

ARTICLE REVIEWED

National Curriculum for Physical Education in the United States.

Oh, J., & Graber, K. C. (2017). National Curriculum for Physical Education in the United States. *Quest*, 69(2), 220-235.

THE PROBLEM:

Some believe that a national curriculum and national testing would raise the educational standards for students, but the traditions of local control and state responsibility for curriculum implementation make this a challenge on the United States (U.S). National testing reforms and initiatives (e.g., America 2000, Goals 2000) have aim to justify such a practice, to hold schools accountable for uniform curriculums with the ultimate goal of academic excellence.

However, there is a lack of consensus within the field of physical education as to whether such national testing initiatives apply, considering the differences in opinion regarding universal subject-matter outcomes (what students should be learning and the goals of PE).



Research Summary:

This paper deliberates on the relevance and feasibility of a uniform curriculum (or core curricula) for physical education in the United States.

Conclusion:

National curriculums in the United Kingdom and Australia have shown flexibility and adaptability considering the diversity in inhabitants and cultures. Yet there are still specific standards, skills and knowledge that all students should achieve at a given grade level no matter their background. As such, rigorous testing initiatives occur and grade-level outcomes are controversial. Some believe that standardized grade level-outcomes restrict learning, which prevents creativity in curriculum implementation, pedagogy and instruction. Furthermore, a promotion of a hegemonic curriculum has ideological implications because it could ignore minority students' home cultures, thus compromising the inclusivity of education.

Key Take-Away:

It would be hard to implement a national curriculum in the U.S. considering its diverse socioeconomic, cultural and geographical characteristics. Further, it is not feasible considering that the U.S constitution generally allows education to be governed at the state and local level. Consider whether you understand the SHAPE America National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes. Contemplate whether you teach by the standards on a daily basis in an appropriate and effective manner. If the standards framework were to change to a common curriculum reform would you be onboard? Consider whether you think it would change the status of physical education in your school.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Curtner-Smith, M. D. (1999). The more things change the more they stay the same: Factors influencing teachers' interpretations and delivery of national curriculum physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 4(1), 75-97.
- Evans, J., & Penney, D. (1995). The politics of pedagogy: making a national curriculum physical education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 10(1), 27-44.
- Williams, A., & Bedward, J. (2001). Gender, culture and the generation gap: Student and teacher perceptions of aspects of national curriculum physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 6(1), 53-66.