Steve Manolis, District Ambassador for the USAPA, Certified Pickleball Teaching Pro and Referee

An introduction to the game of pickleball and how it can be included in curriculum for K-12 schools, colleges and universities, includes a summarized curriculum and information on one of the fastest growing games in America.
Professional Pickleball Education Program

- One of the fastest growing sports in America
- National Tournaments held in Casa Grande AZ
- Entrants as young as 8 years old
- Up to 26 local tournaments held in Arizona each year
- Support by USA Pickleball Association (USAPA.org)
- An estimated 8 million people will be playing by 2018
- A school gymnasium can hold up to 3 courts
- Low cost program start
- Curriculum available to educators
- Supported by nearly 1,800 “Ambassadors” in North America
  - Over 60 in the Phoenix Metro Area

Presented by Steve Manolis, a USAPA representative and volunteer; Steve has been playing for over 6 years, has taught pickleball to over 300 players from ages 5 and up. Steve is a Certified Pickleball Teaching Professional, by the International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA.org) and is a Certified Referee by the USAPA.org.
Overview:

Where does pickleball fit into today’s educational system and how it can be taught to a younger audience?

Today, when we think about the game of pickleball, we immediately think, retirement crowd, ex tennis players slowing down their game and from a kid’s perspective...yeah that’s the game my grandparents play.

Back in the mid 60’s, when the game was being developed, the originators wanted to design a game for the kids to play. The game was designed for the family and for the youth.

Today you find that the vast majority of players are 50 or older, play at 55+ communities or retirement resorts such as RV parks and HOA’s.

There is also a focused movement to bring the game into the school systems and have it be a part of health and physical education. Part of the attraction seems to be that kids want to learn to play, after all their grandparents play and there is that general interest.

Yet there are other reasons that make pickleball a game that is clearly destined to school yards and gymnasiums.

First, it’s economically affordable, the cost of a start-up set (four paddles, a portable net, a few balls, and the space requirements) make it that an investment as low as $150 can get your program going. In most cases, for the adventurous, you can fit 3-4 courts in a typical gym floor.

Second, it’s an easy game to learn.

- We have had programs run where within a few hours kids are playing pickleball.
- Pickleball in itself helps the development of a younger player through hand-eye coordination, muscle control, focus and competitive.
- Pickleball is also widely known to be a very social game...a typical game may only take 15-30 minutes to play so participants rotate in more frequently, more so than tennis.
- The design of the game is such that there is no gender imbalance; pickleball is more a finesse game rather than one of strength.

Third, students as young as four or five can be taught specific skills that help them develop the skills needed to enjoy pickleball at an early age.

- This year the USAPA (USA Pickleball Association) is opening up their National Games to allow players as young as 8 to compete.

Pickleball Growth

The SFIA (Sport & Fitness Industry Association) estimate that there were 2.5 million people playing pickleball in 2015, they further estimated that the growth of player would increase to over 8 million by the end of 2018.

Pickleball has also expanded to 20 countries outside of North and Central America; there are players and clubs in Europe, Japan and India.
The USAPA is represented by local, national and international ambassadors...all volunteers that are focused on continued growth through work with public and private entities to build courts, teach players and generally spread the good will of the game.

Development of Programs

The game is support by a vast array of support programs and entities, one of which is the USAPA Ambassadors program. Another group, IPTPA (the International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association) has developed teaching and coaching programs that develop teaching pros (very similar to the USTA). The USAPA has also developed referee training programs to provide the many tournaments that are run throughout the year with highly trained referees.

Programs for Schools

There are programs and curriculum content for schools that include age appropriate skill sets from K-12. We are providing summarized content and workshops for educators across the state.

There are other materials that go deeper into content and include grading play level and skill sets.

With other companies, such as PurePickleball.com, we have developed and executed successful programs that help to develop the skills sets needed for growth of the game with our younger demo. Students as young as 5 years old quickly develop the skills and exercises needed to play the game of pickleball.

Games from as simple as balancing a pickleball on a paddle, to learning basic stroke and serve techniques, using available tools such as cones to hit balls from to hops as targets, or playing 4-square to teach children required motor skills are presented at our booth and in workshops in the state.

In the Phoenix metro area we have worked most recently with the City of Phoenix Parks and Rec in their summer camp programs teaching K-5 level aged children the game through a progression of exercises and drills. These exercises helped the children understand and develop the game from its most basic shot skill, the underhanded shot, often called the ‘dink shot’. The dink shot forms the basis of the serve, the return and most mid-court shots. The IPTPA strongly recommends teaching the game of pickleball from the inside out, meaning from the net area out to the kitchen; why, because the majority of the game is the finesse game at the net, more commonly referred to as ‘the kitchen’.

Other success stories come from Horizon Community Learning Center, in Phoenix.

Horizon’s faculty lined 6 courts next to their school to teach pickleball as a curriculum sport. Matt Mixer and his staff taught, and continue to teach pickleball to the K-12 charter school.

Horizon also was introduced to two ambassadors of pickleball at Pecos Park, a public park near the school which has 8 pickleball courts. There the junior high school and high school students were taught pickleball based on programs recommended by IPTPA. One of the ambassadors was a certified pickleball instructor.

Another program was introduced and conducted by the local certified instructor and a volunteer group of ambassadors at the Archway Academy in Chandler. There 150 students, K-5, were introduced to the game.

Another program is being put together with the Gilbert School System and designed for various age groups.
Also, the Dysart Unified School District ran teaching programs that ended with a mini tournament among several schools in the area.

The results of all these programs was one that left all children with a sense of being able to compete regardless of age, gender, strength or physical size. Basically all loved playing, had fun and got some great exercise through camaraderies, socialization and a lot of laughter with an air of competitiveness...again, they had fun.

**The Curriculum**

Following is a summarized curriculum based on the experiences and recommendations of several educators and entities, most notably the International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA.org), the USAPA, PurePickleball.com and other experienced players.

The curriculum is currently being taught at Arizona State University in Tempe, Dixie State University in St. George, Utah and Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah. The curriculum will be added to Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, and is being introduced to Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, University of Nevada Las Vegas and University of Arizona in Tucson as well as the Maricopa Community Colleges in the Phoenix Metro area.

As mentioned, there are several published books in hard cover form and on the internet that are available. The most comprehensive is from PurePickleball.com. The books produced offer drills, games and exercises at age appropriate levels and providing tools for grading and measuring progress of the individual. The books are available at our booth where a company representative is on hand to answer any questions.

I am also available, as are a number of representatives, professional players and ambassadors from the USAPA and IPTPA.

Copies of this presentation are available and can be sent via email or hard copy. THANK YOU
A. Expected Student Goals & Learning Outcomes (Ages 5-8)

Students that successfully complete this course will have:

a. Shown cognitive skills:
   i. knowledge of the pickleball equipment (ball, paddle, net)
   ii. knowledge of the basic rules (similarities to tennis and ping pong)
   iii. knowledge of safety

b. Shown motor skills *(demonstration)*
   i. Able to toss, underhanded, and catch a ball without paddle
   ii. Able to toss with controlled direction to other students
   iii. Ball balance on paddle skill
   iv. Ball bouncing on paddle skill
   v. Hitting the ball off a tee
   vi. Light hitting vs hard hitting
   vii. Hitting the ball for vertical and horizontal distance
   viii. Hitting the ball at targets (hula hoops)

c. Shown social skills
   i. Sharing the ball and space by tossing in 4-square *(demonstration)*
   ii. Recognition in space for safety
   iii. Not throwing balls at other players or when others may be in the way

c. Skill games
   i. *Pickleball Golf Demonstration*
      1. Hitting the ball off the T at a cone or hula hoop target
      2. Hitting the ball for horizontal distance
      3. Hitting at various depths Light and hard hits (focus on accuracy)

   ii. *Pickleball Balance Demonstration*
      1. How long can you balance a ball on a paddle
         a. While standing still
         b. While walking
         c. While running
         d. While running through a designated course

   iii. *Pickleball bounce (Hand-Eye coordination) Demonstration*
      1. Bouncing a pickleball off the paddle
         a. How many times can the ball be bounced on the paddle
         b. Progression from standing still to walking and running

   iv. *Hitting the ball over the net to partner* (basics of the dink shot and respect of the net)
      1. Measure how many hits before ball goes into net or is missed
B. Expected Student Goals & Learning Outcomes (Ages 8-10)

Students that achieve the First step (section A) can move to this next level

a. Shown cognitive skills:
   i. knowledge of the pickleball basic rules & terms
      1. underhanded serve
      2. bounce rule
      3. defined court boundaries
      4. definition of: serve, return and volley
   ii. knowledge of safety
      1. do not chase a ball that might be going onto another court
      2. do not back up to hit a ball, do not cross feet when moving
      3. pick up any loose balls that may stray onto your court

b. Shown motor skills (4 square game without paddle) Demonstration
   i. Able to toss and catch a ball without paddle using underhand toss
   ii. Able to toss with controlled direction to other players

c. Shown social skills
   iii. Sharing the ball and space, by tossing to other players in 4-square
   iv. Recognition in space for safety
   v. Not throwing balls at other players or when others may be in the way

d. Skill games
   vi. Hit and bounce back and forth to partner with paddles
      4. Focus on soft hits and patience
      5. Focus on keeping ball in play
   vii. 4-square with 3 other partners
      6. Rotating hits clockwise, counterclockwise and diagonal
   iii. Hitting ball on paddle surface and rotating paddle to hit on other surface
      a. How many times can the ball be bounced on the paddle
      b. Progression from standing still to walking and running
C. Expected Student Goals & Learning Outcomes (Ages 10-13) Playing the Game

After showing student development in sections A & B students move to the next step USA Pickleball Association conducts tournaments at this level and above

Students that are interested can further develop their skills to prepare for competitive levels

a. Overview of pickleball
   i. History of the game
   ii. The court layout and all its parts
   iii. The ball
   iv. The paddle
   v. Playing attire
   vi. Safety Issues...Demonstration
      1. No chasing balls on to other courts
      2. No backing up
      3. If a ball comes on to your court from another stop play

b. Fundamentals of the game...Demonstration
   i. Paddle grip
   ii. Ready position
   iii. Basic swing
   iv. Serve
   v. Return
   vi. Two bounce rule
   vii. Scoring
   viii. Footwork
   ix. Paddle Face Position

c. Basic Shot Types
   i. Dink
   ii. Volley
   iii. Ground stroke

d. Strategies
   i. Reducing errors
   ii. Forehand dominates
   iii. Communication with partner

1. Playing the Game
   e. Setting up recreational play
   f. Warm up drills
      i. Stretching
      ii. Dinking
      iii. Ground strokes
      iv. Serve and Return
   g. Understand scoring and basic court position
   h. Try to hit every ball over the net
   i. Respecting the kitchen area
   j. Rules overview
   k. Game Structure ...Demonstration
      i. Play games to 5 points
      ii. Rotate other players in
      iii. Play team game, (players rotate in and out during the game between points)

Expected Student Goals & Learning Outcomes (Ages 14+) Playing the Game
A. **Expected Student Goals & Learning Outcomes**

Students that successfully complete this course will have:

a. Shown consistency in their play with an understanding of game strategy
b. Used a variety of shots to affect their strategy
c. Demonstrate a comprehension of the rules, terminology, safety and sportsmanship
d. Integrated their knowledge and skills into effective movement with their partner
e. Shown an increase in of play level through performance within the class
f. Demonstrated etiquette, finesse and focus in overall play
g. Participated fully in class

B. **Course Content**

a. Overview of pickleball
   i. History of the game
   ii. The court layout and all its parts
   iii. The ball
   iv. The paddle
   v. Playing attire

b. Fundamentals of the game *Demonstration on Full Court*
   i. Paddle grip
   ii. Ready position
   iii. Basic swing
   iv. Serve
   v. Return
   vi. Two bounce rule
   vii. Scoring
   viii. Footwork
   ix. Paddle Face Position

b. Shot Types *Demonstration on Full Court*
   i. Dink
   ii. Drop shot
   iii. Volley
   iv. Half volley
   v. Volley drop shot
   vi. Forehand ground stroke
   vii. Backhand ground stroke
   viii. Lob
   ix. Overhead shot

d. Spin Shot Types
   i. Top Spin
   ii. Back Spin/Slice
   iii. Side Spin

e. Strategies
   i. Reducing errors
   ii. Playing your strengths
   iii. Recognizing opponent weaknesses
   iv. Forehand dominates
   v. Stacking
   vi. Keeping your opponents back and deep
   vii. Communication with partner
C. Playing Demo Games
   a. Solicit educators onto the floor

D. Questions and Answers

E. Materials and Facilities
   The instructor will provide the needed equipment for all class participants in the course. Students are welcome and encouraged to bring their own paddles. All students are required to dress in appropriate gym attire that allows for full and safe participation.

F. Class Policy
   a. Students must be on time and in full attendance for all classes unless the instructor is notified in advance.
   b. The overall conduct and treatment of classmates and equipment will be one of respect and courtesy regardless of skill level and individual differences.
   c. Appropriate attire: gym shoes, socks and comfortable fitting shorts or pants and shirts.