EFFECTS OF PURPOSEFUL NEGOTIATION OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON ONE TEACHER AND A MIDDLE SCHOOL MINORITY CLASS (GIRLS, BOYS, AND MIXED-GENDER)

by

TASHA DENECKE GUADALUPE

MATT CURTNER-SMITH, COMMITTEE CHAIR
DR. REBECCA BALLARD
DR. OLEG SINELNIKOV
DR. ELIZABETH WILSON
DR. ELIZABETH WOODRUFF

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ABSTRACT

Previous research has indicated that more democratic approaches to teaching in the physical education classroom build equity and create the necessary space for students to develop their voice in the physical education curriculum. The purpose of the current study was to examine the effects of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on one teacher and a middle school class. Participants were three middle school teachers with varied teaching experience and a single middle school class for each teacher of either girls, boys, or mixed genders. Three theoretical perspectives guided data collection and analysis: critical feminism, hegemonic masculinity, and critical tradition. Data were collected through a variety of qualitative techniques: non-participant observation, stimulated recall interviews, reflective journal, formal interviews, informal interviews, focus group interviews, and critical incident reports. Analytic induction and constant comparison were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that more professional development needs to be provided with ongoing mentor support to effectively incorporate democratic approaches in the physical education classroom. Further, the first study’s results indicated that, in an all-girls class, negotiation empowered and motivated the students to participate, as well as encouraging the lower skilled girls to participate in the process equally with higher skilled girls. The second study’s results were similar, reinforcing the suggestion that hegemonic masculinity can be partially negated through participation in a negotiated curriculum and that higher skilled boys can reconnect with their lower skilled peers. The third study showed that curriculum negotiation can be successfully implemented in mixed gender classes, allowing lower skilled boys and girls to reconnect with the curriculum. This
research reinforces that building student voice and creating space for a symbiotic relationship between the teacher and students is a critical component in enhancing student engagement.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this work would not have been possible without the support, encouragement, and professional input of many. I share my excitement with everyone who helped me throughout this process because in many ways this accomplishment also belongs to them.

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The research process calls for the commitment of not just the researcher but also others who see value in the process. With this in mind, I would like to extend my gratitude to the
participants who were willing to give of their time because without them this research would not be possible.

I would like to thank my husband, family, and friends for all of their love and support. I would like to thank my dearest friend, Ms. Lissette McRea, for her insightfulness and encouragement. Her kindness and time meant the world. My parents have always been my biggest supporters and source of motivation. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for your willingness to always support furthering my professional advancement and ambitions. My son, Max, has been the biggest champ throughout this process. I am grateful for his unconditional love and willingness to share his mother with this undertaking.
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CHAPTER I
EFFECTS OF PURPOSEFULLY NEGOTIATING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON ONE TEACHER AND A MINORITY GIRLS’ MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS

Abstract

A limited amount of research has suggested that encouraging girls to negotiate the curriculum with their teachers increases their levels of participation in and enjoyment of physical education. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the impact of purposefully negotiating the curriculum on the 37 girls in one single-sex middle school physical education class. A secondary purpose was to evaluate the influence of the program used to train the teacher of the class. Concepts drawn from critical feminism formed the theoretical lens for the study. Seven qualitative techniques were used to gather data during an 18-lesson unit and standard interpretive methods were used during the analysis process. Key results were that the girls in the class became more motivated to take part in physical education and the strategies used and advocated in the training program proved to be effective. Conducting the class within a single-gender class, the skill of the teacher, and the support of the school’s leadership team positively influenced the outcomes of the study. Teacher and student socialization and the teacher’s focus on standards were constraints. Low-skilled students did not have the same voice as their high-skilled peers.

Introduction

Critics of physical education in Western cultures have noted that its curricula have generally been biased in favor of boys and, hence, have let many girls down terribly. Not
surprisingly, curricula dominated by male-oriented competitive sports and games have led to “feminine” girls losing interest in the subject and opting not to participate in physical activity of any kind outside the curriculum (Azzarito, Solmon, & Harrison 2006; Clark, Spence, & Holt 2011; Enright & O’Sullivan 2010b). Moreover, many of the interventions intended to rectify this state of affairs have relied on softening or layering “girl-friendly” activities on top of the male-biased curriculum. Neither strategy has been successful as they have not involved real substantive change, and been adult-led as opposed to providing girls with an opportunity to make decisions about what and how they will learn in the subject (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010b).

Compounding this issue is the fact that when girls are given the opportunity to express their views in this context, any of which are contrary to mainstream masculine thinking are, at best, misunderstood or, at worst, viewed as a sign of low intelligence (Biklen, 2000; Constantinou, Manson, & Silverman, 2009; Olafson, 2002). Moreover, when space is created for student input in mixed-gender classes, the masculine biases of the curriculum and power relations mean girls have less influence than boys (Butler, 1995).

A growing number of scholars have noted that the key to improving physical education for girls is to give them voice—that is a real and unfettered opportunity to express their opinions as to how the subject should be organized and taught for them (Fisette, 2010, 2013; Walton & Fisette, 2013). Importantly, of course, once expressed, these opinions must lead to action in terms of transforming teaching methods and the curriculum (Greene, 1995). This line of thinking, then, recognizes the fact that girls have different physical and social needs to boys (McRobbie & Garber, 1976). It is also concerned with providing girls with the ownership of the curriculum that will reignite their interest in it and, thus, improve their enjoyment, engagement,
and health (Azzarito et al., 2006). Having this kind of power allows young girls to learn how to assert themselves in a male-dominated world (Lalik & Oliver, 2005).

One method of providing girls with real voice in physical education is to invite them to systematically negotiate the physical education curriculum in partnership with the teacher (Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013). Within this process, girls need to be able to explore, question, and contest aspects of the curriculum (Fisette, 2011) and teachers need to have a good understanding of female stereotypes in physical activity settings and the psychological and social barriers girls face when it comes to participation (Azzarito et al., 2006).

The few previous efforts at purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum with girls’ classes have indicated that girls recognize the barriers that curtail their own participation and enjoyment of physical activity and that their engagement increases when compared with traditional curricula (Fisette, 2013). One particularly useful strategy appears to be asking girls to design their own games as this avoids the negative baggage of gender labels that come with traditional games, sports, and physical activities (Oliver, Hamzeh, & McCaughtry, 2009). Consequently, there have been calls to include training in this type of teaching for preservice teachers (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012). On the downside, there is some evidence to suggest that while girls who consider themselves “girly” and “non-sporty” are engaged in the content of lessons within negotiated physical education units, they tend to look for non-active roles (Goodyear, Casey, & Kirk, 2013).

To date, most studies of negotiating the physical education curriculum with girls have taken place outside the United States at the high school level and with mixed-gender classes. In addition, those American studies that have been completed have focused solely on girls’ responses to the negotiated curriculum as opposed to the strategies used to elicit these responses.
and the training provided for teachers who employ these strategies. The primary purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the impact of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on one girls’ physical education class. A secondary purpose was to evaluate the influence of the program used to train the teacher of the class. The specific research questions the study attempted to answer were (a) What student thoughts, actions, and interactions comprise the negotiation process and how do these change over time; (b) What impact does negotiating the curriculum have on the students and teacher; and (c) Which components of the training program are most and least effective?

**Theoretical Perspective**

Key concepts drawn from critical feminism (Prasad, 2005) formed the theoretical lens that was employed in this study. Within physical education, this perspective has focused on emancipating girls from male-dominated practice, which serves to silence and subordinate them (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010b; Fisette, 2011). Specific goals include providing girls and women a significant role in curriculum development (Fisette, 2013; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013), increasing girls’ levels of engagement in physical activity (Oliver et al., 2009), and balancing power between teachers and female students (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010a). In addition, critical feminists focusing on physical education have stressed the importance of discovering reasons why girls choose not to take part in physical activity specifically as it relates to their embodied identities (Fisette, 2011; Oliver, 2001), and identifying the institutional and cultural barriers which play a role in this choice (Azzarito et al., 2006). Having this kind of understanding should enable the deconstruction of male-dominated curricula and the rebuilding of more equitable curricula in which girls thrive and are no longer limited (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010a). Moreover, this kind of knowledge should also persuade and empower teachers to reflect on their
own perspectives and practices and to change them if they limit female students (Fine, 1994; Giroux, 1997).

**Method**

**Participants and Setting**

Thirty-seven seventh grade girls in one physical education class, along with their teacher, participated in this study. Their school was located in a large urban city in the southeast United States. It was classified as a “Title I school.” Consequently, it received substantial federal funding due to the disadvantages from which many of its students suffered. The school catered mainly to low-income African American and Hispanic children. The girls, their parents, and the teacher completed assent and consent forms prior to the beginning of the study in congruence with the University’s policy on human participants (see Appendices A-F).

The school had excellent physical education facilities and abundant equipment for the subject. Lessons were 90 minutes in duration and were provided 3 times a week. The curriculum included components aimed at teaching sports and games, skill themes, and health-related fitness.

Joanne¹ had taught physical education for 14 years and was 39 years old. While her own teacher preparation program focused on enabling her to deliver a sports and games dominated curriculum at the secondary level, her real passion was for health and fitness. Consequently, her major goal was to promote a healthy lifestyle and to find ways for all students to be active. While the teaching styles she employed were fairly traditional, she was certainly open to trying more indirect teaching methods.

¹The names of the teachers and students in this study are fictitious.
Negotiation Training Program

The negotiation training program (NTP) that Joanne and two of her colleagues followed included two workshops and multiple follow-up visits while she taught her own negotiated unit. The author delivered this program and attempted to provide support that was vital for teacher development (Hastie, McPhail, Calderon, & Sinelnikov, 2015). Strategies the author used during the NTP were mainly drawn from work on teacher development originally described by Joyce and Showers (1982) (see Table 1). These included studying the theory and underlying rationale for negotiating the physical education curriculum for girls, reading articles on the topic, discussing how to go about purposeful negotiation, author modeling of negotiation methods, role-playing negotiations, and observing film and live teaching of purposeful negotiation. Prior to Joanne teaching her own purposefully negotiated unit, the need for her to construct a sound managerial structure was emphasized as were the facts that partially ceding control of (Sinelnikov, 2009) and purposefully negotiating the curriculum would not be easy processes. During her own unit, Joanne was also asked to reflect on her attempts at negotiating by recording her thoughts on the process in a reflective journal and completing stimulated recall interviews which involved her viewing and commenting on film of her teaching. In addition, she was encouraged to share issues and ideas with the other two teachers in the NTP so as to engage in a modified form of peer coaching.

Specific strategies the author urged Joanne to try during her own unit are also listed in Table 1. These strategies were drawn from theory, previous research and literature, or were designed by the author. They included using several indirect, productive teaching styles, such as guided discovery, convergent discovery, and learner initiated (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008); differentiating her teaching so that the needs of individual girls were met; and creating an
Table 1

*Strategies Employed Within the NTP and by Joanne in her Negotiated Unit*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED WITHIN THE NEGOTIATION TRAINING PROGRAM</th>
<th>WITHIN WORKSHOPS</th>
<th>WITHIN THE UNIT</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WITHIN WORKSHOPS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Study theory (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discussion (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading articles</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Observing film (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Observing live teaching</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Modeling and role play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stimulated recall interviews (deMarrais, 2004)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reflective journaling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Peer coaching (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982; Showers &amp; Joyce, 1996)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on strong managerial foundation (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on school culture and context (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on difficulty of the process (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY JOANNE DURING HER UNIT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Creation of an environment that encourages negotiation (Enright &amp; O’Sullivan, 2010a)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exploration of state standards for goals and objectives (Georgia Department of Education, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Co-planning content, tasks, and methods of assessment (Oliver &amp; Oesterreich, 2013)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of reflective coaching conversations (Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, &amp; Schock, 2009)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of indirect, problem solving, productive teaching styles (Mosston &amp; Ashworth, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Differentiated teaching (Tomlinson &amp; Allan, 2000)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

environment that encouraged the girls to engage in negotiation. In addition, they included examining official curricular documents for possible goals and objectives on which to focus and encouraging students to reflect on the negotiation process during reflective conversations. Finally, Joanne was asked to plan the specific content and tasks in which children would engage and the methods by which progress would be evaluated with the girls in her class.
Joanne’s Purposefully Negotiated Unit

Directly after the two workshops within the NTP were concluded, Joanne taught one 18-lesson negotiated unit of her own. The instructions she received were as follows: “Using all the training you have been given in the workshops, as well as any ideas of your own, design and deliver an 18-lesson physical education unit which is negotiated with your seventh grade girls’ class.”

Data Collection

Seven qualitative techniques were used to gather data. During non-participant observation, the author wrote about the issues, interactions, responses, and activities that occurred during the training program and negotiated unit. Two supporting sources of data were the transcripts of the stimulated recall interviews and the entries in the reflective journal. Three additional forms of interviewing were also used. Joanne was formally interviewed before and after the workshops in order to comprehend her beliefs about teaching and physical education and the extent to which she thought she was ready to negotiate the curriculum with the girls in her class (see Appendices G and H). Immediately following the end of her negotiated unit, Joanne was asked to reflect on her experiences within a third formal interview (see Appendix I). At each opportunity, Joanne was informally interviewed about the process of negotiation, as were the girls taking part in the negotiated unit. Moreover, after the unit ended, the girls were asked to take part in focus group interviews with three to five of their peers (see Appendix J). During these interviews, they were asked to describe their thoughts and feelings about the unit. Formal focus group interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Key points made during informal interviews were recorded and noted as soon as was possible.
The girls were asked to write about a critical incident (Flanagan, 1954) directly after each of the 18 lessons that comprised the negotiated unit. In congruence with Hastie and Curtner-Smith’s (2006) use of this technique the girls received the following instructions:

Please write about one thing that happened during today’s lesson that you found important. It may have been important because it made you excited, made you bored, made you worried, or because it was something you learned that was really new. When you have described what happened try and explain why it was important.

Data Analysis

Phase 1 of the analysis involved broadly labeling data related to each of the three questions being asked during the study. Phase 2 involved coding and categorizing these three data sets by employing the techniques of analytic induction and constant comparison (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Smaller categories were then collapsed to form major themes. Persistent and regular member checking throughout the study, the search for discrepant cases, and the use of seven data techniques to triangulate findings (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) served to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

Student Thoughts, Actions, and Interactions Comprising the Negotiation Process

The unit. The unit that the girls and Joanne negotiated is shown in Table 2. The curriculum model chosen by the girls was a combination of the skill-theme, multi-activity, and health-related fitness approaches. As shown in Table 2, the unit focused on a variety of activities that reinforced fitness and collaboration. It was comprised of 18 lessons on the five components of health-related fitness and specific manipulative skills, such as striking with a body part, throwing and catching, and striking with an implement. Circuit training and basic yoga made up
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson #</th>
<th>Activities/Content/Assessment</th>
<th>Lesson Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>• Whole group discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance muscular strength and endurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fun fitness circuits &amp; yoga basic stations</td>
<td>• Enhance stretching and flexibility through basic yoga poses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance aerobic capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>• Whole group discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance manipulative skills for striking with a lower body part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Striking stations</td>
<td>• Enhance manipulative skills for striking with an upper body part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher directed learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher directed discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>• Whole group discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance rhythmic activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dance, dance, dance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>• Whole group discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance manipulative skills for throwing and catching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Throwing and catching stations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student-centered games</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Game presentations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective discussion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>• Whole group discussion</td>
<td>• Enhance coordination and rhythmic activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Jump rope jam &amp; team routines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Routine presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels</td>
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Table 2 (con’t)

| 16-18 | • Whole group discussion  
| • Badminton skills & small-sided games  
| • Reflective discussion  
| • Students self-assessed overall engagement and enjoyment levels | • Enhance manipulative skills for striking with an implement |

the first 3 lessons; striking stations and dance made up lessons 4 through 9; throwing and catching stations, student-centered games, and jump rope jam made up lessons 10 through 15; and lessons 16 through 18 focused on badminton skills and game play. As explained by a number of girls in the class, their rationale for choosing this model, content, and these lesson foci was that they made physical education “comfortable” and enabled them to “feel confident.”

It’s about time we could select our own games. This class always focuses on sports for boys and it’s not fun. We don’t even know how to play a lot of those games as good as them like basketball and football. (Myesha, field notes, lesson 1)

The form of evaluation chosen by the girls was also very different than the typical evaluation methods used by the teacher. It involved students discussing the success and failure of each activity in which they participated. Each of these discussions was either “democratic” (i.e., with no leader) or led by a student leader who was elected. The rationale for choosing this kind of collective evaluation was that it was generally empowering:

Let’s do a group talk at the end of each activity and decide if we liked what we did. Most of the time we just get a grade and never get a chance to say how we feel. We just go from one thing to the next. (Maricela, field notes, lesson 1)

The activity, curriculum model, and assessment methods chosen, and the focus of lessons were a big departure from the girls’ “usual” physical education experience. This was because the girls took advantage of their newfound freedom to create a physical education that was more relevant to them. Because the girls had been constrained by their previous experiences in
physical education and had been socialized into one rather narrow way of thinking about the subject, being able to make these types of decisions empowered them to go outside their normal boundaries:

The teacher is always talking about how much she wants us to be healthy and active when we grow up, but if class is boring then why would we like to do sports or other things to stay in shape? We know what we like to do; they [teachers] should just let us do that. (Jamie, focus group interview)

The girls’ thinking about the curriculum model, content, assessment, and lesson foci, however, was also heavily influenced by Joanne who was “very concerned” about following state and local curriculum guidelines. Consequently, she acted as a conservative force or break on the girls’ plans, particularly in the early lessons:

My goal is for students to learn the physical education skills as stated in the state performance standards. I also want them to learn why it is important to be active. I am the one responsible for their learning; it scares me to let them dictate how the class will go. I guess I’m feeling out of control. (Joanne, informal interview, lesson 2)

Nature of negotiations. Negotiations between Joanne and the girls took place on two levels. First, there were extensive formal and group negotiations at the beginning of the unit and periodically throughout the unit. Typically, formal negotiations were initiated by Joanne and involved the girls sitting in the gym and discussing specific components of the curriculum (e.g., broad goals and objectives, activities, and tasks). Joanne then asked the girls to report the results of their discussions and wrote them down. As long as these results were congruent with state standards, she then helped the girls package their ideas into meaningful action.

The negotiations between the girls and Joanne are going smoothly. The girls are sitting in a large circle in the gym and discussing unit content as charged by Joanne. The girls are excited and energetic and suggest focusing on developing a “fun fitness circuit.” Joanne is calm and positive and approves. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Second, there were also more informal and individual negotiations that took place throughout the unit that were usually initiated by the girls. Generally, these informal negotiations between
Joanne and the girls were cordial and enthusiastic on both sides. At times, however, they were tense and antagonistic.

Joanne is frustrated with the girls’ dance performance. She urges them to use “more appropriate dances for school.” A group of girls is huddled together in the corner of the gym and discusses Joanne’s “interference.” As class ends, [Aquaria] asks Joanne if her group can meet with her. Joanne agrees to meet prior to the start of class the next day. (Field notes, lesson 7)

The main negotiating tactics and strategies employed by the girls during these informal exchanges included making verbal suggestions for change, arguing with Joanne, and refusing to take part in activities they thought “sucked.”

Jasmine (student): No, I don’t want to do this. It’s so boring. Why can’t we talk about it and do what the group decides?
Joanne: The point is for the class to negotiate the curriculum. Part of doing this is to discuss ideas and make decisions together. (Field notes, lesson 1)
Becky (student): Nope, not gonna do it. Don’t like it. No, no, no!
Joanne: Becky, negotiating the curriculum does not mean that you get to refuse to participate. It just means that you get to have a say in the decision process.
Becky (student): Fine, then I want to do something else. If I get to have a say, why aren’t we doing what I want? (Field notes, lesson 1)

Joanne employed two primary negotiation strategies. The more positive of these was to make verbal suggestions to the girls at the beginning and end of classes. More negatively, Joanne occasionally overruled any ideas and opinions the girls had and, instead, dictated the course of action that was to follow:

Joanne: If you are having a hard time with getting along, consider the way that you are not listening to each other’s suggestions. Please try to listen to one another before you make decisions. Everyone’s voice is important when you are negotiating. (Field notes, lesson 10)

Joanne: No, I don’t think that will work. You need to focus on the learning cues for the skill progression. It will be better for your group to include the steps for throwing and catching so that everyone will learn them and each presentation will act as a review for the class. (Field notes, lesson 11)
**Change over time.** Prior to the unit commencing and in the first three lessons, the girls continually expressed their enthusiasm for this “different version” of physical education, noting “class was now going to be more fun” and that they “could get more done without the boys.” During lessons 7 to 9, however, the negotiating process was dominated by what the girls perceived as their “contest” with Joanne. Despite offering them the chance to make all kinds of decisions, the girls’ consensus at this time was that Joanne would only go along with their thoughts and views if she agreed with them. This led to considerable frustration and was discouraging:

She does not let us control what we want to do in the lesson and she keeps telling us how we should change the activities. It was OK at first, but then it did not work. Everything we did was wrong. (Felice, critical incident, lesson 8)

To counter this state of affairs, five girls came forward to take on the role of “negotiation leaders.” One of these leaders, Lauren, was well-skilled and gregarious. Conversely, the other four of these leaders were unskilled but assertive extroverts. For example, Kim had not typically participated in physical education with much enthusiasm previously. In this setting, however, she thrived and was determined to negotiate a better deal for her peers.

Kim (student): My group feels great about making decisions about what we are doing, but we were wondering if we could make changes to the teams if some of the girls are not working good together. That way we can get more done with less arguing, but only if people agree. (Field notes, lesson 9)

This hierarchy of negotiation proved to be successful, in that it played a significant role in improving the experience for all the girls in the remainder of the unit. However, it also meant that while still engaged in the negotiation process, relatively passive and shy girls did not have as much of a voice as their leaders.
Joanne’s pattern of negotiation also changed over time and went through three distinct shifts. During the early lessons of the unit when she initiated the first formal negotiations, she was at pains to give the girls as much freedom as she could.

Joanne: For this unit, you have as much space as needed to make decisions. I am here to help you if you need me or if you have questions, but all in all, you get to decide how the activities are going to run and how you will be assessed. I can offer you all some suggestions, if you need them. Ultimately though, you can decide which ones work best for you. (Field notes, lesson 3)

From lessons 4 to 6, however, when Joanne perceived the class to be struggling, she essentially halted negotiations and intervened and overruled the students’ decision making when she disagreed with it.

During striking stations, Joanne attempts to give a group of girls some technical feedback. The girls listen but take no notice of Joanne’s advice. Joanne insists that the girls follow her suggestions. When they take no notice again, she yells, “Stop, this isn’t working. Come back in. You need to learn to perform this skill correctly.” Joanne then proceeds to present the correct learning cues. (Field notes, lesson 4)

Finally, within lessons 13 to 18, when she gauged the unit to be back on track, she reverted to her original plan and gave the students even more freedom to make choices about their own learning:

Letting go of my class has been really hard. I really struggled throughout most of the unit to trust the girls to direct their own learning. In a few instances, I completely stopped them from playing and that just made it worse. I realized that was not going to work and I needed to refocus and let them have their space to make mistakes. (Joanne, formal interview 3)

Impact of Negotiating the Curriculum on Joanne and her Students

Impact on Joanne. Before commencing the unit and during the NTP, Joanne was clearly interested and enthusiastic about attempting to negotiate the curriculum with her students: “I’m always excited to try something new, because I want to make sure the kids are learning . . . as well as me” (Informal interview). She was also concerned about her ability to “put theory into
practice” and her lack of experience in using indirect teaching styles in general and negotiating the curriculum in particular.

I am very excited but at the same time a little worried that their [girls’] lessons are going to lack substance and focus on the standards. This is going to be a learning process for all of us I suppose. (Joanne, informal interview, lesson 1)

Once the unit got underway, Joanne found the pedagogies involved with negotiating the curriculum much more difficult to master than she had anticipated. In addition, she also noted that the new class dynamic was difficult for a number of the lower skilled and passive girls to work within.

I thought this would be easy once I gained a better understanding for the process. I never dreamed working with the girls on negotiating their learning environment would be so challenging. If we had more opportunities in the beginning to work with students before the study began it would have better prepared me for what I am encountering now. They [i.e., the passive and low-skilled girls] are hesitant to engage and work with one another to make decisions. I feel like I’m back in my first month of teaching and it is hard not to try and take control. (Joanne, stimulated recall interview, lesson 3)

Despite these difficulties, early on in the unit, Joanne made strenuous efforts to be “democratic” and give her students as much “say” in what and how they learned as she thought possible.

Joanne: Here are a few of the yoga moves that you may want to consider. I am going to demonstrate a couple of beginner and intermediate yoga moves. Would any of you like to share any yoga moves you may know? Based on your own level of skill, make decisions about which yoga stations work best for you. I’m here to help, if you need. (Field notes, lesson 2)

During lessons 4 to 6, however, rather than becoming more comfortable with and skilled at negotiating, Joanne regressed to using her normal and more direct pedagogies. This shift was driven by her socialization during teacher training and the 14 years experience she had in the job. It was also driven by her concern for student “success” within the narrow confines defined for by
state and local policy, and worries about how the leadership team at her school would perceive the unit:

But what happens if students aren’t successful? I have to ensure students demonstrate student mastery of standards. What happens if they don’t? Won’t this effect my teacher evaluation? Will I be perceived as a bad teacher? How will I defend my practices to administrators if questioned? (Joanne, informal interview, lesson 4)

I don’t want my administration to start bothering me because they think I am a bad teacher. They pretty much leave me alone and let me do what I want. I don’t want to be a target on their radar. (Joanne, informal interview, lesson 6)

These two sets of concerns grew during the early lessons of the unit when students were still learning how to make decisions for themselves. During this time, there was a good deal of “downtime” when, unused to having the kind of power they had now been given, the girls spent a good deal of time sitting and discussing or waiting for a decision to be made for them by Joanne or a leader. Faced with this situation and used to fast-paced teacher-directed lessons, Joanne lost patience and noted that she could not “let [her] students sit around and not do anything” because her classes had “to be a productive learning environment.”

Two factors saved the unit from morphing into “practice as usual” during lessons 11 to 18. First, Joanne realized that her administrators were more supportive of this kind of indirect teaching than she had first thought. Moreover, they began to “stop by” and “pop in” to watch what was going on and made a number of complimentary and encouraging comments. In one of her walkthrough, informal observations, Joanne’s immediate supervisor stated that the class, “looked very engaged and enjoying what they were doing”; additionally, “it was great how the girls were able to articulate what they were doing and the learning objective they were focused on.”
Second, the development of the student leadership group within the class and the enhanced student understanding of their increased power led to levels of engagement and enthusiasm soaring within the class.

It is amazing how much progress the girls and I have made. They are actually listening and trying new things. They even seem excited! I can’t wait for class tomorrow. I hope they will be as engaging and eager to work together as they have been for the past few lessons. It is refreshing to see this level of collaboration between them. (Joanne, reflective journal, entry 12)

These factors led to Joanne perceiving the unit to be a success, relaxing “because the girls [were] actually beginning to engage in activity,” and shifting her pedagogies back to being indirect.

The lessons are going well and the students seem to be enjoying the course more. I think that they are starting to see how difficult it really is to develop lessons. This was not something that I doubt [sic] they thought of before. (Joanne, stimulated recall interview, lesson 14)

As the unit came to a close, Joanne enthused about it and suggested that she might try negotiating the curriculum both with this class and others that she taught.

This has been an emotional rollercoaster. I had no idea how much I was limiting students to a confined way of learning. I have seen myself grow in my ability to gradually release responsibility to students. At times, tensions were high and the atmosphere was thick, but I guess this had to happen in order for us to find common ground and agree. I saw myself as a facilitator of learning, and that felt good. The level of trust grew throughout the unit between the students and I and I also saw them feel more enthusiastic about PE. (Joanne, formal interview 3)

**Impact on the girls.** At the beginning of the unit, the girls in the class conformed to several gender specific stereotypes (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012). Specifically, more able girls indicated they were motivated to be active during physical education lessons and less able, “feminine” girls indicated that they were more interested in socializing with their friends.

Tricia and Nellie [high-skilled girls] chat about how excited they are to negotiate the curriculum . . . Their conversation revolves around the activities (“dance and fitness”) they have enjoyed participating in how much they are going to enjoy not having to worry about the boys “taking over.” (Field notes, lesson 2)
Laney and Tiffany [low-skilled girls] spend the majority of time off-task and socializing. Joanne intervenes twice and both times the girls respond with a nod and go back to their conversation. The girls appear to be reluctant to negotiate and non-engaged. (Field notes, lesson 1)

In addition, several less able girls confirmed that they were motivated by “having fun,” but also defined “fun” as the opportunity to “socialize with their friends.” Furthermore, they stated that what they did in physical education was “sometimes boring” and “not fun.”

When they first learned that they were to be given much more power about deciding what and how they learned during the class, the girls’ reactions ranged from concern because they “didn’t no [sic] nothing about teaching” to cautious optimism as they had “never done this before, but it could be fun.” Once the unit started, the girls became more enthusiastic and even those who were initially skeptical noted that the class was not “so bad after all” and that they were “really beginning to enjoy” themselves because they “got to have a say” which made “learning fun” and because they “didn’t have to do what we always do in PE . . . playing sports.”

Moreover, several girls noted that having a single-gender class enhanced the quality of their experience because during mixed-gender classes “the boys always [took] control.”

In addition to these generally positive responses to being given the opportunity to make more decisions about their class, the early lessons of the unit were characterized by a power struggle among the girls to determine which of them would actually make the bulk of those decisions. It was from this process that the leaders of the group emerged. It was also during this phase that Joanne became concerned that the unit was imploding. As illustrated by the following field note extract, this power struggle was often confrontational and fractious.

Becky (student): I don’t have to listen to you. The teacher said we get to decide how we gonna learn the material.
Brooke (student): The teacher said we had to work together to make decisions. I don’t know why you is [sic] always trying to be in charge. You don’t get to make all of the decisions for our group. (Field notes, lesson 9)
By lesson 7, however, the girls had moved through the power struggle phase and their negotiation hierarchy was established. Relationships among them had became ordered and cordial, they wasted less time arguing, and started to make decisions expediently:

Two girls, Lauren and Amy, divide the class into smaller teams of five and ask each small group to select team leaders. The team leaders receive directions about how to create a “throwing and catching game” from Lauren and Amy and then go to their respective groups to complete the task. (Field notes, lesson 10)

Furthermore, they recognized the fact that they “got more done when [they] worked together,” “listened” to peers’ views, and “stopped yelling at each other.”

By the end of the unit, and regardless of their position within the negotiation hierarchy, the girls viewed the unit as a success noting that it was “so much fun,” “awesome,” that they “[hoped] PE [was] always like this,” and that they “loved negotiating.” In addition, they indicated that having to discuss key issues among themselves as part of the negotiation process satiated their need to socialize, and that this form of socializing contributed to their physical education experience rather than detracted from it. Specifically, they recalled, “enjoying working as a team” and “talking to everyone” as opposed to just their own “group of friends.”

Finally, enthusiastic engagement in the content of the unit appeared universal in the latter lessons and many of those with lower skill levels noted that “everyone [was] participating.”

The girls are engaged in a modified badminton game. There is much encouragement (“Good one,” “Yeah, girl you got it,” “You’ll get it next time.”) The atmosphere during this lesson is extremely positive. (Field notes, lesson 17)

Most and Least Effective Components of the NTP

As indicated and illustrated in the preceding sub-sections, many of the pedagogical strategies that were advocated in the NTP were employed by Joanne while teaching her unit. Moreover, while all of the strategies used within the NTP workshops to help teachers learn how to deliver a negotiated unit of physical education appeared to have a positive effect, three of
them played a more central part in the ultimate success of Joanne’s unit. These were modeling negotiation methods, role playing negations, and describing a managerial structure that could form the basis of the unit.

Modeling how to negotiate with students gave Joanne a clear and defined vision of the core pedagogies she could use in her unit. Following the second workshop she explained that the workshop was a good way to kick off the unit. It gave me the focus I needed to prepare to let go of some control. Modeling the negotiation process was the most beneficial; it helped visualize how to negotiate and troubleshoot unexpected situations with the students. (Joanne, formal interview 2)

Having gained a picture of these core pedagogies, Joanne also relayed that the opportunity to role-play them with other teachers was invaluable as this process built “confidence” and because running through mock trials of negotiating the curriculum [gave her] a better understanding of [the teacher’s] role in this process. Moreover, Joanne was also grateful for the advice she received about setting up a managerial structure that would support her unit.

The discussions during the training gave me some ideas as to how to make the negotiated unit work in my teaching situation. Exploring different ways to move from whole group to small group as well as individual student focus is the key to effective negotiation. I was able to grasp how different negotiation tactics apply to different group structures. (Joanne, formal interview 3)

Also important to Joanne’s success were the fact that she was trained with other teachers who were also trying to implement a negotiated unit for the first time and the follow-up visits she received. In congruence with previous work on teacher development (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Showers & Joyce, 1996) “collaborating with other teachers” during and following the workshops helped sustain Joanne’s motivation and encouraged her to try new strategies. The follow-up visits enabled Joanne to ask for clarification about and feedback on pedagogies she was trying. They also gave her another opportunity to discuss new ideas she had about her unit. For example, she explained that “sometimes talking things out” or “bouncing ideas off one another”
helps clarify. “Offering the girls different negotiation tactics lessened arguments and disagreements,” claimed Joanne. These visits and the feedback she received were crucial in “keeping her going” during lessons 4 to 9 when her students were in the power struggle phase, she lost confidence, and was concerned her unit was disintegrating.

There were times when it seemed that the girls were constantly disagreeing about what to do and I did not feel like I was doing my due diligence to get them back on track. This was very tough for me; so to be able to get feedback and assurance that it was a process and not necessarily something I was doing wrong was very helpful. I guess just talking it over with someone made me reflect and consider options to make the situation better. (Joanne, formal interview 3)

Conclusions

The most important conclusion to be drawn from this study is that it provides another example of how allowing girls to negotiate the curriculum empowers and motivates them to participate in physical education and physical activity. Furthermore, to my knowledge this was the first study of American middle school physical education to find such an effect. Moreover, unlike other studies of negotiated curricula (Fisette, 2010, 2013; Walton & Fisette, 2013), this study indicated that feminine low-skilled girls were as active as their high-skilled peers. As far as I am aware, this study is also one of the first to provide an example of an NTP that includes the strategies needed by teachers to negotiate the curriculum effectively and the strategies that can be used by teacher trainers to help teachers acquire the pedagogical skills needed to negotiate their curricula.

As well as the potency of the NTP, this study also highlighted three contextual factors that appeared to be key to the success of negotiated physical education curricula. In line with previous research (Lalik & Oliver, 2005; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013), the study took place within a single-sex class and so the girls were not subjected to interference from or dominance by high-skilled, aggressive boys. In addition, Joanne proved to be an energetic, thoughtful, and
skillful pedagogue. Finally, support from the school’s leadership team in general, and principal in particular, for indirect pedagogies played a significant part in encouraging Joanne to move forward with the unit when she might have faltered under less sympathetic administrators.

The study also highlighted two contextual factors that may have a negative influence on attempts to negotiate a unit of physical education. First, it appeared as if Joanne’s understandable fixation on a set of relatively narrow, male-biased state and local standards might constrain the scope of her unit. Specifically, there was a period during the study when Joanne did not seem ready to view increased enthusiasm for and participation in physical education by the girls as ends in themselves. Second, Joanne and her students’ prior socialization served to limit their vision for what might be possible in terms of the physical education curricula. Additional focus on these two factors within NTPs might improve the experiences for children and youth.

Another less positive finding of the study was that feminine, low-skilled girls were less likely to have the same voice in the negotiation process as their high-skilled peers. This suggests that teachers who negotiate their curricula should strive to make sure that their good intentions do not lead to their low-skilled charges swapping one dictator (i.e., the teacher) for another (i.e., higher skilled peers).

Further studies are obviously needed to see if the results of the current study transfer to girls-only classes in other contexts. A key focus of future research should also be on whether the package of strategies that made up the NTP in the current study is effective in middle school boys-only classes and what impact they have on mixed-gender classes.
References


CHAPTER II

EFFECTS OF PURPOSEFULLY NEGOTIATING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON ONE TEACHER AND A MINORITY BOYS’ MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS

Abstract

A limited amount of previous research indicates that when teachers and students purposefully negotiate the physical education curriculum, students have a more equitable experience. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on the 32 seventh grade boys in and the teacher of one single-gender boys’ physical education class. A second purpose was to assess the effectiveness of the program used to train the teacher. The theoretical framework was drawn from elements within the critical tradition and the perspective of hegemonic masculinity. Data were collected by employing qualitative techniques and analyzed with standard interpretive techniques. The negotiated unit the teacher taught and the program that trained her were a qualified success in that non-masculine, less physically able boys engaged in and enjoyed the unit to a greater degree than was usual. Moreover, some usually dominant, more physically able boys showed more empathy for their less skilled peers. More negatively, the curriculum model employed, activity chosen, content, and evaluation methods selected, all of which reflected a traditional performance pedagogy, were constraining.
Introduction

The implications and expectations of Title IX have dramatically impacted the social structure of physical education in the United States since its inception in 1972 (Davis & Nacaise, 2011). Despite this legislation, the indications are that inequitable teaching practices limit all students’ ability to achieve at the highest level within the subject (Davis, 2003). Interpretations of Title IX reinforced the call for coeducational classes in physical education and ended the legal separation of males and females (Constantinou, Manson, & Silverman, 2009). In recent years, however, the United States Department of Education has permitted some flexibility in the offering of single-gender classes, with oversight, because educators stressed that the individual needs of many students were not being met in coeducational settings (Hill, Harmon, & Knowles, 2012). For example, some have suggested that coeducational physical education has led to both genders being disenfranchised, losing enthusiasm for the subject, and engaging in less physical activity (Wallhead, Garn, Vidoni, & Youngberg, 2013).

While the gymnasium may appear heterogeneous in nature, much teaching continues to reinforce male-dominated characteristics that often leave both female and male students at a disadvantage (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012). Furthermore, physical education curricula and pedagogical practices employed in most schools are largely guided by social assumptions about how boys and girls should behave and participate (Hay & Macdonald, 2010). Not surprisingly, these traditional curricula and pedagogies serve to support and reinforce traditional roles for boys and girls (Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013). For boys, this generally means an expectation that they will behave in accordance with traditional male values and exhibit stereotypical masculine traits including being tough, dominant, and mesomorphic (Dowling & Karhus, 2011; Hay & Macdonald, 2010; Haywood & Ghaill 2012; Hickey 2008). As noted by Connell (2008) and
Magan (2000), “sport and PE have an enduring legacy for their perceived potential in molding young men into the ‘right’ ways of being masculine” (cited in Mooney & Hickey, 2012, p. 201). Those boys who are not molded the “right way” are, of course, unlikely to enjoy traditional physical education content focused on competitive sport (MacQuarrie, Murnaghen, & MacLellan, 2008; McEachern & Tischler, 2010). For this reason, they like “feminine” girls who are marginalized within the subject (Hickey, 2008; Ronholt, 2002).

A number of critics of current practice have called for pedagogies to be introduced that allow multiple forms of masculinity to flourish and to improve the educational experience for all boys (Connell, 2008; Keddie & Mills, 2007; Pringle & Hickey, 2010). Moreover, these scholars have emphasized that such pedagogies must allow student voices to be heard and honored (Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013). In addition, some have cautioned that such initiatives should also consider how masculinity interacts with race (Azzarito & Solmon, 2006). Inviting boys within single-gender physical education classes to engage in negotiating the curriculum with their teacher is one such pedagogy that has been promoted (Brooker & MacDonald, 2010; Cook-Sather, 2006; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2013). Specifically, this kind of negotiation can provide a safe environment in which boys can create an improved and more relevant learning experience for themselves (Azzarito & Solmon, 2009). It also has the potential to allow boys to investigate and discuss dominant and other forms of masculinity and perhaps gain an improved understanding of their own prejudices (Constantinou et al., 2009; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2013; Glasby & MacDonald, 2004).

Previous research of negotiated curricula is limited but encouraging. It has indicated that students can and will engage in the curriculum building process in physical education and that when they do so their engagement during lessons increases (Oliver, Hamzeh, & McEachern,
In addition, the quality of the learning experiences within a curriculum designed this way appears to be high (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010, 2012, 2013), individual needs of students get considerable attention, and students marginalized in “normal” physical education seem to thrive (Fisette, 2010a, 2010b). Moreover, the attempts at training both pre- and in-service teachers how to encourage negotiation have been successful (Oliver et al., 2009; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013; Timken & McNamee, 2012). Finally, there is also some evidence to suggest that negotiated curricula can change students’ views about what are and are not gender-appropriate activities and this transformation, in turn, means that boys and girls are more likely to engage in activities usually reserved for the opposite sex (Azzarito & Solmon, 2009).

To date, there have been no studies of negotiated curricula within middle school boy’s physical education. The primary purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate the impact of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on one boys’ physical education class. A second purpose was to assess the effectiveness of the program used to train the teacher of the class. The specific research questions I attempted to answer in the study were (a) What does the negotiation process consist of in terms of teacher and student thoughts, actions, and interactions and how does this change over time?, (b) What impact does the negotiating process have on the teacher and students?, and (c) Which elements of the training program are effective and ineffective?

**Theoretical Framework**

Data collection, analysis, and interpretation within this study were based on elements from the critical tradition described by Brooker and Macdonald (2010) and the theoretical perspective of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2008). Brooker and Macdonald noted that, in
recent years, some scholars in sport pedagogy have shifted from studying the effects of physical education programs designed by adults to studying what children and youth thought about these programs and how they reacted to them. These authors, however, lamented the fact that this shift had not facilitated substantive curricular change that would combat the privileging of Caucasian middle class boys in the subject. They went on to call for work on curriculum building, which incorporated the thoughts, perspectives, and perceptions of children and youth from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Such work would not only empower the children and youth involved, but also help them become more critically aware (Morrison, 1996).

The key concept of Connell’s (2008) theory of hegemonic masculinity is that a dominant form of masculinity exists which involves males displaying traditional behaviors such as being aggressive, showing little emotion, and being physically skilled and strong (Wellard, 2006). This form of masculinity is supported by individuals (e.g., physical education teachers) and institutions (e.g., schools) within a culture. In some cultures, the dominant form of masculinity is also shaped by race and class (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012). Any behaviors which are incongruent with the dominant form of masculinity (e.g., being passive, showing emotion, and being physically unskilled and weak) are viewed as inferior whether displayed by males or females. For this reason, males who do not display stereotypical male behaviors are marginalized as are “feminine” females (Chen & Curtner-Smith, 2013). Further, assertive and highly skilled males tend to overshadow those who are viewed as weak, frail, and lower skilled (Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012).
Method

Participants and Setting

Participants in this study were the teacher and 32 boys in one seventh grade middle school physical education class. The school predominantly served low income Hispanics and African Americans, was located in a large American city, and received significant federal funding due to the disadvantaged status of many of its students. Prior to the study, the teacher, students, and their parents completed consent and assent forms in congruence with the university’s institutional review board policy (see Appendices B-F).

Physical education equipment at the school was plentiful and facilities were of high quality. Curriculum models employed included the traditional sport and games-focused multi-activity model as well as health-related fitness (Houston & Kulinna, 2014). Student-teacher ratios in physical education classes were generally close to 40:1. Classes met 3 times a week for 90 minutes.

Sandra was a 32-year-old physical education teacher who had been working in the field for 8 years. She was attracted to the profession because of her strong sporting background and was focused on her students learning to be healthy and fit, enjoying themselves in a physical activity setting, and participating in traditional sport. Her teacher training focused on traditional curricula and pedagogies although she was open to innovative approaches.

Training Program

The author delivered the training program to Sandra and two colleagues. It consisted of two workshops prior to Sandra attempting to negotiate the curriculum with her students and multiple follow-up meetings with Sandra during her negotiated unit. Several strategies, first recommended by Joyce and Showers (1982) for teacher development were employed during this
training (see Table 3). From the outset the facts that curricular change is not easy to achieve and that a strong managerial foundation and good understanding of the school culture are key to the process were emphasized. Other strategies employed included studying hegemonic masculinity and the elements of critical theory related to curricular negotiation, pedagogical discussions, and reading articles on curricular negotiation, observing author modeling of negotiation tactics, role-playing negotiations with other teachers, and viewing film and live teaching of negotiation being attempted. In addition, Sandra and her colleagues were asked to observe each other’s efforts at negotiating the curriculum and to provide constructive feedback to each other during “coaching sessions.” Sandra was asked to keep a reflective journal about her teaching once she began her negotiated unit and to complete stimulated recall interviews during which she reacted to film of her teaching within the unit.

The specific strategies that Sandra was asked to try as she negotiated the curriculum with her students are also shown in Table 3. The majority of these were taken from previous reports of curricular negotiation in action. They included creating an environment in which students felt safe taking part in negotiation and exploring state curricular documents for “standards” on which to base the curriculum and from which to draw goals and objectives. Furthermore, Sandra was encouraged to co-plan the broad content of the unit with her students as well as the specific tasks to be completed in lessons and methods by which students were to be evaluated. Sandra and colleagues were also asked to differentiate their teaching with the aim of helping individual students. Moreover, they were encouraged to converse with their students within reflective conversations about the process of curriculum building and to use a variety of productive teaching styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 2008) in which decision-making was shifted from the teacher to the student.
Table 3

*Strategies Employed Within the Training Program and by Sandra in her Negotiated Unit*

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<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED WITHIN THE TRAINING PROGRAM</th>
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<td><strong>WITHIN WORKSHOPS</strong></td>
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<td>• Study theory (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>• Discussion (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>• Reading articles</td>
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<td>• Observing film (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>• Modeling and role play</td>
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<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY SANDRA DURING HER UNIT</th>
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<td>• Creation of an environment that encourages</td>
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<td>negotiation (Enright &amp; O’Sullivan, 2010)</td>
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<td>• Exploration of state standards for goals</td>
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<td>and objectives (Georgia Department of</td>
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<td>Education, 2008)</td>
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<td>• Co-planning content, tasks, and methods of</td>
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<td>assessment (Oliver &amp; Oesterreich, 2013)</td>
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<td>• Use of reflective coaching conversations</td>
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<td>(Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, &amp; Schock, 2009)</td>
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<td>• Use of indirect, problem solving, productive</td>
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<td>teaching styles (Mosston &amp; Ashworth, 2008)</td>
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<td>• Differentiated teaching (Tomlinson &amp; Allan,</td>
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The Negotiated Unit

As soon as Sandra completed the two workshops, she began teaching an 18-lesson unit during which the curriculum was negotiated with the 32 boys in her class. Specifically, she was asked to use all of the training she had received, and any ideas of her own, to create and teach an
18-lesson unit, the objectives, content, pedagogies, organization, and evaluation of which were to be negotiated with her students.

**Data Collection**

Data were collected with seven qualitative techniques. The *reflective diary* entries and transcripts from the *stimulated recall interviews* served as two data sources. Three other types of interviewing were also employed. These included *formally interviewing* Sandra prior to and directly after the workshops to gain a greater understanding of her pedagogical values and beliefs and to gauge the degree to which she thought she had been prepared to negotiate with her students. Sandra was also formally interviewed at the completion of her negotiated unit during which she was asked to reflect on the experience. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, Sandra was *informally interviewed* about the negotiation process, as were the boys in her class. The boys participated in *focus group interviews* after the unit was finished during which groups of four to six students were asked to describe their views and thoughts about the unit in which they had just participated (see Appendix J). Formal and focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed. Notes on the contents of informal interviews were made directly after the completion of the interview.

Following each lesson within the negotiated unit, the boys were asked to write about a *critical incident* (Flanagan, 1954). Specific instructions for this task were borrowed from Hastie and Curtner-Smith (2006) and were as follows:

Please write about one thing that happened during today’s lesson that you found important. It may have been important because it made you excited, made you bored, made you worried, or because it was something you learned that was really new. When you have described what happened try and explain why it was important.
Fieldwork involved the author taking copious notes describing the activities, responses, issues, and interactions during the training program and while observing Sandra and the boys in the negotiated unit.

Data Analysis

Stage 1 of the analysis process involved locating data pertaining to each of the three questions I was attempting to answer during the study. During stage 2, I used analytic induction and constant comparison (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) to break down the three data sets into categories before collapsing the various categories into key themes. Throughout the process coding was related to key concepts, ideas, and constructs from the theoretical perspectives that were used to guide the study and the literature concerning purposeful negotiation.

Trustworthiness and credibility of the analysis process were ensured by member checking, searching for negative cases, and triangulation (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Results and Discussion

Negotiation Process

**Constrained by standards.** Immediately prior to beginning the unit, Sandra was very concerned that the boys would not be able to comprehend state and local standards.

The language of the standards is high above their [intellectual] level and I am not sure they will understand what the standards mean. There is too much information to try and negotiate all of the standards of the curriculum in such a short time span. (Sandra, informal interview, workshop 2)

Rather than unpack the standards for the boys so as to make it manageable, Sandra decided that it would be she who selected the broad standards, goals, and objectives for the unit. They were “learning motor skills and movement patterns” and “applying knowledge of moving concepts.” During lesson 1, Sandra explained to the boys that these were non-negotiable:
Remember that we want to make sure we are working on the skills of throwing and catching as well as striking with a body part and an implement. For example, in baseball the bat serves as the implement to strike an object with and in volleyball we use our hands to strike the ball. Another example may be soccer. In soccer, we strike with a body part. As you make decisions for the unit, don’t just think about what you enjoy doing, but also consider whether or not the activities you choose apply to these specific skills. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Importantly, the fact that the objectives chosen by Sandra emphasized “performance” meant that they supported a traditional male-biased curriculum and so limited her potential to facilitate the kinds of change that would help interest and engage boys for whom this kind of focus was marginalizing.

**Constrained by curricular model, activity, content, and evaluation.** The subsequent units negotiated by Sandra and the boys are shown in Table 4. Sandra began each unit by placing the boys in small groups of five to six students and asking them to discuss and make decisions about specific components of the units they were to follow. These discussions took place in the gym. The components were activities, tasks, and assessment. Each group was asked to discuss each of the three components and share its ideas with the other groups. A vote was then taken on which ideas should be implemented.

Sandra: What does your group think we should focus on to meet objectives and standards?
Marcerio (student): Some of us want to do soccer and speedball, but some just want to do basketball.
Sandra: Well, we need to make sure everyone’s opinion is heard and your group needs to come to a consensus. Maybe take a vote and decide that way; whatever you choose also think about how you want to set up so that there is skill practice time as well as game play. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Since it was what both the boys and Sandra were familiar with, not surprisingly, the curricular model in which the unit was situated was traditional multi-activity teaching. The activities chosen were speedball, soccer, and floor hockey. All of these choices limited the opportunity for Sandra to improve the lot of those “non-masculine” boys who were less inclined
Table 4

**The Negotiated Unit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson #</th>
<th>Activities/Content/Assessment</th>
<th>Lesson Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| 1-6      | • Small group discussions and voting  
• Speedball drills and small-sided games  
• Round robin speedball tournament  
• Whole group discussions  
• Performance-based rubric assessment | • Enhance manipulative skills for throwing and catching                        |
| 7-12     | • Small group discussions and voting  
• Soccer drills and small-sided games  
• Round robin soccer tournament  
• Whole group discussions  
• Performance-based rubric assessment | • Enhance manipulative skills for striking with a body part                   |
| 13-18    | • Small group discussions and voting  
• Floor hockey drills and small-sided games  
• Round robin floor hockey tournament  
• Whole group discussions  
• Performance-based rubric assessment | • Enhance manipulative skills for striking with an implement                  |

to participate in traditional physical education. The structure of the multi-activity model is notorious for allowing well-skilled, more physically aggressive boys to dominate proceedings and for those who are less skilled and shy to be marginalized (Ennis, 1999; Griffin, 1985; Parker & Curtner-Smith, 2012). Moreover, speedball incorporates the skills, tactics, and strategies associated with the traditional games of basketball and flag-football and so success is dependent on physical skill, speed, and aggression. Again, these characteristics obviously do not favor low-skilled, less physically imposing boys.

Table 4 shows that during lessons 1 to 6 the content negotiated by Sandra and the boys consisted of drills, practices, and small-sided games to improve students throwing and catching skills within speedball as well as knowledge of pertinent tactics and strategies. During lessons 7
to 12, the concentration shifted to dribbling and passing skills in soccer within practices and modified games. Within lessons 13 to 18 the emphasis was on learning and refining floor hockey skills and strategies. Finally, Table 4 also reveals that the evaluation system selected by Sandra and the boys consisted of a performance-based rubric used to assess the acquisition of skills being learned by the students. Again, the selection of traditional content and evaluation methods with traditional performance foci privileged more skilled and masculine boys and limited Sandra’s ability to negotiate an equitable curriculum that would appeal to all the boys in the class.

**Attempts to democratize.** As revealed in Table 4, on seven occasions throughout the unit, Sandra allocated more class time for whole class negotiations on broad curricular issues that followed a similar format to those held in lesson 1. In addition, there were two other “layers of negotiation” that occurred during the unit. First, Sandra used the tactic of providing the boys with multiple options for specific content (i.e., drills, practices, and game formats) in which they could engage and asked them to choose either as a class or as a group:

Jamal (student): Why do I have to do the drills? I already know how to play.  
Sandra: Jamal, you have to practice the skills before you can play in the game and help your team.  
Jamal (student): But I’m already good at this. Drills aren’t going to help me.  
Sandra: Ok, but this isn’t just about you. It is also about your team. You need to practice the drills with your team so that you will play better together during the games. If you do not practice the drills, you won’t be able to play in the tournament. (Field notes, lesson 3)

Second, as illustrated in the following data extract, the boys initiated negotiations by making verbal requests of Sandra when they wanted changes.

The students are passing in pairs (soccer). Chris approaches Sandra and asks, “Why do students that already know how to play soccer have to do this? I play on a team and know what to do.” Sandra suggests that Chris can “refine his skills and improve” and “help his less skilled peers.” (Field notes, lesson 7)
Changes requested were usually concerned with gaining more time to “play the game,” making practices and games more competitive, and “taking out” modifications applied to games. For example, boys questioned modifications designed to force them to pass rather than dribble. These negotiations were more powerful if initiated and supported by groups of boys and less powerful if initiated by individuals. During early lessons, there was more chance of these student-initiated negotiations being aggressive and combative in nature, but by the end of the unit, they were more likely to be cordial. This was because most of the time, Sandra went along with her charges’ suggestions, unless she deemed them unsafe or unfair and so encouraged them to engage in the negotiating process.

Jose: She [i.e., Sandra] was really good at letting us make decisions as long as we stayed within certain boundaries that were set at the beginning of the unit.

Luis: She [i.e., Sandra] even let us change some of the practice drills that we played when we made suggestions. (Focus group interview)

In addition, as the unit progressed, Sandra gave the boys more encouragement to engage in this type of negotiation by gently, positively, and constantly prompting them to do so if they thought changes to the unit were warranted.

When the students were working on floor hockey, I noticed that a few of the lower skilled boys were struggling with engagement. One way that I encouraged them to negotiate the curriculum was to remind them that they could make suggestions in their critical incident reports. This was a way that they can have their voices heard in a more private manner in case they wanted to avoid making remarks in front of their peers. (Sandra, informal interview, lesson 13)

**Impact of Negotiations on the Boys and Sandra**

**Impact on the boys.** As recognized by Sandra, the class consisted of two broad groups. First, there was the relatively high-skilled group of 11 larger, more gregarious, and aggressive “masculine” boys who clearly looked forward to physical education. The second group
consisted of 21 “non-masculine” boys who were relatively low-skilled, passive, and quiet and were clearly not enamored by the subject of physical education.

During today’s lesson, it occurred to me some boys really stood out as dominant, highly skilled, and more aggressive than others. While they engaged in speedball, I noticed that these students tried to take control and monopolize the game. They were extremely competitive and not supportive of the lower-skilled students. (Sandra, reflective diary, entry 3)

Today, I observed how difficult it could be for lower-skilled students in physical education. Some of the students appeared to be passive and had a low level of engagement during the activity. These are the students that have struggled to speak up during negotiations and have their voices heard over their more dominant group of students. They seem to be very pensive, yet they struggle to articulate what they need and want to be successful. (Sandra, reflective diary, entry 5)

**Domination by masculine boys.** At the beginning of the first lesson of the unit, the masculine group of boys were quick to express their skepticism when Sandra explained that they were going to negotiate the curriculum.

Jamal (student): Are we negotiating the curriculum so that we can play whatever we want to?”
Malcolm (student): Can we please just play basketball already?
Michael (student): I don’t understand why we have to do this. Why can’t we just play sports?”
Marcus (student): Yeah, we’re wasting time when we could be playing basketball.
(Field notes, lesson 1)

This response was not surprising given that the masculine group already had the curriculum it wanted. That is traditional sport-focused units with plenty of game play, which the boys in the group dominated.

Having been encouraged by Sandra to “keep an open mind” on this new form of physical education and to “see how much fun [they] were going to have,” this group of boys also dominated the proceedings when the broad curriculum was being negotiated, both during small group and whole group discussions.

Sandra: Please stop interrupting others and give them a chance to speak.
Kendrick (student): Why? We don’t like their suggestions no way. We already decided what we wanted to do.
Sandra: I’m sorry, Tommy. Please continue with what you were saying.
Tommy (student): Um, no. It’s okay, Ms. Sandra. I can’t remember. (Field notes, lesson 9)

Moreover, as the unit progressed, a hierarchy within the masculine boys’ group developed in which those who were most skillful, powerful, and aggressive dominated their masculine peers as well as the non-masculine group of boys.

Kendrick (student): Nah dawg, listen. Here what we gonna do.
Jamal (student): Yeah, we decided what we doin. So y’all just need to listen to what we sayin.
Kendrick (student): Yep, got dat right. So here how dis goin down. We gonna play speedball but we gonna do games, too.
Jamal (student): Uh-huh. Dat’s right, bro. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Further, deeper into the unit when the boys engaged in more small-sided game play, there were numerous examples of those boys at the bottom of the masculine group’s hierarchy trying to win favor with those at the top by putting down, making fun of, intimidating, and ridiculing boys in the non-masculine group.

Corey (student): Hey, you need to stop what your doin and listen to us, dude. We wanna play. These drills suck.
Dontavious (student): Yeah man, exactly. Listen up, bro.
Ricky (student): I was just saying that she [Sandra] said we needed to practice before we could play.
Corey (student): Dude, shut up! (Field notes, lesson 13)

More positively, toward the end of the unit there were a few signs that the attitudes of some of the masculine boys toward their non-masculine peers shifted and became somewhat encouraging, empathetic, and inclusive.

Chris attempts to make a shot and misses the goal. . . . Juan reaches out to Chris and gives Chris a high five and says, “Maybe next time!”. Chris is clearly encouraged and works even harder during the rest of the hockey game. (Field notes, lesson 14)
**Subservience of non-masculine boys.** The boys in the non-masculine group were accustomed to having little or no voice during regular physical education units and so when faced with the same efforts of their masculine peers to dominate them reverted to typical behaviors despite Sandra’s best efforts. Consequently, within the initial lessons they made little effort to get involved in decision-making discussions or went along with the opinions of their masculine peers.

Oliver, a low-skilled boy, raises his hand in an attempt to make a suggestion for an activity he thinks will be fun. He suggests that they use stations like they have in previous activities in PE. Robert interrupts him and says, “That’s a terrible idea.” Sandra tells Robert that his comment is “not appropriate” and that he needs “to wait his turn” before speaking out in class. But the damage is done. There are no more suggestions from Oliver or other low-skilled boys. (Field notes, lesson 2)

In addition, during the early action within the unit, non-masculine boys were more likely to be on the periphery of the action in game play, were reluctant to take part in drills, and were disengaged altogether. That is they resembled boys described as “invisible players” by Griffin (1985):

> I did not like today’s activity because I do not feel like I’m part of the team. No one wants to pass me the ball because I’m not very good and I have never played before. I’m trying to get better, but if I don’t get a chance what’s the point? I feel frustrated and don’t want to play anymore. (Carlos, critical incident report, lesson 3)

Early critical incident data, however, revealed that while the non-masculine boys had not changed their behaviors during early classes, they were quietly optimistic that this new form of physical education would be more enjoyable:

> I am glad we are not playing basketball. We always play basketball. It isn’t much fun because I am not very good. I run slow and no one wants me on their team. I am excited to try new things in class [but] I do not want to make anyone mad because I don’t like basketball. (Angel, critical incident report, lesson 2)
Toward the end of the unit, it was apparent that while they were still wary of the boys in the masculine group and quick to withdraw if threatened, many of the non-masculine boys’ levels of engagement and enjoyment had increased dramatically.

Evan, a non-masculine boy, continues to make a huge effort although, so far, he has failed at every attempted shot at goal during a small-sided hockey game. His teammates are encouraging and reinforce his efforts through positive comments. (Field notes, lesson 17)

Moreover, while many of the boys in this group continued to note that they did not “want to be in charge and make decisions” “that made [masculine] friends mad” a few brave souls got involved in the decision-making process either by negotiating with Sandra or with their peers.

Ron, a non-masculine boy, approaches Sandra at the beginning of class and attempts to negotiate the curriculum with her privately one-on-one before the large group discussion begins. Ron starts by saying he doesn’t “really like talking out loud” because he is “afraid.” Sandra suggests that this should not deter him from continuing “sharing his mind” with the class. (Field notes, lesson 7)

Javier makes some strategic suggestions the team could use to improve ball movement. He calls a time out and shouts, “Hey, guys, this isn’t working. Why don’t we try to pass and support more by making shorter passes to one another? These long balls aren’t working and we keep giving it to the other team.” The more masculine boys on his team seemed to be receptive to this suggestion. (Field notes, lesson 9)

Liking single-gender physical education for the wrong reasons. As in previous work (Hill, Harmon, & Knowles, 2012; Wallhead et al., 2013), the fact that the class consisted only of boys appealed to both masculine and non-masculine boys. In the current study, however, the reasons for both groups having this kind of opinion differed and were negative. Specifically, masculine boys were in favor of single-gender classes because it kept out girls, all of whom they stereotyped negatively as “feminine,” non-athletic, and disinterested:

D’Andre: It will be great to have only guys . . . The girls are always complaining about it [i.e., physical education] being too hard.
DeShaun: Yeah, I’m glad we don’t have any girls. They never want to do nothin’ anyway in PE. (Field notes, lesson 1)
You mean we don’t have to share with the girls? We [i.e., the boys] get to hang out with our friends and play what we want to? I’ve never been in a class where it was all boys. Miss Sandra said we get to decide what we want to play. I hope we get to play basketball and football everyday because those are my favorite. The girls never want to play that. They’re always worried about their hair. (Malik, critical incident report, lesson 1)

Conversely, the non-masculine boys were relieved that there were no girls in the class to act as an audience during times when they were tormented or made to look foolish by their masculine peers:

The only thing about negotiating the curriculum so far is that girls are not in our class. It’s hard when the boys are making fun of you for not being any good but to have the girls do it too is even worse. (John, critical incident report, lesson 1)

I don’t like trying to play in front of the girls. . . . They can be even meaner than the boys sometimes when you suck. The girls are too worried about what the boys are doing. They won’t leave us alone. (Max, critical incident report, lesson 2)

**Impact on Sandra.** The impact of the negotiated curriculum on Sandra was positive in that it gave her a new awareness about the ecology of her classes. As alluded to in the previous section, more negatively, her efforts to combat the hegemonic masculinity that existed in the class were only mildly successful.

**New awareness.** Sandra’s initial reaction to the idea of negotiating the curriculum with the boys in the class was positive. She had not previously considered the notion that she might be unwittingly favoring dominant, well-skilled, and aggressive boys and “ignoring the boys that [were] not as masculine.” In addition, she noted that she had

. . . never thought about the verbiage I use with my students and how gender-biased it could be or the impact it could have on them. I think this is an area that is easily overlooked because it has been so ingrained from previous experiences. (Sandra, formal interview 2)

Early in the unit, Sandra was particularly concerned about the boys’ negative stereotyping of girls.
Today was more difficult than I thought it would be. I did not realize they [i.e., the boys] would internalize gender-stereotypical reasons for why not having girls in class would be a good thing. Although they are only in the seventh grade, I did not give them credit for gender stereotyping because it was new to myself. Although I do not think they were intentionally trying to do this . . . it is interesting that it does exist amongst seventh graders. It really makes me rethink my approach to teaching. I wonder how many times I have reinforced gender stereotypes in my instruction and not even been aware of what I was doing. (Sandra, reflective diary, entry 4)

**Failure to overcome structural constraints.** Despite this new awareness and a determination to improve the experience of the non-masculine group of boys and the views and perceptions of the masculine boys, Sandra’s efforts to realize these objectives resulted in mixed success. In general, she could not overcome the constraints of the curriculum model employed and the focus of the content and evaluation system. In congruence with previous observations (Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004), particularly damaging to Sandra’s cause was the fact that the multi-activity model she and her students employed was largely teacher-driven even when indirect teaching styles were employed. This meant that Sandra spent much of her time reacting to students who did not behave in ways she deemed desirable in light of her new critical focus. Specifically, she spent enormous amounts of energy trying to loosen the grip the masculine boys had on the decision-making process and within game play.

Talking to a group of masculine boys Sandra implores them to “Listen up, you all need to be more respectful and raise your hand before you speak out anymore during class. Although you may not like all of the opinions given, you still need to be respectful and hear them whether you agree with them or not.” (Field notes, lesson 3)

She also spent a large portion of her time attempting to intervene on behalf of the non-masculine boys. In some cases these efforts to change the behavior of both groups of boys were successful, but often they were not. Moreover, positive gains made in one class were seldom sustained over time. In addition, Sandra was never quite sure about when she should intervene and when she should allow the boys to work through issues themselves:
I should have intervened during class today. I grappled with making the situation worse for Ricardo [a non-masculine boy] by drawing further attention to him. I also had difficulty understanding my role since the goal is to allow students the opportunity to develop their own voice and figure out ways to resolve conflict. (Sandra, reflective diary, lesson 9)

Despite these difficulties, toward the end of the unit, a tired Sandra suggested that she had been partially successful in that the non-masculine boys were, at least, more engaged in the subject than she had observed previously.

It was hard at first to let the kids make the decisions, but overall they have done a good job. They are working hard and are taking it [i.e., negotiating the curriculum] . . . seriously. I have noticed that the more masculine boys came out as leaders, but all in all everyone is engaged and working. (Sandra, stimulated recall interview, lesson 16)

**Effective and Ineffective Elements of the Training program**

Although generally positive about the training program, Sandra noted that its effectiveness had been negated somewhat because it “was rushed because of everything we were trying to accomplish.” Furthermore, she was more interested in discussing the “whole package” as opposed to specific elements. However, she did make it clear that the discussion of hegemonic masculinity coupled with the examination of her own personal biases within the workshops was foundational to her efforts in the ensuing negotiated unit:

Sometimes, as educators, we are not aware of the underlying social influences that impact our classes. Talking about male dominance was useful in helping me see some of my own biases. As a PE teacher, I want to encourage healthy competition, but now I see that this needs to be done with some caution. Students may interpret healthy competition differently than I intend. (Sandra, formal interview 1)

In addition, she singled out the role-playing exercises and the lessons in which she was observed and coached by one of the other teachers in the training program as being particularly useful and noted that reading the literature on hegemonic masculinity was less helpful:

This training session has been very helpful and clarified many misconceptions I had about how to do this . . . Modeling through role-play and coaching sessions were more
beneficial than the reading of articles. It really helped me see what it would look like in my classroom. (Sandra, formal interview 2)

Finally, she noted that teaching within a boys-only class was crucial to any success she did have since trying to provide an equitable physical education for all boys was much easier in this context than within mixed-gender classes:

I think that just having boys in a class is going to keep the boys less distracted. Sometimes they are focused on what the girls are thinking about them instead of the task at hand. Differentiating would probably be easier, too, since the class is single-gender. (Sandra, informal interview, lesson 17)

Summary and Conclusions

The main conclusion to be drawn from this study is that the negotiated unit that Sandra taught was a qualified success as was the program that trained her. In line with previous studies (Brooker & MacDonald, 2010; Cook-Sather, 2006; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2013), Sandra was able to engage her students in the negotiation process. This led to some normally subservient non-masculine boys increasing their engagement in and enjoyment of physical education and some normally dominant masculine boys softening their negative views of and behaviors toward their non-masculine peers which was encouraging. In short, hegemonic masculinity was partially negated by the negotiation process and the boys in the study experienced a more equitable form of physical education. Further studies examining the degree to which the positive features of the current study transfer to other contexts would be useful.

Conversely, the study indicated that attempting to negotiate within a traditional physical education framework within which a performance pedagogy was emphasized was limiting for both structural and social reasons. There has been some suggestion that the sport education curriculum model has structural advantages over multi-activity teaching in terms of being more student-centered and encouraging of students of different abilities to work together (Curtner-
Smith & Sofo, 2004). In addition, the sport education model appears to lend itself to relatively positive forms of negotiation between teacher and students and among students (Wahl-Alexander & Curtner-Smith, in press). Future interventions, then, might prove more successful if teachers are asked to negotiate the curriculum with their students within the sport education framework. Other interventions in which teachers are asked to avoid traditional sport and performance focused objectives altogether may also prove successful.

References


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CHAPTER III
EFFECTS OF PURPOSEFULLY NEGOTIATING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON ONE TEACHER AND A MIXED-GENDER MINORITY MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS

Abstract

A limited amount of research has suggested that teachers who give their students the opportunity to voice their opinions by purposefully negotiating the curriculum with them can improve engagement and realize a number of important affective goals. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effects of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on the one mixed-gender middle school class consisting predominantly of 45 low socio-economic Hispanic and African American students. A second purpose was to evaluate the impact of the program used to train the teacher of the class. The study was driven by a number of theoretical perspectives and ideas from the critical tradition. Data were collected with seven qualitative techniques and analyzed by employing analytic induction and constant comparison. Results revealed the unit and training to be largely successful. Most of the students were empowered and able to think constructively about their own physical education. Less able boys and girls became reconnected with the physical education curriculum and many of the more able boys became reconnected with their less able peers. Ironically, the teacher did not recognize the extent of her success. Her own focus on skilled performance and participation in health-enhancing physical activity, blinded her, somewhat, to the fact that she was actually realizing all kinds of other affective goals.
Introduction

Physical education pedagogies have been predominantly teacher-centered, and reproductive (Curtner-Smith, Hasty & Kerr, 2001; Cothran, 2013). Critics of this direct approach have noted that it fails to provide students with a voice or identity in the learning process, privileges adult interests, forces students to conform to one “normal” standard, and has led to a classroom culture in which teachers take little notice of student opinions and some students disengage from the curriculum (Cruddas & Haddock, 2003; Fisette, 2010a; Foucault, 1979; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sheets, 1995). These issues may be particularly damaging for students within minority groups already aware that they have little say in how life is conducted in their communities (Brooker & Macdonald, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sheets, 1995). In addition, critics of direct pedagogies have argued that teacher-centered traditional pedagogies tend to underestimate students’ ability to think, understand their bodies, and gauge their own physical fitness needs (Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006b; Fisette, 2010b; Rudduck & Fielding, 2006; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004).

More recently, scholars have suggested that democratic and indirect pedagogies in which students and teachers collaborate may improve the learning process in physical education (Cook-Sather, 2006b; Cook-Sather, 2002; Fisette, 2010a; Rudduck & Fielding, 2006; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013). Specifically, these scholars suggested that this collaboration should involve teachers and students negotiating the curriculum that students will follow (Cook-Sather, 2006b; Cook-Sather, 2002; Fisette, 2010a; Rudduck & Fielding, 2006; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004). Importantly, such an approach does not mean teachers allow students to make all the decisions about the curriculum (Fisette, 2010a; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013). Rather, it involves teachers facilitating discussions, listening to students, valuing their voices,
and taking notice of their feedback when making curricular decisions (Cook-Sather, 2009a). Moreover, of prime importance is the teacher’s willingness to share power with students (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010; Fisette, 2010a; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013) and ability to accommodate and be inclusive of different opinions and views voiced by students (Cook-Sather & Alter, 2011; Fisette, 2010b).

Student voice is a crucial component of a negotiated curriculum. Teachers, therefore, must strive to provide students with opportunities to shape and develop the goals and content of their programs (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2013). Moreover, this kind of negotiation is most effective when it involves a fluid exchange of ideas during the entire course or unit, as opposed to being a preliminary or concluding activity (Glasby & MacDonald, 2004).

Advantages touted for this approach include increasing the degree to which students feel safe in the physical education environment, are engaged in their own learning, are prepared to voice their own opinions and views, and feel valued (Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006a, 2009b; Fisette, 2010b; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2011; Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). In addition, a negotiated curriculum may enhance student self-esteem, improve student attitudes towards learning, and lead to more positive interactions between students and their teachers (Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006b, 2009a; Fisette, 2010b; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2011; Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). Furthermore, this pedagogical strategy may lead to students having a more sophisticated understanding of the goals of physical education and increased engaged learning time (Cook-Sather, 2009b). Finally, a negotiated curriculum can lead to a redistribution of power and facilitate a sense of shared responsibility among teachers and students (Brooker & MacDonald, 2010; Galsby & MacDonald, 2004).
Studies of purposefully negotiated curricula in physical education are scarce. The research that has been done, however, shows some promise, particularly for children and youth who do not thrive in more traditional programs. Specifically, this research has revealed that pre-service teachers can be trained to use student-centered pedagogies and that doing so does, indeed, lead to students having a significant role in curriculum development and engaging in the tasks and activities that make up individual lessons to a greater extent (Oliver, Hamzeh, & McCaughtry, 2009; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013). Moreover, findings of this work suggest that the efficacy of the curriculum is not compromised by the negotiation process (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2013). On the contrary, the approach appears to benefit individual students as it incorporates those who might be on the fringes within traditional physical education and allows the teacher to focus to a greater degree on individual student needs (Fisette, 2010a, 2010b). For this reason, a number of researchers have called for both in- and pre-service teachers to receive specific training in negotiation (Timken & McNamee, 2012).

**Purpose**

Negotiated physical education curricula that have been studied previously were predominantly taught in high schools by pre-service teachers. Students participating in these studies were generally grouped heterogeneously and were from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. To date, however, there have been few studies of the impact of this strategy on intact classes of boys and girls from low income minority groups who might well be prone to disengage from traditional middle class programs. Moreover, investigation of programs specifically designed to train in-service teachers to purposefully negotiate the physical education curriculum is scarce. The primary purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the effects of purposefully negotiating the physical education curriculum on one mixed-gender middle school
class predominantly consisting of low socioeconomic Hispanic and African American students. A second purpose was to evaluate the impact of the program used to train the teacher of the class. The specific goal of the study was to answer three questions. These were (a) What did the process of negotiation involve in terms of teacher and student thoughts, actions, and interactions? (b) What were the impacts of negotiating the curriculum on the students and teacher? and (c) Which components of the training program helped and hindered the teacher’s ability to successfully negotiate the physical education curriculum with students?

Theoretical Perspectives

This study was driven by some of the theoretical perspectives and ideas from the critical tradition explained by Brooker and Macdonald (2010). These authors noted that there had been something of a shift among sport pedagogy researchers from testing the effects of adult-designed programs on children and youth to listening to the views of children and youth about those programs (e.g., Graham, 1995). Unfortunately, Brooker and Macdonald also observed that, subsequently, there had been few efforts to transform programs based on students’ perspectives. Referring to the authors who contributed to the text edited by Evans (1993), Brooker and MacDonald (2010) went on to note that physical education in Western cultures was often class-, race-, and gender-biased, and privileged highly skilled and academically able middle class Caucasian students. In order to improve this state of affairs and provide a more equitable and meaningful physical education for all students, and drawing on the work of Aronowitz and Giroux (1993), Brooker and Macdonald (2010) asserted that the experiences and ideas that students from different backgrounds and cultures bring to schools should be embraced and incorporated into the curriculum rather than silenced and marginalized. Moreover, following
Morrison (1996), the suggestion was that as well as empowering children and youth through this type of collaboration and cooperation they might also become more critically aware.

Method

Participants and Setting

The primary participants in this study were 18 boys and 27 girls comprising one seventh-grade physical education class and their teacher. The class was situated within a public middle school located within a large urban city in the southeastern United States. This school was classified as a Title I school. Consequently, it received federal funding aimed at offsetting the disadvantages many of its students faced. The school served predominantly middle to low income Hispanic and African-American children ranging from 11 to 13 years of age. The students, their parents, and teacher completed assent and consent forms prior to the study’s commencement, thus satisfying university institutional review board policy.

Physical education facilities at the school were excellent and included a gymnasium, a state of the art fitness center, black top area, and large playing field. Equipment for the subject was plentiful. Physical education classes at the school were always mixed-gender. Typical teacher-student ratios in physical education classes were 1:40. The physical education teachers at the school generally employed the health-related fitness (Houston & Kulinna, 2014) and skill theme (Graham, Holt/Hale, & Parker, 1993) curriculum models. Lesson length was 90 minutes and students had physical education 3 days a week.

Jennifer was 34 years old and has been teaching at the school for 10 years. Prior to working at the school she was employed at another school within the same district. She was originally attracted to a career in physical education because she had a passion for the subject and wanted to have a positive impact on the lives of children and their families. Her physical
education teacher education (PETE) program focused on teaching sports, physical activities, and skill themes using traditional direct pedagogies, and her key beliefs about physical education at the middle school level were that students should learn how to participate in a variety of health enhancing activities, understand key concepts of health and skill-related fitness, and be passionate to taking part in physical activity for the rest of their lives. Prior to the study commencing, she indicated that she favored the traditional direct pedagogies she had been trained to use.

**Purposeful Negotiation Training Program**

The purposeful negotiation training program (PNTP) included two workshops conducted at the school site prior to Jennifer teaching her purposefully negotiated unit and, in line with the suggestions of Hastie, McPhail, Calderon, and Sinelnikov (2015), multiple follow-up meetings and conversations with Jennifer and two other teachers in the program while they were teaching their units. The PNTP was delivered by the author. Strategies that were used with Jennifer and her colleagues during the PNTP were mainly extrapolated from the recommendations made for teacher development provided by Joyce and Showers (1982) (see Table 5). They included studying the theory behind and discussing the structure of purposeful negotiation, reading articles about purposeful negotiation in physical education and other academic subjects, watching film of purposeful negotiation, author modeling of purposeful negotiation, observing the author engage in purposeful negotiation with middle school children, and role-playing purposeful negotiating. Moreover, during the subsequent teaching of her purposefully negotiated unit, Jennifer was asked to reflect on her ability to negotiate the physical education curriculum effectively by writing an entry in a reflective journal following each lesson and participating in stimulated recall interviews during which she would watch film of herself teaching and describe
Table 5

*Strategies Employed During the PNTP and by Jennifer in her Negotiated Unit*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED DURING THE PNTP</th>
<th>WITHIN WORKSHOPS</th>
<th>WITHIN THE UNIT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WITHIN WORKSHOPS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Study theory (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>• Discussion (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>• Reading articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Observing film (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<td>Stimulated recall interviews (deMarrais, 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Observing live teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective journaling</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Modeling and role play</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Peer coaching (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982; Showers &amp; Joyce, 1996)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on strong managerial foundation (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Focus on school culture and context (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on difficulty of the process (Joyce &amp; Showers, 1982)</td>
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<tr>
<th>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY JENNIFER DURING HER UNIT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY JENNIFER DURING HER UNIT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Creation of an environment that encourages negotiation (Enright &amp; O’Sullivan, 2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exploration of state standards for goals and objectives (Georgia Department of Education, 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Co-planning content, tasks, and methods of assessment (Oliver &amp; Oesterreich, 2013)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of reflective coaching conversations (Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, &amp; Schock, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of indirect, problem solving, productive teaching styles (Mosston &amp; Ashworth, 2008)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Differentiated teaching (Tomlinson &amp; Allan, 2000)</td>
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the thought processes behind specific actions. In addition, Jennifer and her colleagues were asked to engage in peer coaching by observing each other’s teaching and to provide feedback to each other. Throughout the PNTP, the importance of a sound managerial system and taking into account the school culture and context were also emphasized. Moreover, Jennifer and her
colleagues were reminded that implementing a new model, such as purposeful negotiation, is a difficult process and cannot be perfected during a short period of time.

The specific strategies that Jennifer was asked to use in her purposefully negotiated unit are also listed in Table 5. These were drawn from previous research and theory. They included creating an environment that encouraged students to engage in the negotiation process and exploring the state standards for physical education with students for specific goals and objectives on which to focus. In addition, Jennifer and her colleagues were urged to plan the content and tasks to be included in individual lessons with their students as well as the system and methods by which students would be assessed and evaluated. Finally, Jennifer and the other teachers in the PNTP were encouraged to engage in reflective coaching conversations with their students and employ a variety of indirect, productive, problem-solving teaching styles within which students would make most or many of the decisions. This strategy was aimed at enabling them to differentiate their teaching and cater to the needs of specific students.

The Negotiated Physical Education Unit

Immediately following the completion of the PNTP workshops, Jennifer was asked to teach one 18-lesson negotiated physical education unit. The specific instructions she was given were as follows: “Please use all the training you have been given, plus any ideas of your own, to design and teach an 18-lesson purposefully negotiated physical education unit with one of your seventh grade classes.”

Data Collection

Seven qualitative techniques were used to collect data during the study. Those were as follows:
Non-Participant Observation. Field notes were written after both PNTP workshops and each follow-up meeting with the goal of recording what happened during the session and Jennifer’s reactions. Field notes were also written during live observations of each lesson within the negotiated physical education unit. The focus of these notes was on describing the pedagogical strategies used by Jennifer, the students’ reactions to them, and the interactions between Jennifer and the students.

Interviewing. Jennifer was formally interviewed on three occasions. Those were prior to and immediately after the PNTP and immediately after she has completed teaching the negotiated physical education unit. The focus of the first formal interview was on Jennifer’s pedagogical beliefs and values and the experiences that shaped those beliefs. The second interview was concerned with Jennifer’s perceptions of the PNTP and her readiness to teach the negotiated physical education unit. The third interview focused on Jennifer’s experiences within and perceptions about the negotiated physical education unit. Formal interviews were approximately 1 hour in duration. In addition, Jennifer was informally interviewed whenever the opportunity arose during the PNTP and negotiated physical education unit. Finally, the stimulated recall interviews Jennifer completed as part of the PNTP were also used as a data source.

Students in the study were informally interviewed whenever the opportunity arose during the negotiated physical education unit. In addition, following its completion, the students were asked about their perceptions of the unit within three focus group interviews consisting of four students (see Appendix J). All formal, stimulated recall, and focus group interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Written notes were made directly after formal interviews had been completed.
Critical Incidents. Students completed a critical incident sheet (Flanagan, 1954) after the completion of each lesson in the negotiated physical education unit. Following Hastie and Curtner-Smith (2006), they were asked to write about

One thing that happened during today’s lesson that you found important. It may have been important because it made you excited, made you bored, made you worried, or because it was something you learned that was really new. When you have described what happened, try to explain why it was important.

Reflective journal. The entries to the reflective journal Jennifer was asked to keep as part of the PNTP served as a final data source for the study.

Data Analysis

The first phase of analysis involved identifying data that indicated (a) what the process of negotiation involved in terms of Jennifer’s and the students’ thoughts, actions, and interactions; (b) how negotiating the curriculum influenced the students and Jennifer; and (c) which components of the PNTP helped and hindered Jennifer’s ability to successfully negotiate the physical education curriculum with her students. The standard interpretive techniques of analytic induction and constant comparison (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) were used to code and categorize these three data sets. These codes and categories were related to constructs, ideas, and broad principles drawn from the theoretical perspectives driving the study and previous literature concerned with purposefully negotiating the curriculum. The final phase of analysis involved collapsing smaller categories into overarching themes. Credibility and trustworthiness were established through triangulating with data from different sources, a search for negative and discrepant cases, and member checking (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).
Results and Discussion

Process of Negotiation

**Content.** The unit that the students and Jennifer negotiated is shown in Table 6. It was a hybrid unit designed to improve motor skills and health. During lessons 1 to 3, the unit was focused on enhancing manipulative skills through “sling-shot golf.” In the next three lessons, the focus shifted to promoting health through participation in “cross-fit circuits.” In lessons 7 through 9, students participated in practices and small-sided games within the sport of Ultimate Frisbee. Within lessons 10 through 12, the students engaged in “Pound Fit,” while in Lessons 13 through 15 they participated in “recreational games.” Finally, in the last three lessons the students engaged in student-designed “fitness relay circuits and obstacle courses.” Also as indicated in Table 6, the evaluation system the students and Jennifer came up with consisted of multiple forms of student- and teacher-directed assessments. These included peer, self, cognitive, performance, and health-related assessments.

**Negotiation strategies.** Jennifer initiated and maintained the negotiated unit by employing four formal and planned strategies. These were discussing the “rules of engagement” and whole group, small group, and individualized discussions of objectives, content, and evaluation.

Discussing the rules for engagement occurred in lesson 1. It involved a whole class discussion on the field about the characteristics of “good and bad negotiators,” and “effective collaborators.” As illustrated in the data extract below, following this initial discussion, Jennifer had considerable reservations as to the students’ ability to negotiate and collaborate:

I am concerned this unit is going to be a challenge with this group because some have struggled in the past to get along and stay on the same page. From our class discussion this morning, I can also see that their interests are varied and we may have a difficult time agreeing on activities for the unit. However, there are some students that I know will
Table 6

The Unit Negotiated by Jennifer and her Students

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Lesson #</th>
<th>Activities/Content/Assessment</th>
<th>Lesson Objectives</th>
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| 1-3      | • Rules of negotiation  
• Whole group discussion  
• Sling shot golf skills and mini courses  
• Small group discussions  
• Student facilitated peer assessment | • Enhance competency in a variety of motor and manipulative skills |
| 4-6      | • Whole group discussion  
• Cross fit stations and circuits  
• Small group discussions  
• Student designed cognitive assessment | • Demonstrates skills to maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness |
| 7-9      | • Whole group discussion  
• Ultimate Frisbee skills and small-sided games  
• Individualized discussions  
• Small group discussions  
• Student designed performance-based rubric | • Enhance competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns |
| 10-12    | • Whole group discussion  
• Pound fit skills and routines  
• Individualized discussions  
• Small group discussions  
• Performance checklist | • Enhance rhythmic activity and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness |
| 13-15    | • Whole group discussion  
• Recreational games  
• Small group discussions  
• No assessment | • Exhibits personal and social respect for self and others; and recognizes the value of physical activity for health and lifetime enjoyment |
| 16-18    | • Whole group discussion  
• Team fitness relay circuits & student designed obstacle courses  
• Obstacle course presentations  
• Individualized discussions  
• Small group discussions  
• Heart-rate assessments | • Exhibits personal and social respect for self and others; and demonstrates skills to maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness |
serve as leaders and rise to the occasion, so perhaps I can utilize these students to move
the group forward when we hit some bumps along the road. (Jennifer, formal interview
2)

Having arrived at this realization, Jennifer went on to explain that the students were going to
embark on a “new and exciting way to participate in PE” and “make decisions about what you
are learning.” In addition, she suggested that they should proceed using a framework that
involved selecting activities that were “age-appropriate,” and engaging, “inclusive” and focused
on lesson objectives that “met state and local requirements.” Although slightly perplexed by
being given this new freedom, the students agreed that Jennifer’s overarching plan appeared
sound.

Jennifer: How do you all feel about being able to make some decisions in our class?
Maritza (student): I think we can do it as long as we try to get along.
Jennifer: Remember the expectation of meeting our classroom objectives still stands and
we will talk about different ways to negotiate and make sure everyone is able to give
input.
Zoe (student): Sounds exciting; it’s nice to have choices. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Whole group discussions typically took place at the start of each new activity in the
fitness room. They involved Jennifer probing and leading the students with a series of questions
designed to produce consensus on broad objectives, content, and evaluation.

Jennifer: As we move to this set of lessons our focus will be to improve our motor and
manipulative skill levels.
Markeith (student): What? What’s that mean?
Jennifer: We need to select an activity that will reinforce this lesson objective.
Markeith (student): But what does motor and … what did you say … manipulation mean?
Jennifer: Manipulative skills, not manipulation. Motor skills deal with movement
activities while using our bodies (i.e., walking, running, dodging, fleeing) and
manipulative skills involve your ability to control an object through throwing, catching,
or striking. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Small group discussions took place throughout an activity at the ends of classes. Their
focus was on coming up with more detailed and specific content and assessment methods as well
as evaluating the success of the unit to date. Small groups were typically comprised of two to
five girls and boys and were chosen by the students. Small group discussions were initiated by Jennifer posing one question and then completed by the students coming up with multiple answers.

Jennifer: What did you think of today’s lesson?
Connie (student): I liked it. I love to dance.
Davis (student): That ain’t dancin’, but it was fun.
Jennifer: Overall, do you think we met our learning objectives?
Connie (student): Yes, and we had so much fun doing it. Even the boys.
Davis (student): Yeah, it was cool to show that we have rhythm. (Field notes, lesson 10)

Informal individualized student discussions also took place throughout the unit. Jennifer initiated them if she detected students were becoming disengaged. She also encouraged students to initiate them if they had concerns, issues, or ideas.

When we were playing Frisbee, some of the kids made fun of me because I’m not very good. I have never really liked PE. Mainly because other kids don’t see me as athletic. I do good in school and I guess that’s what they [i.e., her peers] think I’m all about. No one would pass to me and I didn’t feel like they even wanted me to play so I just wanted to sit out. My teacher was really nice and she came over to talk to me and make me feel better. (Amy, critical incident report, lesson 8)

**Negotiation tactics.** Jennifer employed three less formal and spontaneous or reactionary negotiation tactics during the course of the unit. These were conflict resolution, interference, and vetoing. Sometimes she used these tactics positively and at other times negatively.

Conflict resolution was always used positively. It involved Jennifer requiring the students to “talk things out” when they had a disagreement.

During the Pound Fit routine, there are several arguments as to what is and is not “appropriate” dance. Jennifer intervenes with one pair of arguing students (Shanya and Jordan) by taking them to the side of the gym and asking them to “calm down,” and “air their concerns.” The strategy is successful and the girls are quickly back with the rest of the class and engaged. (Field notes, lesson 12)

Interference and vetoing were usually used less positively. The former involved Jennifer imposing changes on student plans, which were not necessary and irritated them. The latter
involved Jennifer putting a stop to student plans altogether, often when she thought they were incompatible with the “standards” and “objectives” of the state and local curriculum guides which drove her usual work.

Chanita and I were having so much fun with pound [Pound Fit] today. Well, until the teacher [Jennifer] shut it down because she says we were being too dirty. That was not cool of her. We dance like this all the time. I don’t feel there was nothin’ wrong with it. I thought we got to make decisions, guess not. (Jade, critical incident report, lesson 12)

Jennifer: Could your group please tell me what tactics you are working on?
Aaron (student): Um, well … we are, um ….
Carrie (student): Boy, you so stupid. She [Jennifer] ain’t dumb. They just wanted to play the game and do nothin’ with the tactics. I tried to tell them you’d come over here.
Jennifer: Well, unfortunately for you, we are going to modify this activity now. You’ve lost your game time and will only work on tactics now. (Field notes, lesson 8)

As well as engaging in the formal and planned negotiating strategies that Jennifer initiated, the students also employed some spontaneous and reactionary negotiating tactics of their own. These included “requesting modifications nicely,” “arguing” with Jennifer, and “refusing to take part.”

**Influence of the Negotiated Unit on the Students and Jennifer**

*Misunderstandings.* At the beginning of the unit, the students were excited and inquisitive about what was going to occur in the name of physical education in their next 18 lessons. They also misunderstood Jennifer’s intention, believing that the unit would be non-instructional, that they would make all the decisions, and that the key decision was to decide what sport they were going to “play.”

Terrance looks at Ronnie and begins to smirk. Then states, “You know what this means don’t you?” Ronnie, looking confused replies, “No, what?” Terrance says, “We get to do whatever we want in class. We can play basketball everyday!” Terrance and Ronnie begin to smile and high five one another. (Field notes, lesson 1)

Male dominance and female subservience. In congruence with other research on mixed-gender physical education classes (Fisette, 2010a; Oliver & Oesterreich, 2013; Parker & Curtner-
Smith, 2012), early in the unit the majority of the girls were hesitant to get involved in the negotiation process because they viewed some boys’ aggressive, dominant behavior as a hindrance to effective negotiation.

I don’t want to negotiate. The boys never listen to us [i.e., girls]. It is always like this. They do what they want. They don’t care about our feelings. No way.” (Jana, critical incident report, lesson 2)

Furthermore, less able and physically smaller boys acted in the same way.

They [i.e., dominant boys] always try to control everything. They think they are the best and know everything. They never listen to anyone but their friends. It is hard to negotiate the curriculum when they won’t listen to other suggestions. (Chase, critical incident report, lesson 1)

Able boys also dominated the content portions of lessons and tended to take prime roles and space leaving the girls and less able boys on the fringes of the action.

**Female fightback.** By lesson 5, however, encouraged by the opportunity to negotiate and beginning to understand the mechanics of the unit, five of the more moderately skilled girls became more assertive. First, they questioned the boys’ right to dominate. Second, they declared their right to negotiate content in which they were interested and in which they could participate.

We get to decide what we want to learn and we can make the class fun. (Shayne, informal interview, lesson 5)

It will be fun, maybe we can try new things and the teacher could see what we like doing. (Tara, informal interview, lesson 5)

Between lessons 13 and 15, low and moderately skilled girls and boys gradually joined the ranks of the breakaway girls’ group until they outnumbered the dominant boys significantly. During this time, this new group came up with their own alternative content by designing their own recreational games that was “exciting” and which they “loved.”
Today was so much fun. I loved playing box ball. I hope that we can play it again soon (Allison, critical incident report, lesson 13).

The activity today rocked. Everyone was having fun, even Rico. This just goes to show them [i.e., highly skilled boys] that if they would just try, we could all have fun. (Jamel, critical incident report, lesson 13).

The initial reaction of the dominant boys’ group to this threat to their control was to participate in their own conventional sporting content (primarily basketball) and to ridicule both the process of negotiation (“this totally sucks”) and the quieter and less able boys and any of the girls.

Jose (highly skilled boy) makes snide remarks aimed at Demetrius and Marcus. He states, “That’s so gay” and “you’re such a fag” when they participate with the girls. Jennifer appears to miss this and does not address or correct his behavior. (Field notes, lesson 7)

By the end of the unit, however, all but the most hard-core able boys were prepared to join with the breakaway girls in the negotiation process and engage in the content they were designing.

Working with girls isn’t so bad, I guess. The negotiated unit has taught me to listen more. Especially if a girl be talking. Before this unit, I didn’t care much about what they had to say. Now, I can see where they are coming from. It can be fun to play with girls and work together. (Robert, focus group interview)

This change of fortune, together with the success of their own negotiations with Jennifer, led to the majority of less able girls and boys indicating that their physical education experience had improved dramatically.

I feel so confident in giving my opinion now. This unit has really helped me learning how to work with others, especially if they aren’t my friends. You know, like in my circle. (Linda, focus group interview)

I talk so much more in my other classes now. I think my teachers are shocked. I used to be so shy and not say much. Now I always give my opinion. Even if I don’t know the answer. (Connie, focus group interview)
Fear of losing control. Jennifer was evidently a highly skilled employer of democratic pedagogies, considered herself an “innovative teacher,” and prided herself on her ability to manage her students. Not surprisingly, she had some concerns about “losing control” at the beginning of the unit. Moreover, in congruence with other teachers in past research (Cook-Sather, 2002, 2006b), she underestimated the ability of the students in her class to engage in the negotiation process successfully.

I do not see how this [i.e., the negotiated unit] is going to work. They [i.e., the students] are not mature enough to make their own decisions about learning. They are just too narrow in their thinking and will only want to do the things they are interested in, which is basketball. They can’t meet all of the state learning objectives by only playing basketball. (Jennifer, formal interview 1)

Insecure with indirect teaching. Although Jennifer was encouraged when she realized that she did not have to “give up” all the decision-making power to her students, throughout the unit she indicated that she was still trying to discover what her role was in the negotiation process.

It has been hard for me as the teacher to release control of the unit to my students. I am having a really hard time understanding how I fit in to this process. I do not want to disrupt the study by hindering student’s abilities to negotiate the curriculum, yet I am concerned that I am too disengaged. (Jennifer, reflective journal, entry 11).

Oh my, I’m having such a hard time with this. It’s just not working for me. The students are not listening to me or doing what I want them to. (Jennifer, informal interview, lesson 12).

Constrained by a focus on standards and benchmarks. Since Jennifer was a dedicated professional, understandably in the climate in which she worked, she was focused on achieving the goals of the curriculum according to official “standards and benchmarks.”

I need to be clear as I embark on this teaching journey, that my main goal is to consistently teach state and local standards. As a teacher, I am evaluated based on my students’ acquisition of the standards; therefore, I need to make sure that students are ready to do well on the district mandated benchmark assessments. I know that research aims to find best practices for the classroom, but I need to find a good balance between
this teaching model and what I already know works well with my students. (Jennifer, formal interview 2)

These standards and benchmarks were mostly traditional and performance- and health-based and rarely included the kind of affective goals negotiated curricula are designed to realize.

Consequently, Jennifer was very concerned about the “lack of order” and “structure to [her] classroom.” She was “also not certain if students [would] select activities that [would] lend themselves to high levels of rigor and achievement.”

I am still sorting out in my head how this is going to work. There is a group of boys that thinks that negotiating the curriculum means they can do whatever they want. I don’t think that they understand that there are multiple standards to cover and that PE is not just about sports. It has been very challenging to shift their thinking and see the bigger picture. (Jennifer, reflective journal, entry 13)

This focus on traditional performance- and health-based benchmarks and standards meant that for the majority of the unit Jennifer missed the success her students were having in terms of getting along together, learning how to negotiate, creating a more relevant experience, seeing each other’s points of view, and enjoying their physical education. By the end of the unit, however, although far from convinced, there was a suggestion that she was beginning to expand her views on the multiple ways “achievement” and “learning” could occur.

I’m still not sure how I feel about negotiating the curriculum. This is not what I thought it would be like. Although the students did okay with it, I still believe they were not ready to do this. They really had a hard time in the beginning of the unit and it took away from their learning when they could have been actively engaged in a movement activity. (Jennifer, formal interview 3)

Helpful and Hindering PNTP Components

Despite some of her skepticism about the whole idea of negotiating the curriculum, when asked about the effectiveness of the training she received, Jennifer was, in general fairly complimentary.

The training program at the beginning of the unit was effective in that it provided me with the necessary background information about negotiating the curriculum. Having
some understanding of the theory behind negotiating the curriculum and its overarching goal heightened my interest and willingness to implement it in my classroom. It was a good way to dive into the teaching unit. (Jennifer, formal interview 3)

**Helpful components.** When pressed to select key components of the training program which she found most useful, Jennifer was quick to state that “the modeling of the negotiation process [gave her] a clear sense of how [she could] manage and guide discussions with students.” In addition, she believed that role-playing had been helpful because it “allows me to have a better understanding of how students may feel in a role that may be foreign to them.” Finally, she stressed the importance of the “ongoing support,” she received.

Through the ongoing support I was able to remain empowered to follow the proposed structure of a negotiated unit with fidelity. It was helpful to have someone to bounce ideas off of or talk things through with when I was uncertain about the process or how to handle ineffective negotiation situations. (Jennifer, formal interview 3)

**Hindering components.** Jennifer also noted that some of the components of the PNTP were unhelpful. She believed the film illustrating negotiations was unhelpful because it “did not engage the participants” in the PNTP. She was also somewhat critical of the articles she was asked to read:

The articles presented today gave great background information about the theory of the negotiated curriculum and really helped me see why for some students negotiation skills are essential in their engagement in the classroom. I have a grasp on the how and why some students may be ostracized in the physical education classroom and how it is my responsibility as a teacher to make sure this doesn’t happen. Yet, I wish other articles could have been presented that more precisely apply to my type of classroom, grade level, and teaching experience. That would have been more helpful. (Jennifer, formal interview 2)

**Summary and Conclusions**

The main conclusion to be drawn from this study is that the unit taught by Jennifer was mostly successful as was the training she received. The students and Jennifer learned how to negotiate. Most of the students did, indeed, gain a voice, were empowered, became more
confident, learned to work together, and were able to think constructively about their own physical education. Moreover, less skilled boys and girls became reconnected with the physical education curriculum and many of the more skilled boys became reconnected with their less skilled peers.

The irony was that, although she was an excellent and dedicated teacher, Jennifer failed to recognize the extent of her success. Her socialization into modern thinking regarding the goals and objectives of physical education and their narrow focus on skilled performance and participation in health-enhancing physical activity, blinded her, somewhat, to the fact that she was actually realizing all kinds of other affective goals. This finding suggests that future training in this kind of pedagogy, at both the pre-service and in-service levels, include a critical analysis of the subject’s focus and the unpacking of what are taken-for-granted key objectives. Moreover, it is worth re-emphasizing the connection between affective goals and those of a more physical nature. Specifically, students are more likely to engage in health-enhancing physical activity and skill performance if they find the outlets for engaging in the kind of activities that are personally meaningful.

Obviously, we need more research to ascertain the degree to which negotiating the curriculum and the training of teachers to deliver this kind of instruction is effective in different contexts. In addition, future studies that examine the extent to which the affective skills acquired transfer to other aspects of the lives of children and youth would be helpful. Given the suggestion that they are likely to have limited opportunities to engage in negotiation in general (Brooker & Macdonald, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sheets, 1995), work carried out with minority children and youth in this area could be especially enlightening.
References


Cothran, D. J. (2013). "And I hope you see things that startle you": What students can teach us about physical education. *Kinesiology Review, 2*(1), 76-80.


APPENDIX A

IRB Approval
December 19, 2014

Tasha Guadalupe
Dept. of Kinesiology
College of Education
Box 870312

Re: IRB # 14-OR-435, “Effects of Purposefully Negotiating the Physical Education Curriculum on One Teacher and a Middle School Minority Class (Girls, Boys, Mixed-Gender)”

Dear Ms. Guadalupe:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on December 18, 2015. If your research will continue beyond this date, please complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, please complete the Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent and assent forms.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Director & Research Compliance Officer
Teacher Permission Form

I, __________________________, agree to participate in a research study titled, “Negotiating the Physical Education Curriculum with One Teacher and Classroom of Students”. This research is being conducted by Mrs. Tasha Guadalupe, a graduate student from the Kinesiology Department at the University of Alabama. My participation in this study is voluntary and I may refuse to take part without penalty. I may ask to have all of my personal information returned to me or destroyed.

➢ This study is being conducted to find out how seventh grade students respond to negotiating the physical education curriculum with a physical education teacher.

➢ The researcher hopes to learn how negotiating the physical education curriculum may engage students. Class sessions will be video-recorded.

➢ If I choose to participate, I will be asked to take part in a two-day purposeful negotiation-training program (PNTP) workshop prior to teaching the purposefully negotiated unit.

➢ Strategies that will be used with teachers during the PNTP are mainly extrapolated from the recommendations made for teacher development provided by Joyce and Showers (1982). These include studying the theory behind and discussing the structure of purposeful negotiation, reading articles about purposeful negotiation in physical education and other academic subjects, watching film of purposeful negotiation, author modeling of purposeful negotiation, and role-playing purposeful negotiating.

➢ During the subsequent teaching of the purposefully negotiated unit, teachers will be asked to reflect on their ability to negotiate the physical education curriculum effectively by writing entries in a reflective journal following each lesson and participating in stimulated recall interviews during which they will watch film of their teaching and describe the thought processes behind specific actions.

➢ Teachers will be asked to engage in peer coaching by observing each other’s teaching and to provide feedback to each other.

➢ Following the PNTP, teachers will develop an 18-lesson unit plan.

➢ Teachers in the PNTP will be encouraged to engage in reflective coaching conversations with students and employ a variety of indirect, productive, problem solving teaching styles where students make most or many of the decisions.

➢ The researcher will answer any questions you may have about the research. I may be reached by telephone (770-441-5002) or email (tashaguadalupe@yahoo.com). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Matt Curtner-Smith, at 205-348-9209 or msmith@bamaed.ua.edu.

➢ I understand the process of this study. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.
Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Name of Teacher

Signature

Date

☐ Yes, I consent to being video and audio recorded during the research and interview sessions

☐ No, I do not consent to being video and audio recorded during the research and interview sessions

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher

If you have questions or complaints about your rights as a research participant, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make a suggestion, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach Website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12-19-14
EXPIRATION DATE: 12-19-15
Parent Permission Form

I agree to allow my child, ____________________________, to participate in a research study titled, “Negotiating the Physical Education Curriculum with One Teacher and Classroom of Students”. The research is being conducted by Mrs. Tasha Guadalupe, a graduate student from the Kinesiology Department at the University of Alabama. My child’s participation in this study is voluntary and I do not have to allow my child to participate in this study. My child can refuse to participate in this study if she/he decides they no longer want to without being penalized. I can ask to have all of my child’s information returned to me or destroyed.

➢ This study is being conducted to find out how seventh grade students respond to negotiating the physical education curriculum with a physical education teacher.

➢ Students who take part in this study may show higher participation levels in the physical education class. The researcher hopes to learn how negotiating the physical education curriculum may engage students. Class sessions will be video-recorded.

➢ If I allow my child to participate, my child will be asked questions about their experience in negotiating the physical education curriculum, how they think and feel about their participation in physical education, what types of activities are more interesting, how negotiating the curriculum made them feel about physical education, how negotiating the curriculum gave them a voice, and what parts of the unit they enjoyed most.

➢ The researcher will ask my child to participate in audio-recorded focus group interviews, approximately lasting one hour in length, at least twice during the eighteen-lesson unit, and complete written critical incident reports daily after each lesson. This activity will take place during school and will not conflict with academic courses. If I do not want my child to participate, she/he will be allowed to go to class as usual.

➢ This research is not expected to cause any harm. My child may stop at any time. My child’s grade will not be affected if my child decides not to participate and she/he will not receive any consequences.

➢ Any personal information collected about my child will be kept private unless otherwise required by law. All data will be kept in a secure location.

➢ The researcher will answer any questions you may have about the research. I may be reached by telephone (770-441-5002) or email (tashaguadalupe@yahoo.com). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Matt Curtner-Smith, at 205-348-9209 or msmit@bamaed.ua.edu.

➢ I understand the process of this study. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12/1/14
EXPIRATION DATE: 12/18/15
Name of Researcher ____________________________________________
Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Name of Parent ____________________________________________
Signature ___________________________ Date __________

☐ Yes, I consent to allowing my child to be video and audio recorded during research and focus group sessions

☐ No, I do not consent to allowing my child to be video and audio recorded during research and focus group sessions

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher

If you have questions or complaints about your rights as a research participant, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make a suggestion, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach Website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12-19-14
EXPIRATION DATE: 12-18-15
Child Assent Form

We were wondering if you would like to help us with a research project. We are looking to negotiate the physical education curriculum with one teacher and a class of students. We will ask you questions about your experience while negotiating the curriculum. We want you to be as honest as possible during this process as long as you are comfortable doing so.

If you choose to help us with this project, your answers to questions and critical incident reports will be kept private. However, if you or another child are in danger of being hurt or a judge asks me for this information, I may not be able to keep this private. I would only be sharing this information to keep you or other children safe. You will have the right to stop participation, or not answer my questions, at any time that you decide you do not want to participate.

Do you have any questions or concerns about being involved in this research project? Would you be willing to participate in our research project?

_____ I give permission for the interviews and class lessons to be videotaped and/or audio recorded.

_____ I do not give my permission for the interviews and class lessons to be videotaped and/or audio recorded.

________________________________________  ________________
Child’s Signature (when age appropriate)    Date

________________________________________  ________________
Principal Investigator Signature          Date

UA IRB Approved Document
Approval date: 12-17-14
Expiration date: 12-18-15

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APPENDIX B

Teacher Permission Form
Teacher Permission Form

I, ________________________, agree to participate in a research study titled, “Negotiating the Physical Education Curriculum with One Teacher and Classroom of Students”. This research is being conducted by Mrs. Tasha Guadalupe, a graduate student from the Kinesiology Department at the University of Alabama. My participation in this study is voluntary and I may refuse to take part without penalty. I may ask to have all of my personal information returned to me or destroyed.

- This study is being conducted to find out how seventh grade students respond to negotiating the physical education curriculum with a physical education teacher.
- The researcher hopes to learn how negotiating the physical education curriculum may engage students. Class sessions will be video-recorded.
- If I choose to participate, I will be asked to take part in a two-day purposeful negotiation-training program (PNTP) workshop prior to teaching the purposefully negotiated unit.
- Strategies that will be used with teachers during the PNTP are mainly extrapolated from the recommendations made for teacher development provided by Joyce and Showers (1982). These include studying the theory behind and discussing the structure of purposeful negotiation, reading articles about purposeful negotiation in physical education and other academic subjects, watching film of purposeful negotiation, author modeling of purposeful negotiation, and role-playing purposeful negotiating.
- During the subsequent teaching of the purposefully negotiated unit, teachers will be asked to reflect on their ability to negotiate the physical education curriculum effectively by writing entries in a reflective journal following each lesson and participating in stimulated recall interviews during which they will watch film of their teaching and describe the thought processes behind specific actions.
- Teachers will be asked to engage in peer coaching by observing each other’s teaching and to provide feedback to each other.
- Following the PNTP, teachers will develop an 18-lesson unit plan.
- Teachers in the PNTP will be encouraged to engage in reflective coaching conversations with students and employ a variety of indirect, productive, problem solving teaching styles where students make most or many of the decisions.
- The researcher will answer any questions you may have about the research. I may be reached by telephone (770-441-5002) or email (tashaguadalupe@yahoo.com). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Matt Curtner-Smith, at 205-348-9209 or msmith@bamaed.ua.edu.
- I understand the process of this study. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.
☐ Yes, I consent to being video and audio recorded during the research and interview sessions

☐ No, I do not consent to being video and audio recorded during the research and interview sessions
APPENDIX C

Announcement to Students
Dear Students,

My name is Tasha Guadalupe, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Alabama. I am interested in exploring how negotiating the physical education curriculum with one teacher and a classroom of students can impact student voice and engagement levels in physical education. I would like to request your participation in this study to see how your voice and experiences could impact the physical education setting.

Your participation in this study would include two 50 minute focus group interview sessions in which you will be part of a small group of 5-6 students, and written critical incident reports at the end of each lesson. In the focus group, we will talk about your experiences in physical education and how having student voice and negotiating the curriculum could impact or transform the physical education experience for students. These sessions will take place during the regular school day and I will be present during the sessions.

In addition, I would like to videotape and audio record both focus group interviews. The video, audio recordings and data transcription will only be utilized by the investigators of the study and will be destroyed upon the completion of the study.

Participation in this study is voluntary and presents no risk to you of any kind. Penalties are not attached to this study and you may choose to stop participation at any point during the study. Students will not be compensated for participation and likewise penalties will not be issued for non-participation.

If your child would like to take part in this study, please sign the student assent form and return it to your physical education teacher. If you have any questions or concerns, you may reach me at 770-639-7771.

Sincerely,

Tasha D. Guadalupe

University of Alabama Doctoral Candidate

Department of Kinesiology

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APPENDIX D

Child Assent Form
**Child Assent Form**

We were wondering if you would like to help us with a research project. We are looking to negotiate the physical education curriculum with one teacher and a class of students. We will ask you questions about your experience while negotiating the curriculum. We want you to be as honest as possible during this process as long as you are comfortable doing so.

If you choose to help us with this project, your answers to questions and critical incident reports will be kept private. However, if you or another child are in danger of being hurt or a judge asks me for this information, I may not be able to keep this private. I would only be sharing this information to keep you or other children safe. You will have the right to stop participation, or not answer my questions, at any time that you decide you do not want to participate.

Do you have any questions or concerns about being involved in this research project? Would you be willing to participate in our research project?

_______ I give permission for the interviews and class lessons to be videotaped and/or audio recorded.

_______ I do not give my permission for the interviews and class lessons to be videotaped and/or audio recorded.

_________________________________         ______________
Child’s Signature (when age appropriate)       Date

_________________________________  ______________
Principal Investigator Signature             Date
APPENDIX E

Announcement to Parents
Dear Parents,

My name is Tasha Guadalupe, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Alabama. I am interested in learning how negotiating the physical education curriculum with one teacher and a classroom of students could help build student voice and engagement levels in physical education. I would like to request your child’s participation in this study.

Your child’s participation would include two 60-minute focus group interview sessions. Your child will be part of a small group of students that will write critical incident reports at the end of each lesson. In the focus group, we will talk about your child’s experiences in physical education and how having student voice and negotiating the curriculum could help or change the physical education experience. These sessions will take place during the regular school day and I will be present during all sessions.

In addition, I would like to video and audio record both focus group interviews and class lessons. The video, audio recordings and data transcription will only be used by myself and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Participation in this study is voluntary and presents no risk of any kind to your child. Penalties are not attached to this study and your child may choose to stop participation at any point during the study. Students will not be compensated for participation and penalties will not be issued for non-participation.

If your child would like to take part in this study, please sign the parent permission form and return it to your child’s physical education teacher. If you have any questions or concerns, you may reach me at 770-639-7771.

Sincerely,

Tasha D. Guadalupe

University of Alabama Doctoral Candidate

Department of Kinesiology
APPENDIX F

Parental Permission Form
I agree to allow my child, ______________________, to participate in a research study titled, “Negotiating the Physical Education Curriculum with One Teacher and Classroom of Students”. The research is being conducted by Mrs. Tasha Guadalupe, a graduate student from the Kinesiology Department at the University of Alabama. My child’s participation in this study is voluntary and I do not have to allow my child to participate in this study. My child can refuse to participate in this study if she/he decides they no longer want to without being penalized. I can ask to have all of my child’s information returned to me or destroyed.

- This study is being conducted to find out how seventh grade students respond to negotiating the physical education curriculum with a physical education teacher.

- Students who take part in this study may show higher participation levels in the physical education class. The researcher hopes to learn how negotiating the physical education curriculum may engage students. Class sessions will be video-recorded.

- If I allow my child to participate, my child will be asked questions about their experience in negotiating the physical education curriculum, how they think and feel about their participation in physical education, what types of activities are more interesting, how negotiating the curriculum made them feel about physical education, how negotiating the curriculum gave them a voice, and what parts of the unit they enjoyed most.

- The researcher will ask my child to participate in audio-recorded focus group interviews, approximately lasting one hour in length, at least twice during the eighteen-lesson unit, and complete written critical incident reports daily after each lesson. This activity will take place during school and will not conflict with academic courses. If I do not want my child to participate, she/he will be allowed to go to class as usual.

- This research is not expected to cause any harm. My child may stop at any time. My child’s grade will not be affected if my child decides not to participate and she/he will not receive any consequences.

- Any personal information collected about my child will be kept private unless otherwise required by law. All data will be kept in a secure location.

- The researcher will answer any questions you may have about the research. I may be reached by telephone (770-441-5002) or email (tashaguadalupe@yahoo.com). You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Matt Curtner-Smith, at 205-348-9209 or msmith@bamaed.ua.edu.

- I understand the process of this study. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Researcher</th>
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<td>Name of Parent</td>
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☐ Yes, I consent to allowing my child to be video and audio recorded during research and focus group sessions

☐ No, I do not consent to allowing my child to be video and audio recorded during research and focus group sessions
APPENDIX G

Individual Teacher Interview—Pedagogy and Beliefs
The purpose of this interview is to explore teachers’ perceptions regarding their pedagogical beliefs and values and the experiences that shaped those beliefs.

The Primary Investigator will ask questions to guide the discussion using multiple prompts:

1. How has your socialization shaped your beliefs and values as a teacher?
2. How do your previous experiences shape your ability to negotiate the curriculum?
3. Have you had previous experience as a teacher in negotiating the physical education curriculum?
4. How does being able to engage with your students about what they want to learn and how they want to learn make you feel?
5. How do you feel about the activities you co-developed with students?
6. How does negotiating the curriculum enhance your teaching strategies?
7. Looking back on your experience, how would you change the strategies that were employed with negotiating the curriculum?
8. Do you think negotiating the curriculum had an impact on how you instructed or developed the activities?
9. Is there anything else you would like to share about this experience?
APPENDIX H

Individual Teacher Interview—Perceptions of the PNTP
The purpose of this interview is to explore teacher's perceptions of the Purposeful Negotiated Training Program (PNTP) and their readiness to teach the negotiated physical education unit.

The Primary Investigator will asks questions to guide the discussion using multiple prompts:

1. In what ways was the PNTP effective in preparing you for the development of purposefully negotiating the curriculum unit?
2. Have you made any shifts in your beliefs and values about your role as a physical education teacher?
3. Which changes did you note in your planning and execution of the curriculum?
4. Which aspects of the PNTP did you feel were challenging to understand or accept as effective teaching practices?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share about this experience?
APPENDIX I

Individual Teacher Interviews—Experiences and Perceptions
The purpose of this interview is to explore the teacher's experiences within and perceptions about the negotiated physical education unit.

The Primary Investigator will asks questions to guide the discussion using multiple prompts:

1. How would you characterize your experience with negotiating the curriculum?
2. How has negotiating the curriculum with students changed the dynamics of your classroom?
3. Have you noted any changes with student engagement levels?
4. Which aspects negotiating the curriculum do you think had the most impact on you as an educator?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share about this experience?
6. Which aspects of negotiating the curriculum did you find to be most impactful?
APPENDIX J

Focus Group Interviews
The purpose of the focus group interview is to explore students’ perceptions regarding negotiating the curriculum with one teacher in the physical education class.

The Primary Investigator will asks questions to guide the discussion using multiple prompts:

1. Have you had previous experience negotiating curriculum?
2. How does being able to talk to your teacher about what you want to learn and how you want to learn it make you feel?
3. How do you feel about the activities you have participated in?
4. What are some things you like about negotiating the curriculum?
5. What are some things that you don’t like about negotiating the curriculum?
6. How do you feel about being a class made up of only girls/boys?
7. Do you think negotiating the curriculum impacted how you participated in the activities?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share about this experience?