WHEREAS, Physical education should be viewed as a public health tool that can be used to educate students and empower them to maintain and improve their life-long physical, social, and emotional well-being; and

WHEREAS, Physical education is valued as a foundational component for the health and well-being of students by health experts and policy leaders and has been shown to have a positive association with academic performance as well as mental and social-emotional health; and

WHEREAS, Quality physical education programs enhance the social-emotional learning skills of self-management, social awareness, self-awareness, decision-making, exhibiting responsible behaviors, and relationship skills; and

WHEREAS, Physical education provides opportunities for students to authentically use and evaluate personal Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies in a safe and inclusive setting; and

WHEREAS, Being enrolled in physical education provides an opportunity for students to be active during the school day; the CDC has stated that there are many benefits of physical
education in schools; when enrolled in physical education, students can increase their level of physical activity, can improve their grades, cognition, and standardized test scores, and are better able to focus and stay on-task in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, All physical education programs should follow the same standards; research suggests there are access gaps from school to school; students are entitled to a comprehensive physical education program; and

WHEREAS, Physical education is required to be taught; there is little oversight of compliance to the School Code, and the waiver process is not being strictly followed; and

WHEREAS, The National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) found that budget cuts had differential impacts on physical education, resulting in racial disparities; NPAP maintains that Black and Latinx students are less likely to be physically active and to have access to certified physical education teachers; these factors lead to lower fitness, which is correlated with poor academic performance, among other adverse outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Another public health concern cited by the NPAP is the lack of a consistent, equitable opportunity for kids to
get physical activity; physical education, through the public education system, can mitigate health disparities; physical education classes may be the only organized way for many lower-income kids to get much-needed exercise; and

WHEREAS, Physical education classes may be the only opportunity for students in alternative education programs and students with disabilities to be introduced, to learn, and to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and the confidence needed to be active throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS, The Society for Health and Physical Education reports that students who have physical education are 2.5 times more likely to be active adults; the patterns of inactivity in childhood and adolescence track to higher rates of inactivity, obesity, and other health issues (diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis) in adulthood; and

WHEREAS, Physical education provides opportunities for movement that in turn lead to decreasing medical costs; the World Health Organization estimates that for every $1.00 invested in physical activity $3.20 will be saved in medical costs; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has, in some cases, eroded
physical education programming; steps need to be taken to ensure that all students have standards-based physical education programming when they return to school without the constraints of COVID-19; these steps should include, but are not limited to, making sure that physical education programs teach the Illinois Physical Development and Health Goals and Standards; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that physical education is an essential and integral part of educating the whole child and that ALL students in the State of Illinois should have access to equitable, high quality, standards-based physical education programming being supported by equitable resources and funding; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all physical education programs are urged to be in compliance with and accountable for following the Illinois School Code; and be it further

RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to the State Superintendent of Education, the Illinois Association of School Boards, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois Principal Association, the Illinois Education Association, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, and the Illinois Association of
Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance.