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PHYSICAL EDUCATION – ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Good Practices of PEALS

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Contents

GOOD PRACTICES – MADONAS VALSTS ĢIMNĀZIJA, MADONA	2
SNOW DAY.....	2
AEROBICS FESTIVAL.....	4
GOOD PRACTICES – GREECE.....	7
«ROWING IN HISTORY WITH “OLYMPIAS” TRIREME»	7
« ANNUAL CROSSING OF VOURAIKOS RIVER GORGE, GREECE».....	12
GOOD PRACTICES- GYMNAZIUM NOVÉ STRAŠECÍ.....	19
OLYMPIC DAY.....	19
CYCLING,HIKING COURSE.....	20
GOOD PRACTICES- KÖZGAZDASÁGI POLITECHNIKUM BUDAPEST	22
THE BIG BANG	22
THE SPORTS HALL PARTY	25
GOOD PRACTICES – GELVONAI GYMNASIUM, SHIRVINTOS REGION, LITHUANIA	29
SPORTS CAMP	29
KAYAKING	31
CYCLING	32



Good Practices – Madonas Valsts ģimnāzija, Madona

Snow day

World Snow Day is a part of the international FIS (the International Ski Federation) Campaign «Bring Children to the Snow», which is an annual snow festival for children and their families with various abilities. The main goal of the event is not to find new champions but to provide a chance to explore, enjoy and experience winter sports, to ensure kids that winter sports can become a part of their everyday life and they give positive emotions and promote healthy life style.

In our school Snow Day has been organized for 12 years. It is a huge event, and all our students participate in it with great pleasure. Is is usually held in January or at the beginning of February. Our town is famous for its cross-country and biathlon track at Sports And Recreation Center "Smeceres Sils" , which is known as a track of a very high quality. As a result, these sports and other winter sports are highly developed in Madona. We have a wonderful opportunity to organise Snow Day at "Smeceres Sils", but sometimes it is held in the town park and on the skating rink.

Our school has a long tradition of cross-country skiing, which is compulsory in our school. That is why, all students are able to ski. Regardless of experience, our students get out on our groomed trails in the town park regularly throughout the winter. Our P.E. teachers give instructions and more experienced students help their classmates. There are some students who do cross-country skiing professionally and even represent Latvia in the international competitions.

The aims of the Snow Day:

- to promote healthy life style;
- to develop skiing and skating skills through fun and excitement;
- to create positive attitude to outdoor winter sports and leisure time activities;
- to build teamwork skills;
- to enjoy winter activities in the natural environment;



- to have fun, pleasure and positive emotions with classmates.

Snow Day is organised by P.E. teachers, school council and students from each class who are responsible for sport activities. The event requires serious preparation. First of all, the place of the event has to be chosen. If the winter is snowy and there is enough natural snow, it takes place in the town park. Otherwise, it is held at Sports and Recreation Center "Smeceres Sils" where tracks are prepared with artificial snow by "retrack". Then P.E. teachers decide what kind of activities will be provided and what kind of equipment is necessary. Each year teachers try to create such games and relays which are different from the ones offered previously. However, there are some games and relays that have already become traditional, and our students enjoy taking part in them. It is a challenge to create relays and games for students with different abilities, skills and levels of skiing to keep them being interested in the competition. Everybody should be active all the time. The games and exercises are fun, exciting and at the same time challenging. They demonstrate how versatile skiing activities can be, and how to effectively utilize ski equipment. Basic skills are built through fun and exciting play. Traditional skiing activities are the following:

- skiing with obstacles;
- skiing without the poles;
- slalom between cones;
- gliding on one ski;
- skiing in a group of 3-4.

Besides skiing, students also do other activities, such as playing snowballs, skating, playing hockey with floorball elements, making a snowman, sledding down a hill.

Each class has to organise teams for the relays and games. Teachers also participate with their students. Some students, who can't participate in the activities because of the health problems, are involved as judges. One student from each class is a reporter who is responsible for taking photos and videos, for interviewing the classmates and writing an article for our school newspaper.

At the end of the day all the participants enjoy hot herbal tea with honey.



Aerobics festival

Aerobics festival, which is one of the most popular traditional events in our school, started in 2008. From the beginning, the main aim of the festival is to promote healthy lifestyle.

The festival is held every year in January or in February, in the afternoon after the lessons. It is about 1.5 hour long. In fact, it is a competition between secondary school classes. All the girls from each class have to participate in it. However, boys can also take part. The festival is organised by our P.E. teachers, who motivate and inspire girls of all abilities to take part in it and learn new skills.

Preparation usually starts after Christmas holidays. Students are taught basic steps of aerobics at P.E. lessons. In their performance they show popular types of aerobic dance - classical aerobics, step aerobics, hip hop aerobics, aerobics with objects – balls or sticks. First, students get acquainted with the aims, the rules of aerobics festival and the principles of evaluation of the performance. Then P.E. teachers give instructions and advices how to prepare for the competition. After that students are getting ready for the competition on their own: they discuss their ideas about the composition and costumes, they also think how to link all the elements and steps together in their dance and choose the music. Each class tells their P.E. teacher which music they have chosen (to avoid repetitions). Girls have rehearsals after the lessons as many times as they need.

Before the competition they draw lots to find out the order of their performances. As this is one of the most popular events in our school, there are a lot of supporters: our teachers, younger students, boys, who support the girls from their class and, of course, the parents. There is a reporter who is responsible for taking photos and videos, for interviewing the participants and writing an article about the event for our school newspaper.

The performances are judged by 4 independent judges. We usually invite an aerobics instructor, PE teachers from neighbour school, dance teachers, our former students who used to participate in the aerobics festival and showed good results.



Prizes (usually pizzas) are given to the first three places. Diplomas are given to each class, which has taken part in the competition. Actually, we have an idea to give prizes for the best costumes.

The festival always gives the participants a positive feeling and an invaluable experience from performing, it helps to become more tolerant as they have to accept different opinions while discussing the ideas. Working in groups students will have fun, positive emotions and the opportunity to show their skills, gain greater self-awareness and confidence as well as build team work skills. It's a great way to boost their creative growth.

The aims of the aerobics festival are:

- To evaluate students' achievements in aerobics.
- To teach about the diversity of aerobics.
- To give students the opportunity to perform in front of the audience.
- To educate a healthy lifestyle, to develop sporting behaviour and positive attitude towards physical education.
- To build team work skills.

There are some rules for participation in the festival:

1. One class shows one performance.
2. All girls from the class take part in the performance. Boys can join (optional).
3. 6 - 8 basic steps should be included in the performance.
4. The performance is 3 - 4 minutes long.

Evaluation:

1. Technical skills -10pts.:

- Flooring elements - 1p.
- On-site or moving jump series - 2pts.
- Difficulty and acrobatic elements (which could be performed by all) - 2pts.



- Flexibility - 2pts.
- Synchronization – 3pts.

2. Composition - 10pts.

- Aerobic movement patterns - 2pts.
- Transitions and linking - 2pts.
- Originality/Creativity and expression - 2pts.
- A balanced use of all space throughout the routine. Collaboration. Continuously (no rests or pauses) Solo - 3pts.
- Music (selection, composition, musicality) - 1pt.

3. Costumes - 10pts.:

- Must fit the theme (originality, colour) – 5 pts.
- They are made by students – 5 pts.





Good Practices – Greece

«Rowing in History with “Olympias” trireme»

Athens was the greatest naval power of classical antiquity. The Athenian trireme was an ancient warship with three rows of paddles and rowers on either side. It was a long and low vessel as the length ranged from 33-43 meters, the width from 3.5 to 4.4 meters and the height from 2.1 to 2.3 meters. Its draft reached one meter making it capable of sailing almost at any enemy coast, and its maximum speed was 8 knots with the use of paddles and 10 knots in combination with sails. The crew of the trireme consisted of about 170-200 men, who were free citizens and were paid with three ovaries daily. The staffing by slaves was forbidden. The paddles varied from row to row but were about the same length of 4.2-4.4 meters. The back of the ship is reminiscent of a fish tail.



The deck served to protect rowers from enemy arrows. At the front of the ship there were standing the warriors who they were involved in the deck battle in the event of a resalto and at



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the back of the ship it was the post of commander-in-chief of trireme. The main material of the trireme was the fir because it was very light. The ship's keel was made of oak to withstand tanning. Olympia was also an attraction and was used in many ceremonies, such as on the transfer of the Olympic Flame to Piraeus during the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

The trireme "Olympias" is a functional copy of the 5th-century Athenian triremes. It began to be manufactured in Greece in May 1985 and was completed in July 1987 as part of an experimental archeology program based on research by historian J.S. Morrison and shipbuilder J.F. Coates, with funding from the Greek Navy. The first three years it was used for testing to determine its sailing characteristics (speed, traction, endurance, etc.), to understand the living conditions of its staff, as well as to understand more fully a tactic used during the battle. Nautical trips were made to the islands of the Argosaronic Gulf and the boat achieved remarkable distances and speeds above 9 knots only by rowing, perform a 180 ° turn at a time of just one minute with an arc of less than 2.5 m. Such performance certainly can't be achieved with the civilian crew.

Every year, after lessons in May, trireme Olympias gives us the opportunity to test our skills in rowing, in coordination and in collective effort in the waters of the Saronic Gulf and at the same time to learn our history firsthand. Not at all easy to coordinate with so many people, we get tired, sweaty, puffed up but the excitement we feel is great: we ride an ancient trireme! In addition, as we were informed, the crews needed 3 months of training to be able to paddle a trireme. The whole event lasts about two hours and in the end we are able to get back up on the deck and take photos.

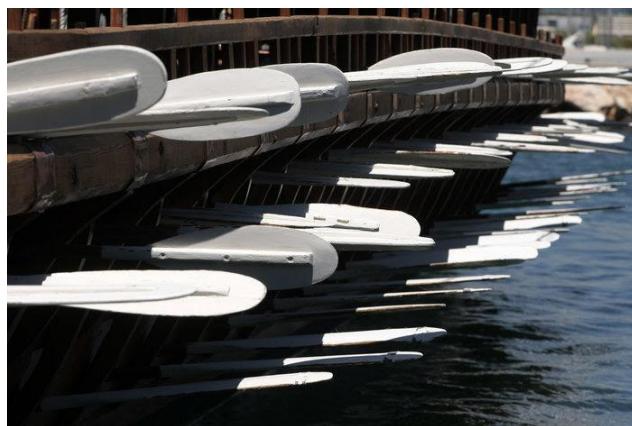




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The paddles are positioned "above" ('pteroson'), stationary and parallel to the sea surface.

The departure time is 10:00 am and the trip lasts approximately one and a half hour. We are at the port (Hellenic Nautical Tradition Grove, Trocadero, Paleo Faliro) at least one hour before departure, at 09:00, in order to be informed on the safety and movement of the vessel. We initially fill out a responsible statement in which we disclose our details and at the same time acknowledge our personal liability in the event of an accident. It would be a good idea for the next trip, to have accident insurance coverage. I'm sure Greek companies would provide it for free, with only the benefit of publicity.

The rowing position is determined upon our entry into trireme. Only the two highest seats of trireme ('thranites' and 'zygites') offer sea views as opposed to those of the 'thalamites' hanging in the hull of the ship, only 40 cm above the waterline.





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We wear sportswear (sports shorts / pants) and sneakers and socks. Inside the boat we can carry a small backpack with our personal belongings (water, hat, towel, cell phone, camera). The ticket is 3 Euros for each rower (a symbolic price to cover the maintenance needs of the Olympias trireme)



After boarding and arranging for the posts, the necessary instructions are given to the ‘sailors’ by the trireme captain and the permanent crew on the safe use of the paddles, orders, etc. and begin paddle movements.



Initially, as expected, the coordination of so many rowers is difficult and the paddles often hit each other. Gradually, however, a finely tuned test movement is achieved, and the ship is opened to the Faliric Bay with the sole propulsion power of its rowers! Accompanying for "security" reasons is the firefighting crew of high speed boats. As the ship progresses, at the rate that our petty officer is giving orders, the coordination is continually improved by confirming the ancient testimonies that despite the large number of crew members, their training was easy and could achieve a high level of maritime capability in a few weeks or even days! There is also no problem with the distance between the rowers, though at least 10-20 cm above would be desirable. Generally the boat is paddled smoothly and shows a fast and good speed. After 1 hour of sailing our ship is returning, with significantly better coordination. The maneuvers of the pier are quickly executed by the "experienced" crew, who is tired of course, but very happy with the whole experience.

Both the teachers and students of our school who participate are really excited and learn the history of trireme firsthand. We all leave with the best impressions, having lived a unique experience that will be unforgettable!





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2nd Good Practice

« Annual Crossing of Vouraikos River Gorge, Greece»



One of the most beautiful hiking experiences is the descent into Vouraikos River Gorge along the lines of the rack railway. Vouraikos River Gorge is located in the north side of Peloponnese, 63 km from Patras and 170 km from Athens. This hike is part of the European path E-4 and it coincides with the track of Odontotos, the railway with the toothed rack rail that connects Diakopto with Kalavryta. Odontotos is the most popular ‘classic’ train in Greece. The railway is 22km long, the hiking time will range from 4 ½ to 6 hours (with stops). The railway follows the course of the river Vouraikos and it links Diakopto, a sea-side town of Achaea region with Kalavryta, a mountainous (750 m. of altitude) historic village associated with the Greek Independence Revolution and the German Occupation; recently Kalavryta became popular because of the nearby ski-center.

The name of the gorge mentions Voura, an important city of antiquity which pioneered the establishment of the Achaean League. According to legend the name comes from the Voura, daughter of Ion and Eliki, who was beloved by Hercules, who according to legend opened the gorge in order to get close to her.

In terms of difficulty, the trail is moderate, but great care is needed when crossing the bridges and passing through train tunnels in order to avoid finding yourself “confronted” with the train! Along the way, we will encounter many tunnels carved into the rock, with just enough space for the little train to pass through, and several iron railway bridges with a gap below them that looks scary. There are cement kilometer indicators by the tracks that show you how much of



your journey remains. It is essential to know the train schedules so that you can calculate where the train is at any time. The train's route takes approximately 60 minutes on the ascent and 50 minutes for the descent.

One could divide the route into three main segments. The first part covers the section from the station in Kalavryta to the station of Kato Zachlorou and is approximately 10 kilometers long. The second part, which features the most striking natural beauty, continues for another seven kilometers to the station in Niamata. The last part, which is less interesting than the others, continues for approximately five more kilometers and ends at the Diakopto Railway Station.

The Association of Mountaineering - Skiing - Climbing - Environmental Protection of Kalavryta since 1980, and every year, on the 2nd Sunday of May, organizes the Pan-Hellenic Pass in the Vouraikos River Gorge. Every year, our school takes part in this event.

Tips (Instructions):

Wear comfortable clothing and walking shoes if you have mountaineers that are ideal for tying the ankle to avoid accidents. Walking on the gravel track is a bit tiring and sometimes slippery. Depending on the weather, you should wear a hat, sunscreen or waterproof. Don't be overwhelmed with unnecessary things. Take only a bottle of water or an isotonic with you if you prefer something light for lunch. Along the way, the Mountaineering Club has taken care of all to find the things to rest and to get the strength to keep going. You do not have to be in a particular physical state, as long as you are willing to walk. There is no age limit to join, the route is simple and everyone can follow it. It is almost a 6 hour hike from Kalavryta to Diakopto, 4 hours from Zachlorou to Diakopto and 3 hours from Zachlorou to Niamata. If you do not have the strength to walk for so many hours (due to age or various health problems), it would be best to avoid it. It is a pure mountaineering hike and not a walk.

For most of the route it is not a problem to ‘coexist’ with the train as there is always a bit of space at the side of the rails; of course the train drivers are aware that there are people who cross the gorge on foot. In some places, however, mostly in the galleries and the bridges, there is no extra space so it is best to stop and wait. As guides just keep in mind



that both from Diakofto and from Kalavrita the train takes about 30 minutes to get to Kato Zachlorou.

The hiking

All the school team starts on Sunday in the morning at 7:30 from the Odontotos station in Diakopto, following the train route to Kalavryta.



The hiking begins gently on relatively flat terrain, crossing the valley of Vouraikos. Our first point of interest (about 4 kilometers from the beginning) is the next rack railway stop after Kalavryta, Kerpinis. A few meters above the station in Kerpi, we can see the newly constructed Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and next to it the monument to four patriots who were executed on this spot by German occupation troops on December 9, 1943.

Starting at Kerpi, the landscape becomes more interesting: we come across the first metal railway bridge and begin to move parallel to the river. In the background, the towering vertical cliffs of Mega Spilaio, the historic Monastery, emerge, and above it the imposing building of the “Castle”, or “Kastro” in Greek.

Approximately 8.5 kilometers from Kalavryta and 15 to 20 minutes before we reach Kato Zachlorou, we should look carefully on our right to discern, well hidden in the greenery, a very beautiful stone bridge that joins the banks of the Vouraikos River. About six hundred meters after that, we see a second stone bridge, or rather what remains of it, since only the two ends still stand erect. Already the landscape begins to become exciting, with the rushing waters of the river buzzing on our right and dense vegetation obscuring our way.





In less than 10 minutes (an hour and 45 minutes from when we set off), we see the first houses of beautiful Kato Zachlorou. We cross the plane tree covered metal bridge and stop for refreshments at the café next to the station before continuing to the second and most exciting phase of our journey.

The second part of our route immediately prepares us for what we will encounter. A few meters after the Kato Zachlorou station, we see a sign on our left that points toward the Vouraikos River. Descending the short path, we reach a beautiful spot next to the river with plenty of room to sit and enjoy the lovely forest.

About one kilometer from Kato Zachlorou, we will see why Greeks call this the “toothed” railway (“Odontoto”): the famously powerful “teeth” between the rails that help the train climb long uphill gradients. These are the last teeth on the rack (or cog) railway on its ascent from Diakopto to Kalavryta. The toothed part of the rack railway covers a total of 3,400 meters.

The lines descend quite a bit, and the vegetation becomes denser. We carefully cross another small metal bridge, and in less than four minutes we see a new train station in a freshly paved cobbled courtyard with wooden pergolas. If we head toward the house and go left, we will descend to the river at a point where a small “beach” is formed.

At this point we are one step from the most impressive part of our route, the famous Portes, which means Doors. It is the narrowest point on the Vouraikos Gorge route. Here the little train passes through a tunnel which has two large iron doors at its entrances (hence the name). In the past, the doors were used to keep out pedestrians, allowing only the train to pass through. Today the doors have rusted and fallen, but they are still there. The landscape is impressive and simultaneously imposing—a landscape that has been shaped by the erosive power of water. Two tunnels with two metal bridges were built for the rack railway, the old and very narrow one through which the little train used to pass, and the newer one that is used today.



About 700 meters after passing through the Doors (Portes), we come to Triklia train station. The route continues to be very interesting, alternating between small tunnels made of stone, railway bridges, and tunnels carved into the rock that barely allow the train to pass through. We hear the turbulent waters of the Vouraikos River in their rolling rapids as the gorge narrows considerably and descends with a steeper slope.

About 50 minutes from the Doors (Portes), we will come across the entrance of the longest tunnel on the route. Before you walk through it, consult the train schedules in order to be sure you will not have an unexpected meeting with a train in the tunnel! The landscape continues to alternate as before with tunnels and bridges.



One of the characteristics of the Chelmos - Vouraikos National Park is its biodiversity of fauna and flora. There is not only a high number of living things, but also a great diversity of microorganisms, plants, and animals living there. For this reason, the natural beauty of the area is characterized by a varied landscape with many important habitats forming shelters for many organisms.

Now we are less than eight kilometers from the end of our journey, and the Vouraikos riverbed has narrowed considerably, forming impressive little waterfalls. About two minutes after we cross the metal bridge located immediately after the informative National Park sign, we pass through a tunnel on a curve. After the tunnel, if we look to the right toward the rock wall on the opposite side of the gorge, we will see two cavities with stalagmite figures that form what is called the “Courts” (“Dikastiria” in Greek). This is a cavernous chamber where the stalagmites



have formed upright columns that resemble figures lined up as if in court. The impressive formations we see on the rocks that rise up on both sides of us were caused by the erosion of limestone by water rich in carbon dioxide. In the vertical walls of the gorge, there are interesting rare plant communities featuring unique species characteristic of the rocky habitat of the Eastern Mediterranean. Although we will see the “Courts” first, as described above, the relevant sign appears a little later, after we cross another metal railway bridge.

We are now just 500 meters from the last major attraction on our journey, the station in Niamata. It is approximately five kilometers from the Diakopto station. There is also an informative sign about the Chelmos - Vouraikos National Park here. There used to be an old agricultural settlement in Niamata.

For the next five kilometers, up to the Diakopto station, nature calms down. We are already at an altitude of just 120 meters, and we have passed beyond the great narrowing of the gorge. In the next three kilometers, that is before we get into the residential area, we will pass through one more very short tunnel. Two kilometers before the end of our hiking, we will begin to leave the beauty of the gorge and enter a residential area. From here it takes just 20 minutes to get to the Diakopto station. On the way, we pass a road crossing and (on our left) the shrine of the Virgin Mary. Five minutes after that, we arrive at the station, which is also the end of this very scenic hiking.



Along the way you will meet many walkers and you will find volunteers from the Greek Rescue Team who will ensure smooth running and will be there for anything you need.

In summary

The descent from Kalavrita to Diakopto, following the rails of the Cog Railway, requires about 6 hours hiking. This route is a part of the European path E4. Although the trip with the Cog



Railway gives us a taste of the beauty of the route, not for a moment do we cease to enjoy the alternating landscapes. Walking on the train rails and looking right and left, every new turn we take surprises us, as we have either tremendous waterfalls unfolding before us, or tunnels, which we have to enter and exit running to avoid any ... “close contact” with the train, abandoned stone houses with a telegraph that turn us back in time, disoriented livestock, rocks carved by the gushing water and shaped into forms that look impossible to the human brain, and the most enjoyable of all, the amazing aerial bridges! This feeling when you have nothing under your feet and that point when you wish the Cog Railway wasn’t coming towards you – or in our case the opposite, just to make it even more fun.



Good Practices- Gymnázium Nové Strašecí

Olympic day

The Olympic day doesn't have a long tradition. It started 6 years ago and since then it has become very popular event in our school

It takes place the last week in June, when the weather is good and students can enjoy outdoor activities.

The main idea is to experience the feeling of fair play, learning about Olympic symbols such as Olympic flame, torch, circles, and also be part of a team.

All classes take part in competitions, and they have to agree on which disciplines is everyone going to compete in

Each class must make two teams for beach volleyball and football and six different athletic disciplines:

long jump

short distance running

middle distance running

high jump

discus throw

4 x 100 m relay

If classes are not big enough some students can compete in more than one discipline.

In the morning all classes gather in our stadium, each class wearing different colours. One student is chosen to run around the stadium with the lit torch.

After that all competitions begin. It is very difficult to organize so many activities at one time for so many students so we welcome the help of other teachers and students who can't do PE (because of health issues)



Students have a community experience with strong emotional effects. The internal feeling of being part of a team is extremely important at this age.

The result of this project develops social, rational and communicative skills. It develops physical abilities and emphasize the importance of active lifestyle . The event creates the great opportunity to show and educate healthy lifestyle, focus on different exercises and improve student's skills and abilities for doing different kinds of sport.

Cycling,hiking course

One of the most important and most favourite extracurricular course in our school is so called cykloturistiky kurz, which is a compound word of two different activities hiking and cycling. It usually takes place the second week in June and PE teachers always try to choose an ideal destination for these activities. So the destination change every two or three years. Last two years students spend all week in the forest near spa towns such as Mariánské lázné and this year we are heading to Děčín with amazing cycling path along the river Elbe.

This course is aimed for students of the third grade and each student can choose what they prefer cycling or hiking.

The essence of this course is to spend a week in completely different surroundings with classmates doing activities which does not only involve cycling or hiking but many more.

Another aim is to gain common experience of emotional effects.

The event usually starts on Monday. Depending on destination students can cycle from school to the place where it takes place. If the accommodation is far away all students and teachers go by bus.

PE teachers usually do some research about student's preferences so they usually make four groups of students.



There are two groups of cyclists and students can choose which team they want to belong. If the students are really good at cycling and they enjoy challenges they go into first group. For the students who are not so good but want to try hard and cycle they usually choose the second group. This is also very good for student's motivation.

If students are not keen on cycling they can choose groups for hiking

As I said this event is not only about cycling and hiking.

Everyday PE teachers prepare extra activities for the evenings or afternoons depending on the length of the trips.

Students play different ball games, there is orienteering run, swimming pool and other activities.

The result of this project develops social, rational and communicative skills. It develops physical abilities and emphasize the importance of active lifestyle . The event creates the great opportunity to show and educate healthy lifestyle. The participants get memories and experience that can have a long impact on their life.



Good Practices- Közgazdasági Politechnikum Budapest

The Big Bang

Politechnikum Alternative Secondary School of Economics is an inclusive school that offers 5-year and 7-year training. We believe it is important for students with different social backgrounds to be together and we also integrate students with special needs, providing them with the appropriate support from our psychologists, psycho-educators and special needs teachers.

As representatives of person-centred pedagogy, it is important for us to coordinate personal development and professional excellence and we aim to renew the contents and methodology of education inside and outside the classroom in order to provide differential help to improve skills and talent. Besides teaching traditional lessons, we provide opportunities for many other kinds of student activities including theme weeks, forest school, urban ecology programme, programmes of the Tolerance Day and sporting events. Our objective is to offer programmes for everybody, including our special needs students, so that they can find the activities which best fits their set of skills and talents in the field of physical education, arts, languages, mathematics and science.

Health education is a priority for Politechnikum and our extracurricular activities such as playing sports and sporting events are of great importance. When organizing these programmes, we always take into consideration the demands of grassroots sports. Our aim is to host events which promote not only being fit but also cohesion and community building. These events help us promote healthy living, being active as well as discovering talent. These complex programmes help students compensate for their lack of strength or skill in certain areas and improve morale by complementing the more direct ways of students' educational development.



Movement, sports and playing gives each participant a chance to gain experience and to make social connections. This process is always a series of interpersonal, communicative and interactive actions. Students practice cooperation with their peers in order to become more tolerant and for them to experience tolerance. We appreciate these kinds of programmes as they improve cohesion in our community, develop sportsmanship and healthy competition. Our events include ski camp, teacher-student matches, senior year students vs. alumni students sports festival, the Big Bang (our bicycle tour) and the Sports Hall Party (where students and teacher of the school compete in four categories: basketball, football, floorball and volleyball while the audience can enjoy sporty and active shows).

Good practice: The Big Bang



One of the most important traditions in our school is the Big Bang which is a sporting event that takes place at a weekend in autumn or in the spring. This is a sporting event (a race) that gives participants a communal experience with its delightful ambiance and an achievable distance making it a valuable and memorable sporting event for students, teachers and parents alike.

The Big Bang is truly a school-wide programme mobilising a populous team of teachers and a helper team which consists of parents. Another important aim of this event is familiarising students and teachers with the beautiful countryside of Hungary and its local sights.

The Big Bang is held by the PE department every year and each year we get to the finish line together, “hand in hand” running, riding our bicycles or with canoes. For this event, a serious



preparatory phase is needed: taking the planned route, securing the course of the race (with the help of the police in critical places), bike drivers' education and securing lorries and cars. We start preparing for the programme by spending Friday night together, at the school. We set off on Saturday morning and we arrive back home on Sunday, in the evening. The distance and the tempo suit the needs of the team, the terrain and the sporting equipment. We are accompanied by the school's news team to record the events of the Big Bang. Upon arrival, a cooking team of volunteer students and teachers welcome the exhausted participants, serving them a warm dinner which further elevates the spirit of the event. We capture the time spent together with a group photo and a personalized certificate.

As this event is a memorable, life-long experience for participants of the race, it is safe to say



that the results are long-term in these two main areas:

We motivate children and adults alike to compete, exercise regularly and take part in grassroots sport, so

hopefully they will cycle more in the future or spend their free time doing a different sports activity.

Participants become part of a community where they experience strong emotional and physical effects that help them obtain and secure patterns of behaviour and social roles that are useful in creating and advancing social connections and communication skills.

This bicycle race develops the specific skills and abilities necessary for everyday or occasional cycling. Moreover, it raises awareness of the importance of frequent exercise, healthy lifestyle and promotes cycling as a form of transport. The programme can also help prevent biking accidents by helping children form civilised conduct on the road and shapes the abilities and skills needed for cycling safely.



The Sports Hall Party

One of the most renowned events in the Politechnikum High School is the Sports Hall Party. It is a special and grand event that was originally held to celebrate the 1st birthday of our sports hall and became a tradition. This party is an amazing, active programme that starts with student-teacher ball game matches early in the afternoon, and lasts until the evening. We occasionally have international exchange students take part in these programmes. It is very important for us to organize these events, as these promote a sense of community, competitiveness and sportsmanship. In the second part of the event we have sports performances where anybody can show off their talent, which we might not have seen during the lessons. We encourage our students to take part and we like having as many student performers as we can. The most valuable outcome of this programme is gaining experiences, doing sport and having fun together.

The aim of the programme:

Providing students with opportunities to show their talent and skill connected to physical culture, movement and different areas of sport and art. They can be active in the competitions and the community events; they can experience sportsmanship and be in friendly and competitive situations. It is also our aim to discover talented students, to get to know them better and further develop their abilities. Participants leave the Sports Hall Party with a sense of achievement, with new experiences and the appreciation for the performances they have seen. They also gain valuable skills by participating in this event and of course, they learn more about the healthy



lifestyle. The goal of the programme is to reach more and more children, to draw them into the school's sporting life and to get them to compete as well.

Experiences of the implementation:

The programme makes it possible to develop the fitness curriculum of the PE classes outside of the lessons as well as discovering talent, developing character, screening and selecting for competitive sports and recruitment of Espoir players for different disciplines of sports.

The event enables healthy lifestyle education and helps promote an active lifestyle and the love of sport and physical activity. With the realization of these enriching events, the Sports Hall Party is an ideal setting for developing individual potential and psychomotor abilities (such as sport and movement).

This complex programme helps balance the students who are less capable in other areas of talent as it boosts morale and promotes areas which complement direct talent development.

Students practice cooperation with their peers so that they become more tolerant and they also experience. On the other hand, they provide an example for „weaker” children, so that they discover their own fighting spirit. We find these occasions very important because they promote cohesion, and develop sportsmanship as well as competitiveness. The aims, the means and the methodology of the Sports Hall Party correspond to the community building and the individual development functions.

To organize the event, we need the active participation of every citizen of our school.

In the advertising phase, the technician of the school places the poster on the digital notice board, the teacher's online interface, the website and the facebook page of the school. The form teachers advertise the event during homeroom classes and PE teachers also call students' attention to it during PE lesson where they share more details, such as the programmes and the current sports disciplines the students can choose. They also talk about the performances for this special day, because our students give countless spectacular and interesting performances each year.

After advertising the party, we start registering the applications and as soon as the performers sign up, we keep in touch with them and with our technicians. If students want to perform





together (more students doing one kind of sport), we usually let them. In this case, it is very important to be in contact with the participants and to know the number of the performers. The quality of the performances is significant, so we always make sure to provide students with the necessary equipment and we help provide proper suspension, fastening and the logistics of these tools. As this is a lot of work, we get help from the parents, coaches and teammates of our performers.



Beside students, we try to involve colleagues in the programmes. For example, we recruit a teacher team to take part in the competitions.

As the event approaches, we get in touch with school management, the overseer, the janitors and the cleaning staff to make sure everything goes well on the special day. On the week of the party, we check all the necessary equipment and tools and we continue to keep in touch with the performers.

We traditionally end the Sports Hall Party

by sharing a meal, eating cake and celebrating with every organizer and guest.

Schedule:

- Setting a date for the event, putting it into the school calendar
- Creating the budget for the Sports Hall Party
- Advertising on the school's platforms, during homeroom classes and PE classes
- Registering applications
- Keeping in touch with the management, the overseer, the janitors and the cleaning staff
- Securing the necessary areas for the event, cancelling events that might be held there at that time





Erasmus+



PHYSICAL EDUCATION – ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

- Creating the detailed programme for the event based on the number of attendees, advertising on the school's platforms
- Planning in terms of staff and resources
- Getting the equipment needed and the prizes
- Consulting with the students who help provide the technical conditions of the event
- Obtaining and handing over the music of the performances in mp3 format (on a USB stick)
- Consulting with the technicians and the presenter of the event
- In the days leading to the party, we remind students of the Sports Hall Party and call them to cheer participants on



Good Practices – Gelvonai gymnasium, Shirvintos region, Lithuania

Sports is very important in our lives. Sports in the school environment is a positive influence on lifelong participation in sports and physical activity. PE and sport contribute to the development of the whole child in several ways, such as health, physical and emotional wellbeing, cognitive and social development. That is why it is very important for pupils to be physically active, participate in PE lessons, extracurricular sports activities and exercise as much as possible. We all know that in today's day and age, pupils are spending more time glued to TV screens, smartphones and rooted to their seats. Teachers and also parents emphasize that young people should do sports and understand that it is important to be healthy and to do well at school. So several years, we have a few ways that help us to encourage more sports participation in our school.

Sports camp

Our school is located in a rural area, not far away from the river Shirvinta, so our teachers like to spend time there with their students, starting with primary classes to school leavers. We use different ways to get there – a school bus, a bicycle, or simply go on foot. At first our camps lasted for 2 or even 3 days, but now we have only 1-day camp. Every year, at the end of a school year we have some days that we call non-traditional educational days. Mostly we use them for educational purposes, students take part in various excursions, meet famous people and, of course, all of them are waiting for a sports camp. Luckily, one of our teachers used to live near the river, he has its own campsite with the main facilities that make staying in there more comfortable and possible. This camp is a big challenge for our teachers as we have to look after and occupy sometimes more than 50 students. It is very important to make a schedule of the day, including sports activities but also some activities of other school subjects, such as biology, science, geography or technology.



The main aim of this camp is to distract our students from their smartphones, tablets or computers and involve them in physical activities and let them feel the beauty of nature with all its benefits.

The preparation for the camp starts from making a team of teachers. Usually, all class teachers take part in this event, PE teachers and some teachers volunteers because it is not so easy to look after such a big number of students, especially when the weather and the water is warm and a lot of students want to go swimming. However, it is very important to think about meals, as the main dishes we cook on the fire. At the same time, we should take into account that every time we have to prepare new activities, think of making new things that could be interesting for our students. It is nice to say that teachers in our school are creative, their heads are full of great ideas and every year we can offer activities that students don't expect.

So, let's look at our day at a sport camp.

Early in the morning, we arrive at a campsite. Then we have camp's opening ceremony and raise a flag of a camp. After that we announce the timetable of the camp and divide students into teams. The number of teams depends of how many students attend. We give students some time to come up with a name, a slogan and the introduction of their team. Usually, we make mixed teams and as it is a sports camp, we use the competitive method. Then the main event of the day starts. Most of the students take part in various activities, mostly our teachers try to think of interesting activities, games, use unusual tools or equipment. Sometimes students have to climb, to crawl, to shoot or jump as well as to sing, to draw or create a haiku. We don't play traditional games such as basketball but, yes, darts and volleyball are the favorites. Students who don't participate in competitions help with the meals. They make sandwiches, look for the wood, collect wild plants for tea. It is also educational to learn more about plants that we can use for our food. Those who like fishing compete in fishing competition and try to catch some fish for soup. In the afternoon, we have dinner that traditionally we cook on fire. And there is a time for a rest, swimming in the river. After a break we continue with the competitions. When



all activities are done, and the winners are awarded, we sit around the campfire with a cup of tea and discuss about the day, what students like the most, what problems appear during the day and what we can improve for the next year's camp. Tired but happy we close our sports camp and return back to school and then home.

It is very important that even non-sporty students love participating in this camp and feel good, can improve their teamwork skills, sportsmanship. We also think, that taking part in this event teaches students the value of collaboration, to be responsible, stay positive, built their character. As we have students with the special needs, however, by participating in sports, they not only gain an outlet to relieve the stress but also to improve their mental health overall.

Kayaking

This sport is new in our school. At first, we, teachers, tried it and then offered to our students. As we have a river nearby, so we go kayaking every year, it's never mind, in autumn, spring or summer. Mostly it depends on the weather and the level of our river. The Sirvinta river mostly is flatwater and can be paddled most of the year. It also has white water sections and can be paddled only at a higher water level at spring flood or after heavy rains. But it is said that this river is safe for kayaking or canoeing. The length of the river is 138 km and it flows into the Sventoji (the Holy). The river is calm but not monotonous, its banks are high and sandy or very flat and suitable to stop, recreate, swim and entertain. Obstacles that are found in this water route are shoals, shallow fords, large stones and meanders.

We organize 1 day long trips with some stops in order to rest, have a snack or explore the surroundings of the river which are rich of various nature and cultural heritage objects. So students can learn more about history of our region, visit mounds (Pasodninkai, Maskoliškiai, Manciusenai, Sliziai), manors (Lapsiai), old wooden crosses and mythological stones (Liukonys). These objects attract their attention.



Usually we have some routes. It depends on how old our students and how physically strong they are. We can choose from the shortest route, approximately 6 km till our campsite, for younger students, to 26,5 km until the Sventoji. If we choose the longer route, we finish it near Upninkai village (Jonava region), paddling 2,5 km on the Sventoji river. Students like kayaking on our river because flowing water, ravines and rock obstacles make it a fun and memorable one. Paddling is a great way to enjoy the waterway.

Kayaking involve paddling a small craft through water, so you can improve your aerobics fitness, strength and flexibility. It also teaches responsibility and discipline.

Cycling

Cycling is a very popular activity with our students. Most of them have bicycles so it is not a problem to organize a bike trip for all ages of students. And also our school has some bikes that we can offer to those who do not have them. Riding a bike is healthy, fun and a low-impact form of exercise for all ages. Cycling is easy to fit into our daily routine by riding to the shop, school or work.

Usually we have trips around our place. The furthest places that we have reached were Moletai Astronomical Observatory (Moletai region) – 76,4 km and Bazuoles mound (Trakai region) – 58,5 km. Both they were 2 days bike trips. But now we do not do such long trips. Students like cycling, and we have visited a lot of famous places near Gelvonai town. Cycling is safe enough because there is not any busy roads and the territory is flat, we try to avoid motorways, so students feel safe. Also it is fun, cheap and good for the environment. Cycling is useful for our health, our body and our minds.

Every time we ride on a new route we come back with many new stories and memories. New roads also mean new challenges and threats, but they also mean new possibilities.

So, when did you last smell the rose or walk on a new road?



To sum up all our practices, I can say that students have to participate in school sports to increase confidence, mental alertness and self-esteem. It helps to teach various skills to students like leadership, patience, team efforts and social skills.

