

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 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.⁴

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.⁵

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.⁶

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

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

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), 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.

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

³ 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.

⁴ 105 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.

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

⁶ 105 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.

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

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 IEP. ⁸

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*. ⁹

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.¹⁰ 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. ¹¹

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

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*. ¹⁴

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

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

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

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

¹² 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(1)(A)-(C).

¹³ Insert any additional criteria the board may want to use.

¹⁴ 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.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-710.
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)