

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Climbing wall is an essential part of phys ed program at SHS

It's a rainy Monday morning outside Sanford High School. Inside the gym, however, the climbing wall is alive with energy and encouragement on this cold fall day.

"You got this! Grab the red grip by your right hand," directs one student anchoring the other from the ground, belaying her classmate halfway up the wall. "I got you!"

This is the scene at Sanford High School's new climbing wall, funded by the Sanford Schools Legacy Foundation last year so that students would have an indoor climbing wall at the new high school. Sanford Schools Legacy Foundation paid in advance for the climbing wall built by Wingspeed Adventures, using unrestricted funds, and is now seeking a sponsor (\$17,500) in exchange for naming rights.

Part of the high school's Outdoor Adventure physical education program, the climbing wall is a highlight of the program, says teacher Kevin Way. He trains his students

to belay in the first two classes, then they are allowed to tackle the wall and the zipline. This goes hand in hand with three more classes outdoors on the new 350-foot zipline, also funded by the Legacy Foundation, expanded from the 150-foot line at the old school.

The wall offers the students a "challenge by choice."

"They don't have to climb to the top, but they at least have to try. They have to challenge themselves," explains teacher

Kevin Way. "This gives them the opportunity to grow."

It's also something different for the students. "It is so much fun," says freshman Addison Long. "It's crazy. I've been to other schools and there is nothing like this. It's definitely a good arm workout. I like that everyone can try it out, so everyone gets a chance at it."

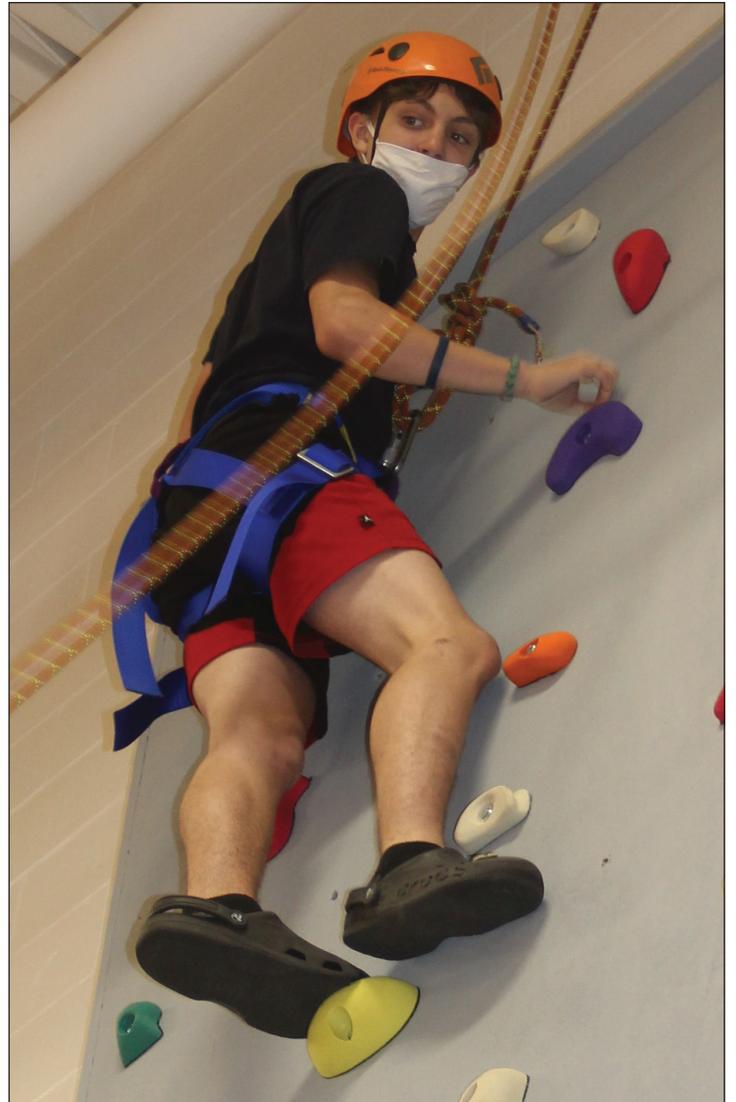
This class offers a nontraditional challenge to all styles of learning. "Even a highly athletic kid, he may be terrified of heights," says Way, describing why this wall is so essential to his program. "And there's only a handful of schools in Maine that have it."

The wall and zipline are the highlights of the class.

"Those two high-challenge elements — had to have it," says Way. SHS had a wall at the old school, but it was outside and only one student could use it at a time. This new wall can accommodate three kids at a time — no matter the weather. The popularity of the class continues as word gets out.

"It allows tradition to continue. We're very fortunate and we very much appreciate it," says Way.

Back in class, with his classmates cheering him on, freshman Corbin Frost sets a new wall record with his 12.36-second climb. "I didn't even think I could go that fast!"



With his classmates cheering him on, freshman Corbin Frost sets a new wall climbing record at 12.36 seconds. How long will it last?



Sponsor our Climbing Wall!

Naming rights to the new climbing wall at Sanford High School are now up for grabs. The Legacy Foundation funded the new installment in the gap between schools last year, and is now seeking a sponsor in exchange for naming rights. For consideration, please email legacy@sanford.org.