

MAPC Position Statement

Grade 11 and 12 Compulsory Physical Education/Health May 04, 2007

MAPC believes in the importance of developing lifelong habits of fitness and healthy lifestyle choices from a very young age. Regular physical exercise, starting from a young age, is an important aspect to maintaining good health.

MAPC believes that the proposed implementation of compulsory Physical Education/Health classes for Grade 11 and 12 students is unlikely to increase the fitness level of students significantly. We see numerous logistical difficulties with this proposal including:

- ◆ Increasing the number of compulsory credits that schools will be required to offer will result in less selection of other courses for students. Parents are concerned regarding the accountability and fairness in issuing credits if the focus of the course is participation outside of school hours, without the supervision and direction of professional qualified educators.
- ◆ Availability of facilities will vary widely from community to community throughout our province and it may be difficult for students to readily access programs that fit the established criteria. Many of the activities that some students already engage in such as hockey or golf are cost-prohibitive for many families and out of reach for many students.
- ◆ During the final two years of high school many students have part-time jobs in addition to their increased workload of demanding courses. If the Grade 11 and 12 Physical Education courses are to be taken outside of school hours, this will add to the already often overloaded work week of many students.

Other jurisdictions have explored options such as mandatory daily physical activity starting in elementary school to increase the regular physical exercise of youth.

MAPC requests the government to reconsider its decision to designate Grade 11 and Grade 12 Physical Education courses as compulsory and listen carefully to the concerns raised by all stakeholders prior to implementation of the Grade 11 and 12 Physical Education/Health Education courses.

Rationale:

MAPC would like to be able to share this position, as representative of its members, with our education partners (including the Minister of Education), and the media.

