

Students

Exemption from Physical Education 1

In order to be excused from participation in physical education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act.² The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request.³

Special activities in physical education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act, prevents his or her participation in the physical education course.⁴

State law prohibits the Board from honoring parental excuses based upon a student's participation in athletic training, activities, or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the School District.⁵

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses in either of the following situations:⁶

1. He or she (a) is in grades 3-12, (b) his or her IEP requires that special education support and services be provided during physical education time, and (c) the parent/guardian agrees or the IEP team makes the determination; or
2. He or she (a) has an IEP, (b) is participating in an adaptive athletic program outside of the school setting, and (c) the parent/guardian documents the student's participation as required by the Superintendent or designee.

A student requiring adapted physical education must receive that service in accordance with his or her Individualized Educational Program/Plan (IEP).⁷

A student in grades 9-12, unless otherwise stated, may submit a written request to the Building Principal to be excused from physical education courses for the reasons stated in 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*.⁸

The footnotes are not intended to be part of the adopted policy; they should be removed before the policy is adopted.

¹ An ISBE rule requires boards to have a policy defining the types of parental excuses that will be accepted in order for a student to be exempted from P.E. (~~23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e), (added at 40 Ill. Reg. 2990)~~). State or federal law controls this policy's content.

For elementary districts, delete ~~6:310, High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students~~ from the cross references of this policy.

² Medical Practice Act is found in 225 ILCS 60/.

³ Required by 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(3). School boards must identify any evidence/support they will require for excuses they will deem *appropriate*. Before the board adopts this policy, it should have a conversation with the superintendent to discuss and review and/or amend the sample reasons for excusal offered in this policy. Topics for discussion include determining whether (a) the sample reasons are sufficient, (b) more reasons are needed, and/or (c) the sample reasons should be amended. These conversations should be based upon the community's needs.

⁴ Required by 105 ILCS 5/27-6, amended by P.A. 100-465, and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(d).

⁵ 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(2). See ~~policy~~ 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students* for a list of categories of students in grades 9-12 who may be excused from P.E. due to participation in school district athletic training, activities, or competitions.

⁶ 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b).

⁷ 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b).

Students in grades 7 and 8 may submit a written request to the Building Principal to be excused from physical education courses because of his or her ongoing participation in an interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program.⁹ The Building Principal will evaluate requests on a case-by-case basis.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in this policy were applied to the student's individual circumstances, as appropriate. **10**

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-6.
225 ILCS 60/, Medical Practice Act.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(p) and §1.425(d), (e), (f).

CROSS REF.: 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:310 (High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students)

The footnotes are not intended to be part of the adopted policy; they should be removed before the policy is adopted.

8 105 5/27-6, amended by P.A. 100-465. Delete this sentence for elementary school districts.

9 105 5/27-6, amended by P.A. 100-465. Delete this paragraph for high school districts. Prior to P.A. 100-465, the statute only allowed students in grades 11 and 12 to be excused from P.E. "for ongoing participation in an interscholastic athletic program." 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b)(1).105 ILCS 5/27-6(b), amended by P.A. 100-465, now states "on a case-by-case basis, excuse pupils in grades 7 through 12 who participate in an interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program." It does not require such participation to be *ongoing*. Common sense, however, would allow the exemption to continue only until the end of the grading period during which the athletic program is active.

State law does not define *interscholastic athletic program* or *extracurricular athletic program*; however, 105 ILCS 5/22-80 defines *interscholastic athletic activity* as "any organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activity for students, generally outside of school instructional hours, under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader, including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling."

For elementary school boards that want to explain the meaning of *interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program*, insert the following option:

Interscholastic or extracurricular athletic programs are organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activities for students that are not part of the curriculum, not graded, not for credit, generally take place outside of school instructional hours, and under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader.

10 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(f). Districts must maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in 105 ILCS 5/27-6, amended by P.A. 100-465, was applied to the student's individual circumstances.