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What Goes Around Comes Around ... Or Does It? Disrupting the Cycle of Traditional, Sport-Based Physical Education

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Abstract

As typically taught, sport-based, multiactivity approaches to physical education provide students with few opportunities to increase their skill, fitness, or understanding. Alternative curriculum models, such as Sport Education, Teaching Games for Understanding, and Fitness for Life, represent a second generation of models that build on strong statements of democratic, student-centered practice in physical education. In the What Goes Around section of the paper, I discuss the U.S. perspective on the origins of alternative physical education curriculum models introduced in the early and mid-20th century as a response to sport and exercise programs of the times. Today, with the help of physical educators, scholars are conducting research to test new curricular alternatives or prototypes to provide evidence-based support for these models. Yet, the multiactivity, sport-based curriculum continues to dominate in most U.S. physical education classes. I discuss reasons for this dogged persistence and propose reforms to disrupt this pervasive pattern in the future.

The English proverb, “what goes around, comes around,” has been featured in songs by Justin Timberlake, Beyoncé, and Bob Marley. It suggests that the status of a person or object returns to its original value after completing a cycle, meaning that one’s actions, whether good or bad, will have consequences. In other words, we reap what we sow (another English proverb). Thus, a series of negative or positive actions can create a chain of reactions that are defined through our personal filters of what is right and wrong. In fact, the consequences of these actions can trickle down relatively quickly to impact a number of things we value (Daragon, 2008).

For over a century, physical education teachers have been creating chains of actions and reactions that enhance or limit students’ experiences in physical education (Kirk, 2010; Penney, 2013). Daily physical educators and teacher educators reaffirm their beliefs in the value of sport, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles through their words and actions, facilitating or constraining access to physical education and distributing rewards based on these beliefs. Often benefits are afforded participants who display characteristics of physicality, vigor, and effort that are easily recognized by physical educators as characteristics they demonstrated as youngsters and that they still value today. In other words, in many gymnasiums the physical education curriculum is a *like us* curriculum. Skillful students who enjoy sport and physical activity are welcomed into the multiactivity programs

that teachers, *themselves*, enjoyed as students. Unfortunately, opportunities for cognitive, conceptual engagement and nonsport based physical activities, such as fitness and leisure pursuits (Green, 2004), often are not included as a curricular focus.

There are other reasons, of course, for the permanence of the multiactivity, team-sport curriculum. In the U.S., secondary schools are built with athletic facilities consistent with team-sport based programs. This built environment along with increasing class sizes, decreasing instructional time, and mounting competition for limited school resources in many school districts continue to make the multiactivity, team-sport focus a viable and relatively easy curriculum to teach in U.S. middle and high schools. Interestingly, in 2013 there are still many physical educators who are unaware of alternative approaches to the traditional, multiactivity focus. Others may have glimpsed one or more of the alternatives, but still cling to the traditional sport model because of the challenges of learning a new curriculum, barriers within their school context, the incompatibility of the new frameworks with their beliefs, or simply the relative ease and familiarity of teaching multiactivity team-sport units.

In this back to the future look at physical education curriculum, I will present a brief U.S. perspective on the origins of *alternative* physical education curriculum models introduced in the early to mid-20th century. I will describe some of the current research providing evidence-based support for new curricular prototypes and propose future reforms to facilitate more widespread implementation of alternative physical education in the early 21st century.

The Past Goes Around: The New Physical Education

The National Education Association (NEA, 1918) report, *Seven Cardinal Principles of Education*, was one of the most influential U.S. educational documents published in the 20th century. It decreed that health, physical activity, and vocational training were central goals of education, not mental development, character, or godliness. In the first cardinal principle, health, the authors called for the inclusion of health, physical education, and physical activities in secondary schools:

Health needs cannot be neglected during secondary education without serious danger to the individual and the race. The secondary school should therefore provide health instruction, inculcate health habits, organize an effective program of physical activities, regard health needs in planning work and play, and cooperate with home and community in safeguarding and promoting health interests. To carry out such a program, it is necessary to arouse the public to recognize that the health needs of young people are of vital importance to society; to secure teachers competent to ascertain and meet the needs of individual pupils and able to inculcate in the entire student body a love for clean sport; to furnish adequate equipment for physical activities; and to make the school building, its rooms, and surroundings conform to the best standards of hygiene and sanitation. (NEA, 1918)

In efforts to implement this principle, schools and school districts assigned boys and girls to separate classes and hired physical training instructors to provide useful skills to encourage

children's and youth's engagement in physical activity (Wood & Cassidy, 1927). Boys, for example, participated in vigorous marching, strenuous games, acrobatics, and calisthenics. Girls engaged in less rigorous activities involving games, dance, marching, and exercise. As team sports became a greater part of recreational pursuits (primarily for men), instructors incorporated sport as a central curriculum in boys' physical education. As professional sporting matches gripped the consciousness of early 20th century men, many boys saw sport as both an escape and an opportunity for a professional career.

Not everyone, however, was enamored by the sport and marching curriculum. At Teachers' College, Columbia University during the 1920s, John Dewey's writings inspired both educators and physical educators to consider alternatives to the traditional production-oriented education models of the time. In physical education, Thomas D. Wood and Rosalind F. Cassidy incorporated Dewey's call for a more democratic approach to physical education in their text, *The New Physical Education: A Program of Naturalized Activities for Education Toward Citizenship*, first published in 1927. Their book proposed a very different curriculum from the boys' multiactivity, sport-based approach or the girls' curriculum of light exercise. They argued that activities in the new physical education must be meaningful, interesting, and reflect current innovative practices in psychology and education. Further, they argued that the new physical education must consider the "child as a complete unit of mind, body, and spirit and recognize the interdependence of the physical, intellectual, and moral" parts of the child's being (Wood & Cassidy, 1927, p. 62). They were among the first, if not the first, authors to argue for a physical education "program in which learning takes place" (p. 62) and that physical educators "shall be open minded and ready to discard all useless forms and incorporate modern scientific practices" (p. 62-63). Williams' article in the *Journal of Higher Education* in 1930 continued this focus, emphasizing the broad goals of "education through the physical" and the unity of mind and body.

By midcentury, physical educators were proposing more complex, diverse experiences for students beyond large team games. For example, in 1943 Cassidy, now on the faculty at Mills College, collaborated with Hilda Kozeman to write *Physical Fitness for Girls*. In this text, they lamented: "It seems to me to be one of the tragic circumstances of our careless ways that we get excited about health and physical fitness only when we are in trouble. It takes a war to stir up general enthusiasm for physical education" (Cassidy & Kozeman, 1943, p. v). This text emphasized physical, social, and emotional goals in physical education within a developmental framework continuously updated based on new scientific knowledge.

Not all physical educators, however, agreed with this emphasis. In 1953, McCloy authored an article, published in *The Physical Educator*, stressing that the central aim of physical education was to educate the physical (McCloy, 1953). He criticized modern programs that neglected physical exercise in an attempt to gain academic status. Both Oberteuffer (1953) and Williams (1953) responded with rebuttals to McCloy, which were published in *The Physical Educator* later that year. Oberteuffer (1953) argued that a broader approach with the goal of making the child's physical education experiences as fully valuable, developmental, and educational as possible would best serve children's interests and needs. Likewise, Williams (1953) reiterated the need for a curriculum that recognized the whole

individual, with equal emphasis on the psychological, sociological, and physiological. These debates continued throughout the 20th century. Textbooks for physical education teacher education continued to describe both viewpoints with some (e.g., Duncan & Watson, 1960; McKenzie, 1969) opting for the broader, democratic perspective.

The Present Comes Around: Testing Curricular Prototypes

Although physical education authors in the early and mid-20th century advocated for physical education content inclusive of many movement forms, most were written as textbooks for preservice physical education majors and teacher educators (Duncan & Watson, 1960; Oberteuffer, 1951; Wood & Cassidy, 1927). It was not until the 1960s that U.S. curriculum developers began presenting curriculum models designed specifically for public school students. This was a major change from the more philosophical textbooks that emphasized general categories of content that elementary and secondary physical educators *should* include in the school program.

Elementary Physical Education

Elementary physical educators and pedagogy scholars conceptualized curriculum models for children that restructured traditional, low-organized game activities into a sequential structure based on Laban's movement framework. For example, Logsdon et al. (1967) developed a sophisticated model that articulated elementary physical education content into three forms: educational dance, gymnastics, and games. In 1969, Logsdon and Barrett presented the *Ready? Set ... Go!* television series accompanied by guidebooks to assist elementary teachers to teach the movement-based lessons. Others (e.g., Graham, Holt/Hale, & Parker, 2012, Rovegno & Bandhauer, 2013) followed this framework to present contemporary approaches to developmentally appropriate elementary curricula for children. These programs were instrumental in changing unstructured, low-organized game formats to curricula focused on fundamental movements within a developmental skill, problem solving, and decision-making approach to children's physical education. Currently, conceptual fitness-based approaches have been developed for children, such as the *Science, PE, & Me!* curriculum, that has been tested in large scale controlled clinical trials. This National Institutes of Health funded research provided evidence from diverse school contexts to support student achievement of cognitive learning outcomes in moderately physically-active physical education. In this 90-lesson curriculum, elementary children participate in physically active physical education to examine the effects of exercise on their bodies (Sun, Chen, Zhu, & Ennis, 2012).

Secondary Physical Education

Today, secondary physical education appears to be traveling on two parallel tracks: multiactivity, sport-based programs and alternative model-based curricula. Physical education pedagogy scholars are making clear progress in validating many different types of curricula, including sport, physical activity, fitness, personal responsibility, and social justice that hold promise to provide alternatives to multiactivity curriculum. For example, two alternative sport-based models, Sport Education (Siedentop, Hastie, & van der Mars, 2011) and Teaching Games for Understanding (e.g., Bunker & Thorpe, 1982; Griffin &

Butler, 2005), are learning focused, provide measurable student outcomes, and assist students to become engaged in positive, learning-oriented sport environments. In addition, conceptually based self and social responsibility (Hellison, 2011) and personal fitness approaches (e.g., Corbin, Le Masurier, & Lambdin, 2007; Corbin & Lindsey, 2006; Corbin, Welk, Corbin & Welk, 2010; Ennis, 2007, Sun et al. 2012; Green, 2004) also demonstrate structural integrity and student-centered coherence. Research examining these models (e.g., Sun et al., 2012) reported evidence-based content sequences and strategies to engage students in meaningful learning and physical activity. Currently, researchers are testing these models in diverse school settings to determine their effectiveness to increase student learning. It is particularly important to understand how each model fits within different school settings and the effectiveness of each in modified or hybrid content programs (Ennis, 2013).

For example, although Siedentop developed Sport Education to focus on game play and skill development, pedagogical researchers have documented diverse learning opportunities (see reviews of research on Sport Education by Hastie, de Ojeda, & Luquin, 2011; Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005). In addition to findings supporting motor skill and tactical knowledge development (e.g., Browne, Carlson, & Hastie, 2004), Sport Education has been found to promote personal and social development and autonomy (e.g., Ennis, 1999; Ennis et al., 1999; Sinelnikov, Hastie, & Prusak, 2007), positive student attitudes (e.g., Hastie & Sinelnikov, 2006), and social values, such as team affiliation and student leadership (e.g., Ennis, 1999; Ennis et al., 1999; MacPhail, Gorely, Kirk, & Kinchin, 2008).

In addition, there is an ever-growing family of models that can be grouped within the Games for Understanding category. The complexity of these models ranges from the original Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) models (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982; Griffin & Butler, 2005) to more sophisticated iterations (Kirk & MacPhail, 2002) and game decision-making models, such as Gréhaigne, Willian, and Godbout's *Tactical Decisions Learning Model* (2005). Research examining TGfU models has documented their effectiveness to increase students' understanding of game tactics in a range of contexts (see reviews Harvey & Jarrett, 2013; McMorris, 1998). The International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education (AIESEP) supports the Special Interest Group on Teaching Games for Understanding and will sponsor the 6th International TGfU Conference in July 2016 at the German Sport University in Cologne.

In the U.S. the National Institutes of Health has supported the design, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of two science-based approaches to physical education. *Science, PE, & Me!* is a three-unit, 90-lesson curriculum for 3rd–5th grade students, and *The Science of Healthful Living* is a two unit, 120-lesson curriculum for 6th–8th grade students. Both programs use the 5Es learning cycle strategy to structure lessons to promote students' examinations of the effects of exercise and healthy eating on their bodies. Randomized controlled clinical trial research provides support for student knowledge growth in physically active lessons (Sun et al., 2012).

The Pervasiveness of Traditional Multiactivity, Sport-Based Physical Education

Although there are numerous examples of proven physical education curriculum models, the multiactivity, sport-based approach continues to dominate throughout the U.S. and the world (Marshall & Hardman, 2000). For example, performance-based sport is the key content in the National Curriculum of England and Wales (Evans & Penney, 1995; Houlihan & Green, 2006) and Australia (Swabey & Penney, 2011). Similarly, Ding, Li, and Wu (in press) report that sport is a central component of the Chinese National Physical Education Curriculum. They reported that 83% of Chinese physical educators consider sport skills taught through traditional multiactivity approaches to be the primary content and approach in physical education, while 79% believed that skill centered content contributes to health enhancement goals (Ding et al., in press).

In the United States, sport skillfulness is central to the first two standards in the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) Standards (NASPE, 2004) and maintains a primary role in the most recent revision emphasizing physical literacy (American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance [AAHPERD], 2013). In most secondary schools in the United States, the traditional multiactivity approach continues to dominate, providing opportunities for skillful students, while less skilled students report being less motivated, marginalized, and relegated to the sidelines (e.g., Ennis, 1996, 1998). If this is the case, why do physical educators continue to favor the multiactivity approach while seeming to ignore or resist the new alternative models?

Contextual and Philosophical Barriers to Alternative Models

One reason physical educators may be hesitant to embrace alternative approaches is the current context found in many U.S. public school physical education programs. Learning-oriented physical education programs require adequate instructional time and reasonable class enrollments, similar to the class sizes in other learning-focused subject areas, such as mathematics and social studies. However, the legacy of multiactivity sport programs suggests that when having fun, playing games, or participating in a large team sport is the primary goal, large numbers of students can participate simultaneously, precluding the need for limited class enrollments. Currently, in many middle schools, for example, all students in a single grade (e.g., all 6th graders) attend physical education during a single class period, permitting the grade level classroom teachers to meet for planning. Although there may be two or three physical educators assigned to the large class, limited gymnasium, fitness, or dance room facilities require large numbers of students to remain packed together, sharing space and equipment. It is very difficult to teach a learning oriented physical education curriculum in these settings.

Couple increasing class enrollments with decreasing physical education instructional time and it becomes very difficult for teachers to present a topic in depth or to provide adequate practice. School based management policies in many U.S. school districts permit principals to adjust the daily schedule, shaving four to five minutes off the so-called encore or special subject areas (physical education, art, music, and technology) to create an additional period in the school day for clubs or other special interests. When middle school teachers and students are left with 35 min for the lesson (*before* changing into activity clothes), it makes

little sense to some teachers to teach for learning goals in physical education. Teaching for learning requires adequate instructional time in mathematics, social studies, *and* physical education. The success of curricular reforms to replace multiactivity models with evidence-based learning alternatives requires reasonable class enrollments and adequate instructional time.

In the Future Will Traditional Sport Curricula Continue?

In theory, policy makers in countries with a centralized or national educational policy can affect major changes to reform physical education practice (Evans & Penney, 1995). In the few countries like the U.S. with a decentralized educational policy, it may be quite difficult to initiate and implement widespread curricular reform.

Impact of a Centralized Policy on Curricular Reform

In many countries, changing the national curriculum appears to hold promise for curricular reform. Most countries worldwide control curriculum for all subject areas, including physical education, through a centralized structure, usually the Ministry of Education. Periodically, ministries convene groups of scholars and practitioners to update the national curriculum in each subject, in theory, providing opportunities for innovation and change. Evans and Penney (1995) were instrumental in tracking this curriculum change process in the late 1980s and 1990s associated with the Education Reform Act in England and Wales.

Evans and Penney (1995) reported in some detail the influence that professional associations, factions, and interest groups (e.g., teachers, sport coaches and coaching associations, recreation providers, health educators, and the media) brought to bear on the National Curriculum in Physical Education. They documented the struggle for control of the rules that govern the form and content between traditional factions, which they termed *cultural restoration*, and progressive groups attempting to bring innovation in sport curricula and the introduction of social discourses to physical education. In the final analysis, the physical education committee proposed a balanced curriculum, including outdoor education, dance, and swimming, and argued for the inseparability of body and mind, and equal status for cognition and activity. Nevertheless, the Secretary of State and Minister of Sport, who ultimately held approval power for the document, decided that only the performance and physical activity components associated with traditional approaches to basic skills, sport, and activity would be sent forward for final review and approval (Evans & Penney, 1995).

A different outcome occurred in the Ministry of Education in Australia as the result of a 1992 Senate inquiry into Physical and Sport Education (Swabey & Penney, 2011). Physical education scholars used established professional and crisis discourses in strategic ways to increase the skill-oriented learning focus in the Australian National Physical Education Curriculum. This focus was (re)emphasized along with others such as the sociocultural perspective.

Later, Cliff (2012) conducted school-based research to examine how physical educators were implementing the sociocultural perspective in two schools in New South Wales. His research suggested, however, that within the overall educational environment of efficiency

and accountability in Australia, physical educators perceived the sociocultural perspective to be “off-track” (p. 306.). Teachers deemed the student-centered strategies accompanying and facilitating the implementation of this perspective too time consuming and ambiguous to ensure students would master the required concepts.

In Scotland, Thorburn and Horrell (2012) reported greater success with the implementation of a “coherent perspective on health and well-being.” This curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education has potential to enhance and sustain the fitness and physical activity focus in physical education. Specifically, as a result of political policy initiatives, the Curriculum for Excellence framework in Scotland positioned health and well-being as one of eight general curriculum areas. Thorburn and Gray (2009) explained that in physical education the challenge to implement this emphasis in an effective alternative curriculum was addressed within a three-pronged approach centered on policy, pedagogy, and professionalism. The authors further expressed a need for a revised teacher education curriculum to further these goals, citing a concern that teachers using traditional pedagogic strategies may in fact decrease student interest. The authors argued that inservice teachers should be retrained to teach without the use of traditional controlling, didactic management strategies if the autonomy-oriented goals of the new health and well-being curriculum were to be attained (Thorburn & Gray, 2009).

Thus, it appears that in countries with centralized educational systems, wide-spread curricular reform is possible, although certainly some policy makers, regions, or individual teachers and schools may resist until required to implement the changes. The message from educators’ efforts to create a more inclusive, integrated curriculum in England and Wales, however, points to the double-edged sword of traditional sport perceptions. When advocates and ministers see physical education as performance-based sport, they may undermine efforts to provide a more broadly based, learning-oriented curriculum. Physical education scholars in Australia and Scotland seem to have been more successful, or at least the authors were more positive about the reemphasis on motor skills (Australia; Cliff, 2012) and health and well being (Scotland; Thorburn & Gray, 2009). Changes of this magnitude required extensive, time-consuming efforts, however, to impact policy. How might the curricular reform process be negotiated in a decentralized educational system, such as in the United States?

Curriculum Change in Decentralized Educational Systems

Unlike almost every other country in the world today, educational governance in the United States is decentralized, with curriculum development and reform located at state level Departments of Public Instruction (DPI). Although a central, federal-level Department of Education is located in Washington, DC, this agency does not develop or disseminate curriculum. Typically, professional organizations, such as the National Academy of Sciences (science education) or the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, convene subject matter experts to identify grade appropriate content standards and learning outcomes. State DPIs typically chose to use those standards to structure curricular documents. In this way, there is general local agreement on content that is further

institutionalized by textbook authors and publishers whose books are adopted in school districts.

There are almost 14,000 individual school districts in the United States, ranging from very large districts in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles to very small community school systems in towns or rural districts with one elementary, middle, and high school. The federal government through the Department of Education can and does standardize curriculum by offering large grants to states to implement educational and testing policies, such as those accompanying the No Child Left Behind legislation and currently the Race to the Top government initiatives. States that accept this funding must agree that students will be tested annually and the test scores will become part of a national database. Currently this process is transpiring with the new Common Core standards in mathematics and reading that have been adopted by 45 states. Thus, the Department of Education sidesteps the restrictions against designing national curricula by authorizing high-stakes tests in high priority content areas that indirectly structure curriculum by designating the content that will be tested and the outcomes that should be achieved.

In subject areas, such as physical education, however, there is little oversight or interest from the U.S. Department of Education in controlling or funding curricula or high stakes assessment. NASPE (2004) has provided periodic updates on the U.S. National Content Standards for physical education and recently published validated metrics for use in evaluating standards-based student outcomes (NASPE, 2011). NASPE also publishes the *Shape of the Nation: Status of Physical Education in the USA* (NASPE, 2012), which reports survey results describing physical education in each state. In examining the 2012 edition of this report, Keating, Subramaniam, Shangguan, and Chen (2013) reported that more states are mandating elementary physical education and requiring elementary physical educators to be licensed. In addition, they found that there have been significant increases in required high school physical education units for graduation, suggesting that some state legislators are responding to public health initiatives. The report also noted, however, that significantly fewer states are funding professional development opportunities for physical education teachers to update their pedagogical skills and that the number of states requiring physical education coordinators be hired to develop curricula and policy to assist teachers also has decreased significantly. Thus, there is little indication that U.S. states have focused on enhancing the content of the elementary or high school curricula or assisting physical educators to teach new model-based approaches.

Casey (2012) noted that some experienced physical education teachers acknowledge their lack of experience and understanding of model-based practices. She reviewed 45 published research studies examining levels of teacher adoption and implementation of models ranging from sport education to cooperative learning and inquiry teaching. She reported “sustained and ongoing pedagogical change required the teacher to initially learn how to teach through the model and then to engage in a conceptual shift...” (Casey, 2012, p. 6) to relearn what teaching in physical education meant within the new approach. Some teachers used terms like, Sport Education, simply to rebrand traditional physical education, avoiding the need to change the content and practice altogether. Likewise, when preservice teachers became

familiar with a model, they taught the model as required while being monitored, but returned to the traditional multiactivity sport practices when allowed to choose.

Although learning new methods is always a challenge, it is also true that the multiactivity model as typically taught often resulted in minimal lesson preparation, student monitoring, and actual teaching and assessment. Penney (2013) reiterates that lasting reform requires attention to the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment elements of the program with the collective dynamic among the three overriding any single influence. She concurs that models such as Sport Education and Teaching Games for Understanding have a proven track record of published results that continue to hold promise for physical education. In the meantime, as Macdonald (2003) points out reforms that are attempted in schools play out like a visit to an Australian chookhouse or chicken farm—there is an initial flurry of activity around the new model, followed by a return to calm, as the physical educators and students return to the traditional practices of the multiactivity approach.

Substantive, Wide-Spread Reform in U.S. Physical Education Curriculum

It is clear that in the U.S. the what goes around, comes around cycle will continue to pose major challenges to the implementation of new approaches to physical education. Breaking the cycle requires reform in several areas. First, teacher educators need to have experience teaching a range of curriculum models and be committed to prepare the next generation of teachers to teach all students—not just those who are *like us*. Second, public school administrators need to protect physical education instructional time and limit enrollments to mirror those in academic, tested subjects. Third, inservice physical education teachers must be skilled and experienced in teaching alternative curricula, committed to change, and have comprehensive and ongoing support structures to initiate and sustain the reform process (Casey, 2012; Penney & Chandler, 2000). They need multiple opportunities to envision less controlling contexts in which students can pursue a range of developmentally appropriate physical education content that includes integrated physical and cognitive opportunities and outcomes (Pope & O’Sullivan, 1998). Fifth, physical education reform initiatives must be accompanied by clear, consistent, and fair accountability and reward systems that both acknowledge the challenges in changing the physical education curriculum and context and contribute to teachers’ personal and professional sense of success (Thorburn, 2007). Without comprehensive reforms to the context and accountability systems in U.S. public schools, it is unlikely that substantive physical education change will occur in the near future.

As first steps in the reform process, we must grasp the opportunity to forge new triangular partnerships among universities, schools, and communities to facilitate these changes in meaningful contexts. It is critical to continue the dialogue with legislators, school administrators, and parents who may not have that visceral love for physical activity that most physical educators share. Many citizens still believe that we should fund physical education *after* we fund everything else. In fact, the opposite is the case. We need to reverse this perception! Student-centered learning in sport and physical activity serves as the foundation for a lifetime of healthy decision-making. It is what all of us and especially the most vulnerable people in our society depend on for future well being. It must come *first*. We need people to understand that a healthy citizenry drives economic progress and human

vitality. As the National Education Association membership realized in 1918, personal health is the asset on which our economies, our sustenance, our livelihoods, and our ways of life depend. Today, we need to secure our futures by investing in our physical capital through high quality physical education programs that establish strong foundations of health and well being. This investment is essential and timely, not an after thought.

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