# Physical Activity in School District of Philadelphia Elementary Schools

61 schools participated in a physical activity assessment conducted by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health in collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia.

## What We Know

**60 minutes/day** of physical activity is recommended for physical, mental and emotional health.

1 in 4 children meets these physical activity recommendations.

**National data and the results of this assessment show:**

**Healthy Students Are Better Learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Achievement Scores</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&quot;Our achievement scores went up 5 points!&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&quot;Our achievement scores only went up 0.5 points.&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools that **DO NOT** take away PE as punishment.

Schools that **DO** take away PE as punishment.

Attendance investments go further when PE is valued and school climate is positive.

**What We Know**

- **60 minutes/day**
- 1 in 4 children

**Healthy Students Are Better Learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Achievement Scores</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&quot;We worked hard to raise attendance.&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&quot;We did too and raised our attendance the same amount.&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brain after 20 minutes of Sitting Quietly**

- **Red Areas Are Very Active**
- **Blue Areas Are Least Active**

Physical activity increases brain activity in children and is associated with improvements in concentration, memory and response accuracy.*

## Physical Activity Is Vital to Great Schools

Physical activity doesn't come at the expense of academics. More classroom movement breaks are not associated with any negative impact on School Progress Report achievement scores.

However, taking away PE as punishment is significantly associated with poorer achievement scores.

**150 minutes of weekly physical activity is possible:**

20% of participating schools meet or exceed that goal.

## Experienced Educators Know This

A commonality among schools with great physical activity is a principal who understands its importance.

Five additional years of experience as a principal increases average moderate to vigorous physical activity by 248 minutes per student per year.

That’s over 2,500 hours per year for the average school.

*Image courtesy of Charles Hillman, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*
### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT

#### CURRENT LANDSCAPE ACROSS 61 SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RECOMMENDED</strong></th>
<th>Moderate to vigorous physical activity during school day:</th>
<th>Minimum of 150 minutes/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT</strong></td>
<td>Moderate to vigorous physical activity in District elementary schools:</td>
<td>Range of 68 - 210 minutes/week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION
- **100%** of schools have PE
- **Range:** 1-5 days/week

#### RECESS
- **100%** of schools have scheduled recess
- **Active Time:** 8-26 minutes

#### MOVEMENT BREAKS
- **82%** of schools have them in some classrooms
- **Active Time:** 1-15 minutes

### DISTRICT POLICY 145: STUDENT AND STAFF WELLNESS
- **28%** of principals are aware of the District Wellness Policy

**If the Wellness Policy were followed, it would ensure more students receive the recommended amount of physical activity during the school day**