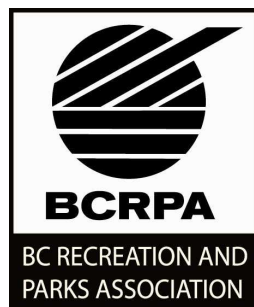


BC Recreation & Parks Association

Daily Physical Activity Pilot

Final Report
August, 2008



Acknowledgements

BCRPA would like to thank the members of the Daily Physical Activity Community Connections Task Group who volunteered their time and expertise to the development of the DPA Pilots:

Bohdan Zajcew (Ministry of Education)
Brenda Adams (YMCA)
Bryna Kopelow (JW Sporta)
Joel Palmer (Ministry of Education)
Heath Mahoney (City of Coquitlam)
Kara Leier (BCRPA)
Sally Mole (District of Tofino)
Tanya Twynstra (Ministry of Education)

The BCRPA would like to also acknowledge Bob Yates and Lance Foreman from Yates, Thorn and Associates for their services and expertise in the creation of this project and report.



Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
INTRODUCTION	7
COMOX VALLEY / COURTENAY.....	10
FORT NELSON	12
HOPE.....	14
NANAIMO.....	16
PRINCE GEORGE.....	17
SAANICH	19
VANCOUVER KILLARNEY.....	21
FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PILOT OUTCOMES	22
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	26
RECOMMENDATIONS	26
APPENDIX A – STUDENT PARTICIPATION SUMMARY.....	28
APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	29
APPENDIX C – QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN HOPE PILOT	31
APPENDIX D – BCRPA FITNESS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM.....	33

Executive Summary

In late 2007, the Ministry of Education announced a new requirement for all students to participate in Daily Physical Activity (DPA) as part of their education program. Students in grades 10 – 12 will be required to document 150 minutes of physical activity per week as part of their Graduation Transitions program, starting September 2008. Students can meet this requirement is by using community sport and recreation systems.

In early partner consultations, the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) expressed interest in supporting this linkage of school and community systems. As a result, the Ministry of Education contracted BCRPA in early 2008 to pilot the approach.

The intention was to develop pilot projects in ten communities (each pilot engaging 100 students) to provide students with an opportunity to meet the DPA requirement through existing or newly-created programming provided by their community recreation centres. The pilots were to commence as soon as feasible and to be complete by the end of June 2008.

The first stage of the process started in late February and involved establishing a steering committee and identifying and selecting pilot sites. Once sites were selected, school and community centre staff were briefed, students were engaged and programming was developed. This process took most of March and went into April. Eventually, seven pilots were established: Courtenay, Hope, Saanich, Nanaimo, Prince George, Vancouver and Fort Nelson. Some started delivering programming in early April, but some were not up and running until early May. By late May, and certainly by early June, the schools and students were into their pre-summer wind-down mode. The pilots, most of which were still only just getting started, also wound down at this point.

Overall, the assessment of each pilot is as follows:

- **Courtenay**
Vanier Secondary School partnered with the Comox Valley Sport Centre. They share a site and already have a good working relationship. Selected students were offered free one month passes to the centre. An additional opening hour was added during the school lunch period. While 25 passes were made available, only eight students picked up their access cards. Of those students, most visited the centre once or twice, but only two became regular users.
- **Fort Nelson**
The Fort Nelson pilot provided an interesting example of how a community with few facilities was able to provide some excellent opportunities for its youth. The community centre works very closely with Fort Nelson Secondary School, and setting up the pilot project occurred quite quickly. At the beginning of the program, there were about 15 to 20 participants each week, with the numbers slowly increasing. By the end of the pilot, 56 students had participated in programs at the pool (most in drop-in swimming; although six students participated in aqua fit classes), 62 had participated in drop-in sports (mostly basketball and floor hockey), and two students had joined the walking club.
- **Hope**
The Hope pilot started with a survey put out to the students to determine their interest. There were 129 respondents, with the overwhelming majority indicating they would be interested in participating. The initial approach was to target specific groups, such as inactive teen girls, and to offer them a variety of programs. However, there was virtually

no attendance at these programs, so the approach was revised to look at all students and to reposition physical activity as the “in thing” to do. The focus was on drop-in activities, with the pilot giving free access to the pool, gym, cardio suite and dry floor in the arena (ball hockey, etc.). By mid-May, there were between 50 – 60 students participating after school on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. By the end of the pilot in mid-June, almost 130 students had participated at least once, mostly on a drop-in basis. In addition, a more structured program in the Recreation Centre’s gym had 123 participants.

- **Nanaimo**
The City of Nanaimo’s Parks, Recreation and Culture Department worked with Nanaimo District Secondary School on their pilot project. Although they worked hard to get the program running, even after considerable effort, the pilot only attracted 10 students.
- **Prince George**
The Prince George YMCA partnered with Prince George Secondary School for the pilot. A total of 38 students were initially selected. Of these, only 20 took the required orientation for the drop-in weight room program, with 18 of them attending once and only 10 becoming regular participants. Although the students had identified that they would like to participate in specific programs, only 1 or 2 turned up for the first few weeks. Eventually these programs were cancelled.
- **Saanich**
In Saanich, Pearkes Recreation Centre worked with Spectrum School to offer a diverse range of activities for the students. Drop-in usage of the pool and weight room were the main activities accessed by students. However, a drop-in after school program at Colquitz School on Tuesdays was used by a few boys to play basketball. A riding day trip was also available. Interested students were given access cards which were used to track these activities. By mid-June, 51 passes had been distributed.
- **Vancouver**
This pilot was a collaboration between the city’s Killarney Community Centre and Killarney Secondary School. Despite the best efforts of the school principal and the community centre staff, no students participated. The community centre and school removed themselves from the pilot process.

Based on what has been learned about factors influencing pilot successes and outcomes, the following guiding principles are proposed to assist schools and community recreation centres with DPA implementation:

- Recognize that students are very busy people, but involve them in all aspects of program planning. Recognize that this will take extra time and resources and commit those resources. Listen to the students and adjust programs accordingly.
- Create a community of trust at the local level by including all levels of school and community recreation staff in the planning team. Think about using new approaches to sharing ideas both within the team and with the students, such as a social networking site that allows students to comment on ideas and make suggestions.
- Agree on a set of guiding principles for collaboration that include full commitment from senior staff, an openness to change, and an unreserved sharing of space.
- Assess the resources required to undertake the projects and commit adequate resources, especially human resources at the school level.
- Focus on creating fun programming and building a social component into it.

- Engage student leadership so the DPA programs become the "in" thing and that there is student involvement in the design of the program.
- Pay close attention to timetables and schedules so program times fit with the lives of the students. Focus on programming that comes straight after school.
- Focus on drop-in activities rather than scheduled programming.
- Build public understanding of the need for students to be engaged in daily physical education. Use this as an opportunity to break down barriers between demographic groups.
- Find ways to integrate the resourcing of these programs into existing contracts and agreements, such as Joint Use Agreements.

The pilot experience has led us to come up with two key suggestions to help enhance the relationships between recreation centres and schools as the program goes province-wide:

- Provide packages to schools and recreation centres which would include examples of joint use agreements, information on extra funding sources, suggestions for involving local Fitness Leaders and student Fitness Leaders, guiding principles arising from the pilot process and samples of success stories.
- Work with grade 9 students as they prepare for grade 10, to inform them about the details of the requirement and the various local options to help them meet it.

Given that the main challenge the pilot projects faced was a lack of time the recommendation proposed for the remaining funds from this project is to carry on the piloting process in a more focused manner.

The recommendation is that the piloting process should be continued in a maximum of three communities, with a view of building on current experiences and identifying successful implementation strategies. In addition, throughout this expanded piloting process, two areas should be examined more closely. First, the major companies that provide IT support to recreation centres should be contacted to determine if there are ways to expand the existing systems to make the tracking of DPA less labour-intensive for the schools. Secondly, joint use agreements should be analyzed to see if there are ways to ensure the financial feasibility of these types of arrangements beyond the pilot process.

Introduction

In late 2007, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to require all students to participate in 30 minutes per day (kindergarten to grade 9) or 150 minutes per week (grades 10-12) of physical activity as part of their education program, starting in September 2008. Students in grades 10 – 12 would be required to document and report 150 minutes per week of physical activity as part of their Graduation Transitions program.

There are three ways grade 10-12 students can meet this time allocation. They can choose one or combine them.

- Within the school setting, such as taking PE10, 11 or 12, or by participating in intramural sports.
- Using the community's sport and recreation systems, such as regularly working out at the community weight room or playing on a community sports team.
- By undertaking personal physical activity, such as walking to school or going for a run or bike ride.

It is anticipated that the majority of K-9 students will meet their DPA requirements in school and the majority of grade 10 – 12 students will meet theirs outside of school. During the Ministry of Education's August 2007 consultations with partner groups, community recreation personnel were supportive of DPA and interested in playing a key role in helping students become more physically active. The Ministry contracted the BCRPA to pilot the approach of using community recreation centres. This entailed:

- Coordinating a steering committee, under the leadership of BCRPA, with representation from local community, recreation centres and from the Ministry. The committee would oversee the selection and delivery of the pilots.
- Ensuring consultation with school district and school staff in the pilot communities regarding the development and delivery of programming meeting the requirements of DPA.
- Assisting in marketing the programming to students and parents in the community and at school, using the visual identity program.
- Supporting the pilot sites with the process of creating, delivering and monitoring their programs.
- Using the lessons learned from the pilots to develop best practices, strategies, and implementation materials to distribute to community recreation centres to assist in the September 2008 province-wide implementation of DPA.
- Creating interim and final reports on the outcomes of the pilot projects.

The goal was to develop pilots in ten communities with each pilot engaging 100 students. The pilots were to commence as soon as feasible and to be complete by the end of June 2008.



Purpose

The intention of the pilots was:

- To provide students in grades 10-12 with an opportunity to meet the requirements of DPA through existing or newly-created programming provided by their community recreation centres.
- To give the schools and community recreation centres an opportunity to test methods of communication, tracking and reporting the DPA requirement, and to comment on key issues, such as program resourcing.

Process

Through the use of BCRPA's Regional Liaisons, *Active Communities* teams and electronic *Communiqué*, a search began for potential pilot communities with strong bonds between a high school and the community centre/recreation staff. A total of 23 communities were identified.

A steering committee meeting was held in late February 2008 to select the pilot communities. An evaluation matrix containing preferred criteria for the pilots was prepared and, as a result, ten communities were selected.

These ten communities were approached in the first week of March. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was drafted and was sent to each of them to provide information concerning the pilot program. Community recreation staff and school staff held discussions through March.

By the beginning of April, six communities (Hope, Saanich, Nanaimo, Prince George, Vancouver and Fort Nelson) had started planning their pilots. Four others (Cawston/Keremeos, Maple Ridge, Surrey and Castlegar) had decided not to participate. Port Coquitlam was also contacted, but, after discussions with the local high school, they too decided not to participate.

Reasons for communities declining to participate included:

- A lack of school or community resources to successfully engage with the project
- A concern that they would be piloting a program that would either not run at all in September, or would run in a modified form. Several schools pointed to the 'Graduation Passport' program as an example of previous initiatives from the Ministry of Education which were announced but later withdrawn.

However, two more communities joined: Courtenay/Comox Valley and North Vancouver. This brought the total to eight pilots initiated by early April. At this time it was agreed that it was too late to engage any other communities.

From mid-April to mid-May, the start-up process continued. Various activities were undertaken:

- School teams were formed – in many cases, the agreement to participate was made by the school principal, who then delegated responsibility to staff (normally PE or Counseling staff) to manage the project and convene a planning meeting with recreation staff.

- Students were consulted – most pilots held meetings, focus groups or conducted surveys of students to identify programs and activities that they would be interested in, as well as preferred times of day to run them.
- Programs were set up by the community recreation centre staff - instructors were hired, spaces found for them, and the programs promoted to students.
- Students were selected – the original focus of most of the pilots was to engage those students who were not physically active. This proved difficult, especially in the short time that was available and without the requirement being mandated until September 2008. Some communities were successful with this approach. However, others expressed concern the process of selecting students was exclusionist.
- Program approaches were revised – when targeted approaches were not successful in several communities, a more open approach was adopted. Instead of structured programs offered at specific times, students were given free access to the community's weight rooms, pools or gyms. Some of the other communities had used this approach from the start.

This all took time. While some communities had programs running by early April, others had only started in mid-May. In one community, North Vancouver, which got off to a late start, this process never quite got completed and they decided in mid-May to withdraw from the program.

Students in grades 10 – 12 are exceptionally busy during the last six weeks of the school year: there are graduation activities, provincial exams, demands to make choices for future courses, and summer brings a range of competing physical activity options. This time constraint resulted in reduced participation for all of the pilots by mid-May, and certainly by the first week of June. A summary of the student participation can be found in appendix A.

The school and community recreation centre representatives were contacted for evaluation purposes in mid-May and then again at the end of June. On the first occasion, a set of 20 to 25 questions were emailed to them (appendix B) and then interviews were conducted. In mid June, a slightly shorter list of questions was distributed to gain overall comments on the piloting process.

Reports from the seven pilots are included in the following pages. They are followed by a summary of the learning from the overall piloting process.

Comox Valley / Courtenay

Vanier Secondary School draws from a wide area, largely in the north and west of Courtenay. It has more than 900 students with over 75% of students bused to the school.

The process to establish the DPA pilot in Courtenay was smoothly accomplished, as the school and Sports Centre are adjacent to each other. Staff have a good working relationship, with school programs using the Sports Centre facilities and sharing fields. Indeed, recreation centre staff said they chose to become involved in the DPA pilot because they were “keen to build on existing good relationships.”

Community Recreation Centre
Comox Valley Sports and Aquatic Centre

School
Vanier Secondary School (SD71)

The DPA pilot in Courtenay was the last one to get started but getting up and running was accomplished swiftly due to this good pre-existing working relationship. The school started by asking staff, in particular physical education teachers and counselors, to identify inactive or at-risk students. Twenty five students were selected and a meeting was held to explain to them the opportunity provided by the pilot project. Twenty of the twenty five students attended this meeting. The majority of these students were in grade 10 and 11, with a couple of grade 9 students in the mix as well.

Interested students received a free one month access card to the community centre. Eight students actually picked up their access cards. While most of them visited the centre once or twice, only two students became regular users.

The pass allowed the students to attend classes and drop-in sessions, but the weight room was the main facility accessed. In order to accommodate the students' schedules, the recreation centre added an extra opening time at lunch hour.

Representatives from both the school and the recreation centre stressed that, while the pilot had limited participation, their partnership will continue to work well, as it uses existing infrastructure and is relatively easy to implement. The Vice Principal commented that this type of program could also provide better opportunities for inactive/at-risk students.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- *Tracking* To assist the school with tracking the students' participation, the recreation centre used their CLASS registration software to create reports on each student card holder's usage. This data was provided to the school on request.
- *Promotion* There was no formal promotion for the pilot project, since they chose to use a process focusing on specific students. In September, the school will promote DPA through activities such as a “meet and greet” night for the parents, newsletters, a web page and class discussions.
- *Funding and Equity* The Vice-Principal noted “many of [these students] could never afford to participate otherwise.” However, if no funding is provided to compensate the recreation centre, he did not foresee this program being able to run in September. Furthermore, concern was expressed about equity issues around hand-selecting participants, which could be a barrier to the implementation of the program.

- *Impacts*

The school has noticed an increased enrollment in active senior-level courses, such as physical education and dance, for next year - some of which they attribute to DPA. The Vice Principal commented that although the school currently has “a good intramural system - it targets the same active students.” He further commented that, “throughout the district there is an organized effort to expand the intramural program to offer non-traditional types of activities that would appeal to inactive students, such as skateboarding, bocce, etc.”

Fort Nelson

The Fort Nelson pilot provides an interesting example of how a community with few facilities has been able to provide some excellent opportunities for its youth.

Community Recreation Centre
Fort Nelson Recreation Centre

The Fort Nelson Recreation Centre chose to become involved in the DPA pilot because it “seemed like a great opportunity to connect with youth and with the school district.” It was also noted that “it is always a struggle to get youth involved” and thus the collaboration with Fort Nelson Secondary School seemed natural.

School
Fort Nelson Secondary (SD81)

Since the recreation centre already works very closely with the school, setting up the pilot project occurred quite quickly. The recreation centre already had programs in the schools throughout the region and once they were accepted into the pilot they were able to get the program up and running in the first week of April.

All students from grades 8 – 12 were invited to participate. However, school staff stated “communication with the students was a bit tough and then actually hooking them into the activities took some doing.” At the beginning of the program, there were about 15 to 20 participants each week, with the numbers slowly increasing as news of the project spread. By the end of the pilot, 56 students had participated in programs at the pool (mostly in drop-in swimming, but six students participated in aqua fit classes), 62 had participated in drop-in sports (mostly basketball and floor hockey), and two students had joined the walking club.

The students were able to access the activities at any time, but the majority came after school and a number of boys joined the evening basketball program. It should be noted that the recreation centre’s drop-in sports programs are now held at the school gym (in the wake of last year’s roof collapse at the rec centre), so the location is a familiar one for students. School busing, which serves many of the students in outlying areas, is also an issue, especially for those who are from the Prophet River First Nations. They have no access to public transit and although the school district has some funds for transportation, the coordination of bus drivers, students and the different programs is a significant problem. This issue could not be resolved during the pilot, but might be solved in the longer term.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- *Tracking* Tracking activities was not a significant issue in this pilot since the school was relatively unconcerned about who participated. They used a simple form which was completed by the student and signed by the program leader. It was the student’s responsibility to ensure this form made its way back to the school, but in most cases there was no requirement for them to do so. The community recreation centre staff kept a separate record of how many students attended programs. The school commented that “tracking at the school may involve expanding the time commitment of the (presently) half time librarian”. Funding for this would need to come from the school board budget.
- *Promotion* In order to facilitate awareness of the project, the school used a bulletin board, school assemblies, newsletters, PA announcements, the PAC and work by the recreation leadership 12 class. In addition, to entice participation, they offered regular draws at the pool for things like free swim passes. Recreation centre staff believe there may be

the potential for corporate support for this type of program. This kind of boost would help to create better promotion and could make the activities “cooler” to the kids.

- *Funding and Equity* There was agreement that without funding, the current program is not sustainable. The recreation department may be prepared to match a provincial grant, but it was noted that, “with the recent economic impacts in the area there will definitely be a problem continuing this type of program if funding is not made available.”
- *Impacts* Overall, recreation centre and school staff agreed the pilot was a good fit for their community

Hope

Hope Recreation Centre, operated by the Fraser Valley Regional District, worked with Hope Senior Secondary School to run the pilot in their community. These two organizations have a long history of working together and found the pilot process worked very well.

Community Recreation Centre
Hope Recreation Centre

School
Hope Senior Secondary School (SD78)

The recreation centre became involved in the pilot project because they have “strong First Nations enrollment at the school as well as many youth from low income homes.” The Recreation Manager commented that there are often low levels of physical activity among these youth and that this, coupled with other social factors, often leads to poor health. Furthermore, the centre already had a good working relationship with Hope Senior Secondary, with the school using the recreation centre for some of the PE classes.

While support from the school district and school administration was excellent, there were difficulties starting the pilot. The first stemmed from the short time frame to get things going. In addition, support from teachers was limited as they appeared to consider the program another burden placed on them. Furthermore, the project was launched at a busy time of year for both staff and students.

Difficulties aside, the Hope pilot has been successful in attracting participants and has been running since the beginning of May. The process was initiated with a survey (appendix C) of students to determine interest in the program, targeting very specific groups, such as inactive teen girls. There were 129 respondents to the survey, with the overwhelming majority indicating they would be interested in participating in such a program.

The initial approach was to target specific youth who had responded to the survey, and to offer them a variety of programs. However, there was virtually no attendance at these programs, so the approach was revised.

The new focus was to target all students and to reposition physical activity as “the in thing”. The focus has been on drop-in activities, with the pilot giving free access to the pool, gym, cardio suite and arena dry floor (for ball hockey, etc.).

By mid-May there were between 50 – 60 students participating in the pilot. The program allowed grade 10 – 12 students to use the recreation centre’s fitness facilities after school on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. By the end of the pilot in mid-June, almost 130 students had participated at least once, mostly on a drop-in basis. In addition, a more structured program in the Recreation Centre’s gym had 123 participants.

Since the program is focusing on drop-in activities, students are able to access the centre at times convenient for them, although after school is most popular.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- *Tracking* Tracking of student participation is achieved by having students sign into a book at the recreation centre. This information is then made available to the school for tracking purposes. Although they have the technology to provide the students with access cards, they are currently unable to release any personal information collected by this system to the school.

- *Promotion* The initial promotion of this program was done through First Nations groups, local media articles and word of mouth. The plan for September 2008 is to promote the program through assemblies for grades 8 - 12 and in information in course packages issued to grades 8 – 10. For grade 11 & 12 students, there will be further communication through the PE department and the Careers department (currently in charge of GTP and therefore tracking the grade 12's). Next year's tracking may involve the PE staff to deal with the journal/logs.
- *Funding and Equity* It is hoped the existing joint use agreement can cover future program costs. The school is also looking at other low-cost options, such as using hiking trails, local parks and tennis courts which are located near the school.

Nanaimo

The City of Nanaimo's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has been working with the Nanaimo District Secondary School on their pilot project. Although they worked hard to get the program running, the pilot only attracted 25 students.

Community Recreation Centre
Beban Park Recreation Centre

School
Nanaimo District Secondary School (SD68)

City staff said their commitment to being innovative and responsive to the needs of the community made them very interested in this pilot project. In addition, the project's focus on youth fit nicely with the department's mission to enhance the quality of life and leisure in Nanaimo.

Making the connection between the school and the recreation centre was easy, as the two buildings occupy the same site. The school's PE classes routinely make use of the recreation centre's facilities and actually hire rec centre staff to teach certain activity units. In addition, school staff are engaged to the point that they have hired the same physical activity consultant used by the recreation centre to offer activity sessions for staff.

The first step in setting up the pilot was conducting focus groups with students, mostly grade 10, to see what types of activities they would prefer and to find out when the optimal scheduling times would be. Based on this feedback, the activities were scheduled after school. The first activity date was May 6, 2008. It was decided students would not be "selected" for the program, but rather that all students would simply be given the opportunity to participate.

The students were offered a *Boot Camp* program at no cost, which included a variety of activities. It was hoped that this would also encourage participation from students who were already participating in community sports but who would like to cross train and try something new. The program took place at the school, which helped to reduce transportation barriers to participation. In the first few weeks of the program, there were 25 students participating, with the majority of the participants in grade 11 and 12. While some continued to participate, there were only about ten students who were regulars.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- *Tracking* Tracking and evaluation was done by the instructor of the program. For September, the recreation centre is looking for a tracking tool to capture all types of activities (e.g. skateboarding, shooting hoops, walking to school etc.) They are also hoping there will be a more complete definition for Daily Physical Activity around which they can develop activities. The school concern is that tracking student participation will require additional funding for staff, and without such funding, this type of program will not be feasible.
- *Promotion* The promotion of the pilot's activities within the school was through PA announcements, PE staff talking to classes, other teaching staff encouraging students to investigate possibilities, and a presentation to the PAC. In September, the city will be promoting and communicating programs through the use of its Leisure Guide. For its part, the school will again be providing information at assemblies, through PE staff discussions with classes and at a presentation to the PAC. There will also be a single, district-wide message at the start of the year. In June, information will be sent out with report cards.

Prince George

The Prince George YMCA partnered with Prince George Secondary School for the pilot. This pilot offered the opportunity to see how the Y and other recreation providers outside of local government can be incorporated into supporting DPA.

Community Recreation Centre
Prince George YMCA

School
Prince George Secondary School (SD57)

The Y became interested in the pilot because it currently has very little youth programming, except for summer camps, but it wants to expand in this area. It also has a general mandate to promote healthy lifestyles, which is a great match for this project.

Coordination between Prince George Secondary School and the Prince George YMCA ensured the start up went very smoothly. Much of this can be attributed to the fact that these two entities were already working well together, with the school using the facilities at the Y for some of its PE classes.

A group of students were identified by the PE staff as being good candidates for the program. A survey was distributed to them to gather ideas regarding what types of activities they would be interested in. Based on the results, two approaches were adopted: drop-in programming and specific programs. For specific programs, a wide variety was offered, including Cardio Boxing, Cycle Fit and Balls and Bands. These programs were running as of April 23, 2008.

Many of the students currently involved come from low income homes and cannot afford to pay for this luxury (in PE class or after school). [This pilot] allows at risk students who due to financial situations would otherwise not be able to experience these types of facilities to participate.
Joe Flavel, PGSS

A total of 38 students were initially selected by the PE department, but other students who expressed an interest were included. Of these, only 20 took the required orientation for the drop-in weight room program, with 18 of them attending once. Ten became regular participants. Although the students had identified that they would like to participate in specific programs, only 1 or 2 students turned up for the first few weeks and eventually these programs were cancelled.

All of the programs took place at the Y, which worked well since the school gym was full with intramural programming and regular PE. Participants received free membership to the Y and were able to drop in at any time.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- **Tracking** The Y uses the Mistral system for tracking registration. Using the access cards, students' entry date/times were recorded. The system did not record their specific activities - it was the responsibility of the students to track themselves. The school PE coordinator and the Y staff person kept in touch regularly via email. The school anticipates that for September 2008, the PE teachers will be in charge of tracking DPA for the grade 8 and 9 students, while the staff who are looking after the graduate transitions program will do the tracking for the grades 10 through 12 students.
- **Promotion** Knowledge of the pilot program spread informally through word of

mouth around the school. In September, grade-wide assemblies will be held during the first or second week of school. In addition, there will be announcements and message boards advertising the requirements and possibilities (in school and out of school) for completing them.

- *Impacts*

There was general support for the pilot. It was noted that the need for non-school facilities will be even greater during the winter when all PE classes are held indoors.

YMCA staff say better integration of the school and Y calendars will enable more students to access their programs.

Saanich

In Saanich, Pearkes Recreation Centre worked with Spectrum School, offering a diverse range of activities for students. The recreation centre chose to be involved with the pilot project because it already had a good partnership with the school and wanted to enhance it.

School staff recognized that it took them quite a while to get themselves and the students organized. The broad plan was set up and confirmed quite early, but it took several attempts to get face-to-face meetings with the students. Eventually, rec centre staff visited four classes, students filled out a survey on their interests, and email addresses were submitted by those interested.

The participants were mostly grade 10 students, although there was one grade 12 student who needed to complete his/her required 80 hours for graduation. As participants in the pilot, the students received access passes which are usable at any Saanich recreation centre. By mid-June, 51 passes had been given out.

The students suggested a number of programs and three kinds of activities were eventually offered:

- Pool (Commonwealth) and weight room (at Pearkes, but could be other Saanich centres) drop-ins were the main activities that were accessed by students.
- An after school drop-in program at Colquitz School on Tuesdays was primarily used by a few boys to play basketball. The largest group was 11, with the smallest being five.
- Saanich organized one riding day-trip, made possible by a close working relationship with a local stable. Staff wanted to provide a program that would interest girls. Another activity tried on an out-trip basis was tennis.

Programs were generally accessed after school, although drop-in activities could be accessed anytime. Activities took place at Pearkes and the adjacent middle school.

Comment on specific issues was as follows:

- *Tracking* Saanich used the access pass, which enabled them to create a record of use for each participant. At the Colquitz program, students used a sign-in book. It is likely that in September, tracking for grade 12 students will remain with the GTP team, but no decision has yet been made on how tracking would be handled for the grade 10 and 11 students.
- *Promotion* Recruitment for the pilot was primarily handled by school staff. A weekly email was sent to students and they were encouraged to forward it to their friends. In addition, there were periodic announcements made and posters put up. In September, information on DPA and the requirements will be disseminated through information packages that will be issued to all students and promoted at school assemblies and PAC meetings.

Community Recreation Centre
Pearkes Recreation Centre

School
Spectrum School (SD61)

*My name is Randy.
I was a student in the pilot program from Spectrum.
I really enjoyed this program. The only problem was we wished we could get more people to get involved.
The supervisors were great and fun to hang out with. My favourite part of the program was probably the horse-back riding, that was really fun.
I really hope that the program continues in September and I look forward to seeing the supervisors again.
Thank you for your time.*

- *Funding and Equity* Given the short period of time the pilot was in operation, both school and community recreation centre staff consider it to be a success. They also recognize that the program, as it currently stands, will need a separate funding source if it is to operate in September. Funding the program will also raise issues of equity, as many students use the recreation centre and many have passes which they pay for. Finding a fair system to reach those students who cannot afford access cards is important.

Vancouver Killarney

Killarney Community Centre and Killarney Secondary School worked together to deliver this pilot project. They are located on the same site and share many facilities and fields, making for an easy integration of the pilot activities. This integration is particularly close at the moment, since the community centre's arena is being rebuilt for the Olympics.

Community Recreation Centre
Killarney Community Centre

School
Killarney Secondary School (SD39)

Both the recreation centre staff and the school principal were keen to be part of the pilot project. Some school staff had reservations and ultimately, even though the principal was very supportive, there wasn't adequate cooperation from the PE staff. Those individuals were only prepared to do the bare minimum to facilitate student involvement. However, the recreation centre staff person identified students who she knew required completion of their 80 hours for their graduation requirement. Programming was then scheduled to start in the middle of May. The group of students was consulted about programming and timing and an instructor was hired. However, no students showed up for the start day and the program was cancelled.

Factors Contributing to Pilot Outcomes

At the start of the project, it was anticipated that all parties would see the value of the project and work towards its goals. It became evident that not everyone in the education system could see this worth. Some teachers and counselors were concerned it would be an outside program creating more work for them but providing no extra resources. They also commented about previous Ministry initiatives that were later withdrawn.

Recognizing that the pilot process fell short of its original goals, this case presented an opportunity to study how easy it was to get the pilots going and to assess ways to overcome obstacles.

In the final interviews with recreation centre staff and school representatives, we asked what were the success factors and what were the obstacles. This section of the report presents a set of key factors that must be addressed if success is to be achieved once DPA is fully implemented in September 2008. We suggest a set of guiding principles, derived from these factors, to assist communities in developing plans for DPA implementation.

- ***Recognizing that students are very busy people*** Adults tend to forget how busy 16 to 18-year-olds really are. In most cases, they are busier than previous generations. School fills six hours of their day, there is homework, some have part time jobs (the average student works between 15 and 20 hours per week), and most have busy social lives. For many youth, physical activity is already built into this schedule, since they are on the soccer or volleyball team for school or community, or regularly work out at the gym. But it is the other youth to whom this program is really directed, and for them, physical activity takes second priority behind the factors noted above. It will take special programs and incentives to get these youth active because they have to give up something in order to make time in their lives for physical activity.
- ***Creating a community of trust at the local level*** As noted in the introduction to this section, many teachers saw the pilots as "just more work". Some school and school district administrators were also skeptical. Obviously, these are reflections of a broader sense of mistrust in the education system, and the Ministry of Education must take steps to reassure staff that it understands the obstacles to achieving DPA and that it is prepared to work flexibly with the teachers, schools and districts to ensure more kids get active.
- ***Willingness to let the recreation centre into the school*** The pilots started by looking for schools and recreation centres that already had close working relationships. This was done to ensure a fast start. But in some ways, this misrepresents the general conditions across the province. Some schools and recreation centres were on the same site or even in the same building. In most of these cases, staff noted they had a close working relationship, sharing space, fields, and in some cases staff and expertise.

This willingness to share is an essential step toward collaboration on DPA and every effort needs to be made to foster it. It was evident in the various pilots, including those that never got

started, that this willingness to collaborate is more lacking on the school side than with recreation centre staff.

- ***School and school district leadership***

One of the most frequent comments made by recreation centre staff was that the school and school district leaders simply were not committed to making the pilot a success - they offered lip service to the idea, but did little more to make it happen. Conversely, in the one or two pilots where students came out to try the programming, it was the school principal in particular who continuously promoted and encouraged students to "give it a try".
- ***Staff attitudes and openness to change***

There is a chain of people who are involved in starting and sustaining the DPA initiative, and everyone in that chain, from school principals to PE staff to recreation centre staff must be positive toward the initiative if it is to succeed.

The weakest link in the chain would appear to be the PE teachers who need to understand the DPA initiative will lead to more students in their programs. They need to understand it is not a substitute for their vital role, To help illustrate this, positive examples of success from the first year of the main initiative will be needed. A communications strategy to get this information out to the teachers will also be necessary.

The DPA project will only be successful if teachers, especially PE teachers and counselors, are its strongest advocates.
- ***Adequate human resources at the school level***

Having adequate human resources at the school level to deliver the various aspects of the program will be essential if the implementation phase is to be successful. This must include staff time to plan and set up the appropriate programs, as well as staff resources to track student engagement.
- ***Creating fun programming and building in a social component***

The programming offered through the recreation centres must not be "more of the same" it cannot duplicate school curricular or intramural sports. The principal market for alternative DPA programming is the group of students who are uninterested in the current in-school offerings. They will only be receptive to DPA if they perceive it as being both fun and meeting their goals for social connectedness.
- ***Student cache and student input***

There is a need to create a 'cache' around the programs. The pilots which tried to make DPA the "in thing" were more successful than those that tried to develop programs targeting students who were physically inactive. Moreover, student input into the design of any programs was essential.
- ***Student leadership was a critical factor***

The importance of student leadership should not be underestimated. In one pilot, two students who were keen to use the opportunities presented took it on themselves to urge and recruit their friends. Most of the participants were actually recruited as a result of those efforts. This can be hard to create in

a school, since the natural leaders are also likely to be those students who are already engaged in sports teams. But it is a strategy worth pursuing if the "right" students express initial interest.

- ***Close attention to timetables and schedules*** Recreation centres learned their current program schedules simply did not suit school students, and by adjusting some start times and program lengths, they could make them instantly more accessible.

- ***After school timing*** In particular, the start times of after school programs must be either 3:15 or 3:30, otherwise students will drift move on to other activities. In one school where space was at a premium and where the community recreation centre was distant, space was found in the elementary school which shared the secondary school site. However, that space was only available at 4:00pm, and this was too late for most students who had already left.

This also brings a focus to the many students around the province who are bussed to and from school every day. The pilots were too short to experiment with any changes to school bussing schedules, and comments that this is an option tend to underestimate the complexity involved. However, adding time after school would make it possible not only for students to take part in DPA, but also to participate in extra-curricular activities.

- ***Focus on drop in activities rather than scheduled programming*** Busy students need time-flexible activities rather than scheduled programming. All the pilots found that providing the ability for students to drop-in to the weight room or pool was more successful than even custom-designed programs at specific times.

- ***Time to get organized*** Allowing time for projects to get up and running was critical, and will be in September 2008.

The set up time allowed for the pilots, while it appeared adequate, was far too short: communities were contacted in early March and the pilots were to finish in June.

Set up time for schools to be ready for DPA will be much longer, thus, a period of grace or transition for this requirement will assist schools with getting organized, including creating partnerships with recreation centres.

- ***Building public understanding*** One pilot saw students start to use the drop-in facilities and join programs at times which had previously been the domain of other demographic groups, especially seniors. This resulted in some displeasure among those other groups.

Clearly, managing these potential conflicts will require work on the part of the recreation centre staff and increased community information and communication.

- ***Integration into joint-use agreements***

The interface between schools and municipalities has historically been managed through joint-use agreements. These lay out what facilities can be accessed, at what times and for what costs. They are periodically renegotiated and revised.

Helping students to meet their DPA requirements should be built into the joint-use agreements. This will not only allow for the long term usage to be assessed, but also for the costs involved to be absorbed into, and defrayed by, other costs. This will help ensure there will be lower or no costs for the educational system.

Guiding Principles

Based on this assessment of the factors influencing pilot outcomes and success, the following Guiding Principles are proposed to assist schools and recreation centres with implementing this component of Daily Physical Education:

- **Recognize that students are very busy people and involve them in all aspects of program planning. Recognize that this will take extra time and resources and commit those resources. Listen to the students and adjust programs accordingly.**
- **Create a community of trust at the local level by including all levels of school and recreation staff in the planning team. Think about using new approaches to sharing ideas, both within the team and with the students (such as a social networking site that allows students to comment on ideas and make suggestions).**
- **Agree on a set of guiding principles for collaboration that include full commitment from senior staff, an openness to change, and an unreserved sharing of space.**
- **Assess the resources that are required to undertake the projects. Commit adequate resources, especially human resources at the school level.**
- **Focus on creating fun programming and build a social component into it.**
- **Engage the student leadership in the school so that the DPA programs become the "in thing".**
- **Pay close attention to timetables and schedules so the program times fit with the lives of the students. Focus on activities that come straight after school.**
- **Focus on drop-in activities rather than scheduled programming.**
- **Building public understanding of the need for students to be engaged in daily physical education, and use these as opportunities to break down barriers between demographic groups.**
- **Find ways to integrate the resourcing of these programs into existing contracts and agreements such as Joint-Use Agreements.**

Recommendation for Continuing Projects

The main challenge the pilot projects faced was a lack of time. By the time the pilots got started, the term was nearly finished. Given this, the recommendation proposed is to carrying on the piloting process in a more focused manner.

The piloting process should be continued in a maximum of three communities, with a view of building on current experiences and identifying successful implementation strategies. In addition, throughout this expanded piloting process two areas should be examined more closely. First, the major companies that provide IT support to recreation centres should be contacted to determine if there are ways to expand the existing systems to make the tracking of DPA less labour-intensive for the schools. Secondly, joint use agreements should be analyzed to see if there are ways to ensure the financial feasibility of these types of arrangements beyond the pilot process.

Suggestions

Furthermore, we put forth the following suggestions for items that would assist both schools and recreation centres in connecting with one another.

1. Provide information packages to the schools and recreation centres. These could include items like:
 - a. Information on local leisure access policies and subsidies
 - b. Examples of joint use agreements
 - c. Ways to connect with local Fitness Leaders
 - d. How to incorporate the student Fitness Leader certification process into your curriculum to ensure a continual stream of Leaders who are able to provide instruction for school programs. (See appendix D for additional information)
 - e. Highlight examples that have been done in the pilots in order to provide ideas and suggestions for communities.
 - f. Outline the outcomes of this project such as the guiding principles.
 - g. Provide information on grants that could help support this process. For example, the School-Community Connections Program that is now available through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and the Active Communities Grant. (Fort Nelson was recently successful in receiving an Active Communities grant to continue the projects they started as a result of the piloting process.)
2. Address the transition from grades 9 to 10, where students must take on the responsibility of meeting the requirement themselves. This may include orienting the grade 9 students to the options available to them during PE9 to ensure that they are successful in meeting the requirement in grade 10.

Conclusion

The DPA pilot process has caused a flurry of activity over the past few months in the participating communities. Certainly the most impressive outcome has been an increase in physical activity among students, especially those traditionally labeled as “hard to reach”. BCRPA is also excited that strong relationships have been forged between recreation centres and schools.

And the program has been of great educational value. While the pilots had mixed results, the communities where the initiative was successful, as well as those that faced challenges, offered insight into the real obstacles and opportunities involved in implementing it. They also brought forward well-thought-out suggestions and innovations that can be used by schools and recreation centres to increase their success rates.

As the Daily Physical Activity requirement goes province-wide this fall, we know that enthusiastic collaboration between recreation practitioners and education professionals will succeed in supporting BC’s youth in becoming physically active and healthy.

Appendix A – Student Participation Summary

Pilot	# of Students Participating
Comox Valley / Courtenay	8
Fort Nelson	118
Hope	123 (with additional drop ins)
Nanaimo	25
Prince George	18
Saanich	51
Vancouver Killarney	0
TOTAL	343



Appendix B – Interview Questions

Questions asked at the interim reporting stage:

Community Recreation Centres

1. Why did you choose to become involved with this pilot?
2. What school(s) are you working with for this project?
3. What difficulties (if any) did you encounter in making the connection with the school(s)?
4. Approximately when was the DPA pilot at your site up and running?
What was the first activity date?
5. Approximately how many students are involved?
6. How were the participants selected or identified?
7. What grades do student participants come from?
8. What activities are the students involved in? (i.e. standard offerings/newly created offerings)
9. At what times of day are the participants participating? (i.e. morning before school/spares/lunch/immediately after school/evenings)
10. Where are the activities taking place? (i.e. school/recreation centre/outside)
11. How are you funding the student activities for this project?
12. How are you tracking the students? Are you using your participant registration systems?
13. How are you reporting the students' successful completion of activity(ies) to the school?
14. Are there any difficulties unique to your area that impact student participation?
15. Have any successful solutions been developed to address these difficulties?
16. How are you promoting and communicating the programs?
17. Is the integration of DPA students into your regular programming a good fit?
18. What are your thoughts on sustainability of this type of a program/initiative?
19. Do you have any plans to recognize/reward the students who participate?
20. Do you have any stories/student testimonials/photos that we can profile?
21. Do you have any suggestions/insights about how community recreation centres and schools can further improve their workings to support Daily Physical Activity?

Schools

1. What community recreation centre are you working with for this project?
2. What difficulties (if any) did you encounter in making the connection with the recreation provider?
3. Approximately when was the DPA pilot at your site up and running?
4. Approximately how many students are involved?
5. What grades do student participants come from?
6. What difficulties (if any) did you encounter in getting the DPA pilot going in your school?
7. How are you going to structure timetables to meet the DPA requirements?
8. Do you foresee more involvement in physical activity at school due to students' efforts to meet DPA time requirements?
9. How are you going to promote the DPA concept and time requirements to students for September 2008?
10. Do you foresee any challenges with school facilities in meeting DPA requirements?
11. How are you promoting the community recreation programs?
12. Is the integration of DPA students into your regular programming a good fit?
13. What are your thoughts on sustainability of this type of a program/initiative?
14. Do you have any plans to recognize/reward the students who participate?
15. Do you have any stories/student testimonials/photos that we can profile?
16. Do you have any suggestions/insights about how community recreation centres and schools can further improve their workings to support Daily Physical Activity?

Questions asked at the final reporting stage:

How did the project work out in the end?

How many students were involved?

What success stories can you share related to particular students?

What factors contributed to the success of the program?

What factors negatively impacted the program?

How will you approach the full implementation of the program in the fall?

Appendix C – Questionnaire Used In Hope Pilot

The following survey was used at the start of the pilot in Hope to gather information around which to plan the DPA pilot.

Hope and District Recreation and Cultural Services
British Columbia Parks and Recreation Association
School District #78
Daily Physical Activity – Survey

Name: (optional) _____

Age: _____

Email: (optional) _____

Male † Female †

1. Do members of your family engage in regular physical activity?

Yes † No †

If yes, who and what sport/activity do they participate in?

How often?

Daily † Weekly † Monthly † Once in a while †

2. Do you exercise regularly?

Yes † No †

If yes, how often?

Daily † Weekly † Monthly † Once in a while †

If no, what in your opinion prevents you from engaging in some form of physical activity on a regular basis?

3. Is your level of physical activity important to you ? Why /Why not

4. Do you have any obstacles preventing you from participating in physical activity?

5. What is your favourite sport/physical activity ?

Team sports † Individual Sports † Outdoor Activities (hiking, walking, etc) †
Fitness Centres † Other _____

6. The use of the Hope and District Recreation Centre during school hours has assisted me in creating/enhancing my own fitness routine outside of school hours.

Yes †
No †

7. On average, how many hours of sleep do you get ? _____hrs

8. Do you work after school/weekends ? Yes † No †

If yes, how many hours per week? _____

9. How much time do you spend on homework per week? _____hrs

10. How often do you go out for a meal? _____

11. What would be something you could give up that would improve your quality of life/health?

12. In my opinion, the way to get teenagers that don't exercise to be involved in some level of physical activity would be :

Appendix D – BCRPA Fitness Leadership Program

Through its Fitness Registration Program the BCRPA acts as a regulatory body by collaboratively developing, recognizing and promoting provincial standards for the training and registration of Fitness Leaders in BC. The program has a current registration of over 3,300 leaders and has gained recognition as the standard against which the qualifications of a Fitness Leader may be measured in BC.

In order to obtain the BCRPA Fitness Leader designation an applicant must complete a series of educational courses and both written and practical evaluations. Recently the BCRPA certification courses have been piloted in high schools where they are being taught as elective courses which are part of the regular school curriculum. This has been met with great success. Students learn about healthy lifestyles, safe and effective physical activity as well as leadership skills. If they decide to follow through with the BCRPA Fitness Leader certification process they receive the BCRPA Fitness Leader designation, insurance coverage and will be able to work as a Fitness Leader in their community.

These “Student Fitness Leaders” will also be able to support the DPA initiative at their school by leading their peers in physical activity programming and delivery. These student leaders will have the ability, depending on which designation they received through the BCRPA, to lead group exercise classes, perform one-on-one training sessions in a weight room setting, assist in goal setting and offer lifestyle guidance. These student leaders will also be able to track the amount of physical activity of the peers that they lead.

Through this initiative more students will learn about health and physical activity which will assist them in maintaining their own health levels, they’ll motivate those peers who may not be motivated by adult encouragement and they’ll develop their own leadership potential. The possible relationship between the BCRPA Fitness Leadership Program and DPA is an area that needs to be further explored because of its potential benefit to the students and the success of the DPA initiative.