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Critics Decry Des Moines PE Cuts

## ***Parents Express Concern Over Obesity, Pent-Up Energy***

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**DES MOINES, Iowa** -- Critics are complaining about the Des Moines Public Schools decision to cut back physical education requirements to 30 minutes a week in order to save money.

Some said it's a bad idea at a time when childhood obesity has become an epidemic.

The decision was part of a list of final budget-cutting decisions that were announced on Friday. Starting next school year, students between kindergarten and fifth grade will have just one 30-minute P.E. class per week.

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Some parents said they are concerned that a lack of P.E. time may affect their child's learning.

"It's going to hurt my kids because they have a high-energy level," said Darla Cosner.

"They need to have at least a couple of classes during the day to get rid of some of that energy because they're not going to want to sit and learn."

"I know it's hard to balance a budget, but you've got to use other things than cutting classes," said Michelle Murphy.

**Des Moines Schools Superintendent Nancy Sebring said she wished she didn't have to make those cuts.**

**"I'm not sure it's the time to cut anything," she said. "It's not that we want to scale back those services for students, but we are being forced to."**

**She said the schools have a mission to educate children.**

**"When you look at it through that lens, you understand, even though we may have other things we would like to do for students," Sebring said. "The most important thing we do for students is to make sure they are proficient in those core areas."**

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