



## **FITNESS TESTING AND HONORS HEALTH COURSES ON THE WAY FOR NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESPONDS TO CHILDHOOD OBESITY EPIDEMIC**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Raleigh, NC – Amidst a challenged economy and an alarming rate of childhood obesity, the North Carolina General Assembly continued its progressive reform to improve the school's physical education and health programs with last night's passage of HB 1757 Fitness Testing in Schools. If signed by the governor, the bill would accompany HB 901 Honors Courses in Healthful Living Classes, which prepares college-bound high school students for highly skilled careers in allied health, exercise science, education and public health. HB 1757 provides a mandate for evidence-based fitness testing in K-8 schools.

"This is a huge step in the right direction. Fitness testing will give us the first clear and comprehensive perspective of childhood obesity, so students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and policy makers can better understand the problem and allocate resources where they are needed most," said North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NCAAHPERD) Executive Director Dr. Ron Morrow.

In June, the Trust for America's Health ranked North Carolina with the 11<sup>th</sup> highest rate of childhood obesity. "Although the state has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity, we are strongly positioned to fight the problem: North Carolina has more nationally board certified PE teachers than any other state. We have more data about our children's' fitness level than any other state, and our legislators in Raleigh are committed to finding the solutions. Fitness testing will help us take immediate action, while honors health courses will better prepare North Carolinians for a healthier future," said Morrow.

Many schools are expected to comply with the new mandate through participation in NCAAHPERD's In-school Prevention of Obesity and Disease (IsPOD), a multi-faceted obesity intervention and prevention program. IsPOD includes FitnessGRAM™, a fitness testing system used to measure the five layers of physical fitness, generate individualized student and parent reports, and submit data to the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics. (The government research center is analyzing the data and will make it available in the future). More than half of the state's schools are already participating in IsPOD; 95 school districts are scheduled to begin participating by the end of 2010.

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HB 1757 and HB 901 cost the state and taxpayers zero. Schools can choose to offer honors health courses using existing staff and resources. The Department of Public Instruction has developed an honors level curriculum for one health course.

### **BY THE NUMBERS**

- **65 school districts** are already conducting fitness testing via IsPOD participation. [View the implementation schedule.](#)
- **10<sup>th</sup>**. North Carolina's is the ranks 10<sup>th</sup> highest for obesity according to June 2010 report from the Trust for America's Health. [Source.](#)
- **1 million** Approximate number of K-8 students in North Carolina.
- **\$3.6 million** Number of dollars the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust awarded NCAAPERD to support the In-school Prevention of Obesity and Disease.
- **\$30,000** The financial investment IsPOD brings to every K-8 school, which includes professional development, new curriculum, software, and licensing for ten years.

### ABOUT NCAAPERD

Established in 1921, the North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NCAAPERD) is a professional organization and advocacy group for North Carolina's more than 3,000 educators in motion. Learn more at [ncaahperd.org](http://ncaahperd.org) or contact us at 888-840-6500.

### ABOUT ISPOD

In 2007, NCAAPERD launched In-School Prevention of Obesity and Disease (IsPOD), a multi-faceted system designed to combat the surge in childhood obesity while raising awareness about the importance of quality physical education. IsPOD is supported via a \$3.6 million grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust and grants from the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of North Carolina.

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