

# Physical Activity and Physical Education in Maryland's Public Secondary Schools

## DATA FROM 2018 SCHOOL HEALTH PROFILES

This document provides a brief overview of Maryland school practices and policies on physical activity (PA) and physical education (PE) using data from the 2018 Maryland School Health Profiles Survey. The School Health Profiles Survey is administered biennially to principals and lead health educators at public middle and high schools across the State to help assess how well school health policies and practices support children's overall health, wellness, and academic performance.

PA and PE are key components to comprehensive child development and school health. The goal of standards-based PE is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful PA. The goal of PA in schools is to ensure all students have the opportunity to practice and engage in activities that support topics taught in physical education. The results of this survey may be used to guide conversation and planning among leadership at the state and local levels concerning PA and PE topics for Maryland schools.

### KEY FINDINGS



**Over 90% of MD schools reported teaching lessons on decreasing sedentary behavior**, the benefits of drinking water, incorporating PA into daily life, health-related fitness, the benefits of increasing daily PA, and the mental and social health benefits of physical activity in a required course.



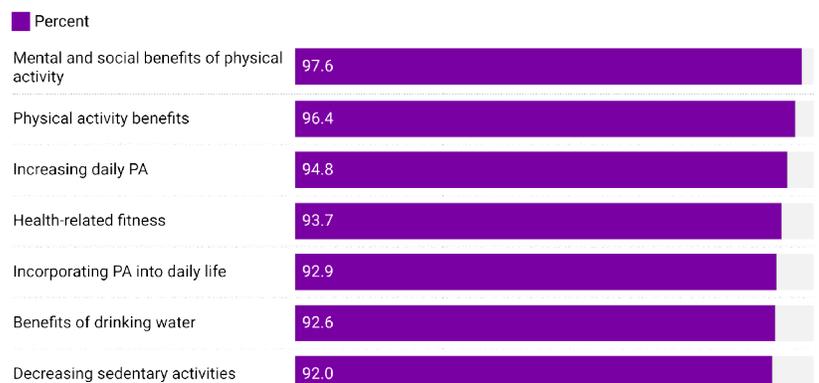
Intramural sports or clubs are voluntary programs within schools. **84% of middle schools and 87% of high schools offered intramural sports or clubs.**



Across Maryland a large majority of schools taught various aspects of physical activity to students in a required course.



### Physical Activity Topics Taught in a Required Course



# Physical Education

## WHAT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES ARE LEARNING



Overall, between **86% and 99% of principals reported that PE teachers are provided with materials** such as goals and objectives, scope and sequence instructions, written curriculum, or plans for student assessment.

### PE Materials Provided to Educators

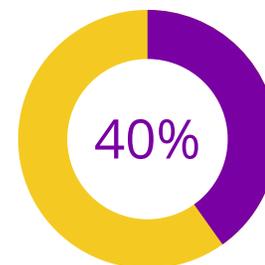
■ Title I ■ Non-Title I ■ All Schools

	Title I	Non-Title I	All Schools
PA Monitoring Devices	74.9	87.5	85.6
Scope and Sequence Instruction	80.7	95.8	93.5
Written PE Curriculum	87.8	95.8	94.6
Fitness Testing Resources	90.2	97.7	96.6
Plans for Assessment	90.2	98.1	96.9
Goals & Objectives	95.2	99.1	98.5

*\*Responses were from school principals.*

However, Title I schools generally reported lower rates of receiving these types of materials than non-Title I schools.

Only **40% of schools reported providing information to families** to increase knowledge about physical activity.



School engagement with families can help reinforce healthy behaviors at home.

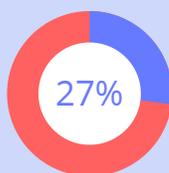
# Physical Activity

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Opportunities for physical activity range from in-class activity breaks to intramural sports, as well as access to facilities before and after school.



**88.5% of schools offered access to facilities or equipment** for physical activity after school hours.



Few schools (27%) offered opportunities for physical activity before school hours.



### Schools with In-Classroom Physical Activity Breaks by School Enrollment



Small  
<500



Mid  
500-1500



Large  
1500+

Overall, **60% of schools had in-classroom physical activity breaks during the school day.** This activity was higher among school with enrollments of 500 students or less.

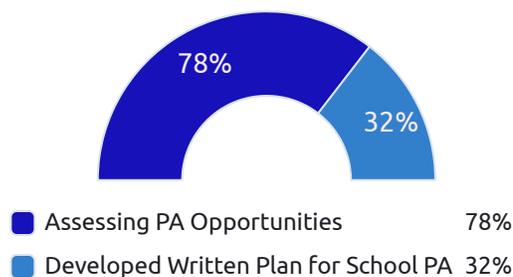
# Planning & Professional Development

## EDUCATOR EXPERIENCES



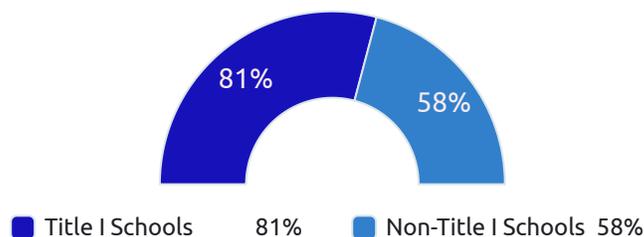
### School PA Planning

In 2018, 78% of school principals assessed the availability of physical activity opportunities to students. However, only 32% developed a comprehensive written plan for physical activity during this period.



### Professional Development

Health educators may play a role in shaping PE and PA planning and development. Among health educators, there is a desire for more professional development opportunities. **81% of health educators at Title I schools and 58% of health educators at non-Title I schools would like to receive professional development on physical activity and fitness.**



## CONCLUSION

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) [13A.04.13](#) related to Programs in Physical Education for Pre-K through grade 12 indicates that local school systems shall provide standards-based physical education curricula to educators, programs to support professional development on physical education topics and methodology, and opportunities for students to participate in comprehensive physical education programs. As amended June 2021, the State regulations provide additional guidance on instructional assessments for physical education.

Future School Profiles Surveys may provide insight into the implementation of this new guidance. This summary provides an overview of the key findings from the 2018 Profiles Survey, on school-based physical education provided to students, student opportunities for physical activity, and planning and professional development desires for school personnel. The Maryland State Department of Education and interested stakeholders may use this data to identify professional development needs and to inform the development of health-related school policies for the state. A full report of findings from the 2018 School Profiles Survey is forthcoming.

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