PERK: The Status of Physical Education in CA Schools

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Presenter Disclosures

Heather Diaz, DrPH, MPH

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationship to disclose.



Background

- Youth obesity on rise
- Absence of physical education (PE) and physical activity (PA) in CA schools
- California Ed. Codes 51210 and 51222 mandates
- > 2006 CCPHA** report on statewide district compliance of Ed. Code 51210 reported that more than 51% of the districts did not meet the minimum physical education standard of 200 minutes of PÉ every 10 school days.
- PE primarily untouched market for legislators.

*Children Now, California 2009 Report Card **California Center for Public Health Advocacy, Dropping the Ball

Background

- Funders: The California Endowment, Kaiser Permanente
- Primary Objective: Examine state of physical education and physical activity in schools throughout CA
- December 08-December 10
- No study to date has examined statewide 8 regions of the state
- Comprehensive Lit Review (217 sources)
- Make policy recc to CA legislators on needed policy change

Background

Primary Partners:

- Sacramento State University, Department of Kinesiology and Health Science
- UC Berkeley Center for Weight and Health
- Collaborative Partners:

 - California Department of Education California Project LEAN California School Boards Association
 - CAHPERD

 - Healthy Eating Active Communities Statewide Youth Board on Obesity Prevention
 - California School Nurses Organization
 - Dairy Council of California
 - Others

Methods: Sampling

- Primary Target Population:
- 1. Physical education teachers K-12 (elementary/secondary)
- 2. District level physical education representatives
- Elementary school teachers (focus on 3. underserved districts >50% FRL; high % ELL)
- *Representation from all 8 regions across the state

Methods: Sampling

- Online mixed methods survey
 - Quantitative
 - Open-ended questions
 - Thematic analysis of qualitative findings:
 - Tape-recording and transcription of interviews and focus groups



Results: Demographics

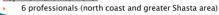


- 690 respondents (n=147 districts)
- 44.2% credentialed PE teachers secondary level
 - 34.6% elementary school teachers
- 22% credentialed PE teachers elementary level
- 6.8% district level PE reps
- ~40% of schools responded

Focus Groups:

6 regions (72 people total); Greater LA; Inland Empire; Greater San Diego; Bay Area; Greater Sacramento; Central Valley

Key Informant Interviews::



Results: Elementary

- Person responsible teach Elem PE: 59.3% elementary MS teachers
 - Ongoing training: 27.9% None; 24.4% Not Know
- Received grant funds in district for PE:
 53.9% Not Know; 32.4% Governors Block Grant
- How PE \$ is spent:
 51.5% purchase equipment; 40.3% Not Know



Results: Elementary

- Biggest barriers at elem level:
 - 1. District not placing PE as priority
 - 2. Lack of credential PE teachers
 - 3. Lack of training for elem MS teachers
 - 4. Lack of admin interest or support
 - 5. Amount of time assigned to PE by district
- Elem School meeting 200 min requirement:
 64% No; 30% yes; 5.6 not applicable



Results: Secondary

- Years currently engaging in PE:
 50.1% 2 years (permanent exemption)
- Time spent in MVPA:
- 41.5% said 51-75% of time
- 29.6% said 21-50% of time
- 14.9% said 75-100% of time
- Biggest barriers to quantity/quality:
 - Class size; exceptions; focus=athletics



Results: Overall

Qualitative:

- De-valuing of Physical Education (at all levels)
 - · Learning to swim on the bleachers
 - · Evaluating physical educators (it took 30 years)
- Over emphasis on test scores
- "Their name, their school, their score."
- 'The shut down the school to take those tests. They don't shut down the school to take the physical education test."



Results: Elementary

- Pressure of responsibilities:
 - Not enough time
 - · One more subject they must master
 - · Administrative pressure-test scores
 - "We are a program improvement district and they all know the minimum requirement, but the teachers are told, you stay in that classroom and work in improving those test scores!"
- On-going training:
 - One shot deal not working

Results: Secondary

- Class size:
 - "1:90 ratio" with 90 moving bodies
 - Safety issues
- Funding:
 - Line item funding for PE-more detrimental to PE
 "You can't use the economy for not providing a
 - quality education to a child."



Results: Secondary

- Exceptions: pull outs; substitutions
 - "Administrators are looking for any reason to get them out of PE class. Our administrators just gave a girl a full year's credit for going to Europe!"
 - "Kid...had to turn in paperwork that he went to the health club." to get PE credit
 - "Pictures"; "Punishment"



- Lack of inclusion of PE professionals in administrative decision making
- > De-valuing of physical education at all levels:
 - Money
 - Support
 - Oversight-state, district, local
- > Safety issues must be addressed now



Policy Recommendations

- Improve the content and evaluation of school physical education programs
 - Monitoring and accountability at all levels
 - Measurement of quality physical education
 Physical education for all students, avoid opting out
 - for other subject areas Professional development and credentialing
 - Adopt a standards based standardized physical education curriculum
 - Support and funding to schools program improvement schools
 - Administrative staffing at the state and district levels to assure increased oversight and support for physical education



Policy Recommendations

- Integrate physical activity into the full school program
 - Increase physical activity in the classroom across all subject matters
 - Increase recess and activity breaks outside of class time
 - Improve school facilities and playground designs statewide
- Recognize the broader context of school physical education and physical activity programs
- Increase integration of school, after school, and community physical activity programs.

Next Steps

- Valuable resources to physical education advocates
 - $\,{}^{_\circ}$ One location for supportive research
- Used in presentations to avoid cuts and layoffs
- No state-level policy changes YET
- CAHPERD included PERK findings in online advocacy kits
- Moving toward advocacy work



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