



Physical Education Programs Annual Review 2023–24

The following report is generated in response to [RCW 28A.230.055](#) Physical Education Programs—Annual Review. Data from school districts is collected from a survey sent to district leaders and from aggregated data through OSPI’s Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), a warehouse of longitudinal educational data.

For this report, 260 out of 295 districts and eight State Tribal Education Compacts (STECs) reported their data through our survey tool. The report includes data on ten different physical education metrics, each in bold headings, and taken from the language of the RCW.



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Results

The Number of Individual Students Enrolled in a PE Class

In the 2023–24 school year, 213,989 students were registered for a physical education class in high school. The table below records how many students received credit at the high school level. High school students need 1.5 credits in physical education to graduate ([WAC 180-52-068](#)). In that same school year, 588,566 students were registered for a physical education class in elementary and middle school.

OSPI’s CEDARS currently cannot calculate every elementary student (and some middle school students) in a physical education class since many school districts do not use distinct course codes for elementary physical education. Thus, 588,566 does not represent all the students enrolled in a physical education class in grades K–8 across the state.

Table 1: High School PE Credits Earned

Range of Credits	# of Students
0 credits earned	14,746
0–.9 credits	87,703
1–1.9 credits	107,744
2–2.9 credits	3,685
3–3.9 credits	104
4 or more credits	7

Source: CEDARS, 2024.

The Average Number of Minutes per Week of PE Received in Grades 1–8

State law requires 100 minutes per week of physical education instruction in grades 1–8 ([WAC 392-410-135](#)). Most respondents (63.8%) did not meet the state requirement during grades 1–8 (see Table 2). Within grades 6–8, most respondents (74.6%) reported meeting 100 minutes or more of physical education instruction per week (see Table 3); middle school students appear to receive more physical education instructional time than their elementary school counterparts.

Note: If students receive physical education time one semester and then do not receive physical education time another semester, the time indicated is averaged over the entire school year. Not all districts have middle school grades.



Table 2: Average Minutes per Week of PE in Elementary

Range of Minutes	% of Respondents
150 or more	4.6 %
125–149	3.1%
100–124	28.5%
75–99	23.1%
50–74	31.9%
25–49	8.8%
0–24	0

Table 3: Average Minutes per Week of PE in Middle School

Range of Minutes	% of Respondents
150 or more	41%
125–149	11.9%
100–124	21.7%
75–99	8.2%
50–74	9%
25–49	8.2%
0–24	0

Source: Survey, 2024.



The Number of Students Waived from PE Requirements

Table 4 (below) tallies the complete number of waivers given from schools in elementary, middle, and high school. State law allows districts to permit students to be excused from participation due to physical disability, employment, religious belief, participation in directed athletics, military science and tactics, or other good causes. Students waived from participating in physical education are required to demonstrate competency in the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement, following written district policy ([RCW 28A.230.050](#), [WAC 180-51-068](#)).

Table 4: Students Granted Waivers from PE

Grade Band	# of Students Waived
Students in elementary	136
Students in middle school	5,931
Students in high school	14,341

Source: Survey, 2024.

Whether Classes are Taught by Instructors with a Valid Endorsement

Table 5 (below) reveals how many physical education classes in elementary, middle, and high school were taught by a certified teacher with a Health/Fitness endorsement. Statewide, over 70% of physical education classes were taught by a certified teacher with a Health/Fitness endorsement.

Table 5: PE Classes Taught by Health & Fitness Endorsed Educator

Grade Band	% Taught by Endorsed Educator
PE classes in elementary	71.7%
PE classes in middle school	71.8%
PE classes in high school	74.8%

Source: CEDARS, 2024.



PE Class Sizes in Appropriate Reporting Ranges

When comparing physical education class sizes in high school to other types of general education class sizes in those high schools (math, science, etc.), physical education class size averaged 1.2x larger (or 120%) than the average of other classes. For example, the average high school physical education class size is 17 students; the average class size for civics, science, and world language classes is 15, and for English and math, the average is 13. CEDARS cannot aggregate the average class size in most elementary schools.

The Frequency with which PE is Provided

Physical education can be offered at various frequencies, from every day to alternating weekly block schedules. The current data collection at the district level does not offer a clear idea of how physical education time is provided. Individual schools within one district could have different schedules, and thus, the frequency would vary within the district. Some common examples listed under “other” include trimester on/off, 2–3 days/week, and frequency that varies by grade.

Table 6 a. shows the responses to the question “What is the frequency with which physical education is provided to students in elementary school? (Check all that apply for your district elementary schools.)” Most responses indicate a frequency of 1–2 days per week (55%).

Table 6.a: Frequency of PE in Elementary School

Frequency of PE Class	# of Responses
1–2 days a week	169
3–4 days a week	47
Every day	27
Alternating weeks	7
One semester on, one off	3
Year-round	23
Other	26

Source: Survey, 2024.



Table 6 b. shows the responses to the question “What is the frequency with which physical education is provided to students in middle school? (Check all that apply for your district middle schools.)” Most respondents indicate a frequency of every day (51%).

Table 6.b: Frequency in Middle School

Frequency of PE Class	# of Responses
1–2 days a week	17
3–4 days a week	41
Every day	126
Alternating weeks	5
One semester on, one off	78
Year-round	11
Other	28

Source: Survey, 2024.

Whether There is Sufficient Dedicated Gym Space

Table 7 shows the number and percentage of respondents who report having one or more buildings without enough space to reach minimum physical education requirements. The data is broken down by grade band and shows that most respondents have enough space, but an average of 15 districts reported that they have one or more buildings without enough space.

Table 7: Percentage of Districts Without Sufficient Space

Grade Band	1 + Building Without Space
Elementary	7.7% (20 respondents)
Middle school	5.4% (14 respondents)
High school	4.2% (11 respondents)

Source: Survey, 2024.



Table 8 shows the number of buildings without sufficient space, as answered yes in Table 7.

Table 8: Number of Buildings Without Space

Buildings Without Space	# of Districts
1 building	14
2 buildings	4
3 buildings	5
4 buildings	1
5 buildings	2
Total districts	26

Source: Survey, 2024.

Whether the District PE Curriculum Addresses the State K–12 Learning Standards

As required by state law, OSPI develops the state's learning standards ([RCW 28A.150.210](#)) and oversees the assessment of the learning standards ([RCW 28A.655.070](#)) for state and federal accountability purposes. Physical education K–12 learning standards define what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level in a physical education class. OSPI does not review the curriculum to determine if it is aligned with the state [physical education K–12 learning standards](#).

Most respondents (82.3%) reported using an adopted or developed physical education curriculum. Of those respondents with an adopted or developed curriculum, 151 districts (70.6%) reported using a district-developed curriculum, and the remaining respondents reported using various adopted curricula such as Focus Fitness Five (14.5%) and SPARK (8.4%), among others.



Whether the District Modifies & Adapts its PE Curriculum for Students with Disabilities

As stated in [RCW 28A.230.055](#): "An indication of whether, as a matter of policy or procedure, the district routinely modifies and adapts its physical education curriculum for students with disabilities."

Most respondents (99.2%) reported that they adapt or modify their physical education curriculum for students with disabilities. Two districts reported no. Of those two districts, the reasons listed for not adapting the curriculum for students with disabilities were Building Closure (1) and Students Excused from Physical Education (1).

Whether the District Routinely Excludes Students from PE for Disciplinary Reasons

Most respondents (98.1%) report that they do not exclude students from physical education class due to disciplinary reasons. Five districts, or 1.9% of respondents, answered yes. OSPI released a [Best Practices for School Leaders](#) document to encourage schools and districts not to exclude students from recess, physical education, or other school events for disciplinary reasons.

For more information, please contact

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Appendices

Out of 295 public schools and 8 STECs, the 48 districts in this list did not respond to the 23-24 Physical Education survey:

1. Anacortes
2. Dieringer
3. Evergreen (Stevens)
4. Ferndale
5. Hood Canal
6. Hoquiam
7. Kiona-Benton City
8. Klickitat
9. Lake Chelan
10. Lake Quinalt
11. Lopez Island
12. Mabton
13. Mary Walker
14. Mill A
15. Morton
16. Moses Lake
17. Mount Pleasant
18. North Beach
19. Oakesdale
20. Oakville
21. Odessa
22. Orcas Island
23. Orchard Prairie
24. Oroville
25. Paschal Sherman
26. Pe Ell
27. Prescott
28. Puyallup
29. Queets-Clearwater
30. Quillayute Tribal
31. Republic
32. Richland
33. Roosevelt
34. Rosalia
35. San Juan Island
36. Selkirk
37. Skykomish
38. South Whidbey
39. Stehekin
40. Suquamish
41. Taholah
42. Touchet
43. Toutle Lake
44. Trout Lake
45. Wahkiakum
46. Waterville
47. Wishkah Valley
48. Yakima Nation