

- SUBJECT:** Standards for public school physical education curriculum
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Eissler, Hochberg, Allen, Farias, Jackson, Olivo, Weber
0 nays
4 absent — Aycock, Dutton, Patrick, Shelton
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 9 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jay Arnold, Texas Parent Teacher Association; Douglas Dunsavage, American Heart Association; Monty Exter, Association of Texas Profession Educators; Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Greg Herzog, Texas Medical Association; Marshall Kenderdine, Texas Pediatric Society; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Joel Romo, Texas Public Health Coalition; Julie Shields, Texas Association of School Boards; Jodie Smith, Texans Care for Children; Charles Stuart, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas; James Willman, Texas Nurses Association; Lynda Woolbert; Coalition for Nurses in Advanced Practice)

Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code, sec. 28.002 requires schools to have physical education.
- DIGEST:** SB 891 would require a school’s physical education curriculum to be structured along certain guidelines. A physical education curriculum would have to be sequential, developmentally appropriate, and designed, implemented, and evaluated to enable students to develop the motor, self-management, and other skills, knowledge, attitudes, and confidence necessary to participate in physical activity throughout life. Each school district would have to establish specific objectives and goals for a program. The State Board of Education would develop essential knowledge and skills for physical education ensuring that the curriculum:

- emphasized a lifetime of regular physical activity;
- was consistent with national physical education standards for the information that students should learn about physical activity and the physical activities that students should be able to perform.

On a weekly basis, at least 50 percent of a physical education class would have to be used for actual student physical activity at a moderate or vigorous level and would have to:

- offer students an opportunity to choose among many types of physical activity in which to participate;
- offer students both cooperative and competitive games;
- cover all physical ability levels;
- take into account gender and cultural differences;
- teach self-management and movement skills;
- teach cooperation, fair play, and responsible participation in physical activity;
- promote student participation in physical activity; and
- allow physical education classes to be an enjoyable experience for students.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

SB 891 would provide for a more structured set of guidelines for physical education classes in public schools. Only half of adolescents regularly participate in vigorous physical education, and one-fourth report no physical education whatsoever. Regular physical education is important for maintaining a healthy body, enhancing physiological well-being, and preventing premature death. Of children aged 5 to 10 who are overweight, 61 percent have one or more cardiovascular disease factors, and 27 percent have two or more. Forty-two percent of fourth graders in Texas are either obese, overweight, or at risk of becoming overweight, and 70 percent of overweight children will become overweight adults. This bill would help to combat obesity by requiring schools to implement rigorous physical education curricula.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

SB 891 would infringe on the local control afforded to school districts. A district is capable of determining the physical education needs of its

students. Because of the high demands that high-stakes testing imposes, school districts already have difficulty finding time in the school day to implement proper physical education or recess.