



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent

FROM: Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Senior Director of Academic and Administrative Services

RE: PE Waiver

DATE: June 23, 2017

Illinois requires all public schools to offer physical education on a daily basis. However, we do not currently have enough staff or adequate space at the elementary level to meet this requirement. This is largely due to the historic surge in enrollment we have experienced across the district during the past 10 years. Therefore, we are requesting a waiver of the daily physical education requirement for students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Under this waiver, we would continue to offer our elementary school students 60 minutes of physical education with a licensed physical education teacher per week. Children would also have the same amount of time and opportunity to participate in recess. The only change is that we would implement more consistent practices around the daily administration of physical education activity (PEA) time. We would work with our faculty, staff and administrators at the building level to ensure that every student in kindergarten through fifth grade has the chance to participate not only in at least 15 minutes of PEA with their homeroom teacher on days when they do not have physical education class, but also in other structured classroom activities that promote movement and support overall fitness. Please note that this waiver would not impact the daily physical education classes our middle school students participate in with a licensed physical education teacher.

If the board decides to pursue the waiver and it is granted by the state, it would be in place for a maximum of two years. During that time period, we would be able to identify potential solutions to the barriers that are currently prohibiting us from offering physical education to our elementary students on a daily basis (e.g., staffing, space, etc.). We would also keep the community updated on the status of these efforts, and provide opportunities for input or feedback when appropriate.

The process of applying for this waiver included:

1. Sending advance written notice of the PE waiver hearing to:
 - a. OPTA President Lary Grimaldi
 - b. All state legislators serving District 97 (Senator Harmon, Senator Lightford, Representative Lily and Representative Ford)

2. Publishing a legal notice announcing the public hearing.
3. Holding the public hearing and documenting any public testimony.

Attached is the Illinois State Board of Education waiver application form and accompanying letter explaining our reasons for requesting the waiver. At the conclusion of today's hearing, the administration will have finished all of the steps required for completing this process. The final step is for the Board of Education to formally approve the submission of our application to the state.

The next postmark deadline for receipt of a waiver to the Illinois State Board of Education is Friday, August 11, 2017. Complete waivers received by that date will be transmitted to the General Assembly in late September of 2017 for action during the Fall Veto session in October and November. A waiver approved by the General Assembly next fall could be put in place in beginning in the winter of 2018 for 1.5 years or in the fall of the 2018-19 school year for 2 years.

Attachments (2)