**Section 1.425 Additional Criteria for Physical Education**

The requirements of this Section apply to a school's provision of physical education required under Section 27-6 of the Code.

a) There shall be a definite school policy regarding credit earned each semester in physical education, with provisions for allowable variables in special cases.

b) Participation in a physical education course shall be required of all students a minimum of three days per five day instructional week except when an appropriate medical excuse is submitted (see Section 1.425(d)). A school board may also choose to allow for student exemptions as permitted by Section 27-6 of the Code (see Section 1.425(e)). If a student nonattendance day is scheduled for a day that would otherwise include physical education or the school building is not open to students, physical education for that day does not need to be made up (e.g., if physical education is regularly scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but a teacher inservice is scheduled on a given Monday, physical education for that Monday does not have to be moved to Tuesday or Thursday.) However, school districts shall make every effort to ensure all students have the ability to participate in physical education at least three days per week even when school is in session fewer than five days in a given week.

c) *The physical education and training course offered in grades 5 through 10 may include health education* (Section 27-5 of the Code).

d) Pursuant to Section 27-6(a) of the Code, a student who presents an appropriate excuse from his or her parent or guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act of 1987 [225 ILCS 60] shall be excused from participation in physical education.

1) Each school board shall honor excuses signed by persons licensed under the Medical Practice Act of 1987 and shall establish a policy defining the types of parental excuses it will deem appropriate for this purpose, which shall include, but not be limited to, reliance upon religious prohibitions.

2) For each type of excuse that will be considered appropriate, the school board shall identify in its policy any evidence or support it will require. For example, a board may require a signed statement from a member of the clergy corroborating the religious basis of a request.

3) *Special activities in physical education shall be provided for pupils whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act* of 1987*, prevents their participation in the courses provided for normal children* (Section 27-6 of the Code).

e) Under Section 27-6(b) of the Code, *a school board may excuse pupils from engaging in physical education courses if those pupils request to be excused for any of the reasons* listed in this subsection (e). *A school board that chooses to allow any of these exemptions shall establish a policy to excuse pupils on an individual basis.* The district shall maintain records showing that, in disposing of each request to be excused from physical education, the district applied the criteria set forth in Section 27-6 of the Code to the student's individual circumstances.

1) School districts shall have guidelines for the return of students who have been excused from a physical education course pursuant to subsections (e)(2) through (4). These guidelines shall return the student to a physical education course as soon as practical. When creating these guidelines, a school district shall take into consideration the following:

A) The time in the school year when participation ceases;

B) Any future or planned additional participation pursuant to subsections (e)(2) through (4) by a student; and

C) Student class schedules.

2) *Students in grades 7-12 on a case-by-case basis, for* ongoing *participation in an interscholastic* (e.g., Illinois Elementary School Association, the Southern Illinois Junior High Athletic Association, and Illinois High School Association) *or extracurricular athletic program.* Interscholastic and extracurricular athletic programs are limited to those programs that are sponsored by the school district as defined by school district policy.

3) Students in grades 11-12

A) ongoing *participation in interscholastic athletics*;

B) *enrollment in a course required for admittance into postsecondary education; or*

C) *enrollment in a course required for high school graduation,* *provided that failure to take such classes will result in the pupil being unable to graduate.*

4) Students in grades 9-12

A) ongoing participation *in marching band for credit*; or

B) *enrollment in a Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program sponsored by the school district.*

5) Students in grades 3-12

A) *eligibility for special education services and the student's parent or guardian agrees, or there is a determination by the student's individualized education program (IEP) team, that the student needs this time for special education support and services*; or

B) participation in *an adaptive athletic program outside school setting as outlined in the student's IEP and as documented according to school board policy*. (See Section 27-6 of the Code.)

6) A board shall have no authority to honor parental excuses based upon students' participation in athletic training, activities or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the school district.

f) Under Section 27-6(b-5) of the Code, *a pupil shall be excused from engaging in any physical activity components of a physical education course during a period of religious fasting if the pupil’s parent or guardian notifies the school principal in writing that the pupil is participating in religious fasting*.

g) Assessment and Reporting

In accordance with Section 27-6.5 of the Code, each school shall *use a scientifically-based, health-related physical fitness assessment for grades 3 through 12 and periodically report fitness information to the State Board of Education to assess student fitness indicators. If the Governor has declared a disaster due to a public health emergency pursuant to Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, no student shall be required to participate in a physical fitness assessment for the duration of that declaration.* (Section 27-6.5 of the Act)

1) For the purposes of this subsection (g), each school shall administer the FitnessGram® (http://www.fitnessgram.net/; also see subsection (g)(3)) to students in grades 3 through 12 (except as noted in subsection (g)(1)(A) and as exempted under Section 27-6 of the Code) for the components and using the test items listed in subsections (g)(1)(A) through (g)(1)(D). Beginning in school year 2016-17, the FitnessGram® shall be administered at least annually in the second semester of the school year; however, schools also are encouraged to administer the assessment at the start of the school year in order to receive pre- and post-results.

A) Aerobic Capacity, grades 4 through 12, either the PACER test or the Mile Run test.

B) Flexibility, either the Back-Saver Sit and Reach test or the Trunk Lift test.

C) Muscular Endurance, the Curl-up test.

D) Muscular Strength, the Push-up test.

2) As applicable, a school shall use the methodologies of the Brockport Physical Fitness Testing accessible at http://www.pyfp.org/

to meet the requirements of this subsection (g) for any student with known orthopedic, intellectual and/or visual disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan identifies the FitnessGram® as not appropriate.

3) In order to ensure that the FitnessGram® and Brockport protocols are followed, school personnel administering the assessments shall participate in training related to the proper administration and scoring of the assessment by reviewing the chapters of the FitnessGram® Test Administration Manual titled "Test Administration", "Aerobic Capacity", and "Muscular Strength, Endurance and Flexibility" and, if applicable, the Brockport Physical Fitness Test Manual for students with disabilities, which are accessible at http://www.pyfp.org/. Each school district shall maintain evidence of an individual's successful completion of the training and make it available to the State Board upon request.

4) *Fitness scores shall not be used for grading students or evaluating teachers* under the provisions of Article 24A of the School Code (Section 27-6.5(b) of the Code).

5) Each school district shall annually report aggregate data regarding the total number of students whose fitness results for each of the components listed in subsection (g)(1) were identified as meeting the "healthy fitness zone" or as "needs improvement zone".

A) Data shall be submitted electronically to the State Board no later than June 30 of each school year, beginning in school year 2016-17, using the Illinois State Board of Education Web Application Security System (IWAS).

B) Data shall be reported for students in grades 5, 7 and 10 only and include:

i) the total number of students tested by grade and gender;

ii) the total number of students achieving at the "healthy fitness zone" by grade and gender;

iii) the total number of students identified as "needs improvement zone" by grade and gender.

h) Each school district shall establish procedures and protocols to ensure the confidentiality of individual student assessment results consistent with the requirements of the Illinois School Student Records Act [105 ILCS 10] and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g).

(Source: Amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 12736, effective July 13, 2022)