

The Department of Public Instruction receives many questions regarding district standards and instruction-related issues, including those about health education. The following are answers to frequently asked questions related to health education.

For more information on these issues, please contact: Eileen Hare: Physical Education, Health Education, and Coordinated School Health Consultant, 608-267-9234 or eileen.hare@dpi.wi.gov.

1. What is the elementary requirement for health education?

School district standards specify for grades K-6 a written comprehensive curriculum under the direction of a licensed health teacher. In grades K-4, regular instruction for an entire school year, and in grades 5 and 6, each week for the entire school term or the equivalent in instructional time and course content to meet a K-12 sequential curriculum plan. (Wis. Stat. sec.121.02)

2. Can a student meet the secondary level ½ credit requirement of health education in grade 7 or 8?

The law specifically identifies that the ½ credit in health education may be taken in grades 7-12. (Wis. Stat. sec.118.33)

3. If the ½ credit of health education is taken in middle school, can it be divided into two separate years?

Yes, it would have to be taken in grades 7 and 8 and be taught by a licensed health education teacher. (Wis. Stat. sec.121.02, Standard J).

4. If health education is taken in grade 7 or 8 does it have to be noted on the high school transcript?

The Department of Public Instruction recommends that courses for high school credit taken at the middle school level be so noted on the high school transcript along with the grade received; however, the grade received should not be factored into high school grade point average.

5. If health education is taken in grade 7 or 8, does the 1/2 credit count towards the district required high school graduation credits?

Yes, the statute on high school graduation standards specifies that ½ credit may be taken in any of grades 7 – 12. (Wis. Stat. sec. 118.33(1)(a)(2))

6. Is instruction in human growth and development required?

Wisconsin statutes support human growth and development (HGD) instruction. The law permits but does not require human growth and development instruction. (Wis. Stat. sec. 118.019) However, statute does require all school districts to provide instruction on sexually transmitted diseases in every high school and related personal development topics. (Wis. Stat. sec. 118.01(2)(d)).

7. May parents opt their children out of human growth and development instruction?

The state statutes allow parents to exempt their child from instruction with a written request to the teacher or principal. (Wis. Stat. sec. 118.019)

Statute permits pupils to be exempted from instruction on physiology and hygiene, STDs, symptoms of disease and proper care of the body if his or her parent files a written request with teacher or principal. (Wis. Stat. sec. 118.01(2)(d)(2)(c))