



Keep Gym in School – the NFL Network’s Initiative to Restore Physical Education in America’s Schools

The Problem:

Over the last two decades, the rates for overweight children have doubled; today one-third of US children are overweight. Physical Education not only gives children an opportunity to be active but it teaches them the skills they need to be active throughout their lifetime. (American Heart Association 2007)

Kids need time and space to be active and play sports every day. And yet, as kids in America are becoming increasingly overweight and unhealthy, our public schools are cutting gym class. There is a crucial hole in our educational system that overlooks physical education and overall fitness as essential to a full, healthy life.

The Idea:

We believe every student should have the opportunity to participate in quality physical education. *Keep Gym in School* is based on the idea that in-school PE offers the best opportunity to provide physical activity to children and to teach skills needed to establish and sustain healthy lifestyles. The NFL Network, League, team and distribution partners are dedicating their collective creative, financial and media resources in a big and bold on-air, online and grassroots campaign to address the most vital issue affecting our youth...*as only America’s #1 sport can.*

Program Elements:

School Adoption

The NFL Network will work with Cox Cable and the local school district in four markets (Phoenix, AZ; Northern Virginia; Wichita, KS; and New Orleans, LA) to evaluate middle school PE needs. The Network will choose a school for adoption to help deliver quality, daily PE opportunities to all of the school’s students. We will provide support as needed to upgrade facilities, hire a certified PE instructor, and supply equipment for PE classes. In addition, we will collaborate with the school district to develop football-specific and more general lesson plans that complement the district’s existing PE curriculum.

NFL Minicamps

To celebrate the school adoption and refurbishment, reveal the enhanced PE program, and introduce the “In-School Fitness Challenge,” the NFL Network will bring local NFL players, coaches and/or trainers to the school for an “NFL Combine” field day. Modified combine events, along with elements of the President’s Physical Fitness Test, will assess student fitness and provide scores for PE instructors to monitor progress throughout the year. The event will feature NFL Network signs, equipment, and giveaways for the kids.

On-Field Kickoff

At one of the local NFL Team's first home games, the NFL Network and the team will host a pre-game ceremony announcing the program and highlighting the local school that has been adopted, with appearances by the principal, PE instructor, elected officials, and select students and parents.

Teacher Training Camps

To broaden the local reach of *Keep Gym in School* and enhance the quality of PE throughout the school district, the NFL Network and the local NFL team will invite all district PE teachers to the team's practice facility for continuing education, utilizing football lesson plans to enhance the district's existing PE curriculum. Attendees will receive customized lesson plans and curriculum enhancements and activities helping teachers to work towards the district's PE requirements.

National School Adoption

To broaden the scope of the program nationally and to offer further schools with incentive to improve dedication to fitness, the NFL Network will offer an online adoption contest open to any middle school nationwide. At www.KeepGymInSchool.com, consumers and schools can submit applications outlining how they would use a pre-determined grant amount to improve fitness and physical education in their schools. A national panel of judges will determine the winner and will invite them to the National Honors Event.

National Honors Event at NFL Draft Weekend

The NFL Network will host a culminating event in New York City during NFL Draft Weekend to recognize teachers and students from each adopted school as well as a school chosen through an online competition. The Honors Event features a luncheon recognizing students from each school based on a series of criteria including dedication to the program, fitness improvement, and an essay contest. Honorees will receive an award and all attendees will get VIP access to NFL and Play 60 Draft Week festivities.