

# Physical Education Assessment Report

Evaluation 2000-2001

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## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present evaluation findings about the advantages and disadvantages of administering the Physical Education Assessment Report (PEAR) during its pilot year and to present information for district decision makers to use in determining whether to continue administration of the instrument. Also, this report includes suggestions for improving administration of the instrument.

The report includes a brief description of the PEAR, its finances, and the history of its adoption and implementation in the district. The effects of the PEAR on inclusion of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in course content, on students' engagement in physical education (PE) classes, and on students' understanding of the skills involved in physical activities are discussed. This report also addresses parents', teachers', and students' perceptions of the PEAR and teachers' concerns about the time and effort spent completing it.

## PEAR Overview

The PEAR, created in spring 1999, is a locally developed assessment instrument that addresses physical education content standards and benchmarks based on the standards created by the National Association of Sport & Physical Education, the TEKS, and the AISD Physical Education Curriculum Framework. The instrument, used with students in grades K-6, covers skills and concepts that are developmentally appropriate for each grade level.

The PEAR is used as a supplement to AISD's traditional letter grade system. It comprises a one-page listing for each grade level of the TEKS to be taught during that year. Teachers enter numerical grades from 1 to 4 showing students' level of mastery for every TEKS addressed in their PE classes. The PEAR is sent to parents in addition to a traditional letter grade. It is designed to help teachers in planning lessons that incorporate the TEKS and in assessing students' mastery of the TEKS. The PEAR is also intended to give students a better understanding of the skills they are required to master in PE. It is hoped that this will result in more enthusiastic and skills-focused involvement in PE classes. Finally, the PEAR is a tool that can help parents better understand what is expected of their children in PE classes and how their children are progressing in the development of specific PE skills.





“calificaciones,” which was used as a translation for “skills.” They listed only activities that they had performed in class that day, including climbing ropes and jumping on a trampoline.

Among fifth-grade students, both groups of non-PEAR students listed combinations of activities and activity components. Both groups of PEAR students listed mostly activity components, including blocking and kicking. One group included one activity, rope climbing.

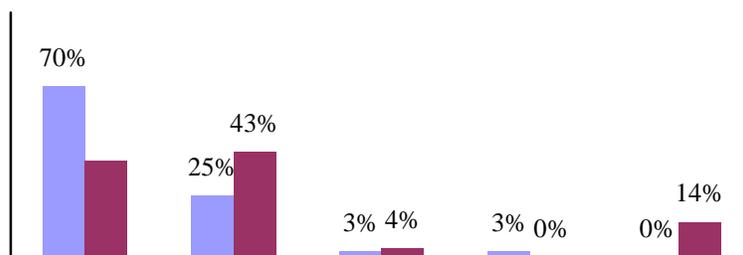
Only one second-grade class spoke readily about the skills that underlie activities, whereas all the fifth-grade classes spoke about them to some degree. This suggests that understanding of skills may be a function of age. Among fifth-grade students, PEAR students’ lists appear to have shown more understanding of the skills that make up their games than non-PEAR students’. This finding suggests that for fifth-grade students, use of the PEAR may promote awareness of the skills that are taught in PE classes.

### **Parents’ teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the PEAR**

#### ***Parents’ perceptions***

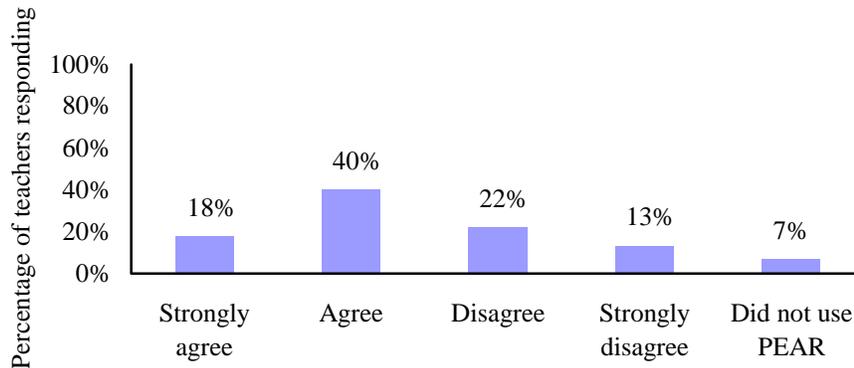
Parents’ opinions about the PEAR were assessed through a survey. Parents of 40 PEAR students (response rate = .50) and 28 non-PEAR students (response rate = .38) responded to the item, “How satisfied are you with the information given on your child’s PE grade report?” As shown in Figure 1 below, 95% of PEAR parents and 82% of non-PEAR parents responded that they were satisfied with their grade reports. Of PEAR parents, 70% responded that they were very satisfied, and 25% responded that they were fairly satisfied. Of non-PEAR parents, 39% responded that they were very satisfied, and 43% responded that they were fairly satisfied.

Figure 1: Parents’ responses to the item, “How satisfied are you with the information given on your child’s PE grade report?”



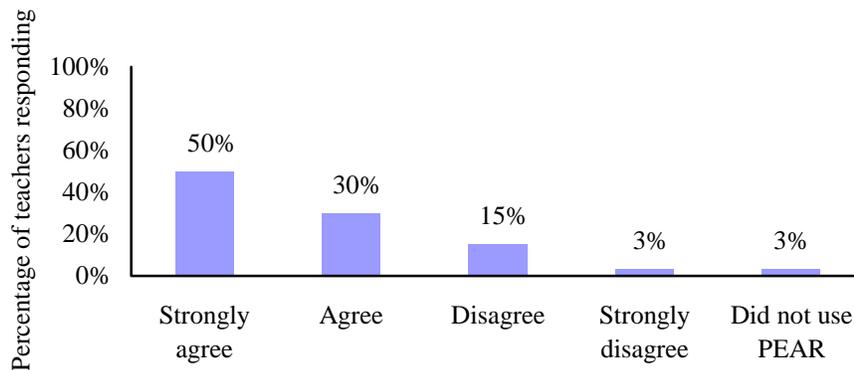
Based on survey results, most parents were satisfied with their children's grade reports.

Figure 3: PEAR teachers' responses to the item, "Teachers' use of the PEAR has positively impacted students' mastery of the physical education TEKS." (n = 45)



Teachers' mixed opinions of the effectiveness of the PEAR may be due in part to the time and effort necessary to complete it. Of 40 PEAR teachers responding to a survey (return rate = .71), 80% agreed that the PEAR took too much time to complete, 50% of them strongly, as shown in Figure 4 below. Only 18% of teachers responded that the PEAR did not take too much time to complete, 3% strongly.

Figure 4: PEAR teachers' responses to the item, "The Physical Education Assessment Report takes too much time to complete." (n = 40)



Each PE teacher is responsible for 21 separate classes, which makes the paperwork prohibitive. One non-PEAR teacher reported informally that he had declined to take part in the pilot because of the amount of paperwork required. One PEAR teacher reported informally that the assessment forms are too bulky to be used in the gym or on the playing field, so grades must be compiled in teachers' gradebooks and later copied onto the forms.

### ***Students' perceptions***

In focus groups, PEAR students reported that they were aware of the individual skill scores given on the PEAR, but many used the overall score much as they would use a letter grade. PEAR students' discussion of grades was very similar to non-PEAR students'. Despite PEAR students' possible superiority in knowledge of skills taught in PE, there was little evidence of a difference in the way PEAR students and non-PEAR students perceived assessment in PE classes.

### **Summary and recommendations**

Results of this evaluation indicate that PEAR parents are more satisfied with the PEAR than non-PEAR parents are in the letter grade they receive. In addition, in the fifth grade, PEAR students appear to show more knowledge of the skills taught in PE classes than non-PEAR students.

Because the PEAR increases parents' satisfaction with grade reports and may promote knowledge of PE skills among fifth-grade students, the evaluator recommends that use of the PEAR be continued, provided that additional research is done to investigate outcomes (i.e., incorporation of TEKS in PE classes and increases in 5<sup>th</sup> grade students' knowledge of PE skills).

However, the evaluator recommends that modifications be made in the construction or use of the PEAR to address teachers' frustration with the time and effort it requires. One option would be to reduce copying by programming a version of the PEAR that could be placed on laptop computers or handheld digital assistants which would be issued to the teachers, allowing them to complete the assessments on site. Alternatively, administrators in the Department of Athletics and Physical Education could reduce the amount of paperwork required during each assessment period by decreasing either the number of administrations each year or the number of students assessed at each administration. A third option would be to require students to take up the paperwork load through self-assessment.

In addition, to improve the effectiveness of the PEAR on student engagement and awareness of PE skills, the evaluator recommends that teachers take class time to be explicit about the form and about the specific skills and expectations each day.

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