

NEW MEXICO

Amount of Required Physical Education: State law specifies that school districts and charter schools are required to develop and implement a policy that addresses student and school employee wellness through a coordinated school health approach. The policy must be submitted to the public education department for approval and include a planned, sequential, K-12 physical education curriculum aligned with the state content standards with benchmarks and performance standards.²¹⁶ The state supports some districts to have standalone physical education classes. High schools are required to provide students with physical education, and students must earn physical education credit for graduation. Districts determine the grade (9-12) in which physical education must be taken.

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 1.0 credit in physical education for graduation.²¹⁷

Substitutions: The state permits schools or school districts to allow students to substitute interscholastic sports, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), marching band, or sports sanctioned by the New Mexico Activities Association for required physical education participation or credit.

Exemptions/Waivers: The state permits schools or school districts to apply for a waiver from state physical education requirements. The secretary of education may exempt a student from the physical education graduation requirement upon a request, using the department's physical education exemption request form, by the local superintendent or charter school administrator with documentation of medical reasons that contraindicate a student's physical activity from a licensed medical doctor, osteopath, certified nurse practitioner with prescriptive authority, or chiropractor.²¹⁸ Students receiving special education supports and services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation act may also be eligible to request an exemption when appropriate medical documentation is provided in an Individualized Education Program. Students may also apply for an exemption from required physical education for medical reasons.

Physical Activity: The state does not require elementary schools to provide daily recess. The state physical education content standards with benchmarks and performance standards address physical activity time, but do not require a minimum weekly amount of physical activity time for elementary, middle school/junior high, or high school students. Each school district's wellness policy must include guidelines to provide physical activity opportunities to students before, during and after school.²¹⁹ Classroom physical activity breaks are not required. The state does not prohibit the use of withholding physical activity, including recess, as punishment for disciplinary reasons, nor does it prohibit the use of 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 and to post it online for the public. The state monitors the implementation of local school wellness policies by requiring each school district and charter school to submit its policy to the public education department for approval. Wellness policies are also monitored on a three-year rotating cycle.

State Standards: The state has adopted standards for physical education.²²⁰ [The K-12 Public Education Department Content Standards with Benchmarks and Performance Standards](#) were last revised in 2009.

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 does not review or recommend curricula but requires local education agencies to adopt curricula that align with state standards.²²¹ In the past year it has distributed

lesson plans or learning activities for physical education to schools or school districts. It has not promoted use of the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) to schools or school districts.

State Funding for Physical Education Programs: General education funding is available for the state's physical education programs in school districts and schools. A formula determines the amounts provided to school districts and schools to support physical education as a graduation requirement and hiring of licensed instructors endorsed in physical education. Elementary physical education programs are eligible for funding if the programs: 1) are in schools with the highest proportion of students most in need (based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-fee lunch or grade-level schools that serve an entire school district and in public schools with available space), 2) meet academic content and performance standards for elementary physical education programs, and 3) use teachers with a license endorsement for physical education. The department determines what programs will receive state financial support each year in accordance with funding available.²²²

Class Size: The state's required student-teacher ratio for academic classes is applicable to physical education. The student-teacher daily teaching load for all subjects in high school cannot exceed 160 students per day.

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

Online Physical Education Courses: The state allows students to earn required physical education credits through online physical education courses.

Student Assessment Requirements: The state requires student assessment related to the state physical education standards in grades 9-12. Students are assessed in the areas of National Standards 1-5 listed above. End of Course Exams are required and a Student Performance Assessment (SPA) may be used. Aggregate data for the school and school district are sent to the state department of education and are used to inform school district or school's long-term strategic planning, School Improvement Plans, and wellness policies. Aggregate data are also shared publicly and individual student results are sent to parents/guardians.

Fitness Assessment: The state does not require student physical fitness assessment.

216 N.M. Code R. § 6.12.6.8 (2015).
217 N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-13-1.1 (2015).
218 N.M. Code R. § 6.29.1.9 (2015).
219 N.M. Code R. § 6.12.6.8 (2015).

Body Mass Index (BMI): The state does not require schools to collect student BMI or 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 elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school levels, and to teach online physical education courses.²²³ It also requires physical education teachers to pass a physical education certificate/licensure exam before they are endorsed to teach physical education. This involves National Evaluation Series Tests including a Content Knowledge Assessment and coursework for the first endorsement. Elementary classroom teachers (generalists) are allowed to teach required elementary school physical education classes.

Professional Development of Physical Education

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

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

National Board Certification: The state supports the National Board Certification process by actively promoting and encouraging teachers to register. It determines funding, additional compensation, and bonuses at the school district level.

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 (<0.5 FTE) to oversee implementation, compliance, technical assistance, or monitoring of physical education programs in school districts and schools.

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220 N.M. Code R. § 6.29.9.6-10 (2015).
221 N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-13-1 (2015); N.M. Code R. § 6.29.1.11 (2015).
222 N.M. Stat. Ann. § 22-13-1.7 (2015).
223 N.M. Code R. § 6.64.14.6-9 (2015).