

## **The responsibilities of the physical education teacher as a pedagogue in the school physical activity program**

**Sanja Gacov, M.Sc.**

Faculty of Educational Sciences, University "Goce Delchev" - Stip

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### **Abstract:**

The Physical Education Pedagogy concentration represents a performance-based program of study that integrates both theory and practical application of pedagogy in a variety of learning contexts including, but not limited to, action research and practicum-based opportunities within public schools settings. Core program elements focus on enhancement of the craft of teaching via self-analysis, reflective teaching, curriculum development, research, and the development of supervisory skills.

Under the current situation of coexistence in the schools, the concept of teacher training should expressly include training on the use of strategies that improve coexistence. Thus, the preparation and professional pedagogical approach of the teacher will allow him/her to critically, reflectively and effectively develop a teaching style that promotes meaningful learning, improves coexistence. It is clear that the current system of initial and permanent training does not meet these objectives, at least in relation to school coexistence.

Thus, it is necessary to update the current training system to achieve useful, team-oriented, compulsory training at the school. Likewise, the teamwork of the teaching staff must result in a coordinated procedure to establish and apply the norms.

Didactic strategies are important to conduct a PE class with fewer problems of coexistence. Furthermore, it is advisable to established a process of awareness of the rules with positive principles and values at the beginning of the course. It will be convenient for teachers to implement a system of logical, educational and gradual consequences for non-compliance with the rules in physical education class.

**Keywords:** Education, physical education, student, teaching, teacher, family, school.

### **Provide Maximum Physical Activity Time Within the Class Period**

It's recommendet that children obtain a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity in a day. It is not possible in most schools to provide the 60 minutes of daily physical activity for every student through the physical education program alone; this has led to development of the idea of having comprehensive school physical activity programs. Some students attend physical education one day a week; others attend two or three days; and a few have daily physical education.

The physical educator is to provide maximum physical activity time within the class period, teach skills and activities that transfer into physical activity outside of physical education class, motivate children to be physically active, and take the role of physical activity

director for the school. If students are to receive the amount of physical activity they need each day, other opportunities to be physically active within the school day must be provided.

The physical education teacher has unique responsibilities in the school physical activity program to ensure that students are physically active within the physical education class. The physical education teacher also has the responsibility to help direct and guide opportunities for physical activity within the school outside the physical education class.

Physical education class is just one avenue during a school day that provides the opportunity for physical activity. During the allotted class time it is recommended that children be moderately or vigorously active for at least half of the class period. Several factors can contribute to making this happen:

1. Effectively organize space, equipment, and students.
2. Provide adequate equipment that allows all children to be active at the same time (e.g., one ball per child).
3. Limit teacher talk or instruction time.
4. Plan practice opportunities that are structured for maximum participation (e.g., individual, partner, and small-group activities; nonelimination activities; activities that require no wait time).
5. Structure the class so that learning occurs while students are being physically active.

With maximum and quality activity time, children become more skilled, knowledgeable, and physically fit.

### **Teach Skills and Activities That Transfer Into Physical Activity Outside of Physical Education Class**

Physical education programs have the responsibility to teach skills that students will need to participate in physical activity outside of the physical education class and skills they will need for a lifetime of physical activity. Skills learned in physical education class transfer to skills used in a child's play. From the kindergarten-age child playing tag, to the second grade child jumping rope, to the older child playing a game of kickball, the skilled child is more likely to participate in physical activity. If a child is confident in his or her skills, there is typically no hesitation to play; however, the low-skilled child, especially in the upper grades, is less inclined to take part in group activities for fear of failure and peer ridicule. Students need skills to be participants in physical activity.

Good physical education programs take the time to teach children activities they may do on their own. Examples of these are jump rope chants, nonelimination tag games, hopscotch, Four Square, tetherball, and basketball activities such as Horse and Around the World. Including these activities briefly in a physical education class and then encouraging children to play them on their own is likely to promote more physical activity on the playground and in their neighborhoods.

## **Promoting Community Activities**

There are typically numerous activities in communities that promote physical activity, such as organized recreational sports, dance classes, gymnastics programs, and martial arts. A bulletin board in the gym, the school Web site, and regular announcements are simple ways to promote these opportunities. Brochures, Web sites, or newspaper announcements are available from most physical activity venues.

## **Motivate Children to Be Active**

Another role of the physical educator is to encourage and motivate children to be active. There are many ways to do this, including promoting community activities, assigning physical activity homework or home fun, showing an interest in the out-of-class physically activity in which children participate, and leading by example.

## **Homework and “Home Fun”;**

While homework is often not a pleasant part of a child's evening, physical activity homework or home fun can be. Home fun may be practicing jump rope tricks with or without a jump rope; participating in simple exercises when commercials come on television; playing outside; walking the dog; talking a walk with a parent or guardian; participating in electronic games that specifically promote physical activity; or practicing manipulative skills such as throwing, kicking, and striking. Physical education homework or home fun can be checked through an honor system by asking for a show of hands with young children and documenting on a physical activity calendar for older children. Sending a physical activity calendar home when children go on holiday or summer vacation is another way to encourage physically active lifestyles. Physical education teachers could ask the classroom teachers to send a physical activity calendar home with the summer reading list.

## **Leading by Example**

One final way to motivate children to be active is for the physical education teacher to lead by example. A physically active and fit physical education teacher is a positive influence. The physical education teacher should occasionally share with the students how physical activity fits into his or her life.

By maximizing physical activity time in physical education class, aiding students in transferring skills and activities to out-of-class play, and making efforts to motivate children to be physically active, the physical educator can greatly influence the daily physical activity needs of students.

A word of encouragement is a simple way to promote physical activity. Praising young students for play may sound somewhat strange to most of us; but for a generation that experiences limited physical activity, it may be necessary. Simply inquiring about student involvement in physical activity and praising students for that involvement carry weight with

young children. To take this a step further, if a teacher shows up at a youth league sporting event or a dance recital, the child will be elated.



Picture 1.1 Physical educator motivating children

### **Play a Leadership Role in the Development of the School Physical Activity Program**

The increase in the number of overweight children and the decrease in physical activity time in school make for a national problem. Curtailing this national epidemic can be addressed at a local level, and the physical education teacher must be the “go-to” person to promote change in the schools. The physical education teacher is the physical activity expert in the building and should take on the role of physical activity director for the school. The responsibilities should include the following:

- Being an active member of the school wellness committee
  - Helping in the evaluation and planning process for the school
  - Actively learning about and promoting opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Serving as a resource person for classroom teachers
  - Informing classroom teachers about the need for and benefits of adding small bouts of physical activity to the school day
  - Providing resources and training to the classroom teachers
  - Aiding teachers in understanding and implementing appropriate practices for physical activity (see chapter 5)
  - Providing opportunities for the teachers to engage in physical activity before or after school

- Organizing schoolwide physical activity experiences
  - Planning schoolwide activities such as field day, fun runs, a walking program, and morning exercise breaks
  - Encouraging fund-raisers that promote physical activity (e.g., Jump Rope for Heart, Walk for Diabetes, St. Jude's Walk)
  - Planning before- and after-school clubs for activities such as jump rope, walking, dance, gymnastics, and intramural sports

### **Personal Skill Development of Physical Education Teachers**

The role of physical education teachers in schools is to help students develop physically in areas such as flexibility, strength, endurance and coordination. This can be one of the more challenging parts of the job because every student will be at a different level of fitness. The real challenge though is for the PE teacher to assess and push students to achieve their best without leaving anyone out; it is especially important to be patient. PE teachers sometimes develop relationships with individual students who are particularly physical and sports-minded. At the same time, you get to come up with group activities that allow every student to participate comfortably.

Your class can and should be about more than just physical accomplishments on an individual level. PE classes provide an atmosphere for students to learn about healthy interaction with their peers. An effective PE teacher encourages teamwork, interaction and group problem solving. It's up to you to make it fun and challenging with games and activities that foster teamwork.

On the other hand, you'll work toward developing a respectful atmosphere in which competition and winning are not necessarily as important as effort and participation, essential life skills students often get from physical education. Physical education for special needs students may also be on the table, which requires good recognition on the teacher's part in order to help provide students with the interpersonal support they need.

### **Providing Encouragement of Physical Education Teachers**

The physical education teacher job description includes providing motivation and encouragement to students. This means being receptive to the needs of individual students while still pushing everyone to strive and succeed. You'll want to find ways to help students enjoy physical education rather than simply imposing a curriculum.

You can accomplish this through games, free time, incentives and more but, most importantly, you can be emotionally present to offer encouragement and support to your students, especially those who might be less enthusiastic or less physically adept. Ultimately, ensuring you communicate well with students will be key to your success.

The real long-term duty of a PE teacher is to educate children and help them develop an awareness of the importance of a healthy overall lifestyle. This can include encouraging a

healthy diet and activities outside of class. Some PE teachers take a leading role in helping develop sports programs at the school. Teachers are often aware of the range of benefits that comes with physical activity, and it's their job to promote this understanding. Physical health is a lifelong goal, and PE teachers have a duty to nurture this type of attitude in their students.

### Physical Education Vs Sport

Characteristics	PE (Physical Education)	Sports
<b>Definition</b>	Instructions are given in push, for the development and care of the body.	Activities that involves physical exertion and skill where an individual or team competes against each other for entertainment or rewards
<b>Acquisition</b>	This is acquired using a linear pedagogy. This style is not strict and focuses on enjoyment, health and fitness promotion	Acquired through non-linear pedagogy where the teaching is focused on the player.
<b>Application</b>	This is part of many education systems in primary and secondary schools	Sport can be an optional activity and is not involved in the regular education system as a subject

Picture 1.2 Differences and similarities between Physical Education and Sports

### Differences and similarities between Physical Education and Sports

- Physical education aims at developing and learning fundamental key skills like walking, running, and catching. Jumping to keep one fit.
- Sport is a more intense form of exercise, which is played at a competitive level, where pressure and demand are at a higher level.
- Sport has more stringent rules (more regulated)—recreation has its own time and space, with rules wanted by the participants. Sport is time-consuming and a commitment.—recreation can be as short or as long as it's needed—usually it has no commitment except to the present activity.

### Conclusion:

The teacher as planning and implementing a series of learning activities is the teacher's role that must be undertaken in the process of the learning series. The teacher's role in learning planning requires teachers to formulate and organize learning sequences to be carried out in the classroom within a semester, a week and a day in accordance with the rules set by the

government in the field of early childhood education which are adjusted to school characteristics so that the role teachers become administrators.

As in any group of professionals, there is a diverse set of skills within a group of physical educators. It is fair to say that each physical educator can have a unique role within the PE program. Different roles can be assigned to individual PE teachers based on their strengths and weaknesses, with the clear objective of contributing to the greater good of the department. For example, some teachers might be good and/or feel very comfortable in the creation of assessment tools. These teachers should be appointed as the assessment specialists that after selecting and/or creating these tools, an evaluation process by all teachers in the department should take place prior to the official implementation of the assessment. Once implemented, they should be used consistently by all of the teachers within the program. Other teachers might be good readers and should be appointed as the reporter of any news, changes and implementation of the new teacher evaluation model. There could be a teacher proficient at creating excel spread sheets. This teacher can be the organizer of the assessment reports for all of the students. Applying the “role of the player” within a physical education program might be effective in the fulfillment of the new evaluation requirements.

One of the most important responsibilities for any physical educator is to be able to report student learning outcomes through assessment. “The very survival of physical education in the public school system will depend, in part, on how well we define the purposes and outcomes of our programs and the methods we use to document the successes of our students and teachers within those programs” (Woods, 1996). Every physical education teacher must report, in writing, an objective account of their students’ performances in their PE classes. This account must reflect the use of formative and summative assessment for student learning. In many cases, physical education is devalued as a subject matter area due in part to a lack of students’ accountability. It is widely known that formative assessments help the teacher get information on the effectiveness of their lessons as related to what the students’ are learning, the appropriateness of the levels of difficulty per task/lessons, as well as getting feedback concerning the curriculum and the teachers’ clarity on the delivery of the instruction. Stakeholders look at the students’ performance through reports provided by the different subject matter areas. Our field cannot continue to be devalued due to a lack of an implementation of an assessment system.

In our current situation and through the SGO’s, physical education programs need to find a tangible goal that can be measured and ultimately deemed as a success or failure. This supports the idea of teachers using formal assessment strategies (i.e., skills tests before-and-after a unit, cognitive exams on rules, formative informal assessments). This will help create the hard data needed to determine whether the teaching is effective or not.

A consistent approach to teaching and management methodologies beneficial to children is paramount (Prusak, Pennington, Vincent, Beighle, and Morgan, 2010). All teachers in a school must have a coordinated system addressing a variety of students’ behaviors. Consistency is the keyword. Once the student realizes a rule and consequence will be the same

regardless of the lesson or area, there is a good chance the student will not only respect the rule, but understand it as the appropriate behavior to demonstrate in the school. Evidently, teachers are responsible to teach those rules and explain the consequences. Lessons can be ineffective when students, out of inappropriate behaviors, interrupt the class. The understanding of the order needed in a classroom is critical in the process of helping students be effective in the application of physical, cognitive and affective skills.

A program where all physical educators do not share with one another the multiple situations happening on a daily basis can fail to be an effective program. On a daily basis, teachers face different behaviors by students (positive and negative), modify lessons (based on facilities, equipment and class sizes), having to cover classes based on a teacher's absence, among other situations. For example, teachers must share a plan to be implemented when having to cover a class for a faculty that is absent. When plans of that nature have not been established, teachers might get surprised when asked to cover for a colleague. The situation can be problematic and stressful when no information was provided and no plan is in place for the modification in the schedule.

For a program to be effective, its teachers must consistently share with one another the different difficulties and challenges each one experience in their classes. This type of interactions can help the teacher create a quick plan of action or strategies for what is coming up later in the day, and to plan strategies to avoid or improve the given situation in the future. Like in team sports, if players do not communicate, their offense and defensive strategies will lose coordination, plays can be lost, and tactics might not work. The same applies to any physical education program. We must coordinate the leadership, collaboration and different teachers' role as the steps leading us to create a high quality physical education program in times of tenure reform and different teaching policies.

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Corresponding author:

Sanja Gacov, M.Sc., e-mail: [sanja.gacov@ugd.edu.mk](mailto:sanja.gacov@ugd.edu.mk)

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