



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Portland (OR) District Redefines Physical Education Programming to Increase Student Physical Activity for the 2014-2015 School Year

David Douglas School District uses Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools Action Plan grant funds to purchase three SPARK programs

San Diego, CA, September 18, 2014 – A new [study](#) published in the *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* journal found that children who are more physically fit have more white matter – the brain matter important for attention, memory and linking different parts of the brain together – than children who are not as physically fit. This study, which is the first to find such results, suggests that physical activity and student wellness directly contribute to brain effectiveness and ultimately student outcomes. To increase physical activity and hopefully impact student brain effectiveness, David Douglas School District in Portland, OR is implementing [SPARK™](#), provider of the world’s most-researched physical education programs. The implementation is made possible through a Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools (KP TS) grant.

“With many competing initiatives, not all districts are in a position to add more but we have made health a priority” said Barbara Kienle, Director of Student Services at David Douglas School District. “Our district has a good reputation for being dedicated to our wellness initiatives. Our PE teachers are always looking for ways to expand students’ access to physical activity. They were the real driving force behind this grant opportunity.”

This school year, Douglas David School District will be using high-intensity and inclusive activities from SPARK’s K-2, 3-6 and Middle School Physical Education (PE) Programs to supplement the district’s existing PE curriculum. In addition to the curriculum activities and associated equipment, 21 of the district’s PE teachers will receive two on-site training sessions from SPARK trainers to ensure that the educators understand how to conduct each activity and assess student improvement. The first round of trainings will take place on August 27-28, 2014 with the final training session occurring in February 2015.

Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools is pleased to be supporting this and is working with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation to help schools become healthier environments. For more information visit www.kp.org/thrivingschools and <https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/>



To schedule interviews with David Douglas School District, please contact Rachael Ballard, public relations for SPARK, at (410) 975-9638 or Rachael@kehcomm.com.

About Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente is committed to helping shape the future of health care. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and not-for-profit health plans. Founded in 1945, our mission is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve approximately 9.5 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal physicians, specialists and team of caregivers. Our expert and caring medical teams are empowered and supported by industry-leading technology advances and tools for health promotion, disease prevention, state-of-the-art care delivery and world-class chronic disease management. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education and the support of community health. For more information, go to: kp.org/share.

About SPARK

SPARK is a collection of research-based Physical Education, After School, Early Childhood, and Coordinated School Health programs for educators serving Pre-K through 12th grade students. Since 1989, SPARK has provided curriculum materials, teacher training, and consultation to over 100,000 teachers and youth leaders, representing many thousands of schools, organizations, and agencies worldwide. SPARK also helps educators find [physical education grants](#). For more information on SPARK, visit <http://www.sparkpe.org> or email [spark\(at\)sparkpe\(dot\)org](mailto:spark(at)sparkpe(dot)org) or call 1-800-SPARK-PE.

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