

## Students

### Exemption from Physical Education<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> Upon written notice from a student's parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup>

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses in either of the following situations:<sup>7</sup>

1. He or she (a) is in grades 3-12, (b) his or her **Individualized Educational Program/Plan** (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.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 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), amended at 42 Ill.Reg. 11542-43. 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 sample policy.

<sup>2</sup> Medical Practice Act is found in 225 ILCS 60/; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(d).

<sup>3</sup> Required by 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(d)(1) and (2). School boards must identify any evidence/support they will require for excuses they will deem appropriate. Before the board adopts this sample policy, it should have a conversation with the superintendent to discuss and review and/or amend the sample reasons for excusal offered in this sample 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.

<sup>4</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-710(b-5), renumbered by P.A. 104-391; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(f). A note from clergy or a religious leader is unnecessary to excuse a student from the physical education components of physical education class during a period of religious fasting, and should not be requested by a district. Only a note from a student's parent/guardian is required.

<sup>5</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/27-710, renumbered by P.A. 104-391 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(d)(3).

<sup>6</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-710(b), renumbered by P.A. 104-391; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(6). See sample 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.

<sup>7</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-710(b), renumbered by P.A. 104-391 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(5)(A) and (B).

<sup>8</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-710(b), renumbered by P.A. 104-391.

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 **Board policy** 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> 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 **Board** policy were applied to the student's individual circumstances, as appropriate.<sup>11</sup>

Students who have been excused from physical education shall return to the course as soon as practical.<sup>12</sup> The following considerations will be used to determine when a student shall return to a physical education course:<sup>13</sup>

1. The time of year when the student's participation ceases;
2. The student's class schedule; and
3. The student's future or planned additional participation in activities qualifying for substitutions for physical education as outlined in Board policy 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*.<sup>14</sup>

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-~~710~~ **6**;  
225 ILCS 60/, Medical Practice Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(p) and §1.425(d), (e).

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

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<sup>9</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-~~710~~, **renumbered by P.A. 104-391**; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e). Delete this sentence for elementary school districts.

<sup>10</sup> Optional. *Id.* See f/n 19 in sample policy 6:310, *High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students*, for discussion of what constitutes an *interscholastic* or *extracurricular athletic program*. Delete this paragraph for high school districts.

For elementary or unit 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.

<sup>11</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e). Districts must maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in 105 ILCS 5/27-~~710~~, **renumbered by P.A. 104-391**, was applied to the student's individual circumstances.

<sup>12</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(1)(A)-(C).

<sup>13</sup> Insert any additional criteria the board may want to use.

<sup>14</sup> Delete item #3 for elementary districts, move "and" to the end of sentence number 1, delete the semicolon at the end of number 2 and insert a period.