

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I have been living here in \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ years, with 2 children at \_\_\_\_\_ School. First let me say I appreciate the hard work that you and your wonderful staff do on a daily basis for the education of our children. I do, however, have one significant concern.

It has been brought to my attention that physical education classes seem to be less and less of an emphasis as the school day becomes crowded with multiple activities in addition to regular classwork. While I do not envy you and the people who must make the difficult decisions of what goes on the daily schedule, one subject that we know affects all other learning is P.E. In his recent book, *Survival of the Fit*, Dr. Daniel O'Neill, makes a compelling argument of why, without proper activity, not only will students not be physically fit, but it will be harder for them to be mentally fit. Numerous studies have supported this idea and the data would appear irrefutable. In 2019, a study linked physical activity to higher math and spelling scores (Szabo-Reed, et al, 2019). In 2017, a meta-analysis of 26 studies including over 10,000 students came to similar conclusions (Álvarez-Bueno, et al, 2017).

The “poster child” for this change has been the town of Naperville, Illinois, where they have made P.E. mandatory for every child, every day. This school district, which was decidedly average twenty-five years ago, is now in the top 5% of schools in the state for academics and has a miniscule 5% obesity rate compared to the national rate of 20%. In fact, physical activity has been shown in dozens of studies to activate the brain allowing it to accept all other forms of input, including such topics as math and english. Without a level of fitness, the brain simply cannot accept new knowledge efficiently. In other words, we cannot have STEM without first having fitness!

I have broached this subject with many other parents who are of the same mind. I would very much like to discuss this topic with you further.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Our school personnel work so hard to educate our children. Giving these youngsters daily, aggressive P.E. in all grades would seem to be “low hanging fruit” to make their jobs easier and to advance the physical and mental health of the district’s students. I look forward to further communication on this subject.

Very truly yours,