

Disadvantages of physical education



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Mandatory physical education for students in elementary through high school is designed with the best intentions like promoting a healthier lifestyle, and aiding students in uncovering their potential talent. But as good as these intentions may seem they all fall short of its goals due to restricting student's freedom of choice, a mounting budget deficit, and constant bullying. All these countless shortfalls cause a string of unforeseen problems such as impairing academic success, vast emotional damage, immense psychological harm, and painful physical damage. Although many parents consider physical education as an important part of the public education system, children should not have to participate in physical education if they do not want to. Physical Education should not be mandatory in public education for students in elementary through high school since it impairs learning, emotional, and physical harm to students causing immense damage that are not beneficial to students.

I am troubled about mandatory physical education for students in elementary through high school. Physical education went through a long journey to become what it is today. It all started in 776 B. C. where Greeks held the first Olympiad. Later on in 1814 Denmark establishes the Bill of 1814 the first ever compulsory physical education bill. In 1825 Charles Beck becomes the first teacher to teach physical education. In 1866, California passed the physical education legislation, becoming the first state to ever do so. Afterwards in 1896 Athens, Greece held the first modern Olympic game (Zeigler). Throughout all these years, physical education maintained its core values, fostering an environment for students to improve their comprehension, skill sets, capacities, and principles (Kelso). Problem starts

when physical education becomes mandatory especially in schools where all these values begin to shift for the worst part. Students lose their freedom of choice, being forced into a highly competitive world of sports where injuries, psychological drama, and fear of losing become a predominant possibility (FLEMING). Whether physical education should be made mandatory in public education for students in elementary through high school is a highly controversial topic since physical education comes with a heavy price by stripping students of their freedom of choice, and an enhanced education due to lack of funding.

Making physical education mandatory in public education for students in elementary through high school intensifies an ongoing budget crisis. In just the state of California alone there is already an 11.2 billion dollar deficit. Across the United States, state tax revenues are down because of the worldwide economic slump. Each year schools receive only limited amounts of state and federal funding, funds depend on population and student academic performance (BBC). According to the Los Angeles Times many schools are already struggling with increased furloughs, and widespread teacher layoffs (Mehta). If physical education were to become mandatory then funds would be stretched even more sparsely. For example making physical education compulsory in elementary and high schools nationwide would be establishing an entirely new department just for physical education, and building new gyms and football fields. All these so-called innovations take away scarce resources which could have been better used on vital academic lessons. Our students deserve a better future and making physical education mandatory is not the answer.

Ms. Weissman, the current head of physical education at Tenafly High School argues that physical education helps students uncover their hidden talent, and helps them use it to their full potential (Weissman). I cannot argue the fact that physical education allows students to try out diverse sports and experience a variety of sports. Nevertheless students can uncover their talents outside of school sidestepping the bullying and physiological damage that usually occurs with physical education. According to a nationwide poll in 2004 done by Southwest Wisconsin Youth Survey 19% of all teens responded to "some" or "quite a bit" when asked "how much do you worry about being picked on or physically hurt by another teen?" (SWYS). Also, 19% is an enormous number that means that two out of every ten students are being bullied. Besides 19% is an understatement since most students that are bullied are too ashamed, scared, or hurt to admit it. There are countless more students that are being bullied but are not documented. Students have a hard time learning when they are constantly being bullied and put down by fellow classmates. Being successful in sports only occurs when both talent and interest are mixed in. Physical education in school only impairs on student academic success it should not be made mandatory.

Cristina S. Barroso the current assistant professor of health promotion and behavioral science at University of Texas Health Science Center argues that physical education should be mandatory since the government is concerned about the well being of its citizens by promoting physical activity in students through mandatory physical education assists students in fighting obesity, and maintaining long-term habits of working out (Barroso). While I cannot argue the fact that physical activities promote good health my point is that

students should at least be allowed a choice. They should be able to do what they want with their body. They are young sensible adults on the verge of adulthood and deserve to be able to make their own decisions and learn from their own mistakes, it is all part of life and growing up. An essay appeared in Journal of Law and Education, a journal published by the University of South Carolina Law Center. In "School Liability: The Danger of Mandatory Physical Education Classes," Heather Sanders the Health argues that forcing students to do what they may not want to do can lead to dire consequences. Consequences like depression, injuries, and anxiety are just a few of the many consequences that occur when physical education becomes mandatory (Sanders). It is also outrageous to say that physical education can actually make a real world difference to student's health. Physical education is highly inefficient; there are countless more efficient ways of ensuring a healthy population than forcing students to run a lap once a week, a simple change in their diet to healthier foods and walking instead of driving to school would do just fine (NCCDPH). Taking away freedom of choice for students is a big mistake since having freedom is essential to being an America, physical education should not be compulsory in public education for students in elementary through high school.

No one can argue the fact that exercise is highly beneficial for people of all ages but making physical education mandatory for students in elementary through high school is not the answer. The goal of physical education is to encourage a healthier lifestyle, promoting students to become well rounded individuals, and assisting students in finding their potential talent, but in reality all these benefits fall short once physical education becomes

mandatory. Once students lose their freedom of choice, have budget cuts kick in, and are constantly being bullied a series of unforeseen problems arises such as underperforming academically, vast emotional damage, immense mental suffering, and constant physical abuse.