



CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE



GRADE
8

Physical Education

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PREFACE

Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers.

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus the Savior means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the Body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life, and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of physical education to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on physical education standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The physical education standards included in this book are informed by the standards developed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) (see also chapter 3) and are provided as a compilation of the physical education standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the physical education objectives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach physical education.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in physical education. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.

- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular textbooks. Inside your plan book, clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use, or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.
- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relative to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month, or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

CHAPTER 1

Finding a Balance in Education— Spiritually and Physically

Jane Blaile

Jane Blaile is from Christ Lutheran School in sunny Phoenix, Arizona. This is her seventeenth year teaching, having taught fourth through eighth grades over the years. Her bachelor's degree in elementary education is from Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois, and she holds a master's degree with a specialization in gifted education from the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Currently, she teaches fifth grade with an emphasis on science. What she loves about teaching is making learning fun and interesting for all learners, then seeing that "Aha!" moment when they make a discovery, figure out a problem, or achieve something new.

Courtney Meyer

A 1965 graduate of Concordia, Seward, Nebraska, Courtney Meyer has been head coach of Bulldog football for the past seventeen years. After graduation, Meyer taught at Lutheran high schools in New York and Minnesota. He returned to Concordia, Seward in 1977 and served as defensive coordinator until 1984, when he took the head coaching job at Concordia, Mequon, Wisconsin, for six years before returning to his alma mater in 1990. Meyer was named Nebraska-Iowa Athletic Conference Co-Coach of the Year in 1999, was named Great Plains Athletic Coach of the Year in 2001, served as the president of the NAIA Football Coaches Association in 2000, and served on the American Football Coaches Association's Ethics Committee from 2002–04. Meyer's Bulldog coaching record is 63-92-1. Meyer holds a master's degree in physical education from Southeast Missouri State University. He is dedicated to the entire student-athlete and is active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Educating the Whole Child

Christian educators have the opportunity and privilege of educating the whole child in body, mind, and spirit in all areas—social/emotional, spiritual, physical, and cognitive. Strong connections can be made between the skills, behaviors, and attitudes developed and emphasized in physical education and in Christian education as students grow in the gifts God has given and continues to bless. Those teaching in Christian schools can approach the core values of self-respect, perseverance, personal integrity, stewardship, self-awareness, cooperation, justice, and respect in physical education from a Christian perspective. Our Christian faith is an integral part of who we are. It is not separated from physical education; rather, it helps to define physical education.

Living a Sanctified Life during Physical Education

Christian education often focuses on our forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, or our justification. Physical education provides the perfect playing field to practice our life of sanctification, as we live as Christians who are assured of our

salvation. As the Holy Spirit works in our hearts and lives, the skills and attitudes demonstrated in physical education can reflect who and whose we are. As God's Spirit works through the Word, students respond in faith to God's love and grow into Christian maturity, worshiping God, serving others, and spreading the Gospel.

Growing in Christ

Movement and growth—those are two concepts very familiar to both the physical education teacher and the Christian teacher. In physical education, through training and conditioning, we continue to build our cardiovascular and muscular strength and endurance. We strive for agility, speed, coordination, and power. We make goals to improve our skills. In our Christian life, through study of the Word, we grow in the knowledge of God, especially His seeking and forgiving love in Christ. We long for the Holy Spirit to give us a strong, mature faith and guard against a stagnant, infantile faith. The Christian school provides an ideal arena in which we can practice the values, attitudes, and actions of our new life in Christ. There are frequent opportunities to grow in our

relationships, based on our relationship with Christ. As redeemed people of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, we can show others the forgiveness, self-control, kindness, and compassion that Jesus first and continually shows to us.

Moving toward a Heavenly Goal

We keep moving toward our heavenly goal, where we will reach the prize of our crown of life. “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). “Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly bodies to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself” (Philippians 3:20–21). It is exciting to grow physically stronger and fitter, but oh, the greater joy of our transformation in heaven!

Transforming

Both coaches and teachers transform students. The impact they make on a child’s physical and spiritual development and well-being can be lifelong. Physical education teachers and coaches have a unique opportunity to affect students and develop relationships with students that teachers in other areas may not have. This chapter continues with thoughts from two respected Lutheran educators, fifth-grade teacher Jane Blaile and college football coach Courtney Meyer. They both share a passion for the game (for physical education), a love for students, and the motivation to help others grow spiritually, under God’s direction. They will explore with us how the classroom and playing field are natural arenas for practicing our Christian life.

Impacting Others for Life

Concordia University, Nebraska, head football coach Courtney Meyer once had the opportunity of a lifetime. Back in the seventies, when he was teaching at a Lutheran high school in Mayer, Minnesota, and was involved in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Meyer was asked to lead a Bible study for the players before a Major League Baseball game with the Brewers. Unfortunately, in May in Minnesota, it can still snow. The game was

cancelled. Meyer still drove to the stadium and was even able to enter the locker room. The room was quiet; there was no one else around. Meyer savored the moment, picked up a glove, and slid his hand inside, pounding the glove with his fist, when a man in a suit walked in. Meyer turned around and instantly recognized the figure . . . Hank Aaron.

What a thrill to meet the famous home run hitter! They exchanged words and then went their separate ways. Meyer’s trip home was an emotional journey. He had driven 50 miles on icy roads, with wind whipping the snow across the fields and onto the highway, hoping to lead a Bible study and witness his faith. He experienced an emotional high meeting Hank Aaron but said “an even greater emotion was the sense of disappointment at not being able to share my message.”

“Train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7–8). Meyer’s biggest motivation for coaching is that it’s a position of influence. He is able to connect with people spiritually.

Utilizing Opportunities to Witness

Meyer suggests that we “use opportunities to witness.” He related how his squad supported a team member whose father died unexpectedly. It was a bonding experience; the entire team went to the funeral to comfort their teammate with the Gospel. Later, the young man expressed, “You are my family. I love you. Thanks for your support.” The team showed that “faith sustains us through difficult times.” Teams encounter other challenges and difficulties. Although Meyer has coached some championship teams during his eighteen years at Seward, many teams have not had a winning record. Meyer does not, however, want the losses to overshadow the spiritual growth that has occurred. “There’s something more to life than winning or losing. The main thing is to share Christ and give Him the glory.”

Being Intentional

Meyer is very intentional about organizing Bible studies and events and infusing the faith into sports during students' formative years. He believes that "Things don't just happen." Meyer encourages leaders to consciously and faithfully "walk the walk" and to "live a life that is impeccable." Coaches and teachers can be "faithful in little things," showing through their actions that they care. He recognizes that the actions and deeds of a person in such an influential position speak volumes. "You never really know how you impact others." He, of course, has received cards and e-mails but admits, "I don't often even remember what I had said!" The appreciation, spoken and unspoken, is proof that people will carry the formative experience with them for a lifetime.

Being a Leader

So often today in the media, we hear about the poor role models that athletes make. But Meyer points out that there can be "positive and negative role models at all levels. Those gifted with positive character traits and Christ need to step forward" in order to influence students positively and purposefully. We know that the power to change lives and attitudes lies in God's Word and Sacraments. The Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts and the hearts of our students. Meyer sums it up, "It's all about Christ."

Growing Personally

Serving Christ in our position of leadership involves being intentional about nurturing our own faith. We can't be so busy and so active in serving Christ that we don't have time to love Christ or grow in understanding how much He loves us. Intentionally infusing spiritual-growth opportunities into sports applies to our own schedule as well. Working through His Word, God's Spirit strengthens and encourages us as we serve His children.

Using Planned and Unexpected Opportunities

Like Coach Meyer, teacher Jane Blaile advocates recognizing and taking advantage of every opportunity for spiritual growth; this includes the challenging situations and also the daily, planned opportunities. We don't leave our faith behind when we enter the gym or playing field. Rather, our actions proclaim what we believe, whatever we are doing. Jane Blaile knows that our faith can be incorporated into physical activities, such as praying for others as you shoot each basket. It is through focusing on Christ during life's challenges that we grow closer to God and closer to each other in our Christian community. Blaile explains that "Changes, challenges, and setbacks are human concerns. Through them we grow stronger in our faith by turning to God for guidance. No matter how long we've trained for or practiced something, God is ultimately in control. We may feel awful about the outcome of a game or a performance, but we can always rely on God's wisdom and open our ears and eyes to God's will and His Word."

Seeing New Opportunities

Recently Blaile has had her eyes and ears opened to God's work in her life. Blaile has had many new opportunities to reach out to others as the Iditarod Teacher on the Trail. She embraces the goal of reaching educators worldwide. "What a chance to witness in all I do and in all the places I go! I've always been interested and involved in missions, and this position involves meeting hundreds of people." At first, Blaile questioned how she would be able to share her message because she came from a single school, with few connections. However, she found that's not true. She has contact with every Lutheran school through the Lutheran School Portal Web site and now has a large public school network as well. Blaile has spoken at many conferences and events and posts messages on various Web sites. She even shares that "When they find out I'm a Christian, it opens doors." For example, the assistant superintendent of the Nome Public Schools is a Christian and invited Blaile to services at his church.