

Encouraging Active Schools

2015 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT SCHOOL SURVEY



Components of physical education

The 2015 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School survey asked school administrators about the components of their school's physical education program, including examples such as the type of movement skills taught, the type of activities, fair play, respect, and safety. This bulletin summarizes the findings from this survey. **Table 1** describes the overall percentage of schools that indicate that their physical education programming provides certain components during the instruction time of students (exclusively or in combination of other physical activities).

In addition, one-quarter of schools indicate that their physical education programming includes an introduction to sport skills, more specifically. School administrators were also asked what other groups are involved in this particular programming, and responses varied as follows:

- 28% indicate that no other organizations beside the school are involved;
- 40% say that community organizations are involved;
- 39% indicate that sport based clubs are involved in the programming;
- 25% indicate that regional, provincial or territorial sport organizations are involved; and
- 16% state that municipalities or communities are involved.

Region

Compared to the national average, a lower proportion of schools in Quebec indicate that their physical education programming includes instruction about specialized movement skills, lessons and activities which are gender or culturally based, an introduction to sport safety, and a variety of individual physical activities. On the other hand, when compared to the average, schools in:

- the Atlantic are more likely to incorporate a variety of seasonal activities;

	Components of PE programming	% of schools that provide...		
		PE Programming	Both PE programming and other PA	Total
Skills, movement, fitness	Instruction in basic movement skills	85%	13%	98%
	Activities that develop health-related fitness	82%	14%	96%
	Instruction in specialized movement skills	83%	10%	93%
	Lessons/activities focusing on physical literacy	81%	12%	93%
	Fitness testing	67%	8%	75%
Type of activities	A variety of team or dual sports	81%	13%	94%
	A variety of individual activities	79%	13%	92%
	A variety of seasonal activities	63%	10%	73%
Targeted programming	Lessons/activities appropriate for age- and stage- of student development	84%	13%	97%
	Lessons/activities that are gender based	77%	10%	88%
	Lessons/activities that are culturally based	75%	10%	85%
Respect and safety	Introduction to fair play and respect in sport	82%	16%	97%
	Introduction to sport safety	82%	14%	95%

PE= Physical education; PA= physical activity

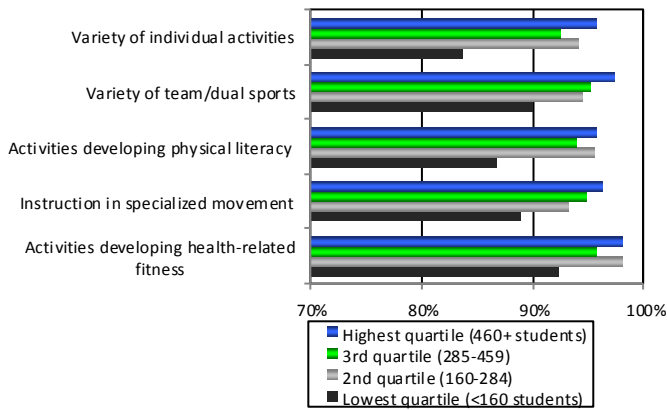
- Ontario are more likely to provide lessons and activities which are gender- and culturally-based; and
- the West are also more likely to provide lessons and activities which are culturally-based.

School characteristics

A greater proportion of administrators in the largest schools (highest quartile, 460 or more students) indicate that their school provides a variety of team or dual sports, physical activities that develop health-related fitness and instruction in specialized movement skills in their physical education programming compared to administrators in the smallest schools (lowest quartile, less than 160 students). Administrators in the smallest schools are least likely to say that physical education programming includes a variety of individual activities, lessons and activities which focus on developing physical literacy. There is a general increase with increasing student population size in the proportion citing a provision for fitness testing from smallest to largest.

FIGURE 1

Components of physical education by school size



Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, 2015, CFLRI

Compared to the average, elementary schools are less likely, whereas comprehensive schools (grades kindergarten to 12), secondary schools, middle schools and a combination of middle and secondary schools are more likely to indicate that they do fitness testing. A greater proportion of administrators in secondary schools mention that their physical education program incorporates a variety of seasonal activities compared to the average.

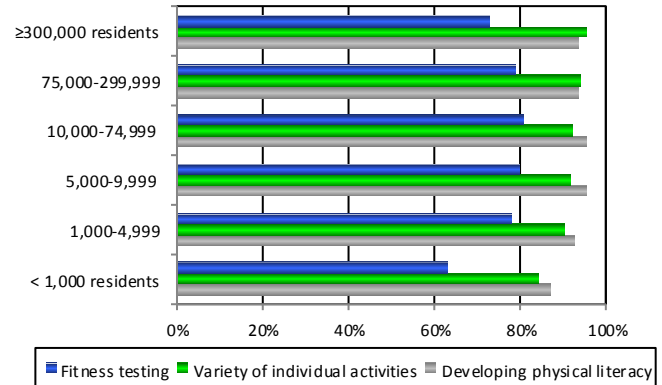
Elementary schools are less likely to provide lessons and activities which are gender and culturally based compared to the average. Middle schools exclusively (and those in combination with elementary grades) are more likely, whereas middle schools in combination with secondary schools are less likely than the average to provide culturally based programming.

Community characteristics

Schools in the smallest communities (<1,000 residents) are generally less likely to incorporate fitness testing, a variety of individual activities, and an introduction to sport skills in physical education programming than those in larger communities. In addition, they are also less likely to provide lessons and activities which focus on developing physical literacy in their physical education programming, compared to schools in mid-sized communities (between 10,000 to 74,999 residents). Schools in smaller communities (1,000 to 4,999 residents) are more likely than those in larger communities (75,000 or more students) to provide a variety of seasonal activities in physical education programming.

FIGURE 2

Components of physical education by community size



Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, 2015, CFLRI

Administrators in suburban schools are more likely than those in rural environments to say that their schools provide a variety of individual activities and provide lessons and activities which focus on developing physical literacy. In a similar way, suburban schools are more likely than inner city or urban schools to incorporate lessons and activities which are gender and culturally based.

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