



# MAHPERD

Michigan Association for Health,  
Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

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April 17, 2013

Chairwoman Lyons and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

My name is Roger Jackson, and I have the privilege of representing several organizations. I am the Executive Director of the Michigan Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD), a member of the Steering Committee of the Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Coalition for Healthy Weight in Children (HKHM), and current chair of the Public Policy Advisory Committee for the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE).

My purpose here today is to address concerns with the portion of HB 4465 that allows for substitution of the ½ credit for Physical Education with participation in extracurricular athletics or other extracurricular activities that involve physical activity.

While the organizations I represent would certainly like to go in the opposite direction and see an increase in the requirements for physical education, as well as require minutes for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade physical education, we certainly do not want to see erosion of the current language.

The benefits of modern day, quality physical education programs that are standards based are well documented, and continue to be substantiated with additional research. I would certainly be happy to provide you with specific data at your request. Whether we are talking about giving students a knowledge base and skills to help enhance the chances of them making better decisions regarding how to live an active, healthy lifestyle, or looking at the correlation between physical fitness and academic achievement, one of the goals of education is to prepare healthy citizens that are not only capable of making informed decisions in their personal lives, but also contribute to our society as a whole. If we fail to address the needs of the whole child, we cannot accomplish that goal.

Representative McBroom, in his testimony before this committee on April 10, 2013, mentioned that some physical education programs are no more than dodgeball and weightlifting. Honestly, I would unfortunately have to agree that those types of programs still do exist. It is a legacy that today's dedicated physical education professionals are working to eliminate.

Instead of marginalizing these programs even further, I would hope that individual school districts would be encouraged to address the issue just as they would a problem with any other curricular area. Sample programs are readily available, and the recent changes in teacher evaluation would help insure that the state standards are being addressed in an effective approach. Change can be accomplished, and can be done without spending a lot of money.

I have been a dedicated member of the education profession for almost forty years, and have spent over twenty of those years coaching several sports for many age groups and serving as a Director of Athletics at the college level. It is my professional opinion, when comparing sports to *quality physical education programs*, that no sport, no matter how well it is coached, can give a student the knowledge and comprehensive skill base they need to prepare them to be problem solvers and decision makers when it comes to making choices about how to pursue an active lifestyle.

Please, do not adopt the language in HB 4465 that allows for substitution of the physical education credit. According to the 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 28% of high school students describe themselves as overweight or obese. During the school day, their activity level is very low, with 66% of Michigan high school students reporting they do not attend a physical education class in an average week. It is clear that we are not addressing all of their needs.

I applaud your efforts to continually look for ways to improve the education system in our state. I believe there is no cookie-cutter, carved in stone approach to educating all students, regardless of age. We strive to meet the individual needs of the students in all areas. While we may not always agree on what are the best pathways to follow, we certainly must be on the same page when it comes to the well-being of our children, giving them every opportunity we can to live healthy, happy, productive lives.

Thank you for your time, and I will certainly try to answer any questions you have, either now or in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Jackson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Roger Jackson