

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Date: April 7, 1998

Revised: _____

Subject: Personal Fitness

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Chasteen</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>WM</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

The committee substitute revises the general requirements for high school graduation, increasing the credit needed in physical education from one-half credit to one credit and reducing the number of elective credits needed from nine to eight and one-half. It authorizes the use of two seasons of junior varsity or varsity interscholastic sports to satisfy the physical education requirement, provided that the student passes a prescribed competency test. School boards may not require the physical education requirement be satisfied in grade nine. This section of the committee substitute is effective July 1, 1999.

The committee substitute encourages elementary and middle schools to implement personal fitness programs which are approved by the Florida Department of Education (DOE), and are in compliance with American Heart Association guidelines. Funds for the program are to be allocated via the General Appropriations Act, including an additional one-fourth position to upgrade a physical education specialist in DOE to a full-time position. These provisions of the committee substitute are effective July 1, 1998.

This committee substitute amends section 232.246 and creates section 233.0616, Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Section 232.246, F.S., prescribes general high school graduation requirements. Students must successfully complete either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24-credit hours must be distributed as follows:

4 credits in English, with emphasis in composition and literature;

3 credits in mathematics, with one credit in an Algebra I level course or higher for students entering grade 9 in the 1997-98 school year and thereafter;

3 credits in science, 2 of which must include laboratory components (unless otherwise waived);

1 credit in American history;

1 credit in world history, including the comparative study of major political systems;

½ credit in economics, including the comparative study of major economic systems;

½ credit in American government, including the study of the Constitution of the United States, and for those students entering grade 9 in the 1997-98 school year and thereafter, the study of Florida government, including the State Constitution, the three branches of state government, and municipal and county government;

1 credit in practical arts career education or exploratory career education, or 1 credit in performing fine arts, or ½ credit each in practical arts or exploratory career education and performing fine arts;

½ credit in life management skills;

½ credit in physical education, which can be satisfied by participation in one season of interscholastic sports at the freshman, junior varsity, or varsity level; and

9 elective credits.

School boards may award a maximum of ½ credit in social studies and ½ elective credit for student completion of non-paid voluntary community or school service work.

Sunshine State Standards have been established for physical education, specifically with respect to physical education literacy, responsible physical activity behaviors, and promotion of physically active lifestyles.

According to DOE, a physical education specialist position is currently funded at 0.75 full-time equivalent (FTE). This other-personnel-services (OPS) position is funded through a comprehensive school health grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The position is used to support physical education initiatives as prescribed in the Sunshine State Standards.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The committee substitute revises the general requirements for high school graduation, increasing the credit needed in physical education from one-half credit to one credit and reducing the number of elective credits needed from nine to eight and one-half. It authorizes the use of two seasons of junior varsity or varsity interscholastic sports to satisfy the physical education requirement, provided that the student passes a prescribed competency test. School boards may not require the physical education requirement be satisfied in grade nine. DOE feels that such a change in credits would limit student choices. Retaining the current level of flexibility, where students may elect to take an additional one-half credit of physical education as a part of the nine elective credits, is preferred by the department.

The committee substitute encourages elementary and middle schools to implement personal fitness programs, approved by DOE, and in compliance with American Heart Association guidelines. Funds for this program are to be allocated via the General Appropriations Act, including an additional one-fourth position to upgrade a physical education specialist in DOE to a full-time position.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

According to DOE, the impact on school districts as a result of requiring a full credit in physical education and reducing required elective credits by one-half is indeterminate. Such a shift in credits could have an unfavorable impact on schools, depending on how teacher assignments would have to be revised.

Funds have not been allocated to support the provisions in this bill. DOE estimates that the total cost, including salary and benefits, to fund the full-time physical education program specialist position is approximately \$75,000. Cost estimates for the remainder of the bill were not determined.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.