

# Success Story



PROGRAM: Melcher-Dallas CSD

TITLE: Physical Education Project Based Learning:  
Seniors Lead the Way

## Summary

After receiving the equipment purchased with 1305 Grant funds, Senior Health and Fitness students at Melcher-Dallas CSD were assigned a final project based learning activity using the new equipment. Students researched each piece of equipment to learn how to properly use each item and discover various ways the equipment could be used. Each senior then developed, designed, planned, demonstrated and taught their lesson to middle school physical education students. The seniors also presented their final projects to a panel of staff. The middle school students then participated in the planned workouts.

The grant activity highlighted here included all middle school students and the senior health and fitness students, impacting 105 students. The total grant amount of \$4,005 for physical fitness equipment will be utilized by the entire 6-12 student population of 245 students.

## Challenge

The challenges this year were the short turnaround time in applying for the grant and getting everything ordered and delivered in time for it to be put to use so close to the end of the school year. Instructing students on proper techniques for using the equipment when they want to use all of it at once, was also a challenge.

## Strategies

The physical education program at Melcher-Dallas Schools is a fitness based program and Mr. Suntken monitors student height, weight, body fat percentages and body mass index as part of class. He instructs students about using the information in a positive manner and to demonstrate personal growth. His goal would be for mandatory daily physical education for all students at Melcher-Dallas in grades K-12.

A healthy body and a healthy mind go hand in hand, and that is been supported by research. Only when the allotted amount of time for quality physical education during the school day is increased, will we truly see the positive cognitive results from students staying active.

Senior Health & Fitness class designed and taught Jr High PE today for their final PBL project. [pic.twitter.com/qblpBD9qfw](https://pic.twitter.com/qblpBD9qfw)

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## Results

The equipment purchased with the grant is being utilized in Physical Education classes for all students in grades 6-12. The effect of a total body workout is being discovered by the students.

The project based learning was a success for the senior students who designed and planned the total body workouts and it was a success for the middle school physical education students who participated in the workouts. The new equipment purchased with this grant allowed students to be creative as they created the circuit training units. Kettle bells, fitness rings, versa bars and medicine balls were utilized in a variety of ways. Students were heard saying "I can tell this is really a total body workout!" and "I am working muscles I didn't even know I had."

Both the seniors and the middle school students had positive comments about all the new equipment and the two favorites were the kettle bells and the fitness ropes. The students went through a variety of exercises for a duration of 10 seconds each for ten minutes at a time as they worked through stations. The workout was fantastic and the options with the new equipment are greatly enhanced. With the circuit style utilized, students are able to move at their own pace, everybody is involved, moving and engaged, and very few students are standing waiting for their turn.

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## Future Directions

Next year, Mr. Suntken plans to continue tracking body fat percentages and resting heart rate with the students. He has been collecting this data for several years and will continue to assess these items. Students are taught how to take their heart rate and the goal is that students will see a reduction in their resting heart rate as their level of fitness improves over the course of the year. Being able to go into more in-depth, total body workouts fully utilizing the new equipment is also in the plans for next year.

Short term and long term goals continue to be to increase physical fitness by increasing strength, cardio-respiratory endurance and muscle tone while at the same time reducing body fat percentages and increasing the minutes all students are engaged and active. This will all increase cognitive performance in the classroom.

Students will continue to participate in physical education activities which are individualized to the students' fitness level and which require some partner work as well. One example is a twenty minute workout circuit where partners work through stations using kettle bells, plyo boxes, medicine balls, and burpees/agility ladders followed by a half mile run carrying weights customized for each students' ability and need. Training ropes and medicine balls will also be used with the objective for the student being to raise their heart rate to their target level for the workout. Students will also experience the use of major muscle groups with this class workout structure.

## Grant Information

This project was made possible by a 1305 CDC Sub-Grant Award sponsored by the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Education.