

MONTANA



Amount of Required Physical Education: The state requires students to take physical education in grades K-8 and requires high school students to earn physical education credit for graduation. The state requires middle school/junior high students to take 225 minutes of physical education per week. The state does not have a method for enforcing the 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.

High School Graduation Requirements: The state requires students to earn 1.0 health-enhancement unit (0.5 units each year for two years) for graduation.¹⁸⁶ Health enhancement combines the disciplines of health education and physical education into a single curriculum with its focus on health-related outcomes.

Substitutions: The state does not permit school districts or schools to allow students to substitute other activities for their required physical education credit.

Exemptions/Waivers: The state does not permit schools or school districts to apply for a waiver from state physical education requirements. At the local level, students can receive an exemption for any class/subject, including physical education, based on individual student needs and performance levels. These requests are considered with respect to age, maturity, interests, and aspiration of the students and are in consultation with the parents/guardians.

Physical Activity: The state does not require elementary schools to provide daily recess and does not require a minimum weekly amount of physical activity time for elementary, middle school/junior high, or high school students. Classroom physical activity breaks are not required. The state does not prohibit the use of withholding physical activity, including recess, as punishment for disciplinary reasons, nor does it prohibit using physical activity as punishment for inappropriate behavior.

Local School Wellness Policy: The state requires schools or school districts to provide their local school wellness policy to the state education agency, but does not require the policy to be posted online for the public. The state monitors implementation of local

school wellness policies every three years during an administrative review of school nutrition programs, during which documentation must be provided to support information about when and how the review and update of the policy occurs.

State Standards: The state has adopted standards for physical education, the [Montana Health Enhancement Standards](#).¹⁸⁷ The standards were last revised in 2001. Revised Health Enhancement standards are expected to be adopted by the Board of Public Education in July 2016.

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 does not require schools or school districts to use a specific curriculum. Local school districts have the option of using a commercial curriculum of their choice and must be revised and/or reviewed every five years. In the past year the state has provided the revised Health Enhancement Standards in draft form at the annual SHAPE Montana conference. It has also promoted use of the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) through existing state communication networks and presentation(s) at state conferences or meetings.

State Funding for Physical Education Programs: School district appropriations fund the state's physical education programs in school districts and schools. No additional funding is available for physical education programs.

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

Grade Point Average (GPA): The state does not require any class grades, including physical education to be included in a student's GPA. This determination is made at the local level.

Online Physical Education Courses: The state allows students to earn required physical education credits through online physical education courses.

Student Assessment Requirements: The state does not require student assessment in physical education.

Fitness Assessment: The state does not require student physical fitness assessment.

Body Mass Index (BMI): The state does not require schools to collect students BMI or height and weight.

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 high school level and for teaching online courses. It does not require physical education teachers to pass a physical education certificate/licensure exam before they are endorsed to teach physical education, but does have Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards for physical education.¹⁸⁸ Elementary classroom teachers (generalists) are allowed to 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, but the 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 does not have a teacher evaluation system for all teachers.

National Board Certification: The state supports the National Board Certification process by providing a one-time monetary bonus if the teacher receives board certification and one or more forms of non-monetary recognition for National Board Certified teachers.

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 have designated staffing at the state level to oversee implementation, compliance, technical assistance, or monitoring of physical education programs in school districts and schools.

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¹⁸⁶ Mont. Admin. R. 10.55.905 (2015).

¹⁸⁷ Mont. Admin. R. 10.54.7010 (2015).

¹⁸⁸ Mont. Admin. R. 10.58.520 (2015).