Mission

What is the effect of mandatory physical education on high school students and its implications on school districts’ budgets?
Divisions of Research

- Mandate
- Obesity
- Education
- Budget
- Community Guide

Mandate

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- Apart from block scheduling, all students must participate in daily physical education.

- Exceptions
  - Varsity sports
  - Advanced Placement classes
  - Marching band
  - ROTC
  - Special education
  - Financial issues
  - Academic requirements
The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) received 637 requests from schools and 263 requests from districts to waive or to modify daily physical education as of January 2010 which were approved by the General Assembly or the State Board of Education.

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- Movement skills
- Health-related fitness
- Knowledge of students
- Opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively
- Healthy habits
Illinois Obesity Facts

- 1 in 3 kids is obese or overweight
- Illinois ranks 5th in the nation for childhood obesity
- In 2007 an estimated 20.7 percent of 10- to 17-year-olds in Illinois were considered obese
- Only 19 schools are involved in the Coordinated Approach to Children’s Health (CATCH) program
- According to Men’s Fitness magazine, Chicago is the 5th fattest city in the nation

Physical Education Facts

- According to The Washington Examiner, “Health experts recommend 30 minutes of daily physical education for elementary school students, and 45 minutes for those in junior high and high school.”
- According to Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, “Activity time in a traditional P.E. class can be less than 37% of the total class time”.
Education

- We have found that there is a correlation between physical activity and higher testing scores.
- In an NYC FITNESSGRAM of fourth through eighth grade students that scored higher on physical fitness tests also scored higher on academic tests (NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene).
- Naperville Central High School in Illinois has an intensive P.E. course directly before an academic course for those students who struggle. On average these students read a half a year ahead of at risk students who did not participate in the program.

P.E. Budgetary Concerns

- Future research can be conducted to gather physical education information.
- Desired data:
  - Number of P.E. waivers passed for students
  - Number of students eligible for waivers that are additionally enrolled in P.E. classes
  - Average salaries of P.E. teachers
  - Student/teacher ratio
  - Calculate the amount of money saved if students with the ability to waive P.E. did so
Over the past couple of months, students from the Student Advisory Council have been attending meetings of the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Task Force.

Their attendance had two purposes: to give input from a student’s perspective to the Task Force and to relay the topics of discussion from the meetings of the Task Force to the Student Advisory Council.

The purpose of the first couple of meetings of the Task Force was to develop a plan to improve physical education in the state of Illinois.

Members of the Task Force discussed different types of enhanced physical education and the strengths and weaknesses of proposed plans of action.

In their most recent meeting, the Task Force created a firm vision statement for their goals: All Illinois K-12 students will participate in daily high quality, physical education in order to promote academic achievement and realize the lifetime benefits of fitness.

The Student Advisory Council has considered the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Task Force’s discussions and vision statement in its research and as it considered solutions to the Illinois physical education issue. This Task Force is beginning to spread awareness about the benefits of quality physical education.
Conclusions

- We have found that the Physical Education mandate is lacking. We suggest reforming the mandate to include more specific requirements for physical fitness while encouraging those districts or schools who are eligible for waivers to obtain them and to alleviate the financial pressure on high schools to maintain a mandatory four year P.E. program.
References


References Continued


- **Strongly Recommended Viewing**