A STUDY OF
THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES
IN IOWA, 1949-50

BY

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A FIELD REPORT

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Development of Physical Education in the Public Schools

A brief look at the historical background of physical education as a part of the curriculum of the American public school system reveals that physical education has not always been considered as vital a part of our school curriculum as it is today.

The early history of organized physical education in America presents a picture of various systems introduced from foreign countries and modified in an effort to meet variable conditions in a new country. The reason for this haphazard, trial-and-error method has been due in part to the neglect of, and the attitude toward, physical education by school authorities in the early development of the public schools. Another reason for the slow development was the lack of means for training teachers in physical education work.

The early Latin grammar schools did not provide any form of physical education, athletics, play, or recreation. Their aims were largely of a religious nature which were reached indirectly through a study of Latin and
Greek. The Latin grammar schools' contribution to the development of physical education was practically nil.

With the growth of the academy came a broader curriculum. Less emphasis was placed on preparation for college. In the academy, time was not usually allotted for physical education during the school day, yet during after-school hours the entire student body was encouraged to participate in group games and certain forms of athletic sports. In these schools, the management of sports was left to students with little guidance from the school authorities.

The early settlers in America had little time or no opportunity to take part in things other than the serious business of earning a living. There was no recognized need for any form of physical activity other than the usual outdoor life led by the frontiersman.

With the passing of the frontier, the development of industry and the urbanization of the population began to take form. A period of specialization came into being and as a result, people had an increased amount of leisure time. With the growth of industry and urbanization of population, and the subsequent increase in leisure time came a change in the attitude of the people toward amusements and sports.

As a result of the industrial revolution, child labor laws and immigration, there was a rapid growth of the school population. Educators found it necessary to
broaden the school curriculum in an effort to provide for the needs of pupils in this new type of society. Increase in wealth and leisure time, lack of necessity for child labor, people moving to the cities, and industrialization were all contributing forces to a changing philosophy of education within the public schools. The broadening of educational aims to include the physical welfare of the child was an important factor in the growth and development of the modern health and physical education program.

Present Status of Physical Education in the Public Schools

Great impetus was given to physical education by the entrance of the United States into World War I. The War acted as a stimulus for the rapid growth of physical education in many schools. When America entered World War II even greater stress was placed on a strong and healthy youth, both physically and mentally.

It is now fully realized that half-hearted attempts to offer health and physical education in the public school will not produce the type of physical fitness most desired in youth. Today physical education is considered an important part of the total school program. Most state legislatures have set minimum standards with which schools of the state must comply. Two of the important requirements are time allotment for physical education and teacher training requirements; for example, in Iowa the minimum
if fifty minutes a week. The teacher requirements, for teaching physical education in the state of Iowa, are considered quite high by some administrators. The Iowa state law requires that teachers, who spend one-half or more of the school day teaching physical education, must have twenty semester hours of physical education training.

**Contributions of Physical Education to the Goals of Education**

Physical education should be considered on the same level with other school subjects, for it deals with physical, mental, and social achievements of the individual. Unfortunately, physical education is not always considered as important as other school subjects and as a result suffers in lack of facilities, allotment time, and of training by those who instruct it.

Physical education, when well taught, can contribute more to the goals of education than can any other school subject; not more to each goal than any other subject but more to all goals than any other subject. This is made possible in part, by the fact that the offering of physical education is very largely on the level at which the youngsters live.¹

Physical exercise is advocated as one of the necessary means of attaining a healthy development. The child who exercises a great deal becomes tired and will rest better; he gets hungry and will eat more; he has more need of oxygen and breathes more deeply and more rapidly;

he has more waste content to be carried from the cells and needs more nourishment for the cells, causing increased circulation. All these contribute their bit toward better health. Major contributions can be made to health through an effective physical education program.

Physical education contributes to the attainment of fundamental physical skills such as running, jumping, throwing, climbing, striking, dodging, swimming, balancing, starting, rolling, bending, lifting, pulling, swinging, catching, and carrying. Mastery of these skills is important to the proper adjustment of the child. In the play situation the good performer is the hero and the poor performer is pushed into the background. A large part of the child's life is spent in play and a large share of play demands physical skills. If the child fails in his physical skills, he doesn't have other phases of endeavor to which he can turn for success as does the adult. A child must master the fundamental physical processes or suffer the consequences of loss of standing and recognition among his fellows in one of the major fields of youthful endeavor. Certainly physical education contributes to the attainment of an adequate command of most of the important fundamental processes.

Physical education contributes to ethical character, worthy home membership, and hence to good citizenship. Physical education is one part of school work that lends itself particularly to the development of character. Where
student interest prevails, activity is predominant and relatively great authority and respect are accorded to the persons in charge. The physical education class provides more than just a place to discuss character education theory; it furnishes a laboratory for actual practice.

Physical education contributes to the worthy use of leisure. Physical education is not presented as the only unit in the public school system that makes such contribution but rather as one of the important units that has a significant contribution to make in this respect, both during the school age and later in life.

Physical education contributes to vocational preparation. Better physical and mental health as well as good character and citizenship will aid one in securing and maintaining employment.

**Purpose of this Study**

The purpose of this investigation is to discover the present practices in regard to the general organization and administration of the physical education program. The nature of the activities in the physical education program, the recreation program in the elementary schools, the physical education facilities that are available, the general practices, and preparation of the physical education instructor in the elementary schools, fourth to sixth grades. Five of the major cities of Iowa were selected in an attempt to get an overview of this problem on a state wide basis. The practices used in these cities will be compared
with the standards set up by the recognized authorities in the field of physical education.

Procedure Used in this Study

After the problem was selected, the first step was the construction of a comprehensive questionnaire that could be used to secure the necessary data and a complete picture of the physical education program in the various schools. The next step was to select five cities in Iowa, that did not vary too greatly in population. School superintendents in those cities selected, namely Des Moines, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, and Council Bluffs, were willing to cooperate and allowed the writer to visit their elementary schools.

The data secured for this study, were made possible by personal interviews of the person in charge of the physical education classes in the various schools. Through these interviews the writer had an opportunity to observe the physical education classes in action and to meet the elementary physical education teachers. Forty-two schools were visited and thirty-six elementary physical education teachers were interviewed.

In each city visited, an effort was made to get a cross-section sample of the physical education program in the various schools. Schools located in districts of the lower economic levels, as well as those in the higher economic levels were selected. Schools differing in pupil population were also included. This plan was used in an
attempt to get a better over-all picture of the physical education curriculum of these cities.

The selection of various schools was made by the supervisor of physical education in each city with the exception of Des Moines. The supervisors were well acquainted with the schools under their supervision and directed the writer to the types of schools desired. In Des Moines, where the writer is personally acquainted with the different districts and types of schools, he made his own selection of schools.
CHAPTER II

PRACTICES FOUND IN THIS STUDY COMPARED WITH THE STANDARDS SET UP BY RECOGNIZED AUTHORITIES IN THE FIELD OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

If the criteria, set up by the recognized authorities in the field of physical education, were actually followed and practiced, the result would be an ideal situation in the elementary physical education program. There are, however, various factors influencing physical education curriculum which make it impossible to achieve an ideal elementary program. Such things as facilities, equipment, available space, time for physical education, climatic conditions, size and resources of the community, state legislation concerning physical education, recreational facilities outside of the school, size of classes, number, and training of the physical education staff members have their influence in curriculum construction for physical education.

General Organization and Administration

Size of class.—In most elementary schools the classroom-teacher organization limits the number of students per room or grade. Usually, the physical education class
in the elementary school is no larger than the number of students in a given classroom. The number of pupils in
the physical education classes surveyed ranged from eighteen to forty-one; the average was thirty.

Selection of the physical education activities.---
The construction of the curriculum in physical education should be founded on the results and experience of the past with due consideration for the needs of the present and trends for the future. The teacher is in the best position to know the pupils' needs and should be qualified to select the activities suited for her class. Sometimes help from the children in the selection of the activities is desired.

It was found by the writer that several methods were employed in the selection of the physical education activities for the elementary schools. In 52.3 per cent of the schools the curriculum was already planned by the administrators; in 11.9 per cent of the cases the activities were planned by the teacher; and in 33.0 per cent of schools the activities were planned by both the teacher and pupil. Table 1 shows the methods used in selecting the physical education activities and the number of schools using each method.

Specialized supervision.--The supervision of instruction is an important part of the school program in both the elementary and secondary school. It has been learned through experience that a certain amount of
supervision is necessary, helpful, and desirable. The aim of supervision is to attain as nearly an ideal situation as possible with respect to pupil growth and development.

All of the schools visited for this study had specialized supervision by the supervisor of elementary physical education. Supervision is usually found in the large city system where the work of many schools must be coordinated.

Time allotment for physical education in the intermediate grades (4th to 6th grades).—At least one hour each school day should be allotted for physical education classwork in each grade of the intermediate school. This amount of time is necessary if the proper program is provided for the children.

The time spent on physical education in the elementary schools visited differed in each school system.
It was found that 23.8 per cent of the schools spent fifteen to nineteen minutes a day for physical education; 28.7 per cent spent from twenty to twenty-four minutes; 14.3 per cent from twenty-five to twenty-nine minutes; and 33.2 per cent from thirty-five to thirty-nine minutes a day.

**TABLE 2**

**TIME ALLOWED FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES IN IOWA, 1949-50**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Minutes Per Day</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15 to 19</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>20 to 24</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25 to 29</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>35 to 49</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Credits and grades.**—The absence of credits and grades may greatly affect the successful functioning of the physical education curriculum. Experience has shown that, if grades and credits are abandoned in physical education but continued in other school subjects, the teachers, students, and parents soon come to feel that physical education is relatively unimportant. The development of this attitude on the part of the teachers, students, and parents seems to be rooted in the traditional value placed on the single mark method of grading in education.
All of the schools selected for this study give credits and grades for physical education. This is an example of the great progress physical education has made since the days of the Latin grammar schools.

Segregation of boys and girls.—It is now well known that best results can be obtained if boys and girls are segregated in a majority of physical education activities, even on the intermediate level. Segregation of boys and girls on the intermediate level was not found to be a common practice. Sixty-six and seven-tenths per cent of the schools studied in this report, never segregate the boys and girls for physical education activities, 28.7 per cent seldom have segregation, 2.3 per cent frequently and, only 2.3 segregate the boys and girls the majority of the time for their physical education activities. Table 3, shows the frequency of segregation of boys and girls in the intermediate grades of five major cities in Iowa.

**TABLE 3**

**FREQUENCY OF SEGREGATION OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES IN IOWA, 1949-50**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Majority of Time</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The use of gymnasium costumes for physical education work.--From both points of view of hygiene and ease of movement it is considered better for pupils to use gymnasium costumes for physical education work.

None of the schools, included in this study, used gymnasium costumes. The reason for this was lack of facilities for dressing and not enough time allowed during the physical education period for dressing.

**Nature of the Activities in the Physical Education Program**

**Rhythmical activities**.--Rhythmical activities consist of singing games, folk dances, gymnastic dancing, natural dancing and social dancing. Under proper leadership dancing offers the greatest cultural contribution of the physical education program.

The percentage allotment time for rhythmical activities for boys in grade four should be 15 per cent, for grades five and six, 10 per cent. For the girls in grades four, five, and six, 30 per cent of the physical education program should be spent in rhythmical activities.

If too much time is taken for rhythmical activities for boys at the intermediate grades level, they are retarded in their development in rugged sports. Furthermore, if programs are provided and conducted on a satisfactory basis aside from rhythms so that the boys enjoy participation, it is likely to be extremely difficult
to establish the proper class spirit and medium whereby satisfactory results in the teaching of rhythms can be obtained.

The results of experience indicate that supervisors should be hesitant about recommending extensive rhythmical programs for intermediate grade boys. Only two of the schools, included in this study, made any differential between the boys and girls in rhythmical activities or in the amount of percentage allotment time spent on rhythms for the boys and girls.

There is a great variation in the amount of time allotted for rhythmical activities; not only in the different school systems but in the schools of the same system. It was found 11.9 per cent of the schools spent 5 per cent or less of their physical education class time on rhythmical activities, 16.8 per cent spent 10 per cent, 23.8 per cent spent 15 per cent, 35.7 per cent spent 20 per cent, and 11.9 per cent spent 25 per cent or more time on rhythmical activities during the school year.

Athletic games (baseball, soccer, volleyball, basketball type games).—More emphasis should be placed on athletic games, especially for boys, throughout the intermediate grades. Not only should the athletic games of a lead-up nature be given to the boys, but many of the more highly organized sports in modified form should be introduced as early as the fourth grade.
TABLE 4
PERCENTAGE ALLOTMENT OF TIME SPENT ON RHYTHMICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES IN FIVE MAJOR IOWA CITIES 1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Percentage Allotment Time</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5% or less</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25% or more</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the recognized authorities in the field of physical education, the time allowed for athletic games should be: 20 per cent of the total programs for the fourth grade boys, 25 per cent for the fifth grade boys, and 30 per cent for boys in grade six. The girls, percentage allotment time should be, 5 per cent for grade four, 10 per cent for grade five, and 15 per cent for the girls in the sixth grade.

It was found from this study that 2.3 per cent of the schools spent 20 per cent of their physical education class time on athletic games, 7.1 per cent spent 30 per cent, 16.8 per cent spent 40 per cent, and 65.7 per cent spent 50 per cent or more of their total physical education class time on athletic games.

Winter outdoor activities.—Winter sports for the intermediate grades should be taught and promoted both
TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE ALLOTMENT OF TIME SPENT
ON ATHLETIC GAMES IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES
IN FIVE MAJOR IOWA CITIES
1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Percentage Allotment Time</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20% or less</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>50% or more</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

during the physical education class period and in the
after-school recreation programs.

Only twenty-one of the forty-two schools visited
have winter activities schedule. The activities that these
schools have scheduled include the following: snow balling,
fox and geese, sliding, ice skating, follow-the-leader,
tag, and soccer.

Outdoor activities, when weather is desirable.--
All physical activities should be held outdoors when weather
permits. A list of outdoor activities, in the intermediate
grades, in five major cities in Iowa, in order of number
of times mentioned are as follows: (1) softball, (2) track
and field, (3) soccer, (4) self-testing activities,
(5) volleyball, (6) baseball, (7) rope jumping, (8) touch
football, (9) marbles, (10) running games, (11) apparatus
work, (12) soccer baseball, (13) horseshoes, (14) basket-
ball, (15) paddle tennis, (16) golf (limited), (17) tennis,
Indoor activities.—Many times weather conditions will not permit the physical education class to meet outdoors. When the class does meet indoors the teacher must have many activities in mind that are suitable for indoors.

A list of indoor activities in the intermediate grades, in five major cities in Iowa, in order of the number of times mentioned are as follows: (1) tumbling, (2) folk dancing, (3) basketball, (4) volleyball, (5) relays, (6) dodge ball, (7) lead-up games, (8) rhythm activities, (9) lead-up relays, (10) rope jumping, (11) marching, (12) combat activities, (13) creative dancing, (14) calisthenics, (15) quiet games.

Boxing and Wrestling.—Boxing and wrestling are seldom thought of as a desirable activities for the boys in the intermediate grades. Reasons for this is that many teachers do not know how to teach these sports, and there are dangers involved if they are not properly presented.

Only two of those schools visited had any boxing and that was in a very limited amount. One school had wrestling, and this was in a special school where the pupils were retarded and older than the average elementary child.

Recreation in the School

After-School Recreation Program in the Elementary School.—It was found in this study that more elementary schools do not have after-school recreation programs, than
those that do have them. Only 42.8 per cent of the schools visited had an after-school recreation program scheduled, while 57.1 per cent of the schools did not have any program scheduled. The extent of the after-school recreation program is shown in Table 6.

**TABLE 6**  
AFTER-SCHOOL RECREATION PROGRAM 
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES 
IN FIVE MAJOR CITIES IN IOWA  
1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Per Cent of Schools Having After-school Recreation Program</th>
<th>Per Cent of Schools Not Having After-school Recreation Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List of activities that are scheduled for after-school recreation program in the intermediate grades, in five major cities in Iowa, are as follows: (1) group games, (2) basketball, (3) tumbling, (4) softball, (5) soccer, (6) social dancing, (7) volleyball, (8) square dancing, (9) boxing, (10) wrestling, (11) touch football, (12) talent shows, (13) song fests, (14) tournaments.

**Noon-Hour program.**—From a hygienic point of view, engaging in strenuous physical activity is not recommended immediately after the ingestion of food. Yet, because of the nature of the elementary school children, this is
precisely what they want to do and actually do. The activities selected for use in the noon-hour recreation program should not be strenuous.

Activities that were scheduled in the various schools for the noon-hour recreational program include the following: softball, soccer, group games, basketball, volleyball, and touch football.

Aquatics.--In all the schools surveyed for this report not one included swimming in their physical education program. This was due largely to the lack of facilities and lack of a properly trained teacher to instruct swimming.

Physical Education Facilities.--Facilities, equipment and available space affect the type of program and the activities included in the curriculum. Without either indoor or outdoor space it is practically impossible for a school to maintain a desirable program of physical education. The same is true in the case of equipment. In the modern type of program there must be a reasonable amount of equipment; otherwise activities cannot be maintained. The amount and kinds of equipment are determined by the type of program, the activities offered in the curriculum. In many schools there is insufficient equipment for the greatest efficiency in learning and practice.

Table 7 shows what facilities the schools studied in this report have, and which facilities are not available.
TABLE 7

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FACILITIES AVAILABLE
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADERS OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES
IN IOWA, 1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Number and Per Cent of Schools Having Facilities</th>
<th>Number and Per Cent of Schools Not Having Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Gymnasium</td>
<td>28 or 66.7%</td>
<td>14 or 33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming pool</td>
<td>0 or 00.0%</td>
<td>42 or 100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressing Rooms</td>
<td>15 or 35.7%</td>
<td>27 or 64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showers for Boys</td>
<td>14 or 33.2%</td>
<td>28 or 66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showers for Girls</td>
<td>14 or 33.2%</td>
<td>28 or 66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars for Apparatus</td>
<td>11 or 26.4%</td>
<td>31 or 73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mats for Tumbling</td>
<td>36 or 85.7%</td>
<td>6 or 14.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Practices

**Individual Athletic Activities.**--All the schools interviewed in this report, practiced the use of individual athletic activities. Those mentioned most were: rope jumping, chinning, standard broad jump, standing high jump, soccer ball, kicking (variation), basketball passing, and throwing and catching a softball.

**Student leaders.**--No other school subject offers the number of leadership opportunities that are to found.
in physical education. The teacher who does not take advantage of these opportunities is failing to make use of the possibilities at his command; he is not putting to good use the talents that have been intrusted to him by the community in which he teaches.

The thirty-six physical education instructors, interviewed in this study, all made use of student leaders in their classes.

Physical examination.—The ideal situation would be to give a physical examination annually. A complete examination should be given to determine the health status of each child; if a pupil has a physical weakness his activities should be limited or modified.

It was found from this study that 73.8 per cent of the schools have some type of physical examination, and know the physical status of each child, while 26.2 per cent have no physical examination.

TABLE 8
PHYSICAL EXAMINATION
BEFORE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES
IN IOWA, 1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Per Cent of Schools Having Physical Examination</th>
<th>Per Cent of Schools Not Having Physical Examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Education Instructors

Sex of Teacher.--To make segregation of boys and girls possible in the physical education classes there should be a woman teacher in charge of the girls, and a man teacher in charge of the boys. For an ideal class set up, a man and woman physical education teacher should be employed. More men teachers are needed and wanted in the elementary schools.

It was found from this study, that only 11.9 per cent of the physical education teachers in the elementary school are men, while 88.1 per cent are women.

TABLE 9

SEX OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES
IN IOWA, 1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Per Cent Men Teachers</th>
<th>Per Cent Women Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training of Teachers.--The minimum requirement for either elementary or high school physical education teachers should be a bachelor's degree with a major or a minor in physical education. The major qualifies one much better to teach physical education. Many of the teachers interviewed in this study had neither a major nor a minor in physical education.
Table 10, shows the training qualifications of the teachers interviewed in this report.

**TABLE 10**

TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS
OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES OF FIVE MAJOR CITIES
IN IOWA, 1949-50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Per Cent that Majored in Physical Education</th>
<th>Per Cent that Minored in Physical Education</th>
<th>Per Cent that Neither Major- ed or Minored in Physical Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER III

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION PRACTICES AND FACILITIES OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY

All the school systems, included in this study, differed; none attain the ideal condition. This chapter is intended to acquaint the reader with the different school systems, included in this study, in regard to the general administration, practices, facilities, and characteristics found in their respective elementary schools.

Davenport, Iowa

Davenport, located on the Mississippi River, is the third largest city in the state of Iowa. There are twelve elementary schools in Davenport; all but three of the school buildings are relatively new. The pupil population of each elementary school is considered high, the highest enrollment reaching nearly one-thousand.

The elementary physical education is headed and supervised by the Supervisor of Elementary Physical Education, who emphasizes lead-up games, rhythmic activities, and a well-rounded physical education program. All six physical education elementary teachers in Davenport have
majors in physical education. Each teacher is assigned to two schools, spending three days at one school and two at the other during one week and reversing the schedule the following week.

Three forty minute periods a week are spent on physical education activities. Eleven of the twelve schools have special gymnasiums.

The curriculum is planned for the teachers by the Supervisor, who tries to have a well-balanced program to meet the children's needs. He feels, as the writer does, that the Davenport elementary schools have adequate space for both indoor and outdoor activities. Davenport has an after-school recreation program in all of their twelve elementary schools.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Cedar Rapids, Iowa is located in the east central part of the state. The fifteen elementary schools in Cedar Rapids vary considerably in student population and in facilities.

The physical education program is headed by the Director of Physical Welfare. There are six men and nine women physical education teachers in the elementary schools. Two of the five teachers interviewed have majored in physical education while the other three have neither majored nor minored in this field. It seems that the music teacher of each school is also in charge of the physical
education classes which works out well for rhythmical activities.

The facilities in most of the schools of Cedar Rapids are limited; only five of the fifteen schools have special gymnasiums. The physical education program is based on seventy-five minutes per week. The program is divided into spring, fall, and winter activities. In the spring and fall outdoor activities are emphasized; in the winter indoor activities prevail, with rhythmical activities taking up 75 per cent of the time.

The six men physical education elementary school teachers and nine men playground supervisors are in charge of the after-school recreation program.

**Waterloo, Iowa**

Waterloo is a city with a lot of industry and is located in the north central part of Iowa. There are fifteen elementary schools in Waterloo and each school has a special gymnasium.

The physical education department of the Waterloo school system is headed by the Director of Health and Physical Education, who, with the aid of the physical education teachers, helps plan the physical education curriculum for the elementary schools. Certain activities are required of all the physical education teachers.

Waterloo has a unique plan which they call the enrichment department. In this plan, one person teaches
art, music or literature, and physical education. The one great difficulty of this plan is to find the teacher who can teach all of these subjects well. The consideration in hiring an enrichment teacher is her ability to teach music, art or literature and her willingness to teach physical education. None of the fifteen teachers in the enrichment department majored or minored in physical education during their teacher training. It is the responsibility of the elementary physical education counselor to help and to instruct these teachers in teaching physical education.

In Waterloo, sixty minutes weekly is spent on physical education activities. There are no after-school recreation programs scheduled for this city.

**Des Moines, Iowa**

Des Moines is the largest city in Iowa and the capital of the state. There are over forty elementary schools here, and there is a great range in the student population and facilities in the elementary schools.

The physical education program in Des Moines is headed by the Associate Director of Health and Physical Education. The planning of the physical education curriculum for the elementary school is done by the director and the elementary teachers in charge of physical education. The proposed plan does not have to be followed to the letter but it is used more as a guide. Each elementary physical education teacher has a booklet called
"A Guide for Teaching Physical Activities in the Elementary School," which is a valuable booklet listing many activities that may be used.

Of the fourteen elementary schools studied in Des Moines nine have gymnasiums; the other five have a converted classroom or basement rooms with low ceilings, which are used for physical education classes.

Of the fourteen teachers interviewed, six have majors in physical education; two have minors in physical education; and six teachers have neither a major or a minor in physical education.

The after-school recreation program in Des Moines is limited; two schools out of fourteen had an after-school recreation program scheduled.

Des Moines elementary schools rank first in time allotment for physical education activities. Thirty-five minutes a day is allowed for the classes. Des Moines is the only school system included in this study that approaches the ideal amount of time that should be spent on physical education.

**Council Bluffs, Iowa**

Council Bluffs is located on the Missouri River in the western part of Iowa. There are seventeen elementary schools in Council Bluffs, differing in size and building construction. The elementary schools not only differ in size and construction, but vary in grade
levels at which they terminate. Eleven of the schools include the eighth grade; three go to sixth grade; two go through the ninth grade; and one school only goes through the fifth grade.

Although all the schools varied in their grade level, only the teachers and physical education classrooms dealing with fourth through sixth grades were studied. The elementary physical education curriculum is set up by a committee of elementary physical education teachers. Copies of the planned curriculum are sent to each teacher who uses them for a guide.

The physical education teachers of Council Bluffs are supervised by the Supervisor of Physical Education, who is trying hard to work in a recreation program for the Council Bluffs elementary schools. The supervisor feels that more time should be spent by the teachers under his supervision in planning and working on physical education activities.

In Council Bluffs twenty-five minutes a day are spent on physical education activities in the intermediate grades. Only two of the schools visited had special gymnasiums. There are no after-school recreation activities scheduled at present. Three of the six teachers interviewed majored in physical education during their teacher training.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Organization and Administration

Time allotment for physical education during the course of the regular school day.--The amount of time allowed for physical education, in all the schools visited was considered inadequate. The time ranged from sixty minutes a week to 175 minutes a week. At least one hour of each school day or 300 minutes a week should be allowed for physical education in each intermediate grade. This amount of time is needed if a proper program is to be provided for the child. It is recommended for improving the present physical education program that more time be allowed for physical education in the intermediate grades of the elementary school.

Segregation of the boys and girls for physical education activities in the elementary schools.--The experts agree that best results can be obtained if boys and girls are segregated for the majority of physical education activities. Of all the teachers interviewed only two segregated the boys and girls frequently; twelve, seldom; and twenty-eight never segregated the boys and girls. The
interests of boys and girls differ in the intermediate grades and for best results students should be segregated for the greater part of the time for physical education.

The following are reasons why boys and girls should be segregated for their physical education activities.

1. The interests of boys and girls, even at the fourth grade level, are not the same when they have participated in a broad program of physical education throughout the primary grades. The main difference in interest seems to be in that the boys are much more interested in the more highly organized sports. The girls are interested in sports, but not to the same extent as the boys. The girls seem to have more interest than the boys in rhythmical activities.

2. Partly because of tradition and partly because of advanced development in physical education activities, the boys in the fourth grade practically demand a male teacher of physical education.

3. The out-of-school experience of the boys in sports and other types of physical activities makes them somewhat advanced over the girls in knowledge, rules, strategy, and skill in a majority of the activities in which the boys are keenly interested.

4. The boys enjoy participating in the more rugged activities even at the fourth grade level.

5. The after-school programs are more successful when boys and girls are segregated. The differences in ability in certain activities conducted during the regular class period in physical education, and in the after-school program, which are not always the same for boys and girls, create a situation in which either the boys or the girls are retarded in progress. This depends somewhat on the activities offered if boys and girls are together for physical education work.

6. The self-consciousness normally existing between boys and girls can be overcome sufficiently by having them participate together in certain activities of a rhythmical nature, through parties, and by occasionally participating in physical activities in which the skills are not too
different.¹

It is recommended that the physical education teachers of the elementary schools segregate the boys and girls more.

The use of gymnasium costumes in the elementary school.—Most elementary schools do not have adequate facilities to allow dressing for physical education class, but even when facilities were available they were not put to use. It is recommended that when facilities permit that boys and girls in the elementary schools use gymnasium costumes.

Nature of Activities in the Elementary School

Rhythmical activities.—Most teachers interviewed in this study allowed adequate time for rhythmical activities; the only criticism is that both boys and girls received the same amount of time for rhythmical activities. Girls should spend more time on rhythmical activities than boys. It is recommended that the physical education elementary teachers spend more time on rhythmical activities with the girls and less time with the boys.

Athletic games.—It was found in this study, that most of the schools spend over one-half of their physical education class time on athletic games such as baseball,

soccer, volleyball and basketball type games. No difference was made between the boys and girls or grade level; all groups had the same activities and the same amount of time spent on athletic games. This was true in all cases except two. It is recommended that a better balanced physical education program may be realized with less time spent on athletic games, that the girls should not participate in all the activities the boys do, that the girls not be allowed to spend as much time on athletic games as the boys. The amount of time spent on athletic games should vary with the different grade levels as the pupil advances more time should be allowed for these activities. The allotment of time devoted to athletic games for boys should not be 30 per cent of the total time, and not over 15 per cent for the girls.

Winter out-door activities.—Only twelve of the schools studied have winter out-door activities scheduled. Winter sports for the intermediate grades should be promoted not only during the physical education classes but also during the recreation program. For a better all-round physical education program it is recommended that more schools schedule winter outdoor activities.

Recreation in the Elementary Schools

After-school recreation program.—The following are reasons why an after-school recreation program is needed in the elementary school.
1. The children need several hours of big-muscle activity each day. Under ordinary circumstances modern home and school life is such that many children do not have the opportunity for sufficient activity unless special provisions are made for after-school programs, by the schools.

2. Experience has shown that children need supervision in recreation activities in order to obtain the best results to accrue.

3. Many children, especially in thickly populated areas, do not have a safe place to play during after-school hours unless programs are provided by the school.

4. Elementary school children need an after-school program as a place to carry over activities from the regular school program. This is especially true of the activities offered in the physical education class.

5. Recreation activities of a type other than physical activities should be provided for the children. Many recreation activities can be included in the after-school program.

6. Children need the opportunity for supervised play during after-school hours to develop the fundamental skills in activities.

7. After-school programs can provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop both socially and emotionally.

8. There should be recreation activities to help establish a natural coordination between the formal classroom teaching and informal school activities.

9. An after-school program should be organized to provide opportunities for the development of qualities of leadership in both boys and girls.

10. After-school programs for elementary school children provide both the incentive and the opportunity for children to participate in outdoor activities.¹

It was found during this study that the majority of the schools do not have an after-school recreation program. An after-school recreation program is needed in most communities, and the school should help meet this need.

**Physical Education Facilities in the Elementary School**

It was found, from this study, that the newer elementary school buildings have adequate facilities, such as special gymnasiums, equipment and adequate outdoor space to carry on a good physical education program. In most of the older elementary school buildings, physical education facilities were not planned for when these buildings were constructed. When new school buildings are put up the necessary facilities for a good physical education program should be included in the plans.

**Preparation of Physical Education Teacher in the Elementary School**

Training of elementary physical education teachers.--It has already been pointed out that physical education teachers in the elementary school should have the minimum requirement of a bachelor's degree with a major or a minor in physical education. In the five Iowa cities included in this study only a little over one-half of the elementary physical education teachers had majored or minored in physical education.

For a better all-round physical education program in the elementary schools, it is recommended that when
teachers are hired to instruct physical education their training in physical education be considered more carefully.

**Summary of Recommendations**

The following is a list of recommendation that are presented in an effort to improve the present physical education program, in the intermediate grades, of five major cities in Iowa.

1. Allowance of at least sixty minutes per each school day for physical education in the elementary schools.

2. Segregation of the boys and girls for the majority of their physical education activities should be started as early as the fourth grade.

3. The use of gymnasium costumes should be practiced in the intermediate grades when facilities and time permit.

4. Rhythmical activities should be emphasized more for the girls than the boys in the intermediate grades.

5. Athletic games are over-emphasized in the schools surveyed and more time should be spent on other activities to develop a more balanced physical education program.

6. Winter activities should be scheduled in more of the elementary schools in Iowa.

7. After-school recreation program should be started in the elementary schools that do not have them at the present time.

8. More consideration should be taken for the gymnasium and other physical education facilities, when elementary school buildings are constructed.

9. More emphasis should be placed on the training and qualification of teachers assigned to instruct physical education in the elementary school.
Adequacy of the Various Physical Education Programs

The elementary physical education programs of the schools surveyed lacked a great deal of reaching the ideal condition for the following reasons: the time allotted for physical education was very inadequate in the elementary schools, segregation of the boys and girls was not practiced in a majority of cases, gymnasium costumes were not used in any of the elementary schools, boys and girls, in all but two cases, had the same amount of rhythmical activities, athletic games were over-emphasized, not enough time was allowed for other physical education activities, winter activities were lacking in a majority of the schools, and there was a lack of after-school recreation programs. Most of the school buildings were old and lacked adequate facilities for a good physical education program. As a rule the elementary school physical education teachers were not trained to instruct physical education.

The strong points found in the schools are as follows: classes were small enough to conduct a good physical education program, specialized supervision was provided, student leaders were used, physical examination were given in most of the schools, and credit and grades were given in all of the physical education classes.
APPENDIX

Questionnaire

General Organization and Administration

1. What is the average size of your physical education classes?

2. What is the number of students you supervise in a school day?

3. Who selects the physical education activities in your classes?

   Curr. Teacher Teacher and already Several Pupils planned Teachers Pupils

4. Is there any specialized supervision of the activities in the physical education curriculum in your school?

   Yes ____ No

5. How much time is allowed for physical education during the course of the regular school day in your school?

   (Minutes)
   30-44
   45-50
   60
   60-74
   75-90

6. Are your school's recess periods considered as part of the time allotted to the physical education program of your school?

   Yes ____ No

7. Do you give credits and grades for physical education in this school?

8. How often are the boys and girls segregated for the physical education activities?

   Never ______ Seldom ______ Frequently ______ Majority of time ______ Always ______
9. Do the pupils of your physical education classes use gymnasium costumes for physical education work?

(Boys) Never - Seldom - Often - Always
(Girls) ______ ______ ______ ______

Nature of the Activities in the Physical Education Program

10. What percentage allotment time do you have for rhythmical activities?

(Boys) 5% 10% 15% 25% or more
(Girls) 10% or less 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% or more

11. What percentage allotment time do you have for athletic games? (Baseball, soccer, volley-ball, and basketball type games)

(Boys) 10% - 15% - 20% - 25% - 30% or over
4th ______ ______ ______ ______
5th ______ ______ ______ ______
6th ______ ______ ______ ______

12. What are some of the winter outdoor activities you have scheduled? Boys Girls

13. What are some of the summer outdoor activities you have scheduled? Boys Girls

14. What are some of the winter indoor activities you have scheduled? Boys Girls

15. What are some of the summer indoor activities you have scheduled? Boys Girls
Recreation in the School

16. Does your school have an after-school recreation program for the children? Yes _____ No _____

17. Does your school have a recreation program during the noon hour? Yes _____ No _____

18. Does your school have a Saturday recreation program? Yes _____ No _____

19. What are some of the recreation activities you have? ______________________________________
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________

Physical Education Facilities

20. What is the approximate size of your floor space? ________________________________

21. What is the approximate height of the gymnasium ceiling? __________________________

22. Do you have the following facilities for your physical education classes?

   Facilities to teach swimming Yes _____ No _____
   Dressing rooms Yes _____ No _____
   Showers (Boys) Yes _____ No _____
                   (Girls) Yes _____ No _____
   Mats for tumbling Yes _____ No ____ How many? __
   Bars for apparatus work Yes _____ No _____

General Practices

23. Do you practice the following?

   Individual athletic activities (Batting for accuracy, base running, basketball pass for accuracy, pull ups, push ups, broad jump, etc.) Yes _____ No _____
Boxing Yes No
Wrestling Yes No
Student leaders Yes No
Contests to motivate pupils Yes No
Physical examination before student participation in activities of physical education program Yes No
Social dancing Yes No
Square dancing Yes No

Preparation of Physical Education Instructor

24. Sex of Teacher

25. Did you major in physical education at college? Yes No

26. Did you minor in physical education at college? Yes No

27. How long have you been teaching physical education in this school system? 

28. Do you teach any other subject besides physical education? 

Opinions of Physical Education Teachers

29. Do you feel that you have adequate space for indoor activities? Yes No

30. Do you feel that your school has enough space for outdoor activities? Yes No

31. What do you believe are the most important objectives of physical education?
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


