



February 28, 2016

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

My name is John Battista, past president of Connecticut Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, (CTAHPERD) and a University supervisor of student teachers at Central Connecticut State University. This written testimony is in support of *Raised Bill 5467, An Act establishing a Red Ribbon PASS Program*:

Today, one-third of our nation's children are overweight or obese therefore educating them in physical competence, health-related fitness and healthful behaviors is critical to their development and long-term success as healthy and productive citizens. Obesity encompasses more than being overweight. It has a more severe and direct effect on one's health. Falling into this category often creates a negative self-image, and in turn, has a negative effect on academic achievement. This growing condition produces a critical demand for quality and daily physical activity and physical education throughout the school day. It is necessary that the goal of all educators is to achieve an overall improved community that is conducive to a child's freedom and safety in physical activity for their health, well-being, academic achievement and social acceptance.

PASS, a Physically Active School System, is a program through which school districts can utilize opportunities for school-based physical activity that contribute to overall fitness and enhanced cognition and which can be broken down into four integral parts; namely the 4 C's, Connect, Cooperate, Collaborate, & Communicate

PASS provides a framework for creating a physically active school system for administrators and educators. The primary focus of PASS is to emphasize the importance of using physical activity to its full potential by all educators.

PASS allows teachers the opportunity to include a variety of teaching strategies and techniques in order to better understand the role physical activity plays in the classroom, which will in turn contribute significantly to improved cognition among students. PASS offers activities that can be incorporated before and after school, during school, at home with the family and within the community.

At its very core there needs to be a quality physical education program in place with the physical educator as the potential leader of PASS. The physical education program provides the

foundation for physically active students. PASS will provide the opportunities for physical activity to be incorporated above and beyond physical education and recess.

The solution begins and ends with the decisions we make. Children are not getting as much physical activity as they should, despite the many benefits. It is important to establish good physical activity habits as early as possible. So how do we do that? By making physical activity and quality physical education a part of the school's culture by increasing the amount of physical activity students participate in, throughout the day, every day. It is critical that we take the steps now to educate and make a change in our student's lives to help them lead a healthier, more productive life.

As past president of CTAHPERD, it is the mission of the organization to promote and advocate for leading a healthy and physically active lifestyle. The PASS Red Ribbon Bill will ensure that schools will provide a foundational platform for creating physically active school systems.

Sincerely,

*John M. Battista*

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CTAHPERD Past President