

Enhance PE Task Force
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, December 19, 2012
9:00am – 12:00pm

Illinois Public Act 97-1102 created the Enhanced Physical Education Task Force. This law requires the creation of a task force charged with promoting and recommending enhanced physical education programs that can be integrated with a broader wellness strategy and health curriculum in elementary and secondary schools in this State, including educating and promoting leadership on enhanced physical education among school district and school officials; developing and utilizing metrics to assess the impact of enhanced physical education; promoting training and professional development in enhanced physical education for teachers and other school and community stakeholders; identifying and seeking local, State, and national resources to support enhanced physical education; and such other strategies as may be identified by the task force. Additionally the task force shall make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on Goals 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 of the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health. The Task Force shall focus on updating the standards based on research in neuroscience that impacts the relationship between physical activity and learning.

Task Force Members Attending:

LaMar Hasbrouck, Director, Illinois Department of Public Health; Angela Crotty, Business Manager, Midlothian School District 143; Bruce Bohren, President, Illinois PTA; Sandra Noel, retired teacher, Hatch Elementary; Maureen Fournier, Southwest Suburban Teachers Union/IFT; Deb Vogel, retired member of Illinois Education Association; Stephanie Whyte, Chief Health Officer, Chicago Public Schools; Jessica Madrigal, Great Lakes ADA Center; Jean Sophie, Superintendent, Lake Bluff School District; Neil Duncan, Naperville Central High School; Anna Barnes, Schools Programs Manager, CLOCC; Lynne Braun, Nurse Practitioner and Professor, Rush University Medical Center, American Heart Association; Representative Linda Chapa LaVia, Illinois State Representative; Amaal Tokars, Executive Director, Kendall County Health Department; Michael Brunson, Recording Secretary, Chicago Teachers Union; Kelly Nowak, Vice President, Geneva CUSD 304 Board of Education; Annie Lionberger, Chicago Public Schools; Mark Bishop, Vice President of Policy and Communications, Healthy Schools Campaign; Rick Reigner, Illinois YMCA Statewide Alliance; Elissa Bassler, CEO, Illinois Public Health Institute; Representative John Cavaletto, Illinois State Representative, 107th District; Senator Sam McCann, Illinois State Senator, 149th District; Christopher Koch, State Superintendent, Illinois State Board of Education; Peggy Pryor, Quincy Federation of Teachers; Daryl Morrison, Education Policy & Agency Relations Director, Illinois Education Association; Amanda Minor, Director, Douglas County Health Department; Serena Preston, Superintendent, Illinois School for the Visually Impaired; Lynne Haeffele, Education Policy Director, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Support Staff Present:

Nicole Besse, Legislative Analyst, Illinois Senate Republican staff

Guests: Paul Zientarski, Retired PE teacher, Naperville Central High School

Illinois Department of Public Health Staff: David Carvalho; Leticia Reyes-Nash; Conny Moody, Tom Schaffer

Illinois State Board of Education Staff: Mark Haller; Joey Ohnesorge; Jessica Gerdes; Shawn Backs

Illinois Public Health Institute Support Staff: Jess Lynch; Kristin Monnard; Sarah Chusid; Coby Jansen

Task Force Members not in attendance:

Bill Truesdale, Principal, Douglas Taylor Elementary; Linda Holmes, Illinois State Senator; Holly Benjamin, MD, appointed by the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Welcome & Opening Remarks:

Shawn Backs called the meeting to order at 9:10am and welcomed everyone to the first Enhanced PE Task Force meeting.

Dr. Hasbrouck (IDPH) officially welcomed the task force and reviewed their charge to promote and recommend improvements to physical education for children across Illinois. He reminded the task force that high quality physical education has both health and educational benefits. He reminded that physical education is the bedrock of learning, and that it is critical to take a lifecourse approach to physical education, keeping in mind that children must learn how to take care of themselves and how to be physically active throughout their lives. The lessons children learn in physical education are just as important as reading, writing, and arithmetic. He stressed the importance of finding innovative ways to fit physical education in the school day without taking away from other class time. He thanked the task force for their hard work and expressed that the task force has the full support of the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Shawn Backs outlined the agenda for the morning.

Task force members and guests in Springfield introduced themselves. Chicago task force members and guests then introduced themselves.

OMA & Ethics Requirements

Shawn Backs reviewed the Open Meetings Act & ethics requirements for the task force. She explained the ethics training and urged task force members to fax in their certificate of completion to document that they had been trained. She then discussed the Open

Meetings Act online training and asked members to also complete this training and email their certificates to Coby Jansen at the Illinois Public Health Institute.

Dr. Koch arrived late at 9:27. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and discussed the importance of the charge of the task force. He noted the strong evidence base for Enhanced Physical Education and pointed to success stories across the state. He said that the task force must make these accomplishments known throughout the state. He encouraged the task force to consider how they will do the following:

- promote training and professional development around Enhanced P.E.
- ensure that teachers have the knowledge they need
- develop metrics to measure Enhanced P.E.
- ensure there is a return on investment for Enhanced P.E.
- reduce the data burden on school local districts
- identify and seek out local, state, and national resources to support physical education
- provide revised, updated state learning standards that correspond with current research

Dr. Koch reminded the group that these improvements will require collaboration between the health and education sectors. He expressed his hope that the Task Force will be able to work together efficiently and effectively.

Review of Bylaws

Shawn Backs described the highlights of the bylaws and announced that a simple majority of members of the Task Force would constitute a quorum. She then opened the floor for comments.

Maureen Fournier (Southwest Suburban Teachers Union/IFT) asked a question regarding the length limitation of comments discussed in Article III of the bylaws, noting that the rule under Section 4-4 currently read that “Ordinarily comments shall be limited to x minutes.” Backs acknowledged this omission and proposed that 3-5 minutes would be an appropriate length for comments. There were no counterproposals regarding comment length. The group agreed to Backs’ proposal of 3-5 minutes.

Vote on Adoption of Bylaws

Dr. Koch asked for a motion to adopt the Task Force bylaws. Mark Bishop (Healthy Schools Campaign) filed the motion to adopt. The motion was seconded by Senator McCann.

Review of Public Act 97-1102 and Task Force Charge

David Carvalho (IDPH) reviewed the purpose of PA 97-1102. He discussed the origins of Enhanced P.E. evidence-based methods from the CDC Community Guide. He noted that the first voluntary Enhanced P.E. Task Force culminated in a report that recommended

that the Task Force be formalized, and that the appointed Task Force would be working within the framework of the statute. Carvalho expressed that the ultimate goal of the Task Force is to develop a report to foster promotion and development of Enhanced P.E. in Illinois. He reviewed the charges of the Task Force outlined under Purpose #1 of PA 97-1102:

- “**Promote and recommend enhanced physical education** programs that can be integrated with a broader wellness strategy and health curriculum in elementary and secondary schools in this State, including :
 - **educating and promoting leadership** on enhanced physical education among school district and school officials;
 - **developing and utilizing metrics** to assess the impact of enhanced physical education;
 - **promoting training and professional development** in enhanced physical education for teachers and other school and community stakeholders;
 - **identifying and seeking local, State, and national resources** to support enhanced physical education;
 - and such other strategies as may be identified by the task force. ”

Carvalho then reviewed Purpose #2 of the Task Force, which is stated as follows:

“Make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on Goals 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 of the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health. The Task Force shall focus on **updating the standards based on research in neuroscience** that impacts the relationship between physical activity and learning.”

Carvalho stated that the report must be filed with Illinois General Assembly and the Governor by August 31, 2013.

Overview of IL Learning Standards

Shawn Backs called Task Force members’ attention to the Illinois State Learning Standards in their packets. Sandy Noel introduced the learning standards, explaining that they were intended to focus on what children need to know. She stated that when the current state learning standards were developed in 1997 they were based on best practices and national standards, but that the evidence-base and best practices have changed since then. She noted the need to continue to update the state learning standards and stressed their importance, explaining that these standards form the foundation of physical education curriculum. Each P.E. class is structured around the learning standards, so it is important that the learning standards be up to date and based on current best practices.

Noel then reviewed the current Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health, which are as follows:

- Goal 19 - Movement Skills

- Goal 20 - Physical Fitness
- Goal 21 - Team-Building
- Goal 22 - Health Promotion, Prevention and Treatment
- Goal 23 - Human Body Systems
- Goal 24 - Communications and Decision-Making

Noel then presented an argument for the need to update the learning standards, noting the changing context around physical education, including new NASPE (National Association for Sport and Physical Education) standards, new neuroscience research on the relationship between physical activity and learning, and the health crisis among Illinois youth due to the obesity epidemic. She stated that the new standards would be based on best practices and would serve as a guide in the development of curriculum, which will align with the latest research and the Enhanced P.E. model.

Carvalho restated the importance of regular maintenance on state learning standards to ensure they are aligned with current research and best practices.

Defining “Enhanced P.E.”

Bucks introduced Paul Zientarski, a physical education teacher from Naperville Central High School. He presented the evidence base for Enhanced P.E. He described a range of studies that demonstrate the connection between fitness and academic achievement. He cited a study from West Virginia that demonstrated that student academic performance dipped when students’ fitness declined and academic performance increased when students’ fitness improved. He also cited a study specifically demonstrating a correlation between academic achievement as measured by the Illinois Standards Achievement Test and physical fitness. He stressed that there was ample empirical evidence to substantiate the findings of these studies.

Physical activity break

Zientarski then explained to the group that any time we sit too long we are cutting off blood flow, so he asked everyone to stand up and find a partner. The group then played a series of games of Rock, Paper, Scissors.

Enhanced Academic Performance

Following the physical activity break, Zientarski continued with his presentation of the evidence base about the connection between physical fitness and academic performance. He described Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor, which is a neurotrophin which functions to translate activity into synaptic and cognitive plasticity in the adult animal. He explained that when we exercise, there is an explosion of dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine in our brains. These neurotransmitters come together and improve mood and cognitive function and reduce anxiety, irritability, impulse, and aggression. He noted that the pharmaceutical industry has prescriptions that do this for children, but that children do not need drugs because we can produce these effects naturally. He then

reviewed the health benefits of exercise and noted that another result of physical education is a reduction in disciplinary action. He then stressed that physical activity is good, but it should be viewed as a supplement to physical education rather than a replacement of physical education.

Zientarski then reviewed the success at Naperville Central and Naperville North High Schools. He shared data demonstrating that academic performance in reading and math improved when these classes were preceded by P.E. He explained that these results were being replicated in Oak Park and Aurora. He stressed that physical fitness needs to be a key element in the progressive PK-12 curriculum.

Dr. Hasbrouck then asked Zientarski whether the benefits were just about timing of the P.E. class or whether there were still academic benefits of P.E. at any time. Zientarski acknowledged that there are benefits at any time, but stressed that time matters. He also stressed that elementary school children need frequent “brain breaks” including P.E. and recess.

Dr. Stephanie Whyte left at 10:09am.

Elissa Bassler (IPHI) responded to Hasbrouck’s question, saying that P.E. with a high proportion of moderate to vigorous physical activity that improves fitness relates to improved academic achievement and learning overall regardless of the timing.

Michael Brunson (Chicago Teachers Union) asked Zientarski if he had presented this information to CPS, and Zientarski said that he had. Brunson expressed that he would like to see Zientarski present to the board as well. He then asked whether anaerobic training had similar benefits. Zientarski said that there were learning benefits associated with anaerobic training as well, but stressed that aerobic activity was superior for learning benefits.

Jessica Madrigal inquired whether Zientarski’s case study included students with physical or orthopedic impairments. Zientarski responded that the data did not include these students, but noted that Naperville Central was having great success with Adapted Physical Education for disabled students.

Amaal Tokars (Kendall County Health Department) noted that the data presented by Zientarski demonstrated correlation rather than causality between physical education and school performance and asked whether this data considered some of other risk factors that might factor into the results. Zientarski said that it did not.

Jean Sophie (Lake Bluff School District) asked Zientarski how long it took to get buy-in and support from parents. Zientarski noted that it took a long time to get support from parents. He said that this buy-in was achieved in part through presentations to parents to educate them about the academic benefits of physical education.

Rick Reigner (Illinois YMCA) inquired when the tipping point occurred in the Naperville

School District when the superintendent, principals, and school board began to come on board. Zientarski replied that he received buy-in from these groups when he was able to show them the data on improved academic performance. He noted that these groups are not invested in student health, but they are invested in improved test scores.

Dr. Koch inquired whether the CDC has specific recommendations on the amount of physical activity for youth. Elissa Bassler responded that the CDC recommends 60 minutes of physical activity, and that according to the Community Guide, Enhanced P.E. contributes to meeting that physical activity requirement. Dr. Koch suggested that it would be helpful to have access to CDC research throughout the decision-making process. Bassler then advised him where he could find this information in his folder.

Recess

At 10:32 the session took a brief recess.

Physical Activity Break

When the meeting reconvened, Noel facilitated another physical activity break.

Overview of Assistive resources

Shawn Backs then introduced Elissa Bassler, who presented an overview of assistive resources. Bassler expressed that she was very happy to be there with the Task Force. She explained that the genesis of this was the CDC Community Guide. She explained the Community Guides' definition of Enhanced P.E. She commented on the correlation between health and educational attainment, explaining that from a public health perspective, using physical activity to increase cognitive functioning and improve school achievement was important because this is a predictor of success throughout the lifecourse. She noted that educational attainment is one of the social determinants of health.

Bassler explained that the original, voluntary Enhanced P.E. Task Force was funded by a grant from the CDC to implement a Community Guide intervention in five different states, and Illinois focused on how to promote Enhanced P.E. She stressed that schools are largely locally governed and while there are some things that states can do, such as create standards, they also must work to provide communities with the resources and knowledge to increase and enhance physical education. She noted the importance of bringing along local decision makers, and stressed that strategies were needed to work with school boards, principals, and superintendents. Bassler expressed her hope that this would be a foundation for the work the Task Force will do, and that this current Task Force would have to figure out how to operationalize this plan.

Dr. Koch commented that although schools are locally governed, ISBE often creates model policies for school districts that they can modify to suit their needs. Bassler stated that it would be a good idea to encourage school boards to hold an annual meeting where

they thought about physical education in their districts, and to create a model policy and set up metrics so the school boards could review their progress with respect to those metrics.

Amaal Tokars stated that thinking about health education includes everything we do or do not do in the school environment, and we need to think about the contradictory messages we are sending students. She stressed the importance of considering how to mitigate these contradictions if schools want to promote lifelong fitness.

Bassler agreed and cited the contradiction of unhealthy snacks in vending machines. She noted that the UDSA will be coming out with recommendation about healthy vending policies in schools. She noted that while the charge of the Task Force is specifically physical education, she agreed that this discussion should take place within the context of broader school wellness policies.

Dr. Koch then asked Mark Haller to explain the anticipated federal regulations that will govern the sale of competitive foods in schools. Haller explained how the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act requires new standards on this, which are expected next spring.

Jessica Gerdes (Illinois State Board of Education) then presented a review of the Shape of the Nation Report, drawing attention to the information specific to Illinois. She noted one error in the checklist of state requirements, stating that while it is not marked down, the state of Illinois does have continuing education for P.E. teachers. She then asked Joey Ohnesorge, the principal consultant for physical education, to share his phone number. His phone number is 217-782-6277.

Overview of State Health Improvement Plan

Dave Carvalho presented an overview of the Illinois State Health Improvement Plan. He said that the Task Force should consider Enhanced P.E. in the context of the SHIP as a whole. He noted that the public health system refers to all the actors that have a role in improving health, including schools. He explained the importance of the SHIP, stressing the necessity of establishing a common idea among all stakeholders for how to advance health across the state. With the SHIP, everyone shares a commonly and coherently developed plan, and everyone has a mutual understanding of what the common goals are and what everyone is working on. The SHIP is meant to facilitate collaboration to advance health across the state. Carvalho reminded the group that goal of this Task Force is not physical education in and of itself, but rather overall health with Enhanced P.E. as a method for advancing health.

Carvalho explained that the SHIP Implementation Coordination Council will be launched in January, and will enable public health stakeholders across the state to keep on top of what everyone is doing and what everyone is working on. He reviewed SHIP priority areas, stressing obesity, nutrition, and physical activity. Carvalho stressed that the guiding principle of SHIP is health equity and noted that we should strive for health improvement in the population as a whole, but that we should be especially focused on

vulnerable groups.

Establish Goals, Timelines and Committees

Coby Jansen (Illinois Public Health Institute) explained to the Task Force that it needed a plan for how to organize itself and take action moving forward. She opened the floor for ideas.

Lynn Haeffele recommended that the Task Force should consider how to help people understand what Enhanced P.E. looks like, and recommended that it could accomplish this through identifying key places where this is being done well.

Dr. Sophie stressed the barrier of financial strain on districts and states that perhaps the recent acts of violence could be an opportunity to advocate for improved social and emotional health that could be achieved through moving to the Enhanced P.E. Sophie also stated that school administrators need to be informed about all the research on the value of P.E.

Maureen Fournier (Southwest Suburban Teachers Union) mentioned a Blue Ribbon program from IAPHERD that highlighted best practices in physical education.

Mark Bishop suggested that the Task Force should engage with teaching training colleges and help them incorporate principles of Enhanced P.E, into the training of our P.E. teachers.

Sandy Noel stated that there was also a need for teacher education in general. She said it was important to communicate why food should not be used as reward and taking away P.E. should not be used as a punishment.

Lynne Braun (Rush University) suggested that the Task Force include recommendations on adapting Enhanced P.E. for less wealthy school systems, noting the importance of acknowledging various resource levels in the education system. Annie Lionberger (CPS) agreed, noting that data is compelling, but we need to develop more accessible tracking systems, as many school systems cannot afford current data tracking systems.

Angela Crotty (Midlothian School District 143) stated that it is important to stress growth rather than the need to be in the top-tier. She noted that the Task Force should be aware of costs when developing recommendations and ensure that they will not simply be considered an additional financial burden by school districts.

Vogel responded that movement is free, and it does not require a lot of money to engage children in physical activity.

Lionberger shared the importance of including training around advocacy for P.E. teachers to help them communicate the importance of their work and its contribution to the school culture.

Neil Duncan informed the group that P.E. teachers currently are not able to be defined as “highly qualified” by federal standards. Vogel suggested that it is probably achievable to change this.

Bassler suggested that the Task Force consider ways to improve communication to parents and demonstrate growth and accomplishments in P.E. beyond a letter grade in a report card.

Carvalho agreed that parents can and should be a driver of physical education in schools, and said that school boards are more convinced if parents express a desire for P.E. than if a task force makes recommendations around P.E. He noted that allocations of resources are set at the local level and determined by local priorities.

Jansen asked if there were suggestions for how to develop metrics to gauge progress for Enhanced P.E.

Tokars responded that BMI is an essential indicator, and would be a great way to track progress.

Jessica Lynch (Illinois Public Health Institute) suggested integrating the metrics cited by Zientarski in his presentation, and asked for a motion that this range of metrics be considered, including mental health and quality of life. Anna Barnes (CLOCC) also suggested that metrics around attendance be included. Rep. Chapa LaVia suggested that metrics related to race/ethnicity be included.

Neil Duncan noted that BMI is an imperfect measure and suggested that the Task Force use a more accurate metric. Bassler responded, acknowledging that BMI has limitations at an individual level, but from a public health perspective, when we look at aggregate BMI data, those limitations are smoothed out and we can use this data to understand obesity trends. She cautioned against using BMI to communicate personal fitness to children on an individual level.

Bishop stated that this Task Force should not be concerned with individual metric outcomes or state outcomes, but instead should focus on the impact of Enhanced P.E.

Jansen then told the group that in the interest of time, the meeting should move on to a discussion of state learning standards. Bassler read the charge of the Task Force for improving state learning standards. Jansen asked for comments on this from the group.

Vogel advised that the Task Force look at revised national standards. Noel agreed and added that the Task Force should also look at examples from other states, and should consider how to integrate health education technology into these learning standards. Bassler agreed that metrics should be built into the standards. Vogel responded that there is currently no assessment built into the standards, but that they could integrate metrics into a performance descriptor below the standards.

Dr. Hasbrouck left at 11:45

Jansen asked if there were other thoughts on revising standards. There were not.

Jansen then asked the group if there were ideas about how to accomplish the Task Force goals. She proposed that the group break into subcommittees, and also invited group members to make other suggestions.

Koch and Carvalho inquired about the limitations of how far recommendations could go beyond physical education. Carvalho said that opinions should be restricted to physical education, and should not focus on tangentially related topics, such as oral health. It was determined that the Task Force will need to revise the state learning standards with respect to all components included in the Goals specified by the legislation, including health education.

Jansen noted that the bylaws do allow people outside of the Task Force to lend expertise.

Linda Chapa LaVia left at 11:52.

Jansen then restated the proposal for committees. There was widespread agreement that there be one subcommittee to do promotion of Enhanced P.E. and another to work on the learning standards.

Jansen then proposed that the group could meet 6 times. Koch asked for clarifications on how often subcommittees would meet and suggested that 4 meetings as a whole group would be a better use of time. Jansen then proposed to the group that they meet an additional 3 times after today's meeting. She asked for any counterproposals. There were none.

Braun asked if subcommittees would be open for public comment and subject to Open Meetings Act, and Jansen replied that they would.

Barnes inquired about breaking down committees further into smaller groups. Bassler explained that OMA regulations would be a barrier, because minute-taking will be required with every subcommittee meeting.

Jansen then told the group that according to bylaws, you can state your preference for participating in one or both committees. You can also offer to be a committee chair, and the task force co-chairs will appoint individuals to do this.

Public Comment

Paul expressed understanding about being sensitive to financial barriers in low income schools, but said that it is not possible to run a quality P.E. program without technology, noting that it was the technology that demonstrated areas needed for improvement in his

program. He said that it is necessary to have data to drive improvement.

Closing Remarks

Koch thanked everyone for coming to the first Task Force meeting. He then asked for a motion to adjourn. Bassler motioned to adjourn, and Carvalho seconded the motion.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm