

TENNESSEE

Amount of Required Physical Education: The state requires students to take physical education in grades K-8,²⁹³ but does not have a requirement for the number of minutes. Students are also required to take physical education in grade 9 and to earn physical education credit for high school graduation. The state does not have a method for enforcing the physical education requirements.

High School Graduation Requirements: The state requires students to earn 0.5 credit in physical education for graduation.²⁹⁴

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 required physical education credit.

Exemptions/Waivers: The state survey reported that the state does not permit schools or school districts to apply for a waiver from state physical education requirements. State law specifies that the Commissioner of Education is authorized to grant waivers to a school that does not comply with physical education rules and regulations only when requested by action of the local board of education.²⁹⁵ Students may not apply for an exemption from required physical education. A modified physical education program based on a physician's written recommendations is required for students with disabilities.²⁹⁶

Physical Activity: The state does not require elementary schools to provide daily recess, but it requires each local education agency to integrate a minimum of 90 minutes per week of physical activity into the instructional school day for elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school students.²⁹⁷ 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 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 monitors the implementation of local school wellness policies through a School Nutrition Review.

State Standards: The state has adopted standards for physical education.²⁹⁸ [The state's health, physical education and wellness](#)

[standards](#) were last revised in 2008 and were undergoing revision at the time of this report.

Areas addressed in the 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. In the past year the state has distributed lesson plans or learning activities for physical education to schools and school districts. It has promoted use of the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) to schools or school districts through existing state communications networks.

State Funding for Physical Education Programs: School districts fund the state's physical education programs. No additional funding is available for physical education programs. Coordinated School Health funding is also available at the discretion of local education agencies, which determine funding amounts, allocations, and permitted uses.

Class Size: The state survey reported that the state's required student-teacher ratio for academic classes is applicable to physical education. State law specifies that maximum class size shall be based on regular classroom teaching positions, but excludes a number of positions, including physical education.²⁹⁹

Grade Point Average (GPA): The state requires physical education grades to be included in a student's GPA.

Online Physical Education Courses: The state allows local boards of education to adopt policies for students to earn required physical education credits through online physical education courses.³⁰⁰

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 4, 6, 8, and 9 using the PACER (Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run). Results are shared at the school level (e.g. to students, parents, principal), with the school district, and with the state department of education.

Body Mass Index (BMI): The state requires schools to collect BMI and height and weight for each student in grades 2, 4, 6, 8, and 9. The state provides model policies, policy guidance, or other materials to inform school or district policy on this screening. Aggregate data for the school are sent to the state department of education and aggregate data for the county are shared publicly. Decisions regarding sharing of student BMI information with parents are made at the local level.

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,³⁰¹ 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) are not 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, and this professional development does not have to be on physical education topics.

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

National Board Certification: Decisions regarding support for and recognition of the National Board Certification process are made at the local level.

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 has designated staffing (<1.0 FTE) to oversee implementation, compliance, technical assistance, or monitoring of physical education programs in school districts and schools.

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293 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.05 (2015).

294 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs.0520-01-03-.06 (2015).

295 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.10 (2015).

296 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.05 (2015).

297 Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1021 (2015).

298 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.05 (2015); Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-07-

02-.03 (2015).

299 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.05 (2015); Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-1-104 (2015).

300 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-03-.05 (2015).

301 Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 0520-01-02-.03 (2015).