

## When School Districts Fail to Comply With State Physical Education Laws, the Fitness of California's Children Lags

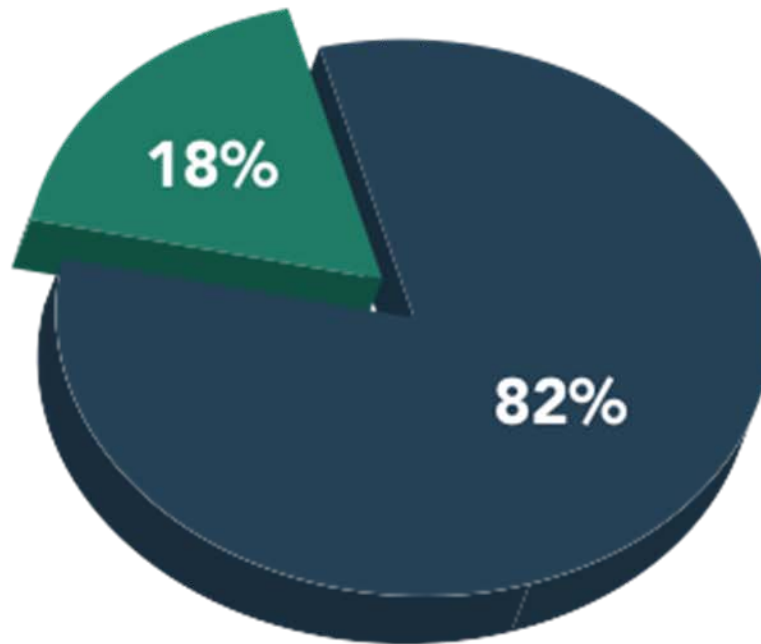


# Study Methods

This study examined physical fitness among 91,236 fifth-graders attending public schools statewide during the two academic years from 2004-2006, using combined data from several sources: student-level FITNESSGRAM<sup>®</sup> data; school- and district-level information, including CA Dept. of Education data on district-level compliance with physical education mandates; and U.S. Census information on school census tracts. Additional details on study methods have been published previously

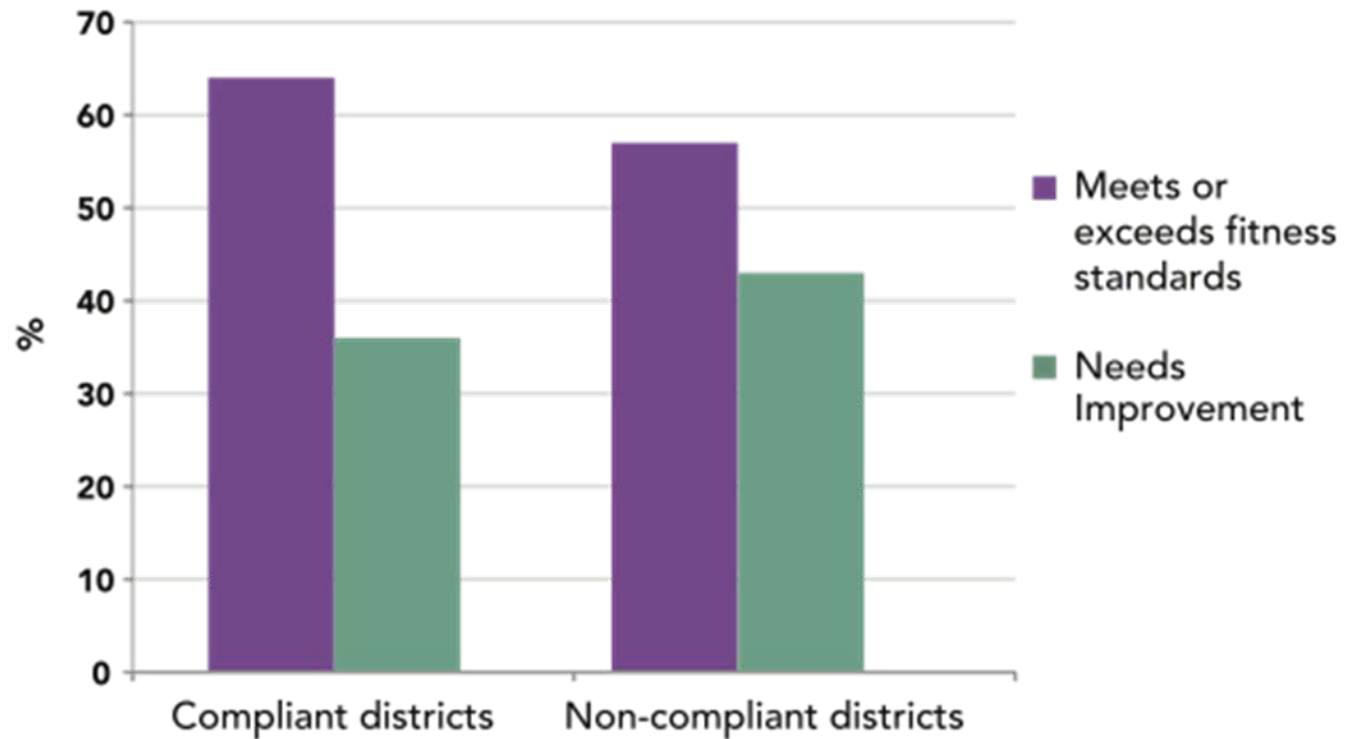
<http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797%2812%2900052-9/abstract>

### Proportion of California fifth-grade students by school district compliance with state physical education mandates



■ Non-compliant districts    ■ Compliant districts

*Only one in five fifth-graders attended school in a district in compliance with state physical education mandates.*

Fifth-graders' physical fitness levels by school district  
compliance with state physical education mandates

*Students in non-compliant districts are less likely to meet or exceed fitness standards than students in policy-compliant districts—a difference with real implications for children's health and well-being.*

## Research indicates that:

- Physical activity and fitness are strongly linked with children's health. \* In addition, physically fit children perform better academically than their less physically fit peers.\*
- Despite this evidence and current California mandates that elementary school students receive at least 200 minutes of physical education every ten school days, too many of our schools fail to meet this standard—with consequences for children statewide.

\* Educating the student body -Taking physical activity and physical education to school: Institute of Medicine of the National Academies; 2013

\* Active Education, Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance. 2009. Active Living Research <http://activelivingresearch.org/active-education-physical-education-physical-activity-and-academic-performance>

## For more information, please see:

-Policy Brief: Sanchez-Vaznaugh, EV., O'Sullivan, M., Egerter, S. When School Districts Fail to Comply With State Physical Education Laws, the Fitness of California's Children Lags. A Policy Brief. San Francisco, CA. December 2013, available at:

<http://activelivingresearch.org/when-school-districts-fail-comply-state-physical-education-laws-fitness-californias-children-lags>

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