



June 2013

Let's Go!



President's Message

Zoe Hamilton

Well another school year is coming to an end! Once again, it has been an eventful year for PESIC and physical education teachers across the province.

PESIC hosted a winter provincial conference in Corner Brook. It was a huge success, not only in terms of the activity sessions but also in making a closer connection with the teachers on the West coast. Membership in that part of our province has increased and we saw the formation of a Western Regional Affiliate Council. On behalf of the NLTA and PESIC, I extend congratulations to the Conference Committee and thank all who committed great enthusiasm to become involved. PESIC would also like to acknowledge the support of the Western School District who granted release time to all PE teachers in their district, attended some sessions and the awards banquet. That kind of commitment demonstrates to teachers the value of physical education. Thank you to all the presenters and sponsors who made the experience rich with knowledge and expertise. Physical Educators appreciate the time and effort that goes in to planning professional development sessions.

PESIC also extends gratitude to MUN's School of Human Kinetics and Recreation (SHKR) who generously sponsored the Friday Social Event at the conference. Dr. Scott MacKinnon's (acting Dean) presence at sessions and words of encouragement displayed the strengthened partnership MUN and PESIC are enjoying. Continuing this support, Dr. MacKinnon and Dr. Linda Rohr joined PESIC during provincial planning meetings offering cooperation with such items as student mentorship and future conference planning. MUN's SHKR and Faculty of Education were instrumental in aiding PESIC make the certification change for BPE (teaching) so that it now reads: Major: Physical Education (K-12 Teaching). You can see more details on this later in this issue.

At the PESIC BGM a new provincial executive and regional representatives were elected. Please note their region and contact information located in the box to the right. In April this group met in St. John's for Provincial Strategic Planning Meetings. New and experienced members reviewed PESIC's role and responsibilities within the NLTA during a session led by George Tucker, Administrative Officer of Professional Development at the NLTA. Please look for important email messages and updates from your

Regional Reps and PESIC's Communications Officer, Andrew Martin. PESIC will be asking for your input and guidance as we proceed through the new organizational structure of our education system. PESIC is only as strong as the voice of its members! If you are not a member please complete the membership form on our website. Remember, if your membership is not current you cannot be eligible for such benefits as travel grants.

The budget announcement this spring has provided an atmosphere of uncertainty for teachers. Be assured that PESIC is actively pursuing these issues. As physical educators it is important to inform PESIC of any issues or changes you experience as the transition to two provincial districts evolves. Without knowledge of the issues PESIC cannot accurately represent our profession. Please take time to respond to the survey Andrew is distributing, contact your Regional Representative or any member of the Provincial Executive. We would love to hear from you.

Enjoy this issue of *Let's Go!* and have a safe and active summer.

Yours in Physical Education,
Zoe Hamilton
President, PESIC

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Re-Making the Case for Physical Education in NL

“It’s better to build children than repair adults.” (Jill Van Dijk)

by Zoe Hamilton

The budget announcement this spring has provided an atmosphere of uncertainty for teachers. In recent years the Newfoundland and Labrador physical education model had become one of the best in the country. In 2002 the creation of the position of Physical Education Consultant was appointed to the Program Development Division at the Department of Education. “This position is dedicated to strengthening the provincial physical education curriculum. The new consultant will work directly with board specialists, principals and teachers to highlight the importance of physical activity and encourage our students to become more physically active,” stated then Education Minister Judy Foote in a January 3, 2003 news release. In 2005, mandatory physical education was implemented in high school programming and directly supported by \$1.4 million in new physical education equipment. An additional \$2.6 million was allocated as part of the Provincial Wellness Plan and Healthy Students’ Healthy Schools’ initiative (October 2006). These efforts at the Department of Education were supported in each district through Physical Education Program Specialists. Linking departmental objectives with district physical educators and schools, these Program Specialists provide professional development and guidance in the implementation of curriculum objectives and student assessment within these curricula.



The students of this province also benefit from being taught by a large number of physical education specialist teachers. In a provincial Physical Education Survey conducted in 2007 by Dr. Antony Card, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, in partnership with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Physical Education Special Interest Council (PESIC), 72 percent of schools surveyed had a dedicated physical education specialist teacher. “Physical education specialists are more likely to: have well-planned programmes that consider pupils’ development in several domains (e.g. physical and affective), individualise instruction, deliver inclusive lessons, use recommended assessment strategies, provide opportunities for skill development, have success in enhancing pupils’ fitness levels and have a positive impact on the overall school

climate” (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012, p.365). These researchers also noted that “when physical education specialists are removed from schools, significant decreases in vigorous activity time and skill development have been noted” (p. 365).

Throughout those years, seven physical education specialist teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador were recognized by Physical and Health Education Canada receiving national Physical Education Teaching Excellence Awards.

With the mentioned government initiatives and supports, physical education in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the top in the country, exhibiting an ever increasing commitment to the vast obesity and inactivity issues afflicting our youth.

PESIC is now concerned that this progress and success may be compromised by the structural uncertainty that the latest budget announcement has created. The Department of Education Consultant has been made redundant, physical education teaching positions face cutbacks and we are waiting to see how district restructuring will affect program specialists. PHE Canada (2013) reported “In all, 90 percent of Canadian parents feel physical education and health education are important, while only 77 percent are satisfied with the quality of the teaching. The difference points to a structural problem where for decades physical and health education has been prioritized less than math, language arts or the sciences.” Newfoundland and Labrador was developing a strong, supportive structural base. The Minister of Education in 2003 voiced the acknowledgement of fostering meaningful physical education programs when she said: “Just as increasing literacy levels depend on getting the youngest children interested in reading, so must we introduce the importance of daily physical activity to our young people.” Newfoundland and Labrador also enjoys a high quality of teaching as evidenced by teacher awards and the high quality of professional development being delivered. The progress that Newfoundland and Labrador physical education has made over the years is in jeopardy and therefore so is the physical literacy of our children and youth.

Currently, there are a number of curricula in varying stages of updating and implementation. Without a consultant at the Department level devoted to physical education curriculum development and redevelopment, PESIC is concerned about how this work will be completed. Physical educators await professional development for curriculum and assessment strategies which is provided by district program specialists. Again, without a program specialist devoted to physical education, that support will not be as readily available.

Cuts to the allocation of specialist teachers also provide concerns. The amount of time allotted in the program of studies has not



changed, but the curriculum is expected to be delivered with a reduced amount of specialty teaching units. The psychomotor, cognitive and affective skills needed by children to become active, healthy members of society remains the same and evidence (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012; PHE Canada, 2013; Jones, 2013) dictates that qualified physical education specialists have the intimate knowledge of skill development and the pedagogical repertoire to teach lessons for maximum participation, skill and strategic development, implement inclusionary practices AND adapt the lesson for those with special needs. “Not only is the physical education teacher imparting knowledge, they must also be deeply familiar with fundamental movement skills so that they can recognize proper form and help a student to build these skills in a fun, positive and motivating environment. This is key because we know that if students do not develop this basic physical literacy, they are more likely to lead a highly sedentary, and ultimately unhealthy, lifestyle,” states Chris Jones, CEO of PHE Canada.

The elements presented above have far reaching effects. The subject area of physical education is designed to teach students the fundamental motor skills that are necessary to successfully participate in and appreciate physical activity and physical health. Quality physical education, and by extension many of the extracurricular physical activities that are organized in schools,

also nurture a child’s social and emotional development as they learn to share, practice strategies to get along with others and gain confidence through the responsibility that physical activities provide. As a child develops through our school system, the course objectives become increasingly more challenging and complicated, each year of development building upon the last. School culture is enhanced in every school where a quality physical education program is found. The physical education class is where a child can be taught and practices the basic skills that allow them to feel comfortable enough to be involved in school activities. Student safety also becomes a concern in this high-energy, high-activity curriculum area when non-specialists are asked to teach a subject area in which they do not feel comfortable (Fletcher & Mandigo, 2012).

The recent cuts in teacher allocations and program support has set progress in physical education in Newfoundland and Labrador back about 10 years to the ultimate detriment of the children and future adults of Newfoundland and Labrador.

“There is no higher priority in life than health. Without it, all other skills lack meaning and utility.”

References

- Fletcher, T. & Mandigo, J. (2012). The primary schoolteacher and physical education: a review of research and implications for Irish physical education. *Irish Educational Studies* 31:3, 363-376.
- Jones, Chris. (2013). Kids deserve phys-ed specialists Retrieved June 12, 2013 from <http://www.phecanada.ca/resources/news/kids-deserve-phys-ed-specialists-column>.
- PHE Canada (2013). Survey: Canadian parents show strong support for physical and health education. Friday, March 1, 2013. <http://www.phecanada.ca/resources/news/survey-canadian-parents-show-strong-support-physical-and-health-education>
- Zoe Hamilton teaches physical education at Davis Elementary in Carbonear and is the current PESIC President.*

PESIC Looking to Start Up Regional PESIC Affiliate Councils

by Paul Hamilton

PESIC regional representatives are looking for Physical Education teachers that are interested in becoming executive members for their respective regions. NLTA provides funding to get affiliate councils up and running, providing financial assistance for setup and meetings. Regional representatives are looking for Physical Education teachers that may be interested in helping form a regional council. The goal of the regional council is to get feedback from teachers, assist with possible PD development, sharing of resources and many other topics related to teaching physical education in Newfoundland and Labrador. Please contact a representative if you are interested in helping improve Physical Education in your local region and/or Newfoundland and Labrador. Regional representatives for your respective region can be found at the PESIC website (<http://pesic.weebly.com/executive-contact.html>).

Paul Hamilton teaches Physical Education at Harbour Grace Primary School and is the current Western Avalon regional representative for PESIC.

What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights: Reflection on PESIC Conference 2013

by Jessica Letto

The PESIC Conference held in Corner Brook this year was fabulous. As a new teacher, it was a very rewarding experience for me both professionally and personally.

It started off with a snowshoe trek through the woods which led to a grand outdoor traditional feast! The food was great and I got to meet physical education teachers from all across the province. From here I got the opportunity to learn some new teaching strategies, activities, and games that they are implementing in their schools.

The conference sessions were very educational and a great source of professional development. I took what I learned from the sessions, such as omniken activities, group games, and lacrosse, to name a few, and used the new ideas to organize and run a Junior Jamboree for five communities of the North Coast of Labrador which I would host later this year.

Overall, I thought the PESIC Conference was a great source of professional development for physical education teachers across the province, and I believe it's very important to be constantly learning new ideas, activities, and strategies in order to fully implement a physical education program in our schools. The 2013 PESIC Conference offered me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and bring these new ideas back to my school!

Jessica Letto teaches physical education at Northern Lights Academy in Rigolet and is the current PESIC district representative for the Labrador School Board.

by Debbie Shortall

It is that time of the year again when your sporting and intramural programs are coming to an end and your planning for Sports Days and last minute school outings are now on your "to-do-list". Let's not forget our Professional Growth Planning as well.

I have been involved for the past ten years or more as a participant, presenter, and as a committee member for PESIC. Throughout my years of involvement I have grown as a teacher both inside and outside of the classroom. The PESIC conferences throughout the years have helped me keep things fresh, helped expose me to new activities, sports, and skills in a way I may never have thought in teaching my eager and energized students. For me, the conferences in early September each year have been a great way to kick off my school year. I have participated in many sessions over the years and I attribute my attendance at these conferences in playing a huge factor as to why the students in my classes are highly engaged and enthusiastic about coming to participate in physical education classes.

This year the PESIC Conference 2013 was held in Corner Brook, February 21-23. What a conference! I was able to refresh my skills in building outdoor snow structures, outdoor survival, snow shoeing and skiing skills in the great outdoors. Inside, I participated in a great new game called "Goal Ball". The presenters for this session were legally blind; what a great game for inclusion. I was also able to participate in a Lacrosse session, DrumFit session, technology, archery and a session on Free Fun play using activity cards. Again, by attending this conference, I was able to modify and introduce these new activities and sports to my eager students.

Get involved! The PESIC Conferences are held every two years, and they are held for you, the leaders of your school. The planning, the detail and the countless meetings that occur to have these conferences is a fabulous experience for me. Why not try it as a member or as a participant. I promise you will have a great experience and will bring lots of ideas back to help kick off your school.

Debbie Shortall teaches physical education at Vanier Elementary in St. John's and is the current PESIC Eastern Avalon regional representative.



International Project Overseas 2013: Teachers Teaching Teachers

Project Overseas (PO) is a joint endeavour of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and its Member organizations to help overseas partners deliver professional in-service programs to teachers in developing countries. The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association supports the Project Overseas initiative and each year, one individual teacher is chosen to participate and travel to either South America, Africa or the Caribbean. This year, Dana Pittman, a Physical Education Teacher from Sprucewood Academy in Grand Falls-Windsor is honored and privileged to have been chosen as the NLTA's participant in Project Overseas. Dana sends sincere gratitude to the NLTA and CTF to have been



accepted for this exceptional opportunity. Dana will be a member of a team of four Canadian teachers who will travel to the country of St. Lucia in the Caribbean on July 7, 2013. The focus of the Project this year is Special Education where the Canadian team will spend three weeks working with over 100 St. Lucian teachers with the aim of improving and enhancing their educational programs.

Dana Pittman teaches Physical Education at Sprucewood Academy in Grand Falls-Windsor and is the current PESIC Central regional representative.

PESIC Awards and Recognition Recipients 2013

by Luke Neville

On the weekend of February 21-23, 2013, many physical educators in our province gathered for our very first "winter" conference in Corner Brook. While the conference covered the curricular spectrum, the snow covered grounds gave teachers the opportunity to explore the many winter activities that were presented. This was not an option during our usual September conferences. It was a huge success! Each conference hosts an award luncheon that celebrates and recognizes its award-winning physical educators. This year's award recipients were...

Service Awards

10 Years of Teaching Service

Brian Kendrick, Charlene Shears, Jacinta McGrath, Jason Quilty, Karen Byrne, Rhonda Martin, Scott Strickland, Vanessa Garnier

20 Years of Teaching Service

Andrew Battcock, Cecil Warren, Eddie O'Keefe, Jennifer Parsons, John Elkins, Lisa Hare-Walsh, Paul Hepditch, Wendell Sparkes

30 Years of Teaching Service

Gord Casey, Edmund Turpin

Award of Honour

Charlene Shears

PHE Canada Dr. Andy Anderson Young Professional Award

Felicia Roul

District Teacher of the Year Awards

Edmund Turpin – Labrador District

Sean Dwyer – Western District

Michelle Cooke – Central District

Winston Taylor – Eastern District

Luke Neville teaches physical education at St. Peter's Junior High in Mt. Pearl and is the current PESIC Vice-President.

Have “The Talk” With Students – Sportsmanship

by Zoe Hamilton



Sportsmanship is a topic that Physical Educators deal with on a daily basis. Often times “poor sportsmanship” leaves the gymnasium and arguments ensue in the classroom or playground after school. Classroom teachers voice their concerns to me periodically as they have to deal with the fallout from someone being a poor sport after PE class or intramurals. Surprisingly, many teachers and coaches have difficulty defining and explaining sportsmanship to students. To support the teachers at my school I e-mailed them the message below. With their help a consistent message was delivered throughout the school which helped student understanding and also that of the teachers.

Dear Teachers,

It happens all the time but is amplified during intramurals – sportsmanship. Once again I have witnessed some examples of poor sportsmanship and many examples of good sportsmanship.

I am discussing sportsmanship in PE class in its many forms daily. I think responsible, respectful, fun competition is important which is one reason I feel intramurals are important.

I need your support. At your convenience please discuss sportsmanship with your classes either formally or during teachable moments (my favorite). Health and Religious Education classes may be a good fit. Below is a link to a site that discusses sportsmanship almost exactly like the speech I give the students. This info outlines my beliefs about sportsmanship and may be helpful for you for a consistent message and it provides examples to discuss. This discussion fits neatly into our Safe and Caring School plan.

Kids know this stuff but practicing it in the heat of the moment is more difficult for some than for others. Many adults find these concepts difficult!! It's okay to be mad or disappointed but it's how we deal with these emotions that make the difference.

http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/sports/sportsmanship.html

Thanks for all your help and encouragement.

Zoe Hamilton teaches physical education at Davis Elementary in Carbonear and is the current PESIC President.

PHE Canada Conference Event

by Andrew Martin

The last Physical and Health Education Canada Conference was in Halifax, May 9-12, 2012. The next PHE conference is in Winnipeg, October 24-26, 2013. We are planning to be in a position to offer grants to help offset the cost of attending this conference. This will be a great professional development opportunity for those who attend. If you would like more information on this conference visit www.phecanada.ca/events/conference2013. As well, you are encouraged to become a PHE Canada member to access their resources and programs to enhance your PE programs. Check out their website (www.phecanada.ca/) for more information and news articles on what is happening in the PE world.



If you were unable to attend the PESIC conference that was held in Corner Brook this year and still would like a PESIC membership, the cost is \$20.00 per year. Please contact Trish Boyer at tdboyer@nf.sympatico.ca for more information.

Andrew Martin teaches physical education at Dunne Memorial Academy in St. Mary's and is the current Communications Officer for PESIC.



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@Mr_PhysEd

Results of PESIC's Work to Ensure that MUN B.P.E. Graduates K-12 Training is Recognized by MUN as Well as Employers

by Kellie Baker

What is the change exactly?

On Memorial Self-Service under program of study Academic Program screen (SGASTDN) under "Field of Study" the following will be listed:

"Major: Physical Education (K-12 Teaching)." (even though "Teaching" is not actually defined as a Major.)

On the transcript of both current and graduated students it will now say:

Current Program of Study:

Degree: Bachelor of Physical Education

Faculty: Human Kinetics and Recreation

Major: Physical Education (K-12 Teaching)

When does it take place? Which convocation will have the first change?

The change will be effective immediately, and it will be retroactive.

Does it apply to all past graduates?

Although no new transcripts will be issued to past graduates, those graduates can legitimately and honestly state that the registrar's office at MUN would also consider their degree a K-12 teaching option. It will be retroactive; a student who graduated 5 years ago and requests a transcript now will see on his/her transcript the new (K-12 Teaching) designation as program of study, rather than the old (Teaching).

NOTE: *A PE graduate's degree name or parchment does not include (Teaching), so the parchment and degree name will not change. In other words, the degree certificate that you frame will not change, just the transcript, but this means that, as stated above, all graduates can legitimately and honestly state that the registrar's office at MUN would consider their degree a K-12 teaching option!*

Why Become a PESIC Member?



by Luke Neville

PESIC membership provides those individuals with a 'special interest' in physical education with an opportunity to voice their ideas and ultimately effect change. This Special Interest Council is constantly listening, searching, and evolving in order to better provide our physical educators with effective and practical professional learning. It is very important that we all take an active role in molding and guiding the direction of physical education. Becoming a PESIC member is an excellent way to collaborate with other professionals who also share this 'special interest'. Other benefits include:

- Free PHE Canada membership.
- PESIC represents all PE teachers at the NLTA; voice your concerns to your PESIC Rep.
- Funding is available to attend a PHE National conference or Provincial conference (Labrador members). We offer one grant per district. This is above and beyond the NLTA Out-of-Province Grant.
- PESIC members are entitled to apply to receive the Mentor Fund which provides funding for one individual to attend the PHE Canada Leadership Camp as a mentor.

Luke Neville teaches physical education at St. Peter's Junior High in Mt. Pearl and is the current PESIC Vice-President.