



# Setting

**I**n this Congress, you will consider the health, academic, and other benefits of physical education courses as you prepare a statement to be delivered to your local school board. You will convene in small groups and as a whole class to design and refine your group presentation. As you work on this presentation, use the information and skills you gained in this unit to support your statements regarding physical education classes. The following setting serves as the impetus for your presentation to the school board.

## **Setting**

Your local school district is growing. The district needs more school facilities, including a new gymnasium for the physical education program. Tax money for schools is limited. Some members of the community are pressuring the school board to prioritize and perhaps even reduce school expenditures.

Your local school board has just received a proposal from a parent group to eliminate physical education (PE) as a course in kindergarten through grade 12. The letter from this group is shown on page 274. The group members believe that PE is an expense that has little to do with academics. Their proposal means that there would be no PE classes at any grade level. All of the PE teachers would be reassigned to teach academic subjects. The group recommends keeping interscholastic football, basketball, and baseball strictly extracurricular activities for athletically talented students.

The school board has requested comments from parents, teachers, administrators, and students. The board has made it clear that it will seriously consider input from all groups and is especially interested in the views of students. You must examine all aspects of this issue to prepare for the school board meeting. The board meeting will be the Forum for this unit. Just as you did for the Copper Basin trial, you will need a full set of notes and a brief that contains all the information you need to consider.

# Parents Coalition FOR Better Education

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President of the School Board  
1234 Address  
Some City, State, Zip

Dear President:

The Parents Coalition for Better Education (PCBE) has met regularly for more than a year seeking to design school programs that will provide the best education for our children, the future citizens and leaders of this city. We are also concerned with rising costs of education. This letter represents the first of a series of proposals to improve education and curb spending.

The PCBE recommends eliminating physical education as a formal instructional requirement in grades K–12. We support this recommendation because:

1. PE does not serve a strong academic purpose and reduces by one hour per day the time students have for basic studies such as mathematics, reading, and science.
2. Students expend a great deal of energy during PE, making them tired in their other classes.
3. PE frequently encourages loud behavior, which spills over into the school hall or classes that follow PE classes.
4. PE causes students to get hot, sweaty, and dirty. As a result, the schools must provide showers and other facilities. This is an additional expense to the taxpayer.
5. Students have numerous opportunities for exercise outside of school. We do not need to subsidize this effort during school.

Elimination of PE would not require that anyone be fired. We can reassign the PE teachers to other school duties. The savings could exceed \$500,000 a year eventually. This money could be better spent on more necessary academic expenses.

We would like to present our case before the next school board meeting and see the issue brought to a vote.

Sincerely,

*Carla T. Millikin*  
*Radna Thompson*

Carla T. Millikin and  
Radna Thompson

For:  
The Parents Coalition for Better Education

## Procedure

1. Hold a class meeting to clarify the proposal, specifically the following:
  - ◆ What do you think the proposal means?
  - ◆ How would it affect students?
  - ◆ What might be the various points of view?
2. Break into small groups, and identify some of the issues. Each group will focus on one advantage and one disadvantage of the