The October issue of the *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education* (JTPE) focuses on some current issues, including training classroom teachers to complement the work of Physical Educators, as well as on some ongoing issues for Physical Education teachers. First, this issue addresses preservice classroom teachers’ physical activity promotion competence and attitudes. Subsequently, it explores the transition from Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) student to teacher via induction socialization as well as how one exceptional teacher navigated her working environment as the teacher of a marginal subject. Next, this issue investigates PETE students’ decision making processes related to tactical knowledge. Finally, it explores overweight children’s perceptions of physical activity and Physical Education in traditional and nontraditional contexts as well as the relationships among high school students’ social goals, effort, and disruptive behaviors in urban Physical Education.

In addition to quality Physical Education programs, it is also important to increase other physical activity opportunities at school. Identifying underlying factors that facilitate teachers’ adoptions of new innovations will lead to critical insights informing school change efforts. In the first paper, “Relationships between personal biography and changes in preservice classroom teachers’ physical activity promotion competence and attitudes”, Webster used the literature on the role of personal biography in preservice education to frame his investigation of preservice classroom teachers’ perceptions and attitudes of teaching healthy behavior content. Specifically, he investigated the influence of personal biographies on teachers’ skills and dispositions related to school-based physical activity promotion (SPAP) across a teacher education course (16-week). Preservice teachers (N=201; mostly white, female, sophomores/juniors students) completed the School-Physical Activity Promotion Competence Questionnaire and the School-Physical Activity Promotion Attitude Questionnaire (Webster et al., 2010). Mixed-model Analysis of Variance results showed that preservice teachers reported significantly higher attitudes and perceived competence for SPAP during recess/classroom physical activity breaks, extracurricular activities, and Physical Education lessons after the 16-week course. The most significant changes were reported for perceived competence in promoting physical activity in the classroom/recess settings. Results also suggested that sport participation, teaching/coaching experience, Physical Education satisfaction, and perceived physical activity confidence were associated with improved scores. Study findings support the importance of enhancing self-schemas and perceptions related to physical activity and Physical Education participation for all teachers.

Transitioning from preservice to inservice teacher is a challenging process and is particularly challenging for Physical Education teachers due to a variety of issues they need to deal with, including the marginalization of the subject and their isolation. The second paper in this issue, “The influence of a state mandated induction assistance program on the socialization of a beginning Physical Education teacher”, written by Richards and Templin, was framed by occupational socialization theory (e.g., Lawson, 1983) and investigated the socialization of an induction phase Physical Education teacher (Janet). Data collection included seven interviews with
Janet as well as interviews with her mentor, principal, and assistant superintendent, which focused on the induction process and the forms of induction assistance that she received. Results from analyzing interviews and induction assistance documents provide a narrative account of Janet’s experiences across acculturation, professional socialization, and her first two years of organizational socialization at her school. Although Janet participated in the State Mentoring and Assessment program, the components of formalized induction assistance she received (e.g., a formal mentor that she was paired with at her school, beginning teacher seminars, etc.) were not grounded in standards for Physical Education (as recommended by Feiman-Nemser, 2003), and they also reinforced the institutional presses (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1983) or the status quo, rather than innovations. Janet felt that she was successfully inducted into the profession; however, her success was facilitated by the community of practice, informal mentoring, and the innovative professional culture present among her colleagues. This paper supports the literature on the importance of communities of practice for Physical Education teachers.

Physical Education teachers who are successfully inducted into the profession, such as Janet, the research participant in paper two, often continue to face marginalization, isolation, and a lack of colleagues’ and administrators’ understanding about the content and outcomes of quality Physical Education programs. In paper three, authors Lux and McCullick describe one success story in “How one exceptional teacher navigated her working environment as the teacher of a marginal subject.” This paper was guided by Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984), which suggests that social practices (structure) and individuals (agency) interact and influence each other. The participant in Lux and McCullick’s study was Grace, a Physical Education teacher with more than 25 years of teaching experience. Data collection for this study included 300 hours in the school setting (observations with field notes, interviews and critical incident reports). Data analysis generated four themes or navigational strategies that Grace used to navigate the school environment, including: (a) being one of their own, (b) acquiring and managing instructional currency, (c) cultivating and nurturing kinship with a paraprofessional, and (d) fostering diplomatic relations with colleagues. Structuration Theory explains how Grace’s behaviors influenced common practices in her school structure as well as how the school structure influenced her everyday behaviors. The article provides new approaches and many examples for successfully changing commonly held beliefs by colleagues in schools, such as, how Physical Education programs and the Physical Education teacher’s work is central to the mission of the school.

Another new approach to teaching, specifically expanding our knowledge base related to PETE students tactical knowledge skills, is provided in the fourth paper “Comparison of three instructional approaches to enhance tactical knowledge in volleyball among university students” from our Belgium colleagues Vande Broek, Boen, Claessens, Feys, and Ceux. Authors investigated second year Masters degree PETE students’ (N=122, Flemish and Dutch) decision-making processes with three instructional groups (i.e., teacher-centered, student-centered with tactical questioning, and student-centered without tactical questioning) in university courses, using computer animation based on the Teaching Games for Understanding framework (TGfU, Bunker & Thorpe, 1982). Tactical awareness was assessed using a volleyball specific Tactical Awareness Test created in Macromedia Flash MX Professional 2004. The test included computer animation of two teams playing small-sided
games (4 vs. 4) in which tactical principles were presented in ten continuous series of three video clips. Students were tested at pretest, posttest and retention (six weeks later). ANOVA results for all three instructional groups showed significant increases in tactical knowledge from pretest to both posttest and retention test. The largest increase in knowledge was seen in the student-centered instructional group with tactical questioning. This study supports earlier work reporting both the effectiveness of a tactical games approach in fostering tactical awareness of students in sports games, and the notion of students as active, creative and social learners, consistent with constructivist theories.

The final two papers in this issue address another important voice in the discussion of Physical Education and physical activity programming at schools: the students. First in paper five, “Do you hear what I hear? Overweight children’s perceptions of different physical activity settings”, Meaney, Hart, and Griffin use Social-Cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986; 1999) to investigate overweight children’s perceptions of different physical activity and Physical Education programming (e.g., BACTIVE). Social-Cognitive theory states that there is an interaction between personal factors and behaviors in particular environments. Participants were 3rd-5th grade students (N=67) with either African-American or Hispanic-American heritages from one low-income school. They met specific BMI criteria (≥85th percentile) and had informed consent/assent to participate. Interview analyses resulted in several major themes, including that they enjoyed participating in the BACTIVE afterschool/summer programming and that they had their own ideas for improving Physical Education (or making it more like BACTIVE). Students suggested that Physical Education would benefit from more variety in games and activities, allowing rest/water breaks, having choices, and not comparing students to others. Suggestions by overweight students may benefit all students’ enjoyment in Physical Education and other physical activity contexts by creating more positive interactions between personal factors and behaviors.

The student voice is also heard in the final paper, “Social goals in urban Physical Education: Relationships with effort and disruptive behavior”, by Garn, McCaughtry, Shen, Martin and Fahlman. This paper was grounded in the social goals literature. Mostly 9th and 10th grade high school students (N=314; >94% Black/African-American ethnic background reported) taking Physical Education at three urban schools participated in this study. Social affiliation goals, social status goals, and social recognition goals were measured through the Social Motivational Orientation in Sport Scale (Allen, 2005). Social responsibility goals were measured through the Social Goals Scale-Physical Education (Guan, McBride, & Xiang, 2006). In addition, information regarding effort and disruptive behavior were collected through student reports (Midgley et al., 2000). Correlation and Multivariate Analyses of Variance results showed that social goals were positively related to student effort. Greater social responsibility goals were also associated with lower levels of disruptive behavior. This study provides information to help Physical Educators identify the diverse social motives underlying student goals in order to maximize learning opportunities through increased student effort and decreased management issues.