

Background

In January 2011, a diverse, multisector team from Illinois gathered for the Community Guide Strategy Workshop (CGSW) hosted by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) in New Orleans. This two-day state strategic workshop gave five state teams (IL, LA, MO, NH, and SC) the opportunity to create strategies to advance [The Community Guide's](#) evidence-based practice recommendations through policy development in their state.

Meeting

- A faculty of experts in evidence-based public health and The Community Guide presented on how the evidence-based recommendations from The Community Guide can be used to inform state health policy.
 - Faculty included The Community Guide Branch Chief and Director, Community Guide Scientific Director of Systematic Reviews, executive leadership from BlueCross BlueShield of Texas, and experts from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health.
- The Illinois team was led by former state health commissioner, Damon Arnold, MD, MPH, CMT. Recognizing increased school-based physical activity as a valuable way to combat high childhood obesity rates in Illinois, the team chose to implement The Community Guide's recommendation for [Enhanced School-Based Physical Education](#).¹

Team Composition

A multisector array of stakeholders comprised the Illinois CGSW team, which grew stronger and more robust after the meeting concluded. Amongst those represented on the team were Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Public Health Institute, Illinois State Legislature, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois School for the Deaf/Visually Impaired, Healthcare Consortium of Illinois, Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, YMCA, and University of Illinois.

Major Activities

- Formation of the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Task Force to create a coordinated approach to implement enhanced physical education (PE) in schools K-12.
- Development of a high-level, three-year strategic plan to engage key stakeholders and inform them of the need for and benefits arising from an enhanced physical education curriculum.
- Informed policymakers and other key on evidence-based PE strategies.

Steps Toward Policy Implementation

Since its inception in 2011, the Illinois Enhanced Physical Education Task Force has provided continuous education to policymakers, culminating in SB 3374 "SCH CD-PHYS ED TASK FORCE." Governor Pat Quinn approved the bill on Aug. 27, 2012. Effective that same day, the legislation:

- Establishes the Enhanced Physical Education Task Force and mandates that the task force consist of at least two representatives from a statewide organization representing health (e.g. state health department).
- Requires the task force to promote and implement enhanced PE programs, including educating and promoting leadership on enhanced PE among school district and school officials developing and utilizing metrics to assess the impact of enhanced PE; promoting training and professional development in enhanced PE for teachers and other school and community stakeholders.
- Requires the task force to make recommendations to the governor and the general assembly on certain goals of the Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health.

¹ The Community Guide. Behavioral and Social Approaches to Increase Physical Activity: Enhanced School-Based Physical Education. Available at <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/behavioral-social/schoolbased-pe.html> 2000. Accessed 03-26-12.