

## Physical Education (PE) and Physical Activity (PA) Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. Are all public schools required to offer physical education (PE) for students?

Yes. According to Texas Education Code (TEC) [§28.002\(a\)\(2\)\(C\)](#); the administrative rules adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE); Texas Administrative Code (TAC) [§74.1\(a\)\(2\)\(C\)](#), [§74.2](#), and [§74.3](#); PE must be offered in grades K-12 as a part of the required curriculum in Texas Schools. A school district may provide instruction in a variety of arrangements and settings; may add elements at its discretion; but must not delete or omit instruction in the enrichment curriculum which includes PE.

### 2. Are school districts required to teach all of the PE Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)?

Yes. TEC [§28.002\(d\)\(1-11\)](#) and TAC [§74.1\(b\)](#) require schools to establish objectives and implement an enrichment curriculum that includes all of the PE TEKS-based standards. School districts may add elements at their discretion but must not delete or omit instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum. In addition, schools are required to adhere to the definition of a public school PE curriculum described in TAC [§74.37](#).

### 3. What are the physical activity requirements for students in grades Pre K-5?

The TEC [§28.002\(l\)](#) requires students enrolled in full-day prekindergarten, in kindergarten, or in a grade level below grade six to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes throughout the school year as part of the district's physical education curriculum or through structured activity during a school campus's daily recess. To the extent practicable, a school district shall require a student enrolled in prekindergarten on less than a full-day basis to participate in the same type and amount of physical activity as a student enrolled in full-day prekindergarten.

If a school district determines, for any particular grade level below grade six, that requiring moderate or vigorous daily physical activity is impractical due to scheduling concerns or other factors, the district may as an alternative require a student in that grade level to participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 135 minutes during each school week.

### 4. What are the physical activity requirements for students in grades 6-8?

The TEC [§28.002\(l\)](#) requires students enrolled in grade levels six, seven, and eight to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes for at least four semesters during those grade levels as part of the district's physical education curriculum.

Additionally, a school district may as an alternative require a student enrolled in a grade level for which the district uses block scheduling to participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 225 minutes during each period of two school weeks.

### 5. Can middle school dance courses satisfy the moderate to vigorous physical activity requirements for students in grades 6-8?

This is a local school district's decision.

### 6. Can middle school dance courses satisfy the middle school physical education curriculum requirement?

Yes. TAC [§74.3\(a\)\(1\)](#) allows for a variety of instructional arrangements and settings. A student who takes Middle School Dance 1-3 may receive fine arts credit as well as fulfill the physical education curriculum

requirement if the student receives instruction and demonstrates mastery in all of the TEKS for both content areas. Districts are responsible for ensuring that their instructors are appropriately certified. Please also note that while the new TEKS for middle school dance are based on the level of instruction, the physical education TEKS are grade-level specific.

### **7. What are the PE graduation requirements for high school students?**

The TAC §74, Subchapters [\(B\)](#) and [\(G\)](#), state that students must earn 1.0 PE credit to satisfy graduation requirements.

### **8. What is the total number of high school PE credits that students may earn?**

The TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(E\)](#) limits the total number of PE credits that can be earned at 4.0 credits. Although only 1.0 PE credit is required for graduation, additional state elective credits may be earned by taking any combination of the approved TEKS-based PE courses or participation in approved substitution activities.

### **9. Is there regulation regarding the class size limit for PE?**

Yes. TEC [§25.114](#) requires the implementation of PE curriculum, to the extent practicable, utilizing student/teacher ratios that are small enough to ensure the safety of students. If the school district establishes a student/teacher ratio greater than 45 to 1 in a PE class, the district shall specifically identify the manner in which the safety of the students will be maintained.

### **10. Is the Foundations of Personal Fitness course required for students as a pre-requisite to other PE courses?**

No. Subject to TEC [§28.025\(a\)](#), the SBOE may not designate a specific course or a specific number of credits as requirements for the enrichment curriculum which includes PE and the Foundations of Personal Fitness course.

### **11. Can a student substitute another course if they are unable to participate in PE?**

Yes. TEC [§28.025\(b-11\)](#) allows a student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to disability or illness to substitute 1.0 credit in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or 1.0 academic elective credit for the PE graduation requirement. The PE substitution credit allowed through an academic subject or elective may not be used to satisfy a graduation requirement other than for the completion of the PE credit. The rules must provide that the determination regarding a student's ability to participate in physical activity will be made by:

- (1) if the student receives special education services under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee;
- (2) if the student does not receive special education services under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, but is covered by Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794), the committee established for the student under that Act; or
- (3) if each of the committees described by Subdivisions (1) and (2) is inapplicable, a committee established by the school district of persons with appropriate knowledge regarding the student.

## **12. Do any of the innovative Sports Medicine courses substitute for PE credit?**

No. Sports Medicine I, II, and III are state approved innovative courses that adhere to TAC [§74.27](#) and offer state elective credits only. The courses cannot be used to satisfy the 1.0 state graduation credit for PE.

## **13. Do athletic trainers receive PE credit?**

No. "Athletic training" is not a state approved TEKS-based course or innovative course used for PE substitution credits. Athletic trainers participate in the Sports Medicine state approved innovative courses for state elective credits only. They also must adhere to the requirement of successfully completing 1.0 credit of PE TEKS-based courses or the appropriate PE substitutions for PE graduation credit.

## **14. What are the TEKS-based PE courses?**

The state approved TEKS-based general PE courses listed in TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)](#), [§74.72\(b\)\(6\)](#), [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)](#), and [§74.74\(b\)\(6\)](#) are:

- Foundations of Personal Fitness (.5 to 1.0 credit)
- Team Sports/Individual Sports (.5 to 1.0 credit)
- Aerobics (.5 to 1.0 credit)
- Adventure Outdoor Education (.5 to 1.0 credit)

## **15. How many times is a student allowed to complete a TEKS-based PE course?**

The TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(E\)](#) states a student may only earn credit for a specific TEKS-based PE course one time. Since there are a limited number of TEKS-based PE courses, the total credits a student may earn for successful completion of PE courses is limited to the number of courses available (i.e. no more than four credits total).

State Board of Education administrative rules allow certain substitutions for TEKS-based PE courses. Regardless of which substitution activities a student participates in, the student may not earn more than a total of 4.0 credits toward graduation for PE substitutions.

## **16. What is the total number of PE substitution credits a student may earn?**

The TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(E\)](#) limits the total credits a student may earn for successful completion of PE substitution activities to no more than 4.0 credits total regardless of which substitution activities in which a student participates.

## **17. Students are required to have 1.0 credit of PE; however, our school district requires 1.5 credits for PE to satisfy graduation requirements. What are the options that the district may use for the .5 credit?**

This is a local school district's decision.

## **18. What extracurricular activities are allowed as substitution activities for PE credit?**

Physical education substitution activities are listed in TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\) and \(D\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(B\) and \(C\)](#). In accordance with local district policy, credit for any of the physical education courses approved for state credit through participation in the following activities: athletics, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (JROTC), drill team, marching band, cheerleading, and commissioner of education approved private or commercially-sponsored physical activity programs that are held on or off campus.

All substitutions must adhere to TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(E\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(D\)](#) and must include at least 100 minutes per five day school week of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Credit may not be earned for any of the required state physical education courses more than once. No more than four substitution credits may be earned through any combination of substitutions allowed.

### **19. What qualifies as Olympic level and private or commercially sponsored physical activities?**

There are two levels of PE substitution credit activities described in TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\)\(iii\)](#) and TAC [§74.73\(b\)\(7\)\(B\)\(iii\)](#):

(I) Olympic-level participation and/or competition includes a minimum of 15 hours per week of highly intensive, professional, supervised training. The training facility, instructors, and the activities involved in the program must be certified by the superintendent to be of exceptional quality. Students qualifying and participating at this level may be dismissed from school one hour per day. Students dismissed may not miss any class other than PE.

(II) Private or commercially-sponsored physical activities include those certified by the superintendent to be of high quality and well supervised by appropriately trained instructors. Student participation of at least five hours per week must be required. Students certified to participate at this level may not be dismissed from any part of the regular school day.

All substitutions must include at least 100 minutes per five day school week of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Credit may not be earned for any of the required state physical education courses more than once. No more than four substitution credits may be earned through any combination of substitutions allowed.

### **20. Are the category I and II private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs also for middle or junior high school students?**

No. Category I and II private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs can only be substituted for the state physical education graduation requirement.

The TEC [§28.002\(I\)\(2\)](#) and TAC [§103.1003\(b\)](#) both state that a school district or open-enrollment charter school must provide an exemption for a student on a middle or junior high school campus to participate in a school related extracurricular activity, or an activity sponsored by a private league, or club that has a moderate to vigorous structured physical activity component and meets the requirements for extracurricular activity as defined by TAC [§76.1001](#). Beyond these rules, middle or junior high schools make their own determinations regarding the quality and rigor of off-campus programs.

### **21. Explain the credits that may be earned toward the PE requirement for participation in JROTC.**

The TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(B\)\(ii\)](#) and [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(B\)\(ii\)](#) both state that districts may award 1.0 PE substitution credit for the physical activity associated with JROTC and may be awarded up to 3.0 additional JROTC completion credits.

### **22. Which on-or-off campus programs may earn 4.0 PE substitution credits?**

According to TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\) and \(D\)](#), [§74.73\(b\)\(6\)\(B\) and \(C\)](#), and local district policy, no more than 4.0 substitutions may be earned through any combination of allowable substitutions. The substitution activities of athletics, JROTC, and private or commercially-sponsored physical activity programs may be awarded up to 4.0 PE credits toward graduation, 1.0 for the required physical education credit and 3.0 additional PE credits as state electives.

The substitution activities of drill team, cheerleading, and marching band may be awarded 1.0 PE credit toward graduation that may satisfy the physical education credit requirement.

If a student participates in a combination of activities, the student may earn no more than the 4.0 available PE credits toward graduation for participation in those activities.

**23. Can a student earn credit for PE by taking any TEKS based course?**

Yes. The TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(B\)](#) of the Foundation Graduation Program states that in accordance with local district policy, the required credit may be earned through completion of any Texas essential knowledge and skills-based course that meets the requirement of 100 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per five-day school week and that is not being used to satisfy another specific graduation requirement.

**24. May a student earn 1 credit for fine arts education and 1 credit for aerobic activities in the same course?**

Yes, if the teacher is certified in fine arts education and physical education, and all of the TEKS for both courses are taught.

**25. Are students permitted to earn credit for PE other than on or off campus courses or activities?**

Yes. The TAC [§74.3\(a\) and \(b\)](#), states that school districts may provide instruction in a variety of arrangements and settings, including mixed-age programs designed to permit flexible learning arrangements for developmentally appropriate instruction for all student populations to support student attainment of course and grade level standards.

The following options are available to assist students in meeting the PE graduation credit requirement:

- Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN)-Grades 9-12 on-line PE courses at: [www.txvsn.org](http://www.txvsn.org)
- Credit by Examination-The University of Texas Continuing and Extended Education at <http://www.utexas.edu/ce/k16/>
- Texas Tech University College of Outreach and Distance Education at [www.ode.ttu.edu](http://www.ode.ttu.edu)
- Correspondence courses or other distance learning opportunities at the discretion of the local school district:
  - Texas Tech University at <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/uc/k-12/> ; [https://www.depts.ttu.edu/uc/ec2k/Heading.asp?heading\\_id=270](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/uc/ec2k/Heading.asp?heading_id=270) or
  - The University of Texas at <http://www.utexas.edu/ce/k16/cbe-ea/high-school-courses/>

School districts retain the authority to provide other options that meet the needs of their students. Award of credit is based on demonstrated proficiency in all the TEKS for a PE course or successful completion of an approved PE substitution.

**26. Where can schools find Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) numbers for PE courses and PE substitution activities in physical education?**

The PEIMS numbers are posted on the TEA website at:

[http://tea.texas.gov/Reports\\_and\\_Data/Data\\_Submission/PEIMS/PEIMS\\_Data\\_Standards/PEIMS\\_Data\\_Standards/](http://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/Data_Submission/PEIMS/PEIMS_Data_Standards/PEIMS_Data_Standards/). Click on the appropriate academic year and the Code Table CO22 can be found under Section 4.

**27. What are the school district requirements for FITNESSGRAM®?**

For information on FITNESSGRAM®, please visit [www.fitnessgram.net/texas](http://www.fitnessgram.net/texas) or the TEA Division of Curriculum at [http://tea.texas.gov/Texas Schools/Safe and Healthy Schools/Physical Fitness Assessment Initiative/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Physical_Fitness_Assessment_Initiative/).