

MISSISSIPPI



Amount of Required Physical Education: The state survey reported that elementary and middle school/junior high students are required to take physical education for 50 minutes per week. State law specifies 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction as defined by the State Board of Education in grades K-8,¹⁶⁰ through a combination of physical education, physical activity, and activity based instruction.¹⁶¹ High school students must earn physical education credit for graduation. The Office of Healthy Schools monitors the health and physical education programs in conjunction with the child nutrition audits.

Physical Education Equipment and Facilities: The state does not annually assess the availability of appropriate equipment and adequate facilities for students to engage in required physical education instruction.

High School Graduation Requirements: The state requires students to earn 0.5 credit in physical education for graduation.¹⁶²

Substitutions: The state permits school districts or schools to allow students in grades 7-8 to substitute extracurricular activities that are sanctioned by the state high school activities association and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), if attendance is kept, instruction is based on at least one competency from the state physical education framework, and licensed staff supervises practice and games. Students in grades 9-12 may substitute the first two JROTC courses for their required graduation credit if instruction includes all of the health components included in the JROTC I and JROTC II curriculums and the JROTC teachers are licensed by the Mississippi Department of Education with the 499 endorsement code.¹⁶³

Exemptions/Waivers: The state does not permit schools or school district to apply for a waiver from state physical education requirements. Students may apply for an exemption for medical reasons, documented by a physician's completion of the school's medical release form.¹⁶⁴

Physical Activity: The state does not require elementary schools to provide daily recess, but it requires at least 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction (as defined by the state board of education) for both elementary and middle school/junior high students. There is no such requirement for high school students. The state does not require classroom physical activity breaks. The state does not prohibit the use of withholding physical

activity, including recess, as punishment for disciplinary reasons, nor does it prohibit using physical activity as punishment for inappropriate behavior.

Local School Wellness Policy: The state requires schools or school districts to provide their local school wellness policy to the state education agency but does not require the policy to be posted online for the public. The state monitors the implementation of local school wellness policies.

State Standards: [The state's standards for physical education](#) were last revised in 2013. All instruction in physical education must be based on the most current state standards provided by the state department of education.¹⁶⁵

Areas addressed in the state standards include:

National Standard 1: Competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns

National Standard 2: Knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance

National Standard 3: Knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness

National Standard 4: Responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others

National Standard 5: Value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction

State Curriculum: The state department of health is to work with the state department of education to develop a Comprehensive School Health Education Program for K-12, including physical education and fitness curriculum.¹⁶⁶ Instruction in physical education must be based on state standards for physical education as provided in the Mississippi Physical Education Framework.¹⁶⁷ The state requires that curricula be revised every six years. In the past year it has distributed a written physical education curriculum to schools and school districts. It has also promoted use of the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) through Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-sponsored professional development session(s).

State Funding for Physical Education Programs: School district appropriations fund the state's physical education programs

in school districts and schools. Subject to the availability of funds, the Office of Healthy Schools can provide financial incentives to schools receiving recognition through the US Department of Agriculture HealthierUS School Challenge initiative for purposes of funding the resources and staff training needed to meet healthy eating, nutrition education, and physical education guidelines.¹⁶⁸

Class Size: The state recommends a physical education class ratio of 35:1 for schools that are K- 5 and a ratio of 40:1 for grades 6-12. If there is a licensed teacher and a teacher assistant, the maximum recommended physical education class size is ≤70 students for grades K-5 and ≤80 students for grades 6-12.¹⁶⁹

Grade Point Average (GPA): The state requires physical education grades to be included in a student's GPA.

Online Physical Education Courses: The state does not allow required physical education credits to be earned through online physical education courses.

Student Assessment Requirements: The state requires student assessment related to the state physical education standards in grades 5 and the grade in which the student received high school graduation credit.¹⁷⁰ Students are assessed in the areas of National Standards 1-5 listed above.

Fitness Assessment: The state requires student physical fitness assessment in grade 5 and the high school grade in which the student will earn the 0.5 credit for graduation. The state does not require a particular assessment tool but cites FITNESSGRAM®, ACTIVITYGRAM®, Presidential Youth Fitness Program, or other comparable program.¹⁷¹ Fitness assessment results data are not shared.

Body Mass Index (BMI): The state does not require schools to collect BMI or students' height and weight.

Certification/Licensure of Physical Education Teachers: The state requires physical education teachers to be state certified/licensed and endorsed to teach physical education at the high school level.¹⁷² It also requires physical education teachers to pass a

physical education certificate/licensure exam (Praxis II) before they are endorsed to teach physical education. Elementary classroom teachers (generalists) are allowed to teach required elementary school physical education classes.

Professional Development of Physical Education

Teachers: Professional development is required in order to maintain/renew one's physical education teacher certification or licensure, but the professional development does not have to be on physical education topics. The state provides professional development events and/or funding specifically for physical education teachers.

Teacher Evaluation: The state has a teacher evaluation system for all teachers including physical educators.

National Board Certification: The state supports the National Board Certification process by providing or facilitating mentoring for teachers going through the process, providing partial funding only if the teacher receives board certification, and providing an on-going higher level of pay to all teachers who are National Board Certified.

District Physical Education Coordinator: The state does not require each school district to have a licensed physical educator serving as a physical education coordinator. It has designated staffing at the state level (<1.0 FTE) to oversee implementation, compliance, technical assistance, or monitoring of physical education programs in school districts and schools.

Contact Person:

Dale Dieckman, ATC, CSCS
Physical Education Specialist
Mississippi Department of Education
Office of Healthy Schools
239 North Lamar Street, 6th Floor
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771
601-576-5000
jdieckman@mde.k12.ms.us

160 Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-134 (2015).

161 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

162 Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-134 (2015); 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

163 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

164 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

165 Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-134 (2015).

166 Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-131 (2015).

167 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

168 Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-8 (2015).

169 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

170 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

171 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).

172 7-3 Miss. Code R. § 4012 (2015).