



# National Standards/Curricula and the State of World Physical Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Through published work such as Hardman & Marshall (2005) it has been suggested that physical education, world-wide, is in a state of decline and in many circumstances can be considered as marginalized when compared to other areas of the school curriculum. Hardman and Marshall further suggested that such marginalization is often due to a variety of factors. These factors range from such issues as the *deficiency of curriculum time allotments, financial resources, increased emphasis and external accountability measures placed on other subject areas* and the *lack of quality in program delivery through to the professional preparation of teachers*.

Physical education organizations have tried to attend to this marginalization through a variety of information campaigns and lobbying of local, regional, and national policy makers. However, it can be argued that there seems to be a case of *Hope and Happening* (Lundgren, 1983). Simply, many countries hope to make changes but there is not a plethora of changes actually happening.

The work of researchers such as Hardman and Marshall (2005) has been a catalyst for much thought and discussion. It also provides opportunities for researchers to seek out complementary information that can be used to support the development of standards of delivery for physical education. It is within this framework that this work has been established and conducted.

### References

Hardman, K., & Marshall, J. (2005). *Update on the State and Status of Physical Education World-Wide*. Presentation at 2nd World Summit on Physical Education Magglingen (Switzerland), 2-3 December 2005.

Lundgren, U. (1983). Curriculum theory, between hope and happening: Text and Context. Geelong, Deakin University.

## PREVIOUS WORK

The intention from this line of research is to establish an interpretation of the status of physical education world-wide. It is hoped that a body of information can be compiled to understand what is occurring in physical education from a world perspective. Presented here is Part VIII of an on-going line of research that has investigated the structure, delivery, and implementation of physical education in a variety of countries. The following provides an overview of the focus of investigation conducted in this line of research...

**Part I – Programming in Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US)**

**Part II – Collected thoughts and opinions of educators and students from Canada, China, Thailand, UK, and the US**

**Part III – Looked at the implementation policies in Canada, China, UK, US, and New Zealand**

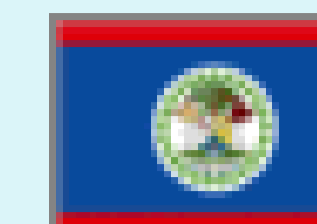
**Part IV – Investigated programming, implementation policies, professional development opportunities, and resource provision in Australia, Hungary, India, Scotland, and South Africa**

**Part V – Examined the structure and implementation policies in Chile, Kenya, and Jamaica**

**Part VI – Considered the structure, underlying concepts, and aspects of learning in The Bahamas, Sweden, and The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.**

**Part VII – Investigated programming, implementation policies, professional development opportunities, and resource provision in Brazil, Cuba, and Portugal.**

BELIZE



## Structure

In Belize, the Ministry of Education is charged with the oversight and development of education. According to the Education Act of 1990 (amended in 2000), an eight-year primary education program is mandatory, and stipulates that all children between ages five and fourteen must attend school. Article 25 of the Education Act states that, "The education system shall ensure equitable access for both genders to education at all levels, shall be sensitive to the particular needs of the female gender, and shall cater to the special needs of challenged pupils." Pre-school education is not required, but becoming more widespread. Secondary Education is delivered by four-year schools that offer general education, and usually include some vocational-technical education. Tertiary Education is delivered by universities that offer a variety of certificates, diplomas, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees.

## Underlying Concepts

Core curriculum subjects include: Science, English, Spanish, Social Studies, Mathematics, Economics, *Physical Education and Health*, and Artistic Appreciation. Students are also expected to have knowledge of Belize and its development, an appreciation and respect for different people and cultures, a commitment to justice and equity for all, an appreciation of work, and the ability to use a range of technologies. Among the general objectives of education are "knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles" and "spirituality, social skills, and personal qualities." The National Physical Education and Health Policy comes directly from the National Goals of Education, and was introduced in 1998 and updated in 2001.

The National Physical Education and Health Policy states that students should:

- Participate in physical activity for sport, leisure, and health
- Recognize the importance of avoiding unhealthy habits and lifestyles

It further states that:

- Physical education is an integral part of the total education program
- Physical education should promote the development of quality and meaningful movement through carefully planned experiences
- The movement-centered experiences provide a basis for development in the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains

## Key Aspects of Learning

Physical Education and Health are based on human movement activities with a focus on *developing knowledge and understanding of factors involved in physical activity and fitness, efficient and effective motor skills and applying those skills in a wide variety of physical activities* and *developing and maintaining physical fitness*. Additionally, priority is placed on the goals of *developing positive personal attributes and interpersonal relationships*. *Curriculum Standards* are aligned with the desired *Learning Outcomes*. Typical core components included in the curriculum are:

*Badminton Basketball Cricket Field hockey Dance Gymnastics Health and Physical Fitness  
Movement Education Netball Outdoor Education Soccer Swimming  
Tennis Track and Field Volleyball*

## Development

The Physical Education Curriculum Standards are developed in accordance with the NASPE (National Association for Sport and Physical Education) Standards. Detailed curriculum guides are developed to address physical education and health curriculum at the lower level, middle level, and upper levels of education. Additionally, the curriculum guides present learning objectives for each level, suggest activities that can be taught to meet the learning objectives, and provide assessments to assist the teacher in the assessing student performance. Furthermore, teaching guides are available to help teachers develop their lessons in conformance with the curriculum standards.

## Assessment

Programs are assessed using alternative and traditional forms of assessment. Students and parents are expected to play an integral role in students' assessment and learning. Standards and expectations are directed to be credible and accounted for throughout the school curriculum. Assessment is ongoing, and a formal assessment is required at the end of each term. Learning outcomes are assessed in accordance with the learning objectives.

## Implementation

The physical education curriculum in each school follows the national curriculum guidelines, and is implemented by the teaching specialists in the individual school. Time allocations for instruction, teaching assignments, resources, and student needs are determined by the principals who consult with the teaching staff and parents. Within the national curriculum guidelines, there is variation between individual schools.

## Professional Preparation and Development

Many teachers in Belize lack formal training in education, and physical education is impaired further by a lack of specialists. However, Belize is committed to upgrading the level of teacher preparation and instruction in all schools. The Teacher Development and Licensing Services of the Ministry of Education establishes standards for initial teacher education and continuing professional development for teachers at all levels, establishes the criteria for licensure, and monitors all teachers against established teaching standards. To upgrade teacher development, the Ministry of Education organized the Teacher Education and Development Services (TEDS) which is responsible for coordinating all educational and professional development services for teachers. TEDS is charged to:

- Support the attainment and retention of a high quality teaching service
- Facilitate the increase in access to teacher education programs and services
- Assure quality in teaching and teacher education programs and services
- Ensure the accountability of institutions and organizations offering teacher education programs and services
- Facilitate the production and dissemination of relevant resources and educational research

## References

UNESCO. (2006). *World Data on Education, 6th edition, Belize*, Retrieved January 18, 2012 from [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/LATIN\\_AMERICA\\_and\\_the\\_CARIBBEAN/Belize/Belize.htm](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/LATIN_AMERICA_and_the_CARIBBEAN/Belize/Belize.htm)

Ministry of Education and Youth. (2012). *Curriculum*. Retrieved January 20, 2012 from [http://www.moe.gov.bz/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=120&Itemid=40](http://www.moe.gov.bz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=120&Itemid=40)

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