**395A: Kinesiology Leadership Practicum for Teachers**

**Practicum Reflection**

For my Practicum experience, I was placed at Park Forest Middle School located in the State College School District. This experience was the first time I was ever at Park Forest Middle School. I went into practicum knowing that the State College School District was known for their fantastic facilities, faculty, and students. Park Forest is definitely a testimony of that statement. The school is placed on a large campus and offers many different activities due to the span of equipment offered. One of the first things I noticed at Park Forest was the moving rock wall which was located in the gymnasium. I had never seen one and thought that if they had the drive to earn the money for that piece of equipment, they would share the same passion for their students.

The classes I observed were co taught by a male and female teacher. The average class size for each period was around 50 students. When I began my observations, I was actually observing a student teacher that was also working with my cooperating teacher. This was the first time I had ever watched a student teacher’s lesson from a professional point of view. It was very interesting to watch the lesson choices made and sometimes being asked to critique. I was put on the spot many times by the cooperating teachers asking, “what would I do differently with this activity?” or “what is wrong with the cues set up?” I used these instructional “probes” to further develop my own personal knowledge of classroom development. I feel like I learned just as much from talking to the teachers during her lesson as I did observing other lessons.

This practicum was also the first time I had ever taught a lesson to actual school students alone. I had a partner that I observed with but we both taught individual lessons two times in the 10 weeks we were there. I was very nervous to teach the students because I had never had the opportunity to teach alone in the gymnasium setting except to my peers. I also was nervous to be observed by my cooperating teacher as I had never been critiqued by a professional outside of my professors. My first lesson was on Ultimate Frisbee with a 6th grade class. Although the lesson did not pan out the way I had planned, I learned a lot from that teaching experience and feel that a lot of the students really found success in the skills taught. I had several students come up and thank me after the lesson, which was really special to me because although I was very nervous because my lesson plan did not really work, it was great to see the students still got what I wanted them to from the lesson. I also taught a lesson of volleyball with 7th grade. The students were very outgoing and fun. I really enjoyed the lesson and hoped that they did as well. This lesson was a little more challenging because I had both classes (all 50 students) to myself. It was difficult to plan for 50 students considering I had never done that in the past, but the lesson went great as well.

I was a little sad to depart from Park Forest, but I was very happy with the experience. From observing, discussing, teaching, and reflecting I feel I was able to improve my professional tool box. Everything that the teachers and school has done for me is greatly appreciated. I have many more tools and resources at my dispense now because of this experience. This practicum was a helpful step in becoming a teaching professional.