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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Physical education should be viewed as a public health tool that can be used to educate students and empower them to maintain and improve their life-long physical, social, and emotional well-being; and

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WHEREAS, Physical education is valued as a foundational component for the health and well-being of students by health experts and policy leaders and has been shown to have a positive association with academic performance as well as mental and social-emotional health; and

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WHEREAS, Quality physical education programs enhance the social-emotional learning skills of self-management, social awareness, self-awareness, decision-making, exhibiting responsible behaviors, and relationship skills; and

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WHEREAS, Physical education provides opportunities for students to authentically use and evaluate personal Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies in a safe and inclusive setting; and

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WHEREAS, Being enrolled in physical education provides an opportunity for students to be active during the school day; the CDC has stated that there are many benefits of physical

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1 education in schools; when enrolled in physical education,
2 students can increase their level of physical activity, can
3 improve their grades, cognition, and standardized test scores,
4 and are better able to focus and stay on-task in the classroom;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, All physical education programs should follow the
7 same standards; research suggests there are access gaps from
8 school to school; students are entitled to a comprehensive
9 physical education program; and

10 WHEREAS, Physical education is required to be taught;
11 there is little oversight of compliance to the School Code,
12 and the waiver process is not being strictly followed; and

13 WHEREAS, The National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) found
14 that budget cuts had differential impacts on physical
15 education, resulting in racial disparities; NPAP maintains
16 that Black and Latinx students are less likely to be
17 physically active and to have access to certified physical
18 education teachers; these factors lead to lower fitness, which
19 is correlated with poor academic performance, among other
20 adverse outcomes; and

21 WHEREAS, Another public health concern cited by the NPAP
22 is the lack of a consistent, equitable opportunity for kids to

1 get physical activity; physical education, through the public
2 education system, can mitigate health disparities; physical
3 education classes may be the only organized way for many
4 lower-income kids to get much-needed exercise; and

5 WHEREAS, Physical education classes may be the only
6 opportunity for students in alternative education programs and
7 students with disabilities to be introduced, to learn, and to
8 develop the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and the
9 confidence needed to be active throughout their lives; and

10 WHEREAS, The Society for Health and Physical Education
11 reports that students who have physical education are 2.5
12 times more likely to be active adults; the patterns of
13 inactivity in childhood and adolescence track to higher rates
14 of inactivity, obesity, and other health issues (diabetes,
15 heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis) in
16 adulthood; and

17 WHEREAS, Physical education provides opportunities for
18 movement that in turn lead to decreasing medical costs; the
19 World Health Organization estimates that for every \$1.00
20 invested in physical activity \$3.20 will be saved in medical
21 costs; and

22 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has, in some cases, eroded

1 physical education programming; steps need to be taken to
2 ensure that all students have standards-based physical
3 education programming when they return to school without the
4 constraints of COVID-19; these steps should include, but are
5 not limited to, making sure that physical education programs
6 teach the Illinois Physical Development and Health Goals and
7 Standards; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that physical education is
10 an essential and integral part of educating the whole child
11 and that ALL students in the State of Illinois should have
12 access to equitable, high quality, standards-based physical
13 education programming being supported by equitable resources
14 and funding; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That all physical education programs are urged
16 to be in compliance with and accountable for following the
17 Illinois School Code; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
19 delivered to the State Superintendent of Education, the
20 Illinois Association of School Boards, the Illinois
21 Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Principal
22 Association, the Illinois Education Association, the Illinois
23 Federation of Teachers, and the Illinois Association of

1 Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance.