

March 25, 2009

The Honorable Julia Brownley
Chairperson, California State Assembly Committee on Education
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Assemblymember Brownley,

I am writing to encourage your support for AB 351 to allow participants in programs such as the California Cadet Corps and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps to receive physical education credit.

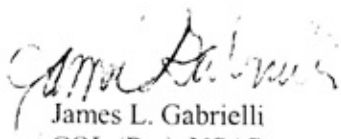
Founded in 1911, the California Cadet Corps is the oldest school-based leadership development program in the United States. The California Cadet Corps strives to promote leadership, citizenship, patriotism, basic military knowledge, academic excellence, health, fitness and personal wellness. The California Cadet Corps improves student attendance, reduces suspensions, reduces disciplinary referrals, helps students avoid gangs and drugs, increases academic achievement, and increases the likelihood the student will enroll in college.

The Cadet Corps curriculum is fully aligned with the California Model Content Standards for Physical Education. Cadets participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. They learn motor skills, individual, dual, and team sports, and principles of health and personal wellness. Their instruction includes lessons in nutrition, conflict, anger and stress management, emotional wellness strategies, personal fitness planning, and weight management.

The decision by the California Department of Education to limit access to physical education credit has had a negative impact on cadet enrollment in the Cadet Corps. Approximately, 40 schools with cadet programs have seen dramatic drops in enrollment or been eliminated altogether.

The Cadet Corps curriculum has proven to be an excellent resource in preparing cadets for the Fitnessgram. Cadets presently take and pass the Fitnessgram at a rate significantly higher than their non-cadet counterparts. We know that the California Cadet Corps program is achieving great results with the youth of California. AB351 will allow schools to grant physical education credit to cadets who successfully complete the Cadet Corps course work. I strongly believe that you will find this curriculum to be academically rigorous and worthy of the committee's consideration for awarding physical education credit.

Respectfully,



James L. Gabrielli
COL (Ret), USAR
Director, Youth Programs