PRIORITIZING SCHOOL-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & EDUCATION DURING REOPENING

HOW SCHOOL LEADERS CAN REDUCE DISPARITIES RESULTING FROM COVID-19

Disparities exist and are being exacerbated by COVID-19, but school provides an equitable access point for youth physical activity. School-based PE, sports, and recess might be the only way some youth can get the critical benefits of physical activity.

The good news: physical activity and play are conduits for healing and learning.

WE ENCOURAGE SCHOOL LEADERS TO CONSIDER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS EDUCATIONAL IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

Failure to meaningfully incorporate physical activity into schools will perpetuate and exacerbate disparities for those already furthest from educational justice.

We offer the following recommendations to school leaders to explicitly include physical activity and education in reopening plans.

Physical Education & Literacy
- Do not suspend the 100-minute weekly PE requirement.
- Plan for a robust PE program that can take place at school & home.
- Maintain adapted PE supports for those who need them.

Recess & Outdoor Play
- Consider that being outside is both safest right now and also a contributor to health and well-being.
- Partner with community-based organizations to operate programs before and after school outside on school grounds.

Active Play & Outdoor Learning
- Orient learning around opportunities to move, play, and be outdoors.
- Integrate these opportunities into lessons in other subjects like math, science, or reading.
- Create educational activities to support active transport to school (i.e. walking and biking).

School-Based Organized Sports
- Ensure that interscholastic sports (if offered) remain accessible to all youth in the event of remote instruction.
- For example, youth who do not have transportation to school because of remote learning will not be able to participate in after-school activities.

Promotes resiliency
Mitigates effects of trauma
Enhances readiness to learn
Protects against illness and infection

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79% of Black youth vs. 94% of white youth spend any time at their nearby parks.
75% of less-affluent youth vs. 95% of more-affluent youth have ever participated in an organized sport.
11% of non-English-speaking youth vs. 19% of all youth meet the CDC’s physical activity recommendations.

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King County PLAY EQUITY COALITION

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