



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

### July 28, 2023

This document is intended to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions related to physical education (PE). Questions are organized into the following categories:

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### General

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

Yes. The Texas Education Code (TEC) [§28.002\(a\)\(2\)\(C\)](#) and State Board of Education (SBOE) rules in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.1(a)(2)(C) identify PE as part of the required curriculum in Texas public schools. Additionally, SBOE rules in 19 TAC [§74.2](#) and [§74.3](#) require that a school district must provide instruction in all of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for PE at elementary, middle, and high school.

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

Yes. TEC [§28.002\(a\)](#) and 19 TAC [§74.1\(b\)](#) require schools to provide instruction in all of the TEKS for PE. Additionally, districts and charter schools must ensure that sufficient time is provided for teachers to teach and students to learn all of the TEKS for PE at grades kindergarten–grade 5 (19 TAC [§74.2\(a\)](#)) and grades 6–8 (19 TAC [§74.3\(a\)\(1\)](#)). School districts may add elements at their discretion but must not delete or omit instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum. In addition to providing instruction in all of the TEKS, schools are required to adhere to the definition of a public school PE curriculum described in 19 TAC [§74.37](#).

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

Yes. TEC [§25.114](#) requires each school district, in implementing the PE curriculum, to establish specific objectives and goals including, to the extent practicable, student/teacher ratios that are small enough to ensure the safety of students participating in PE. If the school district establishes a student/teacher ratio greater than 45-to-1 in a PE class, the district is required to specifically identify the manner in which the safety of the students will be maintained.

#### **4. Where can schools find Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) numbers for PE courses and PE substitution activities?**

All PEIMS information is handled by our Texas Student Data Systems (TSDS) team. To view the PEIMS numbers for PE, please visit the Texas Web-Enabled Data Standards (TWEDS) web page by visiting: <https://tealprod.tea.state.tx.us/TWEDS/92/0/0/0/CodeTable/List/13154>.

Once there, click in the upper right corner of the page where it says “year” on the arrow and select the current academic year. It will then ask you to click on the open button.

Once you have done that, you will then click on the tab for “code tables”, and then click on “List of Code Tables” under the Description of Code Tables heading in the box on the left-hand side. Once you do this, a list of code tables will drop down. You will then click on the C022 SERVIC-ID table.

Once you click on the C022 SERVICE-ID table, this will populate all of the PEIMS codes for the academic year. You will have to scroll to find the codes for physical education.

If you need further assistance or support with accessing the TWEDS, please contact your district or education service center (ESC) PEIMS specialist.

#### **5. What are the school district requirements for the physical fitness assessment?**

For information about the physical fitness assessment, please visit <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/physical-fitness-assessment-initiative>.

### **Middle School PE**

#### **6. Can middle school dance courses satisfy the middle school PE curriculum requirement?**

The 19 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 PE curriculum requirement if the student receives instruction and demonstrates proficiency in all the TEKS for both content areas. Districts are responsible for ensuring that their instructors are appropriately certified to teach both content areas. Please also note that while the TEKS for middle school dance are based on the level of instruction, the PE TEKS are grade-level specific.

#### **7. Can middle school students who are enrolled in Music, Middle School 1-3 satisfy the middle school PE curriculum requirement?**

The 19 TAC [§74.3\(a\)\(1\)](#) allows for a variety of instructional arrangements and settings. A student who takes Music, Middle School 1-3 may receive fine arts credit as well as fulfill the PE curriculum requirement if the student receives instruction and demonstrates proficiency in all the TEKS for both content areas. Districts are responsible for ensuring that their instructors are appropriately certified to teach both content areas.

### **High School PE**

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

The TEC [§28.025\(b-1\)\(8\)](#) and 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)](#) require students to earn 1.0 PE credit to satisfy state graduation requirements.

Local districts have the authority to add additional credit requirements for graduation beyond what is required by the state.

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

The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) 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.

**10. Are there any high school PE courses required for students as a prerequisite 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.

## **High School PE Substitutions**

**11. What activities are allowed as substitutions for PE credit?**

The PE substitution activities are listed in 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\) and \(D\)](#). In accordance with local district policy, credit for any of the state-approved PE courses may be earned 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 PE substitutions must adhere to 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(E\)](#) 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 PE courses more than once. No more than four substitution credits may be earned through any combination of allowed substitutions.

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

Yes. The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(B\)](#) states that, in accordance with local district policy, the required PE graduation credit may be earned through completion of any TEKS-based course that meets the requirement of 100 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per five-day school week and that is not being used to satisfy another specific graduation requirement.

Districts and open-enrollment charter schools must use the special explanation code “7” to indicate the substitution of the TEKS-based course. Special explanation codes are available in the Texas Records Exchange (TREx) system to identify allowable substitutions and courses taken as part of the Foundation High School Program.

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

The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) 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.

#### **14. Which on- or –off-campus programs may earn substitution credit for PE?**

The substitution activities of athletics, JROTC, and private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs may be awarded up to 4.0 credits toward graduation, 1.0 for the required PE credit and 3.0 additional credits as state elective credits. (See question 15 for more information about private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs.)

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

According to 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\) and \(D\)](#) and local district policy, no more than 4.0 substitutions may be earned through any combination of allowable substitutions. If a student participates in a combination of activities, the student may earn no more than the 4.0 available credits toward graduation for participation in those activities.

#### **15. What qualifies as a private or commercially sponsored physical activity program that may substitute for the PE graduation requirement?**

There are two levels of PE substitution credit activities described in 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(C\)\(iii\)](#) that are available for high school:

- (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 PE courses more than once. No more than four substitution credits may be earned through any combination of substitutions allowed.

#### **16. Can a student with a disability substitute another course if they are unable to participate in high school 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.

**17. 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 19 TAC [§74.27](#) and offer state elective credits only. The courses cannot be used to satisfy the 1.0 state graduation credit for PE.

**18. Can athletic trainers substitute Athletics for PE credit?**

Athletics is an approved substitution for the PE graduation requirement, and student “athletic trainers” are often assigned to Athletics. There is nothing in law or rule that defines the “activity” of Athletics or lists the requirements for who can enroll or earn credit for Athletics. The graduation requirements specify that all substitution activities allowed for PE must include at least 100 minutes per five-day school week of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Therefore, if the district decides to award PE substitution credit for a person enrolled in Athletics who is an athletic trainer, the substitution must meet 100 minutes per five-day school week of moderate or vigorous physical activity.

**Award of High School PE Credit**

**19. How many times is a student allowed to complete a TEKS-based PE course for credit?**

The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) states credit for any of the SBOE approved PE courses may not be earned more than once. 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.

**20. 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?**

Local districts and charter schools have the authority to add additional credit requirements for graduation beyond what is required by the state. The courses that may satisfy local graduation requirements are determined by each local district and charter school.

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

The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(B\)\(ii\)](#) permits districts to 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. May a student earn 1.0 credit for fine arts education and 1.0 credit for PE through the same course?**

Yes, a student may earn credit for both fine arts and PE if they receive instruction and demonstrate proficiency in all the TEKS for both content areas. Please note that the teacher must be appropriately certified in both fine arts education and PE at the appropriate grade level.

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

Yes. The 19 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 online PE courses at: [www.txvsn.org/](http://www.txvsn.org/)
- Credit by Examination:
  - Texas Tech University (TTU) K-12 at <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/k12/cbe/>
  - The University of Texas at Austin UT High School at [https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit\\_by\\_exam](https://highschool.utexas.edu/credit_by_exam)
- Correspondence courses or other distance learning opportunities at the discretion of the local school district:
  - TTU K-12 at <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/k12/courses/>
  - The University of Texas at Austin UT High School at [https://highschool.utexas.edu/hs\\_courses](https://highschool.utexas.edu/hs_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 of all the TEKS for a PE course or successful completion of an approved PE substitution.

## **Physical Activity**

### **24. What are the physical activity requirements for students in grades prekindergarten-5?**

The TEC [§28.002\(I\)](#) requires students enrolled in full-day prekindergarten, kindergarten, or 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 PE 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.

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

The TEC [§28.002\(I\)](#) 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 PE 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.

**26. Can middle school dance courses and Music, Middle School 1-3 satisfy the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirements for students in grades 6-8?**

This is a local school district's decision.

**27. Are the category I and II private or commercially sponsored physical activity programs allowed as PE substitutions for middle or junior high school students?**

No. There are no substitutions, exemptions, or waivers for PE in middle school. The 19 TAC [§74.3\(a\)](#) states that school districts are required to provide instruction in all of the TEKS for PE at each grade level 6-8.

**28. Are there exemptions from the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirement for middle or junior high school students?**

Yes. The TEC [§28.002\(l\)\(2\)](#) states that a school district or open-enrollment charter school must provide an exemption from *the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirement* for a middle school or junior high school student who participates in an extracurricular activity with a moderate or vigorous physical activity component that is considered a structured activity under the rules adopted by the commissioner. Extracurricular activities are further defined in 19 TAC [§76.1001](#) and structured activities are further defined in 19 TAC [§103.1003\(d\)](#).

Additionally, TEC [§28.002\(l-1\)](#) states that in adopting rules relating to an activity described by Subsection (l)(2), the commissioner may permit an exemption from *the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirement* for a student who participates in a school-related activity or an activity sponsored by a private league or club only if the student provides proof of participation in the activity. These programs are further defined in TAC §103.1003 (b)(c). Approval of an exemption from *the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirement* for participation in one of these programs at the middle school level is a local district decision. Students participating in both of these programs **must** still demonstrate proficiency in the TEKS for PE in grades 6-8.

**29. Can students with an illness or disability be exempted from the moderate or vigorous physical activity requirement?**

Yes. The TEC [§28.002\(l\)\(1\)](#) states that a school district must provide for an exemption for any student who is unable to participate in the required physical activity because of illness or disability.

**Implementation of the 2022-2023 High School PE TEKS**

**30. What are the high school TEKS-based PE courses?**

Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, the state approved revised TEKS-based PE courses listed in 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(A\)](#) are:

- Lifetime Fitness and Wellness Pursuits (1.0 credit)
- Lifetime Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits (1.0 credit)
- Skill-Based Lifetime Activities (1.0 credit)



### **31. Is Lifetime Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits a new course?**

Lifetime Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits is not a new course. It is a revision to an older course, Adventure/Outdoor Education, which is why the service ID did not change.

The 19 TAC [§74.12\(b\)\(6\)\(F\)](#) states that credit for any of the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved courses may not be earned more than once. Therefore, a student who earned 1.0 credit for the old Adventure/Outdoor Education course cannot also earn credit for Lifetime Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits.

### **What are the options for a student who only earned 0.5 credit in the previous Adventure Outdoor Education course?**

In accordance with 19 TAC [§74.26\(d\)](#), which discusses the award of proportionate credit, if a student was awarded 0.5 credit in a previous academic year for taking Adventure/Outdoor Education, the student will have to earn 0.5 credit from either Lifetime Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits, Lifetime Fitness and Wellness Pursuits or Skill-Based Lifetime Activities, or 0.5 credit from one of the SBOE-approved substitutions for physical education.

### **32. Have the options for how a student can meet the PE graduation requirement changed due to the new high school PE courses?**

No. Only the courses have changed. The options to meet the PE graduation requirement are the same.

### **33. Which high school PE courses are recommended for dual credit?**

Dual credit is an instructional arrangement. The selection of which courses to be offered for dual credit is a local district decision made in agreement with the partnering institution of higher education. For more information about dual credit please visit <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/college-career-and-military-prep/dual-credit>.

### **34. What is the rationale for changing PE courses and substitutions to a full credit?**

Eliminating the 0.5-1.0 credit range is not just unique to PE courses and substitutions. The State Board of Education (SBOE) has been eliminating the credit range based on TEA recommendations that started with the CTE TEKS review in 2015. All subjects will eventually be updated as the TEKS are revised to ensure all students can achieve the same amount of credit for demonstrating proficiency in the same set of TEKS.

### **35. If a student already has 0.5 PE credit, what would an option be for them beginning with the 2022-2023 school year?**

Districts may have two options for addressing this scenario:

- Beginning in 2022-2023, for students taking PE courses that only need 0.5 credit of PE to graduate, 0.5 credit of the course would apply to the graduation requirement for PE, and the remaining 0.5 credit would meet a state elective credit requirement.
- In accordance with local district policy, 19 TAC [§74.26\(d\)](#) states that students who successfully complete only half of a course can be awarded credit proportionately.



**36. Does a student have to stay in a high school PE course for its entirety or can a campus do a schedule change at mid-year?**

This is a local district decision that needs to be made in accordance with 19 TAC [§74.26\(d\)](#). Please note that the award of credit is tied to demonstrated proficiency of the TEKS for a course and not the time spent in the actual course. Therefore, the district will need to determine and document the portion of the content that has been completed and that the student has demonstrated proficiency of the TEKS for half the course.

The district will also need to make sure that they are not putting the student at a disadvantage for completing the second half of the course that they are being enrolled in at mid-year.

**37. Can a student earn two 0.5 credits in the courses adopted in 2020 or combine an existing 0.5 credit with a 0.5 credit from a course adopted in 2020 to make the 1.0 credit necessary for graduation?**

The 19 TAC [§74.26\(d\)](#) states that in accordance with local district policy, students who are able to successfully complete only one-half a course can be awarded credit proportionately. With that being said, the new PE courses are ideally intended to be taken in their entirety. With the arrangement discussed above, the district will need to determine and document the portion of the content that has been completed, and that the student has demonstrated proficiency of the TEKS for half of the course.

**38. Can LEA's schedule the PE courses as A and B sections with the understanding that the student must complete both sections?**

The scheduling of courses is a local district decision. The 19 TAC [§74.3\(b\)\(1\)](#) states that districts may provide instruction in a variety of arrangements and settings, including mixed-aged 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.