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ABSTRACT

This document is an examination of the legal provisions for physical education in elementary and secondary schools in the state of Indiana, based upon the Legislative Acts of 1919. The paper is divided into three sections, examining (1) the general relationship between the State Board of Health and the State Department of Public Instruction, and the duties of the Division of Health and Physical Education; (2) the aims and purposes of the course of physical education established under the 1919 Acts and physical education requirements for graduation as stated in the ADMINISTRATIVE HANDBOOK FOR INDIANA SCHOOLS; and (3) a comparison of the Indiana requirements for physical education with those of other states, as drawn from statistics in the STATE REQUIREMENTS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, published by the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation in 1973. (MB)

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LEGAL PROVISION FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN INDIANA - ACTS OF 1919

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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EDUCATION

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Relationship of the State Board of Health and the State Department of Public Instruction is unique in that it is based upon mutual agreement and cooperative effort. The Division of Health and Physical Education was created in 1936 by joint resolution of the two boards. This came about as a result of the state association (Indiana Association of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation) urging the Department of Public Instruction to provide professional consultant service in health and physical education to the schools. The association was supported in its request by the State Tuberculosis Association and representatives of the State Medical Society.

The State Department of Public Instruction had no funds for this service although they were in sympathy with the cause. The Children's Bureau of the Federal Government had allocated funds to the State Board of Health for use in the promotion of child health. The solution was reached when the two boards agreed that part of this money should be used to employ a trained and experienced person to give direction to the school health and physical education program and to direct a program of public health education for the Board of Health.

The services of the Director of the Division of Health and Physical Education are only in an advisory capacity as mutually agreed upon by both boards.

The staff provides personal consultation to individual school systems

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and groups on specific problems or programs of school health and physical education.

Conferences, workshops, and special group meetings on school health and physical education are carried on cooperatively with the local schools.

Assistance and guidance in the evaluation of health and physical education programs are provided to school administrators and teachers upon request to upgrade the level of these programs in all schools.

The division also provides a service in the preparation and distribution of teaching aids: a wide coverage of subject matter on films and printed material available in quantities with no charge. The monthly Bulletin, posters, and a limited number of mechanical exhibits are available for school use also. The development of course of study in health and physical education and the carrying on of research with the universities and colleges are also services which the division provides as a means of assisting the health and physical education teachers in Indiana schools in making their programs more meaningful and worthwhile.

The following reference is made to Burns Indiana Statutes, Volume 6, Part 4, 1970 Replacement, pp. 307-310.

The state board of education may prescribe suitable courses of instruction in physical education, in accordance with the provisions of this act (SS 28-5426 -- 28-5435), for all pupils enrolled in the private, elementary and high schools of the state, except pupils who may be excused from such

training on account of physical disability, such physical disability to be determined by the health supervisor of the school corporation, if there be a health supervisor, or by any reputable physician licensed to practice medicine in the state. Such courses of instruction in physical training shall be adapted to the ages and capabilities of the pupils in the several grades of the elementary and high schools, and shall include physical exercise, calisthenics, formation drills, games and athletics, and such other features and details as, in the discretion of the state board of education, may aid in carrying out the spirit and purpose of this act. (Acts 1919, ch. 149, S 1, p. 682.)

The aims and purposes of the course of physical education established under the provision of this act (SS 28-5426 -- 28-5435) shall be as follows:

- (1) To develop physical and organic vigor; provide neuro-muscular training; promote bodily and mental poise; correct and prevent postural and bodily defect; and to develop a correct carriage and mental and physical alertness.
- (2) To secure the more advanced forms of coordination, strength and endurance, and to promote the more desirable moral and social qualities, such as an appreciation of the values of cooperation under leadership, self-subordination, obedience to authority, higher ideals, courage, self-reliance, disciplined initiative, self-control and a wholesome and robust interest in recreational activities.
- (3) To promote a hygienic school and home life and to secure scientific supervision of the sanitation of school buildings, playgrounds

- and athletic fields and the necessary equipment thereof.
- (4) Such course may likewise include suitable instruction in personal and community health and safety, the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship as they are related to community and national welfare, the production of the highest type of patriotic citizenship and domestic hygiene and first aid. (Acts 1919, ch. 149, S 2, p. 682.)

It shall be the duty of the township trustee, board of school trustees or board of school commissioners of each school corporation in which courses in physical education are established in accordance with the provisions of this act (SS 28-5426 -- 28-5435) to provide for, install and enforce such courses of physical education as may be prescribed by the state board of education, in accordance with the provisions of this act, and to require that such physical education be given in the schools under their jurisdiction and control. All pupils enrolled in the elementary schools of the state, except pupils excused therefrom in accordance with the provisions of this act, shall be required to attend upon and receive instruction in such prescribed courses of physical education during periods which shall average not less than fifteen (15) minutes in each school day; and all pupils enrolled in the high schools of the state, except pupils excused therefrom in accordance with the provisions of this act, shall be required to attend upon and receive instruction in such prescribed courses of physical education for at least two (2) hours each week that school is in session. Beginning with the school year 1919-1920, the successful completion of a course in physical education, as prescribed by the state board of education, in accordance with the provisions of this act, including the minimum number of hours of physical training prescribed,

shall entitle any pupil who has completed such course to a credit or credits in promotion or graduation from the school attended by any such pupil. The conduct and attainment in physical education of the pupils of the several grades in the elementary and high schools taking such course shall be marked as in other courses or subjects, and the standing of the pupil in connection therewith shall form a part of the requirements for promotion or graduation. (Acts 1919, ch. 149, S 3, p. 682.)

The additional information concerning the physical education requirements for graduation is stated as follows from the Administrative Handbook for Indiana Schools, Bulletin No. 225, 1972, as published by the Department of Public Instruction.

Rule C-1 Health and Safety

Section 1. All schools shall offer at least one-half unit in health and safety education and one-half unit in physical education, credit in which courses shall meet the minimum requirements in this area for graduation. (Rule 47, 1947, p. 767). High schools which are properly equipped may offer one complete unit of physical education making a minor in the subject of health, safety, and physical education.

G. Graduation requirements, general standards, and school classification

Ryle G-1 High school graduation requirements

Section 1. In order to be graduated from a four-year high school, a pupil shall have completed a minimum of 16 units of

Science 1 unit
(must be two (2) semesters
in one (1) laboratory science)
Health and Safety Education .5 unit
(Home Economics I and II (2 units
or their equivalent) may count
in lieu of the required health
and safety credit)
Physical Education .5 unit
(.5 unit of credit in physical
education requires five (5) class
periods per week for two (2) semesters
or its equivalent)

Section 3. In order to graduate from a high school, a pupil shall attend at least seven (7) semesters in grades 9-12. For students fulfilling all other requirements for graduation in less than seven (7) semesters, this requirement may be waived by the Commission on General Education provided that an application specifying the circumstances which make the waiver advisable is submitted by the local corporation superintendent.

It is hoped that this information may answer questions concerning the legal basis for physical education in our state. Yet, how does Indiana rank with other states in comparing the state requirements for students? The best resource to answer this question is the State Requirements in Physical Education for Teachers and Students as published by the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation in 1973. Specific reference is made to the chart entitled "Time and Grade Requirements for Physical Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools - States and Possessions" on pages 51 through 54 of the publication. A total of 51 states and 4 United States Possessions participated in this survey. Five of the participants do not have a grade requirement for physical education by law or regulation. In forty-eight of the states there is a grade requirement. However, not necessarily as we know it in our state. In some cases, the grade level was optional or was not specified. Only one state required 3 years during the grades 9-12.

The time requirement for the elementary level ranged from a minimum of no specified time to a maximum of 200-250 minutes per week. At the secondary level, the time ranged from a minimum of no specified time to a maximum of 3 years of 5 daily periods per week.

In Indiana, the requirements are only a minimum and are in no way meant to restrict a local school corporation from establishing and increasing their own requirements for their students. Several of the larger school corporations have set specific time requirements above the state level for both the elementary and secondary. They have felt the need to increase the teaching time based on facilities and staff in the hope of providing the most service for the tax dollar.

There has been an increase in the development of advanced physical education classes. Within the past year, several high schools have petitioned the Commission on Physical Education requesting permission to offer the same amount of credit for their advanced physical education classes as offer for other advanced classes. We certainly encourage other high schools with similiar programs to follow the process.

There is a tremendous job to be done in form of improving and expanding our programs of physical education. Our task force for improvement must be an organized voice of physical education teachers, Indiana Association for Health, Physical Education & Recreation, the Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Health. The challenge is there for 1975- right in our own programs.