



Every Student Succeeds Act OVERVIEW

Include PE in Every State's Education Plan — and Every Child's Education

Right now, every state is putting together a comprehensive plan to ensure all students receive a fair, equitable and high-quality education.

These plans are required by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, recently passed by Congress to replace *No Child Left Behind*.

ESSA requires that states develop plans that address academic standards, regular assessments, school and district accountability, and special help for struggling schools.

These plans give states and localities the ability to choose how to best meet the needs of their students. This is not a federal mandate, and it's not part of Common Core. This is truly about local control and doing what's best for our children.

Every state must include math, reading/language arts and science. But states are also required to include at least one additional area related to school quality or student success.

The American Heart Association is advocating that access to physical education (PE) should be a key indicator in every state's plan.

PE isn't just about physical activity, as important as that is. PE addresses the needs of the whole child, positively impacting their physical, mental and emotional health. PE programs have been shown to improve judgement, reduce stress and increase self-esteem. We also know that keeping kids physically active helps them better focus and achieve when they are in the classroom.

Sadly, too few students are getting PE in school. Only 4% of elementary, 8% of middle and 2% of high schools provide daily PE or its equivalent for the entire year. Having a strong state standard is critical to improving the health and achievement of all students, regardless of their zip code.

It's really quite simple: PE helps kids do better in school and lead healthier lives. And that's why it's critical it be included in every state's education plan.

Exercise Their Minds. Include PE.

Voices for Healthy Kids is specifically working to have states include the following in their state ESSA plans and state and local report cards:

- **Percentage of elementary schools offering 150 minutes of PE per week**
- **Percentage of middle schools offering 225 minutes of physical education per week**
- **Percentage of high schools requiring PE for high school graduation**