



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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To: District 97 Board of Education
Dr. Ushma Shah, Superintendent of Schools

From: Dr. Eboney Lofton, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer
Dr. Tawanda Lawrence, Senior Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Re: Physical Education Waiver 2022

Date: August 5, 2022

Type of Report: Informational

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Education information regarding the Physical Education Waiver the teaching and learning department is requesting for school years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

The teaching and learning department is requesting a modification of the daily physical education requirement for students at the kindergarten through fifth grade levels as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/27-6. We are asking that physical education with a licensed physical education teacher be limited to 60 minutes per week. This request does not impact middle school schedules for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade as students will continue to receive daily physical education classes with a licensed physical education teacher.

While our district team values physical education, we have evidence-based reasons for seeking this waiver:

- 1. Human capital and space limitations.** The district has neither the space or the personnel to meet the state's requirement. As an example, one of our elementary schools has 33 sections from kindergarten to fifth grade. If each classroom participated in a 30 minute gym class, the maximum number of classes that can take place, conservatively, would be 14. In order to provide courses aligned to the Act, the district would need to hire an additional 1.5 teachers at the school **and** find three total large spaces that are not already in use that can be used for physical education. There could also be a need to reconsider all of our special area offerings (Music, Art, World Language, Library) in order to meet this provision.
- 2. Continuation of current practice.** This waiver was last approved in July 2020 and does not propose a change to schedules that students in kindergarten through fifth grade have experienced in the past.
- 3. Embedded opportunities for physical activity.** The teaching and learning department will partner with elementary schools to ensure students in kindergarten through fifth grade receive adequate physical activity on a daily basis beyond 60 minutes of physical education per week and 30 minutes

of daily recess. Students will participate in at least 15 minutes of physical activity education (PEA). PEA is in addition to daily recess, and will allow all students time for movement and opportunities for large and small group activities. Additionally, effort will be made by regular education staff to provide structured classroom activities that require movement and fitness.

4. Continue to provide nutritious meals. District 97 will continue to provide all students with nutritious meals through the National School Lunch Program.