

Indiana Department of Education

Flexibility in Physical Education

March 2013

In 2009, the State Board of Education made several rule changes, including the definition of credit, the intent was to allow schools more flexibility in working with students and engaging them in challenging content. Students using the credit flexibility option must still meet the academic standards of the courses Physical Education I and II.

Standards: <http://dc.doe.in.gov/Standards/AcademicStandards/PrintLibrary/physed.shtml>

Course Descriptions: <http://www.doe.in.gov/publications/courses.html>

For physical education, the teacher could develop an independent learning course that would encompass standards met through participation in marching band, athletics, as well as other extra-curricular experiences. The PE teacher must still grant the credit. Keep in mind that course descriptions for PE I and II state that the course should 'provide students with opportunities to actively participate in at least four of the following: team sports; dual sport activities, individual physical activities; outdoor pursuits; self-defense and martial arts; aquatics; gymnastics; and dance' so opportunities to gain experience in multiple areas would need to be provided. If credit for participation in one sport is granted for PE I, the same sport activity could not be used for PE II. However, it could be used for Elective PE which provides for more in-depth study in one or more areas and the refinement of skills that promote lifetime fitness.

The waiver related to the definition of credit is "immediately available to Indiana schools with no need to submit an application or waiver request". This is the flexibility that allows schools to award credit based on meeting the standards. Local school boards may adopt credit flexibility policies but are not required to do so. If the board adopts a credit flexibility policy, the school needs to develop guidelines, establish the process, and identify ways to communicate the options to parents and students.

The actual curriculum and how to measure if standards are being adequately met is a local decision just as the curriculum is locally determined. However, credit must be granted by a licensed physical education teacher. They would be the teacher of record responsible for insuring that PE standards were addressed and for assessment. The coach/band director would implement the course requirements identified by the PE teacher, collect documentation and recommend to the PE teacher a grade and credit be awarded.

Additional questions:

1. If participation in one sport (i.e. cross country or golf) does not meet all the PE standards can credit be given?

Credit can be awarded by a teacher licensed in physical education if the student has mastered the physical education standards.

2. Is golf season (5 weeks) equal to basketball season (4 months) in terms of credit awarded?

Since credit would be granted based on mastery of the physical education standards, the length of the season should not be an issue. Likewise, if the student needed time beyond the regular season, the physical education teacher or facilitator (coach) could continue to work with the student until the standards were met.

3. If a student is injured during the season and can't participate is credit still given?

If the student is injured and is not able to participate, it may still be possible for the physical education teacher to work with the facilitator (coach) to develop an adapted program that would allow the student to complete the standards within their physical limitations. Students must meet the standards in order for credit to be awarded. There is no time limitation in these situations so the student could complete the requirements over the course of several semesters.

4. Does the student have to letter to get credit?

Credit is related to a student meeting the physical education standards and not to 'lettering' in a sport unless those criteria are part of the local school guidelines and course requirements.

5. Can PE I, PE II, and Elective PE be pass/fail courses?

No. Physical education classes cannot be pass/fail since PE I & II are required courses and must be factored into GPA calculations for both the GQE waiver and financial aid. For Elective PE, the State Board policy is no P/F grades for courses that count for the Core 40 or Honors diploma. It is recommended that a grade be assigned for all physical education classes.

6. Can current students be issued credit for HS athletic participation in previous years or does it begin next year?

The waiver related to the definition of credit is "immediately available to Indiana schools with no need to submit an application or waiver request". This is the flexibility that allows schools to award credit based on proficiency. If a school was able to assess that a student had met the standards and was highly proficient even if they never participated in a traditional or credit flex course, credit could be awarded.

7. What guidelines does the IDOE have as to how to measure if standards are being adequately met?

That is a local decision just as the curriculum is locally determined.

8. How is a grade issued since grades are required for Core 40 and AHD diplomas?

The PE teacher grants the credit and awards the grade for PE I and/or III or Elective PE.

9. Why are the Physical Education standards important?

Standards reflect what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. The goal is to have a physically educated person who is able to maintain appropriate levels of cardio-respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition necessary for a healthy and productive life. Through a variety of instructional strategies, students practice skills that demonstrate motor skills, movement concepts, strategies and tactics. These standards must be met whether it is through a traditional or credit flex course.

10. Is swimming required?

The state sets the course titles, descriptions and standards but the local school corporation sets curriculum. The course descriptions for PHYSICAL EDUCATION I & II (L) state that it: “focuses on instructional strategies through a planned, sequential, and comprehensive physical education curriculum which provide students with opportunities to actively participate in at least four of the following: team sports; dual sport activities; individual physical activities; outdoor pursuits; self-defense and martial arts; *aquatics*; gymnastics; and dance, all which are within the framework of lifetime physical activities and fitness.”

You will note that ‘aquatics’ is listed as one of the activities a school could use in their curriculum so whether it is required is a local decision.

11. Can you charge a sports participation fee to students taking PE through credit flexibility?

No. Since you are using the sport (through the credit flexibility option) as the class through which the student earns high school credit, you cannot charge them a participation fee just as you could not charge one to students in a traditional setting. This would only apply to students using the credit flexibility option and not necessarily the entire team. In short, if a school corporation gives PE credit for a student’s participation in sports, it can’t charge that student a participation fee. The fee can be charged only to students who are not earning course credit as a result of their participation.