

High School Graduation Requirement: One Credit of Physical Education and Health

The Department of Education supports the right of local districts to use flexibility in meeting the new high school requirements. The following guidelines will assist districts in determining how to flexibly meet student needs while remaining within the law.

Teachers must hold the proper endorsements

By state law, high school teachers must have an endorsement in the content area they are teaching. The endorsements for physical education and health education are different from each other.

- **Physical education endorsements:** These include the **MB** (physical education major or minor), the **MX** (group major of physical education, health education, recreation, and dance), and the **SP** (physical education for students with disabilities).
- **Health education endorsements:** These include the **MA** (health education major or minor), **MX** (group major of physical education, health education, recreation, and dance), and the **KH** (family and consumer science major or minor).

One teacher may teach both health and physical education if he or she holds endorsements for both disciplines. Please note that, while teachers already having the MX endorsement are considered qualified, teacher preparation programs are no longer accepting new students for the MX endorsement.

The course content must focus on the standards and grade level content expectations for each discipline.

Health education and physical education have different standards, which have been approved by the State Board of Education. Both disciplines have approved credit guidelines. The combined content of the courses designed to meet the graduation requirement for health and physical education must be focused on addressing the standards of both disciplines, as well as the credit guidelines.

In cases where different teachers are teaching the health content and the physical education content, it may be practical to offer a half-credit course in health education, and a half-credit course in physical education. However, districts may choose to consider other ways of meeting the requirements and the needs of their students for quality health education and physical education.

Districts may exceed the minimum requirements

Of course, individual districts may choose to exceed the minimum requirement when it is determined to be in the best interest of their students. Some districts that already require a full credit of health, or a full credit of physical education, may add a half credit of the other discipline to meet the requirement.