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An Investigation of the Physical Education Specialist in the Elementary School

William G. Bentley
Central Washington University

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REVISED
AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION
SPECIALIST IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by

William G. Bentley

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education, in the Graduate
School of the Central Washington College of Education

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Maurice Pettit, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Erma Blethen

Delbert G. Peterson

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION

Introduction

A marked increase in the number of children entering the nation's elementary schools has created an awareness of the problems confronting the grade schools. While the building programs with their vast expansion of school plants and facilities have contributed greatly to the total picture, the fact remains that certain instructional needs have not kept pace with the material expansion. Elementary school physical education is one such area. Many school systems realize the dilemma and have analyzed the situation to the extent that definite strides have been taken to see that physical education instruction assumes its rightful place in the elementary school curriculum.

While it is true that after World War II many students went into the field of physical education, it is also apparent that the majority of those entering the field elected to major in physical education on the secondary school level. Thus, a strong need exists in the elementary schools for qualified personnel, while an overabundance of personnel is available at the secondary level.

Strayer has this to say regarding the importance of

the elementary school:

Historically the program of the elementary school was a very simple one, confined almost altogether to the propagation of the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is only within the lifetime of middle-aged adults that the investigations of psychologists and others into the area of child growth and development have revealed the extent to which the early school and pre-school years set patterns for and determine the nature of subsequent development. It is increasingly recognized by educators and psychologists that these early years are the most important in the entire lifetime of the individual from the standpoint of their influence in determining the nature of the child's physical, psychological, and social development. It is during these years that his lifetime health habits are formed in large part and his basic psychological and character attitudes determined. During this time the child learns or fails to learn to be a member of a group and to control himself and his actions in relationship to a circle wider than that of his family. The skills and basic tools of knowledge that he acquires are related from the standpoints of motivation and effectiveness to all three of these aspects of his development.¹

It becomes obvious then, that the area of elementary school physical education is a vital one. While it is felt by many that today's instruction is not adequate, a far more serious problem will present itself in future years, because the elementary schools are now feeling the pressure of increased attendance, and the prospects are for larger enrollments in years to come.

The situation in the elementary school as viewed by Irwin is as follows:

¹George D. Strayer, A Digest of a Report of a Survey of Public Education in the State of Washington. (Olympia: Department of State Publication, 1946), p. 115.

Conditions in the elementary schools, on the whole, are not as good as in the secondary schools. It is luminously clear then that any widespread lack of health and physical education of youth could not be directly attributed to existing school programs of health and physical education for the relatively simple reason that a majority of the elementary schools did not maintain programs of health and physical education of any type. The only justifiable criticism that can be rightfully made is that we failed to provide programs of health and physical education which might have helped the large numbers of youth from being below par in health and physical condition. Although these circumstances have improved, nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that, to this day, and in elementary schools particularly, the majority of youth in the public schools are not, as yet, being provided with the most acceptable and desirable programs in health, physical education, recreation and safety.²

This study will attempt to view the special teacher of elementary school physical education in his proper frame of reference, also to analyze the desired co-ordination of the "haves and have nots" in the area of elementary school physical education.

Purpose

With a scarcity of material available in regard to the special teacher of elementary school physical education, it is the purpose of this paper to explore materials available in regard to the special teacher of elementary school physical education.

²Leslie W. Irwin, The Curriculum in Health and Physical Education (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company, 1951), preface.

Realizing that there is not an abundance of material available in this matter, this paper has attempted to identify the common philosophy and material contained in the field of elementary school physical education.

It is hoped that in some way this compilation may furnish information which may prove helpful to others working in this area.

Limitations

The study has been limited to library research, plus personal letters received in response to inquiries sent out by the investigator.

The study is limited to the elementary school, and is not an evaluation, only an identification and exploration.

Procedure

The method of approach was the normative-survey, utilizing the readings of literature and personal letters to various school systems throughout the United States.

Definition of Terms

Specialist. A teacher who has confined his work to a specific and limited field in the area of physical education.

Self-contained classroom. A classroom wherein all areas of work are taught by one teacher.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION OF THE FUNCTION OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Background of the Specialist

How has the elementary school physical education specialist come into being? Is he merely going down the scale in the matter of departmentalization from the secondary school? Is he a result of an awareness on the part of society that the whole child is deemed worthy of education? Is he a product of the need for more adequate instruction in physical education? Is he a product of the need for more men in elementary schools to maintain a better balance of adult contacts?

Wild and White have this to say regarding the growth of physical education:

Those influences which have been of most profound importance in maturing, establishing and shaping physical education during the first half of the twentieth century are: the new philosophy of education and psychology of learning; the science of man; the playground, club and camping movements; World War I; the depression of the '30's; World War II; and above all a new feeling of responsibility to make democracy work.¹

Historically speaking, elementary school physical

¹Monica R. Wild and Doris E. White, Physical Education for Elementary Schools (Cedar Falls, Iowa: Iowa State Teachers College, 1950), p. 3.

education teachers were employed in Cleveland, Ohio in 1908. They were also employed in great numbers following World War I. This was in all probability due to the fact that there was an awareness on the part of citizens of the high rate of rejection of World War I draftees. This interest was no doubt carried down to the elementary school program.

Regarding the background of physical education training, Brace states the following:

Originally in this country, teachers of physical education were trained in private schools, but as physical education began to assume its proper relationship in total education, the professional preparation of teachers was taken over entirely by our colleges and universities and became unified with all teacher education. Today teachers of physical education on undergraduate and graduate levels are prepared in the educational atmosphere of leading institutions of higher learning.²

Thus it appears that physical education has come a long way from when it was offered to prospective teachers on a limited basis. It can be truly said that it now does assume its rightful place in the curriculum of teacher training institutions.

In the main, with the exception of the area of child behavior and development where there does not appear to be enough emphasis, the specialist will have completed a broad

²D. K. Brace, "Contributions of Physical Education to Total Education," Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 20:635-37, 683-88, December, 1949.

program in education and physical education. This, however, will depend upon the institution attended.

The author, to have a point of reference, will at this time cite typical requirements for students majoring in elementary school physical education at Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.³

Freshman Year

Fall

Basic 111,	Communication Skills.....	3
Basic 121,	Natural Science.....	4
Music 145a,	Music Foundations.....	4
P. E. 141,	Hockey.....	1
P. E. 191,	Introduction to P. E.....	1
P. E. 330,	Tumbling.....	1
		<u>14</u> Qtr. Hrs.

Winter

Basic 112,	Communication Skills.....	3
Basic 122,	Natural Science.....	4
Basic 231,	Social Science.....	4
Music 145b,	Elementary Piano.....	2
P. E. 145,	Games and Stunts.....	1
P. E. 152,	Basketball.....	1
P. E. 222a,	Folk Dance.....	1
		<u>16</u>

Spring

Basic 113,	Communication Skills.....	3
Basic 123,	Natural Science.....	4
Basic 232,	Social Science.....	4
P. E. 120c,	Softball.....	2
P. E. 146,	Archery.....	1
P. E. 188,	Square Dance.....	1
		<u>15</u>

³Michigan State College Catalog (East Lansing, Michigan, March, 1950), pp. 124-125.

Sophomore Year

Fall

Basic 233,	Social Science.....	4
Basic 241,	Humanities.....	4
Chem. 107,	Introduction.....	4
P. E. 222b,	Social Dance.....	1
P. E. 257e,	Advanced Swimming.....	1
P. E. 266,	Soccer.....	1
		<u>15</u>

Winter

Basic 242,	Humanities.....	4
Chemistry 108,	Introduction.....	4
Physiology 224,	Introduction.....	5
P. E. 329,	History and Principles.....	3
P. E. 269,	Tap Dance.....	1
		<u>17</u>

Spring

Basic 243,	Humanities.....	4
Chemistry 109,	Introduction.....	4
Physiology 319,	Physiology.....	3
Psychology 201,	General.....	4
P. E. 256,	Contemporary Dance.....	1
		<u>16</u>

Junior Year

Fall

Anatomy 306,	Human Anatomy.....	4
Health Education 103,	Personal Health.....	3
P. E. 321,	Dance Education.....	5
P. E. 322a,	Swimming.....	3
P. E. 331,	First Aid.....	2
		<u>17</u>

Winter

P. E. 321a,	Rhythms and Creative Dance for Children.....	3
P. E. 432,	Physical Examination and Diagnosis.....	3
P. E. 425,	Organization and Adminis- tration of P.E.....	3
P. E. 320b,	Basketball.....	2
P. E. 286,	Bowling.....	1
Education 227,	Science for the Elementary School.....	5
		<u>17</u>

Spring

Recreation Education 226a,	Playground.....	3
Recreation Education 445,	School Camping..	3
P. E. 267,	Golf.....	1
P. E. 324,	Special Methods.....	3
P. E. 420,	Tennis.....	2
P. E. 423a,	Electives.....	2
		<u>17</u>

Senior Year

Fall

Foods and Nutrition 351,	Studies in Nutrition and Children....	5
P. E. 287,	Volleyball.....	1
P. E. 272,	Badminton.....	1
Education 343,	Methods in Elementary Schools.....	8
		<u>16</u>

Winter

Zoology 313,	Human Heredity.....	4
Education 345,	Apprentice Teaching.....	9
Education 341,	Child Growth and Develop- ment.....	3
		<u>16</u>

Spring

Education 445, Internship in Elementary Schools.....	<u>16</u> 16
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In addition to the Bachelor's degree in physical education, many elementary school physical education specialists pursue graduate work that takes them far beyond basic requirements.

Constantly supplementing the background of the elementary school physical education specialist are such media as workshops, local-district-regional meetings of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; keeping abreast of trends via the Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, plus such collateral readings desired by the individual. The opportunities existing for professional growth and development in the field of elementary school physical education are manifold, and these valuable opportunities are utilized by the beginning teacher as well as recognized authorities in the field.

Duties and Functions

The duties and functions of the elementary school physical education specialist may be classified in the following manner:

- I. Setting up Objectives of the Program
 - A. General
 - B. Specific
- II. Planning for Class Activities
 - A. Planning work
 - B. Determining pupil interest
 - C. Command of subject matter
 - D. Planning space area for activities
 - E. Schedules
- III. Organizing Subject Matter
 - A. Selecting activities
 - B. Selecting equipment
 - C. Preparing a syllabus
 - D. Correlating with other subjects
 - E. Incorporating outside materials
- IV. Developing and Keeping Interest
 - A. Incentives
 - B. Modification of activities
 - C. Time element
- V. Instruction
 - A. Presenting, explaining, and illustrating
 - B. Keying instruction to proper level
 - C. Suggestions
 - D. State and restate
 - E. Additional demonstrations for certain few
 - F. See that all comprehend
- VI. Evaluation
 - A. Aptitudes
 - B. Inspections
 - C. Consultations
- VII. Records and Reports
 - A. Height and weight recordings
 - B. Wetzel Grid (when used)
 - C. Conference with parents
 - D. Conference with teachers
 - E. Conference with school nurse
 - F. Anecdotal records

VIII. Influencing Conduct

- A. Encouraging fringers in gym
- B. Encouraging fringers on playground
- C. Helping morale and leadership
- D. Helping discipline
- E. Enforcing regulations

IX. Use of Student Assistants

- A. Assisting with equipment
- B. Assisting with squad organization

X. Guidance

- A. Offering counseling on health
- B. Offering counseling on conduct
- C. Offering counseling on sportsmanship

XI. Publicity

- A. Within school
- B. Outside school

XII. Organizing Extra-curricular Activities

- A. Playground schedules
- B. Playground space allocation
- C. Intramural tournaments
- D. Bicycle rodeos
- E. Marble tournaments
- F. Field days
- G. After school recreation programs

XIII. Administrating Intramural Contests

- A. Providing for officials
- B. Providing for scorers
- C. Providing for timers
- D. Providing for spectators

XIV. Caring for Injuries

- A. Accident reports
- B. First Aid
- C. Notification of proper authorities

XV. Health Instruction

- A. In the gym
- B. On the playground
- C. In the shower rooms

XVI. Administrative Functions

- A. Faculty meetings, conferences, councils
- B. Correspondence
- C. Report card grades

XVII. Professional Contacts

- A. Membership in local organizations
- B. Membership in state associations
- C. Membership in national associations
- D. Attendance at conventions and workshops

XVIII. In-Service Training

- A. Familiarity with current literature
- B. Familiarity with trends
- C. Building one's own professional library

XIX. Supervision of Equipment and Supplies

- A. Equipment in gymnasium
- B. Equipment on playground
- C. Shower rooms
- D. Locker rooms
- E. Checking out equipment to classrooms
- F. Efficient record system for supplies
- G. Efficient record system for equipment
- H. Repair of equipment and supplies
- I. Purchase of equipment
- J. Budgeting

It must be remembered that the duties and functions of the specialist will vary with the situation, but in the main, they will follow the aforementioned pattern.

CHAPTER III
NEEDS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Area of Training for Special Skills

The teaching of skills is an important responsibility of the physical education program. One has only to glance around an elementary school playground to observe that many children are so poorly skilled that they become fringers and hesitate to participate in physical activities. To what avail is it to foster the mental ability of a child in the classroom and then let the physical side of his development fend for itself? Children will play naturally, but motor skills unless guided correctly can develop along improper channels and are difficult to remedy as years go by. Speech, sight, hearing and dental defects are given attention as soon as they are discovered, while motor patterns are sometimes shrugged off with the casual, "Oh, they'll outgrow that."

Keeping pace with a group plays an important part in the sociological development of youngsters. There is an awareness on the part of children in the elementary grades to develop their physical ability, and they will intently practice certain activities in a sincere endeavor to increase

their skill.

A point not to be overlooked in the teaching of skills is the fact that children take to physical activities naturally, and sincerely enjoy themselves in performing the function.

Forsythe and Duncan have this to say regarding the needs for physical education at the elementary level:

If physical education is to become an integral part of education and make its maximum contributions to society, it must become a real part of elementary school education. National emphasis must be given to physical education at the elementary level so that all children may enjoy its benefits at the time when they will profit most. Such a movement requires the united effort of all persons associated with physical education. National leaders in the field need to recognize the potentialities involved in the thousands of elementary schools and in the millions of children enrolled. Our keenest minds, including our research specialists and policy-makers, must direct attention to the elementary school.¹

Going still further into the needs for physical education in the elementary school, Forsythe and Duncan continue:

We must discover ways and means of convincing educators and school patrons that physical education has an important place in the education of all children. We must develop meaningful programs that will contribute significantly to the growth and development of children. And the schools and departments of physical education in teacher education institutions must prepare teachers who have the desire to teach at the elementary level and are adequately prepared for the task.²

¹Charles E. Forsythe and Ray O. Duncan, Administration of Physical Education (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1951), p. 29.

²Ibid., p. 30.

What are some of the reasons that physical education is vital to the curriculum? The inferences pivot around physical, social, and emotional growth and development. The objectives of physical education no longer hinge on physical growth alone; the intentions are much broader and more numerous now, because they have become a bit more defined within recent years. It must be remembered that just participating in physical education does not automatically accomplish the objectives of a physical education program. It calls for a concentrated effort on the part of those designated to administer the program.

The following areas of training for special skills are vital to the elementary school youngster:

PHYSICAL:

1. Ability to start, stop, run fast, and to change direction.
2. Ability to pass others without colliding.
3. Ability to jump, climb, and do stunts.
4. Ability to throw, kick, and bounce a ball.
5. Ability to skip, glide, run, walk in rhythm.

SOCIAL:

1. Ability to follow directions.
2. Ability to play without arguments.
3. Ability to abide by group's choice of game.
4. Ability to take proper care of equipment.
5. Ability to lead games; also to follow.
6. Ability to play fair.

EMOTIONAL:

1. Ability to control emotions.
2. Ability to develop courage.
3. Ability to develop self-control.
4. Ability to develop honesty.
5. Ability to develop cooperation.

Recognition of Individual Needs

Due to the fact that elementary school students are in very formative years of their lives, an awareness of the individual needs of each pupil is imperative. In the early years, many habits and attitudes are formed. We learn by doing or reacting to situations; we do not learn by just absorbing material. It is the function of the teacher to make situations meaningful, because only thoughtfully acquired information has meaning, and it is through reaction to stimuli that pupils really learn. Children have to be met at their own level, thus the instructor has to view the situation through children's eyes, and gauge the program accordingly. In other words, to present things that are commensurate with pupil readiness and interest.

Individual differences follow many paths, i.e., interests, readiness, dislikes, capacities to learn, and appreciations. Hence, anyone entrusted with the instruction of children in their physical education program should have a good knowledge of children's characteristics, both mental, physical, and emotional.

Through group games, social development can be facilitated to a great extent. These group activities tend to induce the child who is solitary or withdrawn to adjust to the group, while on the other hand, the child who is too

aggressive must learn to control his tendencies for the welfare of the group. Also, by the same token, selfish children must learn to share. Physical education is one of the most potent subjects in the curriculum when it comes to satisfying basic needs of children. Through physical activity they can feel at their peak organically, secure recognition, obtain feelings of personal worth, and have a sense of belonging. Youngsters like to deal with things they can experience--chasing, dodging, twisting, running, throwing; the natural and spontaneous things in a young child's life. The saying "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" is no idle statement. A child brings his body to school as well as his mind and feelings and they must all be given due consideration.

Recess periods, in which children are not provided with instruction, are not meeting the state requirements in a vast majority of states. The keyword is instruction. Just turning children loose to fend for themselves on the playground is not keeping in harmony with the tenets of a sound physical education program. A definite schedule is necessary if the state requirements are to be met. Lesson plans are vital to the best interests of a physical education program, and should be given the same consideration and planning that is accorded other phases of the elementary school curriculum.

Widespread adjustments in the administration of elementary school physical education have not been made. Methods which put emphasis on one phase of a program will usually develop better performers in that one skill and pupils will become quite adept at that particular activity, but is that teacher offering a well-rounded program and will his pupils have a chance to enrich their lives through the many social opportunities a well-planned physical education program affords?

Guidance in the Program

In physical education activities, children's emotions are not as likely to be as restrained as they are under more regimented surroundings. The fact exists that informal conditions seem to naturally establish the rapport that formal settings seem to inhibit. Confidences are exchanged in the permissive atmosphere of the gym or the playground that would otherwise be subdued through formality. The opportunity for a feeling of camaraderie seems to exist naturally in play situations. One of the paradoxical things about guidance in the elementary school is the fact that physical education teachers are sometimes unaware of the fact that they have supplied the exact word, or feelings of non-verbal communication.

One of the best vehicles existing for elementary school guidance is the opportunity to help the youngsters in their transition from individual and neighborhood to large group play, a transformation that doesn't come easily in many cases. The previous attitudes that a child had in his notions of play are in for a bit of alteration. It is indeed a rude awakening for youngsters to find out that they can't have their own way as they do at home. The idea of sharing is not a lesson that is easily acquired overnight.

Blanchard says this about the opportunities for individual guidance in physical education:

Game situations have many counterparts in actual life and individual reactions to them may forecast future characteristics of the boy or girl. In the excitement of competition in athletics elemental emotions, usually well-hidden, leap out unexpectedly. When the teacher understands these and recognizes their cause he can counsel and advise in such a way that such emotions eventually come under the control of the student and he becomes their master instead of allowing them to run rampant and control him.³

How the Physical Education Specialist

Can Fit These Needs

The first need mentioned in this chapter was the area of training for special skills. How will the child acquire a greater working background of skills? It is obvious that

³Vaughn S. Blanchard, Curriculum Problems in Health and Physical Education (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1942), p. 121.

a child needs competent instruction to enhance his success in this area, and the specialist through a broad background in physical education should be in an excellent position to impart this knowledge to the student.

The fact that the field of physical education is assuming its rightful place in the curriculum more and more, also means that more ideas and techniques are manifesting themselves. Thus the physical education specialist through in-service training, reading current literature in the field, membership in professional organizations, attendance at the various workshops, plus informal exchanges of ideas with his contemporaries, keeps abreast of current practices and opinions in the field of elementary school physical education.

Another factor that appears to favor the specialist is the fact that he can see the entire program in its proper frame of reference, and has a full comprehension of the scope and desired results of the program. The specialist could also facilitate the development of a Health Council, consisting of the School Nurse, Doctor, and Administration.

A definite time allotment for physical education is also provided for when specialists conduct the program. With increased demands being made on the classroom teacher's time, it would appear that the classroom teacher would relish the opportunity for her children to engage in

physical education activities at a prescribed time.

Irwin states the situation very capably and clearly when he says:

In the light of experience in schools where specialized teachers of physical education have taught the daily class period work in the intermediate grades with the boys and girls segregated, it seems advisable to recommend that, whenever possible, specialized teachers be employed. Certainly, through experience it has been shown that much more rapid progress and development in physical education activities can be made when specialized teachers conduct the class work. It is no reflection on the ability of the classroom teachers that pupils progress more rapidly under the direction of specialized teachers in physical education. Rather, the difference is in the extent of training. It is impossible for the classroom teacher under modern conditions to be as well qualified to teach physical education as the specially trained physical education teacher.⁴

The elementary school physical education specialist in the role of consultant can extend excellent resource materials to those wishing to avail themselves of his services. Familiarity with trends, literature in the field, sources of supply, and other agencies enables the specialist to play a strong role when requested to serve as a consultant.

⁴Leslie W. Irwin, The Curriculum in Health and Physical Education (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company, 1951), p. 104.

CHAPTER IV

CURRENT PRACTICES

Investigation of Practices

As might be expected, mediums of elementary school physical education instruction vary to a marked degree throughout the United States. The range extends from special teachers handling the physical education program directly, to self-contained classrooms, where the classroom teacher handles everything, including physical education.

A limited sampling reveals the fact that methods are not static according to locality. However, empirically speaking, it does appear that there is a more pronounced leaning toward the use of specialists in elementary school physical education programs east of the Mississippi River, than there is west of the aforementioned dividing line.

Illustrations of how various school systems throughout the Eastern United States handle their elementary school physical education programs are as follows:

Baltimore, Maryland

In the Baltimore Public Schools, teachers of elementary school physical education are assigned to one or two schools and are consultants for those schools.

Atlantic City, New Jersey

The Atlantic City Public Schools employ special teachers of elementary school physical education for grades one through six. Classes are taught directly by the special teacher. There are also three teachers of elementary school physical education who cover two schools apiece each week.

Providence, Rhode Island

Primary grade teachers teach their own physical education, aided by monthly visits of physical education specialists. In grades four, five, and six all physical education is taught by specialists who visit the same school and classes daily. Classroom teachers have no responsibility for the teaching of physical education.

Washington, District of Columbia

Physical education is taught by classroom teachers with the help of a special teacher of elementary school physical education assigned to cover a number of buildings. The physical education teachers are traveling teachers who serve in part as consultants. Their main function, however, is to teach.

Montpelier, Vermont

Two special teachers handle the elementary school

physical education program. A man has the boys from the fourth grade up and a woman who has both boys and girls in the first three grades, and girls only from the fourth grade up.

West Hartford, Connecticut

There are four elementary school physical education supervisors for the ten West Hartford elementary schools, grades one through six. Programs are mapped out and initiated by the physical education supervisors, and the classroom teachers then carry out the program.

Samplings of practices in the Southern area of the United States are now cited:

St. Petersburg, Florida

Four "area" teachers of elementary school physical education visit the elementary schools for the purpose of working with classroom teachers as in-service training personnel in elementary school physical education. These teachers visit each of the schools and teach each class in each two week period.

Miami, Florida

The Miami Public Schools employ sixty physical education instructors for their elementary school physical

education program.

Shreveport, Louisiana

Self-contained instruction under the direction of a physical education specialist, who works with the classroom teachers in developing a program of health and physical education is the practice in this city.

Dallas, Texas

Each elementary school has an inside physical education teacher for health instruction, and an outside physical education teacher for playground instruction.

Contacting school systems in the Northern part of the United States divulged this information:

Green Bay, Wisconsin

Two elementary school physical education specialists are employed by the Green Bay School District. They meet each group once each week, and classroom teachers carry out the remainder of the program, under the direction of the specialist.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Thirteen physical education majors spend various times at various buildings in the system.

Fargo, North Dakota

There are seven full time physical education teachers in the schools that operate on a platoon basis. In the other elementary schools the regular classroom teachers handle the physical education with assistance from a supervisor.

Duluth, Minnesota

A supervisor of physical education in the elementary schools gives assistance to the classroom teachers in the form of demonstration meetings, conferences and school visitations. The visitation period is one of observation or teaching, depending on the need.

Various practices in the Mid-West are now given:

Cincinnati, Ohio

Each school has a physical education teacher who is a full time member of that staff. Pupils in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades receive instruction in all phases of physical education by this training. The physical education program at the primary level is conducted by the primary teacher and supervised by the four supervisors of primary education.

Winnetka, Illinois

There are full time physical education teachers in each of the three elementary schools in Winnetka, Illinois.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Each of the eighty-three elementary schools in Indianapolis has a man physical education teacher and attempts are being made to have a woman physical education instructor in each school, in addition to the man.

Clayton, Missouri

Physical education in grades one and two are handled by the classroom teacher. The intermediate and upper grades are handled by special teachers of elementary school physical education. The classes meet daily for their physical education periods.

Wichita, Kansas

Wichita has self-contained classroom instruction. There are occasional training classes for teachers.

Springfield, Illinois

Each elementary school has one person who teaches elementary school physical education and some other subject. In a few of the large elementary buildings, all of the time is spent by that person in physical education instruction.

University City, Missouri

Each elementary school in the system employs a special teacher of elementary school physical education.

De Kalb, Illinois

Special teachers of elementary school physical education are employed by the De Kalb Public Schools.

Rockford, Illinois

Special teachers of elementary school physical education are employed by the Rockford Public Schools.

To round out the cross section of the United States, samplings of western practices are now given:

Laramie, Wyoming

A physical education supervisor plans, outlines, and supervises each teacher in the elementary grades. The supervisor sees each teacher about every two weeks.

Palo Alto, California

This city employs a man and a woman as elementary school physical education supervisors. It is the job of these consultants to give aid to the classroom teachers in arranging physical education schedules.

San Jose, California

Each elementary teacher conducts her own physical education class through the self-contained classroom plan.

Palm Springs, California

The six elementary schools in the Palm Springs Unified School District use the self-contained classroom plan of instruction. Attempts are made to secure elementary school teachers with good backgrounds in physical education.

Burbank, California

Each classroom teacher conducts her own physical education. The principal appoints a physical education chairman; this person plans meetings and represents the school in system-wide meetings.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Combination of methods--some classroom teachers conduct their own physical education; some physical education specialists are assigned to work with two schools; and some specialists are assigned to one building only. Four supervisors of elementary school physical education integrate the entire program.

Richland, Washington

Each of the seven elementary schools in the Richland School District has a special teacher of elementary school physical education. The physical education teacher is a resident member of the faculty and teaches each class, grades one through six, on the average of two times per week. Grades one through three have twenty-minute sessions, while grades four through six meet for thirty-minute periods.

Carmel-by-the-Sea, California

Self-contained classroom instruction is the method employed in the teaching of elementary school physical education in the Carmel Elementary Schools.

Opinions of Authorities

In the summary and conclusions of their study regarding elementary school physical education, Georgiaday and Savage point out this result:

Most individuals directly connected with physical education programs in elementary schools feel that their programs suffer because of the lack of necessary equipment, funds, and properly trained classroom teachers.¹

¹Alexander Georgiaday and Russell Savage, "Status of Physical Education in Elementary Schools," The Research Quarterly of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 11:46, May, 1940.

Taylor Dodson has this to say regarding the conducting of an elementary school physical education program:

The classroom teacher who must conduct a physical education program for her children often feels inadequate when it comes to the demonstration of physical skills and wonders where to turn for help. Too often, she thinks she is resolving the problem by merely allowing the students to pick their own activities. Pupil planning is good to be sure, but adult guidance is necessary to make it a success.²

Forsythe and Duncan have this to say on the teaching of elementary school physical education:

Leaders in the physical education profession generally hold that it should be taught in the elementary grades by specialists--teachers who have majored in physical education. Such a policy seems sound, but nevertheless, daily physical education is taught by specialists in only a small portion of the elementary schools of the United States. Recess and free play comprise physical education in the majority of the elementary school. Many school systems in large cities, the Chicago system, for example, have specialists in charge of physical education in all of the grades.³

Forsythe and Duncan also state that:

It is obvious that if physical education is to make its maximum contribution to the growth and development of American youth, it must be a part of the curriculum in all grades of all schools.⁴

²Taylor Dodson, "Physical Education? Help!", Journal of Education, 134:222-3, November, 1951.

³Charles E. Forsythe and Ray O. Duncan, Administration of Physical Education (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), p. 291.

⁴Loc. cit.

It might be brought out at this point, that in his capacity as State Director of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation for the State of Illinois, Ray Duncan has ample opportunity to observe the various practices and identify certain procedures throughout the State of Illinois.

Regarding the matter of who shall teach elementary school physical education, McNeely and Schneider seem to sum up the diversity of opinions when they state:

Who shall teach, classroom teacher or special teacher? Some people say classroom teachers should do the work, others that specialists can do it better, and still others that it is not a case of one or the other, but that both classroom teachers and specialists need to work together.⁵

Pursuing the matter further, McNeely and Schneider give the following reason:

Classroom teachers who have a deep understanding of boys and girls look upon physical education as a part of the total school day. These teachers also think that they should have opportunities to teach physical education, first, because it gives them another way of knowing children better; and, second, because it enables them to provide a better-balanced school program.

Specialists in physical education know boys and girls, too. The specialists are usually more aware of the values of certain physical education activities to growing boys and girls. They are likely to know more about the procedures for selecting and teaching these activities and for organizing and using equipment. On the other

⁵Simon A. McNeely and Elsa Schneider, Physical Education in the School Child's Day (Washington, D.C., Office of Education, Bulletin No. 14, 1950), pp. 33-34.

hand, because the specialists usually teach more children than classroom teachers do, they may not know a particular group of boys and girls as well as she does.

When classroom teachers and specialists plan together and share the responsibility for teaching, good programs are likely to result. Many communities are finding that classroom teachers like this way of working.⁶

In the State of Ohio, this is the view of who should teach elementary school physical education:

Who should teach physical education, the classroom teacher or the special teacher?

This is a difficult question to answer. As someone has said, this is like asking, "Who shall bring up the child, the father, or mother?" It is not a matter of either-or, for neither can do the job alone. It is a matter of both cooperating to get the desired results. Both have many contributions to make for a better program. The classroom teacher knows her children, their needs and interests, while the specialist has the training and background for organizing the physical education program. By pooling the knowledge and the contributions which each can make, a better program can be developed than if either attempted to do the job alone.⁷

The National Conference for Cooperation in Health Education arrived at this conclusion regarding the importance of elementary school physical education:

Pupils in the elementary school should participate daily in a guided program of play and physical education

⁶Ibid., p. 34.

⁷P. C. Bechtel, A Handbook for Teachers of Physical Education in the Elementary Grades (Columbus, Ohio: Department of Education, State of Ohio, 1951), p. 51.

activities.⁸

The responsibility of physical education is reflected in this statement by Crowe:

Since the physical education program has a greater opportunity for developing mental, social, and moral qualities than any other subjects taught in school, it also has a greater responsibility.⁹

⁸National Committee on School Health Policies, Suggested School Health Policies, Second Edition (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1946), p. 17

⁹J. E. Crowe, "Sportsmanship," The Athletic Review, Vol. 1, No. 3, November, 1947, p. 1.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The following facts seem to assert themselves throughout the author's readings: (1) The physical education program appears to achieve more stature when a specialist is connected with the program. (2) More men are included on elementary school staffs through the use of specialists. (3) A definite time schedule for physical education assures a specified time being set aside and utilized for the instruction of physical education.

Reviewing the literature in the field of elementary school physical education, one wonders if elementary school physical education is being taught in the thorough manner it deserves.

It is apparent that physical education in the elementary schools is just beginning to be regarded seriously in various school systems throughout the United States. However, the favorable views reflected by various superintendents and supervisors may serve to encourage other systems who have long contemplated the use of special teachers of physical education in the elementary school programs.

The administration should concern itself with this matter. Who is more likely to make out a definite lesson

plan for physical education, the classroom teacher or the specialist? If the objectives of education and physical education are to be realized, then more determined steps toward a more thorough teaching of physical education has to be made. Acting on the premise that the physical education program is a vital part of the elementary school curriculum, every elementary school should provide qualified leadership, proper facilities, and activities suited to the growth and development of the participants.

If this investigation will better acquaint those within the profession with the elementary school physical education specialist, it will have served its purpose.

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