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Recent Changes in School's Healthcare Policies: No More Non-Regulated Physical Activity Requirement

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The General Assembly of the State of Tennessee has issued a series of amendments to Title 49 of the Tennessee Code Annotated. Specifically, this memo will address changes in the physical activity requirements for K-12 schools.

T.C.A. § 49-6-1022 has been amended to return to addressing only “physical activity” and no longer separately addressing “non-structured physical activity.” In 2016, the statute was amended to require certain amounts of time of “non-structured physical activity” into student’s schedules. This amendment was proposed after the “non-structured” physical activity requirement had been in effect for a year; State Representative Dunn said that the requirement put an undue burden on teachers and administrators and that, ultimately, “it just does not work.” The recent amendment no longer includes a distinction for “non-structured” physical activity and instead, requires that elementary students receive one hundred and thirty (130) minutes of physical activity per full school week, and a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes a day, and middle and high school students receive a minimum of ninety (90) minutes of physical activity per full school week. The statute goes on to define “physical activity” as walking, jumping rope, playing volleyball, etc. but excludes walking to and from class. The office of coordinated school health is still required, under the statute, to provide a statistical annual report by October 1.



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Clifton N. Miller and Erica R. Marino are available to consult with school systems and other governmental entities regarding these and related matters.

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