



CLOCC Seed Grant Presentation

David Q, Thomas, Ph.D., FACSM
School of Kinesiology and Recreation
Illinois State University



General Overview

- ❑ Obesity epidemic
- ❑ Unhealthy nutrition and sedentary lifestyles
- ❑ Prevention is more effective than rehabilitation
- ❑ Prevention means targeting children
- ❑ Children spend most of their days in school



Surgeon General's Report

- Schools provide many opportunities to engage children in physical activity as well as healthy eating.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Recommendations:

- ❑ “Daily physical education programs for all children in kindergarten through 12th grades.”
- ❑ “Eliminate or sharply reduce the practice of granting exemptions for physical education classes.”
- ❑ “Increase the amount of time that students are active in physical education classes.”



Situation in Illinois

- Only state with a law mandating daily PE in K-12 grade levels
- State allows schools to seek waivers to the mandate
- 1/3rd of school districts have waivers
- Another 30-40% operate as if they have waivers



Situation in Chicago

- PE waiver exists for all 11th and 12th grade students
- Otherwise, instruction in PE is inconsistent and largely unknown
- Before improvement can be made, situation needs to be understood

Physical Education Instructional Profile and Needs Assessment in the Chicago Public Schools

Dave Thomas¹, Pat Faire²,
and Sara Verbel¹

Illinois State University¹ and Chicago Public Schools²

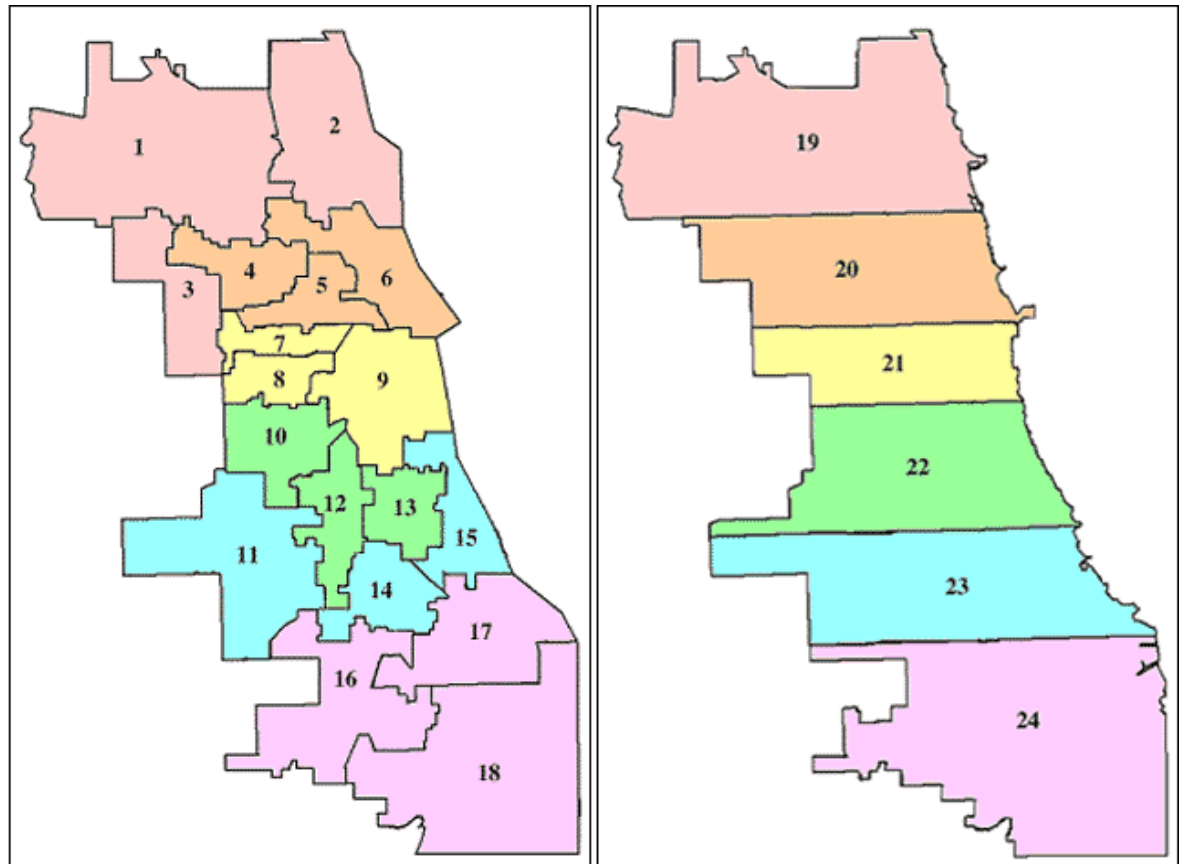


Purpose

- Purpose was to provide a profile of PE instruction, and perform a needs assessment, in the Chicago Public Schools.
- The intent was to find out exactly how physical education is delivered in the CPS and to find out what needs exist related to improving PE instruction.

Methods

- Randomly selected 9 high and 51 elementary schools representing each of the cluster areas based on the CPS instructional map.
- This equates to 10% of the total schools in the CPS.





Methods

- Contact was made with each school and a visitation was arranged.
- Research assistant toured the school and assisted a physical education teacher in completing a 63 item survey.



Methods

- The school name and the person filling out the form were not included in the data analysis.
- Frequencies and percentages were calculated, and written comments were recorded.



Results

- We have data on all of the 60 schools.

- There are no written guidelines at the district level regarding physical education instruction.
 - “District attempts to adhere to state learning standards”



Frequency of PE

- Frequency and quality of PE varies greatly across CPS.

- 83% of elementary schools do not offer daily PE
 - Three schools have no PE teachers, therefore those schools do not have PE instruction.



Frequency of PE

- The majority of elementary school students (79%) have PE once a week.
 - One school indicated that on average students do not have PE at least once a week.

- The number of days at the high school level is spread fairly evenly from 1-5 days per week.

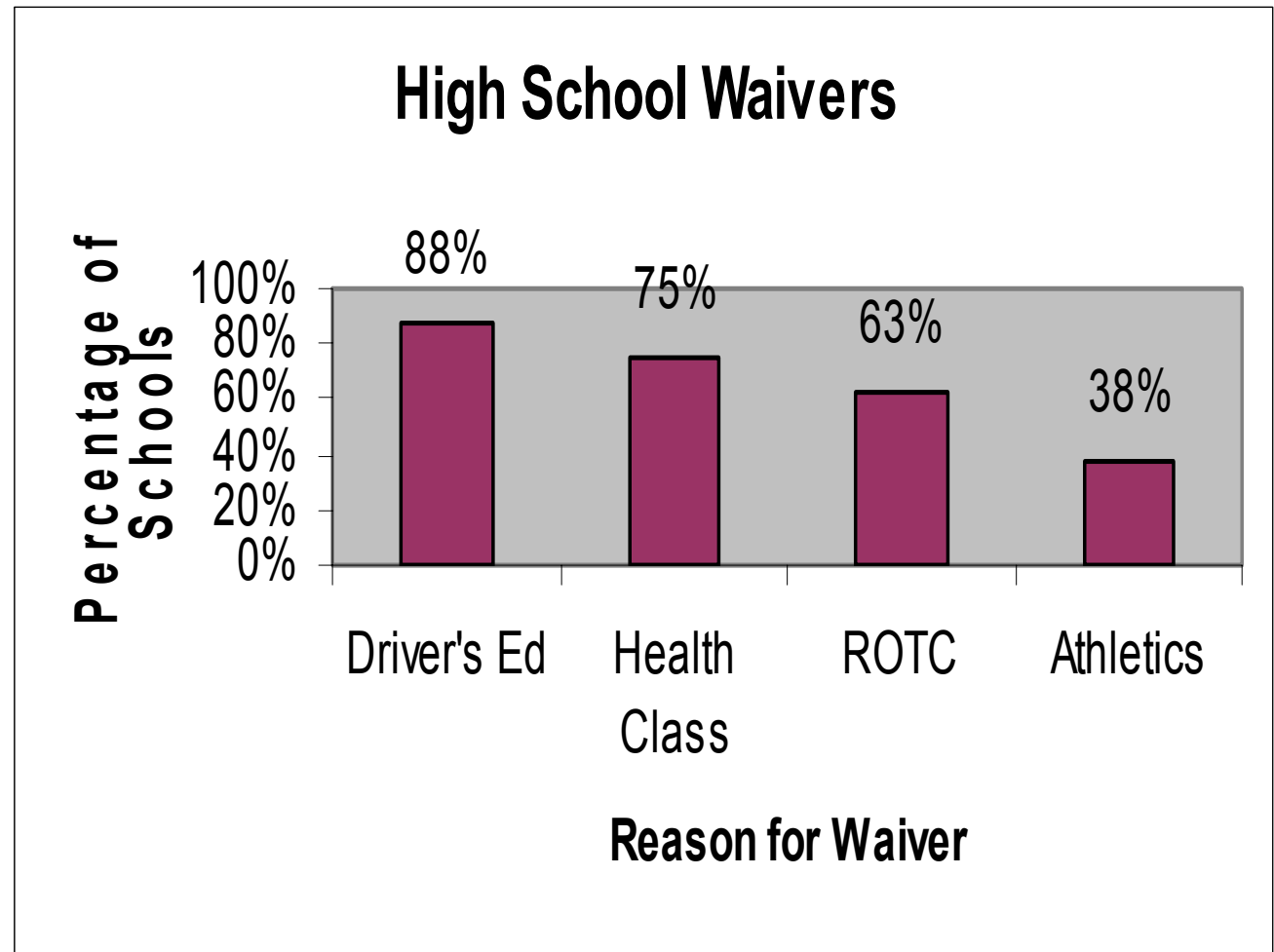


Waivers

- Most elementary schools (78%) do not waive children from PE unless they have a medical excuse.
- Of those that do, the primary reason students miss elementary school PE are for academic classes (55%).

Waivers

- 88% of high schools do waive students from PE for reasons other than a medical excuse.
- The majority of these reasons fall within the state and district guidelines for exemptions from PE





PE Teachers

- In the elementary schools (96%) and the high schools (90%), a certified PE teacher teaches PE.
- Elementary teaching vacancies:
 - 3 schools did not have PE teachers
 - Other schools were understaffed by 2 full and 2 part time teachers
- No unfilled positions at the high schools.



Focus of Instruction

- The most common focus of PE instruction was games and sports, followed by motor skill development, and wellness/fitness.
- Over 95% of the elementary schools and all but 1 of the high schools offered PE all year.

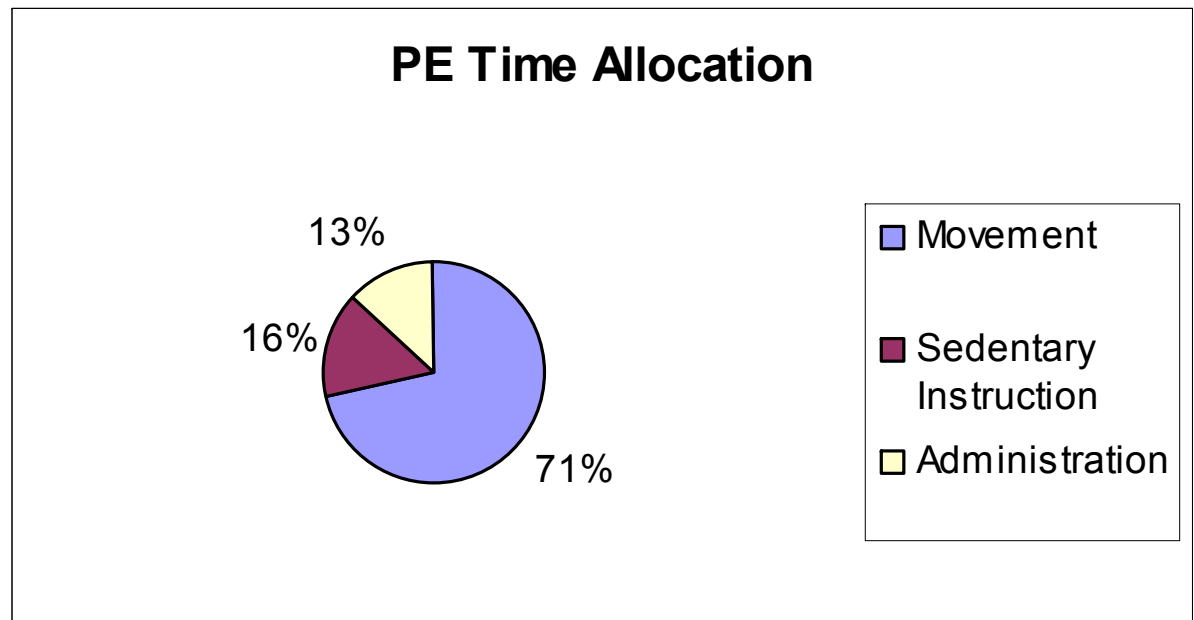


Class Demographics

- Elementary PE class period duration = 40-49 mins.
- High schools class duration = 50-59 mins.
- Elementary student/teacher ratio = <30 to 1
 - Although in one case the student to teacher ratio was over 50 to 1.
- High schools (89%) student/teacher ratio = between 30 and 50 to 1.

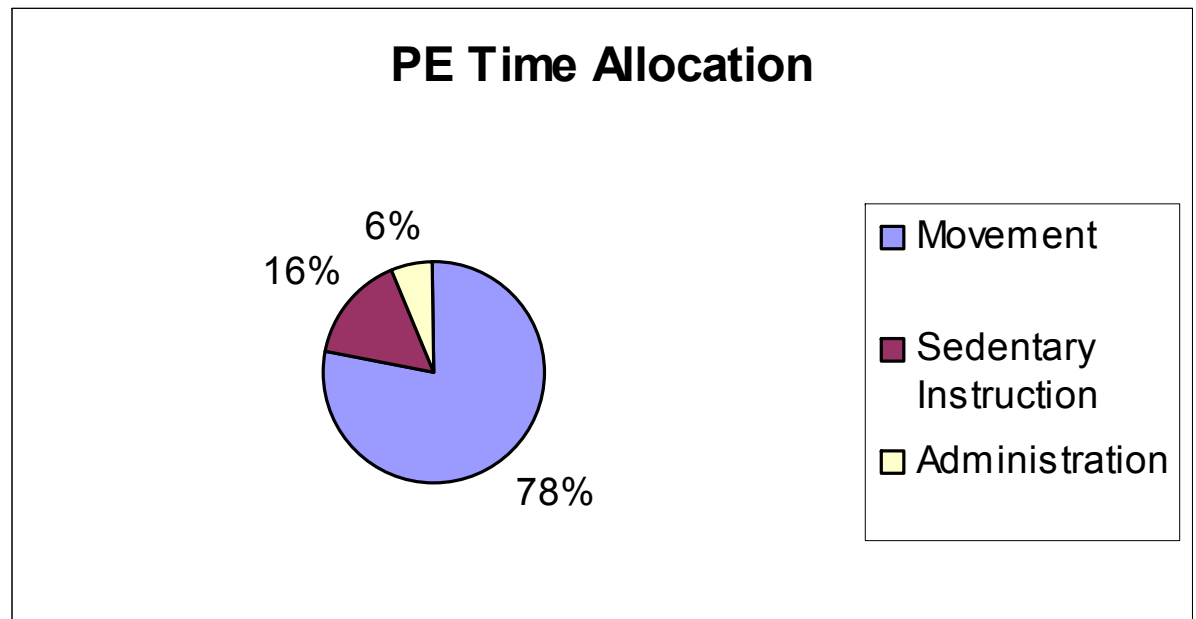
Elementary PE Time Allocation

- Figure shows typical time allocation
- However, in 20% of the elementary schools, 50% or less of class time was spent in movement.



High School PE Time Allocation

- The quality of facilities, the quality and accessibility of equipment, and teacher support varied greatly.



The majority of these items were considered at least to be acceptable, if not better.



Written Comments

Budget:

- A significant number indicated they have no knowledge of their budget or that one does not exist.
- “I haven’t been given a number-have not been refused request to purchase”
- “There is no predetermined amount for PE, when we need equipment we ask and if there is money we can get what we need in the \$100’s not \$1000’s range.”
- “There is no budget. If I ask administration for money for equipment that is how I would get my money needed.”



Written Comments

- “I believe we would have even more success if money was allotted for after school activities. Children in this neighborhood do not have access to any gym facilities.”
- “Very little or no money is given to P.E. for supplies.”
- “Depending on school budget funds. Usually no funds are allocated for physical education”
- “\$100 plus \$200 of own money”



Written Comments

Quality of PE Facilities:

- ❑ “Below par - At this time, but principal is very supportive.”
- ❑ “The gymnasium is also the auditorium. Offices are located on the stage. Not a lot of space, auditorium chairs are in the way.”
- ❑ “Need windows that open, ventilation systems, weighted volleyball standards, tumbling mats, floor repaired, and scoreboard installed and connected.”
- ❑ “Physical education as a whole in the CPS is outdated in equipment and thought. Buildings are old and have classrooms as gyms with great numbers”



Written Comments

Quality and Availability of PE Equipment:

- “This school doesn’t have any equipment except basketballs and volleyballs. Children receive P.E. one day a week. Sometimes they don’t have it because of the children’s behavior.”
- “It takes too long to get things repaired.”

Instructional Support:

- “Would like more information on grant writing and use of technology”



Suggestions

If the Chicago Public School District is to play a role in combating the obesity epidemic, several changes are suggested

- 1) Coherent, comprehensive, yet flexible guidelines for PE focusing on, preferably, daily PE involving instruction and participation in lifetime physical activity need to be enacted. Ensure that schools implement the guidelines. This process is reportedly underway.



Suggestions

- 2) Review of PE facilities, instruction, and equipment in all schools.

- 3) Improve facilities, instruction, and equipment in schools that require change.
 - Teacher training may also be necessary for those without experience in teaching lifetime physical activity.



Suggestions

- 4) Administrative support for change is necessary.
 - Currently one person has administrative duties in physical education for over 600 schools.
 - Budgets need to be allocated to improve PE.



Suggestions

- 5) Adequate school funding is necessary for improvements
 - State funding
 - City funding
 - Professional organizations
 - Governmental organizations
 - Non-governmental organizations
 - Foundations



Suggestions

- 6) Parents, community leaders, and political leaders must demonstrate support for quality, daily physical education.