

ALABAMA



Amount of Required Physical Education: The state requires all public and private schools (except church schools) to have a system for physical education. The state requires students to take physical education in grades K-5 and requires that middle school/junior high and high schools provide their students with physical education. The state requires a minimum of 30 minutes of physical education per day in grades K-5. The state also requires a minimum of 30 minutes of daily physical education in grades 6-8, with a recommendation of (but not requirement for) 50 minutes per day. There is no minimum time requirement for high school students. There is not a method in place for enforcing the physical education requirements.

Physical Education Equipment and Facilities: The state does not annually assess the availability of appropriate equipment and adequate facilities for students to engage in required physical education instruction, but requires the school grounds to be large enough to provide outdoor areas for physical education.

High School Graduation Requirements: The state requires students to earn 1.0 credit in physical education for graduation.

Substitutions: The state permits school districts or schools to allow students to substitute interscholastic sports, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), cheerleading, or marching band for their required physical education credit.

Exemptions/Waivers: The state does allow schools and school districts to apply for a waiver from the state physical education requirements, but until funding is obtained for K-8 physical education teachers there will be no exception to the one required unit of physical education for grades 9-12. If a public school system has adequate certified physical education teachers for K-8, it may request an exemption from the one required physical education credit in grades 9-12 by substituting one of the activities listed above.

Exemptions are only granted to high school students by the state superintendent. The exemptions is valid for a two-year period. In addition, students may apply for an exemption from participation in the physical education class time or required credit. Students may receive an exemption for medical reasons or at the recommendation of an IEP team or 504 Plan.

Physical Activity: The state does not require elementary schools to provide daily recess and it does not require a minimum weekly amount of physical activity for elementary, middle school/junior high, or high school students. Classroom physical activity breaks are not required. The state does prohibit the use of withholding physical activity, including recess, as punishment for disciplinary reasons, and it prohibits the use of physical activity as punishment.

Local School Wellness Policy: The state does not require schools or school districts to provide their local school wellness policy to the state education agency nor to post it online for the public. It does monitor the implementation of local school wellness policies.

State Standards: The state has adopted standards for physical education, with which all school districts are required to comply. Physical education classes must meet the needs of all students and be modified for those unable to take the regular program, and must meet or exceed the minimum requirements in the [Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education](#) were last revised in 2009.

Areas addressed in the state standards include:

National Standard 1: Competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns

National Standard 2: Knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance

National Standard 3: Knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness

National Standard 4: Responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others

National Standard 5: Value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction

State Curriculum: The state requires elementary, middle school/junior high, and high schools to use the department of education's standards-based curriculum for grades K-12. The curriculum must be reviewed and/or revised every six years. The state has distributed the following information to schools or school districts: written physical education curriculum; goals and objectives of physical education programming; a chart describing scope and sequence for

physical education; lesson plans or learning activities for physical education; and pacing guides. It has also promoted the use of the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) by conducting presentations on its use at state conferences and meetings.

State Funding for Physical Education Programs: School district appropriations fund the state's physical education programs in school districts and schools. The State Board of Education is authorized to borrow money from the United States of America or any of its departments or agencies, or from any person, firm, corporation or other lending agency, for purposes of providing athletic fields and other facilities for physical education.¹

Class Size: The state's required student-teacher ratio for academic classes is applicable to physical education.

Grade Point Average (GPA): Physical education grades are not required to be included in a student's GPA.

Online Physical Education Courses: The state allows students to earn required physical education credits through online physical education courses, provided that written approval is given from both the principal and superintendent before the course begins and that the course includes all required content identified by the state unless it conflicts with the virtual delivery of the program.

Student Assessment Requirements: The state does not require student assessment related to state physical education standards.

Fitness Assessment: The state requires student physical fitness assessment in grades 3-12, using the Alabama Physical Fitness Assessment. Results are shared at the school level (e.g., to students, parents, principal) and with the school district, the local department of health, and the state department of education.

Body Mass Index (BMI): The state does not allow collection of students' BMI data.

Certification/Licensure of Physical Education Teachers: The state requires physical education teachers to be state certified/licensed and endorsed to teach physical education at the

elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school levels, and to teach online physical education courses. It also requires physical education teachers to pass a physical education certificate/licensure exam (PRAXIS) before they are endorsed to teach physical education. Elementary classroom teachers (generalists) may teach required elementary school physical education classes.

Professional Development of Physical Education Teachers: Professional development is required in order to maintain/renew one's physical education teacher certification or licensure and this professional development does not have to be on physical education topics. The state provides professional development events or funding specifically for physical education teachers.

Teacher Evaluation: The state has a teacher evaluation system for all teachers.

National Board Certification: The state actively promotes and encourages physical education teachers to register for the National Board Certification process, providing partial funding only if the teacher receives board certification.

District Physical Education Coordinator: The state does not require each school district to have a licensed physical educator serving as a physical education coordinator. It does not designate any staff to oversee implementation, compliance, technical assistance or monitoring of physical education programs in school districts and schools.

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1 Ala. Code § 16-3-28 (2015).