

A Physical Education Curriculum for Kansas

By

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Guest Editor

In the United States of America there is but one standard answer to the question "Who shall be taught in our school system?" and the reply is: Every child. On the opposite extreme is the question "What shall be taught in the school system?" and for this there are thousands of answers. All shades of agreement and disagreement are apparent. Professional opinion may be as divergent as expressions of laymen, and it frequently is. To make homogeneity out of heterogeneity is one of the stupendous tasks facing every individual who considers himself a part of the school system, in whatever capacity that may be.

One of the functions of the curriculum is to provide some semblance of the homogeneity referred to above. The word curriculum has had many connotations, and the term has been used indiscriminately when other words would have served, such as programs, courses of study, subjects, units of instruction, etc. Formerly it has been necessary to distinguish between curricular and so-called extra-curricular activities. If we accept the idea that life experiences have supplanted other factors as a basis of the curriculum, then there is but one definition which will fill the requirement. Accordingly, the curriculum consists of all experiences under school control.

The state of Kansas is engaged in the process of building a curriculum. Like the Virginia Study of several years ago, it is a cooperative venture. It is being built from the inside out, not from the outside in. It is being made, not by curriculum specialists to be imposed upon the teachers, but by both of these groups together with administrators and officials. The State Department of Public Instruction and the Kansas State Teachers Association are sponsoring this huge undertaking. Miss Dale Zellar of the Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, is heading up the work.

In practically every instance in the past, physical education has not been provided for when such a universal curriculum has been in preparation. It has been tacked on as an afterthought, with

the usual result that physical educators have been regarded as not being in sympathy with education generally, but interested only in their special field of activities. Now there is an opportunity to do some constructive work in having physical education included in a state curriculum. Sensing this, Miss Helen Saum, President of our organization, appointed a committee to work with the people in charge.

The need for inclusion of physical education is obvious to all of us. In casting about for materials to comprise a curriculum, it was found that the College Physical Education Association had completed a nine-year study by a Committee on Curriculum Research. This report meets the needs of a graded curriculum; it is sufficiently flexible and adaptable to any ordinary school situation regardless of climatic or geographic condition or equipment limitation. There is no intention of railroading this thing through, but if it is selected as a basis for the curriculum in our state of Kansas, it would be the first step, and incidentally the most difficult one, in bringing about progress which is sorely needed. Without progress we are sunk. If you have any pride in your profession, lend your support to this most vital project in whatever manner you are called upon.

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REPORT OF CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
Edna McCullough, Chairman

The Curriculum Committee was appointed last fall by Helen Saum, President of the State Association to promote and improve the status of Physical Education in Kansas. We hope eventually to build up certain progressive guides for curricula content that can be used in the various school levels, which will tend to unify and standardize physical education in the state, without limiting or restricting any school or any teacher.

With those objectives in view, the committee met with State Superintendent Markham in December. He graciously gave us an hour of his time, encouraged us, and