

Instructional Time Requirements

The Standards and Instructional Support Team at CDE receives the following question each year. Please use the information below to make local decisions regarding instructional time requirements.

**Q: Does CDE require a certain amount of instructional time in minutes or hours for different subjects?**

A: No, except for physical activity for elementary school students as stated in statute [**C.R.S. 22-32-136.5**](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/colorado?app=00075&view=full&interface=1&docinfo=off&searchtype=get&search=C.R.S.+22-32-136.5):

(3) (a) Each school district board of education shall adopt a physical activity policy that incorporates into the schedule of each student attending an elementary school the opportunity for the student to engage in:

 (I) A minimum of six hundred minutes of physical activity per month if the classes at the school meet five days per week and the student attends school for a full day;

 (II) A minimum of three hundred minutes of physical activity per month if the classes at the school meet five days per week and the student attends school for a half day;

 (III) A minimum of thirty minutes of physical activity per day if the classes at the school meet fewer than five days per week and the student attends school for a full day; and

 (IV) A minimum of fifteen minutes of physical activity per day if the classes at the school meet fewer than five days per week and the student attends school for a half day.

 (b) The physical activity policy may include an exception for any month that includes a planned or unplanned full-day or half-day school closure.

 (c) Each school district board of education shall implement the physical activity policy beginning with the 2011-12 school year.

(d) Each school district board of education may require the person or committee in each school designated to ensure that the school complies with the local wellness policy, as described in section 22-32-136, or the school district accountability committee and school accountability committees created pursuant to article 11 of this title to review and advise the school district or an individual school regarding the school district's or the individual school's physical activity policy and compliance with this section.

(e) The expectation that a school district adopt a policy concerning physical activity pursuant to this section is not intended to dictate instruction in the classroom.

(f) A school that, prior to January 1, 2011, provides more than the minimum minutes specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection (3) shall not decrease the amount of physical activity as a result of the policy specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection (3); except that the school may decrease its required minutes of physical activity in response to budgetary constraints, so long as the school complies with the requirements specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection (3).

(g) A school shall not substitute noninstructional physical activity for standards-based physical education instruction.

**Additional statute that is related to hours of instruction:**

**School boards are required to approve a school year of at least 1080 hours of instruction (**[**C.R.S. 22-32-109**](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/colorado?app=00075&view=full&interface=1&docinfo=off&searchtype=get&search=C.R.S.+22-32-109)**):**

(n) (I) To determine, prior to the end of a school year, the length of time which the schools of the district shall be in session during the next following school year, but in no event shall said schools be scheduled to have fewer than one thousand eighty hours of planned teacher-pupil instruction and teacher-pupil contact during the school year for secondary school pupils in high school, middle school, or junior high school or less than nine hundred ninety hours of such instruction and contact for elementary school pupils or fewer than four hundred fifty hours of such instruction for a half-day kindergarten program or fewer than nine hundred hours of such instruction for a full-day kindergarten program. In no case shall a school be in session for fewer than one hundred sixty days without the specific prior approval of the commissioner of education. In extraordinary circumstances, if it appears to the satisfaction of the commissioner that compliance with the provisions of this subparagraph (I) would require the scheduling of hours of instruction and contact at a time when pupil attendance will be low and the benefits to pupils of holding such hours of instruction will be minimal in relation to the cost thereof, the commissioner may waive the provisions of this subparagraph (I) upon application therefor by the board of education of the district.

(II) (A) The actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and teacher-pupil contact specified in subparagraph (I) of this paragraph (n) may be reduced to no fewer than one thousand fifty-six hours for secondary school pupils, no fewer than nine hundred sixty-eight hours for elementary school pupils, no fewer than four hundred thirty-five hours for half-day kindergarten pupils, or no fewer than eight hundred seventy hours for full-day kindergarten pupils, for parent-teacher conferences, staff in-service programs, and closing deemed by the board to be necessary for the health, safety, or welfare of students.