



# Spartan Staff News

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## ***SUPER'S PERSPECTIVE***

A new study finds participating in extra physical activity for just two hours every week can boost school performance. Scientists at the Centre for Brain Repair and Rehabilitation at the [Sahlgrenska Academy](#), University of Gothenburg in Sweden, conducted a study on 2,000 participants 12 years of age. They investigated if physical activity boosts learning and improves school performance.

In the study, the researchers assigned 408 participants from the Gothenburg region to two hours of extra play and motion activities per week, in collaboration with a local sports club. This was twice the normal amount (four hours versus 2 hours) of curricular physical activity.

Schools were chosen carefully for this study and the scientists highlighted the schools were comparable with respect to the number of boys and girls, the fraction of pupils with foreign background, and the average level of income, unemployment and education of parents.

The effect of the intervention was assessed by comparing the achievement of the national learning goals by the children four years prior and five years after the implementation. They also compared the results to the control groups in three schools that did not receive extra physical activity. They discovered that most of the students from the intervention school achieved the national learning goals in all subjects examined that included Swedish, English and mathematics.

Two additional hours of physical education each week doubled the odds that a pupil would achieve the national learning goals. This improvement did not happen in the control schools (the schools where the pupils did not receive extra physical activity). In fact, a decline in learning was noted.

The results of the study were in line with earlier studies that noted a correlation between physical activity and cognitive learning. This study indicates it is possible to improve the school performance of young pupils relatively easily and that dropping physical education will not help academic performance, but rather the opposite occurred. Physical activity is important especially for youth in promoting learning.

*"We do not need magic to change the world. We carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: We have the power to imagine better."*

*--J.K. Rowling*

## ***CALENDAR OF EVENTS***

Some events that are on our calendar that will be happening over the next several weeks follow. Athletic events will be listed only when it is a special event such as homecoming, parents night, or a tournament.

- ✓ **Mon. March 27<sup>th</sup>** – Opening Date for Golf
- ✓ **Tues. March 28<sup>th</sup>** – MRC Indoor @ Concordia (5 p)
- ✓ **Wed. March 29<sup>th</sup>** – Joint Coop Board Meeting in Hope (7 a)
- ✓ **Thurs. March 30<sup>th</sup>** – Elementary BBB v Central Cass @ Casselton (4:30 p); State Science Fair @ UND
- ✓ **Fri. March 31<sup>st</sup>** – State Science Fair @ UND; Speech Meet @ Tower City; Hope-Page Re-Organization Committee Meeting (7 a) in Hope
- ✓ **Sat. April 1<sup>st</sup>** – Maple Valley Elementary BBB Jamboree in Oriska
- ✓ **Tues. April 4<sup>th</sup>** – Elementary BBB v Northern Cass in Page (4:30 p); School Board Meeting in Page (7 p)
- ✓ **Wed. April 5<sup>th</sup>** – Two Hour Late Start – Staff Development Day
- ✓ **Thurs. April 6<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V / JH) v Midkota in Hope (4 p); Elementary BBB @ Enderlin (4:30 p); RRCV Indoor @ UND (5 p)
- ✓ **Fri. April 7<sup>th</sup>** – Regional Speech Meet in Hope (3:30 p)
- ✓ **Sat. April 8<sup>th</sup>** – Elementary BBB Jamboree in Page; Bb DH (V) v Northern Cass in Hope (1 p)
- ✓ **Mon. April 10<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Thompson in Hope (4p); Elementary BBB @ Oriska (4:30 p) v Maple Valley
- ✓ **Tues. April 11<sup>th</sup>** – Gerrells Invitational Track Meet in Devils Lake (4 p)
- ✓ **Wed. April 12<sup>th</sup>** – Instrumental Music Contest @ VCSU
- ✓ **Thurs. April 13<sup>th</sup>** – **NO SCHOOL**; Cavalier JH/HS Invitational Track Meeting in Cavalier (2 p)
- ✓ **Fri. April 14<sup>th</sup>** – **NO SCHOOL** – Good Friday
- ✓ **Mon. April 17<sup>th</sup>** – School Resumes after Easter Break
- ✓ **Tues. April 18<sup>th</sup>** – LYC Outdoor @ VCSU (3 p); Bb (V/JH) v H-CV in Reynolds (4 p); Elementary BBB @ Northern Cass (4:30 p)

- ✓ **Thurs. April 20<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Hatton-Northwood in Hope (4 p); Elementary BBB v Central Cass in Page (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Fri. April 21<sup>st</sup>** – “Dance the Night Away” Page Café fundraiser spaghetti dinner and concert @ Page School (6 p)
- ✓ **Sat. April 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Prom @ Finley
- ✓ **Mon. April 24<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V – DH) v MPCG in Hope (4 p)
- ✓ **Tues. April 25<sup>th</sup>** – Pembina County Outdoor @ Cavalier (1 p); Bb (JH – DH) v Northern Cass in Hope (4 p)
- ✓ **Wed. April 26<sup>th</sup>** – Athletic Awards Banquet in Hope (6 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. April 27<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) @ Larimore; Elementary Spring Concert (7 p)
- ✓ **Sat. April 29<sup>th</sup>** – State Speech @ Mandan; MPCG Invitational (10 a)
- ✓ **Mon. May 1<sup>st</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) @ Thompson (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Tues. May 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Larimore Invitational (2:30 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. May 4<sup>th</sup>** – Title Workshop in Fargo; Spring HS Concert in Hope (7 p)
- ✓ **Fri. May 5<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (v/JH) v H-CV in Hope (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Sat. May 6<sup>th</sup>** – State Music Contest
- ✓ **Mon. May 8<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Hatton-Northwood in Hatton (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Tues. May 9<sup>th</sup>** – RRVC Outdoor @ Mayville (2 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. May 11<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Dakota Prairie in Tolna (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Fri. May 12<sup>th</sup>** – Elementary Talent Show in Page (2 p)
- ✓ **Sat. May 13<sup>th</sup>** – Larimore Invitational (10:30 a)
- ✓ **Mon. May 15<sup>th</sup>** – Last Chance Track Meet (TBA); Bb (V/JH) v Larimore in Hope (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Fri. May 19<sup>th</sup>** – Regional Track Meet (TBA)

## BURNOUT –

What makes the fire fizzle so fast for a teacher? Sadly, 50% of those who enter public school teaching will be gone at the end of five years.

Teachers go into the profession to effect change. To make a difference. To help kids. The fine print, however, fails to tell the prospective educator how human the job can be; the heart gets involved. What other profession chisels at the core of one’s being and causes one to feel so deeply (besides perhaps the clergy)? We give so much of our selves. Parker Palmer, in his classic book, *The Courage to Teach*, notes, “The more one loves teaching, the more heartbreaking it can be. The courage to teach is the courage to keep one’s heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able”. We learn about our students’ lives and it is hard to separate emotionally as we go about our daily



lives. Not to mention the fact that currently teachers are expected to wear many more hats, and the time to do this is just not there. Burnout lurks ahead unless steps are taken to keep the heart wholly grounded.

Leaving work at the door of the school is difficult because we are feeling individuals. We feel deeply for our students and we own the emotion. Because the goals (or the ideals of what we expect) are not being met, we start to feel something is wrong. We also may have a slanted view of what we are doing. Is there a reason we become affected so quickly and lose sight of our purpose in education. Parker Palmer finds that it starts with the questions we should be asked before we enter the profession.

Palmer points out that when we consider teaching, we often begin with the traditional ‘what’ question – what subjects shall we teach? Here we want to inspire, innovate, lead, but we start with the wrong question. We know we want to teach others, and we may have some ideas how we will teach; we already

*‘The more one loves teaching, the more heartbreaking it can be. The courage to teach is the courage to keep one’s heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able’.*

know why we want to teach, right? But, do we ever ask the who question? Who am I doing the teaching? As Parker puts it “*who is the self that teaches?*” What does this mean? It means we need to know our individual limits.

It also means that we need a more realistic view of our role in the classroom. Teaching is something one can *never* master. For some, this can be frustrating. We cannot always control the outcomes of what the students learn or how they are feeling. As teachers, we continue to give (of time and self), and this appears as a badge of honor in education. Burnout happens when there is nothing left inside; we cannot give what we don’t possess (or have never had in the first place).

There are some signs that burnout is occurring:

- You are physically depleted;
- You are isolating yourself from friends, family and colleagues;
- You are a victim of your own negative self-talk;
- You criticize everything about your work and devalue it;
- You start making mountains out of molehills; and

- You lose sight of the resources you have at your disposal.

If any of these things ring true to you, where do you start to renew that spark within?

There is an inner practice which must take place in the heart of a teacher, and if completed, no matter what endeavor he / she undertakes, the ability to handle such demands shall be more doable. Schools do a great job of professional development and techniques for classroom management, but what about reflective practices for teachers?

Following are some reflective practices to help prevent teacher burnout.

- 1) Rest your body, and find ways to take breaks and unplug.** To renew the self, first, we must look at our outer being. This is critical and it is the first issue that must be addressed. This will vary greatly for individuals as to what each person needs to do.
- 2) Check your diet, make a healthy diet a priority.**
  - ✓ Focus on the whole person and incentivize time.
  - ✓ Focus on your overall health to prevent the widespread burnout by doing the following:
    - Develop habits of mental, physical, and emotional health;
    - Holistic wellness will support the mind, body, and spirit;
    - Increase awareness of factors and resources that contribute to professional and personal well-being;
    - Push yourself to achieve personal health goals and life-style balance; and
    - Find a sense of community, collaboration, and camaraderie.
  - ✓ Given a gift of small amounts of time and a healthier outside, one can then take a look inside.
- 3) Meditate, pray, or reconnect** – release feelings of frustration. Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” If we are to engage with other people, it is vital we continue to examine our hearts which can govern our thoughts, reactions, and motives. We need to be true to ourselves, and we will always be ready to give more than we may be able. Meditation, prayer, and / or reflection will make us become more aware. This must become habit-form; it will be one day at a time practicing positive steps. Sometimes a private blog can be used as a dumping ground of ideas and feelings. These writings can also help us see issues with a different lens; we can step out of ourselves and have perspective. This leads to the next point of looking outward.
- 4) Seek wisdom.** One of the symptoms of burnout is isolation. It is important not to wall the self up

where receiving is not happening. Find a confidant and share. There are plenty of resources if we just look. Finding *one* person who we trust is a vital step.



- 5) Form a community.** Building community is critical in the school environment. When we come together as a community – reflecting and sharing, the bright spots can be recognized. This may be the “ticket” (what is needed) if the person experiencing burnout cannot see anything bright at the moment. Iron can sharpen iron. The resources could be right under one’s nose yet a person may be so exhausted (burnt out), he / she cannot see them. The seeking of counsel can open up a small window to this step. This leads back to the original issue and that is the heart. THE HEART of the teacher is what brought us into this crazy profession. We fell in love with the art and science of teaching. Therefore it’s time to refocus.

**“WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.”**

--WINSTON CHURCHILL

- 6) Refocus on your purpose.** It is time to refocus on the question above. Who is the teacher who is teaching? How much of self has been given away? Did we give expecting instant results? Maybe we need to realize we cannot make a difference for every single student every single day. We cannot please all people all of the time. It takes time for seeds take root, to sprout and blossom.

Teaching is a marathon, yet it is fast paced. It is exhausting. It is never “over” when the school day is done. There are bumps, detours, side streets, and obstacles, but, if we can recover our heart by getting back to our root of our first love, taking care of who we are along the way, we can renew our spark as a teacher.