

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



**Task Force Summary**  
December 18, 2014  
9:00am-12:00pm

*Public Act 98-0859 created the Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education. The purpose of this Task Force is to submit recommendations (from which ISBE will adopt rules for implementation of physical fitness assessments and collect and report aggregate fitness information), including methods for ensuring validity and uniformity of fitness scores, including assessment administration protocols and professional development approaches for P.E. teachers; how often fitness scores should be reported to ISBE; grade levels within elementary, middle, and high school categories for which scores should be reported to ISBE; indicators that should be reported to ISBE, including scores for aerobic capacity (grades 4-12), muscular strength, endurance, flexibility; demographic information that should accompany the scores, including, but not limited to, grade and gender; development of protocols to protect students' confidentiality and individual info/identifiers; how fitness scores should be reported by ISBE to the public, including potential correlations with academic achievement, attendance, discipline data; and may also recommend methods for assessing student progress on Goals 19 & 21-24.*

Meeting was held via v-tel conferencing at the IL State Board of Education's Chicago Office (James R Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph, VTEL ROOM 14th Floor) AND Springfield Office (100 North 1st Street, VTEL Room 3rd Floor).

**Task Force Members Attending:** Jean Sophie, Superintendent, Lake Bluff School District 65; Elissa Bassler, CEO, Illinois Public Health Institute; Antonio (Tony) Marquez, Chicago Public Schools, designee of Stephanie Whyte; Conny Mueller Moody, Assistant Deputy Director, Office of Health Promotion, Illinois Department of Public Health; Kelly Nowak, Vice President, Board of Education, Geneva CUSD 304; Marjurie Ribeiro, Principal Consultant, Data Analysis and Accountability, Illinois State Board of Education; Timothy A. Sanborn, Head, Division of Cardiology, NorthShore University Health System; Katherine Nিকেle, Research Assistant, Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children, Lurie Children's Hospital, designee of Sarah Welch; Michael Wiggins, Physical Education Teacher, Hinsdale Central High School District 86; Skip Williams, Assistant Professor of PE Teacher Education, School of Kinesiology and Recreation, Illinois State University; Deb Vogel, Retired Physical Education Teacher; Paul Zientarski, Learning Readiness PE Coordinator, Naperville Community School District 203

**Member of the Public:** N/A

**Presenters:** Nicole Bazer, General Counsel, Illinois State Board of Education; Marjurie Ribeiro, Principal Consultant, Data Analysis and Accountability, Illinois State Board of Education; Therese McGuire, Program Specialist, Health and Physical Education, Georgia Department of Education

**Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Staff:** Shawn Backs; Mark Haller; David Smalley

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



**Illinois Public Health Institute Support Staff:** Sarah Chusid; Janna Simon

**Task Force Members not in attendance:** Mark Bishop, Vice President of Policy and Communications, Healthy School Campaign; Jason Leahy, Executive Director, Illinois Principals Association; Peggy Pryor, Physical Education Teacher, Quincy School District 172; Sarah Welch, Evaluation Manager, Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children, Lurie Children's Hospital (represented by designee Katherine Nickele); Stephanie Whyte, Chief Health Officer, Chicago Public Schools (represented by designee Antonio Marquez)

## Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 9:01am. Chair Jean Sophie welcomed task force members and gave an overview of the objectives of the meeting, an overview of the list of recommendations to date and a summary of the fitness tests selected at the last meeting.

Task force members introduced themselves.

## Review and Approve Meeting Summary from December 1, 2014

Task Force members reviewed the summary from the 12/1 meeting. The summary was approved with one edit: The second bullet on page four was corrected to say that pull ups [instead of push ups] are not recommended as the test requires a lot of equipment and takes a long time to administer.

Elissa Bassler moved to accept with that edit and Deb Vogel seconded the motion. The amended summary was unanimously approved.

## ISBE presentation: Considerations around data collection

Task force member Marjorie Ribeiro presented on considerations around data collection from ISBE's perspective.

A mock-up of a potential aggregate data collection reporting screen would have schools inputting the number of students tested, the number of students that fall in the Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ) for a given test (or alternate test, if applicable) and the number of students that fall into the Needs Improvement Zone.

## Discussion

- Would this require teachers to input data by hand?
  - Chair Sophie: This would not work in her district as data is only handled at the principal and superintendent levels, and that is because having that information inputted properly is crucial to grants, as well as for what's reported in the School Report Card.
    - ISBE: Principals would have the authority to designate who would be allowed to enter data.

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



- Would this reporting be required of every school and not just at district level?  
Would ISBE then be able to aggregate at both the school and district levels?
  - Chair Sophie: She approves each report from every school, so the task force should be mindful of the time burden. Also, the majority of districts do not have a dedicated data entry person, so staffing issues must also be considered.
  - Bassler: Reporting at the school level would allow administrators to make comparisons, which would be useful for planning purposes and as a programmatic tool.
    - ISBE: Reporting at the school/district level is no problem, it's when you go down to the individual student level that there are issues
  - Marquez: Represents Chicago Public Schools (CPS), the largest district in the state at over 600 schools. It makes sense to have this reporting at the school level, just keep in mind that in practical terms it means an administrator having to look over 600 data points for multiple tests.
    - Wouldn't CPS use their regions to assist in reporting? CPS would have to decide how to operationalize.
- Task force members asked ISBE to look into whether P.E. minutes are reported on the School Report Card, as well as how much additional room there might be for fitness testing reporting.
  - It was a recommendation of the Enhance P.E. Task Force that ISBE include a measure on the School Report Card about the number of minutes of instructional P.E. provided for different grade levels as a measure of health.
    - If we're going to do fitness testing reporting, the number of minutes is really important contextual information.
    - It would be interesting if there was a field for the number of P.E. minutes on ISBE's fitness testing reporting document.

## **ISBE presentation: Considerations around student confidentiality**

ISBE General Counsel Nicole Bazer presented on considerations around student confidentiality.

Main takeaway: The question is whether individualized student data should be held at state level. This is a big issue in the states right now; there have been a number of bills in other states prohibiting this type of data collection. If you want the state to make correlations between fitness and other demographic information, why couldn't you do it with aggregate-level data instead of individual? This becomes part of a bigger conversation going on in the state around data security and privacy.

## Discussion

- Nowak: As a voting delegate for her district at their annual conference, she can affirm there is a significant amount of concern around this issue. She recognizes there is good value to longitudinal data, but where does it stop? Baby steps may be

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



the way to go, starting with aggregate-level reporting and making sure we can handle this data in terms of security.

- Bazer: It would behoove task force to involve the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and parent groups, to solicit their opinions, engage them in the process and perhaps gain their buy-in. This is a positive initiative, but the concern is if state starts collecting these data and parents are not aware of it, there could be a backlash and - even more damaging - a much greater backlash against other essential data collection efforts. She's seen bills to roll back data collection in other states. She thinks the baby steps approach is prudent.
  - Chair Sophie: We may have to consider appointing a PTA representative as an advisory member of the task force. One of the PTA's main tenets is healthy kids, so they could be big advocates for this work. Also, there's been a student confidentiality group meeting and she predicts that with the recent high profile data hacks, privacy concerns will be huge issue at the next meeting.
- Chair Sophie: Are there confidentiality concerns for reporting just at the aggregate level?
  - Bazer: The concerns are lessened at the aggregate level. From an optics perspective, you have to ensure that parents and constituents are supportive.
  - Marquez: From CPS' perspective, aggregate-level reporting is better than the alternative.
- Chair Sophie: We may bring Bazer back to review our work at a later point in the process.
- For potential correlations, how is race/ethnicity determined?
  - There's a process, a federal form.
  - ISBE: Making correlations based on race/ethnicity would require tying fitness scores to unique student identifiers and would open up a host of privacy/confidentiality concerns.
- Jean: High schools are more equipped to do this data collection, the majority of elementary schools are not; they are moving in that direction but are not there yet. In light of that reality, the aggregate-level reporting seems like the right step at this time.
  - Vogel: As a group we can recommend, if we go with aggregate-level reporting, that schools link fitness scores with their own discipline data, etc.
  - Chair Sophie: As far as the correlations go, everything is vague at this point. Perhaps after the first couple of years of administering the tests, we'll have a better idea of the correlations that could be made.
    - Bassler: We should revisit correlations when we have the professional development discussion.
- The task force could make a recommendation for ISBE to collect data from those who are already using Fitnessgram.
  - For those schools/districts that already use it, maybe ISBE could build some sort of collection system that would enable them to do something with that more robust data.

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



- ISBE: We would have to build interface between Fitnessgram and our system, which would be a significant change with a significant cost.

## **Physical Activity Break**, led by Michael Wiggins

### **Discussion: Which data fields will get reported by schools?**

- ISBE: A big issue is bad data entry. The task force will need to provide rules on how to do this. One thing you'll find out is that you're going to get bad data.
  - Chair Sophie: That's precisely why superintendents keep control of data entry in her district.
  - IPHI: For the mock-up form, since the task force will only require one test for each component, whether schools choose the recommended or alternate test (if applicable), the form would need to only include one entry point for each fitness component (not one for each test that is available for that fitness component)
  - We may have to live with imperfect data.
- To lighten the reporting load, isn't it true that schools would only have to report one measure (such as how many fell in the HFZ for a given test), and then the other percentages would be auto-populated based off of that initial entry?
  - ISBE: You may still want to have a field on there for those who fall into the Needs Improvement Zone as a quality assurance check.
  - Vogel: She would like to revisit the test selections. She feels strongly that for flexibility the Back-Saver Sit and Reach should be the recommended test and the Trunk Lift be the alternate. The trunk lift carries a risk of neck hyper-extension and also takes the entire focus of the teacher to administer. Additionally, the concerns about equipment costs are not valid; she has done it with just a yard stick connected to a bleacher. Marquez concurred. The matter will be revisited during the 1/7/15 meeting on protocols.

### **Discussion: How often should schools report and for which grade levels?**

- Marquez: Mid-year reporting might be ideal.
- Vogel: Enrollment is uneven throughout year. For example, Chicago kids don't come in until after Labor Day. For elementary, testing time would be dependent on how many days they have P.E. If they only have it for one or two days per week, they will only be testing once a year.
- Marquez: We recommend schools do pre and post tests, but we may end up reporting just one.
  - Bassler: The law says schools must test every year and we have to figure out what will be reported.
  - Vogel: Elementary schoolers may have to start in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade but report in 4<sup>th</sup> grade as they need time to get used to the test. For high schools, other concurrent testing must be taken into consideration.

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



- Kelly: Junior year is a pivotal testing year. She worries about how much instructional time will be lost with all this testing.
- Chair Sophie: She recommends doing pre and post testing and reporting only the post test results.
- Bassler: She thinks whatever grades are picked, reporting should be on an annual basis, otherwise there would be cohorts of students that would never be tested.
- Many high schools have half of sophomores out of P.E. for half the year in drivers' ed or health. This is an age of rapid development so collecting at different points in the year would have ramifications in terms of the uniformity, and perhaps validity, of the data.
- What should be done about students who've waived out, an issue more heavily weighted to junior/senior years? Missing students would impact the accuracy of the denominator.
  - Why would a student exempt from P.E. not be brought back for fitness testing?
    - Collecting data on these students will be hard because they are not assigned to a P.E. teacher. The task force will have to figure out how to deal with that.
  - What about three-sport children? They would be out of P.E. most of the time.
    - That represents a very small percentage of students as most are focused on one sport.
- The task force originally decided that reporting would occur in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Then, a member pointed out that Fitnessgram only calculates HFZ for aerobic capacity for ages 9 and up. The task force then decided testing would occur in 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, would be reported on an annual basis and only for the post test.

## **Discussion: How and what will ISBE report out to the public?**

- The reporting mechanisms are the School Report Card and ISBE's website. ISBE will check into what is reported on the School Report Card and much room is available for additional fitness testing reporting. The task force decided ISBE will post the reporting on its site.
  - There may be some capacity to display additional information on the School Report Card as a rollover menu for the online version.
- Chair Sophie: For schools, current requirements related to a school posting information only apply if the school has a dedicated webmaster, which most don't, so there are many ways to get around there requirements.

## **State experiences with purchased version of Fitnessgram and state reporting**

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education



Therese McGuire, Program Specialist, Health and Physical Education, Georgia Department of Education gave a presentation on her state's experiences with Fitnessgram and state reporting.

## Highlights

- Only aggregate-level reporting
- Reporting is broken out at state, district and school levels. Different levels of access are granted to teachers, administrators, state officials, etc.
- Each teacher enters their own scores into Fitnessgram software program.
- They have a dedicated reporting website, separate from other reporting systems, that is hosted by The Cooper Institute.
- Much of the funding for Fitnessgram came from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation and Georgia's sports teams. Since these were not public funds, they were able to do things they otherwise wouldn't have been able to do.
- Only 20 complaints related to BMI testing in the first year, far lower than anticipated, and most were related to procedural failures.
- There was an initial cost to purchase licensing for the schools (in perpetuity) and \$300,000 per year to host the site.

## Discussion

- If IL had Fitnessgram, printing color reports would be an issue.
  - There's an option to send electronic pdf files.
- Georgia uses the Sit and Reach for the flexibility test.
- They used seven trainers for the program rollout, purposefully used only a few to ensure consistency. Illinois would need triple or quadruple that number for the number of teachers in the state.

## **Discussion: What is needed to discuss protocols at next meeting?**

- Bring data on which IL schools are already using Fitnessgram – a very small percentage.
- Find out GA's long-term plans to sustain program, especially in terms of funding.
- Skip Williams and Dale Brown will present on their research and experiences with fitness testing validity and fidelity.
- Someone from Lurie Children's Hospital will present on their experiences with fitness testing in Chicago Public Schools.

## **Public Comment**

No members of the public were in attendance.

## **Adjourn**

Deb Vogel moved to adjourn the meeting, Timothy Sanborn seconded the motion. The task force voted unanimously to end the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:53am.

# Stakeholder and Expert Task Force on Physical Education

---

