

COURSE/CREDIT CONTENT EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Since the passage of Michigan's new state high school graduation requirements commonly referred to as the Michigan Merit Curriculum, the Michigan Department of Education has worked with hundreds of educators and representatives from professional organizations and higher education to develop documents and materials that outline what students should know and be able to do in required courses/credits during their high school experience.

Two main sets of documents called *High School Content Expectations (HSCE)* and specific *Course/Credit Content Expectations* and Guidelines provide educators with the tools needed to align their curriculum and instruction and provide parents with meaningful information to gauge student progress. These expectations also serve as the basis to determine student proficiency and grant high school credit in required courses/credits and for the Department to develop various questions included in the Michigan Merit Exam.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements are based on what research shows will provide students with the educational foundation to be successful as they move beyond high school into college and the workplace. These requirements will tell parents, colleges, and technical schools Michigan students are ready for college. They will inform employers that our students have mastered the reading, writing, and math skills required for success in our workplace. It will tell the world that Michigan is developing the highly educated workforce that is among the best in the nation and will help secure the economic future of our state.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

What the Michigan Merit Curriculum Law Says

MCL 380.1278a At least 1 credit in subject matter that includes both health and physical education aligned with guidelines developed by the Michigan Department of Education and approved by the Michigan State Board of Education.

MCL 380.1278b(5)(i) The health and physical education credit may be modified as part of a personal curriculum only if the modification requires the pupil to complete 1 additional credit in English language arts, mathematics, or science or 1 additional credit in a language other than English. This additional credit must be in addition to the number of those credits otherwise required under subsection (1) and section 1278a (2).

What other Relevant Michigan Law Says

MCL 380.1502 Health and physical education; establishment; course in physical education required; extracurricular athletics as meeting requirement.

Sec. 1502(1) Health and physical education for pupils of both sexes shall be established and provided in all public schools of this state. Subject to subsection (2), each pupil attending public school in this state who is physically fit and capable of doing so shall take the course in physical education.

(2) A school district may credit a pupil's participation in extracurricular athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical activity as meeting the physical education requirement for the pupil under subsection (1).

MCL 380.1169 Dangerous communicable diseases; human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency virus infection; teacher training; teaching materials; curricula; teaching of abstinence from sex.

Sec. 1169(1) The principal modes by which dangerous communicable diseases, including, but not limited to, human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, are spread and the best methods for the restriction and prevention of these diseases shall be taught in every public school in this state. Subject to subsection (3) and section 1507b, the teaching under this section shall stress that abstinence from sex is a responsible and effective method for restriction and prevention of these diseases and is a positive lifestyle for unmarried young people.

(2) Except for licensed health care professionals who have received training on human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, each person who teaches K to 12 pupils about human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome pursuant to subsection (1) shall have training in human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome education for young people. The superintendent of public instruction, in cooperation with the department of public health, shall train trainers to provide the teacher training required by this subsection and shall provide for the development and distribution to school districts of medically accurate material on the teaching of human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome to young people.

(3) The choice of curricula to be used for human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome education required to be taught under subsection (1) shall be approved by the appropriate school board and implemented in the school setting not later than October 1, 1990. Before adopting any revisions to the curriculum implemented under this section, including, but not limited to, revisions to provide for the teaching of abstinence from sex as a responsible method for restriction and prevention of disease, a school board shall hold at least 2 public hearings on the proposed revisions. The hearings shall be held at least 1 week apart and public notice of the hearings shall be given in the manner required under section 1201 for board meetings. A public hearing held pursuant to this section may be held in conjunction with a public hearing held pursuant to section 1507.

What Research Says

Research tells us that when students are fit, healthy, and ready to learn, they achieve more success in all areas of their lives, including the classroom. Research shows effective health education helps students stay in school and better achieve in their classes. Research also shows effective physical education and physical activity has a positive impact on cognitive functioning and supports improved student learning.

Questions & Answers

1. Q: Do the requirements give the option for students to take just physical education OR health?

A: No. One credit that includes both physical education AND health must be earned by high school students for graduation. The requirement could be met in two separate courses each earning ½ credit. How this credit is offered is a local district decision.

2. Q: How should the one credit for physical education/health be divided?

A: Schools have flexibility in meeting the requirements as long as they meet the intent of the requirement. They are able, under the law, to organize the health education and physical education requirement at the high school in whatever way makes sense in their district.

They must ensure that:

The standards and credit guidelines for both health education and physical education are thoroughly addressed in the required content; and persons assigned to teach health education have a teaching certificate with an endorsement that qualifies them to teach health, and those assigned to teach physical education must have a teaching certificate with an endorsement that qualifies them to teach physical education.

Districts may find that the simplest solution is offering a semester of health and a semester of physical education to meet the requirement, using qualified teachers to do so. Even if the school teaches health in some other class, such as physical education or biology, the teacher must have the health endorsement to teach health education.

3. Q: How does the High School Graduation Requirement for one credit in physical education and health affect teachers?

A: Some teachers who currently are teaching health education and/or physical education are qualified to teach both. Not all are. The state's health education endorsements are MA, MX and KH. The physical education endorsements are MB, MX, and SP.

4. Q: How can high school teachers who lack the endorsement to teach health education become qualified?

A: Certain institutions of higher education are collaborating to offer alternative preparation/endorsement options for teachers who are already teaching health, but who do not have the endorsement. Some institutions will give teachers significant credit toward the additional endorsement for experience gained in teaching health and professional development received from the regional School Health Coordinator. Teacher colleges' also are planning to offer distance learning courses, evening and/or weekend courses, and summer institutes for the convenience of teachers.

5. Q: I thought No Child Left Behind didn't require health and physical education teachers to be highly qualified.

A: That's true. However, state law and administrative rules define what it means to be a qualified teacher in Michigan schools. For the definition of a qualified teacher of health education, go to www.michigan.gov/mde. Click on K-12 Curriculum/ Curriculum Subjects/ Health. Look for the document titled, "Fully Qualified Teachers of Health Education." For the definition of a qualified teacher of physical education, go to: www.Michigan.gov/physed. Under professional development, you will find the document titled, "Qualified Teachers of Physical Education."

6. Q: What do the credit guidelines refer to?

A: The credit guidelines refer to the content expectations that have been developed for high school in both physical education and health. Students earn credit based on the student's demonstrated proficiency in each subject matter's content expectations.

7. Q: Can a student required to take the Michigan Merit Curriculum waive the state's Physical Education or health credit requirement for any reason?

A: Yes, under certain conditions. The Michigan Merit Curriculum MCL 380.1278b, allows a student to substitute one physical education and health credit to acquire extra English language arts, mathematics, science or world language credits, if a student has an approved personal curriculum. Please see the Personal Curriculum Frequently Asked Questions Document for guidance.

In addition, students may test out of any state required graduation credit if the student earns: 1) a qualifying score, as determined by the department, on the assessments developed or selected for the subject area by the department; OR, 2) the student earns a qualifying score, as determined by the school district or public school academy, on one or more assessments developed or selected by the school district or public school academy that measure a student's understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines that apply to the credit. Please see the Testing Out Frequently Asked Questions Document for guidance.

The Revised School Code MCL 380.1169 requires school districts to instruct students in dangerous communicable diseases such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection and Acquired Immunodeficiency Virus Infection (AIDS). While the law does not require this instruction to take place in high school, the Michigan Department of Education has encouraged that this important instruction be taught to students in elementary, middle, and high school.

7. Q: Can districts still choose to replace extracurricular activities (e.g. marching band and sports) for the physical education requirement? What about health?

A: Under the Revised School Code, *380.1502(1) Health and physical education for pupils of both sexes shall be established and provided in all public schools of this state. Subject to subsection (2), each pupil attending public school in this state who is physically fit and capable of doing so shall take the course in physical education.*

380.1502(2) A school may credit a student's participation in extracurricular athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical activity as meeting the physical education requirement for the student under subsection (1).

This law is still in effect as well as the new Michigan Merit high school graduation requirements. Therefore, a district may still determine that extracurricular activities involving physical activity may be used as credit toward the physical education requirement. If a district does decide to use extracurricular physical activities to meet the physical education requirement, the student must still demonstrate proficiency in the physical education credit guidelines beginning with students entering 8th grade in 2006 (Class of 2011). Please see the Testing Out Frequently Asked Questions for further guidance. Please note, however, that this pertains **only** to the physical education credit guidelines of the Michigan Merit Curriculum, not the health education credit guidelines.

8. Q: Can a modification for Health and Physical Education occur at any time?

A: Beginning with students entering 8th grade in 2006 (Class of 2011), a modification to either the health or physical education Michigan Merit Curriculum's 1 credit in health/physical education requirement could occur at any point in a student's high school career. The student should be required, before applying for a personal curriculum, to:

- Develop a Educational Development Plan (EDP) that clearly indicates the additional credit the student proposes to earn in order to waive credit(s).
- Create an agreement that includes written understanding that if at some point in the future the student fails to follow through on the plan that justified the personal curriculum, the personal curriculum would become null and void and the student, in order to graduate, would be required to successfully complete waived credit(s).

9. Q: Can a district establish physical education and health requirements above and beyond those required in the Michigan Merit high school graduation requirements?

A: Yes. A district may mandate additional credits in Health and Physical Education without being affected by the personal curriculum modification or testing out criteria.

10. Q: Can a student receive high school credit for a health or physical education class in middle school?

A: Yes, students may receive high school credit in middle school if the following three criteria for middle school credit outlined below are met:

- The middle school class must cover the same content expectations as the high school class.
- Proficiency must be assessed using the same assessment (e.g. exam) used at the high school.
- The level of proficiency expected in order to "pass" (e.g. 80%) must be the same as at the high school.

However, leaving students without such education during high school could place students at greater risk for alcohol, tobacco, and drug use; sexual activity leading to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies; personal injury (e.g. violence, bullying) and long term health problems (e.g. childhood overweight & diabetes) related to lack of nutrition and physical activity.

11. Q: Can the Physical Education, Health or Visual, Performing and Applied Arts requirements be met through an online course?

A: To an extent, yes, some content associated with the physical and health education guidelines could be taught through an online experience. However, there are many skill-based requirements that could not effectively be taught through an online experience such as maintaining a target heart rate or demonstrating the ability to express emotions constructively, including use of anger management skills.