

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 WHEREAS, Regular physical activity is associated with a  
3 healthier, longer life and a lower risk of cardiovascular  
4 disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and some  
5 cancers; and

6 WHEREAS, Physical activity offers young people many health  
7 benefits, including improved aerobic endurance and muscular  
8 strength, better weight control, and the opportunity to build  
9 lean muscle and bone mass and reduce fat; and

10 WHEREAS, Physically fit children have higher scholastic  
11 achievement, better classroom behavior, a greater ability to  
12 focus, and less absenteeism than their physically unfit  
13 counterparts; and

14 WHEREAS, One important way to stop this rise in childhood  
15 obesity is by establishing lifelong physical activity habits  
16 with strong physical education programs and regular physical  
17 activity opportunities in our nation's schools, both during and  
18 outside of the regular school day; and

19 WHEREAS, The Enhance Physical Education Task Force,  
20 established by Public Act 97-1102, recommended enhancing  
21 physical education to increase the amount of time students  
22 spend in moderate to vigorous physical activity, with an

1 emphasis on fitness, skill-building, and cooperation;  
2 therefore

3 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
4 **represented in the General Assembly:**

5 Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section  
6 27-6.5 as follows:

7 (105 ILCS 5/27-6.5 new)

8 Sec. 27-6.5. Physical fitness assessments in schools.

9 (a) As used in this Section, "physical fitness assessment"  
10 means a series of assessments to measure aerobic capacity, body  
11 composition, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and  
12 flexibility.

13 (b) To measure the effectiveness of State Goal 20 of the  
14 Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and  
15 Health, beginning with the 2016-2017 school year and every  
16 school year thereafter, the State Board of Education shall  
17 require all public schools to use a scientifically-based,  
18 health-related physical fitness assessment for grades 3  
19 through 12 and periodically report fitness information to the  
20 State Board of Education, as set forth in subsections (c) and  
21 (e) of this Section, to assess student fitness indicators.

22 Public schools shall integrate health-related fitness  
23 testing into the curriculum as an instructional tool, except in

1 grades before the 3rd grade. Fitness tests must be appropriate  
2 to students' developmental levels and physical abilities. The  
3 testing must be used to teach students how to assess their  
4 fitness levels, set goals for improvement, and monitor progress  
5 in reaching their goals. Fitness scores shall not be used for  
6 grading students or evaluating teachers.

7 (c) On or before October 1, 2014, the State Superintendent  
8 of Education shall appoint a 15-member stakeholder and expert  
9 task force, including members representing organizations that  
10 represent physical education teachers, school officials,  
11 principals, health promotion and disease prevention advocates  
12 and experts, school health advocates and experts, and other  
13 experts with operational and academic expertise in the  
14 measurement of fitness. The task force shall make  
15 recommendations to the State Board of Education on the  
16 following:

17 (1) methods for ensuring the validity and uniformity of  
18 reported physical fitness assessment scores, including  
19 assessment administration protocols and professional  
20 development approaches for physical education teachers;

21 (2) how often physical fitness assessment scores  
22 should be reported to the State Board of Education;

23 (3) the grade levels within elementary, middle, and  
24 high school categories for which physical fitness  
25 assessment scores should be reported to the State Board of  
26 Education;

1           (4) the minimum fitness indicators that should be  
2           reported to the State Board of Education, including, but  
3           not limited to, a score for aerobic capacity (for grades 4  
4           through 12); muscular strength; endurance; and  
5           flexibility;

6           (5) the demographic information that should accompany  
7           the scores, including, but not limited to, grade and  
8           gender;

9           (6) the development of protocols regarding the  
10           protection of students' confidentiality and individual  
11           information and identifiers; and

12           (7) how physical fitness assessment data should be  
13           reported by the State Board of Education to the public,  
14           including potential correlations with student academic  
15           achievement, attendance, and discipline data and other  
16           recommended uses of the reported data.

17           The State Board of Education shall provide administrative  
18           and other support to the task force.

19           The task force shall submit its recommendations on physical  
20           fitness assessments on or before April 1, 2015. The task force  
21           may also recommend methods for assessing student progress on  
22           State Goals 19 and 21 through 24 of the Illinois Learning  
23           Standards for Physical Development and Health. The task force  
24           is dissolved on April 30, 2015.

25           The provisions of this subsection (c), other than this  
26           sentence, are inoperative after March 31, 2016.

1       (d) On or before December 31, 2015, the State Board of  
2       Education shall use the recommendations of the task force under  
3       subsection (c) of this Section to adopt rules for the  
4       implementation of physical fitness assessments by each public  
5       school for the 2016-2017 school year and every school year  
6       thereafter.

7       (e) On or before September 1, 2016, the State Board of  
8       Education shall adopt rules for data submission by school  
9       districts and develop a system for collecting and reporting the  
10       aggregated fitness information from the physical fitness  
11       assessments. This system shall also support the collection of  
12       data from school districts that use a fitness testing software  
13       program.

14       (f) School districts may report the aggregate findings of  
15       physical fitness assessments by grade level and school to  
16       parents and members of the community through typical  
17       communication channels, such as Internet websites, school  
18       newsletters, school board reports, and presentations.  
19       Districts may also provide individual fitness assessment  
20       reports to students' parents.

21       (g) Nothing in this Section precludes schools from  
22       implementing a physical fitness assessment before the  
23       2016-2017 school year or from implementing more robust forms of  
24       a physical fitness assessment.

25       Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
26       becoming law.