

**Dear PTA members and friends,**

**Texas PTA Action Alert:**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TODAY!**

**PLEASE Contact your State Board Of Education (SBOE) Representative before Wednesday!**

**Individual and Team Sports P.E. courses are being considered for elimination beginning 2010-2011 school year. A message from you can make an important difference at this point in the process.**

**Here's what you need to know:**

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 the State Board Of Education (SBOE) will make several decisions related to High School PE.

- They will decide whether to eliminate individual and team sports PE courses.
- They will decide whether to standardize 1 PE requirement for each of the 3 diploma options, rather than require 1.5 credits for 2 of the diploma options.

*(Links to the proposed amendments are found at the bottom of this alert.)*

According to the proposed amendments, the only High School P.E. courses offered would be Foundations of Personal Fitness, Aerobic Activities and Adventure/Outdoor Education. Health course would be eliminated. If the amendments pass as written, students who do not qualify to play competitive athletics but are interested in learning a lifetime sport such as tennis, golf, swimming, basketball, softball, etc., would have to sign up for an Athletics I-IV class in order to learn that sport.

We believe many non-athletic students would be hesitant to sign up for an athletics course when they do not even know how to play the game. By structuring and naming the new courses Athletics I-IV, the SBOE would inadvertently limit the ability for non-athletic students to learn lifetime team or individual sports.

Athletics courses often focus on only one activity (i.e., football), and are not required to provide principles of a healthy lifestyle. In addition, athletics courses are often restricted to students participating on athletic teams so, without changes in policy, these courses would not be open to everyone since students can't just "sign up" for athletics; they must have coach approval. Non-athletic students would be denied the opportunity to learn about individual and lifetime sports and team sports if the only courses they could take that teach sports are athletics courses.

The recent *F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies are failing in America 2009* report indicated that one of the main factors behind the obesity epidemic is the reduction in the amount of physical education, recess, and recreation time as well as limited health classes. Additionally, research at the University of Illinois reported in the April 1, 2009 edition of *Science Daily* indicated that

physical activity may increase students' cognitive control and ability to pay attention and result in better academic performance.

**Here's what you can do:**

**PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL YOUR SBOE REPRESENTATIVE BEFORE WEDNESDAY!**

**Who Represents Me link here:** <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>

Follow the directions below to email:

1. Go to <mailto:rules@tea.state.tx.us>
2. In the subject line write: Comment on Text of Proposed Amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 74, Subchapters E & F RE: physical education changes
3. In the body of the message: RE: Chapter 74, Curriculum Requirements, Graduation Requirements for Physical Education: E -74.62 (7), 74.63 (7), & 74.64(7) and F -74.52 (7), 74.53 (7), & 74.54 (7)
4. Write your email using message points below.
5. Be sure to include your email address so a receipt can be acknowledged.

Message Points for call or email:

1. *I urge you NOT repeal Individual and Team Sports courses from the TEKS:*
  - a) Taking athletics as a PE class may not be an option for many of our students due to: finances, interest, their need to be at a job or their need to be home right after school and on weekends. Yet, these same students may wish to learn more about soccer, tennis, or disc golf or other team and individual sports.
  - b) Individual and Team Sports as a PE course offer students activities that are more recreational/lifetime in focus.
  - c) Team and Individual Sports courses have very different goals and assessments than an athletic class would have. Athletic classes' primary focus tends to be the win concept, not the lifelong health lessons, teambuilding and/or self-esteem lessons, or basic knowledge of how to play the game(s).
  - d) Many coaches of athletics are NOT certified P.E. teachers and do not possess the necessary background to offer quality physical education concepts.
2. *I urge you not to reduce PE and health requirements to 1 credit across all diploma plans:*
  - a) Academically and physically, children and youth need physical education and health courses as part of their education experience. Kids who are unhealthy, undernourished and physically inactive do not learn as well or as easily.
  - b) Maintain the 1.5 credit hours of physical education and .5 credit hours of health course for the distinguished and minimum high school degree plans.
  - c) This is a critical time for students, and without a Health requirement, essential information they need to make healthy choices and be well informed will not be available. Health class is where students learn the impact tobacco, alcohol and drugs can have on their lives. They learn about nutrition, have discussions about peer pressure, analyze and apply strategies for avoiding violence, gangs, and weapons.

Below are links to the proposed amendments:

[Text of Proposed Amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 74, Subchapter E](#)

[Text of Proposed Amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 74, Subchapter F](#)

**Thank you for speaking out for the youth of Texas!**

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