

# Strong Academics. Healthy Habits. Enhanced Social-Emotional Skills.



These are the keys to success for our students, both inside and outside of the classroom. They are the tools we strive to give our children every day. They are the foundation for a successful future.

**And they can all be fostered in one class – *physical education*.**

Illinois' kids deserve to have physical education so they can be academically competitive, healthy, and ready to take on the challenges that face the next generation. State, district, and school policymakers have an opportunity to embrace physical education, creating policies, setting standards and providing the resources students need to be successful in all areas of life. Building a standards-based curriculum and following a minutes-per-week recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention helps ensure equity no matter where our students live.



“P.E. is the one class where students are provided **a physical, mental and emotional experience**. The ability to be active throughout the day promotes improved brain functions, including students' ability to concentrate and retain information at a high rate. P.E. also provides students with access to activities that they may not have the means to access outside of the normal school day.”

**Clay Reagan**

School Administrator, District 200, Oak Park & River Forest

“It's important that **students get P.E. everyday**. You can make it happen if you say you want it to happen- in our small, rural district, having P.E. everyday helped justify having a full-time P.E. teacher who also teaches health and computers.”

**Bob Bowser**

Superintendent and Principal, Allendale CCD 17

## Physical education is proven to:



### Improve grades and standardized test scores.

One report found that kids do markedly better in math, reading, and writing when they are physically active on a regular basis.



### Increase healthy behaviors.

Routine physical activity reduces kids' risks of developing chronic issues such as heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



### Help students stay on-task in the classroom.

Physical activity in youth can improve mental health by decreasing and preventing conditions such as anxiety and depression, while enhancing self-esteem, according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.



**Now is the time to stand up for our children and make sure they have every resource they need to be successful. And that starts with investing in high-quality physical education.**

“ Exercise has been clearly demonstrated to **improve mental health, combat depression and anxiety**, and allow children to re-focus on academic skill building, more than making up for the time spent in physical activity. ”

#### Dr. David Soglin

Chief Medical Officer, La Rabida Children's Hospital,  
Chicago, Illinois; Illinois Chapter, American Academy of  
Pediatrics member

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**See what parents, teachers, school leaders, and pediatricians are saying about the importance of P.E.**

“ The amount of stress, homework, and studying required by high school students today is greatly **impacting the mental, emotional, and physical health**. Physical education is not only a class where the majority of students get movement throughout their entire day, but it is one of the only classes that works on all three components of health: mental, emotional, and physical. ”

**P.E. Teacher**  
Will County, Illinois

“ P.E. benefits students by **giving them the tools to stay healthy and physically active** while also building the skills to be self-directed, collaborative learners. ”

**Alex S.**  
P.E. Teacher, Naperville CUSD 203

“ **It is the foundation of youth and adolescent development.** P.E. encompasses development of the whole student. I have heard the phrase ‘educate the whole’ countless times. Without P.E., students are consistently lacking in needs being met on a social, emotional and, of course, physical level. ”

**Amy C.**  
P.E. Teacher, Hinsdale, IL

“ Our school district community prides itself in educating the whole child. We not only want to support the academic growth of our students, but their physical health as well. **By creating a strong foundation for developing healthy habits early in our students’ lives, we are helping them strive to have a successful future** academically, physically and emotionally. These programs and policies have changed the way we think about physical fitness. It has become a way of life for our students. ”

**Samantha S.**  
Principal, Berwyn South District 100

“ **Our students need to move**, not just for their physical health, but for their brains, their mental, social and emotional health. And they need to be taught the value in that so they can continue to use physical activity as a tool for life in all areas of their health and wellness. ”

**Lynn H.**

P.E. Teacher, Naperville CUSD 203

“ P.E. teaches the idea that **life balance includes education, physical activity, and emotional health**. It improves classroom behavior and encourages healthy minds and bodies. ”

**Dr. Cynthia J. Mears**

Adolescent Medicine Specialist, Advocate Children's Hospital, Oak Lawn, Illinois;  
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics member

“ My children get quality P.E. every day and they love the exercise. **It gives them more energy to get through the rest of the day academically.** ”

**Chris**

Parent, Brookfield, IL

“ The value of a strong P.E. program **goes hand in hand with a strong overall school curriculum**. Active people tend to score higher on standardized tests; so it stands to reason that you can't have one without the other. ”

**Joseph C.**

P.E./School Health Advocate, Lockport, IL

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