing before it is complete.
- A soft ball only (size 0 foam or soft handball). Throws are always at targets or goals, never at a person. Dodgeball rules are explicitly contrasted in week 1.
- The goalkeeper's area is marked with flat spots. Field players never enter it; the rule is taught as a game in week 2.
- Mini-handball is played with no contact. Defending means staying between the ball and the goal; no grabbing, no pushing.
- Children with medical notes or accommodations receive a modified participation plan that keeps them active and included, for example as a goalkeeper, a passer in stationary drills, or a team job holder.
- The coach reviews the school's emergency procedures (nearest AED, nurse, evacuation route) with the PE teacher before the first session.
- Whistle system: one blast means freeze, ball on the floor; two blasts mean sit down where you are; three long blasts mean the session is over. Practiced as a game in week 1.

Equipment requirements

ITEM	QUANTITY	NOTES
Soft handballs, size 0 (foam or soft rubber)	30	One per child for skill play; foam for K–2
Colored pinnies	32, four colors	Team and station identification
Cone goals or mini goals	4 sets	Flat markers can substitute; no heavy goals needed
Agility cones and flat spots	60 cones, 40 spots	Stations, pathways, goalkeeper areas
Whistle	1 per coach	Freeze cue and transitions
Goal cards and kindness notes	1 per child	Printed by us; kept by the PE teacher

Handball Rising brings and maintains all equipment; nothing is purchased by the school. Balls and cones are left at the school for the length of the unit.

Expected student outcomes

By the end of the 11 weeks, a child who has fully engaged with the unit will show measurable growth in every domain of elementary physical education. The outcomes below describe what that child can do.

Physical outcomes

- Throws overhand with a side-on stance, opposite-foot step and follow-through.
- Catches a soft ball with two hands while moving, and from a bounce.
- Bounces a ball with one hand, eyes up, at walking and jogging speed.
- Jumps and lands softly on two feet and one foot.
- Dodges and changes direction to get free of a defender.
- Is active for 30 or more minutes of every 45-minute session.

Emotional outcomes

- Uses a reset breath and keeps playing after a miss.
- Sets a simple goal and checks it.
- Says "I can't do it yet" instead of "I can't."
- Names how moving makes the body and the mood feel.

Social outcomes

- Shares space and equipment and follows the rules with few reminders.
- Calls a teammate's name, encourages after a miss, high-fives the other team.
- Holds a team job and takes a turn leading.
- Has made at least one new friend through a team.

Knowledge & cultural outcomes

- Can say that handball is an Olympic sport played around the world and name the three things you do in it.
- Can connect handball to tag, basketball, soccer and (as a contrast) dodgeball.
- Can say the three Olympic values in their own words with an example from class.
- Understands the first tactical ideas: space, the free friend, stay between.

> **This is physical education at its highest standard.** Physical education in the elementary years is not a break from learning. It is where children learn whether they are movers. In this unit they learn to throw and catch, and they learn that they can do hard things in front of their friends.

When a third grader who dropped every ball in week 1 catches a pass on the move and scores in the festival, she is not just learning handball. She is learning that practice works. When a team that lost every game wins the Fair Play award and cheers about it, they are not just playing a sport. They are practicing how to be people. That is the promise of this curriculum, and that is why it belongs in every elementary school.

> *"The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle."*
>
> Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic Games