

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

YOUR QUARTERLY @OPENPHYSED MAGAZINE



BRINGING LAX TO LA

Christina tells us how introducing lacrosse brought new energy to her curriculum.

THEME-BASED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Kevin shows how his Star Wars theme helps him better engage his students.

PRODUCT REVIEWS

Rich shares his experiences with Slotcones and the Spikeball® Rookie Set.

GO FORTH AND CONQUER, FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS! NEVER GIVE UP, NEVER SURRENDER!

Stephanie gives some tried and true advice for teachers just getting started.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

ISSUE **03** TABLE OF CONTENTS

5

LETTER FROM THE **EDITOR**
RICH WILES

6

PHYSICAL EDUCATION MATTERS
AARON HART

14

DANCE DIGEST: THE CUPID SHUFFLE
BRANDON HERWICK

16

TECH REVIEW: PROJECTOR IN PHYS ED
KEVIN TILLER

18

RECHARGE THOSE **BATTERIES**
MIKE MILLER

19

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE **ENGAGEMENT PUZZLE**
ROSS CHAKRIAN

20

BULLETIN BOARDS
JOSHUA TEBO

22

SPORT EDUCATION: THE MODEL THAT NEVER GROWS OLD
CHARLA TEDDER (PARKER) KRAHNKE

FEATURED

08

**THEME-BASED
PHYSED**
KEVIN TILLER

11

**PRODUCT
REVIEWS**
RICH WILES

12

**BRINGING LAX
TO LA**
CHRISTINA COURTNEY

24

**GO FORTH AND CONQUER,
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the start of the 2018–2019 school year.

As physical educators, we're tasked with the essential role of teaching students about the importance of physical literacy and play. Each year, this mission starts with our first class and continues until the end of the school year.

The beginning of the year can be one of the most stressful periods of time for physical educators. We are preparing our classrooms for students, developing curriculum maps for quality physical education, and developing ourselves professionally. It can be an especially challenging time for physical educators who've worked, traveled with family, or attended professional development conferences over the summer.

While you may want every poster, tape spot, and lesson plan to be perfect for the first class of the year, the reality is that very little of that matters to your students. Instead, what your students experience in your physical education class is all about your attitude and love of the field. If you're passionate about the importance of movement, play, and their development, then your students will be engaged and interested in learning. **You have the ability to make a difference.**

This issue is all about helping you make a difference during the upcoming school year.

You are an amazing member of the OPEN tribe, and I know you'll have a wonderful school year with your students. If things get challenging, reach out to your tribe on social media and feel the love of your community. We are teachers helping and supporting fellow teachers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rich", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rich

OPEN Curriculum Development Team Leader, Physical Education Magazine Project Leader
Physical Educator at Severna Park Elementary School
rich@physedresource.com

PHYSICAL EDUCATION MATTERS

BY **AARON HART,**
@NYAARONHART

ENCOURAGEMENT (noun)

**Support, confidence,
or hope offered by
someone or some event.**

The OPEN National Training Team works to provide encouragement to physical education and activity leaders who are working hard to support the health and well-being of students and families.



A PUBLIC SERVICE OF



Take a few minutes to reflect on a simple sentence with big meaning:

WHAT WE DO MATTERS.

We provide meaningful movement experiences meant to build knowledge, attitudes, and essential skills that lead to healthy and active lifestyles. We are vital

contributors to the social and emotional climate of our schools and our communities. We're necessary in every school building that's committed to educating "the whole child."

We are a community of professionals who are skillfully trained to organize safe and effective learning experiences that integrate movement, play, cooperation, and competition. We're 21st Century educators with a professional learning network made up of tens of thousands of like-minded and equally skillful peers. We are physical educators, life coaches, crisis counselors, personal trainers, exercise scientists, and mentors.

We matter to our students. They look forward to our classes. They benefit immediately from the burst of physical activity we provide. This burst decreases anxiety, improves their mood, and enhances their readiness to learn. We matter to our students.



Pictured: The OPEN National Trainers East Coast Team at the HPAI evening at the U Rec at James Madison University.

We matter to our colleagues. We understand 21st Century learning skills, and we can help our colleagues incorporate play-based learning to promote social and emotional learning outcomes. We are also role models for personal fitness. This doesn't mean we have perfect bodies and perfect habits. It does mean we understand the struggle that all teachers have with healthy eating and exercise, so we do our best to model a physically educated lifestyle while encouraging others to do the same.

What we do matters. Be encouraged, and have an amazing school year.

My first experience using a theme in my physical education classes came when I was teaching at a Pre-K-2 school. Each year, the school would have a theme around which the teachers revolved their classrooms. One year it was “Around The World,” another was “Under The Sea,” and another was “Community.” This practice taught me the benefits of using a theme for my classes.

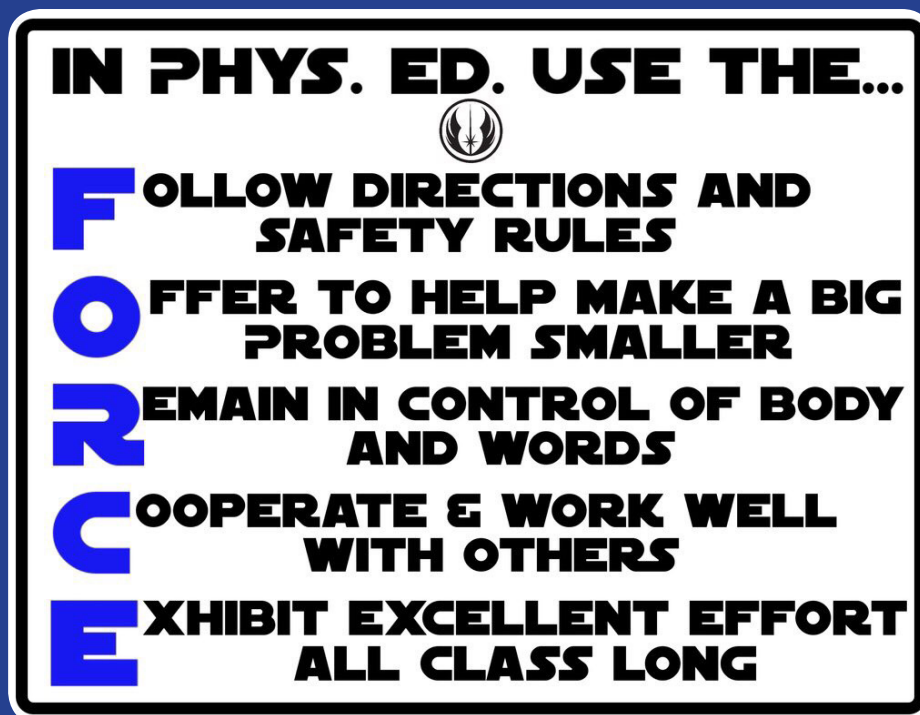
Fast forward to 2015, when I was about to enter a new school (in my current school district). They didn’t use school-wide themes, so it was the perfect time to dive in and do my own.

Now the question was: What theme? I thought about it and thought about it, and I decided to go with Star Wars. Why? Because I love Star Wars. Always have. And in 2015, a new series of Star Wars movies was about to be released, so there’d surely be tons of Star-Wars-related posters, toys, clothing, and other items that I could buy to ensure my theme as complete as possible.

THEME - BASED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

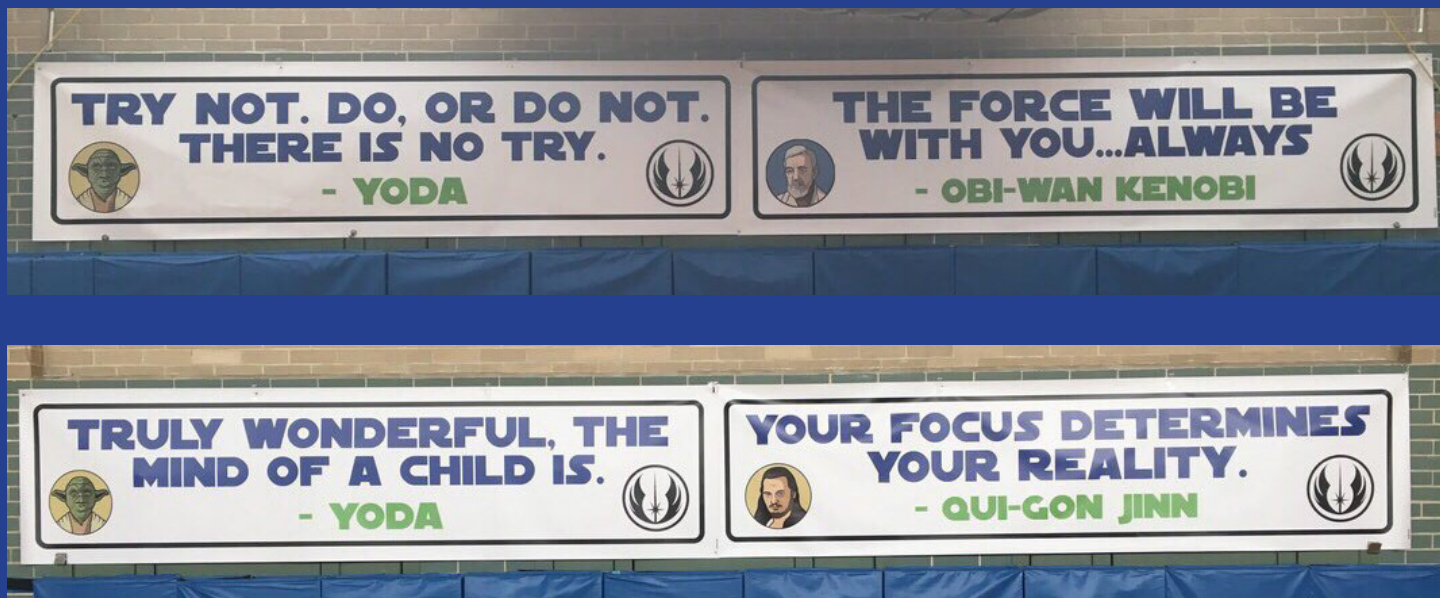
BY **KEVIN TILLER**, @PHYSEDREVIEW

My first step was to develop class guidelines for my students. I found a graphic online that a music teacher had used revolving around the word FORCE. Those who know Star Wars know how important that word is and what it means in the Star Wars universe. It was perfect. I developed my own set of FORCE guidelines:

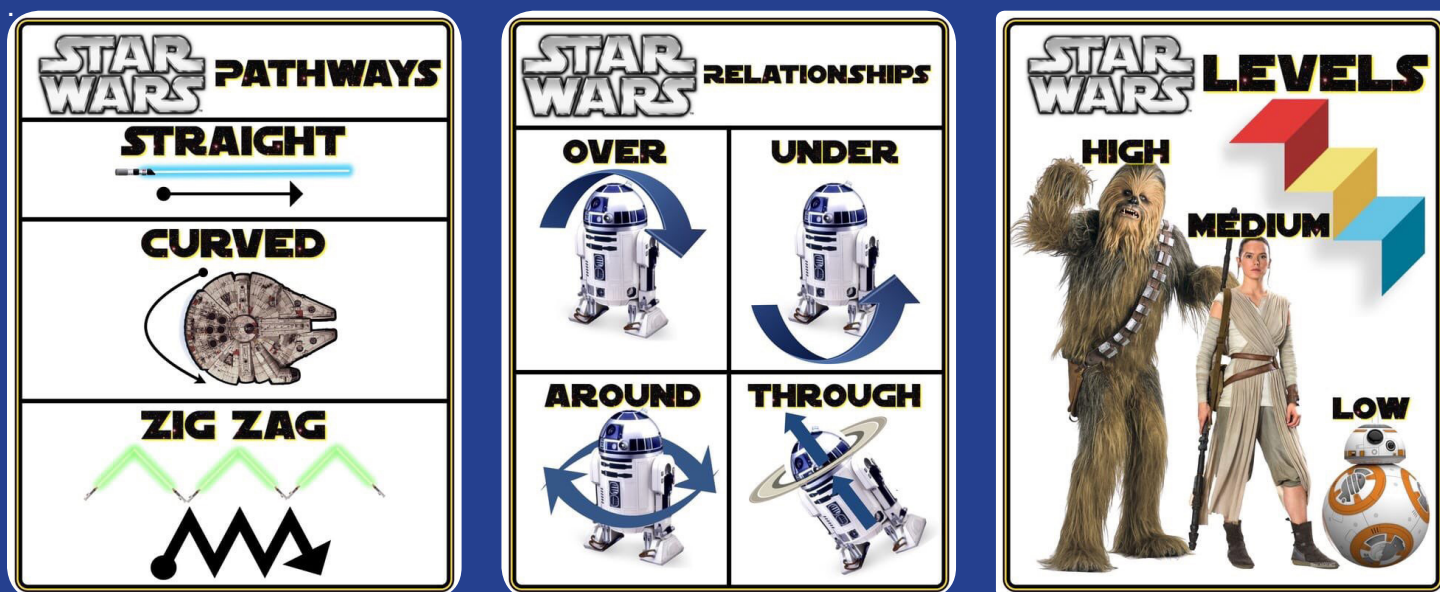


From there, everything began to fall into place. Using the Comic Life 3 app for iPad, I created a ton of PE-related visuals that included:

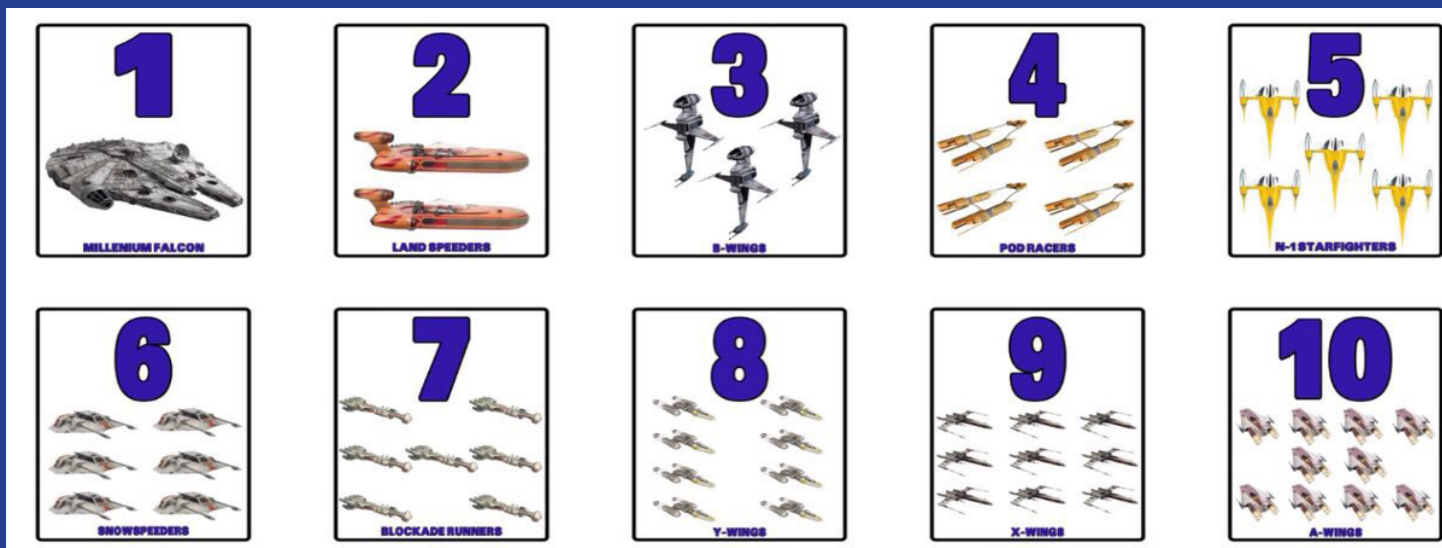
BANNERS



MOVEMENT THEMES

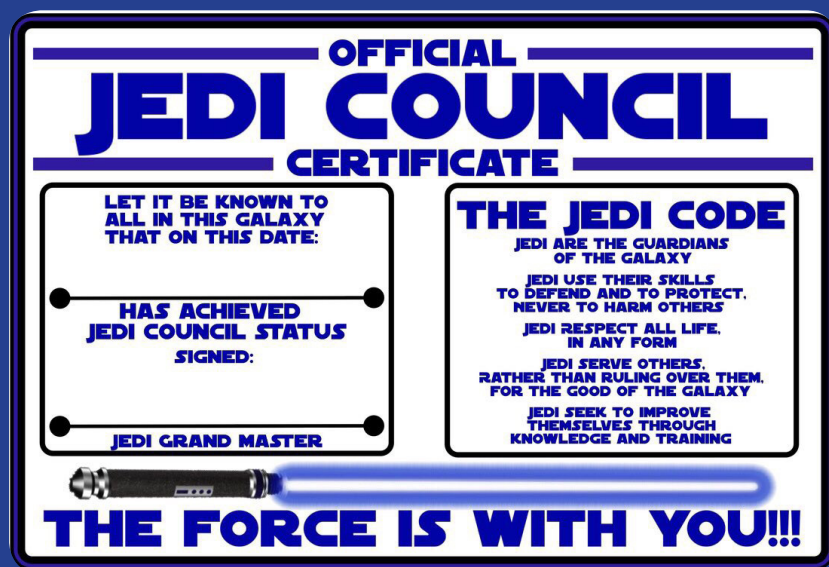


AND OTHER VISUALS LIKE NUMBERS FOR THE GYM DOORS



I also included positive behavior incentives that encourage students to earn “Jedi Council” status. Those who “follow the FORCE” have an opportunity to be named to the Jedi Council and earn a special certificate.

Those on the Jedi Council have also earned special privileges. These include things like picking a partner first, demonstrating a skill (if they want to), and being selected for special roles like the tagger in a chasing, dodging, and fleeing game.



I have other resources available on my website, [Phys.Ed.Review](https://www.phys.ed.review/), including projector activities, Star Wars music playlists, and many active game and activity ideas. You can also learn more in [this article](#) and [this episode](#) of HPE Quick Tips Podcast.

One of the things I love most about using a theme in physical education is being as creative as I want to be. I LOVE creating. Seeing the response from my students has been amazing, too. Let’s be honest: the majority of young students who enter a gym absolutely love physical education,

but for a number of different reasons, some are not so excited. I’ve found that using a theme (particularly Star Wars) enabled me to engage that small group of students in a way that no sport or game ever could. Also, when students see your passions and interests, it helps them to feel comfortable in sharing theirs as well. **MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!**

PRODUCT

REVIEW

BY **RICH WILES**,
EDITOR, @RICH_WILES



SLOTCONES

The SlotCones are possibly one of the coolest cone sets that I've seen in my career; most of my cones are pretty boring compared to these! They're heavy plastic cones with space for a weighted base on the bottom, and they're the swiss army cone in my closet. They can hold crossbars for hurdles and then transform into goals with hoops for scooter activities or throwing games. They can also be used with task tents and any homemade sign. If you're looking for some new cones this fall, add the SlotCones to your list.

Slotcones

SKU# 1453543

Slotcone Crossbars

SKU# 1453544

SPIKEBALL® ROOKIE SET

The original Spikeball set has become a massive hit in the middle school and higher education markets. I found the product to be well constructed and very practical when teaching with the OPEN Roundnet module or using a tactical games approach to teaching Spikeball.

The latest model added to the Spikeball product line is the Spikeball Rookie Set. The Rookie is built with the same materials as the original design, but it has large legs and a larger hoop and net diameter. Student success rates increase with the larger net size. This makes it more appropriate for upper-elementary students and for use with a 6-inch gator ball. The sets also come with a 6½-inch rubber inflatable ball, which helps with teaching progressions. Educators can also design different gamification levels with the two nets.



I really liked using the original yellow Spikeball with the large net for instruction and backyard fun with the kids. If I were ordering for next school year, I would order the Rookie with a set of standard Spikeballs. Hopefully, the Rookie can be the all-star in your semester or yearly plan.

Spikeball Rookie Set

SKU# 1453529

BRINGING LAX → TO LA

BY **CHRISTINA COURTNEY,**
@C8462COURTNEY

As a teacher entering the middle of my career, many of the units and activities I had at my disposal had begun to feel stationary and lackluster. Although my students were learning and highly engaged, I sought to increase the depth of my own teaching knowledge while bringing something new and exciting to the table.

Like any great educator, I set a goal. I would incorporate 2–3 new units during the coming school year. These units needed to increase my students' skill base while allowing me to expand, grow, and learn.



As a physical education teacher at a K–12 school in Louisiana, there are many struggles. One is a lack of indoor space. Our school is blessed to have daily PE for grades K–10, but as you can imagine, having that many classes happening at the same time when gym space is a constant struggle requires some organization and creative planning.

While cleaning out our equipment closets one day, I noticed a large set of youth lacrosse sticks that had gone untouched. I knew instantly that I'd stumbled onto my

newest unit. Lacrosse (LAX) is not particularly popular in Louisiana, but I know that many people enjoy it. My first plan of action was to learn as much as I could about the sport. Then I'd research easy warm-ups and activities that could be incorporated into my classes. As it turned out, OPEN had just released a new [LAX module](#) for grades 3–5, and it instantly helped me with so many ideas and activities.

I was teaching grades 5–9 at the time, and none of my students (nor myself) had ever seen a LAX game or even held a LAX stick; I knew the learning curve from older students would be steep.

The various skill-development activities would have to meet the needs of a wide group of students working at various skill levels. My student teacher and I educated ourselves using tools like OPEN, YouTube, and uslacrosse.org to make sure we understood the rules of the game and cues for teaching various skills. We had a wide range of videos to show students throughout the unit. I also reached out to a high school coach in our area, who sent me some easy drills and plays to run with my older students.



In the south, we say that the “proof is in the pudding.” I’m not sure whether that fits perfectly with this situation, but here’s my pudding: by the end of the first day, LAX was all my students talked about. When I passed them in the halls or saw them at lunch, I was peppered with questions. What are we learning tomorrow? Did you see how well I scooped my ball? Are we playing the same game? When are we going to start throwing and catching? My students were motivated, involved, and intrigued by this new activity.

By the end of the unit, I’d seen an increase in skill from all my students. Their ability to manipulate long-handled implements, catch, throw, scoop, and cradle was often done with great ease, some better than myself (which I will never admit to them...).

Taking the time to continue to grow and learn through LAX has been a fabulous experience, not only for my students, but for me as well. Remembering that I, too, must extend past my comfort zone and seek new activities allowed me to create an environment in which my students can only benefit. So, my question to you is this: **What’s in your pudding?**

Photo use approved by LSU Lab School.

**I knew
instantly that
I’d stumbled
onto my newest
unit.**



THE DANCE DIGEST

BY **BRANDON HERWICK,**
@BROOKLYNDREAMER

THE CUPID SHUFFLE: KNOWN CLASSIC TO NEW AND CREATIVE

They got a brand new dance, you gotta move your muscle.

Brand new dance, it's called the Cupid Shuffle.

It don't matter if you're young or you're old, here we go.

We gon' show you how it go.

The Cupid Shuffle, a song by DJ Casper, provides melodic instruction for participants to take part in a simple 4-wall line dance. Performed at school dances, at weddings, and in many physical education classes, the Cupid Shuffle is one of the most popular line dances that exist, right up there with the Wobble, the Chicken Dance, and the Electric Slide. The most popular choreography of the dance includes shuffling to the right, then shuffling to the left, then kicking your feet forward, and then making a quarter turn to face a new wall. It's catchy, fun, and easy to remember and perform.

But what if the Cupid Shuffle could be more? What if this dance could be a vessel for group creativity, a vehicle for student contribution and expression, an avenue for something new and engaging by way of something known and established? What if you could recreate the choreography of its catchy verse and chorus into something even more engaging? I'm here to tell you that all of these are possible!

So. We know that, in order to stay with the rhythm of the music, we need to move right, move left, face forward, and then do a quarter-turn. But with this order of directional movement established, the options to add our own personal twists are endless! If you'd like an example, OPEN has activity

plans and choreography for the original dance and for two fitness versions, each focusing on a different component of Health-Related Fitness. One of my favorite versions of the Cupid Shuffle blossomed while I was co-teaching with Elyse Loughlin, an outstanding teacher, OPEN Trainer, and very energetic dancer. Elyse and I were leading our students in the Cupid Shuffle when she spontaneously encouraged our students to make the next segment of movements "our own." Then she performed the next set of movements crouched low moving right, then left like a ninja, kicking her legs out to the side and rotating. Amazed and inspired, I danced my next set of movements like a Rockette. Our class followed with their own personal versions of a Heisman Trophy football player, a swimmer, an eagle, a unicorn, a ballerina, a kangaroo, and a rockstar. From this class, the Creative Cupid Shuffle was born.

The Creative Cupid Shuffle illuminated the idea that while teaching the known can be fun and familiar for us and for our students, seeking to recreate the old into something new can be even more rewarding. New creations from old dances and activities can be simple to develop; all it takes is starting with a question. Ask yourself and your students what's missing, what can be added, and how more purpose or a different objective can be applied. Allow time for these seeds of creativity to grow, and care for them with encouragement, time, and effort. With them, you will create new ways for others to try, learn, question, create, and then try the process for themselves.

Down, down, do your dance, do your dance (We got a brand new style y'all)!








Join the **Active Schools** Movement!

Take action to help K-12 schools provide all students with physical education and before, during and after school physical activity opportunities – **because Active Kids Do Better!**

Share and engage in Active Schools' vision to reimagine school environments to provide opportunities for academic, social, emotional, **and** physical learning so that all children have the ability, confidence, and desire to lead active, healthy lives.

**Become part of the 36,000+ individuals
("champions") affiliated with over 23,000
schools reaching more than 13 million students
– enroll now as an Active Schools Champion!**



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Active Schools is a national collaborative of 90+ partner organizations. OPEN was one of two partners recognized as 2018 Active Schools Partners of the Year.

HOW?

Go to www.activeschoolsus.org and click the blue Sign Up button in the upper right corner. It's free, quick and easy.

Once enrolled, you have the option of affiliating with one or more schools or districts. If you do so, those schools will be enrolled as well, which means they are eligible for grants given by Active Schools partner organizations.

WHY?

You will receive our monthly e-newsletter full of free resources, grant opportunities, and information about special events.

You will have access to our Partner Discounts page where 20 Active Schools partner organizations provide discounts of 10-75%.

And most important, you will be adding your voice to the Active Schools Movement.

In addition to physical education teachers, Active Schools focuses on three important groups that influence what goes on in schools – principals, parents, and classroom teachers. Please encourage these individuals in your network to enroll as well.



Physical activity is an important part of our children's physical and mental development, so it's critical that we make it a priority in the school day."

Shannon Miller
7-time Olympic medalist, mother of two,
Active Schools Ambassador

I first used a projector in physical education in 2004, and I've been using one in my classes to teach, assess, and motivate my students ever since. They're great tools, but there are several factors to consider when deciding which is right for your classes.

TECH REVIEW: **PROJECTORS** IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

BY **KEVIN TILLER,**
@PHYSEDREVIEW

1

PRICE

There are literally hundreds of models to choose from, and the old adage that “you get what you pay for” definitely applies. More expensive models will get you better features and a brighter, crisper projection. Prices range from a couple hundred dollars to well over \$100,000 for highly advanced models. I find that the models fall into three groups: what I'll call “regular,” “short throw,” and “ultra-short throw” projectors. Read on to learn about each.

2

LUMENS

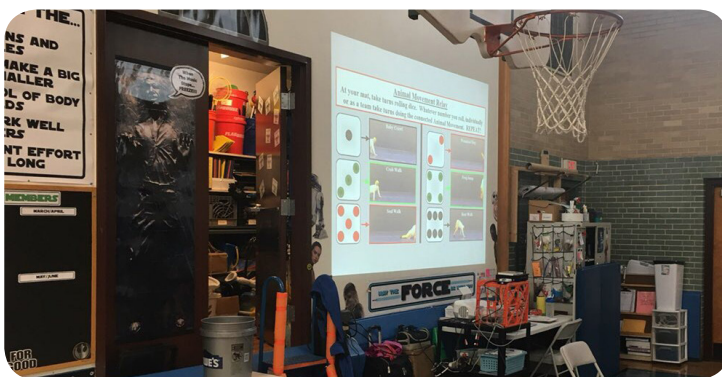
A lumen is a measure of the total quantity of visible light emitted by a source. As it relates to projectors, think of it this way: lumens = brightness. The more lumens, the brighter the projector—and more is better. For most gyms, a projector with at least 2,000 lumens will work. If you can limit the light in your gym by blocking natural light or turning off a section of your overhead lighting, you may be able to get away with fewer. If possible, before buying a projector, I suggest you borrow one and test it out in various locations in your gym. You may find that one area is better than another.

3

REGULAR, SHORT THROW. OR ULTRA SHORT THROW

I use the word “throw” to describe how far away the projector will sit from the wall or screen. The shorter the throw, the more expensive it will be. When considering your needs, ask yourself: How big is your gym? Do you have enough space to place the projector on a cart? How will you protect it from damage? If you choose to mount it, who will do that work?

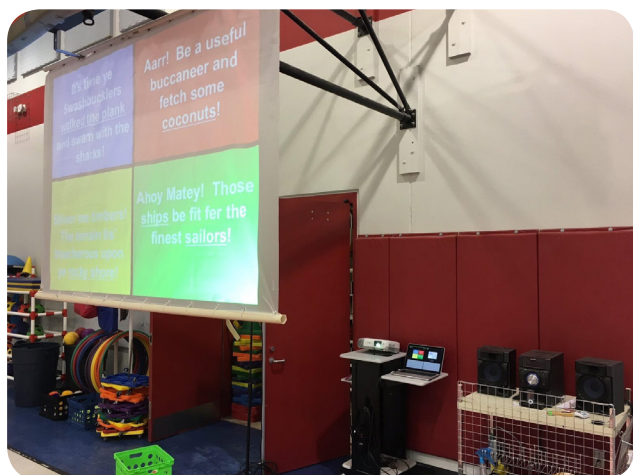
If you have a very large gym, you may be able to use a “regular” projector. But if you teach in a small gym, you probably need one that sits close to the wall. I use an “ultra-short throw” projector because my gym is very small (2,400 square feet). The projector is inside the orange crate in the lower right-hand corner of the picture to the right.



4

SCREEN OR NO SCREEN

As you can see in the photo above, I currently use a wall in my gym as a projector screen. It's white and works perfectly. Other teachers I know use a projector screen, a concrete cinder block wall, or something creative, like this set-up by physical education teacher Mark Jungmann.



Mark is using a rear projection screen in his classes, meaning it projects from behind the screen rather than in front of it. Then he hangs a frosted shower curtain from the backboard of one of the basketball hoops in his gym. With the projector against the wall, the result looks like the photo to the left.

For about \$20, he has created a homemade screen that allows him to use a “regular” projector (keeping costs down) and protect it from the action in the gym.

There's a small but growing community of physical education teachers who are doing some great things in their gyms with projectors. People often create and then

share (for free) their resources on Twitter. (My own resources can be seen [on my website](#).)

In closing, I encourage you to consider using a projector in your gym. It's a worthy investment that will open a world of possibility for your lessons.

Whether they've been teaching for one year or 20, everyone needs to relieve stress and recharge their batteries so they can be at their best for their students. As physical educators, we can sometimes build in physical breaks for ourselves by being active with our students, but not always. If you're looking for ways to help you become your better self for next year, or even if you've found yourself a few steps from burnout, here are some tips and techniques you can try.

RECHARGE THOSE BATTERIES

BY **MIKE MILLER, @COACHMILLERPE**

A GUIDE TO SELF-CARE FOR THE PE PROFESSIONAL

SET SOME BOUNDARIES

Work. Life. Balance. The reality is this: if you want to be great at your craft and provide the best possible physical education for your students, you're going to have to do some work outside of school hours. Many of us, including myself, also coach, so we may get home to our own families late. But no matter how many extra hours you put in, make sure you set some time aside for yourself.

Better time management as a whole will yield more home time. Try reserving the first hour or two after you get home to take care of all your planning and school-based responsibilities so that the rest of your evening can be dedicated solely to you. (I like to think of this like getting your chemistry homework done right away in high school!) Maximizing your prep periods inside school for planning and reflection will help as well.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

This should go without saying, as we all want to be a positive role model for our students. But it can be hard to carve out the time. You know it as well as I do: Physical activity is proven to release endorphins and relieve stress! Whether it's a full-fledged workout at the gym or just a quick set or two while watching tv or writing a lesson plan, make sure you're taking care of yourself.

Two huge fitness trends that have taken hold in my class are HIIT and Tabata-format workouts. 4–8 minutes of high-intensity movement holds the power to help any teacher fight off the woes of a day gone awry, or that 2nd grade class that just doesn't quit. Or, if there's truly no time for exercise, at least allow yourself to take a deep breath! Deep-breathing exercises instantly reduce anxiety by sending more oxygen to your brain.

TAP INTO YOUR RESOURCES

There are plenty of resources around for teachers, both inside and outside your school. If the most stressful period in your day is your 3rd grade class, ask their classroom teacher what they've found to work well for their students. You can also find online resources; let OPEN, Twitter, and Google be your best friends. There are people out there willing to help, willing to listen, and willing to offer you their ideas to make your life—and the lives of your students—better. Work smarter, not harder.

Whichever approach you take, make sure you're allowing yourself to put your best self forward. You owe it to your students to provide them with the best education possible, and you owe it to yourself to love doing it.

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE ENGAGEMENT PUZZLE

BY **ROSS CHAKRIAN**, @MR_C_PE

What are your students' thoughts and feelings about particular lessons, units, or content?

What do your students find most enjoyable about your classes?

What are the strategies and tools that evoke the highest levels of engagement from your students?

Last summer, I embarked on a journey to change my teaching practices for the better. As I reflected upon my practices, I tried to answer these questions myself. As I reflected, it occurred to me that my perceptions of my students' thoughts and feelings might not actually match up with theirs. After all, as well as I think I know my students, it's not exactly fair (or particularly accurate) to put words in their mouths. I thought to myself, "How can I get my students' true reactions to these questions?"

The answer was unbelievably simple: just ask them.

So, this past school year, I began to use paper and pencil surveys for a variety of units with my 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students to try to get to the heart of these questions. I presented some surveys like an entrance ticket at the start of a particular unit, and I used them to help inform my instruction. Other surveys were designed more like an exit ticket, given out at the end of a unit so my students could reflect and give feedback on all the things we did.

The surveys were always anonymous. This gave my students the ability to write their true thoughts and feelings in response to the questions, providing answers that were as honest as possible. Also, before handing out each of the surveys, I always made sure to let my students know that they wouldn't be graded in any way on their responses; the main purpose of these surveys was to help me understand what they find enjoyable, engaging, meaningful, and valuable in order to give them a better experience in physical education class.

The results were always interesting, and in most cases, aligned with the enormous amount of research literature centered on student engagement. In her book, *Just Ask Us: Kids Speak Out on Student Engagement*, Heather Wolpert-Gawron shares the trends she aggregated from years' worth of student surveys asking, "What engages students?"

She boiled it down to nine themes (and expands upon each as a chapter in her book):

- 1. Let students work together.**
- 2. Make learning more visual by using technology.**
- 3. Connect what is being learned to the real world.**
- 4. Let students move around.**
- 5. Give students choices.**
- 6. Show that you, as the teacher, are human.**
- 7. Help students create something with what has been learned.**
- 8. Teach students new things in new ways.**
- 9. Mix things up.**

If you're looking for a good resource that will inform your practice and give you useful strategies related to engagement, I encourage you to give this book a read.

BULLETIN BOARDS

BY JOSHUA TEBO

1



This is the Blair Elementary Word Wall, which consists of common tier-two vocabulary words that scholars see and hear regularly in physical education class. Six vocabulary words per letter were created, laminated, and stuck to the wall. Additional vocabulary words are added with dry erase markers.

This "What's On Your Plate" display was created in conjunction with ProHealth Care's nutritional program, which our scholars receive during after-school programming. I used this visual along with "do now" classroom activities to send a consistent message of healthy eating.

2



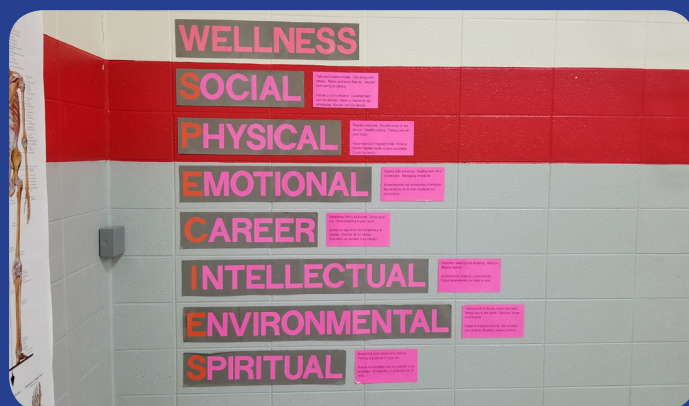
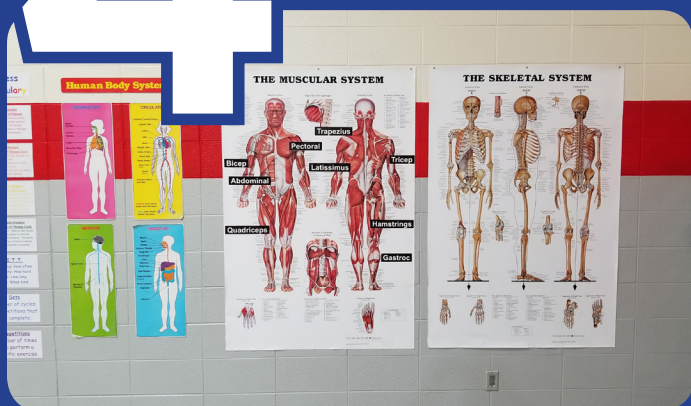
3



This ROYGBIV display is the hub for Blair's personalized fitness club. Every 3-4 weeks, our scholars choose the activities they'd like to complete in order to move up a level. Once they meet their goals, they add their name and stamp to the display. Our school's theme was pirates, so I entitled the year's club "Blair's Pirate Fitness Club." Each level corresponded with the different ranks and roles of a pirate ship.

4

These two images show the different body systems and wellness areas we teach to our grade 4 and 5 scholars.



5

Finally, this board shows a short description of Offense and Defense using three levels of intensity: cold, warm, and hot.



SPORT EDUCATION:

BY **CHARLA TEDDER
(PARKER) KRAHNKE**

@NCPE4LIFE

As a veteran physical education teacher, I have realized that every class I teach has a different personality and therefore needs to be taught with a different technique.

The biggest challenge I face teaching high school is to get every student to participate daily. My goal is to help each of them find something that interests them so they can continue lifelong physical activity.

In order to succeed in this goal and prepare students for the demands of the 21st Century, I've had to be willing to continue my own education by attending workshops. In the fall of 2000, I was chosen as one of ten teachers in North Carolina to attend the first Physical Education Partnership with Sport Education (PEPSE) workshop. We were trained to implement a physical education model called Sport Education, which was first developed by Daryl Sidentop at Ohio State University.

Each teacher was paired with a university partner to assist in this implementation, and I was fortunate enough to be paired with Appalachian State University.

THE MODEL THAT NEVER GROWS OLD

With the guidance of the PEPSE project and ASU, Sport Education gave me a new perspective on physical education. I was excited about teaching again, and students who didn't want to participate before suddenly found it exciting.

The Sport Education model focuses on building teamwork, relationships, sportsmanship, leadership, and game strategies that enhance participation. The elements of this model include:

- A training camp, officiating clinic, and pre-season/regular season competition consisting of small-sided games, a tournament, and a celebration in which everyone is a winner.
- Students actively engage in their own learning as they choose how they will participate. Each student has a role on his/her team (captain, co-captain, coach, manager, exercise, specialist, publicist or sports council).
- The team with the most points at the end of a two- to three-week unit wins. Points are earned through student participation and activities like independent performance of warm-ups and successful completion of tasks. Students do not want to let down their peers, so they focus on improving their learning.

The first unit in which I taught using this model, participation increased 100% and school attendance improved. All students learned responsibility by performing their duties. It also increased social skills as teams worked together toward common goals in initiative activities and developing successful offenses.

This style of teaching also provided more opportunities for students to learn from each other. They practiced the cognitive skills necessary to grasp the rules of basketball and officiate a game. They learned good sportsmanship by signing player contracts, and they displayed team spirit by being supportive of each other as to avoid penalty points due to poor sportsmanship.

“ The Sport Education model focuses on building teamwork, relationships, sportsmanship, leadership, and game strategies that enhance participation. ”

Students learned to trust and encourage each other. One particularly self-contained, exceptional student, after being paired with a teammate, began to actively participate. She learned to keep stats, officiate, and play in full-court basketball games.

Students also learned that if they work together, anything's possible. One student stated, "You don't have to be an athlete to be successful."

I've presented several of these workshops around the country, and I always seem to learn something from them as well. Seeing the excitement on the faces of these teachers when they're learning something new reminds me why I do what I do. At this time in my life, I'm unable to actively participate in the activities I enjoy most (like tennis and dancing), but I've found a way to fill that void through teaching and helping others.

All teachers have different teaching strategies—this just happens to work well for me. My advice to any new teachers is this: always keep an open mind, and be willing to change. Your teaching style should be based on the types of students you teach. There's nothing that works for absolutely everyone. Continue learning for the benefit of your students; using different teaching strategies will keep you engaged in the profession longer, and your students will appreciate the hard work you put into the daily lessons.

I can honestly say that after 32 years of teaching, there's nothing I'd rather have done as a career than teach physical education. It does help to have complete support from administration and a great department, but there was never a day when I didn't enjoy getting up and going to school.

It can best be said by my favorite quote: **"Love what you do, and you will never have to work a day in your life."**

First of all: congrats! You've chosen such a great profession. You're about to play a crucial, essential, vital role in molding young students into healthy adults. (No pressure!) Being a physical education teacher is the greatest adventure that I've ever been on, and I can still say how awesome it is after over 20 years in the biz.

GO FORTH AND CONQUER, FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS!

BY **STEPHANIE DICKSON, @KCKFITSCHOOLS**

NEVER GIVE UP! NEVER SURRENDER!

Every year, I run a day of training for our new PE teachers. (We're really lucky to have the time dedicated to all sorts of learning and any necessary hand-holding or deep-breathing exercises.) I asked last year's class of new teachers to give me some feedback on what they thought was important in their first few weeks on the job and what was vital to their growth. Here's what they said.

FIND A FRIEND.

Yes: Find a friend, teacher, custodian, secretary—anyone who can be your go-to person. Someone of whom you can ask anything and not feel like you'll get laughed at. Personally, I asked some crazy questions my first year, like what I should do if I have to go to the bathroom. Nobody had told me where to go—or even whether we had a bathroom! These are things you need to know! That friend (or friends) will be your lifeline and your key to success for the first year.

If you're an elementary PE teacher, you should also rely on your custodian, your lunch person, and your secretary. Another person of strength will probably be your partner in the PE department, if you have one. Use these people wisely.

MEET AND FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR ADMIN.

One of my teachers scheduled an appointment with their principal the first day in July. They talked about the focus of PE and the schedules, found the equipment, and nailed down basic logistics

before the school year started. This helped him feel like he had a month more of planning and could hit the ground running in August.

Always make sure your principal knows that your gym doors are open to them. Invite them to your classes. Inform them about what units you're teaching or any special activities you have planned. Sell yourself and what physical education is all about.

USE AVAILABLE LESSON PLANS AND CURRICULUM.

Get to know which curriculum your school district uses or can access. (OPEN is a free curriculum that is standards-based, so that is amazing!) See if your district has pacing or curriculum guides that break down units of study for the school year. Be ready to over-plan for each lesson, and know that what worked well for one class might not work for another class. Be reflective at the end of each day so you can plan better for next year.

ROLL WITH IT.

There are going to be days when you're an amazing rock star teacher, and then there'll be days where you don't know what happened! We all have days that are like that. It's how we react that is the true testament to personal growth!

ALWAYS BE A LEARNER.

Listen to others. Read books on a variety of subjects. Join and engage with others on Twitter. Listen to the OPEN Podcast for great information from other PE teachers around the country. Ask questions. And always strive to do your best for yourself and for the kiddos that you teach! They need you!

NOW...GO FORTH AND KICK BUTT!

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