

Guiding Questions

What are student perceptions of physical education programs?

Does the type of program elicit different perceptions from students?

What We Know

Physical education class provides the ideal medium for introducing activities, which may continue into adulthood (Trudeau & Shepard, 2008). According to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE, 2004) Standards 3 and 4, a physically educated person participates regularly in physical activity and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

Individuals who enjoy physical activity, have positive experiences, and participate in physical education classes in high school, have a greater probability of continuing involvement through adolescence into adulthood (Hobin, Leatherdale, Manske, Burkhalter, & Woodruff, 2010).

Having groups of students involved in activities reduces the opportunities for individualizing success, thus encouraging teamwork and cooperation (Martin & Sharpe, 2009).

Methods

Senior level students from two different high schools were administered written surveys. The anonymous, voluntary, survey included six open ended questions. This poster discusses the response from the question, "What do you think is the purpose of the Physical Education/Wellness classes?"

The survey received approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Salem State University

Teacher Directed Physical Education Program

Requirement : 1 semester per year
 Frequency: 6/7 days a week
 Time: 50 minutes 5 days, 70 minutes 1 day
 Unit length: 10 days

Required Courses

Introduction to Wellness (*Freshman*)
 Project Challenge (*Sophomores*)

Program for Juniors and Seniors

Students choose from one of three categories

Lifetime activities

In-line skating
 Badminton
 Dance

Competitive Activities

Soccer
 Floor Hockey
 Basketball
 Flag Football

Fitness activities

Pilates
 Yoga
 Weight room

What Student's Said

- ☺ "In PE we don't really learn anything new, basically it's just a place to run around and blow off steam."
- ☺ "They [the teachers] tell us it is important to be healthy, but we don't learn anything we don't already know"
- ☺ "I like working in groups, and interacting with people I don't normally socialize with"



Elective Wellness Program

Requirement: 3 full years (12/16 quarters)
 Frequency: 5/10 days a week
 Time: 65 minutes 4 days, 53 minutes 1 day
 Unit Length: 15-20 days

Required Courses

Muscular Fitness (*Freshman*)
 Introduction to Wellness (*Freshman*)
 Outdoor Pursuits (*Sophomores*)
 Community Action/ CPR (*Sophomores*)
 Health Issues (*Juniors*)
 Cardiovascular Fitness (*Juniors*)

Elective Courses

Students choose from the following courses to fulfill the remaining minimum six quarters

Lifetime Sports

Golf
 Tennis
 Badminton
 Rock Climbing

Games Classes

Territorial Games
 Fitness Games
 Coaching,
 Teaching,
 Recreation,
 Leadership
 (CTRL)

Lifetime Fitness

Functional Fitness
 Dance
 Personal Fitness
 Group Exercise
 Yoga

Life Skills

Conflict Resolution
 Sport Psychology
 Nutrition
 Self Defense

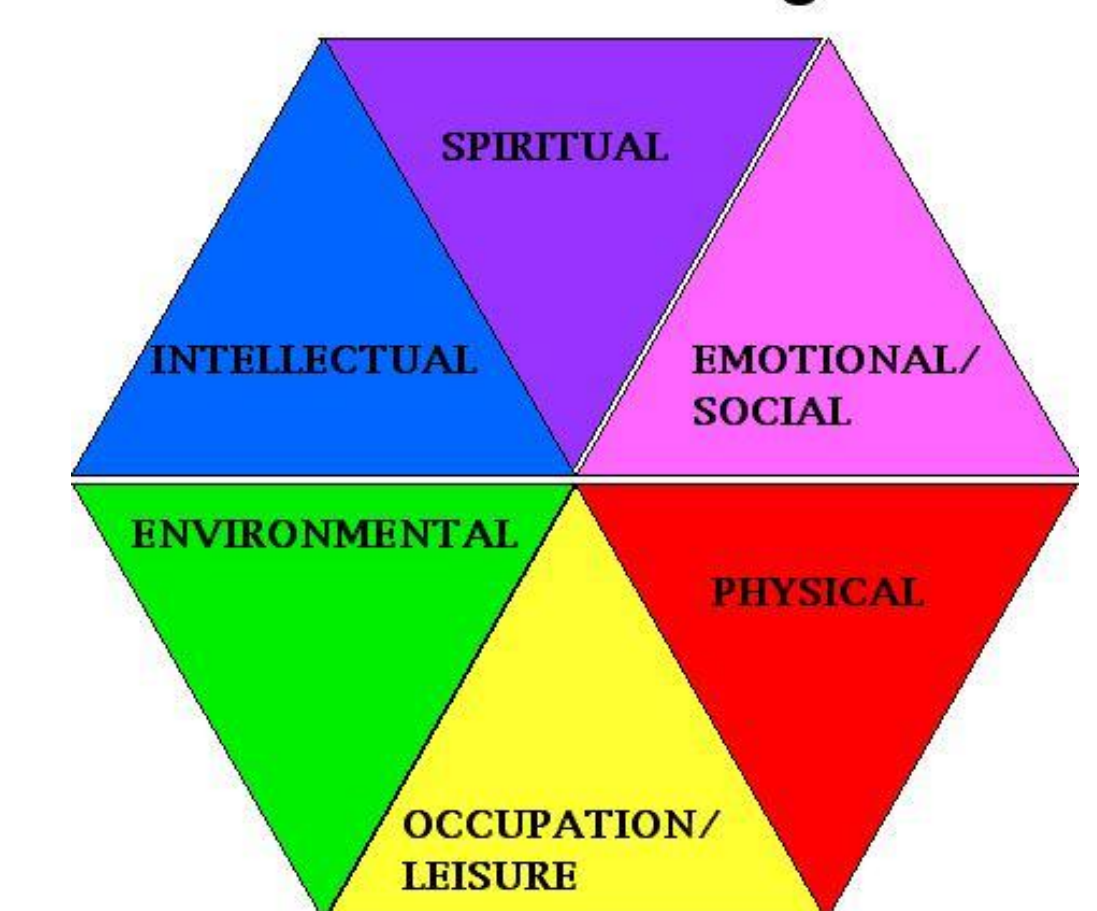
What Student's Said

- "To learn core values and teamwork."
- "A way to exercise your body and mind."
- "I think the purpose is to educate kids about health."
- "To educate us about staying healthy."
- "To learn about yourself, to get active, to form new relationships, and to become educated about human anatomy, relationships, development, and health."

Summary

Although the socialization component of meeting and interacting with peers was a common finding among both sets of student responses, the students perceptions of the intent of the physical education program varied from the wellness program. The wellness students responses reference purpose related to education, such that the answers began with the word "to" as if the students know the objectives of the classes/program. In comparison to the students in the physical education program, who expressed that there was limited new information being taught or learned. Further research could explore if the choice offerings in the two different programs influenced the students responses or the delivery of instruction.

Wellness Hexagon



Suggestions

- Programs that include the opportunity for student choice and interaction stimulate participation. Eliciting student interests and ideas allows teachers and administrators to gather information to compare student responses with current curricula.
- Check student engagement and interest, to ensure connections are being made to events after high school
- Evaluate student needs and interests and align curricula with student preferences
- Ensure student experiences are meaningful, fun and enjoyable
- Use surveys, suggestion boxes, and smartphone polling applications to elicit student opinions and ideas