The Physical Educator Vol. 80 • pp. 677–700 • 2023
https://doi.org/10.18666/TPE-2023-V80-I6-11613

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Enhancing the Legitimacy of High School Physical Education

Nicholas Washburn

Abstract

Compared to elementary physical education, high school physical education has historically lacked quality. Students struggle to find relevance in the subject, team sports dominate the curriculum, and teachers generally do not actively teach to the extent of their elementary counterparts. Though the need for change has long been acknowledged, substantive change has failed to permeate practice. Indeed, the same issues that plagued high school physical education 30 years ago continue to do so today. This article presents a splintered identity, misaligned curriculum, and a negligible commitment to teaching as fundamental issues that should be addressed if high school physical education is to successfully enhance its status in the eyes of key stakeholders, including students, other teachers, administrators, parents, and policy makers.

I remember entering physical education teacher education (PETE) with the mindset to assist in efforts that bring positive change to high school physical education (HSPE). Such changes are necessary when students experience boredom from repetitive material (Couturier et al., 2005) and view the class as irrelevant (Rikard & Banville, 2006). Despite calls for change (Corbin, 2002; Curtner-Smith, 2009; Doolittle, 2007; Griffey, 1987; P. Ward et al., 2021), actualized change remains scant. Indeed, the "dominant model" for HSPE (Locke, 1992)—a model identifiable in part by introductory-level instruction, low academic learning time, and content based on teacher interest and convenience—maintains its dominance today

Nicholas Washburn, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Western Washington University. Please send author correspondence to nick.washburn@wwu.edu

(Rikard & Banville, 2006). This is particularly troubling given Locke's (1992) claim from almost 30 years ago that "if physical education is to have a significant presence in the secondary schools of the 21st century, it is better to chuck the dominant model (and thereby most school programs) and start over from scratch" (p. 362). It is never too late to actualize change, and what better time to begin doing so than now? In this article, I provide candid commentary on how a lack of identity, a misaligned curriculum, and non-teaching prevent the field from gaining standing in the eyes of students, teachers of other subjects, administrators, parents, and community members. I stand with Henninger and Carlson (2011) in the perspective that we, as a profession, can no longer use marginalization as an excuse to "roll out the ball." To begin, however, I present a brief overview of the physical education (PE) teacher socialization process.

Unique to the teaching profession is the extensive experience future teachers gain as students in school, observing what it means to be a teacher. Few, if any, other career paths involve such a substantial preview. This approximately 13,000-hour shadowing period is like an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975). During this time, future physical educators develop subjective theories about what it means to teach PE (Richards, 2015). They determine their fitness for the job through appraising personal abilities, interests, and beliefs about the purpose of PE with reference to those of the individuals occupying the socially constructed role of PE teacher in their school (Richards, 2015). The culture of the school nests and shapes this role. According to role socialization theory (Richards, 2015), everyone within a school community occupies a certain status (e.g., student, teacher, administrator, parent). Each status coincides with a role to play, or a script for how to act. Groups of individuals occupying the same status comprise role sets. Roles are socially constructed and contextually bound, informed by the views of what other role sets in a particular school consider appropriate and inappropriate. For example, the role of the PE teacher (the behaviors they enact and the values they hold) depends largely on the expectations of others. Students, other teachers, administrators, and parents within that school community hold expectations for PE as a subject and for the PE teachers themselves. This role may be very different in another school community.

Though some teachers retain an innovative orientation in that they seek to utilize the methods taught in their PETE programs (Mercier & Iacovelli, 2014), research indicates that many schools, functioning as custodial bureaucracies (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008), favor the status quo and promote a maintenance of sameness. Lawson's (1983) illustration of the custodial nature of schools likens them to prisons and mental hospitals, containing "large, heterogenous groups of clients who do not seek professional development voluntarily" (p. 5). Such bureaucracies standardize technique reproducibility of work in the interest of preserving order (Lawson, 1983, drawing from Downs, 1967). This highly regimented, routine-focused heritage of schools stands at odds with that of PETE, which espouses an emphasis on student learning over mere supervision and a humanistic approach as opposed to a pupil-control approach toward teaching (Templin, 1979). Even with the assumption that new teachers have internalized the professional teachings of their PETE programs, which is a major assumption, indeed, considering the potency of acculturation in relation to that of formal training (A. M. Woods et al., 2016), the socializing force of the school is quite powerful (Schempp & Graber, 1992; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). It can be even more powerful when multiple role sets (e.g., students, teachers, administrators, parents) within the bureaucracy hold similar views about the role of the PE teacher.

When the perspectives of others within the school align with those of the incumbent, the transition is relatively seamless. When they are misaligned, however, social turbulence in the form of role stress is likely to arise (see Richards et al., 2014). For example, if the students, veteran PE teachers, other faculty, and administrators in a school uniformly believe the purpose of PE is simply to "blow off steam" and the role of the PE teacher is to maintain positive student behavior, then an incoming physical educator who values individualizing instruction for success and focuses on student learning would likely experience significant intrarole conflict (Merton, 1957). The point is that most school cultures tend to possess relatively custodial views toward PE. The subject is afforded a lower status than those considered to be more academic in nature, and expectations for PE teachers pertain less to facilitating student learning and more to ensuring desirable student conduct (Henninger & Carlson, 2011). This

widely accepted perspective of the nature of PE places physical educators lower on the totem pole than teachers of other subjects. As a result, PE teachers often experience lower instructional expectations and interact with administration less than other teachers (Richards et al., 2018). This social structure facilitates the retainment of teachers willing to embrace a custodial, and frankly easier, approach to teaching PE. Those unwilling to compromise their innovative ideals (however they were formed) either leave voluntarily or are relieved of their post to be replaced by someone who will (Gaudreault & Woods, 2013). This is not to say that there are no motivated, humanistic veteran physical educators, though they appear to be among the minority (Woods et al., 2016). The ultimate and unfortunate consequence is that the next generation of aspiring physical educators then begin to develop their own subjective theories based on the custodial roles of their PE teachers, roles that have become worn and weathered to be custom fit for success in a culture that endorses the status quo.

What Is the Place for Physical Education in Schools?

Prior to elaborating on issues of curricular revision and commitment to teaching, I offer my perspective on the place of PE in schools. Consensus on our identity as a field has been elusive since its inception in 1885 with the inaugural meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Physical Education (currently SHAPE America). At that time, in what came to be known as "The Battle of the Systems" (Weston, 1962), prominent founding individuals promoted the style, or system, of gymnastics they felt to be most appropriate for PE. Unlike Olympic gymnastics seen on television today, these gymnastics systems were more so gymnastics-themed approaches to *formal* (i.e., prescribed, whole-group) physical training (Siedentop, 2009). Though unique to each other, these systems shared the common goal of improving physical fitness. None of these systems ultimately took the lion's share in school curricula due to ongoing debates about the merits of any one system (Ennis, 2006) and student apathy toward forms of exercise they did not understand or were disinterested in (Halsey, 1964).

The vision for PE that emerged supreme was initially developed and touted by Thomas Wood (1910) and became known as "The New PE." This new version of PE expanded the goals of the subject

to educate the entire human through an emphasis on mind *and* body. According to Wood, to gain recognition in the world of education, PE needed to expand its focus beyond just physical training to include development in cognition and prosocial skills. The health benefits that once were the primary focus of gymnastics-based PE became viewed as by-products of activities that promoted social, mental, and ethical development (Davenport, 1984). To a large extent, formal gymnastics were replaced with competitive sports, recreational games, rhythmic movements, and modified gymnastics for the purposes of supporting students' physical, mental, social, and emotional development. The New PE (Wood & Cassidy, 1927) viewed physical activity as a medium for educating the whole child (Oberteuffer, 1951).

A resurging emphasis on fitness development in PE occurred toward the middle of the 20th century due to the inadequate fitness of American troops in the Korean War and the observation that almost 1 of every 2 young Americans were being rejected from military service on the basis of being either mentally, morally, or physically unfit. Chiefly, however, and prompting then-President John F. Kennedy to pen the article "Soft American" on the declining fitness of young Americans in a December 1960 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, was the *U.S. News and World Report* ("Are U.S. Kids," 1954) coverage of findings indicating children in the United States were weaker than those in Italy, Switzerland, and Austria (Kraus & Hirschland, 1954). Six fitness tests, five assessing muscular strength and one assessing flexibility were administered to 4,264 American children and 2,870 children from the other three countries. Results showed that 57.9% of American children failed at least one test, compared to 8.7% of European children. President Kennedy was particularly disheartened by the strength test results, as 35.7% of American children failed at least one of these, compared to just 1.1% of Europeans. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport was created shortly following the release of these findings (1956). Despite this heightened awareness of the importance of fitness, the institutionalization of organized sport in American culture enabled sports to continue occupying center stage in PE curricula (Siedentop, 2009).

Following the release of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), the scathing critique of American

education as being mediocre and threatening the future of the nation, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (1995) published the first set of national standards for PE. Though the standards have been condensed in number from seven to five in the last 26 years, there remains a clear connection to The New PE theme of education *through* the physical. Consider that Standards 2 through 5 pertain primarily to development in cognition and affect. The diversified focus of the standards is further reflected in what might be considered the most recent era in the PE field, the age of models-based practice (Metzler, 2017). Instructional models are developed to serve the purpose of PE as seen in the eyes of their creators. Sport education (Siedentop, 1998), for example, inducts youth more effectively into American sport culture, whereas teaching personal and social responsibility (Hellison, 2010) views PA as a vehicle to promote positive youth development. The play practice approach (Launder & Pilz, 2013) emphasizes development of tactical and technical gameplay competencies, whereas cooperative learning (Casey & Dyson, 2012) emphasizes blending positive interdependence in small groups with individual accountability for the achievement of academic and social outcomes. The implementation of instructional models is requisite for PE to retain legitimacy in the 21st century (Kirk, 2012). While I see value in incorporating various instructional models into the curriculum, I propose that a shift in *what* is taught rather than *how* it is taught in HSPE will prove more fruitful in pursuit of legitimacy.

A Common Vision for the Future

PE was socially constructed around movement for the purpose of improving the physical dimension of the person, and a return to this purpose is recommended. What makes PE unique is a focus on movement. The subject exists as a vehicle for developing in youth a value for moving. While the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America, 2021) states on its website that PE exists to develop physical literacy, "the ability, confidence, and desire to be physically active for life," the obesity rate in the United States increased from 26% in 2008 to a staggering 42% in 2018 (Warren, et al., 2020). This upward trajectory is projected to continue, with obesity prevalence among U.S. adults reaching almost 49% by 2030

(Z. Ward et al., 2019). Though it seems unreasonable to place the responsibility of flattening the obesity curve solely on school-based PE, one controllable factor that significantly influences an individual's weight is the amount of physical activity built into their lifestyle. Admittedly, youth cannot improve their fitness if the only time they are physically active is in PE; however, PE teachers can help to develop in students a value for PA that will lead them to be physically active outside of school and beyond.

Each week, adults ages 18 to 64 should (a) accrue 150 min of moderate-intensity (e.g., brisk walking) or 75 min of vigorous-intensity (e.g., jogging) aerobic activity, and (b) engage in muscle-strengthening activities (e.g., resistance training) that work all major muscle groups at least twice a week (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). Just 24.2% of adults (18 years and older) are meeting the aerobic and muscle-strengthening guidelines (Elgaddal et al., 2020).. On the basis of these metrics, adults are not adequately physically active and PE is not sufficiently contributing to this cause, its initial sole purpose. This "PE effect" (Green, 2014), or the influence of involvement in PE outside of school, appears to be minimal (Green, 2014; Portman, 2003) with 82% of 515 students not participating outside of school in activities learned in PE.

It is important to acknowledge the monist perspective from which I comment, one that considers the mind and body to be inextricably linked. With improvement of the body comes improvement of the mind. While social and affective development is certainly important and deserves to be intentionally addressed through the PE curriculum, caution should be exercised in touting outcomes in these realms as primary programmatic initiatives (Corbin, 2002; Crum, 1993). Indeed, I respectfully welcome other subject areas in schools to consider making curricular space in their programs for formal instruction in these domains in the interest of collectively educating the whole child. In promoting an emphasis on the physical, I am not suggesting that students today need to become highly proficient sportspersons, dancers, swimmers, adventurers, yoga instructors, or fitness enthusiasts. Rather, I am merely suggesting a renewed commitment to helping students become lifelong movers. In this vein, there needs to be a shift in the focus of HSPE.

Revising HSPE Curricula

The secondary PE curriculum is no longer meeting the needs of adolescents in 21st century (P. Ward et al., 2021). SHAPE America (2014) indicates that HSPE learning outcomes extend upon those established for middle school "but with a more concentrated focus on planning and implementing lifetime physical activity goals" (p. 53). This statement aligns with PA preferences among adults. Among individuals indicating they engage with sport or exercise on an average day, walking is by far the most popular form of exercise (30%), followed by weightlifting (9%), use of cardio equipment (9%), running (8%), aquatics activities (7%), basketball (3.5%), golfing (3%), cycling (3%), yoga (2.5%), and aerobics (2%). Basketball is the only team sport among the top 10 activity preferences. In total, just 5.2% are playing team sports. Further, data from this survey indicate that, with age, there is a shift in PA pursuits from team sports to lifetime activities. Roughly 75% of individuals participating in the team sports of baseball, softball, soccer, football, and basketball are 15 to 24 years of age. Most participants engaging in lifetime activities such as yoga, walking, use of cardio equipment, golfing, swimming, and hiking are 25 years of age and older (R. A. Woods, 2017). These data support research observing that, by far, Americans age 18 and older participate less in team sports and more in lifetime sports (e.g., golf, tennis), exercise, and recreation (Corbin, 2002; Ham et al., 2009; Simons-Mortons et al., 1999).

Nevertheless, traditional team sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball) continue to dominate HSPE curricula in the United States (Corbin, 2002; Gaudreault, 2014). Secondary physical educators' steadfast "love affair" with team sport are a product of their past experiences (Ferry & McCaughtry, 2013). The emotional connections between future PE teachers and sport form during their acculturation, producing in them a sporting habitus that influences their decision to become PE teachers. A crucial initial step toward fixing the PE system is changing the basis on which future HSPE teachers develop their subjective theories on the nature of the subject. If they largely experience team sport in high school, those wanting to teach HSPE in the future will likely do so with the perception that HSPE is a place to play team sports. Contrarily, if they experience HSPE as a place for learning about and developing competence in lifetime physical

activities, those entering PETE with the intention to teach at the high school level might do so because of a value for lifetime physical activities.

In light of the obesity and overweight statistics, indicating that there is a general lack of physical activity among U.S. adults and that the vast majority of those who keep physically active do so through lifetime activities, HSPE programs can make substantial contributions to public health and become increasingly meaningful to students (Carlson, 1995; Doolittle, 2007; Griffey, 1987) through re-allocating curricular space to formal instruction in a variety of lifetime activities (Fairclough et al., 2002; Trudeau & Shephard, 2008) that are culturally relevant to students. Examples of such "cool" PE (McCaughtry, 2009) include how to operate and interpret the display information on common fitness facility cardio machines, how to adjust and properly use resistance training machines, how to swim freestyle and breaststroke to swim laps for exercise, and how to competently play a recreational game of tennis. Students also claim to participate outside of school in activities they were introduced to in PE including archery, badminton, tennis, fencing, and weightlifting (Green, 2014). Though conceptual variations of PE that involve a blend of classroom time and activity time (Corbin et al., 2020; Dale et al., 1998) demonstrate moderate potential in improving the PE effect, I believe greater success toward this end will be realized with less classroom-based time and more time experiencing the joy that accompanies engagement in physical activities of interest. Accepting this as the principal goal of HSPE can aid in conceptual clarity and the attainment of learning outcomes (McKenzie & Lounsbery, 2014; P. Ward et al., 2021).

A better-aligned approach might be the health-based PE (HBPE) model from Haerens et al. (2011). The HBPE model is one approach that can be particularly effective in helping students develop a value for PA (Siedentop, 1996), compared to a traditional multiactivity sports-based curriculum (i.e., one that assumes a discipline mastery value orientation in teaching largely team sports) to make a meaningful contribution to PA health promotion. This model draws on self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) in that planning to support students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is important in providing enjoyable, independent yet

supported learning experiences that build competence and a value for PA.

Where I may slightly deviate is the emphasis, or apparent lack thereof, on the development of competence in the content. I believe that skillful performance, at least insofar as results are more often considered to be a product of one's actions rather than luck, is part and parcel to experiencing the deep level of enjoyment that is capable of producing sustained engagement (P. Ward, 2020). For someone to willfully play golf, go for a bike ride, or play tennis, they must have a reasonable level of confidence in their ability to have at least a moderate level of success. This does not mean that teachers must concern themselves with getting every student to be proficient in every activity. Not everyone is skillful or even cares about being skillful in golf, cycling, or tennis. Instead, the task becomes understanding that individuals' interests and aptitudes vary and helping them identify and excel in those activities in which they aspire to improve. Indeed, the paramount focus of PE should be on helping students learn to value PA as a crucial part of a healthy life. Haerens et al. (2011) support Siedentop (1996) in that the affective domain should take precedence when a value for PA is being developed in individuals. I concur, though I propose that the task should primarily be identifying content of interest to students and facilitating a utilization level of competence (Graham et al., 2020).

Table 1 serves as a sample HSPE curriculum that focuses on lifelong physical activities. Each block essentially represents a 4-week unit or miniature class. In line with previous suggestions for undertaking curricular revision (Cothran & Ennis, 1998), this sample curriculum comes from the belief that the current team sport–dominant model characteristic of many HSPE programs is misaligned with the purpose of HSPE in socializing adolescents into lifelong movement culture (Corbin, 2002). The curriculum involves activities from all four games classifications represented within the tactical games approach (Mitchell et al., 2020); however, team sport occupies just five of 20 blocks. The remaining 15 blocks pertain to instruction in lifetime activities, and fitness is not a standalone unit but rather is integrated throughout all blocks. One issue students have with HSPE is the inability to see gains in fitness (Rikard & Banville, 2006). This constant emphasis on allowing students to exercise enables them to

set goals and track growth over time and thereby develop desirable habits around fitness. Of course, if certain units involve significant exertion, such as cross-country skiing, it is the teacher's decision to abbreviate or omit the fitness portion for that block. Table 2 presents a sample block, specifically the content of golf taught through the sport education model (Siedentop, 1998). Grade-level outcomes from all five national standards are achieved in just this one block. I submit that a curriculum such as the one in Table 1 that is taught through the use of a variety of styles and models is capable of meeting all high school grade-level outcomes as set forth by SHAPE America (2014) while maintaining a primary focus on promoting lifetime PA.

Teachers looking to revise the curriculum in their own programs might begin the process by generating a list of lifetime activities that could realistically be taught by the PE staff or outsourced, asking students to select activities from this list they have not done before but would be interested in experiencing, and identifying the amount of time to be invested in each unit throughout the program (Gaudreault, 2014). It is worth underscoring that the term program was used instead of year, because a curriculum should not be recycled year after year (Rikard & Banville, 2006). What is taught each year should not be replicated in the following year. If activities are revisited, the content within that activity should review and build on what was taught previously. With the assumption students are growth-oriented (Ryan & Deci, 2017), one major step toward helping students identify a sense of meaning in HSPE lies with facilitating the development of an interest in any number of lifetime physical activities. Even then, the best of curricula can be rendered useless without teachers who are willing to teach it.

Establishing a Commitment to Teaching

A third substantial hurdle to overcome if HSPE is to gain legitimacy as a subject is the problem of a weak commitment to teaching (Crum, 1993), or a general lack of acceptance that the physical educator's primary function is to help pupils learn. Much of what occurs in HSPE programs in the name of teaching can be more accurately characterized as managing, supervising, and socializing (Griffey & Housner, 1999; Henninger & Coleman, 2008; Placek, 1984). This current form of HSPE includes a longstanding trend of non-teaching PE teachers, including "sport officials," "sandwich eaters," and "chair

sitters" (Curtner-Smith, 2009). Breaking this trend requires garnering information from teachers, because "it seems pointless to find out even more about effective teaching methods or new curriculum models if we can't get anyone to use or do them" (Curtner-Smith, 2009, p. 222; Locke, 1977).

A non-teaching approach is traceable to the two foundational ideologies long competing for centrality within the subject, namely, education *of* versus *through* the physical (Crum, 1993). Early pioneers of the gymnastics movement and those who believe PE exists to develop fitness subscribe to the education of the physical ideology, whereas those who consider PE as a vehicle for holistic development, such as the promoters of The New PE, align with the education through the physical philosophy. In either case, the act of teaching is reduced. In the former, beyond teaching the movement initially, class time becomes little more than routine exercise. In the latter, teachers concern themselves primarily with socioemotional outcomes, thus undermining the importance of the content that makes up the subject.

I submit that non-teaching behavior among high school physical educators is a product of a flawed system and can be explained through operant conditioning theory (Skinner, 1953). Operant conditioning is an associative learning process that considers behavior to be influenced by consequences in the form of *reinforcers* and *punishers*. Reinforcers are consequences that increase the likelihood of a behavior being repeated, whereas punishers decrease such a possibility. Both reinforcers and punishers can be positive (i.e., applied) or negative (i.e., withheld). For example, to get a child to finish their homework, a guardian might reward them with ice cream when their assignment is complete (positive reinforcer). Contrarily, they might remove their responsibility for washing the dishes that evening if the assignment is completed (negative reinforcement). To get a child to stop cussing, a guardian might impose a time-out (positive punishment) or remove 15 min off a curfew (negative punishment) for each cuss word they hear. Through leveraging something of value, such as the desire for ice cream and a later curfew, or the disdain for washing dishes and time-out, the guardian can promote in their child desirable behavior.

I believe the system for teacher evaluation is structured to enable non-teaching. Specifically, there is a lack of reinforcement for investing the effort needed for teaching well and a lack of punishment for non-teaching. In my state of residence, along with many others, teachers are awarded permanent contracts through tenure after successfully completing 3 years of service. Once a teacher is tenured, it is very costly and laborious for a district to dismiss that teacher. At first glance, having a teacher prove their abilities during a probationary period prior to earning a permanent position seems like a rational policy. Once a teacher is tenured, however, there is little, if any, incentive for them to continue investing as much effort in teaching as they did to become tenured. Regardless of lesson quality, all tenured teachers earn the same stepwise raise year after year. Guaranteeing the equality of outcome suppresses drive and innovation. Eventually, absent positive reinforcement, efforts dedicated to teaching at a high level will become reduced or even extinct. This might explain why so many veteran physical educators become burned out (A. M. Woods et al., 2016).

The teacher evaluation system should become merit-based instead of time-based. Teaching competence should not be considered as commensurate with years of service. There must be incentives for teachers going above and beyond, trying new techniques, offering students new experiences, and so forth. Teachers should be eligible for bonuses, additional paid leave, expanded program budgets, or other forms of positive reinforcement when revising their curricula to meet students' needs and provide differentiated instruction.

In addition to recalibration of the teacher evaluation system, what can be done to eradicate this non-teaching approach? PETE faculty need to be stricter gatekeepers for the profession (Graber et al., 2016). We cannot make individuals one day want to teach. If someone is not interested in teaching, external intervention will only do so much to change that, at least in the long term. PETE programs need to be more stringent in gatekeeping. Individuals who love teaching, who possess a teaching orientation (Curtner-Smith et al., 2008), and who demonstrate a desire to continue to learn should be admitted, whereas hardcore coaching-oriented and low-achieving students should be denied admission and advised toward alternate career paths (Templin et al., 2019). That many high school

PE teachers prioritize coaching over teaching is well-documented (Washburn et al., 2020). If they want to coach badly enough, they will find a different job that allows them afternoons and weekends off to do so. Their path to the playing fields should not be through PETE. Though this is potentially harsh, I believe it is necessary.

I further recognize that PETE enrollment is perilously low with respect to numbers at the turn of the century (Templin et al., 2019). Indeed, the entrance to the teacher "pipeline" is now a trickle (P. Ward, 2019). This sport analogy sums it well: We cannot afford to make cuts if it is a struggle to field a team. To become more exclusive, we need to generate interest and increase recruitment. I offer these suggestions in this very interest:

- The structure of PETE faculty workload should be reconsidered. Traditionally, faculty are expected to devote most of their efforts between teaching and research, with the remainder dedicated to service (Terpstra & Honoree, 2009). The problem is that this model is not yielding desirable results. The custodial, potent institutional press gradually erodes foundations of humanism (Templin, 1979), and the knowledge available in the literature rarely translates to improved practice (Kirk, 1989; Lawson, 1992; Stadulis, 1973). More credit within faculty workloads should be allocated to service to the profession and the community. For instance, PETE faculty should be given credit for supervising interns, providing relevant professional development opportunities for physical educators, and organizing family fun nights with the help of preservice teachers. This could improve local PE program quality, strengthen school–university partnerships, provide additional practical experience for PETE majors, and generate greater visibility for PETE programs.
- In addition, PETE faculty could offer a brief overview of their programs and the work of a PE teacher in local PE classes. This need not be anymore than a 5-min message in each of the PE classes in a high school. Before leaving, they might ask the PE teacher for permission to post a QR code that students could scan to see the PETE program's website. Considering the extent to which adolescents use their phones

today (Hirsh-Yechezkel et al., 2019), this could be an effective means for promoting the profession.

- Another approach might be to offer course credit to PETE majors for setting up an information table in high school cafeterias. With age being a factor in approachability (Bonnet & McAlexander, 2012), high school students might be more inclined to approach college students than professors.
- A final consideration, and one that we at Western Washington University have implemented, is to create program informational flyers and distribute them to high school guidance counselors and career offices in 2-year institutions. Students cannot apply to programs they do not know exist. Raising awareness can potentially increase recruitment.

As stated at the beginning of this article, my love for PE led me to PETE because I believe HSPE has the potential to be so much better than it is currently. Our standing as a profession, in my opinion, can be improved substantially if we establish consensus on the purpose of HSPE being to instill in adolescents a value for lifetime PA, revising programs' curricula accordingly, and becoming more rigid with respect to gatekeeping. Understandably, concerted efforts, including those offered as examples, are necessary to boost recruitment, thus enabling PETE faculty to become more selective in the admission process. This should not be viewed as an insurmountable task, however, but welcomed as a challenge for the achievement of something special. Much like companies set quarterly finance goals, PETE programs could set SMART goals (Rubin, 2002) pertaining to the number of applicants and those gaining admission.

I would be remiss if I neglected to acknowledge that, even with these hurdles being overcome, gaining legitimacy in schools and in the eyes of the community is likely going to be an ongoing and difficult process. Teacher marginalization is well-documented in the PE literature. Relative to their counterparts who teach "core" subjects, physical educators inherit larger class sizes, receive less support from administration, and are afforded less prestige (Lux & McCullick, 2011; Richards et al., 2018). This marginalization partly stems from the dualistic perspective pervasive in Western society that the mind is separate and superior to the body (Rozemond, 1998). Substances

that consume space, such as chairs, tools, and our bodies, known as "res extensa," are controlled by the thoughts of the mind, known as "res cogitans." Theoretical and academic activities are given status above those that are practical and physical (Kretchmar, 1996). This perspective manifests in the occupational hierarchy, which identifies professional jobs such as lawyers and doctors as more prestigious than vocational jobs such tradesmen and caregiving (Lynn & Ellerbach, 2017).

Another reason traces from the widely accepted "American Dream" that boasts hard work leads to success (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003). PE content is leisure oriented and thus viewed as peripheral, if not inhibitory, to the process of self-improvement. If a person is playing or exercising, they are not working and making progress. This perspective, of course, is grounded in the belief that improvement is measured in terms of work-related qualities (income, title, visual progress, etc.). So, while I believe the standing of PE can be appreciably increased relative to its current level, I also recognize that for the aforementioned reasons and possibly others, this progress will take time and will not be experienced without the constant challenge of advocating for the unique and essential contribution HSPE makes to a child's education: establishing a value for PA and identifying as a mover. Nevertheless, seeking to rid our profession of the enemy that is the non-teaching physical educator through sound gatekeeping and revised teacher accountability and refocusing HSPE toward an emphasis on learning about and participating in lifelong physical activities will serve us well in this uphill but noble battle.

References

Are U.S. kids falling behind? (1954, March 19). *U.S. News and World Report*, *36*(12), 35–36.

Bonnet, J. L., & McAlexander, B. (2012). Structural diversity in academic libraries: A study of librarian approachability. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *38*(5), 277–286. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2012.06.002

Carlson, T. B. (1995). We hate gym: Student alienation from physical education. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *14*(4), 467–477. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.14.4.467

Casey, A., & Dyson, B. (2012). Cooperative learning in physical education. In B. Dyson & A. Casey (Eds.), *Cooperative learning in physical education: A research-based approach* (pp. 166–175). Routledge.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, June 2). *How much physical activity do adults need?* https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/index.htm

Corbin, C. B. (2002). Physical education as an agent of change. *Quest*, *54*(3), 181–195. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2002.10491773

Corbin, C. B., Kulinna, P. H., & Yu, H. (2020). Conceptual physical education: A secondary innovation. *Quest*, *72*(1), 33–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2019.1602780

Cothran, D. J., & Ennis, C. D. (1998). Curricula of mutual worth: Comparisons of students' and teachers' curricular goals. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *17*(3), 307–326. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.17.3.307

Couturier, L. E., Chepko, S., & Coughlin, M. A. (2005). Student voices: What middle and high school students have to say about physical education. *Physical Educator*, *62*(4), 170–187.

Crum, B. J. (1993). Conventional thought and practice in physical education: Problems of teaching and implications for change. *Quest*, *45*(3), 339–356. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1993.10484092

Curtner-Smith, M. D. (2009). Breaking the cycle of non-teaching physical education teachers: Lessons to be learned from the occupational socialization literature. In L. D. Housner, M. W. Metzler, P. G. Schempp, & T. J. Templin (Eds.), *Historic traditions and future directions of research on teaching and teacher education in physical education* (pp. 221—225). West Virginia University.

Curtner-Smith, M. D., Hastie, P. A., & Kinchin, G. D. (2008). Influence of occupational socialization on beginning teachers' interpretation and delivery of sport education. *Sport, Education, and Society*, *13*(1), 97–117. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573320701780779

Dale, D. L., Corbin, C. B., & Cuddihy, T. (1998). Can conceptual physical education promote physically active lifestyles? *Pediatric Exercise Science*, *10*(2), 97–109. https://doi.org/10.1123/pes.10.2.97

Davenport, J. (1984). Thomas Denison Wood: Physical educator and father of health education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *55*(8), 63–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.1984.10630633

Doolittle, S. (2007). Is the extinction of high school physical education inevitable? *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *78*(4), 7–9. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2007.10597995

Downs, A. (1967). *Inside bureaucracy.* Little, Brown and Company. https://doi.org/10.7249/CB156

Elgaddal, N., Kramarow, E. A., & Reuben, C. (2020). *Physical activity among adults aged 18 and over: United States, 2020* (NCHS Data Brief No. 443). National Center for Health Statistics. https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc:120213

Ennis, C. D. (2006). Curriculum: Forming and reshaping the vision of physical education in a high need, low demand world of schools. *Quest*, *58*(1), 41–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2006.10491871

Fairclough, S., Stratton, G., & Baldwin, G. (2002). The contribution of secondary school physical education to lifetime physical activity. *European Physical Education Review*, *8*(1), 69–84. https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X020081005

Ferry, M., & McCaughtry, N. (2013). Secondary physical educators and sport content: A love affair. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *32*(4), 375–393. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.32.4.375

Gaudreault, K. L. (2014). "Cool PE" and confronting the negative stereotypes of physical education. *Strategies*, *27*(3), 32–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/08924562.2014.901049

Gaudreault, K. L., & Woods, A. M. (2013). Factors leading to career frustration and exit: A case of a veteran physical educator. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport Management*, *4*(4), 51–61.

Graber, K. C., Killian, C. M., & Woods, A. M. (2016). Professional socialization, teacher education programs, and dialectics. In K. A. R. Richards & K. L. Gaudreault (Eds.), *Teacher socialization in physical education* (pp. 79–94). Routledge.

Graham, G., Holt/Hale, S. A., & Parker, M. (2020). Children moving: A reflective approach to teaching physical education (10th ed.). McGraw Hill.

Green, K. (2014). Mission impossible? Reflecting upon the relationship between physical education, youth sport, and lifelong participation. *Sport, Education, and Society*, *19*(4), 357–375. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2012.683781

Griffey, D. C. (1987). Trouble for sure, a crisis perhaps: Secondary school physical education today. *Journal of Physical Education Recreation, & Dance*, *58*(2), 20–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.1987.10609500

Griffey, D. C., & Housner, L. D. (1999). Teacher thinking and decision making in physical education: Planning, perceiving, and implementing instruction. In C. Hardy & M. Mawer (Eds.), *Learning and teaching in physical education* (pp. 211–222). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203487150

Haerens, L., Kirk, D., Cardon, G., & De Bourdeaudhuij, I. (2011). Toward the development of a pedagogical model for health-based physical education. *Quest*, *63*(3), 321–338. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2011.10483684

Halsey, E. (1964). *Inquiry and invention in physical education.* Lea & Febiger

Ham, S. A., Kruger, J., & Tudor-Locke, C. (2009). Participation by US adults in sports, exercise, and recreational physical activities. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, *6*(1), 6–14. https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.6.1.6

Hellison, D. (2010). *Teaching personal and social responsibility through physical activity*. Human Kinetics. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781718208919

Henninger, M. L., & Carlson, K. B. (2011). Strategies to increase the value of physical educators in K–12 schools. *Journal of Physical Education*, *Recreation, & Dance*, *82*(6), 17–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2011.10598639

Henninger, M. L., & Coleman, M. (2008, April). *Student success in physical education: Still busy, happy, good* [Poster presentation]. Annual American Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Convention, Fort Worth, TX, United States.

Hirsh-Yechezkel, G., Mandelzweig, L., Novikov, I., Bar-Yosef, N., Livneh, I., Oren, M., Waysberg, R., & Sadetzki, S. (2019). Mobile phone-use habits among adolescents: Predictors of intensive use. *Cyberpsychology*, *Behavior*, *and Social Networking*, *22*(3), 212–219. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2018.0177

Hochschild, J. L., & Scovronick, N. (2003). *American dream and public schools*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195152784.001.0001

Kirk, D. (1989). The orthodoxy in RT-PE and the research/practice gap: A critique and an alternative view. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *8*(2), 123–130. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.8.2.123

Kirk, D. (2012). What is the future for physical education in the 21st century? In S. Capel & M. Whitehead (Eds.), *Debates in physical education* (pp. 220–231). Routledge.

Kraus, H., & Hirschland, R. P. (1954). Minimum muscular fitness test in school children. *Research Quarterly*, *25*(2), 177–188. https://doi.org/10.1080/10671188.1954.10624957

Kretchmar, S. (1996). Movement and play on higher education's contested terrain. *Quest*, *48*(4), 433–441. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1996.10484208

Launder, A., & Piltz, W. (2013). *Play practice: Engaging and developing skilled players from beginner to elite.* Human Kinetics. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781718209060

Lawson, H. A. (1983). Toward a model of teacher socialization in physical education: Entry into schools, teachers' role orientations, and longevity in teaching (part 2). *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *3*(1), 3–16. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.3.1.3

Lawson, H. A. (1992). Why don't practitioners use research? Explanations and selected implications. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *63*(9), 36–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.1992.10606642

Locke, L. F. (1977). Research on teaching physical education: New hope for a dismal science. *Quest*, *28*(1), 2–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1992.10484062

Locke, L. F. (1992). Changing secondary school physical education. *Quest*, *44*(3), 361–372. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1992.10484062

Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. University of Chicago Press.

Lux, K., & McCullick, B. A. (2011). How one exceptional teacher navigated her working environment as the teacher of a marginal subject. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *30*(4), 358–374. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.30.4.358

Lynn, F. B., & Ellerbach, G. (2017). A position with a view: Educational status and the construction of the occupational hierarchy. *American Sociological Review*, *82*(1), 32–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416671743

McCaughtry, N. (2009). The child and the curriculum: Implications of Deweyan philosophy in the pursuit of "cool" physical education for children. In L. D. Housner, M. W. Metzler, P. G. Schempp, & T. J. Templin (Eds.), *Historic traditions and future directions of research on teaching and teacher education in physical education* (pp. 187–196). Fitness Information Technology.

McKenzie, T. L., & Lounsbery, M. A. (2014). The pill not taken: Revisiting physical education teacher effectiveness in a public health context. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *85*(3), 287–292. https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2014.931203

Mercier, K., & Iacovelli, T. (2014). Summative assessments: How we improved our high school physical education program. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *85*(2), 14–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2014.866794

Merton, R. K. (1957). The role-set: Problems in sociological theory. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *8*(2), 106–120. https://doi.org/10.2307/587363

Metzler, M. (2017). *Instructional models in physical education*. Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315213521

Mitchell, S., Mitchell, S. A., Oslin, J., & Griffin, L. L. (2020). *Teaching sport concepts and skills: A tactical games approach*. Human Kinetics Publishers.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (1995). *Moving into the future: National physical education standards: A guide to content and assessment*. McGraw-Hill Humanities, Social Sciences, & World Languages.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. U.S. Government Printing Office.

Oberteuffer, D. (1951). *Physical education: A textbook of principles for professional students.* Harper & Brothers.

Placek, J. H. (1984). A multi-case study of teacher planning in physical education. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *4*(1), 39–49. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.4.1.39

Portman, P. A. (2003). Are physical education classes encouraging students to be physically active? Experience of ninth graders in their last semester of required physical education. *Physical Educator*, *60*(3), 150–160.
Richards, K. A. R. (2015). Role socialization theory: The sociopolitical realities of teaching physical education. *European Physical Education Review*, *21*(3), 379–393. https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X15574367
Richards, K. A. R., Gaudreault, K. L., Starck, J. R., & Mays Woods, A. (2018). Physical education teachers' perceptions of perceived mattering and marginalization. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, *23*(4), 445–459. https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2018.1455820
Richards, K. A. R., Templin, T. J., & Graber, K. (2014). The socialization of teachers in physical education: Review and recommendations for future works. *Kinesiology Review*, *3*(2), 113–134. https://doi.org/10.1123/kr.2013–0006
Rikard, L. G., & Banville, D. (2006). High school student attitudes about physical education. *Sport*, *Education, and Society*, *11*(4), 385–400. https://doi.org/10.1080/13573320600924882
Rozemond, M. (1998). *Descartes's dualism*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674042926
Rubin, R. S. (2002). Will the real SMART goals please stand up. *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, *39*(4), 26–27. https://doi.org/10.1037/e576932011–003
Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation*, *development*, *and wellness*. Guilford Publications. https://doi.org/10.1521/978.14625/28806
Schempp, P. G., & Graber, K. (1992). Teacher socialization from a dialectical perspective: Pretraining through induction. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *11*(4), 329–348. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.11.4.329
Siedentop, D. (1996). Valuing the physically active life: Contemporary and future directions. *Quest*, *48*(3), 266–274. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1996.10484196
Siedentop, D. (1998). What is sport education and how does it work? *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance*, *69*(4), 18–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.1998.10605528

Siedentop, D. (2009). The heritage of physical education, sport, and fitness in the United States. In D. Siedentop (Ed.), *Introduction to physical education, fitness, and sport* (7th ed., pp. 23–56). McGraw-Hill.

Simons-Mortons, B., Eitel, P., & Small, M. L. (1999). School physical education: Secondary analysis of the School Health Policies and Programs Study. *Journal of Health Education*, *30*, S21–S27.

Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. Macmillan.

Society of Health and Physical Educators. (2014). *National standards & grade-level outcomes for K–12 physical education.* Human Kinetics.

Society of Health and Physical Educators. (2021, June 15). *Physical literacy.* https://www.shapeamerica.org/events/physicalliteracy.aspx?hkey=61893e49–8a9e-430c-b4f5–8267480cb421

Stadulis, R. E. (1973). Bridging the gap: A lifetime of waiting and doing. *Quest*, *20*(1), 47–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.1973.10519773

Templin, T. J. (1979). Occupational socialization and the physical education student teacher. *Research Quarterly*, *50*(3), 482–493. https://doi.org/10.1080/00345377.1979.10615635

Templin, T. J., Graber, K. C., & Richards, K. A. R. (2019). Will PETE survive in the 21st century?. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *38*(1), 68–74. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2018-0015

Terpstra, D. E., & Honoree, A. L. (2009). The effects of different teaching, research, and service emphases on individual and organizational outcomes in higher education institutions. *Journal of Education for Business*, *84*(3), 169–176.

Trudeau, F., & Shephard, R. J. (2008). Is there a long-term health legacy of required physical education? *Sports Medicine*, *38*, 265–270. https://doi.org/10.2165/00007256-200838040-00001

Ward, P. (2019). Chapter 2: The teacher pipeline for PETE: Context, pressure points, and responses. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *38*(1), 4–13. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2018–0008

Ward, P. (Host). (2020, July 14). Doctoral Seminar 3 with Dr. Phillip Ward (No. 109) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Playing with research in health and physical education.* Anchor. https://anchor.fm/pwrhpe/episodes/53-Career-Reflections-of-a-Senior-Scholar-Steve-Silverman-e4earr

Ward, P., van der Mars, H., Mitchell, M. F., & Lawson, H. A. (2021). PK–12 school physical education: Conditions, lessons learned, and future directions. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *40*(3), 363–371. https://doi.org/10.1123/jtpe.2020-0241

Ward, Z. J., Bleich, S. N., Cradock, A. L., Barrett, J. L., Giles, C. M., Flax, C., Long, M. W., & Gortmaker, S. L. (2019). Projected U.S. state-level prevalence of adult obesity and severe obesity. *New England Journal of Medicine*, *381*(25), 2440–2450. https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMsa1909301

Warren, M., Beck, S., & Delgado, D. (2020). *The state of obesity: Better policies for a healthier America* (Report No. 18). Trust for America's Health. https://www.tfah.org/report-details/state-of-obesity-2020/

Washburn, N. S., R Richards, K. A., & Sinelnikov, O. A. (2020). The development of US physical education teachers' motivating styles: A socialization perspective. *European Physical Education Review*, *26*(2), 495–514. https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X19873355

Weston, A. (1962). *The making of American physical education.* Appleton Century Crofts.

Wood, T. D., & Cassidy, R. F. (1927). *The new physical education: A program of naturalized activities for education toward citizenship*. Macmillan.

Woods, A. M., Gentry, C., & Graber, K. C. (2016). Research on physical education teachers' career stages and socialization. In K. A. R. Richards & K. L. Gaudreault *Teacher socialization in physical education: New perspectives* (pp. 97–113). Routledge.

Woods, R. A. (2017). *Sports and exercise*. United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2017/sports-and-exercise/pdf/sports-and-exercise.pdf

Zeichner, K. M., & Gore, J. M. (1990). Teacher socialization. In W. R. Houston, M. Haberman, & J. Sikula (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 329–348). Macmillan Publishing Company.