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Transforming PETE's Initial Standards: Ensuring social justice for Black students in physical education.

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Recommended Citation

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27 In 1987, the Initial Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) standards were
28 adopted for implementation in PETE programs to establish competencies for teacher education,
29 teaching licensure, and subsequently, accreditation. The National Association for Sport and
30 Physical Education (NASPE) and the American Alliance for Health Physical Education
31 Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) were the first producers of the standards, and are currently
32 under the direction of the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America) (Walton-
33 Fisette & Sutherland, 2020). Originally, there were four standards with 23 candidate guidelines
34 that PETE candidates were expected to demonstrate competency in prior to graduation.
35 Subsequent revisions were made that comprise four editions, with the current iteration
36 established in 2017 (NASPE, 1987,1989, 2008, SHAPE, 2017). Today, there are 6 standards
37 with 25 candidate competencies expected of teacher candidates (see Appendix). Although not all
38 PETE programs are aligned to SHAPE’s PETE standards, a large majority have endorsed the
39 standards to serve as a guide for curriculum, instruction, teacher certification, and/or
40 accreditation (Walton-Fisette & Sutherland, 2020).

41 According to SHAPE America (2017) “physical literacy is the ability to move with
42 competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that
43 benefit the healthy development of the whole person.” Although the current PETE standards are
44 not explicit in the goal of promoting physical literacy, explicit reference is made to the K-12 PE
45 standards, which all begin with “The physically literate individual...,” therefore, the implications
46 that PETE candidate standards are aligned to K-12 standards and student outcomes are clear
47 (SHAPE, 2013). Furthermore, both sets of standards are produced by SHAPE America. Given
48 this, the initial PETE standards theoretically provide the foundation to help K-12 students

49 become physically literate. While achieving physical literacy is an ambitious goal, without
50 socially just intentions, notions of physical literacy only reinforce whiteness.

51

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55 **SHAPE America and physical literacy**

56 SHAPE America found the argument for physical literacy compelling in Roetert and
57 MacDonald's (2015) assessment of the concept. In explaining how the organization adopted
58 physical literacy as the goal of physical education, the authors discussed how the goal of physical
59 literacy was combined with standards and grade level outcomes to operationalize the concept of
60 physical literacy and create a framework for teachers to develop curricula and lesson plans. The
61 rationale for this was stated as 1) practical, in that the concept of physical literacy would help
62 teachers articulate to learners and the general public what PE is trying to accomplish, 2) to align
63 PE on a more level playing field with other school subject areas which have adopted the term
64 literacy and 3) the philosophical grounding of physical literacy validates embodiment as an
65 important subject of study, with PE being a means by which students can learn about this human
66 dimension. The characteristics of physical literacy are certainly worthwhile aspirations.
67 However, it is fair to question whether physical literacy serves the needs of Black youth who are
68 significantly impacted by structural inequalities and practices that undermine opportunities for
69 them to achieve optimal health outcomes (Noonan, Velasco-Mondragon, & Wagner, 2016).

70 **Authors' Positionalities**

71 As Black American academics who teach in PETE programs at predominately white
72 institutions (PWI), we acknowledge that our Blackness, intersectionalities, and experiences
73 influence the critical examination of the construction of SHAPE America standards. We are
74 acutely aware of racism, anti-Blackness, and inequities underpinned by white supremacy that
75 continue to negatively affect Black students and faculty at PWIs, in teacher education, K-12
76 schools, in physical literacy concepts, and in society (Hodge, 2014). We are also members and
77 active leaders in SHAPE America involved in initiatives and roles designed to advance equity,
78 diversity, and inclusion. As such, we have chosen to use our voices to confront systems that are
79 detrimental to Black people, and offer a path that works towards racial and social justice in
80 physical education.

81
82 **Black America in 2020**

83 Harrell (2000) proclaimed at the outset of the 21st century that racism was still a sickness
84 that had deadly ramifications for Black Americans. As racism is a problem that permeates every
85 aspect of Black life, the well-being of Black Americans from the “crib to the coffin” (Jones et al.,
86 2020) is worthy of introspection. Despite the immense optimism that existed with the election of
87 President Barack Obama, the suggestion that the United States of America had entered into an
88 era of post racialism in retrospect has been found to be premature. Recent poll data suggests that
89 as many as 93% of African Americans feel that they are targets of racial discrimination (National
90 Public Radio, 2017). In respect to dealing with the police and the criminal justice system as a
91 whole, over 80% of Black adults feel that they are treated less fairly than whites. Decades of
92 systemic inequities, racial segregation and anti-Black legislation have significantly impacted
93 opportunities for African Americans to build community wealth and maintain employment on
94 the same level of their white counterparts.

95 Racism hurts Black children. Research points to a correlation between racism and low
96 birth weight disparities among Black babies. From the time that they enter preschool, Black
97 children are expelled and suspended from schooling two to six times as often as their white peers
98 (Bell, 2020). Additionally, exclusionary disciplinary practices that target Black youth in schools
99 are associated with lower test scores, higher dropout rates and increased exposure to the juvenile
100 justice system. This does not include inattention to the litany of untreated traumas, undiagnosed
101 learning disabilities, instabilities in the home, lack of safe spaces to play, and other personal
102 stressors that have become a recognizable characteristic of America's callous approach to the
103 plight of Black youth. Indeed, racism is a pernicious and unique stressor with the ability to
104 thwart the physical, physiological, and psychological health of Black Americans (Jones et al.,
105 2020). As physical education has been touted as a means to address health disparities and these
106 aforementioned areas, it is important to incorporate the Black experience into existing SHAPE
107 standards as part of an inclusive strategy that clearly communicates to everyone that Black lives
108 matter.

109 **Social Justice and Black Representation in PETE Standards**

110 Hodge and Wiggins (2010) mentioned that one of the ironies of physical education is that
111 the profession has repeatedly failed to acknowledge the significant contributions of Black
112 people. The social climate and ongoing history of discrimination in the United States that
113 contributed to this tragedy has been well documented (Hodge & Wiggins; 2010; Wiggins &
114 Wiggins; 2011). Aaron Molineaux Hewlett was the first African American appointed to the
115 Harvard University Faculty as director of physical education and culture in 1859. It would not be
116 until 1950, when Rosco Brown was appointed to the faculty at New York University, where
117 another Black physical educator would be seen at a predominately white institution (PWI).

118 Despite the struggle for representation at PWI's, African Americans would apply their trade in
119 Historically Black Institutions (HBCU's) as they created successful programs without dedicated
120 resources and accolades for their achievements during most of the 20th century (Wiggins &
121 Wiggins, 2011). Indeed, beginning with the editorials and publications of Edwin Bancroft
122 Henderson in the 1940's, Black voices in AAHPERD (now SHAPE) have been instrumental in
123 working towards social justice, despite their contributions to the field being unjustly ignored
124 (Clark, Johnson, Sales, & King, 2020). Black pioneers in PETE included Dr. Leroy T. Walker,
125 the first Black president of AAHPERD, and Lavonia Allison, PETE professor, over a number of
126 years made significant contributions to AAHPERD's curriculum (Clark, et al., 2020) while
127 taking active steps to dismantle segregation in the Southern District affiliate (Salyer, 2003; Smith
128 & Jamieson, 2017).

129 Upon the arrival of 2020 and a new era in physical education, there is a call to reform the
130 current PETE (and K-12) standards to reflect social justice and inclusivity to meet the needs of
131 students today (Culp, 2011, Walton-Fisette & Sutherland, 2020). Culp (2011) asserted that PETE
132 programs needed to take a proactive approach that embeds social justice concepts throughout
133 PETE curriculums rather than stand-alone applications. These recommendations included social
134 justice curricula and standards in PETE programs that focus on all marginalized groups. With
135 this in mind, and considering the current events, the focus of this paper, however, is to address
136 anti-Black racism and social (in)justice as it pertains to Black people in America. This decision is
137 based on the evidence that Black lives are not valued in [physical] education. For instance, U.S.
138 public schools have shown to reproduce prison-like conditions for Black students rather than
139 educationally supportive environments including unreasonable and disproportionate discipline,
140 and misappropriate tracking into lower level courses (Kunjufu, 2012; Allen & White-Smith,

141 2014). Furthermore, the history of Black Americans is distinctively different from other
142 marginalized groups. And, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement (Hillstrom, 2018) demands
143 that institutional actions meet the empty promises of racial and social justice statements recently
144 posted on institutional and organizational websites such as SHAPE America (SHAPE, 2020).
145 Hence, a commitment to Black life challenges the status quo of maintaining white supremacy,
146 and acknowledges the urgent need to make effective changes.

147 Our aim is to examine the development of past and current PETE standards using critical
148 race theory (CRT) to illustrate the promotion of physical literacy under white values that
149 perpetuates white supremacy and poses harm to Black students. It is unfortunate that Culp's
150 (2011) early call to include intentional social justice instruction/inclusion in PETE programs
151 have largely been ignored, however, recent efforts to reform PETE standards have emerged.
152 Based on past and current recommendations, we accept the challenge made by Walton-Fisette
153 and Sutherland (2020) to develop explicit socially just PETE standards along with Culp's (2011)
154 recommendation of intent. As such, we will draw on CRT and culturally relevant/sustaining
155 frameworks to dismantle racist and exclusionary practices that occur in PETE programs due to
156 the implementation of the PETE standards without question of the impact on Black students in
157 K-12 physical education programs. The goal is to develop race-conscious PETE standards that
158 can lead to the development of teachers who can affirm Black students to reach their full
159 potential and right to exist in physical education settings, and by extension, society at-large.
160 Furthermore, the intentional restructuring of PETE standards will explicitly confront racism and
161 support cultural awareness. Therefore, we will:

- 162 (1) Identify how whiteness is reflected in SHAPE's Initial PETE standards;
- 163 (2) Provide an initial vision for how standards should be revised and implemented;

164 (3) Develop socially just/race conscious PETE outcomes that serve Black children
165
166 ***PETE, whiteness, and standardization:*** Understanding race in America requires the
167 investigation of whiteness and the normalization of white racial identity. Morrison (1992) put it
168 bluntly, “In this country, American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate. Undoubtedly,
169 whiteness as a social construct has survived as cultural and historical contexts of race have
170 changed over time (Hackman, 2015). Leonardo (2009) describes whiteness as “characterized by
171 the unwillingness to name the contours of racism, the avoidance of identifying with a racial
172 experience or group, the minimization of racist legacy, and other similar evasions” (p. 170). The
173 accepted normality of whiteness can also exist as everyday macroaggressions* that can be
174 demonstrated through hostile, derogatory, or harmful messages towards Black people (bell
175 hooks, 1996; DiAngelo, 2018). Further, whiteness is a currency that is accumulated and utilized
176 through the creation of systems, legislative decisions, ideas, values, and curriculum practices
177 (Azzarito, 2016; Culp, 2017; Simon, 2020).

178 Scholars (Blaisdell, 2016; Weilbacher, 2012) have discoursed at length on numerous
179 entrenched standardization practices in the United States that have been detrimental to Black and
180 other learners of Color. Weilbacher (2012) notes that the promotion of white ways of thinking
181 and knowing through standardization has roots in the social efficiency movement of the early
182 1900’s. In its initial form, social efficiency prioritized education as a means by which one can
183 compete in a global economy or find gainful employment. As it has evolved into the 21st
184 century, social efficiency fails to question the dominant order and does not view experiential
185 knowledge or issues related to race and racism as essential (Kim, 2018). Given this, it is no
186 surprise that the current tone of education undermines the ability of the teacher to learn about the
187 students they teach and the experiences that impact them.

188 Weilbacher (2012) mentions that there are other cultural considerations to consider that
189 impact the welfare and future success of Black and Brown students. Essentially, education that is
190 based solely on the foundation of promoting standards is problematic for two reasons. The first is
191 that those who write the standards often have experienced more privileged physical and social
192 surroundings than many of the students on whom the standards are imposed. Second, teachers
193 are forced to start with the standards that create fragmented or inconsistent learning experiences
194 for Black and Brown students, in part due to how standards are constructed. White people who
195 write standards do not know all students and the physical and social surroundings that influence
196 their behaviors, especially Black students. The failure to incorporate education that diverts from
197 norms of whiteness in conjunction with inadequate teacher preparation and institutional
198 resistance to change, creates a perfect storm for the exclusion of Black students and other
199 students of Color. Irrespective of intention, these restrictions are transmitted through standards,
200 ultimately serving as the doctrine for how students are expected to act, or in the case of SHAPE
201 standards, how physical literacy is envisioned.

202 **Critical Race Theory**

203 With a better understanding of PETE and the implications of whiteness on
204 standardization and physical literacy, we draw on critical race theory (CRT) to illustrate
205 whiteness as reflected in the initial PETE standards. CRT is a theoretical framework designed to
206 interrogate, confront, and disrupt white supremacist constructs, behaviors, and practices that
207 negatively impact the wellbeing of Black people and other groups of color (Crenshaw, 1995). To
208 use CRT, it is understood that the United States' (U.S.) institutions, organizations, and agencies
209 are fundamentally rooted in white supremacy. While CRT has its origins in law, and is evident in
210 education more broadly (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), CRT is starting to be used by scholars

211 in physical education (Barker, 2019; Blackshear, 2020; Clark, 2020; Harrison & Clark, 2016).
212 There are five tenets of CRT including the permanence of racism, interest conversion, critique of
213 liberalism, whiteness as property, and counternarratives. We, however, draw on whiteness as
214 property and the permanence of racism in the examination of the construction of the initial PETE
215 standards. Next, we draw on counternarratives via Black voices and culturally relevant
216 frameworks to reconstruct the initial PETE standards that work to achieve social justice for
217 Black children (Crenshaw, 1995; Tate, 1997; DeCuir and Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefaniec,
218 1993; Hiraldo, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2013).

219 ***Whiteness as Property:*** Whiteness as property in the U.S. was initially associated with the
220 enslavement of Black people who were used as human capital (objects), that included extreme
221 abuse, rape, exploitation, and psychological warfare by white America to build wealth, thus, the
222 term “property” (Harris, 1993; Leary & Robinson, 2017). Whiteness as property or to behold
223 white skin also meant the property of freedom or the insurance that a white person could not be
224 enslaved (Harris, 1993). Once enslavement became illegal, whiteness as property manifested (or
225 permeated) itself into all dimensions of American life to ensure that white supremacist ideology
226 and the legacy of slavery would remain intact (Harris, 1993). White privilege is the terminology
227 commonly used today, which affords white people systemic advantages (power) in housing,
228 employment, health, healthcare, and education based on erroneous constructions and beliefs
229 around race (Bhopal & Alibhai-Brown, 2018).

230 ***Permanence of Racism:*** Racism is part of the fabric of U.S. society and is deeply ingrained in
231 the policies, practices, and institutionalized routines of education (Milner, 2017). One of the
232 most salient examples of racism in education is segregation, when Black schools were
233 significantly underfunded compared to white schools. After the U.S. Supreme Court

234 unanimously deemed that de jure segregation between Black and white schools were
235 unconstitutional, de jure segregation in schools became illegal (*Brown v. Board of Education of*
236 *Topeka*, 1954). Efforts to integrate schools, however, were met with resistance, as it took three
237 years for implementation. Furthermore, Black students were the recipients of violent racist
238 attacks. In response, Black students were escorted to school by the National Guard for protection
239 (President of the U.S. Executive Order 10730). While this act was symbolic of change and
240 equity, this was the beginning of the end for many Black teachers and coaches, as jobs were lost
241 due to discriminatory practices (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1999; Bell, 2004). Leadership roles
242 for Black people also diminished, as white people denied Black educators access to academic
243 and social advancement (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1999 as cited by Hodge, 2014), which put an
244 economic strain on Black communities. Black students also lost out, as they were at a cultural
245 disadvantage—not having the freedom to practice their cultural traditions while affirming their
246 identity, which is a component to successful outcomes for Black children (Kunjufu, 2012;
247 Ladson-Billings, 1995). In essence, institutional racism in education was simply reconfigured
248 rather than dismantled.

249 Although legal segregation in schools ended 66 years ago, racist behaviors, beliefs,
250 policies, and practices promote separate and unequal schools today. In fact, Black schools
251 receive less funding than white Schools, teachers at Black schools earn less income than teachers
252 at white schools, and Black teachers leave the profession prematurely due to undesirable work
253 conditions, the silencing of their voices, the inability to make decisions, and the lack of
254 autonomy (Pitts, 2019; Shanker Institute, 2015), which are all symptoms of institutional racism.
255 It is important to note that within the Black community, educator was one the most prominent

256 professions. Black children, consequently, became casualties to the fallacy that integrating into
257 whiteness is a liberating act---an overlooked counternarrative (Bell, 1991).

258 **Counternarratives:** Deficit models used to describe the plight of Black America are deafening
259 that include unsubstantiated beliefs that Black are inferior and lazy (Kunjufu, 2012; Quicke,
260 2019). In *There is Nothing Wrong with Black Students*, Kunjufu (2012) denounces deficit models
261 often ascribed to Black youth. Instead, he offers data-supported counternarratives to white
262 supremacist ideology on why and how Black students fail and achieve in schools. While Kunjufu
263 (2012) identifies several schooling issues that stifle Black student development, “an irrelevant
264 Eurocentric curriculum model,” (p. 109) is included, which teaches Black children to hate
265 themselves and fosters the internalization of negative concepts of Blackness as defined by white
266 people—including achievement. As a result, the erosion of Black self-esteem and confidence
267 permeates in every facet of Black students’ lives. In contrast, when Black students are taught in
268 African-centered environments and have Black teachers, they fare similar or better than their
269 white peers (Kunjufu, 2012)—a consistent finding in the literature (Acosta, Foster, & Houchen,
270 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

271 Clark (2020) has similar sentiments as Kunjufu (2012), however, his counternarrative
272 setting is in PETE. Rarely used in PETE programs, Clark (2020) presents critical race pedagogy
273 for Black students who attend historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) to positively
274 impact Black students in K-12. Clark (2020) suggests that PETE scholars should decenter
275 whiteness. Rather if the intention is to teach and uplift Black folk, then the focus should be on
276 Blackness. In agreement with Kunjufu (2012), Clark recognizes that an understanding of
277 African-centered concepts coupled with Black teachers is paramount to the success of Black
278 students. Approaches such as these affirm Black PETE candidates who in turn will affirm Black

279 students in physical education, which contributes to social justice in academic settings for Black
280 people.

281 **Cultivating Social Justice Environments**

282 Social justice in education is one that:

283
284 ...actively address the dynamics of oppression, privilege, and isms, recognizing
285 that society is the product of historically rooted, institutionally sanctioned
286 stratification along socially constructed group lines that include race, class,
287 gender, sexual orientation, and ability. Working for social justice in education
288 means guiding students [and often being guided by students] in critical self-
289 reflection of their socialization into this matrix of unequal relationships and its
290 implications, analysis of the mechanisms of oppression, and the ability to
291 challenge these hierarchies (Cochran-Smith, 2004, as cited by Sensoy &
292 Diangelo, 2019, p. 350).

293
294 Although this definition is inclusive, the elusive nature of “race” does not encapsulate the
295 historical, cultural, and modern day Black American experience.

296 In the United States, contemporary social justice frameworks stem from the atrocities and
297 injustices that have occurred to Black people during enslavement and Jim Crow segregation
298 laws. *All* of the Civil Rights Acts have been made in effort to right the wrongs of the ill-
299 treatment of Black people, which has resulted in significant inequities. Tangled with civil rights,
300 affirmative action policies designed to eradicate employment and educational discrimination for
301 Black people, people of color, and women has not reached the promise of equality for members
302 of the Black community (Harris, 1993). While some progress has been made, even with

303 protections under the law, Black people continue to face systemic racism and discrimination in
304 all aspects of life to include housing, employment, economics, voting rights, health, access to
305 health care, and education (Davis & Harrison, 2013). As such, a radical shift towards social
306 justice is a necessity.

307 Socially just educational environments for Black students require a good understanding
308 of effective pedagogies. Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced the theory of culturally relevant
309 pedagogy, which is a reformative approach to teacher education that focuses on teaching
310 strategies shown effective for Black American children. In recognition that culture influences
311 educational outcomes, and after conducting research on effective teaching behaviors among
312 teachers of Black students, Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that culturally competent teaching is
313 underpinned by three criteria:

- 314 1. The ability to develop students academically
- 315 2. A willingness to nurture and support cultural competence
- 316 3. The development of sociopolitical or critical consciousness (p. 483).

317 While culture (customs, mores, practices and beliefs) and race (socially constructed
318 physical distinctions according to pigment or melanin) are not one in the same, Ladson-Billings
319 theory of culturally relevant pedagogy was as much about race as it was culture. To implement
320 the above, there must be the understanding that the permanence of racism exists in schools and
321 PETE programs, as these spaces consistently reproduce oppressive environments for Black
322 students (Allen & White-Smith, 2014; Harrison & Clark, 2016; Hodge, 2014). Furthermore, and
323 building on Ladson-Billings' (1995) culturally relevant theory, contemporary pedagogies
324 including *culturally responsive* (Gay, 2002; Wright, 2019), *culturally sustaining* (Cole, 2017),
325 *abolitionist teaching* (Love, 2019), and *African pedagogical excellence* (Acosta, 2017) are other

326 approaches that aim to liberate Black people in systemically racist academic environments. With
327 this understanding, teachers must enact these transformative pedagogies for racial equity and
328 social justice to occur (Harrison & Clark, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Tinning, 2016).

329 Harrison and Clark (2016) have further raised the consciousness that PETE programs
330 need to include social justice and cultural competencies after race-related injustices transpired in
331 2016 (e.g., the killing of nine Black church attendees by a white supremacist). Unfortunately,
332 tragic events that occurred four years ago run parallel to today with the senseless murders of
333 Black people by White police officers and random White citizens (e.g., George Floyd, Breonna
334 Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others), which has inspired Black Lives Matter protests,
335 and demands for social justice. Recognizing that PETE can aid in the alleviation of current and
336 historical injustices (Harrison & Clark, 2016), we offer culturally responsive PETE standards
337 that foster social justice by incorporating the historical and cultural contexts of Black people in
338 America.

339 **Methods**

340 In this paper, we critically reviewed and evaluated the development of the initial PETE
341 standards, the relationship to physical literacy, and the impact on Black students through a
342 racialized lens as supported in CRT. Walton-Fisette & Sutherland (2020) recently conducted a
343 thorough analysis of SHAPE's K-12 and initial PETE standards, which highlighted the lack of
344 social justice language and outcomes. They pointed out that standards of yesteryear had more
345 social justice language than standards today, which led us to examine the development teams for
346 the current and previous versions of the initial PETE standards.

347 We identified the contributors' names listed in each edition along with their institutional
348 affiliations at the time of publication. Internet searches were conducted to determine or confirm

349 the presenting race and gender of each contributor as well as the associated institution, although
350 most were known through our collective professional networks and affiliations. Once the
351 presenting race and gender were confirmed and agreed upon with a 100% interrater reliability,
352 we conducted frequency analysis and calculated percentages in each category. We shared a copy
353 of the final, pre-published manuscript with SHAPE America’s CEO and President for
354 transparency and to ensure accuracy in reporting. Next, we drew on CRT’s permanence of
355 racism to discuss the racial and gender makeup of the development teams and the impact on the
356 PE environment for Black children. Quantitative outcomes helped guide the PETE standard
357 analysis. However, we adopted CRT’s counternarrative (Black voice) and culturally relevant
358 principles to create a blueprint of culturally appropriate PETE standards. The goal is for the
359 standards to reflect explicit social justice outcomes for Black students with the vision that teacher
360 educators become culturally aware, competent, and literate (Culp, 2011).

361 **Results and Discussion**

362 25 people were directly involved in the development of the initial PETE standards. In Table 1, 23
363 (96%) of the PETE standard writers were White, and one (4%) Black. The gender makeup was
364 balanced with 13 (52%) males and 12 (48%) females, and most (n=22; 81%) were affiliated with
365 a predominately White institution. See Figure 1 for visual representation of racial demographics.

366 Insert Table 1 Here

367 Insert Figure 1 Here

368 Since inception, the initial PETE standards were developed through a White framework
369 as illustrated by the predominately White development teams from the late 1980s to today. In
370 four editions in just over 30 years, only one Black person has participated in the development of
371 the initial PETE standards, and is a representation of whiteness as property as the development

372 teams are essentially “owners” of the standards (Hiraldo, 2010) allowing them the “right to
373 exclude” (Harris, 1993, p.1714). This ownership status grants permission to permeate racism at
374 the expense Black students resulting from the lack of racial diversity among the development
375 team. Racial exclusion of the past is evident today, as there are no representations of Black
376 people on the most recent development teams—3rd and 4th editions (NASPE, 2008; SHAPE,
377 2017), further illustrating the permanence of racism and the cyclical return to whiteness, as Black
378 physical educators had more influence in physical education curriculum in the 1960s than now.
379 Lavonia Allison, for example, is a Black woman physical education pioneer who not only
380 disrupted institutional racism by integrating the North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health,
381 Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NCAAPHERD), but also was instrumental in
382 curriculum framework development for the national organization (AAPHERD - now SHAPE)
383 (Clark, et al, 2020; Jewett & Mullan, 1977; Salyer, 2003) further suggesting that the current
384 standards remain the property of whiteness.

385 Patterns of whiteness are also supported by the institutional makeup of the contributors,
386 as all associated institutions of higher learning were PWIs. Furthermore, field testing only
387 occurred at PWIs (AAHPERD, 1987), which ensures that the property (standards) benefits white
388 over Black students. Failure to include HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions highlights
389 that only white students matter when determining the effectiveness of the initial PETE standards.
390 Weilbacher (2012) asserts that educational teams composed only of white people are designed to
391 ensure that white people can maintain white dominance, which will likely be to the detriment of
392 Black children, as there is a litany of evidence that white educators engage in anti-Black
393 behaviors directed towards Black students--including in physical education (DeCuir & Dixson,
394 2004; Martin & Smith, 2017; Dagkas, 2018; Hylton, 2015; Weilbacher, 2012).

395 Although indicated in the first edition of the initial PETE standards that teacher
 396 candidates should be “capable of interpreting the physical education program to the many
 397 diverse communities that represent our society” (AAHPERD, 1987, p. 53), descriptions of
 398 diverse communities, and processes to meet this expectation are absent from the document.
 399 Furthermore, the term diverse only appears a few times in the current iteration along with
 400 ‘equitable’ and ‘culturally competence,’—stated one time each under the main standard as
 401 indicated below (SHAPE, 2017) .

402 **Standard 3: Planning and Implementation Physical education candidates apply content and foundational knowledge to**
 403 **plan and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences aligned with local, state and/or SHAPE America**
 404 **National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education through the effective use of resources,**
 405 **accommodations and/or modifications, technology and metacognitive strategies to address the diverse needs of all**
 406 **students.**

407
 408 3b Plan and implement progressive and sequential content that aligns with short-and long-term plan objectives and that
 409 addresses the **diverse** needs of all students.

410 3c Plan for and manage resources to provide active, fair and **equitable** learning experiences.

411 3d Plan and implement individualized instruction for **diverse** student needs, adding specific accommodations and/or
 412 modifications for all students

413
 414 **Standard 6: Professional Responsibility Physical education candidates demonstrate behaviors essential to becoming**
 415 **effective professionals. They exhibit professional ethics and culturally competent practices; seek opportunities for**
 416 **continued professional development; and demonstrate knowledge of promotion/advocacy strategies for physical**
 417 **education and expanded physical activity opportunities that support the development of physically literate individuals.**

418
 419 6a Engage in behavior that reflects professional ethics, practice and **cultural competence**

420
 421 In addition, there is no indication of what equitable and cultural competence actually mean, and
 422 the measure of these competencies are vague at best, which complement Walton-Fisette and
 423 Sutherland (2020) finding that standards of the past contained more social justice language than
 424 standards of today, however, practical application is not evident. Last, and perhaps most
 425 important, there is no mention of race, racial justice, or anti-Black racism, which challenges the
 426 recent Black Lives Matter statement posted by SHAPE America, as there are no physical
 427 education documents that indicate such (SHAPE, 2020).

428 As illustrated in the lack of racial diversity among the development teams, and the
 429 limited diversity language used in the initial PETE standards, there is obviously a cultural

430 disconnect between standard writers and the students that PETE candidates will eventually teach.
431 As such, the standards need to expand beyond physical literacy concepts that are rooted in white
432 privilege, as PETE candidates will be ill-equipped to effectively teach Black students. Based on
433 this assessment, diversity is used to describe anyone who does not meet white normatives.
434 Haphazard insertions of diversity suggest that PETE candidates will only reproduce inequalities
435 inherent in the standards. Furthermore, failure to de-couple race from diversity initiatives used in
436 the initial PETE standards indicates a commitment to the status quo of centering around
437 whiteness rather than equitable standards for all.

438 Willful exclusion of race in the initial PETE standards illustrates the permanence of
439 racism as there is no acknowledgement of the negative educational experiences Black students
440 encounter in U.S. academic institutions. Furthermore, there is no recognition that standards
441 rooted in African and/or Black culture are instrumental in the academic and social success of
442 Black children (Acosta, Foster, & Houchen, 2018; Clark, 2020; Kunjufu, 2012; Ladson-Billings,
443 1995). The lack of explicit diversity language, action steps towards social justice, and the
444 reported strength in the flexibility of institutional interpretation of the standards (AAHPERD,
445 1987) implies that White faculty decide diversity outcomes and how diverse communities are
446 best served ensuring that the standards remain the property of whiteness. Therefore, diversity is
447 an empty promise of equity and social justice.

448 The lack of explicit diversity initiatives is problematic for several reasons--Black PETE
449 faculty, scholars and PE teachers are excluded from these conversations; most PETE faculty are
450 white (Graber, Woods, Killian, Richards, & Rhoades, 2019); most PETE candidates are white
451 (Data USA, 2016; NCES, 2020), and the impact on Black students is not considered.
452 Furthermore, teacher candidates' requirement to meet "diversity" competencies are weak and

453 lack actual practices or demonstrations of diversity, equity, or inclusion (Weilbacher, 2012). For
454 example, PETE candidates are expected to “engage in behavior that reflects professional ethics,
455 practice and cultural competence,” yet there are no cultural competencies presented. In addition,
456 most PETE faculty are white (Graber, Woods, Killian, Richards, & Rhoades, 2019) and lack
457 cultural competence themselves (Wyant, Tsuda, & Yeats, 2020). Given these facts, and in
458 recognition that the current standards are absent of race conscious principles (Walton-Fisette &
459 Sutherland, 2020), we understand that alternative approaches that include Black voices are
460 necessary. As such, we propose standards with explicit competencies that PETE candidates
461 should demonstrate during pre-service teacher education training that strive for social justice.

462 **Black People, PETE Standards and Social Justice**

463 *Counternarrative-Black Voices:* Since Black scholars were not involved in the development of
464 the current initial PETE standards, it is time that Black voices are represented to address the
465 needs of Black children. SHAPE America recently issued a Black Lives Matter statement since
466 the killings of Black bodies by white police officers, however, words are often empty when not
467 attached to action. To their credit, however, SHAPE has begun to act in support of these
468 statements that illustrate their commitment to equity and justice for all. For example, we have
469 been invited to serve on several SHAPE committees, our suggestions to effect change have been
470 considered, and SHAPE leaders welcome the difficult dialogue that is often involved when
471 discussing race in America. Furthermore, SHAPE leadership accepted our participation in public
472 discourse until statements, policy, and practice unequivocally reflect social justice for Black
473 people. As such, Black voices are the counternarratives to whiteness in SHAPE America.

474 While these actions are commendable, we cannot ignore the fact that Black people are not
475 currently engaged in the construction of position papers, standards, or policy, which is where the

476 power lies. Furthermore, definitions of social justice are inclusive, yet the initial PETE standards
477 do not require candidates to demonstrate competencies that work towards inclusivity or social
478 justice. Acknowledging that the initial PETE standards lack explicit socially just actions, we
479 provide intentional outcomes that PETE candidates should engage in and develop during their
480 pre-service training, and hopefully, continue as practitioners (see Table 2). Given that Black
481 scholars lead this initiative, it is a start to dismantle physical education policies, practices, and
482 standards that do not serve Black children.

483 ***** Insert Table 2 here*****

484 Unlike SHAPE America's initial PETE standards, the social justice standards presented are
485 guided by a critical race lens using African principles and Black cultural pedagogies to promote
486 social justice for Black students in physical education. As suggested by Culp (2011) and
487 Harrison and Clark (2016), we incorporate intentional historical and cultural contexts in our
488 proposed standards to best serve Black children. We actively address social justice criterion
489 across eight categories that includes 67 measurable cultural competencies that PETE candidates
490 should demonstrate routinely throughout their PETE programs. As with the initial PETE
491 standards, there is flexibility to meet group specific needs by incorporating related issues that
492 affect other marginalized and minoritized groups (e.g., LGBTQ>Stonewall>Gay marriage). For
493 PETE candidates to effectively teach Black students, explicit criterion, expectations, and
494 assessment of each competency should be required. Furthermore, all pre-service teachers **MUST**
495 address these standards whether they are working with Black students or not. While the next
496 steps are to field test the standards, it is our hope that these standards become integrated
497 throughout all PETE programs.

498 **Limitations**

499 As the presentation of standards is how we envision social justice in PETE, standards
500 have yet to be field tested, which we acknowledge as the next step. However, and in the words of
501 Hodge (2014), the standards we offer show “*promise*” (p. 177). Furthermore, and despite these
502 limitations, we present a robust and timely argument that the initial PETE standards are
503 inherently rooted in whiteness and need radical adjustment to reflect social justice in action that
504 ensures equity for Black students in physical education settings.

505 **Conclusion**

506 Milner (2017) notes that change is often purposefully and skillfully slow and at the will
507 and design of those in power (p. 297). Given the state of current society and ongoing
508 demonstrations of anti-Blackness in virtually every facet of life in the U.S., we feel that a focus
509 on Black learners in physical education is not only timely, but a matter of life and death. For
510 those unfamiliar with the plight of Black people in the United States, the previous statement is
511 sure to provoke a range of emotions. However, a collection of data since the beginning of the
512 21st century suggests that outcomes for Black communities are worsening when compared to
513 whites in relation to health, economic mobility, education, safety, and overall quality of life
514 (Milner, 2017; Shanker Institute, 2015). As it pertains to schooling, structural racism is so fixed
515 as an omnipresent part of education, that it is hard for many to envision the long-term
516 consequences of messages promoted through the hidden curriculum of physical education.

517 Earlier, we noted the incorporation of physical literacy into SHAPE standards. While
518 generally accepted as a positive addition, the concept of “literacy” in the United States is
519 contentious and should be further examined in respect to the promotion of quality physical
520 education for Black youth. Venezky, Wagner and Ciliberti (1990) remind us of the cultural,
521 moral and instructional dimensions to the provision of literacy (p.ix). Origins of the discussion of

522 literacy can be traced back several centuries through colonial explorers and their desire to
523 educate those who they deemed were illiterate “savages”. Prendergast (2003) argues that literacy
524 is essential to the maintenance of white identity, has historically been recognized as “white
525 property” throughout American history and is replicated in courts, markets and the composition
526 of standardization initiatives. To be frank, perceptions of what literacy is in the United States
527 cannot be discussed without acknowledging the impact of racism on Black people. Valant (2020)
528 in reflecting on the banality of racism in education notes:

529 We are a country only a century-and-a-half removed from the enslavement of African
530 Americans and its accompanying anti-literacy laws, which prohibited teaching slaves to
531 read and write. The end of that era led not to some type of egalitarian or meritocratic
532 society—or any sincere, sustained attempt to get there—but rather to the Jim Crow laws
533 and de jure segregation of yesterday and the de facto segregation and structural racism of
534 today. (Valant, 2020, paragraph 3).

535 In providing this context, we do not suggest that physical literacy has no merit. Rather, we
536 challenge SHAPE America and similar organizations to be more forward thinking and
537 responsive to the needs of Black youth. The data in this study indicates that the standard bearers
538 who help “shape” SHAPE and ultimately physical education are overwhelmingly white, from
539 predominantly white institutions and are diverse only in gender. And if we only knew other
540 identities regarding their sexuality, religion, (dis)ability, etc., it would likely showcase even more
541 of the privileged, powerful groups. Consequently, the most recognizable national organization
542 for physical education in the United States does not accurately represent the racial and ethnic
543 diversity found in current American schools. There is much work to be done to ensure that Black

544 perspectives are seen in future standards and are not ignored through the promotion of cultural
 545 routine.

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