



Our Children, Our Future Our Kids Need Physical Activity & Recess

Our children are facing one of the largest public health threats to date: childhood obesity. Children who live in poverty are at a significantly increased risk of food insecurity and lack of physical activity opportunities that further increases their risk of childhood obesity and adult diseases like hypertension and diabetes. One simple solution is increasing the amount of physical activity during the school day. Daily physical activity promotes not only health benefits, but is also linked with enhanced academic performance.

Background

- In 2005, WV passed the Healthy Lifestyles Act which required “not less than 30 minutes of physical education, including physical exercise and age appropriate physical activities, for not less than 3 days a week.”
- There is no minimum requirement for daily physical activity such as recess.
- The WV Board of Education Wellness Committee’s position statement calls for “at least sixty minutes of physical activity everyday through a combination of physical education, recess, and before/after school activities.” But there is no policy or accountability for implementation.

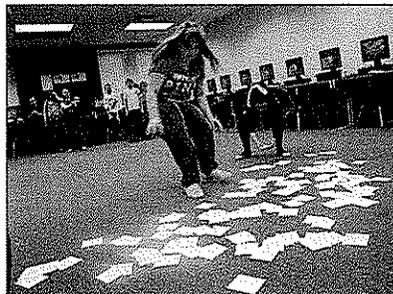


Each day before school, kids at Kanawha Elementary have physical activity time.

Rationale

Kids who are more physically active perform better academically.

- Multiple studies have found physical fitness to be significantly and positively associated with academic performance. This finding was demonstrated locally in Wood County schools.
- A 2008 survey found that a statewide policy requiring at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity improved students’ focus and alertness.
- Children who perform better on physical fitness tests are more likely to earn higher reading and math scores.



First-graders at Sutton Elementary School are playing an active game to learn about vowels and consonants.

Daily physical activity results in better attendance, improved student behavior, and fewer disciplinary problems.

- In a 2007 study, higher physical fitness results were associated with better school attendance and fewer incidents of drugs, alcohol, violence or truancy.
- Another study found that physical activity breaks improved student

Recommendations

Training



Establish requirements for **competencies** in physical education and physical activity and offer **professional development** and training for teachers, PE teachers, wellness champions, and school administrators.

Physical Activity



- An **additional 30 minutes of physical activity time** such as recess, dedicated physical activity time at the beginning of school, before lunch, at the end of the day and/or active academics during classroom in addition to PE as outlined by the Healthy Lifestyle Act of 2005
- $\geq 50\%$ of physical activity and PE class time is **moderate to vigorous intensity**

Accountability



The school master schedule should reflect planned physical education and physical activity for monitoring and accountability.