

## ESSA PE Sample comment/letter of support

[Appropriate official/committee/body]:

A proper and complete education ensures children are well-prepared for the rest of their lives. This should include the wellbeing of the whole child, supporting their physical, mental and emotional health. However, with the ever-growing number of priorities competing for time during the school day, too many of our children have lost what was once a given: access to quality physical education (PE).

PE is about far more than just fun and games. Strong PE programs taught by trained instructors not only improve the health of our children, but also help them perform better academically. A Centers for Disease Control analysis concluded that physical education improves student attendance, test scores, participation and enthusiasm for other academic subjects, motivation to learn, and reduces discipline referrals. The research also showed PE can have a positive impact on cognitive ability, help kids avoid tobacco, and reduce their risk for insomnia, depression, and anxiety.

In short, active kids learn better, and quality PE programs help ensure that our children are on their way to a healthier future.

You currently have an important opportunity to support healthier kids by supporting PE. As you convene the relevant stakeholders to develop and finalize [STATE'S] *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) implementation plan, we strongly encourage you to include physical education as a key indicator for school quality and student success.

The new law includes important provisions and support to states and districts to ensure all children receive a “well-rounded” education, and unlike under previous law, PE is now an approved option to help meet that requirement. ESSA also gives states the flexibility to use Title I, Title II and Title IV funds to support PE programs. These changes reflect the growing consensus that PE is critical to student success. With the troubling trend of inactivity and health issues facing our children, including PE in our state's plan is an important way to improve the health and well-being of every [STATE] child — regardless of their zip code.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the importance and tremendous value PE can provide as you engage in discussions on the state education plan, and we are happy to be of assistance in any other way needed.

Thank you for your consideration and for thinking of the health and well-being of our children as a critical building block of a successful education.