Crossing Borders and Changing Boundaries to Develop Innovations that Improve Outcomes

Hal A. Lawson
Hlawson@albany.edu
The lack of active, healthy lifestyles is a global problem requiring local innovations as solutions.

(Slide template courtesy of Thom McKenzie)
Three Aims

- To provide alternative design frameworks, principles, and criteria
- To stimulate action-oriented dialogue
- To contribute to colleagues’ research, program development, and policy advocacy
Main Premises 1

- Although “the global age” has arrived, we have industrial age institutions and programs

- Schools, PE & national PE are products of industrial age logic

- We confront needs and opportunities to design (create, invent) global age innovations

- Design is not predicated on “out with the old, in with the new.” Hybrids will be normative!
Main Premises 2

- We enjoy a wealth of knowledge about the beneficial outcomes stemming from active, healthy lifestyles.

- We also know a lot about exercise, sport, and health-related behavioral change.

- However, we lack enough, good evidence that shows that school PE systemically & uniquely yields desirable outcomes.
Main Premises 3

- We have not been able to “get the conditions right” for quality PE in industrial age schools.

- Industrial age schools have altered the essence of PE as a universal, public good.

- Industrial age PE in container schools harms some young people.

- Teacher-coach turnover, burnout, & elite sport commitments are predictable correlates and outcomes.
Main Premises 4

- Industrial age PE prototypes originated with leaders’ ideologies, not with relevant research

- Some PE prototypes continue despite research to the contrary

- Theory & research, joined with justifiable visions & ethics, are needed in new designs. “The Normative Leap”

- We need to figure out what it takes to show that every child matters (UK) & that no child left is behind (USA). *Do no harm* is a starting point.
My Search for Innovations that Improve Outcomes

- Phase 1: School–community designs
- Phase 2: Designing & adding Kinesiology
- Phase 3: Professional socialization theory
- Phase 4: Social exclusion, poverty, & isolation

- Phases, not steps: Back and forth, iterative and recursive searches

- Both an insider, an outsider: Crossing borders & changing boundaries to innovate
Phase 1: 1969–2008

- The community school (and school–community partnerships): A Sense of Purpose and a clear direction starting in 1969

- Schools as hubs for youth engagement, family support, and community development

- PE, sport, & HE for kids, entire families, & other adults in both school & community facilities and outside the regular school day
Liberating teachers & young people from the industrial age, assembly line curriculum & its sorting, channeling, & labeling mechanisms

Enabling universal success and enjoyment as learning and teaching–coaching proceed without threats, punishments, & marginality

Increasing youth engagement & empowerment–oriented self–determination via through choice, joint leadership, positive youth development principles, & new roles for teacher–coaches
Phase 1, con’t

- “Getting the conditions right” for PE & Sport during out-of-school time & targeting young people’s active, healthy lifestyles in schools, families and neighborhood communities

- Improving kids’ sense of connection to school and simultaneously, increasing parent involvement & engagement via “parent & family friendly” sport, exercise, and health programs

- Developing new kinds of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) for direct & indirect practice
In sum, PE in the community school model:

- Enjoyed better conditions for young people’s learning, instruction, and healthy development
- Became a school improvement resource
- Supported families’ healthy development
- Provided a hub for population change

Figure 1 Handout: New criteria contrasted with industrial age criteria: Toward action-oriented, design dialogue
Phase 2: Advancing “The Academic Discipline” with PE Connections

- Crossing borders and changing boundaries to develop an action-oriented, cross-disciplinary field (“The Name Game”)

- A performance-based discipline: Developing & strengthening connections between personal performance experiences–expertise & performance analysis

- Developing contrasts & identifying risks of sub-disciplinary orientations
Phase 2, con’t

- Alternative career preparation and development: Complementing school PE

- A vision for lifespan exercise & sport participation as part of active, healthy lifestyles....school PE as a centerpiece

- Implications for school PE designs and “outcome claims”: Preventing wishful thinking & over-promise
Phase 2, con’t

- Striving for unique, important, & systematic outcomes for PE: Using Kinesiology to prepare young people to make good choices and enjoy active, healthy lifestyles

- Kinesiology’s relevance to teacher-coaches: Indirect and direct contributions to new designs for programs and pedagogical content knowledge
Figure 3. Exercise/Sport/Health Literacy

The real world

A real situation

A model of reality

Validating the results

Real results

Understanding, structuring and simplifying the situation

Interpreting & implementing the scientific results

The scientific world

Operationalizing the problem for scientific analysis

An action-oriented scientific model

Using relevant scientific tools & analyses to solve the problem

Scientific results
Phase 3: Professional Socialization Theory and Research

- **Driver number 1:** Colleagues’ indifference, resistance, and open hostility

- **Driver number 2:** Program persistence—despite evidence of ineffectiveness and indicators of unintended harms & negative side-effects

- **Driver number 3:** What amounted to failures with my–our work in Phases 1 and 2
Phase 3, con’t

- Employing “the machine trick” to understand institutional reproduction

- Studying and employing relevant social theory to gain knowledge and understanding for institutional reforms and transformations

- Deriving 4 lessons for future work
Phase 3, con’t

- **Lesson 1**: Our new designs could not compete with colleagues’ pet ideologies, prior socialization, career plans, and career identities
- **Lesson 2**: Our frames & discourses were inadequate; colleagues did not share our perceptions of priorities and “solutions”
- **Lesson 3**: Friends & colleagues used socialization theory & research to reinforce the status quo.
- **Lesson 4**: I (& we) underestimated gatekeeper-leaders’ needs for power & authority, including what they would do to protect their positions
Looking Ahead

- We need **relational theory** and research on how to redesign professional socialization structures and processes in support of institutional reforms and transformations
- We will be wise to proceed with R & D–oriented, university–school–community partnerships for simultaneous renewal & improvement
Phase 4: Social Exclusion, Poverty, and Social Isolation

- **Outcome disparities** in health, education, social services, and their relationships

- The new **social geography of vulnerability and hardship**: Challenges and opportunities for schools, PE, and other human service systems

- Rural & indigenous community challenges

- Special urban challenges (W. J. Wilson’s work)
Phase 4, con’t

- Appreciating both **tame problems** and **wicked problems**

- Interdependent, poorly-understood, wicked problems require **innovative complex interventions** (“theories of change”)

- Needs for **new institutional designs** are evident, starting with schools & their links with families, agencies, & “higher eds”
Phase 4, con’t

- Interdependent professionals face needs to \underline{collaborate}, form \underline{organizational partnerships}, & view youth & local leaders as experts who must \underline{co–produce} innovations & outcomes.

- Progress toward collaboration, partnerships & co–production depends in part on \underline{interprofessional education} and training.

- Needs also are apparent for \underline{new theories of change} and \underline{capacity–building}
Phase 4, con’t

Three Opportunities for Innovation

- **Sport as social intervention**: Promoting social integration & social inclusion: Toward a New TGFU Model (Handout)

- **Addressing kids’ obesity** with special interest in the needs & life chances of adolescent girls

- **Integrating H/PE in community schools**, alongside changes in “the built environment” to address disparities (handout)
Figure 5. A Logic Model for Comprehensive H/PE Planning and Implementation

**Community Partnerships, Distributed Leadership, and Sustainability Planning**

- **Identifying Improvement Needs & Opportunities**
  - Identifying out-of-school learning & health-enhancing opportunities
  - Identifying external and internal barriers to learning & healthy lifestyles
  - Inventorying school and community programs and services to maximize resources
  - Developing coherent school-community program & service designs for a feeder pattern of schools

- **Implementation of a Comprehensive Health & Physical Activity Enhancement Program & Integrating It with School Improvement**

- **Expanded Learning**
  - 21st Century Learning Centers
  - Community-based learning
  - Socio-emotional learning
  - Embedded Learning

- **Youth Development**
  - Asset-based Programs
  - Risk Reduction Programs
  - Youth-led Partnerships & Services
  - Health Careers Education

- **Parent/Family Engagement and Support**
  - Parent Involvement Programs
  - Parent Empowerment Programs
  - Family Health/Wellness Programs

- **Health and Social Services**
  - Child/family service teams
  - School-linked Health Services
  - Inter-agency Programs

- **Community Engagement**
  - Community Health Promotion
  - County-wide Partnerships
  - New Policies for Health
  - Integrated Health & Education

**Getting The Conditions Right For Learning**

- **Qualified Health/PE Teachers Implement Best Practices**
  - Children’s Learning & Development Outside of School are Linked to H/PE Classrooms

- **Parents & Community Members Learn How to Reinforce Healthy Lifestyles**
  - School & Community Environments are Enhanced to Promote Healthy Lifestyles

- **Food Services and Vending Machines Promote Healthy Nutrition**

- **Student Engagement & Connections to School Improve Via Health Programs**

**Improved Health Outcomes for Students, Parents & Staff**

**Improved Academic Outcomes**

**All Children & Youth are Healthy, Succeed in School, & Transition Into Productive Citizenship**

**Improved Staff Recruitment/Retention**

**Evaluation and Feedback/Continuous Improvement**

**Accountabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development</th>
<th>Improvement Targets</th>
<th>Immediate Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-term Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Improvement Components**

- Completing Assessments & Analyzing Data

- Implementation Needs & Targets
Summary & Conclusions

- Toward a common purpose: Young people have a right to assistance, supports, and resources needed to develop, maintain, and promote active, healthy lifestyles.

- PE, HE, schools, youth sport, and recreation are centerpieces; they need to be connected.

- We need new institutional designs founded on strong ethical–moral ideals & with fair, firm accountability structures and processes.
Summary, con’t

- Alternative kinds of “global schools” will offer different kinds of PE & challenges to national curricula will grow as outcome gaps grow.

- Competition among professions for PE, HE, & HPE will intensify.

- Hybrids, including industrial age prototypes, will be normative & so will out-sourcing of PE.

- PETE programs will become more specialized & diversified to compete—with opportunities for new KPE programs & new forms of PCK.
Finally:

- Institutional redesigns illuminate the need to become proactive, organizing and mobilizing for collective action that is both local and global.

- Action-oriented search conferences, involving national & international communities of practice, have special import.

- All such global age work entails crossing borders and changing boundaries to develop innovations that improve outcomes.