

CHAPTER

3

Steps in Developing a Curriculum

Chapter Summary

This chapter describes a systematic approach to curriculum development and provides suggested formats for organization and evaluation of curriculum. A sequence of steps is offered for planning and designing a comprehensive curriculum. The concepts of scope, sequence, breadth, depth, and balance help ensure that the curriculum will meet the needs of all students. The chapter also provides a discussion on the importance and advantages of a vision and philosophy behind curriculum development, plus the advantages of articulating the curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Chapter Highlights

- A curriculum is a framework of student-centered physical activities that promotes physical activity and skill development. It reflects teachers' value sets, which considers the subject matter to be learned, the students for whom the curriculum is being developed, and the society that has established the schools.
- Designing a quality curriculum for physical education involves seven steps: (1) develop a guiding philosophy; (2) define a conceptual framework for the curriculum; (3) consider environmental factors; (4) determine content standards and student objectives; (5) select student-centered activities; (6) organize selected activities into instructional units for a yearly plan; and (7) evaluate, assess, and modify the curriculum.
- Developing a philosophical platform for the physical education program is essential for guiding the developmental process in curriculum design. Answering questions about what the teacher(s) believe can clarify what the curriculum will reflect.
- Defining a conceptual framework will characterize the desired curriculum and help teachers select activities and experiences to be included in the curriculum.
- When considering environmental factors, the following should be included: school administrators, the community, facilities and equipment, laws and requirements, scheduling, and budget and funding.
- Content standards determine what students should know and be able to do when they complete their schooling, specifically the physical education program. Student objectives should be student-centered and reflect each of the learning domains (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor).
- When selecting student-centered activities, it is important to design a program that flows with students rather than runs contrary to their desires, characteristics, and interests. Additionally, becoming familiar with the desires of parents in the community is key. Surveys or checklists can serve as tools for identifying student and parent interests.

- A yearly plan should be developed to ensure that all selected activities are scheduled and taught. This can be accomplished by determining the length of activity units and by checking the scope, sequence, breadth, depth and balance of the curriculum.
- It is important to consider activities that students will engage in beyond the high school years when developing the curriculum.
- The Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) (2006) was recently developed to assist in the development and enhancement of programs for the purpose of influencing school aged students' physical activity behaviors. Revisions can be made with existing curriculum or provide a focus for what should be included when writing a new curriculum. Pilot programs can help teachers transition from the old to new curriculum.

Learning Outcomes

After reading the chapter, the student will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of standards-based curriculum.
- Discuss the common value orientations in physical education curriculum approaches.
- List and discuss the steps of curriculum construction.
- Describe the issues that must be considered in developing a philosophy and conceptual framework.
- Describe various environmental factors that must be considered when developing a physical education curriculum.
- Analyze the content standards that should guide curriculum development.
- Explain how to write the three parts of student-centered objectives.
- Discuss the desires of adults and students with regards to physical education activities.
- Explain the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual differences between middle and senior high school students.
- Discuss the following concepts as they relate to curriculum construction: scope, sequence, breadth, depth, and balance.
- Give several examples of how curriculum can be evaluated.
- Explain the advantages of an articulated K–12 curriculum.

Key Concepts

guiding philosophy
breadth

conceptual framework
sequence

scope

Discussion Topics

1. Analyze community programs relative to the factors discussed in the chapter.
2. Ask students to comment on the type of curriculum that existed at their junior and senior high school. (After reading the chapter, they should be able to analyze the curriculum.)

3. Center a discussion on the activity interests of students from communities in different geographic locations. Why do interests vary somewhat from place to place? (weather, economic factors, tradition, etc.)
4. Why is it important to have a balanced curriculum that also includes lifetime activities?

In-Class Activities

1. Invite a physical education department head to speak to the class about the components of the curriculum at his/her school.
2. Assign students to small groups and have them develop a curriculum project using all the various components of a curriculum. They should assume that they are the staff of a middle or high school in the community.
3. In small groups, have students list as many units/activities as possible. Then have them categorize them into the following: team sports, individual sports, rhythm/dance/gymnastics, and outdoor/adventure. Which of these are considered lifetime activities?
4. Briefly examine the PECAT and have students identify different essential parts of a mock curriculum.

Written Assignments

1. Interview five peers who attended different high schools. Ask them about their physical education curriculum and their perceptions of the curriculum. Compare and contrast the types of curricula they experienced with regard to student-centered activities.
2. Locate, complete, and score the value orientation inventory (www.uncg.edu/kin/faculty/cennis-res.html). Determine what your value orientations are with regard to physical education curriculum.
3. Referring to “What Is High Quality Physical Education?” box (Figure 3.16), think back to your own middle or high school physical education curriculum. Analyze it in response to all of the bullets listed.

Community Activities

1. Visit a school and observe the curriculum in action. Groups of students could visit various types of classes such as required, elective, specialized, adapted, or different activities. Ask students to report to the class about various curriculum models they visited in the community.
2. Contact state or district teachers of the year and survey them about their curriculum philosophy, goals, scope of activities, and so on.
3. Observe a physical education class at a junior high school and identify the physical, social, and emotional characteristics displayed by the students.
4. Administer an interest survey (e.g., Figure 3.12) to a group of youth. The interests of various areas of the community or various schools in the community could be compared to determine differences.
5. Interview middle or high school students and capture their perception about the physical education experiences. Comparisons could be made across the views of different types of students.

Related Websites

Curricula Examples: www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/physed/physed1-5/index.html

Physical Education Curriculum Information:

www.pecentral.com

www.pelinks4u.org

www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/pecat/index.htm

Research for Education and Learning: www.mcrel.org

COOPERATIVE LEARNING TASK SHEET

Steps in Developing a Curriculum

Directions: Your cooperative learning group will become the content experts by finding the answers to the items listed below. Discuss these items with your group and be ready to report on one or all of them at the end of the class period.

1. What is a curriculum, and why should you have one?
2. How do you determine the main focus of a curriculum, and what is this called?
3. List the steps identified in the textbook for developing a guiding philosophy.
4. Why is yearly planning important?
5. How do environmental factors affect the development of a curriculum? Give examples.
6. Discuss the developmental characteristics and levels of middle and high school students as they relate to curriculum writing.
7. What do scope, sequence, breadth, and depth of a curriculum mean?
8. Why does it mean to have a balanced curriculum, and what does that look like for a middle school curriculum?
9. What do you need to consider in creating a personal philosophy of teaching physical education?
10. Describe the various school scheduling procedures and how they impact curriculum development.
11. Discuss the importance of periodically evaluating the curriculum.