

## **Pennsylvania Health and Physical Education Requirements**

The requirements for health and physical education are exactly the same as the requirements for math, science, language arts, social studies or any discipline with academic standards.

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education Curriculum Regulations, Title 22, Chapter 4, [http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/022\\_0004.pdf](http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/022_0004.pdf) require that:

- Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in health and physical education be provided to every student every year in the primary (generally grades K-3) and intermediate (generally 4-6) programs;
- Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in health and physical education must be provided to every student in the middle school program; and
- Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in health and physical education must be provided to every student in the senior high program.

The regulations require that instruction be standards-based. The recent Chapter 4 revisions require that curriculum and instruction be aligned to the academic standards. It requires that schools provide sufficient time and planned instruction in order that students are able to achieve the proficient level on the standards. In this case, the Health, Safety and Physical Education standards:

[http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard\\_ed/lib/stateboard\\_ed/sandyhealth.pdf](http://www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard_ed/lib/stateboard_ed/sandyhealth.pdf). School districts must determine the proficient level for areas not assessed by statewide testing and then determine how much time and planned instruction is necessary for students to achieve the proficient level. Since health and physical education are not assessed via a state assessment, school districts must have a local assessment system in place.

Neither the Pennsylvania Department of Education nor the State Board of Education mandates a specific number of minutes or times per week. These are local control issues. The bottom line is that school districts must provide sufficient planned instruction, time and opportunities for students to be able to achieve the proficient level on the standards. The school district makes the decision as to the most appropriate manner in which to schedule classes as long as it is within the boundaries of the School Code, Curriculum Regulations and legislation.

The goal of physical education is to provide students with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to participate in health enhancing physical activities for a lifetime, not just their time in school. The role of the school is to provide students with sufficient time, planned instruction and opportunities in order to achieve the standards. The regulations do not allow for waivers out of a class simply due to participation in an activity. It must be noted that physical education and physical activity are not the same. Physical activity is only one component of physical education. Physical education must be provided within the context of planned instruction, alignment with the academic standards, local assessment system and certified instructor. Students cannot receive physical education credit for marching band or ROTC.

Neither the Department of Education nor the State Board of Education requires a specific number of credits for graduation. The number of credits is determined by the local school district. The Curriculum Regulations are the minimum requirements. A school district may have more stringent regulations but not less. If the requirements of the local district exceed the minimum requirements of the state regulations, the local district regulations are what are enforced. In regards to high school graduation requirements, the requirements must include course completion and grades, completion of a culminating project and results of local assessments aligned with the academic standards.

The supporting documentation in the regulations [http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/022\\_0004.pdf](http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/022_0004.pdf) is as follows:

**§4.11(h):** Public education provides planned instruction to enable students to attain academic standards under §4.12: **§4.12(a)(6):** Health, safety and physical education.

Planned instruction shall consist of at least the following components:

1. Objectives to be achieved by all students;
2. Content, including materials and activities, and estimated instructional time to be devoted to achieving the academic standards;
3. The relationship between the objectives of the planned instruction and academic standards specified under regulation 4.12; and
4. Procedures for measurement of the objectives.

**§4.12(a)(6):** Health, safety and physical education: Study of concepts and skills which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, physical fitness, movement concepts and strategies, safety in physical activity settings, and leadership and cooperation in physical activities.

**§4.12(b):** School districts shall provide for the attainment of the academic standards. Attaining the academic standards requires students to demonstrate the acquisition and application of knowledge.

**§4.12(c):** School districts shall prepare students to attain academic standards in mathematics, reading, writing, speaking and listening and such additional standards as may be adopted by the Board.

**§4.12(d):** A school entity's curriculum shall be designed to provide students with planned instruction needed to attain these academic standards.

**§4.12(e):** School entities shall apply academic standards for students in all areas described in subsections (a) and (c). The local assessment plan under §4.52 must include a description of how the academic standards will be measured and how information from the assessment is used to assist students having difficulty meeting the academic standards.

**§4.12(f):** School entities shall assess the attainment of academic standards developed under subsections (a) and (c) and any other academic standards that they develop and describe in their strategic plans under §4.52(c) for purposes of high school graduation and strategies for assisting students to attain them.

**§4.12(h):** School entities are responsible for assessing individual student attainment of academic standards and for assisting those students having difficulty attaining them.

**§4.21(b):** Curriculum and instruction in the primary program must be standards-based and ...

**§4.21(d):** Standards-based curriculum and instruction in the intermediate level must enable all students to reach the proficient level on the local assessment system and the Statewide assessment system. Academic standards will guide the focus on learning specific subject matter content.

**§4.21(e):** Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student every year in the primary program: (6) Health, safety and physical education.

**§4.21(f):** Planned instruction in the following areas shall be provided to every student every year in the intermediate program: (8) Health, safety and physical education.

**§4.22(c):** The middle level planned instruction aligned with academic standards serves children who are approximately 11—14 years of age.

**§4.22(c):** Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student in the middle level program: (7) Health, safety and physical education.

**§4.23(b):** Curriculum and instruction in the high school must be standards-based and ...

**§4.23(c):** Planned instruction aligned with academic standards in the following areas shall be provided to every student in the high school program: (8) Health, safety and physical education.

**§4.24(a):** Relating to high school graduation requirements: Requirements shall include course completion and grades, completion of a culminating project and results of local assessments aligned with the academic standards.

**§ 4.27. Physical education and athletics:**

(a) Physical education shall be taught as required under § 4.21(e)(5) and (f)(8), 4.22(c)(7) and 4.23(c)(9) (relating to elementary education: primary and intermediate levels; middle level education; and high school education).

(b) The physical education program must be adapted for students who are medically unable to participate in the regular physical education program.

(c) The physical education program shall provide coeducational instruction, except that separation by sex may be permitted in courses involving contact sports. Separation by sex may not be used to exclude students of either sex from participating in any physical education instruction.

(d) In addition to physical education instruction under subsections (a)—(c), students of both sexes shall have equal access in interscholastic and intramural athletic programs to all of the following:

- (1) School facilities.
- (2) Coaching and instruction.
- (3) Scheduling of practice time and games.
- (4) Number of activities at each level of competition.
- (5) Equipment, supplies and services.
- (6) Funding appropriate to the sport.

(e) School districts may sponsor coeducational teams in interscholastic and intramural sports programs.

(f) Interscholastic and intramural teams playing contact sports may be separated by sex, but this subsection may not be used to exclude students of either sex from participating in a sport.

**§ 4.29: HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening and communicable diseases:**

(a) Instruction regarding prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other life-threatening and communicable diseases shall be given for primary, intermediate, middle school and high school education and shall follow the requirements of subsections (b) and (c).

(b) Educational materials and instruction shall be determined by the local school district and be appropriate to the age group being taught. The program of instruction shall include information about the nature of the diseases, treatments and cures, methods of transmission and how infection can be prevented. The school district may omit instruction in the elementary grades on transmission of disease through sexual activity. Programs discussing transmission through sexual activity shall stress that abstinence from sexual activity is the only completely reliable means of preventing sexual transmission. Programs shall stress that avoidance of illegal drug use is the only completely reliable means of preventing transmission of disease through shared drug paraphernalia.

(c) A school district, including charter schools, shall excuse a pupil from HIV/AIDS instruction when the instruction conflicts with the religious beliefs or principles of the pupil or parent or guardian of the pupil and when excusal is requested in writing. Prior to the commencement of instruction, a school district shall publicize that detailed curriculum outlines and curricular materials used in conjunction with the instruction are available to parents and guardians during normal school hours or at teacher-parent conferences. Curricular materials, if practical, shall be made available by the school district for home instructional use by a parent or guardian of a student excused from the district's HIV/AIDS instruction.

**§4.52(a):** Each school district shall design an assessment system to do the following:

1. Determine the degree to which students are achieving academic standards under §§ 4.12 and 4.13(c) and provide assistance to students not attaining academic standards at the proficient level or better;
2. Use assessment results to improve curriculum and instructional practices to guide instructional strategies and to develop future strategic plans;
3. Provide information requested by the Department regarding the achievement of academic standards; and
4. Provide summary information including results of assessments relating to the local assessment system to the general public regarding the achievement of students.

**§4.52(c):** The local assessment shall be described in the district's strategic plan.

**§4.52(e):** The local assessment shall be designed to include a variety of assessment strategies.

**§4.52(g):** Children with disabilities shall be included in the local assessment system with appropriate accommodations, when necessary.

In addition, **Pennsylvania School Code Article XII Section 1202** and **Pennsylvania Certification and Staffing Policy Guideline (CSPG) No. 1** require that teachers be certified in the area in which they teach. CSPG No. 1 can be viewed at:

<http://www.teaching.state.pa.us/teaching/cwp/view.asp?a=131&Q=105871>. The School Code states "No teacher shall teach, in any public school, any branch which he has not been properly certificated to teach." In order for a student to receive physical education credit, physical education must be taught by an individual who holds a valid Pennsylvania certification in Health and Physical Education.

**Act 114 of 2006:** On July 11, 2006, Governor Rendell signed Act 114, which was formerly HB 185 into law.

**Act 114: Section 1512.1:** The board of school directors in every school district shall establish a curriculum aligned with Pennsylvania Academic Standards on Health, Safety and Physical Education that, pursuant to 22 Pa. Code §4.27 (relating to physical education and athletics), requires pupils enrolled in the district to participate in physical education.

**Act 114: Section 1513:** Physiology and hygiene, which shall in each division of the subject so pursued include special reference to the effect of alcoholic drinks, stimulants, and narcotics upon the human system, and which shall also include special reference to tuberculosis and its prevention, *as well as nutrition and obesity*, shall be introduced and studied as a regular branch by all pupils in all departments of the public schools, and in all educational institutions supported wholly or in part by appropriations from this Commonwealth.

**Basic Education Circular: (Purdon's Statutes): Drug and Alcohol Education, Counseling and Support Services: 24 P.S. §15-1547:**

Classroom Instruction: Section 1547 requires each public school student to receive instruction in alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse in every year in every grade from kindergarten to grade 12. While the law requires universal instruction for all students, it does not prescribe the curriculum, methodology or content of the courses of study. The law requires that the instruction be age appropriate, sequential, discourage use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and communicate that the use of illicit drugs and the improper use of legally obtained drugs is wrong. The law does not require local schools to set up an independent course of study but rather to integrate the instruction in health or other appropriate courses of study.

In-service: As part of its in-service training program, local schools are required to provide programs on alcohol, other drugs, tobacco and controlled substances for all instructors whose teaching responsibilities include the course of study on tobacco, alcohol and other drug prevention.

**Act 91 of 2000: Section 1205.4 CPR Instruction:** School entities shall be required to offer a cardiopulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) class on school premises at least once every three years. The course shall be offered as an option to all employees of the school entity.

**Local Wellness Policies:** Another area that needs to be addressed is the Local Wellness Policies that were developed by the school districts. These policies went into effect July 1, 2006. The Local Wellness Policies are federally mandated. The school policy should be aligned with what is contained in the district's local wellness policy that was submitted to the Department of Education, Division of Food and Nutrition. This policy will be monitored and can impact school lunch and breakfast reimbursement funds.

If you need additional information, please contact: Shirley Black, Health and Physical Education Advisor, at: 717-772-0067 or [sblack@state.pa.us](mailto:sblack@state.pa.us).