

**Intention #7**

**Physical Education Needs to be Taken More Seriously**

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Throughout my experience in this class, I have learned many things about my life and how I can impact others. This is the reason I decided to pursue a degree in education with hopes of some day being a teacher. Impacting others is the reason I am here today. Throughout my life many people have guided me to where I am, sports and physical activity is a huge reason for that. Many coaches and teachers have instilled many characteristics into myself, which I can see reflecting in my emerging teacher identity. To be honest, after taking this class, I have realized many things I was taught in physical education were not well planned or well taught, and most of the time we just played dodgeball. The problem with this is, what if you are not a good thrower, or struggle with receiving skills. This leads me to my claim “Physical Education is not taken seriously enough by teachers, students or the school board”.

In elementary school you get sixty minutes of recess each day; however, living in Saskatchewan you are already at a disadvantage because of the freezing cold temperatures. This leads many recesses to be canceled for “in door” recess which take away physical activity experiences from students. In grade four, we had over 100 indoor recess, that is crazy! One of my other memories of elementary school physical education is if we were going skating, we never would go to the gym for our scheduled class. As a student who could not get enough physical activity it was really disappointing to not go to the gym. This really bothered me and now looking back on it, I see a ton of problems. Many kids did not have skates to go skating, many were scared to try, and others just did not care enough. But if we went to the gym, everyone could have gone, and everyone could have gotten a physical activity experience. As a teacher you could even have a free physical education period, where students can do stuff that interests them, this allows students to participate in stuff they enjoy and allow them to have a positive experience instead of a negative one.

“The aim of Saskatchewan’s K-12 physical education curricula is to support students in becoming physically educated individuals who have the understanding and skills to engage in movement activity” (Government of Saskatchewan). This is right out of the Saskatchewan curriculum, this shows what the goal of physical education should be; however, from my personal experience, dodgeball every class does not seem fit. Now I do feel there is a time and a place for dodgeball, but as teachers we need to ask the question “What’s worth doing?”. Will the students benefit from getting picked on by other students and getting a ball whipped at them? In my opinion no, however unfortunately this is the case for many physical education classes. Some teachers should change the name to “Dodgeball time”. As teachers we are supposed to teach to the needs of each and every single student. Some students may have never been taught the proper throwing techniques, this may lead to a student injuring themselves, also some students can throw the ball really hard, and may injure a class mate with a throw. This system to put it frankly, is a recipe for failure.

How are we suppose to keep students involved all the way through grade twelve if we keep throwing dodgeballs at them. According to Adria Hill of the Saskatoon Phoenix, Saskatchewan leads the country with obesity rates (2017). Adult obesity is almost 50% in Saskatchewan (Hill 2017). This shows a direct impact of the physical education programs in Saskatchewan, they just are not doing enough. In the Saskatchewan curriculum the number one goal is to create active life styles (Government of Saskatchewan). The problem is if students are not required to take physical education in high school, how are we suppose to create active lifestyles for life? Another problem is clearly the standards of physical education. If we just keep doing the same thing over and over again, students are going to check out and lose interest in physical education. Looking through the Saskatchewan curriculum it is sad to see that the

curriculum from K-8 has not been updated in over ten years. Today we know more about fitness and active living than we ever have. Why can we not continue to change and adapt with the world. It shows why we are behind compared to the rest of the country. Not enough is being done, to help guide students in a successful path.

Students will either continue to lead the country with the highest amount of obesity, or us as teachers will make a change. This also must come directly from the government and realize that there is an issue. I see that the curriculum was updated in 2019, which is a great start. There are many things in there that I see as positives. One goal is to create lifelong learners! Physical education is unique and different from any other class. Physical activity is a huge part of every single person's life. If people do not understand basic movements and skills, how do we expect them to continue a lifelong journey of physical literacy. As long as physical education continues to be over looked by both society and the government, we will continue to see these problems. I know it is easy for me to say there is a problem; however, I want to help make a change.

The change needs to begin in the classroom. School can help make physical activity a priority. If everyone involved can work towards the same goal, I believe we will take great strides. Being physically active can mean many things. It does not mean being able to throw the ball harder than everybody else, or run faster. Physical activity could be doing calming yoga or even just going for a walk. These are all primary examples of what creating lifelong movers can do. The possibilities are endless when it comes to physical education and activity. The opportunities are also endless from this field. Many opportunities may arise for students who pursue careers through physical activity, and health and wellness; however, if we do not expose students to these fields, they may never know how much they may love physical activity, or how many opportunities there is out in the world.

If we can make the gymnasium a fun safe environment for everyone, then we will see lifelong participation increase, but until then, we are stuck in a constant loophole. If a parent had a negative experience inside of a physical education class, they obviously will not push their child in that class. Eliminating negative experiences and turning them into positive ones will be a huge contributing factor in creating lifelong participants in physical activity. As a teacher, it will be my goal to create relationships with students that leads to lifelong positive impacts. Opportunities I have been granted with through physical activity and physical education are the reason I am here today, and the reason I want to help make a difference.

I believe school and teachers are a huge part of development within children and young adults. Unfortunately, the schools are underfunded, huge class sizes, and do not supply teachers with enough resources to maximize each student's potential. Once the government starts to do a better job of funding and supporting schools, then we will see major growth not just in physical education, but the whole school system. This leads me to my final statement, which is change does not begin tomorrow, it begins today and starts with all of us!

## Resources

Andrea Hill, S. (2017, August 01). Sask. leads country in obesity rates. Retrieved December 08, 2020, from <https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/sask-leads-country-in-obesity-rates/>

Saskatchewan Curriculum: Physical Education 30. (n.d.). Retrieved December 08, 2020, from <https://www.edonline.sk.ca/webapps/moe-curriculum-BB5f208b6da4613/CurriculumHome?id=454>