

# A Snapshot of Recruitment in Health and Physical Education Teacher Education: Results from a National Survey

A Report Prepared by the SHAPE America and NAKHE Joint Task Force

## Background

In the spring of 2017, SHAPE America and NAKHE appointed a joint task force charged with examining challenges and directions forward related to recruiting students into health education and physical education teacher education programs. Recognizing that factors affecting recruitment are largely driven by factors operating at the state level, the task force developed and launched a survey intended to evaluate the status of recruitment across all 50 US states. Survey questions were developed by taskforce members in consultation with experts in the fields of health education and physical education teacher education. The survey was completed through an online survey platform by one representative from each state. The survey was intended to be a brief, broad-scope examination of recruitment challenges. As a result, the survey was not subjected to a stringent examination of validity and reliability, and should be interpreted with the associated limitations in mind.

## Participants

State HPERD association presidents and executive directors were contacted and asked to either (a) complete the survey themselves, or (b) forward the survey invitation to someone in the state association familiar with issues affecting recruitment into health education and physical education teacher education programs (e.g., a state association higher education representative). This initial recruitment led to the completion of surveys by approximately 50% of states. Task force members reached out to personal contacts with the remaining states until one survey had been completed for each state in the US.

## Survey Questions

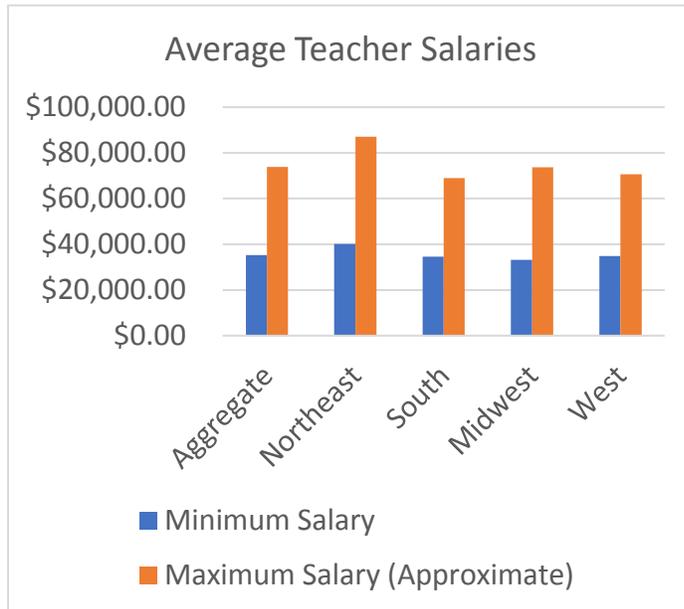
Survey questions were developed by members of the joint taskforce in consultation with experts in the health education and physical education teacher education community. Task force members valued survey brevity along with the need to collect meaningful information. Therefore, the survey was limited to 20 questions. A complete list of survey questions is available in Appendix A, but questions focused on factors that influence the extent to which teaching is viewed as a desirable career choice (e.g., salary, requirement to have a teaching license to coach) along with factors affecting teacher education (e.g., GPA requirements), and requirements for licensure.

**Data Analysis**

Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in order to provide an overview of factors affecting health and physical education recruitment in aggregate and broken down by US Census region. These included the Northeast ( $n = 9$ ), South ( $n = 16$ ), Midwest ( $n = 12$ ), and West ( $n = 13$ ). See Appendix B for an overview of Census regions.

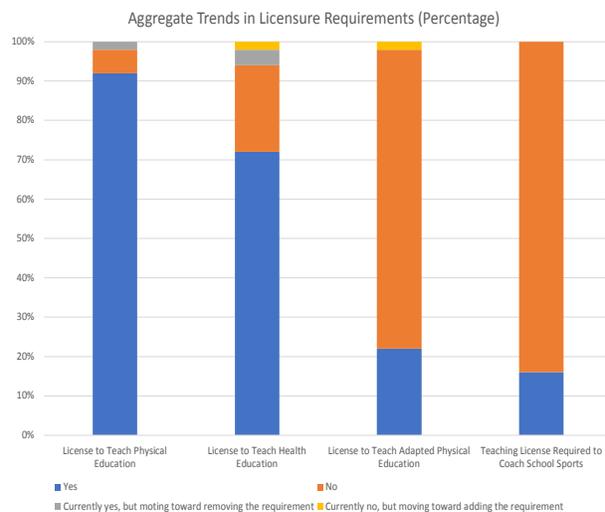
**Findings**

Survey results are discussed across the categories of survey questions with attention to US Census region.



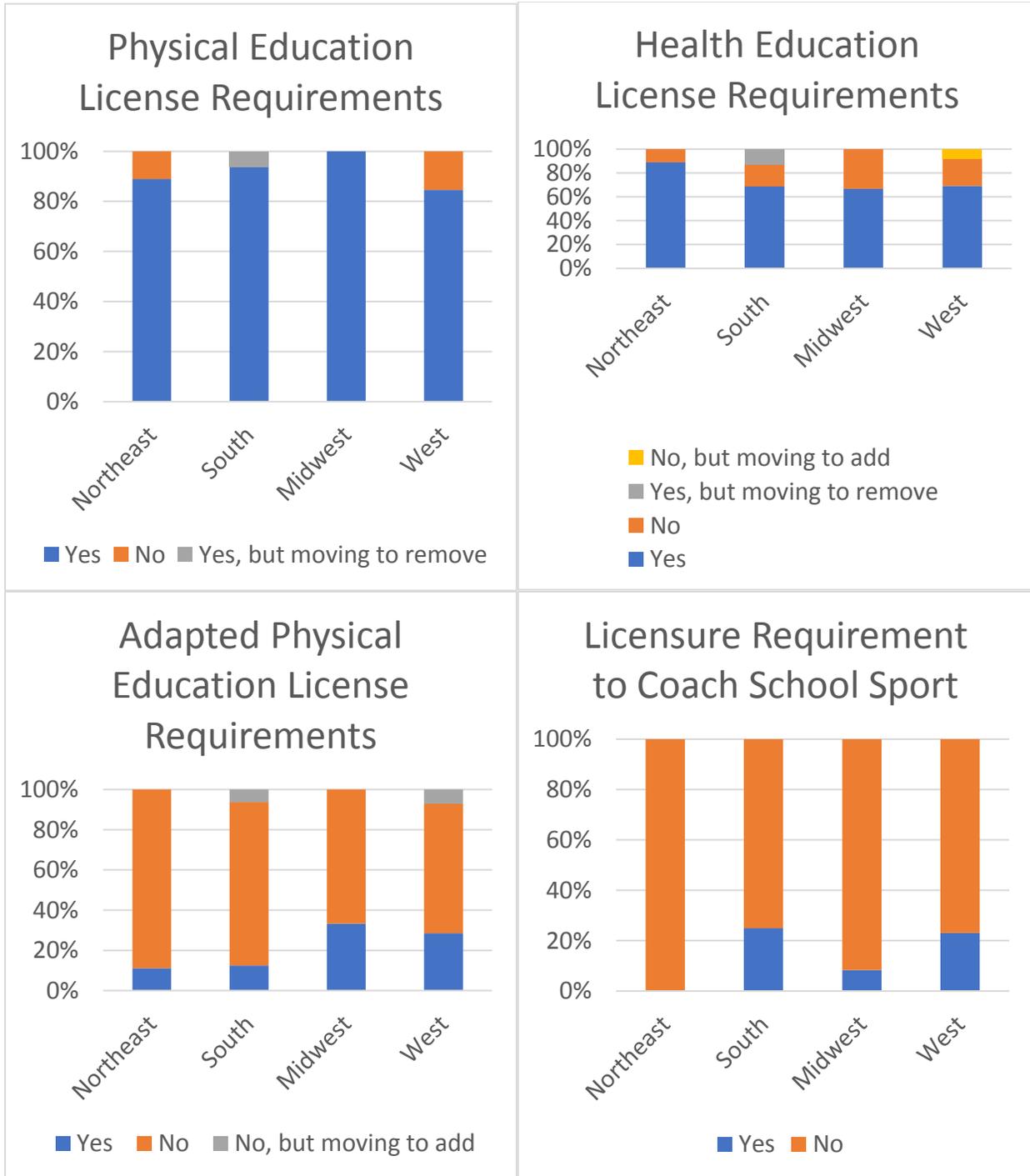
**Teacher Salaries.** Reported starting teacher salaries ranged from \$27,274 (Montana) to \$48,631 (New Jersey) with an average of \$35,296.70 ( $SD = \$4,549.84$ ). Approximate salary ceilings ranged from \$42,325 (Oklahoma) to \$120,000 (New York) with mean of \$73,811.26 ( $SD = 16,735.82$ ). Regional differences are displayed graphically, and cost of living differences across these regions should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. Salaries were generally higher in Northeast states and lower in the Southern states.

**Licensure Requirements.** Most states had requirements that teachers be specifically licensed to teach health education and physical education. However, few required a licensee to specifically teach adapted physical education, and even fewer required a teaching license to coach extracurricular school sports. Georgia was moving toward removing state requirements of physical education licensure, and Georgia and Texas were moving toward removing requirements for licensure in health education. Hawaii was in the process of adding requirements for licensure to teach health education, and North Carolina was doing the same relative to adapted physical education.



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The figures that follow break down regional differences for licensure requirements relative to physical education, health education, adapted physical education, and sport coaching. The requirements for physical education were consistently high (above 80% in all regions), but health education showed greater variance with the highest requirements in Northeast states and lowest in Midwest and South states. Adapted physical education requirements were low across all regions, but were highest in the Midwest and West. Requirements that individuals be a licensed teacher were highest in the South and West, and somewhat lower in the Northeast and Midwest.



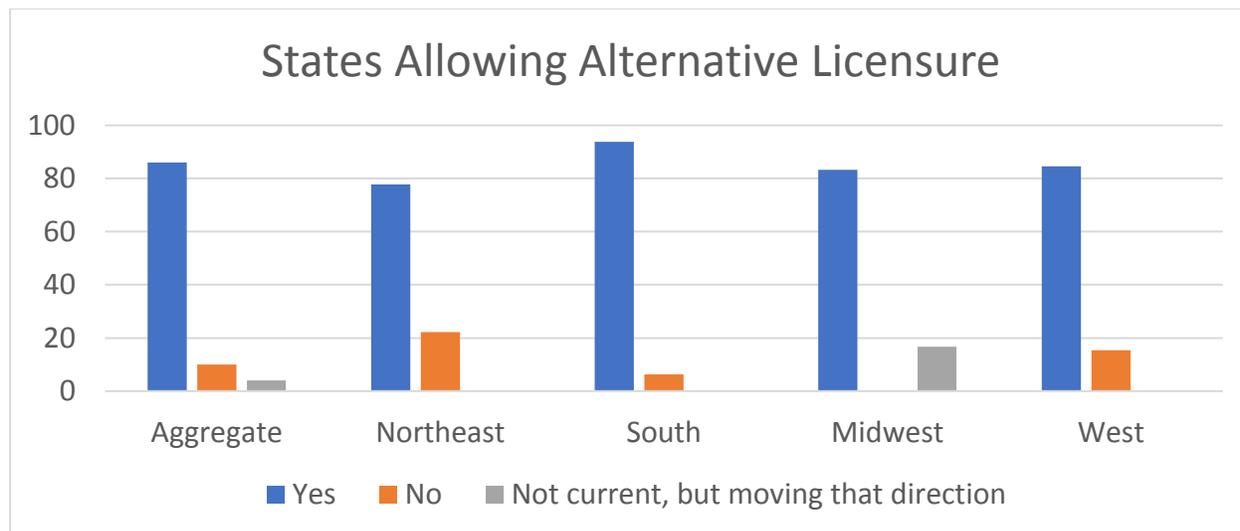
While the majority of States did not require a teaching license for extracurricular sport coaches, many states reported that principals considered health education and physical education teachers' coaching ability in the hiring process. This was particular the case in South and Midwest states, and to a lesser extent in the Northeast. None of the 13 Western states reported that coaching ability influenced hiring decisions.

US Region	Teaching License Required to Coach		Coaching Ability Influences Hiring Decisions	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Northeast	0 (0%)	9 (100%)	5 (55.6%)	4 (44.4%)
South	4 (25%)	12 (75%)	14 (87.6%)	2 (13.3%)
Midwest	1 (8.3%)	11 (91.7%)	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)
West	3 (23.1%)	10 (76.9%)	0 (0%)	13 (100%)

**Alternative Licensure Procedures.** Most states ( $n = 43$ ; 86%) included some procedures for granting emergency or alternative licenses for health education and physical education teachers that allow for at least partial circumvention of traditional teacher education requirements. An additional two states (Illinois and Michigan) were considering a move toward allowing alternative licenses.

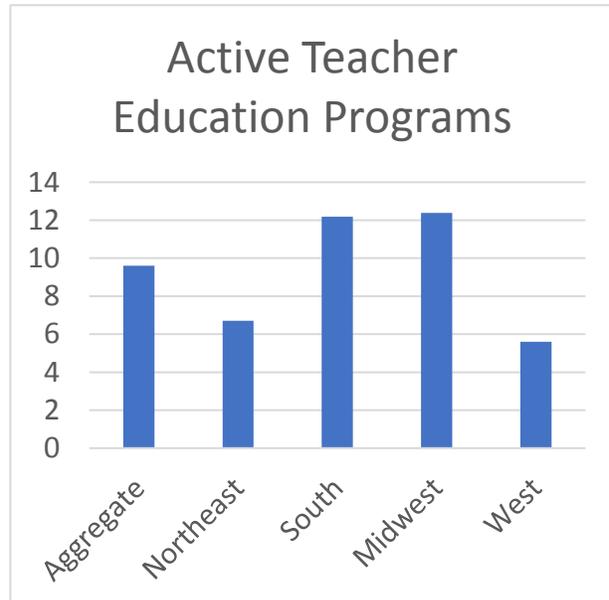
Participants were asked to elaborate on the procedures used for emergency or alternative licensing. Example quotations included:

- “Have to acquire a conditional certificate with requirements for appropriate coursework within a specific timeline”
- “Pass the state test in the subject area to get a preliminary license”
- “Given a temporary license for up to three years. Must start a licensure program during that period or lose license”
- “We have a severe teacher shortage, so although licensure is required, many teachers are not licensed. The routes can include courses, life experience, etc.”

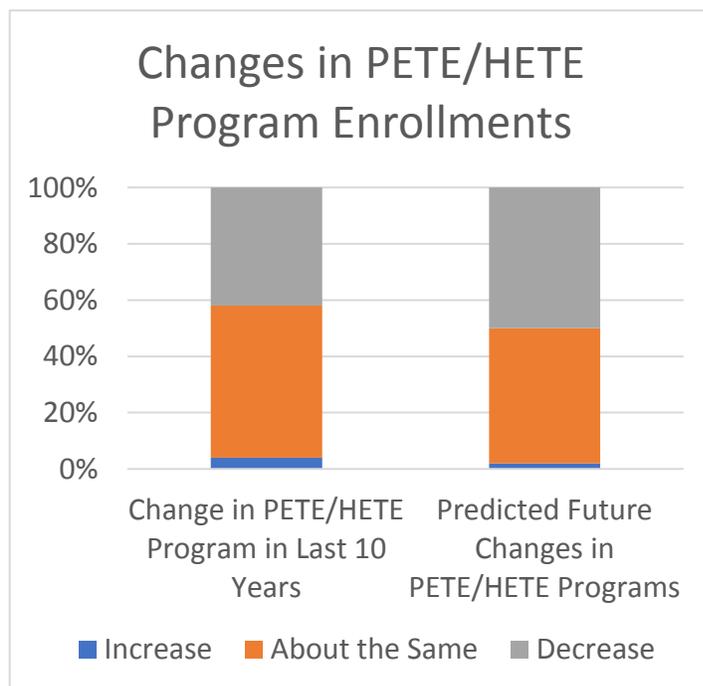


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**Licensure Programs.** Participants were asked to list the number of active physical education teacher education programs in their specific state. Results are displayed and tabular and graphical format below. States in the South and Midwest had generally more active programs than those in the Northeastern and Western regions. However, population differences across states in these regions should be taken into consideration when considering the number of active programs that is desirable for a given region. Texas, for example, reported 60 total teacher education programs, but the state is large and requires teaching licensure for sport coaches. Nevada was the only state that reported not having any active teacher education programs.



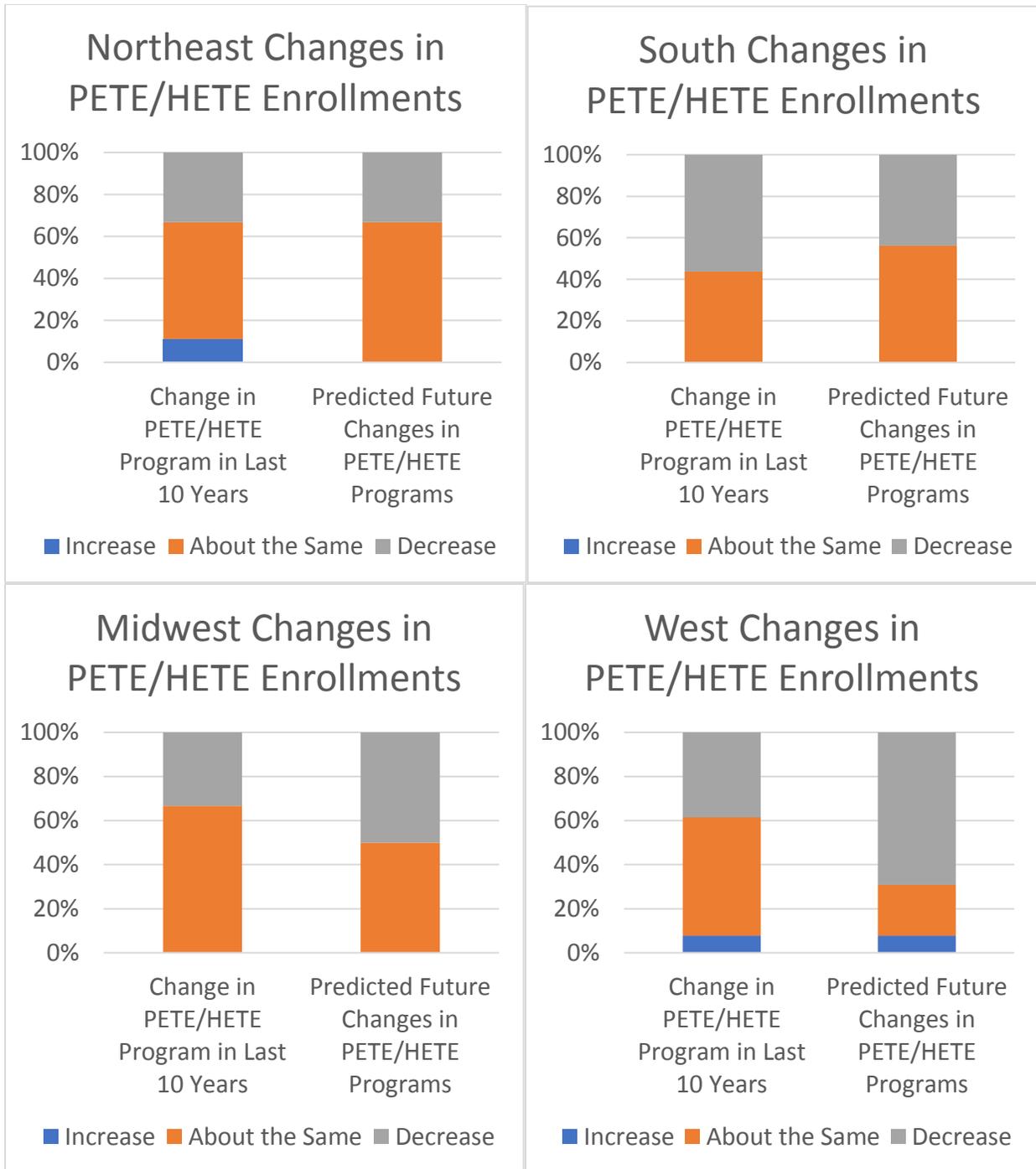
	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<b>Aggregate</b>	50	9.60	9.25	0	60
<b>Northeast</b>	9	6.67	4.42	2	15
<b>South</b>	16	12.19	13.52	1	60
<b>Midwest</b>	12	12.83	5.11	6	23
<b>West</b>	13	5.46	6.27	0	25



Participants were asked to describe past and predicted future changes in health education and physical education program enrollments. In aggregate, 42% of state representatives reported that their program enrollments had declined in the last 10 years. When asked to consider the future of program enrollments, 50% of state representative predicted future program declines. A large percentage of participants also reported that programs had (54%) and will continue to (42%) maintain enrollments, while relatively few state representatives reported experiencing (Maine, Colorado) or predicting future growth

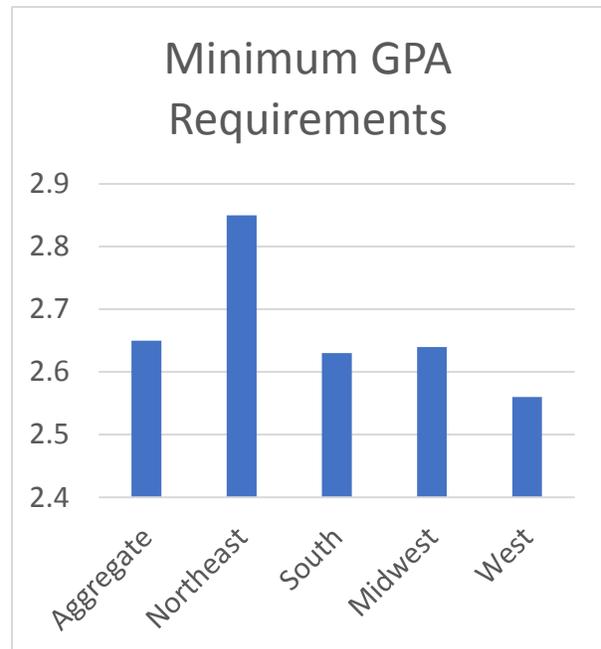
(Oregon).

Regional differences in perceived enrollment trends are depicted in the figures that follow. The Northeast region reported expiring and predicting future declines amongst a moderate number of states (33.3% of states), In the South region, over half of the states (56.3%) reported past declines, and 43.8% are anticipating future declines. In the Midwest, declines over the last 10 years were reported in 33.3% of states, and future declines were anticipated in 50% of states. Finally, in the West region, 38.2% of states reported a decline in the past 10 years, but 69.2% of states anticipated future declines.



Minimum GPA requirements for entrance in to teacher education programming are displayed in tabular and graphic format below. The GPA requirements ranged from 2.00 to 3.00 across states. The states in the Northeast region had generally higher GPA requirements ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = .20$ ) than in other regions. The Western region reported the generally lowest GPA requirements ( $M = 2.56$ ,  $SD = .22$ ).

All participants with the exception of those in California reported that their state required students to pass a licensure exam to complete teacher certification. In all states with the exception of Florida, Massachusetts, Arizona, Illinois, and New Mexico, and Georgia the required state test was the Praxis II subject area test.



	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<b>Aggregate</b>	50	2.65	.23	2.00	3.00
<b>Northeast</b>	9	2.85	.20	2.50	3.00
<b>South</b>	16	2.63	.16	2.50	3.00
<b>Midwest</b>	12	2.64	.28	2.00	3.00
<b>West</b>	13	2.56	.22	2.00	2.75

Most of the state representatives reported that health education and physical education teacher education were combined in all ( $n = 11$ ; 22%) or some ( $n = 24$ ; 48%) of teacher education programs. Fewer representatives reported that no programs were combined in their states ( $n = 15$ ; 30%).

### Conclusions and Directions Forward

While some regional trends were reported by state representatives, there are still a number of idiosyncrasies that make recruitment into health education and physical education programs a state-level issue. The experienced and predicted future declines in enrollment are troubling for the future of health education and physical education, both at the collegiate level and in school environments. Reductions in the number of qualified, licensed teachers will likely lead states to continue exploring emergency/alternative licensure procedures with the priority of getting an adult in the classroom to oversee education. The joint task force recommends that SHAPE America and NAKHE invest time and staff resources in developing a national advocacy plan focused on promoting the benefits of and challenging misconceptions related to careers in health education and physical education. This should include leveraging both teacher education faculty and inservice health education and physical educators, particularly at the secondary level, as recruitment agents.

### Suggested Citation

Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America) and National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education. (2018). *A snapshot of recruitment in health and physical education teacher education: Results from a national survey*. Reston, VA: SHAPE America.

### Contributing Members

Dr. K. Andrew R. Richards, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana

Dr. Phillip Ward, The Ohio State University

Dr. Daniel Burt, Texas A & M University, Kingsville

Dr. Beth Hersman, Wright State University

Dr. Jackie Lund, Georgia State University

Dr. Kim Razzano, East Stroudsburg State University

Dr. Shonna Synder, Gardner-Webb University

SHAPE America Staff liaison: Chris Hersl, SHAPE America

## Appendix A: Survey Questions

In recent years, concerns have been raised about declining enrollments in health and physical education teacher education programs, as well as the elimination of programs across the country. This presents a serious threat to the future of health and physical education, as there will not be enough trained and certified teachers to meet the needs of schools. In light of this situation, SHAPE America and NAKHE have created a joint task force to investigate health and physical education teacher education enrollments.

Given that recruitment challenges vary across the US, one of the first goals of the joint task force is to develop a better understanding of the challenges faced in different states. Toward this end, we are asking a representative from each state association to complete this brief online survey. Questions will ask about state policies that influence teacher recruitment and education, so it is likely that someone with a higher education background would be best suited to answer the questions. If you think that someone else in your state association would be the best person to complete the survey, please forward the email to that individual.

What US State, District, or Territory do you represent

▼ Alabama ... US Virgin Islands

What is the approximate **entry-level salary** for physical education and health education teachers in  $\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}$ ?

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What is the approximate **upper-level salary ceiling** for physical education and health education teachers in  $\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}$ ?

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Does  $\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}$  require that teachers have a license to teach **physical education**?

- Yes
- No
- Currently yes, but moving toward getting rid of the requirement
- Currently no, but likely moving that way

Does  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  require that teachers have a license to teach **health education**?

- Yes
- No
- Currently yes, but moving toward getting rid of the requirement
- Currently no, but likely moving that way

Does  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  require individuals to have a specific certification to teach adapted physical education?

- Yes
- No
- Currently yes, but moving toward getting rid of the requirement
- Currently no, but likely moving that way

Does  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  allow for alternative or emergency licenses that allow individuals to get health and/or physical education positions **without attending a teacher education program**?

- Yes
- No
- Not currently, but likely moving that way

How do people go about obtaining an alternative or emergency license in  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$ ?

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Does [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#) require a teaching license for individuals to coach interscholastic high school sports?

- Yes
- No
- Not currently, but likely moving that way

Do high school principals in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#) typically consider applicant's ability to coach when considering health and physical education hires?

- Yes
- No

What is the current number of PETE/HETE programs in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#)?

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Please provide a list of the universities with PETE/HETE programs in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#) (if you don't know them all, please list as many as you can)

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How has the number of PETE/HETE programs changed in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#) over the **last 10 years**?

- Increase
- About the Same
- Decrease

How do you think the number of PETE/HETE programs in  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  will change in the **next five years**?

- Increase
- About the same
- Decrease

What is the minimum GPA requirement for successful completion of teacher education in  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$ ?

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Does  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  require students to complete teacher licensure exams?

- Yes
- No

What teacher licensure exams are required in  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$ ?

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Does  $\{Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$  require successful completion of edTPA?

- Yes
- No
- Currently piloting edTPA and moving toward implementation
- Not currently, but likely moving that way

Are health and physical education teacher education programs combined in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#)?

- Yes
- Some
- No

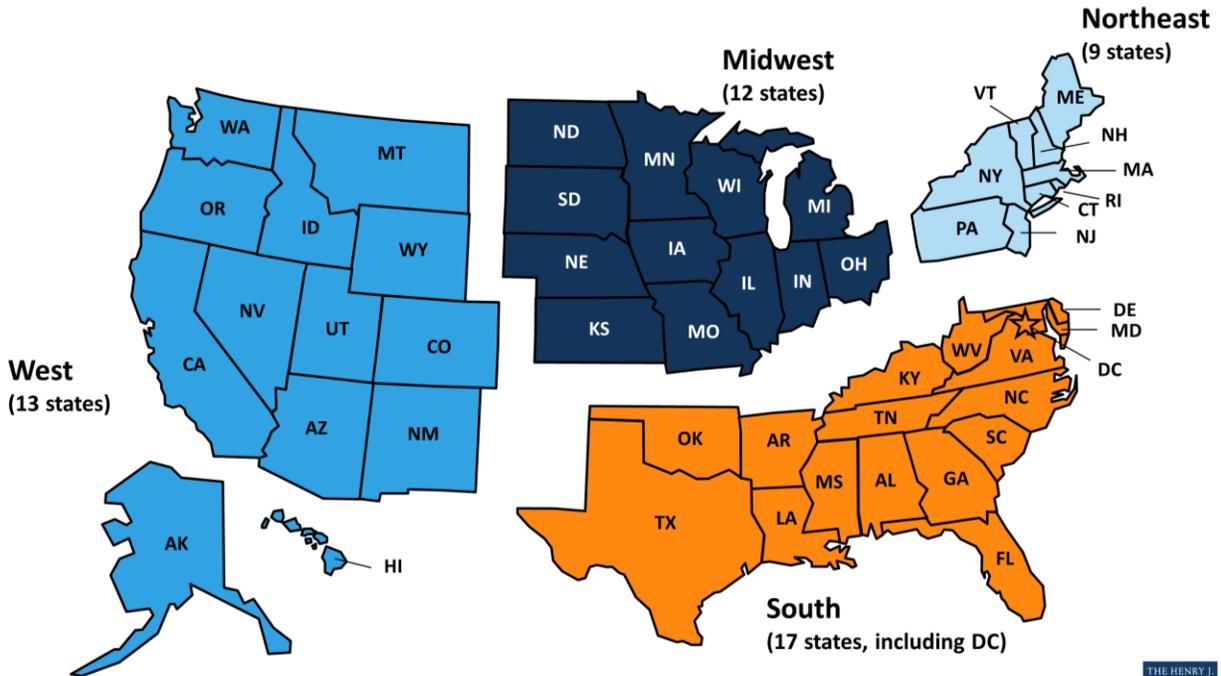
Beyond the questions above, is there anything else that impacts recruitment into PETE/HETE programs in [\\${Q2.1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices}](#)?

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Appendix B: Graphical Representation of US Census Regions

Census Regions and Divisions of the United States



SOURCES: [http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/pdfs/reference/us\\_regdiv.pdf](http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/pdfs/reference/us_regdiv.pdf)

