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How Health and Physical Education Teachers Feel About the Virginia Communications and
Literacy Assessment
TC Thacker
Senior Honors Project

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the graduation requirements
of the Westover Honors College
Westover Honors College
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Abstract

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, in order to become a teacher, certain state-selected assessments must be completed. These assessments are required for every candidate who is pursuing a teaching career. One of these required assessments is the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) and it was created to measure communication and literacy skills. The requirement of this test brought forth the question: how do Health and Physical Education teachers feel that the VCLA has helped prepare them for their current work? This question was explored using a qualitative approach which led to the examination of teachers beliefs in regards to teaching philosophy, quality teaching, and student achievement. Within each of these areas I was able to identify particular themes. On the topic of teaching philosophy, I identified two themes: (1) building relationships; (2) coaching. On the topic of aspects of quality teaching, I identified two themes: (1) being adaptable; (2) setting routines. The theme of setting routines included one subtheme. On the topic of what student achievement looks like, I identified one theme: (1) students earn their grades based on effort. On the topic of the VCLA and its role in preparing teachers, I identified three themes: (1) the VCLA doesn't play a role in being a good H.P.E teacher; (2) applications of the VLCA outside of HPE; (3) the VCLA is like an SAT or standardized entrance exam. Implications of these findings are discussed, followed by notation of limitations and directions for research.

Keywords: VCLA, Teacher Effectiveness, Teaching Philosophy

Introduction

In the Commonwealth of Virginia it is required from someone striving to be a teacher to take the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA). The VCLA is an example of a professional teacher licensure test which is written “to create a normative measure of ensuring all teacher candidates, regardless of which university attended, are properly prepared for the classroom” (Jones et al., 2011, p. 909). Once future educators pass this assessment they are able to be accepted into a teacher preparation program, which leads to them becoming a teacher candidate (Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment [VCLA] n.d.-a). The issue is that some people believe that these teacher licensure tests are not effective measures of determining teacher effectiveness or preparing teacher candidates.

Literature Review

Even though there has not been much research on the effectiveness of the VCLA there has been extensive research done on teacher licensure tests in general. One of the tests that a lot of research has been done on is the Praxis I. “On June 18, 2010, the Virginia Board of Education approved the use of the VCLA and Praxis I Mathematics as a substitute test for Praxis I required for admission to a Virginia teacher preparation approved program” (Virginia Department of Education, 2012). This being the case some of the research explored focused on the Praxis I and it's reading and writing sections since it is comparable to the VCLA. The research includes many topics such as; whether or not teacher licensure tests are good at measuring teacher effectiveness, can the number of licensure tests be reduced, and the racial disparities visible in the scores on these tests. To be able to discuss the first topic one must have a better understanding of what teacher effectiveness is. Throughout much of this research Linda Darling-Hammond, a renowned

researcher on this topic, and many of her articles will be referenced. Many of the other resources used throughout also came from the reference lists of her works.

Teacher Effectiveness

The debate on what makes an effective teacher has been going on for a long time and research on this subject has been taking place since the 1940s (Rink, 2013). Even though there have been multiple ideas about what makes an effective teacher, Rink (2013) states, “the education community has moved steadily toward the notion that good teaching is teaching that results in student achievement.” (p. 407). This is seen not only in Rink’s article but also many of the articles within this literature review (e.g., Crowe, 2010; Mitchell, 2001; Goodman, 2008). Even though this is the case, Stronge and colleagues (2004) discuss the more personal qualities that make up an effective teacher. The reasoning behind this is stated that “Individuals remember the relationships, and those relationships can be powerful motivators to learning” (p.30). This being the case, the author is stating that when there is a stronger relationship between the teacher and the student then the student is more willing to learn and in turn will be more successful. Going back to the idea that teacher effectiveness is based around student achievement it is easy to see that there are qualities that play a role even if certain ones cannot be decided on. In the text by Stronge, et al. (2004) there are six qualities for an effective teacher “as a person” and they are: Caring; Fairness & Respect; Attitude Toward the Teaching Profession; Social Interactions with Students; Promotion of Enthusiasm & Motivation for Learning; and finally, Reflective Practice (pp. 30-31). For a teacher, knowing which qualities one possesses can allow them to work on the ones they do not, and work on becoming a more effective teacher. Along with this though, there are other aspects to an effective teacher mentioned in the handbook.

The following two chapters of the handbook discuss the topics of classroom management and organizations and then organization for instruction (p. 63; p. 93). Classroom management is defined as “the actions and strategies teachers use to solve the problem of order in classrooms” (Doyle, 1986; as cited in Stronge et al., 2004). In this first chapter about classroom management there are two section headings which are rules and then routines. The author explains how effective teachers tend to have fewer number of classroom rules in general. Since effective teachers have less rules though they make good use of routines which Stronge and colleagues. (2004) explains are “more flexible than rules.” The book then explains that effective teachers focus on routines at the beginning of the year, which in turn allows the classroom to be more effective for the students. This aspect serves as a segway because this chapter discusses “how effective teachers organize for instruction by creating the maximum learning time and opportunities for students” (p. 94). These two topics are linked because an effective teacher who has a solid classroom routine will in turn be able to maximize their instructional time. This maximization of instructional time allows for the increase in learning opportunities and a possibility for greater student achievement. A link can also be seen between this chapter about organizing for instruction and the chapter discussing the personal qualities of a teacher. This link is between the quality, “promotion of enthusiasm and motivation for learning” (p.31) mentioned earlier and the factor of “expecting students to achieve”(p. 98) in this chapter (Stronge, 2004). It can also be tied to the personal quality of caring because the teacher must care about their students in order to support them and believe in them.

Going back to the personal qualities of an effective teacher, a quality that can be seen in a lot of Darling-Hammond's (2010) research is the quality of reflective practice. In her article she states that the “current teacher tests don't directly measure what teachers do in the classroom and

they don't indicate how well teachers will do in the classroom" (p. 5). Therefore, instead of the current method of teacher licensure test that is employed across most states in the U.S. she believes the requirements for becoming a teacher should be changed. One of her suggestions is that all states should change to performance assessments that evaluate what is actually being done in the classroom. For teacher candidates this could be done during their student teaching before they are granted their license. One of the major aspects that would be done during these performance assessments in the student teaching would involve the student teachers documenting their instruction, videotaping, and analyzing their teaching. Teaching the quality of reflective practice at this early stage would hopefully prepare these teacher candidates much more effectively. Stronge et al., (2004) already stated "Reflective Practice is the process by which all professionals develop expertise" (p. 31). If it allows professionals to eventually develop expertise then it would hopefully allow teacher candidates to reach that expertise at a much sooner time.

Teacher Licensure test and reducing the number

The next issue that can be seen not only in Darling-Hammond's (2010) research but other articles (e.g., Crowe, 2010; Mitchell, 2001), is the number of teacher licensure tests there currently are in the U.S. Crowe (2010) stated that at the time there were over 1,000 different licensure tests being offered, including "about 160 basic skill tests, over 100 different tests of professional knowledge and more than 800 different content knowledge tests" (p. 8).

Darling-Hammond (2010) quotes this Crowe (2010) and then goes on to state "A great deal of money and energy is spent on developing tests that have little value in separating out teachers who are effective from those who are not" (p. 5). With this number being so high it makes one wonder why there is a need for this number to be anywhere close to what it is. Something that

makes these numbers sound even more outrageous is when looking at the testing requirements for other professions. Mitchell (2001) shows this when she compares teaching to professions such as physical therapists, registered nurses, architects, and professional engineers, all of which have less than two licensure tests required. It is understood that teaching is unique in that there are multiple subjects, so that the number of tests may be higher just for that instance. However, if there were only two tests for each subject the number would still be nowhere close to the 1,000 that it is at.

As stated previously, there is a high number of tests but it does not help if there is such a high number of tests and they still do not measure a teacher candidates readiness to be an effective teacher. Goodman (2008), states “in general, pencil-and-paper tests tend to be highly related to aptitude measures like the SAT and may not measure actual teaching skills and dispositions” (p. 26). This then brings him to his main point and the title of his article that teacher licensure tests are high-stakes, minimum-competency tests. Goodman (2008) explains this more by saying the concern is that effective teachers could be prevented from entering the workforce because they failed a licensure test (p. 26). Another big problem that Goodman (2008) brings forth is “the fact that a disproportionate number of minority teacher candidates fail these exams” (p. 27).

Goodman (2008) does not go into much more detail about this topic, but Mitchell (2001) brings forth a much more statistical view. The beneficial aspect about this resource is that some of the statistical data used involved the Praxis I exam, which has a similar make-up as the VCLA. In a table Mitchell (2001) explains that between 1994 and 2000, white Connecticut teacher candidates had a 71% First-Time passing rate on the Praxis I, while Asian Americans had the second highest First-Time passing rate with 54% (p. 108). This was followed by African

Americans with a 48% rate and Hispanics with a 46% passing rate (p. 108). It is important to notice that this is a “First-Time” passing rate because the passing percentage does eventually rise a little due to candidates retaking the test until they pass. However, Asian Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics only increased to a 66%, 55%, and 59% eventual passing rate, respectively (Mitchell, 2001, p. 108). Mitchell (2001) then goes on to explain how these low passing rates for minority teacher candidates could be the cause of many school districts having troubles diversifying their teaching force. This can prove to be a problem in school districts where the students of minority races make up the majority but are being taught by white teachers. Studies have shown that minority students perform better when being taught by a minority teacher compared to a white teacher, therefore, there is a need for more minority teachers. This can be seen in Figlio (2017) when he states “Minority students often perform better on standardized tests, have improved attendance, and are suspended less frequently when they have at least one same-race teacher” (para. 6). Figlio (2017) then goes on to explain that most of these performance outcomes are in the short run and then references a study that focused on the longer-run outcomes. In this study it was shown “that if a black male student has at least one black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade, he is significantly less likely to drop out of high school and more likely to aspire to attend a four-year college” (para. 7). Therefore, as one can see having a minority teacher can not only increase grades and attendance but also decrease suspension and dropout rates.

Virginia Teacher Licensure

Now that the background literature has been detailed, the purpose of this study is to determine how health and physical education teachers feel the VCLA has prepared them for their current work. Even though the VCLA was not stated specifically in the research explored above,

the connection can be seen since it is a teacher licensure exam. To dive more into this specific study the VCLA, CAEP, and the FITNESSGRAM will be explained with more detail.

VCLA and SAT

As previously stated, the VCLA must be taken by future teacher candidates. The VCLA website states “The VCLA measures the communication and literacy skills necessary to teach and communicate effectively with parents and others in the education community” (Pearson Education, 2020a). However, the design is set up in a manner of two sections, both computer based: 1: reading and 2: writing (Pearson Education, 2020a). For some, this may seem to be a similar set-up as the reading and writing sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The SAT is the test that many students take prior to attending college or university. Comparing the VCLA and CollegeBoard websites, similarities in the test design and what is being tested in each section can be seen (Pearson Education, 2020a; CollegeBoard, 2020a). The reading subtest portion of the VCLA is described as being “Designed to measure comprehension and analysis of readings, outlining and summarizing skills, and ability to interpret tables and graphs” (Pearson Education, 2020a). While looking on the reading test section of the SAT website a video is available to watch explaining that on the SAT one is required to answer questions that “focus on what the passage says... asks you to think about how the author conveys his or her meaning... require you to draw conclusions and make connections between passages or between passages and information graphics” (College Board, 2020b). As seen, the similarities between the two are not just in the way the tests are constructed but actually in the descriptions of each test provided by their respective association. Looking at these two tests this way further explains Goodman’s (2008) point that pencil-paper tests are usually related to aptitude measures like the SAT rather than measuring teaching skills (p. 26).

VCLA Scores. The VCLA is broken down into a reading subtest and a writing subtest. Each subtest is scored between 100 and 300 and in order to pass the VCLA a candidate must finish the test with a total score of 470 between both of these subtests (Pearson Education, 2020b). Even though there are two separate sections of the test, there is no score requirement on the individual sections, just the total score requirement of 470 out of the possible 600 points.

CAEP

In order for colleges and universities to continue teaching future educators, they must maintain accreditation for their teacher-preparation programs. The standards for these accreditations are set forth by an accrediting board and for many colleges and universities across the United States this accrediting board is the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Standard 4 also known as “Program Impact” is broken down into 4 parts, the first part being 4.1 “Impact on P-12 Student Learning and Development” (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP], 2013). Standard 4.1 is explained as;

The provider documents, using multiple measures that program completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth. Multiple measures shall include all available growth measures (including value-added measures, student-growth percentiles, and student learning and development objectives) required by the state for its teachers and available to educator preparation providers, other state-supported P-12 impact measures, and any other measures employed by the provider. (CAEP, 2013)

This standard allows CAEP to judge the teachers' impact/effectiveness based on numbers they can obtain through required testing. In the realm of physical education (P.E.) these numbers are mainly fitness testing scores because they are a criterion referenced tests administered across the country. The use of CAEP in this study is to take the FITNESSGRAM scores the teachers have and use it as another factor to determine their effectiveness.

Fitness Testing Scores

In order to make sure students within the same grade level are staying on track with each other and their learning keeps advancing, the use of standardization has been utilized across many subjects. In September of 2012 a big step was taken for P.E. when the President's Youth Fitness Program (PYFP) was launched (Plowman & Meredith, 2013). This allowed standardization for many P.E. programs by naming FITNESSGRAM "the official fitness assessment tool" of the program (Plowman & Meredith, 2013, p. 1:9). As technology has become more relevant in the classroom, FITNESSGRAM has moved towards a software program that allows educators to keep track of their students' FITNESSGRAM scores throughout their primary and secondary schools (Fitnessgram n.d.-b).

A benefit of the FITNESSGRAM test is that it assesses full body health for the student. The assessment tests a student's upper body strength/endurance, abdominal strength/endurance, flexibility, aerobic capacity, trunk strength, and body composition through a specific group of activities (Parkway School District Health & Physical Education, 2016, p. 1). The image below, provided by (Virginia Department of Education, 2007), shows the exercises for each of these groups.

As one can see in Fig. 1, there are recommended exercises that most teachers use, but there are also alternative options for some of the tests. For the body composition, checking a student's BMI has become the standard because it is less invasive to the student and can be done quickly.

Each exercise in the FitnessGram has standards that indicate whether or not the student is in a healthy fitness zone (HFZ). These standards are criterion-referenced and "developed by the FitnessGram Advisory Board to determine if a student is at a health risk," while taking into account the individuals' age and gender (FitnessGram n.d.-a). For the Aerobic capacity test,

percent body fat test, and BMI test a student can be above the HFZ and enter the “needs improvement” zone and then after a “needs improvement-health risk” zone. For the other test, the student must simply reach a designated score based on their gender and age in order to be in the HFZ. Figures 2 & 3 show these numbers based on the Cooper Institutes Standards.

Purpose of the Current Study

In the state of Virginia, in order to become a teacher, certain state-selected assessments must be completed. These assessments are required for every candidate who is pursuing a teaching career. One of these required assessments is the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) and it was created to measure communication and literacy skills. The requirement of this test brought forth the questions: How do Health and Physical Education teachers feel that the VCLA has helped prepare them for their current work? How do health and physical education teachers describe their experiences and beliefs in regards to teaching philosophy, quality teaching, and student achievement? The purpose of this study, then, was to explore these questions by understanding the phenomenon experienced by four health and physical education teachers.

Methodology

In this section, I first provide a rationale for the methodology chosen for this study. This is followed by a presentation of the methodology of the study.

Methodology Rationale

Throughout this study the two research questions that were being analyzed were:

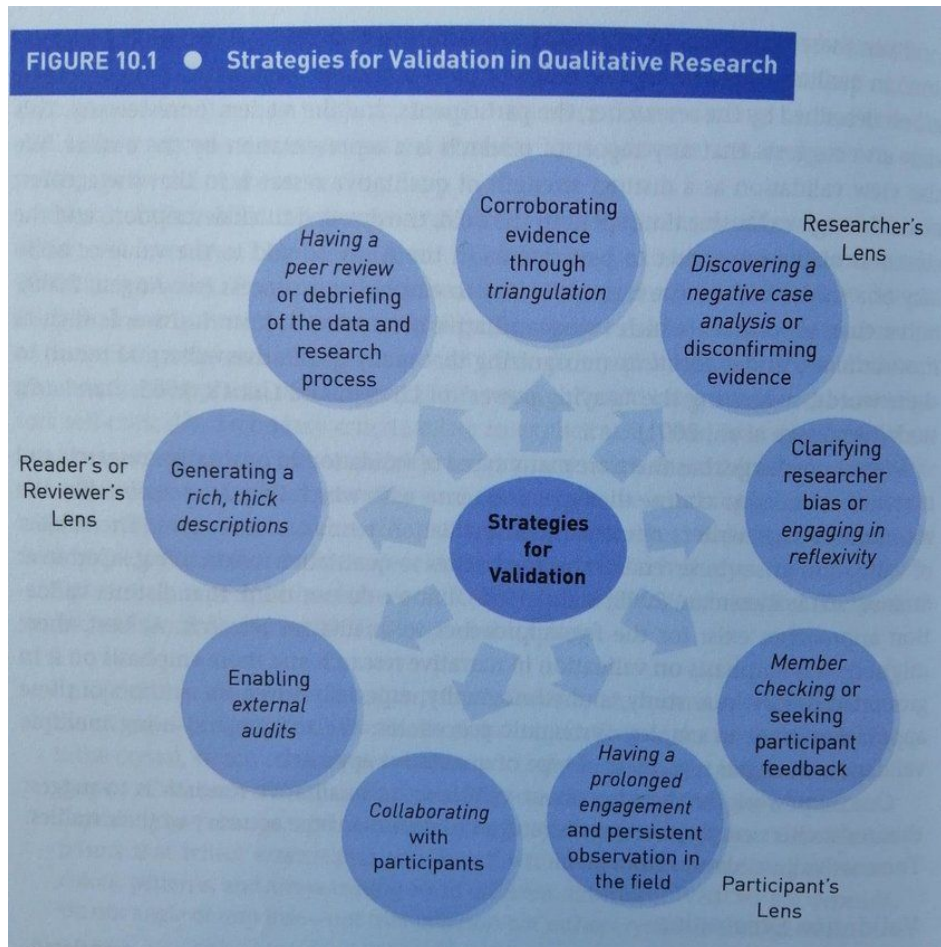
Research Question 1: How do health and physical education teachers describe their experiences and beliefs in regards to teaching philosophy, quality teaching, and student achievement?

Research Question 2: How do teachers feel that the VCLA helped prepare them for their current work as health and physical education teachers?

Due to the types of questions that needed to be asked to answer the above research questions, this study followed a qualitative study design where interviews with current HPE teachers were analyzed to determine their beliefs and feelings towards taking the VCLA. These questions involved “how?” and “what?” and were created to allow for open-ended responses from the interviewees. As Creswell and Poth (2018) state “... qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 7). Even though the “natural settings” aspect has been slightly disrupted, the main point of the study was to interpret how HPE teachers describe their experiences with the VCLA and how this prepared them for other experiences later in their teaching career. A phenomenological study can be defined as a study that “describes the common meaning of experiences of a phenomenon for several individuals” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 314). Having to go through the process of taking the VCLA, entering a teacher preparation program, and becoming a teacher all being a common phenomena between all of the teachers, this study can be classified as a phenomenological study. It can be more specifically classified as a transcendental phenomenology, which “consists of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one’s experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.78). After the data was collected “[t]he researcher then analyzed the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.78).

Validity in Qualitative Research

Unlike quantitative research, validation in a qualitative study does not come from statistics or numbers, it comes from a variety of descriptive sources. Creswell and Poth (2018) provide multiple strategies for validation in the figure below (p. 260):



The strategies used within this current study include: corroborating evidence where possible (triangulation was not possible, as detailed below); clarifying researcher bias or engaging in reflexivity; and engaging in an external audit and peer review.

Triangulation. A cornerstone of achieving validity in qualitative research is the process of triangulation. Creswell and Creswell (2015) explains that different data sources are triangulated by “examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes” (p. 200). It is ideal to be able to show that findings are supported by

triangulation from multiple sources of data. To do this, I had planned to use in-person observations of the teachers in addition to the initial survey, in-depth interviews, VCLA scores, and FitnessGram scores. Inclusion of observations was intended to allow myself to actually see *how* the teachers prepared for the FitnessGram rather than telling me how they do so. Also during observations teachers would have been able to easily access their past FitnessGram scores. However, due to circumstances beyond the researcher's control -- the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic -- inclusion of observations was not possible. Thus, triangulation was not possible. Despite the externally imposed limitations for data, corroboration between two data sources was still possible in some cases.

Researcher reflexivity and bracketing. Another aspect of validity within a qualitative study is having reflexivity, meaning I am aware of the bias that I have on the subject due to my experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Being a Health and Physical Education major, who has been accepted into the Teacher Preparation Program, I was required to take the VCLA in June of 2019. As I was taking the exam it felt as if I were simply retaking the SAT which I took during high school. Therefore, it may seem that I am biased against taking the VCLA, however, the purpose of this study is not to see if people feel similarly, but rather to judge how others felt being required to take this assessment. As Creswell and Poth (2018) explain "qualitative text cannot be separated from the author, how it is received by readers, and how it impacts the participants and sites under study" (p. 228). In saying this, though, in order to remove bias, the study will be based solely on the responses of the interviewees rather than a personal bias. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain this by stating in a qualitative approach, "...the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of the participants" (p. 17).

External audit and peer review. External audits and peer reviews came from the research committee. One committee member provided an external audit and peer review in regards to qualitative methodology; a second committee member advised based on their knowledge of the topic; general oversight and input was provided by another committee member.

Methodology of the Study

Participants and Site

This study was undertaken in cooperation with the teachers of a rural school system near the University of Lynchburg, because of the relative ease of access and connection throughout the study also known as “convenience sampling” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 150). Each teacher being interviewed will have taken the VCLA as part of their process in becoming a teacher, and use FitnessGram as a form of assessment in their classroom. Teachers were selected based on convenience, also known as nonprobability sampling, due to the availability of teachers who have taken the VCLA. Four participants were chosen because it is recommended to study three to ten participants when conducting a phenomenology (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants were caucasian, between the ages of 23 and 45, and a mix of both male and female.

Teacher 1 (Mrs. Donald) has taught for 15 years and currently teaches 9th grade girls at the school she has taught at for her whole career. She received her undergraduate degree in Pennsylvania and her masters in physical education from an accredited institution. This teacher was not required to take the VCLA since she went to a college in Pennsylvania, however, because she was hired on a provisional license in Virginia she was given the option to take the VCLA to gain her teaching license.

Teacher 2 (Mr. Scott) was the only male interviewed and has nine years of teaching experience but only one at his current school where he teaches elementary. He received his

undergraduate degree from an accredited University and also has his Master of Education degree. This teacher is one of the most interesting because he never actually passed the VCLA but instead got it bypassed and received his license from the state. He took the VCLA multiple times and missed it by roughly 10 points each time, so eventually the state allowed him to get his license based on his credentials and experience teaching.

Teacher 3 (Ms. Underwood) has been teaching for a total of seven years but only four at her current position, where she is a 10th grade girls teacher. She received her bachelors and masters of art in teaching at an accredited institution. Since she graduated from a college in the state of Virginia she was required to take the VCLA to be admitted into a teacher preparation program as mentioned earlier in the text.

Teacher 4 (Mrs. Gardner) is similar to teacher 3 in that she graduated from a University in Virginia so she was required to take the VCLA in order to be admitted to a teacher preparation program. This teacher graduated with her Bachelor of Science at an accredited institution. and currently teaches Co-ed middle school P.E. where she has taught for the past two years since she graduated.

Sources of Data / Instrumentation

The sources of data included: preliminary questions via a Google Form survey, in-depth interviews using an open ended questions protocol, VCLA scores from the teachers, and Fitnessgram assessment scores (This is a form of growth measure under standard 4.1 for CAEP).

Preliminary Survey. The preliminary survey was sent out in order to gain some demographic information, background information on the teachers such as years of experience, and other information such as VCLA and FitnessGram assessment scores. The main purpose of this survey is it will determine which of the teachers have taken the VCLA so they can be

selected for the In-depth interviews. Another important aspect of this survey is the link to a Doodle Poll at the end, allowing the teachers to say when they are free for an interview (Fig. 4).

In-depth interviews. This research being a phenomenological study means that the interviews are the most important part due to open ended questions being what will give the most information (Questions asked to the teachers can be seen in Fig. 5). Zoom and its ability to record meetings was utilized to interview the teachers. After the interview is done the recorded interview will then be able to be transcribed and analyzed by the researcher.

VCLA scores. The VCLA scores will be collected through the preliminary survey sent out to the teachers via a Google Form, which can be seen in Fig. 1 in Appendix

FitnessGram assessment scores. The FitnessGram assessment scores will also be obtained through the same Google Form survey (Fig. 4 in Appendix). These are important because they are the growth measures discussed in CAEP standard 4.1. All of the participants use the FitnessGram as a form of assessment within their physical education setting so it was a common measure between all of them.

Researcher as an instrument. Within qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell (2018) explain that the researcher is also considered an instrument because:

Qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing participants. They may use a protocol -- and instrument for recording data -- but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information and interpret it. They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers (p. 181).

Even though this statement explains that in qualitative research the researcher usually does not rely on questionnaires or other instruments it is not uncommon. This can be seen in the section describing triangulation of data explaining different strategies to prove validity.

Procedure

The teachers' VCLA and FitnessGram assessment scores were obtained via a preliminary Google Form survey. Interviews lasted approximately 20-25 minutes using Zoom and the built in recording option. Recorded interviews were then transcribed using Sonix, an online audio transcription software. Four HPE teachers, all who were required to take the VCLA at some point prior to becoming an educator, participated in both the surveys and interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved three data sources: in-depth interviews, FitnessGram scores, and VCLA scores. The in-depth interviews were recorded and then transcribed using a speech-to-text software. After the transcriptions were done the interview was listened to again with editing to be sure that the transcriptions were accurate. Once correctly transcribed, the interviews were coded using an open coding method, meaning there were no set themes being searched for. FitnessGram and VCLA scores were organized based on teachers and compared with relevant information teachers shared in their interviews. Within the topics of the research questions, themes were identified from the data sources.

Findings

As discussed earlier, in qualitative research, it is ideal to be able to show that findings are supported by triangulation from multiple sources of data. However, due to circumstances beyond the researcher's control -- the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic -- triangulation was, ultimately, not possible. Despite the externally imposed limitations for data, corroboration between two data sources was still possible in some cases. In the findings below, I note when themes were corroborated by more than one data source.

The major areas of focus in the research questions were: teaching philosophy, characteristics of quality teaching, what student achievement looks like, and the VCLA and its role in preparing teachers. Within each of these areas I was able to identify particular themes. On the topic of teaching philosophy, I identified two themes: (1) building relationships; (2) coaching. On the topic of aspects of quality teaching, I identified two themes: (1) being adaptable; (2) setting routines. The theme of setting routines included one subtheme. On the topic of what student achievement looks like, I identified one theme: (1) students earn their grades based on effort. On the topic of the VCLA and its role in preparing teachers, I identified three themes: (1) the VCLA doesn't play a role in being a good H.P.E teacher; (2) applications of the VLCA outside of HPE; (3) the VCLA is like an SAT or standardized entrance exam.

Teaching Philosophy

Within the topic of teaching philosophy, I identified two themes based on my interviews with the four teachers. Since all of the teachers are HPE teachers it was not surprising that there were many common elements between each teacher. The first was building relationships, and the second was students earning grades based on effort. Each theme is discussed below.

Building Relationships

The most dominant theme I saw in the teaching philosophies expressed by the teachers was the importance of building relationships with their students. Each one explained this in different ways but each felt this is important and it could be seen throughout each of their interviews.

Mr. Scott: When discussing his strengths and weaknesses Mr. Scott explained that one of his strengths is his personality and that he “like[s] to build relationships”. Along with this though he explained that he still keeps it professional because he does not try to be friends with

his students because there is a respect aspect. With this he also states that sometimes as a teacher “you gotta give some tough love”, meaning that he cares for his teachers but sometimes has to be tough on them.

Mrs. Gardner Similar to Mr. Scott, Mrs. Gardner described one of her strengths as “connecting with students, having a conversation that isn’t me being the teacher and not necessarily a friend”. With both of them it seems there is a thin line that they both know must not be crossed given they are professionals, however it is easy to see that making connections is important to them.

Mrs. Donald: Mrs. Donald stated “ I am definitely a student centered teacher where I work to make sure that I bring out the student’s best abilities”. One point that Mrs. Donald made that was different from any of the others is that she welcomes each of her students with an open mind and no preconceived notions. This is because she knows each student is their own individual self and they should not be looked at differently based on “who their previous siblings are or any encounters they may have had with other teachers”. It is important to note that this means she only focuses on the connection she has made with the student in her class.

Ms. Underwood: Ms. Underwood also stated that she felt her teaching philosophy was student centered and wants her students to “feel like their voice matters”. In order to build a relationship with each of her students Ms. Underwood states “I’ll pick a new student each day to talk with and get to know them more so that I can better understand who they are as a person”. She usually does this at the beginning of the school year because then she is able to better understand and interact with them the rest of the school year.

Coaching disposition woven across the conversation

Given that many HPE teachers have athletic backgrounds, it was not surprising that three of the four teachers also mentioned coaching aspects/experiences with sports as part of their philosophies. Even though Mrs. Donald was the only one not to mention this, she has coached soccer at her current school before and some similarities in her responses to the other teachers could be seen.

Aspects of an Effective Teacher

When asked their opinion of an effective teacher there were a couple answers that seemed to re-occur between the teachers. These comprised the two themes I identified on this topic: (1) being adaptable; (2) setting routines. The theme of setting routines has the subtheme of Fitnessgram informing routines. Each theme is discussed below.

Being Adaptable

Along with this would be implementing differentiated instruction because teachers who are adaptable are able to create different activities for multiple students. Mrs. Gardner explained this by saying she feels an effective teacher is someone who is adaptable and can “completely be able to change any activity to fit a student.” Ms. Underwood also stated that an effective teacher is someone who is “willing to change and adapt as necessary.” She also explained she thought an effective teacher was “one that is willing to address their teaching based on their students and each individual class”. Therefore, it seems that a teacher who is adaptable is also one who uses differentiated instruction throughout their lessons because they can easily adapt to each class or specific students in the class.

Setting Routines

The next aspect of an effective teacher that was re-occurring was having a routine or a set of rules and expectations. Mr. Scott, the only elementary teacher interviewed, discussed this thoroughly during his interview. He explains this is because with elementary students “you’ve got to have a task for them... a regimen.” Without a routine it can be difficult to keep students on task and, as he explains, especially younger students who are very energetic and do not want to sit still. Even though Mrs. Donald teaches high school students she states something similar but adds that once the expectations are set, the teacher must stick to them. Another point that Mrs. Donald makes, which relates back to being adaptable is that even though a routine can be effective because it makes things run smoothly a teacher must be open to change if things begin to go awry. When discussing her routine Ms. Underwood used the word “structure” to show how a routine can be helpful in the classroom. As explained earlier in the study it has been shown that having routines in a classroom also allows for teachers to have less rules because the students already know the expectations.

Fitnessgram informs daily routines. The final theme that was present was how each of the teachers prepared their students for the FITNESSGRAM test. Each teacher's responses were again pretty similar with this topic. This seems to relate back to their responses of having a routine each day. All of the teachers mentioned that one way they prepared their students for the FITNESSGRAM test was incorporating aspects of the test into their daily warm-ups. This routine leads to the students working on these certain exercises everyday. Each teacher also mentioned how they like to incorporate different exercises so it is not the same exercises every week since it is a daily thing. Mrs. Gardner explained, instead of making her students run they will do jumping jacks and high knees or some other dynamic activity in their warm-up.

What Student Achievement Looks Like

On the topic of what student achievement looks like, I identified one theme: (1) students earn their grades based on effort. This theme is discussed below.

Students Earn Their Grades Based on Effort

On the topic of what student achievement looks like, each teacher mentioned how simply having students be motivated and showing effort is the means for doing well in their class. Mrs. Gardner explained that “any sort of improvement” and “any student that finds more interest in what they’re learning” is an achievement in her eyes. Mrs. Donald stated “I think I've only had maybe a handful of students that have failed my class, and that’s just out of their sheer lack of effort,” While Mr. Scott and Ms. Underwood mentioned they want their students to try to the best of their abilities. Even though each teacher mentioned their students earn their grades, as one can see they all believe their class is not all about earning good grades. As Mr. Scott said when discussing student achievement, “it’s not all about them getting A’s... It’s not just a grading thing... there’s so much to that.” This can be somewhat seen in both Mr. Scott and Ms. Underwood Fitnessgram scores because Mr. Scott had an 83% pass rate while Ms. Underwood had a 92% pass rate.

The Role of the VCLA

On the topic of the role of the VCLA I identified three themes: (1) the VCLA doesn’t play a role in being a good H.P.E teacher; (2) applications of the VLCA outside of HPE; (3) the VCLA is like an SAT or standardized entrance exam. Each theme is discussed below.

The VCLA Doesn’t Play a Role in Being a Good HPE Teacher

All of the teachers explained they felt that the VCLA is not helpful in preparing HPE teachers. Two sources of data contributed to identifying this theme: interview data and the VCLA scores provided by the teachers. Some of the teachers responses were more adviid than the

others but they mostly agreed that the VCLA didn't have direct connections to physical education.

Mr. Scott. Mr. Scott was definitely the most outspoken. He stated "there is no correlation with the VCLA and me teaching Health and P.E." He then continued and said, "No correlation. The worst thing ever. If it was up to me, no one should take that." Mr. Scott frustration most likely comes from his inability to even pass the VCLA. He explained that he took the VCLA five times and missed it by 10 points or less each time he took it. However, since he had his masters degree in education he was able to get the VCLA bypassed and still earn his license. This did not prevent him from opposing the VCLA though.

Mrs. Gardner. Mrs. Gardner also explained that she did not believe the VCLA played a role in being a quality HPE teacher. When asked to what degree she feels the VCLA prepared her, she stated "absolutely not at all" She then went on to say "I think that should be up to your english professor in college to see if you can read and write." Contrary to Mr. Scott though, Mrs. Gardner felt the VCLA was very easy and even went as far as to say that she felt some of the questions could have been answered by one of her middle school students.

Mrs. Donald. Mrs. Donald was in the middle of the other teachers' responses. Similarly to Mrs. Gardner, she explained that she felt her reading and writing skills came from her classes she had to take during college so she found the VCLA easy. The ease of the test to Mrs. Donald can be seen in her score, a 537 out of 600 (Received from Google Form questionnaire), which was the highest of all the participants. She went on to say that she felt the VCLA would be more applicable to english and reading teachers but not necessarily HPE teachers.

Ms. Underwood. Ms. Underwood's response was not nearly as passionate as Mrs. Gardner's and Mr. Scott's. When asked if she believed the VCLA helped prepare her to be a quality HPE teacher, she simply replied "Not really so much on like the physical education side."

Applications of the VLCA Outside of Health and Physical Education

Even though the teachers said they did not believe the VCLA prepared them to be quality HPE teachers they all mentioned that they could possibly understand where it was seen in their classroom. Ms. Underwood was the most outspoken on this saying she did not think the VCLA played a role on the P.E. side but could see how it does in the classroom with health. Stating that she herself should be able to properly write questions and use the correct grammar needed. Mrs. Donald said something similar to this in saying that she does make sure her students understand basic punctuation and grammar. Mr. Scott on the other hand dealing with elementary students explained the only time he sees the VCLA playing a role in his classroom is when he sends e-mails to parents and they need to be grammatically correct.

The VCLA is Like an SAT or Standardized Entrance Exam

This theme was present when teachers were discussing the VCLA was what past tests the teachers compared it to. Mr. Scott, Mrs. Donald, and Ms. Underwood all explained that the VCLA reminded them of the SAT. Mr. Scott stated "It's a standardized test. So it reminded me right away with taking the entrance exams in college or taking the SAT." When Ms. Underwood was asked if the VCLA was similar to any tests she had taken before, she responded "Yeah, probably the SAT. With a similar setup and questions. You have the multiple choice, short answer." Mrs. Gardner was the only teacher that did not specifically name the SAT but she said

that certain aspects of the test reminded her of tests she would have been required to take in high school.

Discussion

In the discussion that follows, I discuss the implications of the findings of this study as they relate to the existing literature. I also discuss limitations to this study and directions for future research.

Teacher Philosophy and Effectiveness

The literature on effective teachers identifies multiple characteristics of effective teachers. Rink (2013) explains that one way of measuring an effective teacher is student achievement. During the interviews the teachers in this study explained that in their classrooms, student achievement was mainly based on effort and participation. For physical education courses, this is mainly because teachers simply want their students to be active and involved in class. As long as the students participate then they usually do well in these teachers' classes.

Stronge's (2004) work shows that many effective teachers are able to make relationships with their students and have set routines. Both of these attributes were seen in the teachers in this study and are detailed in the findings above. For all of the teachers in this study, the main tenet of their teaching philosophies was to build relationships with their students because they felt that this allowed them to be more effective teachers. As Stronge (2004) stated, "Individuals remember the relationships, and those relationships can be powerful motivators to learning" (p. 30). Even though there is a lot of debate about what factors make an effective teacher, it can be seen that the ability to make relationships is one factor that usually stands out.

Each teacher in this study also explained how they had daily routines that they stuck to and mentioned how a structured classroom was easier to teach in. As mentioned earlier, Stronge

(2004) explains that effective teachers have fewer rules because they make good use of routines. This could be seen in Mrs. Donald's response when discussing routines. She mentioned that she has a certain set of rules that she follows and considers to be her expectations, but then she usually just tends to stick to her routine. All of the teachers explained how their routines can usually be seen at the beginning of class during their warm-ups. This is important because it allows the class to begin smoothly, which then leads to more instructional time.

Teacher Licensure Test and Their Role in Preparing Teachers

Literature on teacher preparation also addresses the role and efficacy of teacher licensure tests in measuring teacher effectiveness. Studies have illustrated that there are some researchers who believe teacher licensure tests should not be in place because such tests are ineffective (e.g., Crowe, 2010; Mitchell, 2001; Goodman, 2008). These researchers suggest that it is not that *all* of these tests should be gotten rid of, but in order for them to actually be effective many may have to be. As quoted earlier, Darling-Hammond (2010) stated, "A great deal of money and energy is spent on developing tests that have little value in separating out teachers who are effective from those who are not" (p. 5). The fact that research shows that teacher licensure tests are not measuring what they are intended to *and* that teachers echo the same sentiments solidifies the relevance of this debate. During the interviews in this study, it was easy to see that the teachers felt the VCLA did not play a role in preparing them to be quality health and physical education teachers. They simply felt it was not a test that should be required for them to teach because it did not correlate with the subject they were teaching. Even though some were more adamant than others with their feelings because they had bad experiences with the VCLA, even the teachers who found the test easy still did not believe it was necessary. Their views are similar to those of Goodman (2008) who explained, pencil-paper tests are usually related to aptitude measures like

the SAT rather than measuring teaching skills (p. 26). The similarities between teacher licensure tests and aptitude tests are also reflected in comparisons made between the VCLA and SAT.

VCLA and SAT

When I asked the teachers in this study if the VCLA was similar to a test they had taken before, three of the four responded by saying that it reminded them of the SAT. When looking at the information discussed in the Literature Review, the teachers' comparisons between the VCLA and SAT is not surprising. The major similarity between the two tests is the design. Even though the VCLA does not have a math section, its reading and writing portions are similar to that of the SAT. Additionally, if one were to look at the websites for the VCLA (Pearson Education, 2020) and SAT (College Board, 2020), the descriptions given for the reading sections are similar in meaning; they are just written in different ways. Based on this information, it is logical to question why teachers are required to take the SAT to gain admittance to a college or university and then be required to take a similar test to become a teacher.

Limitations

Given the current state of schools that have been in place since spring break, being able to observe the teachers as part of this study was not possible. This being the case, the data had to solely rely on an initial electronic survey and virtual in-depth individual interviews. Being able to observe the teachers while they were teaching would have allowed for a better understanding of their teaching practices and what makes them an effective or ineffective teacher. However, this made it possible to focus on the interviews and make sure they were done with great detail. This also led to the study being changed from a case study to a phenomenological study which worked well because of the themes that were able to be found between each teacher.

Directions for Future Research

As seen in much of Darling-Hammond's research there is already a major push for future research in the field of teacher licensure tests. Future research could use a quantitative approach to see if there is a correlation between teachers' VCLA scores and their students' achievement records. Mixed methods research could examine correlation between teachers' VCLA scores and students' achievement records as well as including a qualitative component. Even farther in the future though, work could be done to set up a standardized assessment across the country. This could possibly create a more effective assessment since it is standardized because it would be agreed upon by numerous committees. Secondly, if it was standardized then teachers would be able to freely move from state to state and teach rather than taking different licensure tests whenever they move to a different state. These tests could be set up similar to a test like the Praxis 2, which is specific to a certain discipline. If the teachers are taking a more standardized test to be licensed then what they are teaching also may be more standardized. This being the case it would be harder for a student to fall behind if they moved to a different state that taught a different subject in that specific grade.

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Appendix

Figure 1:

Form # LE.005 2/2007

CUMULATIVE WELLNESS-RELATED FITNESS RECORD

Name: _____ Gender: _____ Date of Birth: _____

 Last First Middle

Enter age of student at time best score was performed. Place an "Y" in the HFZ column when HFZ is met. "N" if not in zone.

Grade	4th			5th			6th			7th			8th			9th			10th			
	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	Age at Best	Best Score	HFZ	
Upper-Body Strength and Endurance	*90 Degree Push Ups																					
	Modified Pull-Ups																					
	Flexed Arm Hang																					
Abdominal Strength and Endurance	*Curl-Up Cadence																					
Flexibility	Back-Saver Sit & Reach																					
	Shoulder Stretch																					
Aerobic Capacity	*Pacer																					
	One Mile Run/Walk																					
	One Mile Walk Test																					
Trunk Strength	*Trunk Lift																					
Body Composition (optional)	Skinfold Measurement (optional)																					
	Body Mass Index (BMI) (optional)																					

* Recommended Test HFZ = Healthy Fitness Zone

Figure 2:

Standards for Healthy Fitness Zone®

BOYS

	Aerobic Capacity			Percent Body Fat				Body Mass Index						
	VO_{2max} (ml/kg/min)			Very Lean	HFZ	NI	NI-Health Risk	Very Lean	HFZ	NI	NI-Health Risk			
	PACER, One Mile Run & Walk Test	NI	HFZ											
5	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤8.8	8.9-18.8	18.9	≥27.0	≤13.8	13.9-16.8	16.9	≥18.1			
6	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤8.4	8.5-18.8	18.9	≥27.0	≤13.7	13.8-17.1	17.2	≥18.8			
7	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤8.2	8.3-18.8	18.9	≥27.0	≤13.7	13.8-17.6	17.7	≥19.6			
8	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤8.3	8.4-18.8	18.9	≥27.0	≤13.9	14.0-18.2	18.3	≥20.6			
9	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤8.6	8.7-20.6	20.7	≥30.1	≤14.1	14.2-18.9	19.0	≥21.6			
10	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤37.3	37.4-40.1	≥40.2	≤8.8	8.9-22.4	22.5	≥33.2	≤14.4	14.5-19.7	19.8	≥22.7
11	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤37.3	37.4-40.1	≥40.2	≤8.7	8.8-23.6	23.7	≥35.4	≤14.8	14.9-20.5	20.6	≥23.7
12	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤37.6	37.7-40.2	≥40.3	≤8.3	8.4-23.6	23.7	≥35.9	≤15.2	15.3-21.3	21.4	≥24.7
13	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤38.6	38.7-41.0	≥41.1	≤7.7	7.8-22.8	22.9	≥35.0	≤15.7	15.8-22.2	22.3	≥25.6
14	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤39.6	39.7-42.4	≥42.5	≤7.0	7.1-21.3	21.4	≥33.2	≤16.3	16.4-23.0	23.1	≥26.5
15	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤40.6	40.7-43.5	≥43.6	≤6.5	6.6-20.1	20.2	≥31.5	≤16.8	16.9-23.7	23.8	≥27.2
16	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤41.0	41.1-44.0	≥44.1	≤6.4	6.5-20.1	20.2	≥31.6	≤17.4	17.5-24.5	24.6	≥27.9
17	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤41.2	41.3-44.1	≥44.2	≤6.6	6.7-20.9	21.0	≥33.0	≤18.0	18.1-24.9	25.0	≥28.6
>17	NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ	≤41.2	41.3-44.2	≥44.3	≤6.9	7.0-22.2	22.3	≥35.1	≤18.5	18.6-24.9	25.0	≥29.3

	Curl-up # completed	Trunk Lift inches	Push-up # completed	Modified Pull-up # completed	Flexed Arm Arm Hang seconds	Back Saver Sit & Reach** inches	Shoulder Stretch
5	≥2	6 12	≥3	≥2	≥2	8	Healthy Fitness Zone = Touching fingertips together behind the back on both right and left sides
6	≥2	6 12	≥3	≥2	≥2	8	
7	≥4	6 12	≥4	≥3	≥3	8	
8	≥6	6 12	≥5	≥4	≥3	8	
9	≥9	6 12	≥6	≥5	≥4	8	
10	≥12	9 12	≥7	≥5	≥4	8	
11	≥15	9 12	≥8	≥6	≥6	8	
12	≥18	9 12	≥10	≥7	≥10	8	
13	≥21	9 12	≥12	≥8	≥12	8	
14	≥24	9 12	≥14	≥9	≥15	8	
15	≥24	9 12	≥16	≥10	≥15	8	
16	≥24	9 12	≥18	≥12	≥15	8	
17	≥24	9 12	≥18	≥14	≥15	8	
17+	≥24	9 12	≥18	≥14	≥15	8	

**Test scored Yes/No; must reach this distance on each side to achieve the HFZ.

Figure 3:

Standards for Healthy Fitness Zone*

GIRLS

<u>Aerobic Capacity</u> VO _{2max} (ml/kg/min)			<u>Percent Body Fat</u>				<u>Body Mass Index</u>				
<u>PACER, One Mile Run & Walk Test</u>			Very Lean	HFZ	NI	NI-Health Risk	Very Lean	HFZ	NI	NI-Health Risk	
NI-Health Risk	NI	HFZ									
5			≤9.7	9.8-20.8	20.9	≥28.4	≤13.5	13.6-16.8	16.9	≥18.5	
6	<i>Completion of test. Lap count</i>		≤9.8	9.9-20.8	20.9	≥28.4	≤13.4	13.5-17.2	17.3	≥19.2	
7	<i>or time standards not</i>		≤10.0	10.1-20.8	20.9	≥28.4	≤13.5	13.6-17.9	18.0	≥20.2	
8	<i>recommended.</i>		≤10.4	10.5-20.8	20.9	≥28.4	≤13.6	13.7-18.6	18.7	≥21.2	
9			≤10.9	11.0-22.6	22.7	≥30.8	≤13.9	14.0-19.4	19.5	≥22.4	
10	≤37.3	37.4-40.1	≥40.2	≤11.5	11.6-24.3	24.4	≥33.0	≤14.2	14.3-20.3	20.4	≥23.6
11	≤37.3	37.4-40.1	≥40.2	≤12.1	12.2-25.7	25.8	≥34.5	≤14.6	14.7-21.2	21.3	≥24.7
12	≤37.0	37.1-40.0	≥40.1	≤12.6	12.7-26.7	26.8	≥35.5	≤15.1	15.2-22.1	22.2	≥25.8
13	≤36.6	36.7-39.6	≥39.7	≤13.3	13.4-27.7	27.8	≥36.3	≤15.6	15.7-22.9	23.0	≥26.8
14	≤36.3	36.4-39.3	≥39.4	≤13.9	14.0-28.5	28.6	≥36.8	≤16.1	16.2-23.6	23.7	≥27.7
15	≤36.0	36.1-39.0	≥39.1	≤14.5	14.6-29.1	29.2	≥37.1	≤16.6	16.7-24.3	24.4	≥28.5
16	≤35.8	35.9-38.8	≥38.9	≤15.2	15.3-29.7	29.8	≥37.4	≤17.0	17.1-24.8	24.9	≥29.3
17	≤35.7	35.8-38.7	≥38.8	≤15.8	15.9-30.4	30.5	≥37.9	≤17.4	17.5-24.9	25.0	≥30.0
>17	≤35.3	35.4-38.5	≥38.6	≤16.4	16.5-31.3	31.4	≥38.6	≤17.7	17.8-24.9	25.0	≥30.0

	<u>Curl-up</u> # completed	<u>Trunk Lift</u> inches	<u>90° Push-up</u> # completed	<u>Modified Pull-up</u> # completed	<u>Flexed Arm Arm Hang</u> seconds	<u>Back Saver Sit & Reach**</u> inches	<u>Shoulder Stretch</u>
5	≥2	6 12	≥3	≥2	≥2	9	Healthy Fitness Zone = Touching fingertips together behind the back on both right and left sides
6	≥2	6 12	≥3	≥2	≥2	9	
7	≥4	6 12	≥4	≥3	≥3	9	
8	≥6	6 12	≥5	≥4	≥3	9	
9	≥9	6 12	≥6	≥4	≥4	9	
10	≥12	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥4	9	
11	≥15	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥6	10	
12	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥7	10	
13	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	10	
14	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	10	
15	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	12	
16	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	12	
17	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	12	
17+	≥18	9 12	≥7	≥4	≥8	12	

**Test scored Yes/No; must reach this distance on each side to achieve the HFZ.

Figure 4:

Teacher Background Information Questionnaire

* Required

1. Age *

2. Race/Ethnicity *

Check all that apply.

- African American
- Caucasian
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander
- American Indian

Other: _____

3. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Other: _____

4. Years of teaching experience *

5/5/2020

Teacher Background Information Questionnaire

5. Years of teaching at current school *

6. Grade level(s) of current teaching *

7. Where did you obtain your undergraduate degree? *

8. What college/university degrees have you earned? *

9. Were you required to take the VCLA? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

10. If taken, when did you take the VCLA?

Example: January 7, 2019

11. What was your score on the VCLA? (Points earned out of points possible) *

5/5/2020

Teacher Background Information Questionnaire

12. What was your pass rate for the FitnessGram assessment? *

Doodle Poll for interview

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Figure 5:

General Questions:

- How would you describe your teaching philosophy?
 - What has influenced this philosophy
 - Has it changed over time?
 - Can you describe an example of what this looks like in your classroom?
- In your opinion, what is an effective teacher?
 - What qualities do you think this entails?
 - What is an example
- How do you describe student achievement?
 - How important are grades in your class?
 - Are good grades an emphasis in your teaching?
 - Other than grades what is another example of student achievement?
- What would you say are your strengths and weaknesses in the classroom?
 - What do you do to work on your weaknesses?
 - What has contributed to your strengths?
 - In what area(s) have you seen the most improvement?
- How would you describe the learning environment of your class?
 - How structured is your class?
 - Is there a daily routine?

VCLA:

- To what degree do you believe the VCLA helped prepare you to be a quality health and PE teacher?
- Did you pass the VCLA the first time you took it?
 - If not, what did you find difficult?
- Was the VCLA similar to a test you have taken before?

FitnessGram:

- Which of the FitnessGram assessments do you require from your students?
 - Why did you choose these assessments?
 - Were you familiar with the FitnessGram before teaching at your current position?
- How often do your students perform these FitnessGram assessments?
 - How do you prepare for the assessment?
 - Are they incorporated into your class any other way?
- Is every student required to do these assessments?
 - What happens if they do not?