



South Carolina Band Directors Association

S.302 - Marching Band as an Alternative to Physical Education Requirement for a South Carolina High School Diploma

S.302 would allow high school students participating in marching band to earn the physical education credit requirement for their high school diploma as an alternative to the traditional PE class. Marching band curriculum must be based on the *South Carolina Academic Standards for the Visual Arts* and additionally incorporate the *South Carolina Standards for Physical Education* curriculum into the program in order to qualify for the physical education credit. A similar bill – S.1204 – passed the Senate in 2016, but the session adjourned before consideration in the House of Representatives.

Marching band programs are an extracurricular or co-curricular group ensemble experience giving high school students numerous performance opportunities such as marching band contests, football games, parades and exhibitions. There are currently over 150 marching band programs in South Carolina's public high schools with more than 11,000 students participating in the programs, many for all four years of high school.

Students participating in marching band typically invest 6 to 8 hours each week from late July through early November participating in a rigorous, physically active marching band programs which not only meet, but exceed the physical movement and healthy life skills which are expected from the standards of Physical Education (PE) in South Carolina. Additional points to consider:

- Many high school band students currently take PE via the South Carolina Virtual School using the cardio regiment from marching band as their activity for this class. Virtual school PE students are required to have a fitness sponsor to monitor their physical activity for the duration of the course, and many band students have selected their band director to be their fitness sponsor. (Sponsors can be a teacher, parent, or any adult the student assigns as their sponsor.)
- Marching band curriculum parallels the following standards from the virtual school standards:
 - Group Learning Community for Fitness, Cardio Vascular Exercises, Flexibility Exercises
 - Muscle Strength Exercises, Muscle Endurance Exercises, BMI charting
 - Jumping Jacks, Movement Forms – team sports, etiquette, safety, activity logs, Life Time Fitness
- Several high schools in the state are now requiring students to obtain sports physicals before participation in marching band due to the physicality of marching and curriculum. Examples include: Northwestern High School in Rock Hill, Landrum High School and Hartsville High School. Lexington School District One is currently considering a district-wide physical for marching band policy.

- Students earning PE credit from marching band would have more opportunity to enroll in IB and AP classes, as their class schedule would be allowed additional flexibility.

Marching band programs typically begin band rehearsal sessions at the end of summer break before school begins outside on the drill field and continue with two to three rehearsals each week on the drill field as the band's competition show for the season is perfected. In a regular marching band practice, students work through specific training/conditioning of certain muscles groups through activities such as running for timed distance, working the core muscle groups, the feet and ankles, and the upper body to build arm strength.

While applying this same visual/physical technique, the group would warm up musically, incorporating fundamental musical technique with their show music and then move into working specific sections of the show while still placing dual emphasis on the physical and musical demands of the ensemble. The group then runs multiple repetitions with minimal instruction between reps to maximize retention and improvement. At the end of rehearsal each day, runs of the entire show help build endurance for the performers to push their bodies to become more mentally and physically stronger much in the same way a marathon runner trains their bodies over time.

- The following PE standards can be measured in the marching band curriculum:
 - Standard 1 – The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns. (HS-1.1 and HA-1.2) Example: strength training, dance, and outdoor pursuits.
 - Standard 2 – The physically literate individual demonstrates knowledge of concepts, principals of strategies and tactics related to movement and performance. (HS-2.1, 2.2) Example: Apply terminology associated with exercise, use of movement concepts and principles (motion, rotation) to analyze an improve performance of self and/or others.
 - Standard 3 – The physically literate individual achieves and maintains health enhancing level of physical activity and fitness. (HS-3.1, 3.2, 3.4) Example: Self-monitoring of his/her own participation in physical activity using measuring devices such as Fitbit, or other tracking devices, or activity logs. Participating in physical activity outside of PE class.
 - Standard 4 – The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and other in physical activity (HS-4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4) Example: injury prevention, hydration, sun protection, implementation of rules, use of equipment, proper alignment, dance, etiquette and respect for others through team work, warm up activities.
 - Standard 5 - The physically literate individual demonstrates awareness that physical activity provides the opportunity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and /or social interaction. Example: the holistic marching activity demonstrate all components of this standard.

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