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## Kentucky SHAPE Position Statement on House Bill 301: Physical Education Credit Substitution

**February 2025**

Kentucky SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) acknowledges the critical role that physical education (PE) plays in fostering lifelong health, wellness, and physical literacy among Kentucky students. While we recognize the value of extracurricular sports and marching band in promoting physical activity, these activities do not align with the educational rigor, structured curriculum, or assessment standards required of a quality physical education program.

### **Current Standards and Requirements:**

Kentucky currently mandates only **0.5 PE credit** for high school graduation—less than many states that allow flexibility only after a full PE credit has been earned. Under existing law (**KRS 156.160**), the **only** approved substitution for PE is participation in **Junior ROTC**, provided the Kentucky Academic Standards for Physical Education are still addressed.

### **Why Extracurricular Activities Are Not Equivalent to Physical Education:**

1. **Curriculum-Based Instruction:** Physical education classes are grounded in research-based curricula designed to develop physical literacy, including knowledge, skills, and competencies that support lifelong health and fitness.
2. **Assessment and Standards:** PE classes include assessments that evaluate student progress in meeting state academic standards. Extracurricular sports and marching band focus on performance and competition rather than skill development, health education, and comprehensive fitness assessments.
3. **Inclusive Access:** PE classes are designed to meet the needs of all students, regardless of ability level. Extracurricular sports often require tryouts and may exclude students who are less skilled or physically able, limiting equitable access to the benefits of structured physical education.
4. **Holistic Health Education:** Physical education not only improves physical fitness but also integrates essential components like teamwork, leadership, goal-setting, and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle—elements not systematically addressed in extracurricular activities.

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### **Kentucky SHAPE's Position on House Bill 301:**

While we appreciate the intention behind House Bill 301 to recognize the value of physical activity in sports, we **strongly oppose** counting extracurricular sports or marching band as a substitute for the required PE credit. Doing so undermines the educational purpose of PE and diminishes its role in fostering comprehensive health and physical literacy.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Maintain the current PE requirement** as a distinct and necessary component of the high school curriculum.
- **Encourage participation in extracurricular sports and activities** as valuable supplements—but not replacements—to structured PE instruction.
- **Promote professional PE instruction** by certified educators to ensure all students meet the Kentucky Academic Standards for Physical Education.

### **Conclusion:**

Kentucky SHAPE urges legislators and advocacy groups to prioritize the integrity of physical education in Kentucky's schools. Quality PE equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong health and wellness—goals that cannot be fully achieved through extracurricular participation alone.

We invite policymakers to collaborate with Kentucky SHAPE to explore innovative approaches to improve quality physical education while maintaining the academic standards that prepare our students for lifelong success.

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