

Dear **(your principal)**,

Climbing has experienced a dramatic change from an original outdoor hobby to today's indoor profession. Simple concrete indoor walls with single, unmovable holds were created to accommodate the climbers desiring to train during the winter months. Indoor walls have advanced from the walls of the 1960's in England to the X-Games of the present time. The French reinvented the indoor wall's system by utilizing interchangeable handholds allowing for various climbing routes. Climbing walls are now seen indoors and outdoors, permanently fixed and transportable, hosting national and international competitions in which America is enthusiastically involved.

Today, people want to climb for both fun and fitness (Jacobs, 1992; Wescott, 1992). Indoor climbing has transformed from an outdoor hobby to an exciting indoor hobby advancing into a World Cup sport with proposed Olympic status.

A major and tamer component of the climbing wall is the 7-8-foot-high, laterally running, bouldering section (see attached picture). Traverse (bouldering) sections are basic in hand and foot hold construction. Traversing hones in on developing techniques as well as building and/or maintaining the climber's strength with no aid needed from safety equipment. The **(your school)** Physical Education Program proposes to build a traversing wall to benefit students, faculty and staff.

Purpose/Benefits

(your school) Physical Education Program believes this ever growing interest in vertical and lateral climbing is more than a fad that will diminish in the near future. According to Fesko, climbing represents an exciting new phenomenon in the fitness industry and is growing rapidly (1992). Not surprisingly, children have really taken to climbing walls (Mittelstaedt, 1997). Approximately eight elementary schools in Worthington, Ohio, have successfully incorporated climbing walls and climbing into their physical education programs. The Campus Recreation Services Outdoor Program at Illinois State University found in 1990, that 25 universities and agencies have installed climbing walls.

Teachers involved in climbing confirm that indoor rock-climbing allows them the chance to challenge their students by having them think about the next step leading the child to progressively take responsibility for his or her own security. Therefore, climbing is a unique and stimulating pedagogical tool highly important to the creation of a myriad of learning activities and pedagogical experiences. The approach to climbing increases the recognition of an individual's strengths and weaknesses without focusing on competition.

(your school) Physical Education Program backs Mittelstaedt's philosophy that "through participation and practice, a climber will develop a unique combination of fitness that includes strength and power, endurance, flexibility, and mental tenacity" (Mittelstaedt, 1997).

AAPHERD supports and encourages many of the goals in the activity of sports climbing, which are found in most high quality physical education programs. A brilliant and common reference to climbing is the molding of gymnastics and ballet rehearsed over and over again. Yet, novice climbers can enjoy the sport as much as a skilled climber based on the requirements that a beginner needs the skills only necessary to use a ladder. Climbing will enhance one's problem-solving skills while trying to negotiate through routes. Following and/or choosing routes (paths) on a climbing wall, the climber will strengthen their mind, both halves of the brain, by using logic, spatial awareness, problem solving skills, ingenuity and imagination, all under physical exertion (McNeal, 1994). Climbing encourages the shift in the philosophy from exclusively teaching sport and game skills to improving health and well being of participants in activities. The focus must be changed to the well-being of individuals as well as games and sports if physical education is to be a part of the future.

Climbing and climbing classes are common in schools and are being increasingly found in public and private school physical education programs. Future teachers of physical education will know what and how to properly, safely and knowledgeably teach students about the sport of climbing and its many purposes and benefits. The Physical Education Program of **(your school)** enthusiastically and willingly desires to be a program to help inform and lead the wave of the future. Adventure activities will enhance the well being of students only if the teachers can correctly pass on the educational skills needed. **(your school)** can be a forerunner in the process of enhancing the **(your area)** school system.

Students can directly experience opportunities to bring together and integrate physical, emotional, social, intellectual and aesthetic aspects of their personalities. Physical education teachers recognize the ability of climbing to build personal stamina, flexibility, muscle strength and self-discipline and confidence while educating as well as interesting students of a sport not easily naturally accessible. Climbing undoubtedly has become an exciting alternate source for reaching physical fitness. The physical and mental benefits include the following:

- Muscular endurance is the body's ability to generate sub-maximal force over an extended period of time. Climbing is a sport composed of multiple and various small moves never requiring a singular maximal burst. With experience in climbing, an individual will gradually acquire the ability to achieve more and more moves along a wall.
- Flexibility refers to the range of motion at a joint (Mittelstaedt, 1997). Constant stretching and reaching requires the body to be able to maneuver over distance. Well-

rounded fitness and training programs including flexibility exercises reduce one's risk of injuries.

- Muscular strength is the amount of weight the body can move through gravity in one maximal force. A climber moves and adjusts himself with and against gravity with every move along the wall. Transferring and manipulating the body weight adds resistance to the muscles building the strength in an inviting and enjoyable fashion, without mundane lifting, allowing for dynamic “crux,” a push-up-style or pull-up-style: moves including great demands on the leg muscles.
- Mental fitness will increase the person's self-discipline and confidence by his or her remaining calm and not listening to the “inner voice” bowing out under the extreme and strenuous situation in completing challenging routes, expanding the climber's power to use logic, spatial awareness, and problem-solving skills, ingenuity and imagination.
- Cardio respiratory fitness means the heart, lungs, and blood vessels are able to supply oxygen to the muscles in use, while removing carbon dioxide from the system. New competitions in climbing stress speed, a highly entertaining and possible change to regular movements.
- Aerobic work is gained with repetition. Raising the heart rate, expanding the lungs and resisting gravity provide incomparable aerobic workouts. Climbing is associated with gymnastics and ballet.

The **(your school)** Physical Education Program recognizes that people want to climb for fun and fitness and also identifies that long-term fitness and wellness is acquired only when the participants can enjoy the time spent during activities. Rock faces combine both physical and mental challenge with the fun of climbing and promise to take the human spirit to new heights (Mittelstaedt, 1997). Elementary schools around the country have successfully integrated climbing into their facilities and the benefits and interest have soared beyond the original expectations (Ryan, Ross, & Maina, 2000). Offering a traversing (bouldering) wall will give the students a chance to enhance themselves and experience a sport not found in this area. Beneficiaries will be faculty, staff, and students as well as those who are invited or come to visit and take advantage of such a great opportunity offered by **(your school)**.

Project Goals and Objectives

Goal

The Physical Education Department at **(your school)** proposes to build a traversing climbing wall for their students, faculty and staff.

Objectives

1. Build a 40-foot wide by 8-foot high traversing wall on an outside **(or inside)** wall of the school.
2. Develop a climbing wall curriculum to include grades 1-5.
3. Develop a climbing wall wellness program for faculty and staff.

Location

The traversing wall will be located on the south and west walls inside of the gymnasium. The wall is made of cinder block and reaches a height of 15 feet. The length of the traversing wall will be a total of 40 feet extending 40 feet from the southwest corner in each direction. The height of the traversing wall holds will be no more than 7 feet from the floor. There is ample space to install foam matting under the wall for student safety.

Construction

The traverse wall will be made out of 4' X 4' climbing panels made out of plywood covered with GymTex, a colorful textured finish, specially design for climbing . The panels each have 32 holds placement, to allow for a maximum flexibility and adjustability when installing the climbing holds. The holds will be ordered to reflect a traversing wall course that will be consist of different shapes and colors holds, specially chosen for the school. A traversing wall 40 feet long and 8 feet high will require a total of 20 panels and 128 holds. The holds will be placed so the highest a student can climb is 2 to 3 feet from the ground. The installation of the panels and holds will be installed

according to the “ Sketches of installation for climbing panels” (annex # 1) . Construction is scheduled to take place on August 3.

Maintenance

A traversing wall has low maintenance with proper assembly. All equipment utilized by the students is made of stainless steel or concrete. A weekly checklist will be sufficient in maintaining the wall. A simple checklist will consist of the following:

- Tightening loose handholds
- Cleaning all handholds
- Checking for loose T-Nuts (anchors for climbing holds)
- Check for worn foam matting

Security

The gymnasium area has always been an area that is off-limits to unsupervised activities. The gym door is always locked and entry can only be obtained with the presence of a teacher. Students will also be reminded that the wall is only to be used with proper supervision. The holds can also be taken down within a 10-minute period for added security.

Budget

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<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supplier</u>
20	4X4 climbing panels	150 each	3000 \$	PM Climbing
128	holds	Included with the panels		
Transport:		135 \$	Yellow freight	
Total			3135 \$	

The physical education and school maintenance departments will provide the labor.

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