

WHAT IS PEM?

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Body Shame as Pre- dictor of Exercise Addiction among College Students: Implications for Sport Psychologists	2
Committee Corner: Self-Reflection and Professional Growth in the Journey of a Sport Psychology Professional	4
High School Ath- letics: A Fertile Field for Growing Sport and Perform- ance Psychology Services	6
Interview with a Sport Scientist	8

The Performance Excellence Movement (PEM) is a newsletter designed to increase awareness on sport and exercise psychology topics. PEM also provides insight into applying these concepts to a number of different domains, including business coaching, medicine, the military, music, and elite athletes. PEM has historically consisted of one annual issue; however, we are excited to announce that two issues will be published for the first time this year!

This issue includes two student-written contributions as well as an interview with a professional in the field of sport and performance psychology. In the first student contribution, Ertl and Martin of

University at Albany, State University of New York discuss the results of a study examining body shame as a positive predictor of exercise addiction among college students, including implications for practitioners. Then, a student from Indiana University, Matt Powless, will discuss his experiences as an “in-house” sport psychology consultant at the high school level.

You will also find an interview with a prominent sport scientist, who offers current students advice on and directions in training, types of experiences to look for, and reflections on his own professional journey.

Finally, we are excited to announce the addition of a “Committee Corner” section to PEM publication. Here, current PEM editors give their thoughts or on current issues in the field of sport and performance psychology. In this issue, Noelle Menendez discusses her experiences of personal and professional growth through seeking counseling during her training.

We hope you can learn from some of the experiences in this issue, and that you enjoy reading PEM!

How can I get involved with PEM?

- Contact the editors to learn more:
Alan.Chu@unt.edu & JoannaFoss@mail.missouri.edu
- Read the newsletter and spread the word
- Attend the AASP conference to meet those involved

How to contribute to the Fall 2016 PEM:

Do you have evidence-based consulting or applied experience other students could benefit from? Do you want to obtain experience in a peer-review process? Then consider submitting to PEM!

We are always looking for students willing to share their experiences and help others improve their consulting expertise. Please contact us if you are interested in submitting an article. (See contact information on final page.) We want you to be part of the process for the Fall 2016 newsletter!

Body Shame as Predictor of Exercise Addiction among College Students: Implications for Sport Psychologists

Melissa M. Ertl

Jessica L. Martin, PhD

University at Albany, State University of New York



Although a wealth of research supports the psychological and physical benefits of exercise (Penedo & Dahn, 2005), exercise addiction is a highly concerning problem defined by withdrawal symptoms, deleterious social consequences, and other negative psychophysical effects (Berczik et al., 2012). Exercise addiction is differentiated from other behavioral addictions such as substance abuse and gambling by its compulsive rather than impulsive attributes. Little is known about the predictors of exercise addiction and few studies have investigated it among college students (Zmijewski & Howard, 2003). Blaydon, Linder, and Kerr (2004) suggest that preoccupation with body image is the driving force of exercise addiction; however, this has not been empirically tested. To fill these gaps in the literature, the present study examines whether body shame—the negative emotional experience that results from evaluating the appearance of one's body (McKinley & Hyde,

1996) — is a significant positive predictor of exercise addiction among college students. Results will inform interventions by determining whether targeting body shame would be beneficial in treatment.

Method

Participants

Participants included 463 undergraduates age 18 to 26 ($M = 19.85$, $SD = 1.52$) at a large Northeastern public university who reported the following identities: 71.6% women, 27.8% men, 0.4% transgender, 0.2% agender, as well as 57.8% White, 15% Black/African American, 14.6% Hispanic/Latina/Latino, 6.1% Asian/Asian American, 4.1% Biracial/Multiracial, and 2.2% Other.

Participants indicated exercising occasionally (40.9%), regularly (28.8%), not exercising (8.7%), recreational club (6.7%), varsity athletics (5.5%), intramural/organized (4.7%), recreational informal competitions (3.7%), or elite athletics at the (inter) national level (1.0%). Participants who indicated that they did not exercise were excluded from data analysis.

Procedure and Measures

Participants were recruited through flyers and classroom announcements. They answered several questionnaires as part of a

larger study on health behaviors. Body shame was measured using the 8-item Body Shame subscale of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996), which has shown good internal consistency among undergraduates ($\alpha = .84$) and convergent validity with Internalization of cultural beauty standards ($r = .51$). Items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 7 = *Strongly agree*). The 6-item Exercise Addiction Inventory (EAI; Terry, Szabo, & Griffiths, 2004) measured exercise addiction behaviors. It has received support for internal ($\alpha = .84$) and test-retest ($\alpha = .85$) reliability as well as convergent validity with two measures of exercise dependence ($rs \geq .80$). Items on the EAI are 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*).



Results

Using a linear regression, we tested whether body shame was a significant positive predictor of exercise addiction. According to our hypothesis, body shame emerged as a significant positive predictor of exercise addiction, $b = .30$, $t(421) = 6.51$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.10, .19], accounting for a relatively small but significant amount of variability [$R^2_{\text{Adjusted}} = .09$, $F(1, 421) = 42.41$, $p < .001$]. Although small, the effect size is noteworthy since predictors of exercise addiction have not been empirically tested.

Discussion

The present study investigated whether body shame predicts exercise addiction among college students. Findings suggest the more body shame an individual has, the higher the likelihood of exhibiting indicators of exercise addiction (e.g., preoccupation with exercise, exercising despite injury, intense withdrawal symptoms when not exercising). In this sample, body shame's explanation of 9% of the variability in exercise addiction indicates the need for further evaluation of other potential predictors. When considered with other factors such as self-esteem or disordered eating, body shame may account for more variability in exercise addiction.

The present study imparts several practical implications for professionals. Targeting body shame in treatment could be effective in diminishing exercise addiction, as research consistently finds that individuals affected by exercise addiction often show an excessive concern about their body image, weight, and diet (Blaydon & Lindner, 2002; Klein et al., 2004).

Body shame is generally treated with therapy focused on physical and psychosocial concerns (Gilbert & Miles, 2014). Treatment that uses cognitive restructuring to change individuals' beliefs about their bodies (Grabe, Hyde, & Lindberg, 2007) by attempting to modify maladaptive thoughts may help reduce body shame and exercise addiction (e.g., "an athlete is incapable of doing anything when not exercising" or "exercise

is the only way to reduce negative feelings"; Rosenberg & Feder, 2014). If athletes with body shame and exercise addiction begin believing that their worth is not tied to exercise, they may moderate their exercise and engage in alternative activities that could validate their new, more adaptive beliefs. Berczik et al. (2012) recommend focusing on moderation and alerting individuals to



signs of excessive behaviors; providing psychoeducation about the damaging consequences of exercise addiction (e.g., losing the ability to perform due to injury) may motivate addressing these excessive behaviors. Finally, we recommend that professionals trained in assessment consider use of the EAI to screen for exercise addiction among students and athletes because of its brevity, ease of scoring, demonstration of good psychometric properties, and accuracy in identifying exercise addiction.

“Targeting body shame in treatment could be effective in diminishing exercise addiction”

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables.

Variable	α	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Body Shame	.85	27.67	10.40	8	56
Exercise Addiction	.84	15.82	5.32	6	30

COMMITTEE CORNER

Self-Reflection and Professional Growth in the Journey of a Sport Psychology Professional Noelle Menendez John F. Kennedy University

As Sport Psychology Professionals (SPPs), everyday we ask our athlete-clients to actively indulge in their personal thoughts, feelings, and behavior, all of which drive their performance. Understanding our own thoughts, feelings, and behavior related to our own work is equally important to being an effective SPP. Self-reflection has been known to contribute positively to that objective (Cropley, Miles, Hanton, & Niven, 2007). There are many different methods for engaging in self-reflection, from journaling to note writing to discussions with peers. The manner in which I took initiative to put my reflective practice into action was by seeking counseling for myself. For the several months I had worked with a licensed mental health counselor as a client, I found my experience beneficial to both my personal and professional development. There are three key points from which professionals would benefit: intentional self-reflection, self-care, and exposure to another's interpersonal style and philosophy.

Seeking counseling is one way of practicing what we preach in sport psychology. Just as we hold our ath-

lete-clients accountable, our counselor or psychotherapist does the same with us. During the sessions with my counselor, I spoke to my work as a master's student of sport psychology, through which I continued to improve upon my self-awareness. I was required to do tasks outside of our sessions, which put things in perspective for me as the client. An example task was creating and implementing affirmations. I was required to write down a statement and three action items to help facilitate that affirmation. One of my personal affirmations was "I live in the moment." Three items utilized to fulfill that affirmation were: a verbal cue — telling myself "be where your feet", a visual cue — seeing an image "live in the moment" saved as the locked screen on my phone, and a physical cue — tapping something wherever I was in that moment like the chair or my glasses. I was required to recite my affirmation statements for daily use. I found myself hesitating, procrastinating, or even neglecting some homework items at times. Such experiences provided me with insights into developing a treatment plan with or providing take-home exercises for a client. It is easy to become distracted by daily hassles and only focused on what we do day in, day out, and thus seeking counseling is helpful in bringing forth an action-oriented self-reflection.



“Understanding our own thoughts, feelings, and behavior related to our own work is equally important to being an effective SPP”



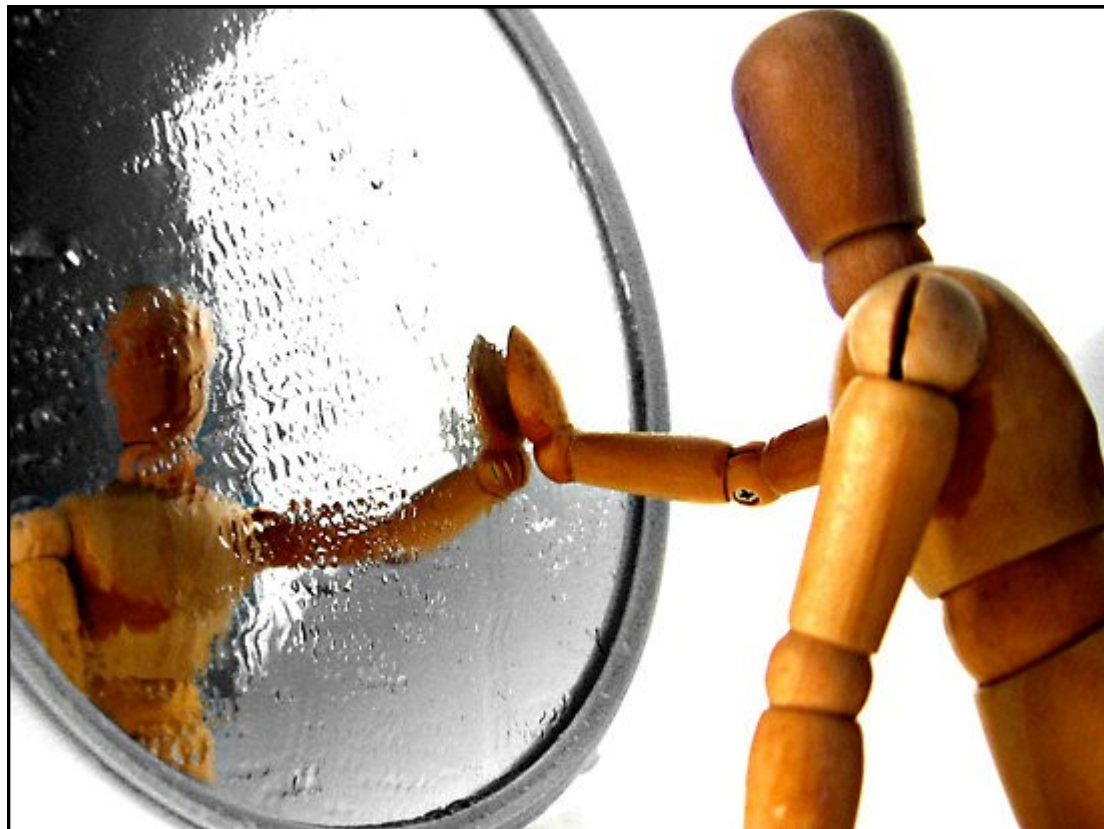
In addition to the intentional self-reflection, counseling has allowed me to create the space and time for self-care. Self-care can be defined as tending to one's physical, mental, and emotional health (University of Kentucky, n.d.). As a SPP, our own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors fuel our performance with athlete-clients. It is critical to intentionally implement self-care in our work. Without it, our services could suffer. For example, I can perform at my best when I have spent quality time with friends and family, have exercised, or have read a good book. It is important to care for ourselves, which in turn enhances our ability to serve others.

Working with a licensed mental health counselor also exposed me to new resources including, but not limited to, assessment tools, relaxation techniques, handouts, and books. The sessions with my counselor allowed me to experience firsthand her therapeutic style and philosophy. Although there were some of her thoughts or strategies with which I disagreed, these observations allowed me to rationalize why I disagreed and further solidified my professional identity. Assertiveness was the most salient point I took from her. Reflecting back to my applied experiences and internships, I was very lenient as a SPP with my athlete-clients. Having built good rapport with them, some could have benefited from a more direct approach with regards to their weaknesses and/or our mental game plan.

After seeking counseling as a SPP and a graduate student, I wonder what master's or doc-

toral students might experience if they are required to receive counseling during their training. After counseling, I feel more confident as an individual and in my ability to be an effective SPP. Within our field, we are continuing to battle stigma with the word "psychology" or "psychologist". Normalizing counseling can only further enhance our service delivery to our athlete-clients and help us become competent and effective SPPs. Can we now see what we might gain from counseling?

"After counseling, I feel more confident as an individual and in my ability to be an effective SPP."



High School Athletics: A Fertile Field for Growing Sport and Performance Psychology Services

Matthew D. Powless
Indiana University

In the 2014 – 2015 school year, there were approximately 7.8 million high school student-athletes in the United States (National Federation of State High School Associations, 2015). Despite the low probability of earning an athletic scholarship to compete at the college level (Wilson, 2014), there are growing pressures placed on these young athletes to specialize in a sport at a young age (Hecimovich, 2004; Smith, 2015; Young, 2012). This pressure often leads to an increased risk of burnout and sport dropout in young adulthood (Russell & Limle, 2013).

In addition to pressure to perform well in sport, there is a high prevalence of mental illness amongst adolescents (de Anda et al., 2000; National Alliance on Mental Illness, n.d.).

“Convenience helps to break down barriers, such as help-seeking stigma — athletes fear being perceived as ‘weak’ ”

The Mental Health Model (MHM) of sport performance proposes that there is a negative correlation between psychopathology and sport performance (see Raglin, 2001 for an overview of the MHM). The stressors faced by high school student-athletes, the prevalence of mental illness among adolescents, and the MHM all seem to suggest that high school athletics is a fertile field for sport and performance psychology practitioners to initiate meaningful work and grow their services. Thus, in this article, I will describe my experience providing services to high school student-athletes as a practicum model for current and future student practitioners.

Practicum Experience

As a practicum student over the past year, I had provided counseling and performance enhancement services at a local high school. This role included providing individual mental skills training, counseling

sessions, coach consultations, team consultations, and leadership training. Both a licensed psychologist and a certified sport psychology consultant (CC-AASP) provided supervision during my practicum placement.

My office was located in the high school guidance department, where I wrote hall passes to see athletes during the school day. I met with the athletes individually for 20-30 minutes before they had to return to class. Although sessions were short, the in-house nature of this practicum allowed me to see high school athletes in a way that was convenient for them and their coaches. When working with high school athletes, convenience helps to break down barriers, such as help-seeking stigma — athletes fear being perceived as “weak” if they seek out sport psychology services (Martin, 2005), and scheduling difficulties — it is difficult to see students exclusively after school and practice when time is limited (Zakrajsek, Martin, & Zizzi, 2011).

Being an in-house sport psychology consultant normalized the experience for student-athletes because I was seen as a member of the athletic staff. This position helped mitigate the “outsider-coming-in” dynamic. Coaches or athletic trainers often made referrals at practice by approaching me and asking me to meet with their athletes during the school day. Being available at practice also helped break down barriers of students being able to get into contact with me, as some would come to me at practice and simply ask, “Hey, can I talk to you at school tomorrow?” These subtle comments and questions at practice from coaches, trainers, and athletes would lead to ongoing counseling relationships. Lastly, in addition to meeting with athletes and teams, I collaborated with a faculty member in my department to organize and conduct a student-athlete leadership development program called the Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy consisted of three tiers designed to teach student-athletes leadership skills (e.g., resolving conflicts, setting team goals, creating team cohesion) based on their developmental levels.

Powless, Continued from Page 6

Adaptations for Services at the High School Level

Sport and performance psychology consultants would be wise to create practica at the high school level. Many high schools may not have the funds to hire a full-time consultant so graduate students in sport and performance psychology are a great fit for the consultant position. If a hall pass system is not possible, graduate students can meet with athletes for individual sessions before or after their practices for 20-30 minutes in offices that are vacant after the school day has ended. Graduate students can also meet with students individually during study hall periods if sufficient office space is available.

Depending on the focus area (i.e., performance enhancement vs. counseling), practicum students may provide mental skills training, mental health services, or both. Supervision provided by a licensed psychologist and a CC-AASP is ideal. A psychologist can help students address mental health concerns and a CC-AASP can provide suggestions for performance interventions as well as help students work towards becoming a CC-AASP themselves (Association for Applied Sport Psychology, 2016).



In regards to leadership sessions, it is best to host them during study hall so that they do not take time away from practice. However, study hall may not always be an option. If this is the case, practitioners may hold sessions during lunch or consult coaches to find times when all athletes can meet for leadership training prior to practices (Blanton, Sturges, & Gould, 2014).

Conclusion

This article provides a practicum model that can be adapted at high schools by attending to logistical, supervision, and training concerns. This practicum model may help break down the stigma associated with sport psychology services in this population (Martin, 2005). There is an excellent opportunity for sport psychology services to be extended to a frequently untapped population of athletes if they are integrated at the high school level.

“Many high schools may not have the funds to hire a full-time consultant so graduate students in sport and performance psychology are a great fit for the consultant position”

References for Powless can be found on page 10.

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Special thanks to Dr. Jesse Steinfeldt for creating the practicum site where I have served for the past academic year. Additionally, thank you to graduate students of Indiana University’s counseling program: Brooke Boyts, Kyle Kennedy, Julia Cawthra, Kelzie Beebe, Keino Miller, and Jessica David – who aided me in facilitating multiple groups of the Leadership Academy.

INTERVIEW WITH A SPORT SCIENTIST*

The PEM professional interviews serve the purpose of helping audience understand how different professionals in the field apply sport and performance psychology in research and practice.

What is your background as it relates to sport and exercise science as well as psychology?

I have a PhD from UTS (University Technology Sydney, Australia) where I was lucky enough to complete this within a professional sporting club in Australia. I am an Accredited Sports Scientist and Exercise Physiologist, whilst also being a Registered Nutritionist. To balance this, I have been fortunate enough to have worked in professional sports for over the last 15 years with athletes from numerous backgrounds.

How does the science behind your work assist your athletes with performance?

I think it takes out the guess work. Underpinning decisions with an evidence based approach is so important.

What role do you believe psychological or mental aspects play in your athletes' ability to adhere to your sport science recommendations?

I have always worked with fantastic performance professionals that work mainly from the neck down and appreciate that changes in performance are often due to what is happening from the neck up. Ensuring that athletes are prepared mentally is crucial. Also, having the right skilled people to assist an athlete develop sound habits has had the most impact in areas of skill, confidence and professionalism from

what I have seen in my years in football.

Given the intertwined relationship between mental and physical skills, when possible, how would you recommend sport scientists and sport-exercise psychologists work together to assist elite athletes?

I think each performance specialist has to have a defined role when working with an athlete. There are times when there is crossover but often times it is

ensuring that all people dealing with the athlete are aware of what is going on. It is also very individualized. I have seen some of the best footballers have no dealings with a sports psychologist and others whom have regularly seen them once or twice a week. It really depends on the athlete and their needs.

What educational training do you recommend students seek in order to apply sport and exer-

cise psychology in a manner that is meaningful when collaborating on providing services alongside a sport scientist such as yourself?

This is a great question. The most successful outcomes are always the people who can change behavior and create habit. For example, diets are easy for a sports nutritionist to prepare, but actually getting an athlete to adhere is the most important thing. So a student needs practical experiences working with athletes to complement their academic qualifications.



INTERVIEW WITH A SPORT SCIENTIST*

What should current students be doing to prepare themselves to be productive members in the performance psychology field?

Again, I can't reinforce enough that the more practical experience working with athletes one on one is critical. Also, understanding how each performance specialist within an organizational structure works and their role with an athlete is essential to practitioner development. Knowing what message to deliver requires interaction with staff to ensure everyone is on the same page. For example, if a player is going through rehabilitation from injury, the physiotherapist will often spend copious amounts of time with them and builds great rapport...its important that the connection is with both the athlete and the practitioner.

What is one advice you would offer a student who wants to do both research and applied work in the world of elite sport?

Get a great supervisor! So many people were worried about which University they were going to attend, but ultimately it is about the person you are dealing with and how they can practically apply the questions you are asking in a research setting. I was fortunate enough to get a great professor to supervise my PhD. Some supervisors are more interested in research for publication, whilst we were taught to research in an aim to understand the practical setting and see if we could make change.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received with regard to working with elite level performers?

Evaluate both the practical and the academic information to best answer the question.

In terms of available performance monitoring programs (your area of research and applied expertise) what are some questions a practitioner/ researcher should ask as they consider sub-

scribing to such systems?

The most important thing to determine is are the monitoring tools valid and reliable.

Considering your transition from working in an international environment to a U.S. based system, what are some differences and similarities you have encountered when working with sport performers? What advice would you give to others who may be considering making similar transitions?

Very fortunate to have worked in multiple sports. The similarities are that athletes have that same work ethic and competitive nature. Whether it be during a game or playing marbles...they all want to win! Work ethics are always exceptional and attention to detail is evident. As I have only been in the U.S. a short time, it is hard to establish the differences at this stage. Practitioners wishing to head overseas to explore opportunities in sport, ensure you understand the culture of the sport by speaking to as many professionals as possible at the destination of interest.

“Knowing what message to deliver requires interaction with staff to ensure everyone is on the same page.”

* The interviewee asked not to be identified to protect confidentiality of organizational affiliations. As the PEM committee strives to bring our audience information that bridges the gap between research and applied work, there are opportunities to engage with researchers and practitioners working at elite levels. This interview serves as an example for when confidentiality of services must be maintained. Budding practitioners who desire to work with such entities should be fully aware of the necessity to accommodate organizational requests for privacy and confidentiality. As such, we trust that our readers will digest the information shared and appreciate the interviewee's willingness to foster insight into the field of sport science and its role within the field of sport performance psychology at the elite level.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

As editors of the 2016 PEM Newsletter, we first want to thank the students who have contributed their experience to this year's first newsletter. Additionally, we would like to thank all who have made the final product possible. This includes the AASP Executive Board and Student Representatives, former PEM Initiative Leaders, and the professionals in the sport and performance psychology field who so willingly participated in our interviews. The PEM Newsletter would not have been possible without their helpful contributions and support. We would also like to send special thanks to the AASP Student Representatives for giving us the opportunity to serve as PEM editors as well as make changes to the newsletter format from previous years. We decided to increase publication from one to two newsletters this year, in June and September, respectively. The newsletter also completely becomes an online publication this year. This has been a learning experience for us, from the initial planning and recruitment to the process of editing and newsletter design.

We would also like to reinforce the thoughts shared by the past editing teams. The current team of editors also believes that the PEM Newsletter is an excellent student publication that can increase student, practitioner, and public awareness of the applied techniques in sport, exercise, and performance psychology. We also believe that it is crucial for AASP student members to have a venue through which they may publish articles in this field. As PEM editors, we have tried to create a best product that reaches these goals and serves the diverse interests in our field. Looking to the future, we invite AASP student members to become more involved in the PEM Newsletter and to help this initiative grow! Please remember to look out for our next publication in September before the AASP annual conference!

Please email any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the newsletter to PEM Committee Co-Chairs Alan Chu and/or Joanna Foss as we continue to improve. Newsletters from previous years are available on the PEM Initiative Website: <http://appliedsportpsych.org/students-center/initiatives/performance-excellence-movement-pem/>

Thank you,
—The 2016 AASP PEM Team

Thank You
For Reading!

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