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## NFL NETWORK TACKLES YOUTH FITNESS WITH NEW NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO “KEEP GYM IN SCHOOL”

*Program Includes Partnerships with NFL teams, Cox Communications, The President’s Challenge and National Association for Sport and Physical Education*

*Arizona Cardinals, Kansas City Chiefs, New Orleans Saints and Washington Redskins Lend Support to Keep Gym in School*

NFL Network is launching **Keep Gym in School**, a national initiative dedicated to supporting physical education in America’s schools and raising awareness about the importance of physical activity as part of education. The announcement was made today by Kim Williams, COO of NFL Network.

In its first year, *Keep Gym in School* is funding refurbishments for Physical Education programs at select schools, hosting NFL minicamps to get kids active and assess their fitness levels. Students will participate in follow up testing to determine the local performers who will earn trips to a National Honors Event held during the 2009 NFL Draft week. *Keep Gym in School* has created a series of football-inspired lesson plans and a fitness assessment program in collaboration with the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). The initiative is also incorporating the President’s Challenge, a physical activity and fitness recognition program of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS) and creating the “*Keep Gym in School* President’s Challenge” program.

NFL Network is rolling out the program with Cox Communications in Fairfax County, Virginia; Wichita, Kansas; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Phoenix, Arizona. NFL teams supporting *Keep Gym in School* in its first year are the Washington Redskins, Kansas City Chiefs, New Orleans Saints and Arizona Cardinals. Participating NFL players include: Redskins wide receiver **Antwaan Randle El**, Chiefs linebacker **Donnie Edwards** and former guard **Will Shields**, Saints running back **Deuce McAllister** and Cardinals quarterback **Kurt Warner**.

“Every student should have the opportunity to participate in quality physical education because it offers the best opportunity to teach skills needed to establish and sustain healthy lifestyles,” said Williams. “NFL Network is dedicated to the long-term success of physical education in

these four schools, as well as many more as we expand this exciting initiative from year to year.”

“Physical education in school not only gives children an opportunity to be active, but also teaches the skills they need to be fit throughout their lifetime,” said Joe Rooney, chief marketing officer at Cox Communications. “As a longstanding partner in the communities in which we operate, we are proud to champion *Keep Gym in School* with NFL Network.”

“NFL Network, Cox Communications, The National Football League and participating NFL clubs are dedicating their collective resources in a groundbreaking campaign to address this important issue affecting our youth...as only America’s #1 sport brand can,” said Dena Kaplan, senior vice president of marketing, NFL Network.

### **Keep Gym In School Overview:**

#### *School Adoption*

*Keep Gym in School* has chosen schools in-need for adoption to help deliver quality physical education opportunities to all students. *Keep Gym in School* will refurbish facilities; provide funding for physical education instructors and supply equipment, as needed.

#### *NFL “Minicamps” and Fitness Challenge*

Each adopted school will engage in an “In-School Fitness Challenge” to assess student fitness, motivate students to stay active and allow physical education teachers to monitor student progress throughout the year. The challenges will be kicked off with “minicamp” events that will be run by the participating NFL players.

#### *Teacher Training Camps*

NFL Network, Cox Communications and the local NFL teams will host all district physical education teachers at the team’s practice facility for continuing education, utilizing football-style lesson plans to enhance the districts’ existing PE curriculum.

#### *National School Adoption Grant*

To expand the program nationally, *Keep Gym in School* will provide one additional school with a \$10,000 grant to improve its physical education program. NFL Network will offer an online adoption contest open to any middle school nationwide at [www.KeepGymInSchool.com](http://www.KeepGymInSchool.com). Students, parents, teachers and other community members can nominate their school for the grant online at the website. A list of finalists selected from the nominations will be invited to apply for the grant. A national panel of judges will select the winner who will be announced at the National Honors Event.

#### *Public Service Campaign*

*Keep Gym in School* Public Service Announcements (PSAs) featuring Randle El, Edwards, McAllister, and Warner will run on NFL Network, in NFL games on broadcast partners and as a cross-channel spot on the Cox affiliates.

#### *National Keep Gym in School Honors at NFL Draft Week, April 2009*

NFL Network will host a culminating *Keep Gym in School* honors event in New York City during NFL Draft Week in April 2009 to award teachers and top-performing students from each adopted school. The school receiving the National School Adoption Grant will be announced.

#### *The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)*

*Keep Gym in School* is working with National Association for Sport and Physical Education

(NASPE) to develop instructional and educational content. NASPE is creating a series of football-inspired lesson plans and activities, designed to get kids excited about PE. NFL Network is making these lesson plans available at no cost through the program website.

*Keep Gym in School is a President's Challenge Advocate*

*Keep Gym in School* has partnered with the President's Challenge, a program of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, to promote regular physical activity for the health of all of America's children. As a President's Challenge Advocate, *Keep Gym in School* will incorporate the free motivational tracker into its initiative to encourage Americans, of all ages and abilities, to make activity a part of their everyday lives. NFL Network is creating a customizable "*Keep Gym in School Challenge*." With this program individuals can log on to the website, engage in activities, and track progress to earn special Presidential awards recognizing their accomplishments.

*Keep Gym in School*, in conjunction with the NFL's Play 60 initiative, is designed to address recent facts released by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Over the past two decades, the rates for overweight children have doubled and today over 12.5 million children and adolescents 2-19 years of age in the United States are overweight. According to the for Disease Control, only 7.9 percent of middle schools provide daily physical education or its equivalent (225 minutes per week) for the entire school year (36 weeks) for students in all grades in the school.

**Additional Partners:**

Donations have been made to the initiative by **Wilson**, who will be providing footballs to each of the schools and **Gatorade**, who will supply hydration stations at the "minicamps."

**About NFL Network:**

NFL Network airs seven days a week, 24 hours a day on a year-round basis and is the only television network fully dedicated to the NFL and the sport of football. For more information, log on to [www.nfl.com/nflnetwork](http://www.nfl.com/nflnetwork). NFL.com is the exclusive Internet home of NFL Network.

**--KEEP GYM IN SCHOOL--**