

Sept. 15, 2010

Physical Education and Credit Flexibility

Q: Can students earn physical education credits via credit flexibility?

A: Yes. Credit flexibility is available to all content areas, including physical education. Students interested in earning physical education through the credit flexibility option should contact their school counselor or teacher of record to initiate the plan development process.

Q: Can participation on an interscholastic sports team or community club team be used to earn credits via credit flexibility?

A: Yes, but only as a component of a more comprehensive credit flexibility plan to earn physical education credit. State law does not permit the mere participation in interscholastic athletics to substitute for participation in physical education coursework. In addition, the credit flexibility plan must be developed with components that address the graded course of study and/or the elements within the physical education academic content standards.

Q: Is the physical education waiver different from earning credit via credit flexibility?

A: Yes. A waiver is permissible under state law under the following circumstances:

The board of education of each school district and the governing authority of each chartered nonpublic school may adopt a policy to excuse from the high school physical education requirement each student who, during high school, has participated in interscholastic athletics, marching band, or cheerleading for at least two full seasons or in the junior reserve officer training corps for at least two full school years. If the board or authority adopts such a policy, the board or authority shall not require the student to complete any physical education course as a condition to graduate. However, the student shall be required to complete one-half unit, consisting of at least sixty hours of instruction, in another course of study. In the case of a student who has participated in the junior reserve officer training corps for at least two full school years, credit received for that participation may be used to satisfy the requirement to complete one-half unit in another course of study.

It is a local decision by the board of education whether or not to adopt this option. Students who successfully complete all parts of the waiver are not required to take physical education in order to graduate. Therefore, credit for physical education will not be earned.