

Policy work, change and creativity in Health and Physical Education

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This paper illustrates how the concept of 'creative ecologies' (Harris, 2016) can be used as a framework for better understanding the intersection between policy work, change and creativity in Physical Education (PE). In doing so it presents a counter-narrative to the long-held belief that Physical Education is impermeable to change (Stolz and Kirk, 2015). This paper adds nuance and detail to existing scholarship related to the source, nature and impact of resources that allow for creative approaches to curriculum transformation and enactment. We do so with reference to interview data and field notes from an exemplary case study that involved Secondary PE teachers from one Australian Secondary school engaging in a process of curriculum transformation and enactment over the course of two years. We, the researchers, adopted a contextualised (Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins, 2011; Thrupp & Lupton, 2006) and relational approach (Hickey and colleagues, 2021) to supporting and exploring the reform. The findings suggest that it was the interplay of resources across the dimensions of the creative ecology (policies, processes, products, partnerships and physical environment) that supported the process of curriculum transformation and enactment in the case-study school. More specifically, the teachers identified the most valuable resources as being: i) structural and networked support; ii) sustained leadership; iii) a clear vision; iv) professional learning; and v) time. The findings suggest that sustained access to these resources enabled the teachers to transform their curriculum and some teachers' philosophies and practices over a two year period. In time we will know more about whether the innovations enmeshed within the curriculum transformation have been institutionalised, and also how the students experienced the 'pedagogical work' (Tinning, 2008, p.417) enacted in the name of the new curriculum. For now, however, the findings from this research can inform future attempts at creative curriculum transformation, and maximize the possibility of sustained change in PE.