

Urban Physical Education Teachers'  
Ideas and Perspectives on Curriculum

by

Robert Schmidlein

(Under the direction of Rose Chepyator-Thomson)

ABSTRACT

What do U.S. urban teachers in physical education do to address challenges in curriculum implementation? The purpose of this study was to examine urban physical education teachers' ideas and perspectives on curriculum implementation in inner-city public high schools. Ten urban physical educators were interviewed. They included seven males and three females, and among them were three African Americans, four Caucasians, two Latinos and one Asian, with teaching experiences ranging from five to 20 years. The data collection methods included interviews and artifact collection. Theme-by-theme analysis (Van Manen, 1990) methods were used to analyze the data. The results of the study indicated the participants to: (a) follow district curriculum at their discretion, (b) use health-related fitness and diverse curricula units, (c) employ behavior and social responsibility affective goals in their daily lessons, (d) value multicultural education, despite lack of content knowledge either from teacher training or professional development, (e) lack equipment and to have poor facilities and

large class sizes. Implications include multicultural training, relevant pedagogy, and more funding.

Index Words: Urban physical education curriculum, Physical education programs, Multicultural physical education, Physical best, Inner-city physical education.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and all of my friends.

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## **Chapter 1**

### ***Introduction***

The demographics of the United States have changed throughout history and nowhere is this more apparent than in urban areas (Chepyator-Thomson, Unpublished Works, 2006). Cities started as trading posts for merchants to conduct business and they provided ports for international commerce exchanges, which fueled development and continuation of business growth and population expansion long after the boom of the industrial revolution. Indeed as time continued into the late 1800's, U.S. cities became a haven for worldwide immigrants and rural-urban and south-north migrant, with people moving and searching for greener pastures. The migrations toward northern cities included former slaves (Zinn, 2005). Driving the northward influx of people were work opportunities, allowing people to make money, which was why citizens and foreigners alike opted to come and live in major U.S. cities, such as, New York, Boston and Chicago (Blake, 2006).

Due to both rural-urban and international migrations, metropolises continued to undergo metamorphosis from the 1900's to the present time (Zinn, 2005). The increase in urban population drove the need for new voluminous public resources, for public education (Blake, 2006; Gabaccia & Ruiz, 2006). The influx of diverse population in urban areas fostered the need

for educational creativity that would bring people of diverse backgrounds together, for business innovations that would bring about jobs to absorb increased needs of the population, and for more resourceful ways to meet increased expenditure for public education. Given the massive changes that happened in urban areas, practices of assimilation and requirements for competing in an emerging global economy made public education a place that needed to be continually adjusted to meet the needs of a diverse population (Francisco, 1996; Berger 1981).

### ***Changes in Urban Population***

#### ***South-North Migrations***

Following the conclusion of the Civil War, many freed slaves made their way north in search of a better life (Kopetz, 2006). These former slaves believed that the booming life of northern cities could offer more job opportunities than the rural farms of the South. Although job opportunities were perceived to exist following the courts decision on *Plessy versus Ferguson*, African Americans found themselves classified into a separate but equal situation in education and public life (Paccione, 2000). Moreover, not only did African Americans move from rural to urban areas, but also did many Whites (Zinn, 2005).

### ***Rural-Urban Migrants***

As farmlands remained destroyed from the Civil War, many farmers and country dwellers found themselves attempting to start their lives over in cities. Cities offered industrial jobs and affordable housing, making the move attractive to outsiders. More and more people continued to move from farms and country sides, to the cities, as the United States moved toward the great depression (Zinn, 2005). By the Dust Bowl of 1930-1939, nearly 500,000 Americans were homeless and this catastrophic event mushroomed a spike in urban populations (Hesse, 1997).

### ***International Immigrants***

A wave of immigrants, such as Italian and Irish, moved to the U.S. in the early 1900's. These immigrants brought with them customs and habits that became neighborhood specific, fueling dramatic differences in public schools (Cantor & Mayer, 1978). Moreover, the influx of such a wide variety of immigrants to cities called for a diverse curriculum that led to the creation of both trade schools and private schools. The face of public or common schools forever changed as each new era of immigration and migration moved forward.

### ***Evolution of Urban Schooling***

The urban schools developed mainly from the surrounding neighborhoods that resulted from south-north, rural-urban

migrations and international immigrants, making urban schools an outcome of changes within U.S. communities and villages, and also from outside international demographic changes.

Consequently the city demographic composition changed to consist of mostly ethnic 'minority people' (Kozol, 2005). The immigrants had to attend school, and by the great depression, each looked to the school as a way to improve the job opportunities opened to them when they completed schooling (Tyler, 1954). Urban schools attempted to assimilate immigrant students into the U.S. society, and an effective way to do this, particularly in the 1900's, was to have schools to teach basic skills (Berger, 1980). Increased social and educational needs allowed public schools to thrive in cities (Tyler, 1954).

When these immigrants started going to public schools, many of the Protestant White students left to go to private schools; thus, city school stratification began (Spring, 2001). Many researchers cite "White flight" as the cause in the change of population of urban schools because a large number of Caucasians moved to the suburbs. A staggering statistic is that 76.1% of urban schools are populated by 'minority' students whereas 87% of the teachers are White (Council of Greater City Schools, 1997). According to Kozol (2005) this number is going to continue nationally with each new generation. With the gap between Caucasians and 'minority' enlarging, the urban teachers'



responsibility will be to learn about diversity and culture as each year passes. In the near future, an influx of over one million 'Hispanic' immigrants a year are expected to move into this country, and this will have a drastic impact on the bilingual aspect of education, as well as on the need for educators to be able to speak Spanish in schools (Martin & Midgley, 1999).

The primary role of urban education was to assimilate immigrants to use U.S. English and to learn basic reading and writing skills in order to function effectively in the society (Spring, 2001). If urban schools were going to successfully educate non-English speaking populations of students, they would have to develop a comprehensive curriculum that focused on essential cultural ideas and beliefs of urban U.S. society (Fransico, 1996).

As these city departments of education grew, so did the bureaucracy, which governed policy and educational outcomes (Kantor, 2001). This monopoly, which added to the power that the board of education wielded, is thought to stifle teacher creativity and is often cited as responsible for students' poor academic achievement. Many researchers write that city schools are non-cognitive, reasoning that the focus of teaching is based on character education and life skills (Katz & Gurin, 1969). Outside of the power elite control of urban public education

departments, Johnathan Kozol (2005), in the New York Times best-seller book, *The Shame of a Nation*, sheds light on the plight of the urban schools' financial struggles. As the ethnic makeup of U.S. metropolises changed so did the needs for public resources. Tradition began to change in light of new legislation and many books and articles displaying the atrocities that have taken place in an unpleasant number of city schools were in circulation.

### ***Laws and Urban Students***

Enacted laws such as *No Child Left Behind*, *Brown versus the Board of Education* and *Title IX* each have contributed to changes that affects the make up of urban schools (Brown, 2003). Starting with *Brown versus the Board of Education*, city schools began to become desegregated, which provided equal schooling to both Black and White students. *Brown versus the Board of Education* was the cornerstone for the Civil Rights Movement; it allowed for the removal of educational injustices, starting at the national level. As schools became desegregated, many White families left cities for the suburbs, which lead to a large 'minority' city population remaining in urban schools. *Brown versus the Board* in turn led to laws like *Title IX*, which allowed equal funding for all programs receiving federal funding. The idea behind *Title IX* states that equal opportunities in education and money must to be equally spent

for men's and women's programs. This law led to the end of many all-male or all-female schools and programs. The newest such law created under the Bush administration is *No Child Left Behind*, which makes schools responsible for all of their students reaching a uniform educational level at each grade. The law was intended to create a standard-based curriculum for students, regardless of school type or grade level. Each new law adds to the issues that effect the teaching environment in urban schools. There are great possibilities that as administration changes, new laws will further incorporate diverse changes and target the quality of education in major cities in the United States.

### **Educational Resources and Urban Education**

Funding has been an issue in urban schools and can be loudly expressed in books such as *The Shame of a Nation* and *Pedagogy of the City*. The South Bronx is a primary example of lack of funds with figures like \$11,627 being spent on each pupil, where as, nearly 20 miles away in Manhasset they spend \$22,311 on each pupil (Kozol, 2005). Kozol reports that some of the teachers he spoke to reported having 40 students in a classroom with only 30 chairs, so these kids have to learn standing up. If you compare neighborhoods in New York City you can see that Greenwich Village schools only have a 20% population below the poverty line, as compared to some Bronx

neighborhoods that have 95% of the students living below the poverty line (Kozol, 2005). To shed light on the segregation in these schools, in some of the South Bronx schools of the 11,000 students enrolled only 26 were White. This means that the schools were 99.6% 'minority'! Overall, 26% of New York City School children are listed as White or Other while, 74% are considered Black or 'Hispanic' (Kozol, 2005). In many of these schools districts, prekindergarten was available for students starting at two years old, yet the price of these programs were around an extra \$6,000 a year for an 11-hour a day program. With over 90% of the students coming from poverty backgrounds, where would the extra money for prekindergarten come from? This often leads to the teachers opting to teach in the suburbs, and the city schools then have to employ uncertified teachers. Many educators and researchers alike blame the tax system, bureaucracy and thus the "cycle of poverty" leads to the financial hardships.

### **Educational Research and Social Justice**

Legislation and finance have led to power struggle issues in education. These power struggles have been examined under the lens of Social Justice Theory, which states that inequities in education can be altered through action and realization of patterns that are the basis for justice, seen as a societal responsibility (Rothman, 1978). Whether looking at different

schools' student composition, class issues, or college versus non-college tracks, researchers conducted a variety of studies in the area of inequity in education (Willis, 1977; MacLeod, 1995; Peshkin, 1987, 2001; Bettie, 2003). Research regarding socioeconomic status has yielded many findings that suggest U.S. schools have a disproportionate amount of funding (Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 1996; Peshkin, 2001; Kozol, 1991, 2005). Moreover, where these students end up at the conclusion of their high school careers have highlighted the need for reform in tracking and college preparation (Mehan, Hebard, & Villanueva, 1994). Finally, research on social justice in schooling, requires examinations of resistance and reproduction of social class (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985). This means that people born in on social class tend to stay part of that class for the rest of their lives. All of these issues directly effect the creation of a culturally responsive curriculum in urban schools (Grant & Sleeter, 1988).

### ***Curriculum in Schools***

Curriculum has a variety of definitions, theories, and approaches (Apple, 1995). Curriculum can be the complete educational experience of the student, a subject that the student studies, the product of education, the process of learning and praxis (action and reflection), or an arrangement based plan for training students (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997;

Grundy, 1989). Curriculum could consist of the entire phenomenon that takes place within the school walls, indicating various components that make it possible. These components include learning, teaching, assessment and the hidden curriculum, which all compose the school phenomenon. Curriculum is often divided into units and these can be seen as a specific group of lessons that are part of the curriculum. Curriculum is either state-based or it is left to the individual county, region, district or city.

Part of many schools' curricula is a physical education program. These physical education programs are influenced by many different parties. An example of this is national groups such as the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), which also helped to develop physical education curricula standards for many states (NASPE, 2004). An essential part of any curriculum is the set of standards and objectives that are associated with the subject. Once an individual has these standards and objectives, they can create an assessment tool which suits the individual needs of the student body.

An important aspect of designing and implementing curriculum is curricular knowledge. Curricular knowledge is defined as the ability to select and convey content-appropriate topics to the learner (Ennis, 1994). Research has shown that experienced teachers do not have a 'concrete' curricula model that they

follow (Dodd, 1994); instead they use different curricula models when they are teaching different types of learners. This means that they normally implement a student centered curriculum. On the opposite end of the spectrum, inexperienced educators adhere stringently to their curricula for all learners. The goal of any physical educator should be to teach and modify what is being taught to help each individual learner and also the class as a whole. In order to determine how an experienced teacher chooses the plan they have, it must be understood that declarative and procedural knowledge need to work concurrently and decisions are in-depth and well orchestrated (Ennis, 1994). Additional ideas about lack of curricular knowledge and understanding on diversity in cities can leave a new educator to deal with variables such as, values and experiences that are unique to the inner-city child (Yeo, 1997).

### ***Diverse Curriculum and Urban Education***

Creators or developers of curriculum need to recognize that immigration and social diversification are not going to halt, and that new physical education curriculum needs to address a diverse student population. A multicultural based curricula reform would take into account all cultures and foster awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of various games from around the world (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). The goal of a multicultural based curriculum is to help create a view of the

world, culture and reality through the eyes of an educated, well exposed teacher (Bennett, 2007). Culture drives our society and needs to change as society changes (Culp, 2005). Culture molds who we are, and the way we are raised therefore affects our personalities and the way we act in society. Furthermore, multicultural education fosters a pluralistic and democratic society, enabling the community bond to meet the agenda of the city as a whole (Banks & Banks, 1995). Schools that use these ideas need to inform teachers of various teaching styles that could improve the curriculum implementation. Both the teachers and the students can use their own language and culture to add to the curriculum, using critical thinking and project collaborations within different subjects.

As new immigrants come to the United States, the face of urban schools change; therefore faculty must strive for culturally relevant curriculum that fosters inclusion of all ethnic groups. Educational task forces such as, the National Council for the Social Studies, has set forth two suggestions for addressing the diverse needs of the student population in schools. First, schools must take special consideration for low income families and students of color, to allow them to gain knowledge and skills to meet the development of new jobs. Additional findings state that teachers do not have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of a multicultural school



system, which leads to students from different backgrounds failing to make cross-cultured connections with other students.

### ***Physical Education and Urban Areas***

Physical education curricula can use many different approaches to accomplish the various goals that are associated with physical activity (Jewitt, Ennis, & Bain, 1995). When creating a curriculum, physical educators must consider three domains of learning, which include cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. The cognitive domain concerns content knowledge of the unit in question. Psychomotor objectives refer to the movement of the students' body or the skills associated with the motor goals of the unit. Finally, affective goals focus on the emotion and behavior of the student during teaching or curricula implementation. All of curricula variables are put together to make outcomes and goals to be added and subtracted from a well rounded curriculum. Outcomes are the end product of the implemented curriculum, whereas the goals are lesson based aims that you want the student to take away from the individual lesson.

Curriculum is defined as the course of study or the process and product of the complete human experience (Grundy, 1989). Physical education curricula can be movement based, sport based, humanistic, multicultural, fitness based or lifetime-wellness based and are determined by administrators and teachers alike

(Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). When developing curriculum, urban high school physical educators often have to apply methods and strategies that may differ from rural and suburban schools (Ennis & Chen, 1995). Facilities, budgets, and the school demographics often have a large influence on what is being implemented in terms of urban high school physical education classes. Teachers' value orientations also play a large role in deciding what type of curriculum teachers follow (Ennis, 1994). Additionally, the state standards for physical education play an important part in what is being taught (NASPE, 2004).

Numerous curriculum developers have thought about philosophical perspectives when creating curricula (Jewitt, Bain, & Ennis, 1995). Curricular decisions, design and development are largely based on what the teacher and staff value. Most researchers have concluded that value orientation is the main driving force behind which curricular theory the developer follows (Jewitt, et al.). Simply put, the values that a teacher has will clearly be displayed by the choice of activities found in their curriculum. If the teacher's value orientation subscribes to "disciplinary mastery" perspective, they would hold skill and strategy as the most imperative part of a physical education curriculum. Value orientations therefore are the most predominate factors influencing curricula design, and most importantly in curricular implementation. The

value orientations that play a large role include: disciplinary mastery, self-actualization, social reconstruction, the learning process and ecological integration (Jewitt, et al.).

### ***Physical Education Research***

According to Weir (2000), traditional physical education curriculum is team sport based. Team sports such as basketball, flag football and baseball serve as the cornerstone of physical education in the United States since the 1960's. This enables the school's athletes to improve their skills and receive extra practice time (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). During the late 1990's and early 2000's, researchers examined many factors that influence the creation and implementation of curriculum such as: teachers' values and students' values (Ennis & Chen, 1995; Knop, Tannehill, & O'Sullivan, 2001). Programs and 'underserved youth' goals were also examined in curricula studies throughout the 1990's (McKenzie, 1998; Jones & Jones, 2002). There are many paradigms that can be implemented when creating or remodeling a physical education curriculum which include: developmental, movement, humanistic, and fitness models (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). According to Chepyator-Thomson (2001) developmental curriculum is based on age appropriate goals for each grade level, where as, movement-based curriculum focuses on analyzes of movement patterns. Moreover, the humanistic approach involves affective (social) goals, which lead to a more holistic

way to implement curriculum. Finally, fitness-based curriculum largely focuses on health-related fitness. Additional researchers conclude that fitness and movement dominate curriculum (Jewitt, Bain, & Ennis, 1995).

### ***Significance of the Research Investigation***

The significance of this study lies in identification of curricula design and implementation perspectives that aid in reforming programs of physical education in urban schools. Upon examining different types of curricula, and researching the different programs the participants' ideas have implication for physical education curriculum development. Physical education programs continue to exist in urban schools even though funding, space and interest is on the decline. Secondary schools are a great place to instill lifetime physical education ideas in students' minds. It is clear that physical educators need to infuse health, wellness, nutrition and multiculturalism into all aspects to create well-rounded physical education curriculum.

NASPE has presents standards that recommend curricula innovation be present in all schools (NASPE, 2004). Standards one through six all enable the teacher to use various curricula ideas when teaching physical education. Although programs are slowly being modified to meet the needs of diverse populations, the participants current ideas can assist in further reforming curriculum. Through use of outside data sources, such as the

Internet, workshops, mentors and journals, teachers can transform the face of physical education to resemble many other innovative programs.

Recent synthesis of reviews of literature found a small percent of published articles in *JOPERD*, *Quest*, *Research Quarterly in Exercise and Sport*, the *Physical Educator* and the *Journal of Teaching Physical Education* to deal with urban physical education, and more specifically curriculum in urban education (Chepyator-Thomson, Kim, Xu, Schmidlein, Na, Choi, & Yeo, 2008; Chepyator-Thomson, You, & Hardin, 2000). When examining the urban research, several key researchers deal with the topic of urban physical education curriculum, such as Sparks (1994), Pahnos & Butt (1995), Hellison (2003) and McCaughtry (2006); while other researchers look at urban teachers' values, these researcher include: Ennis and Chen (1993), Meek and Cutner-Smith (2004). This study focused on both perspectives on urban physical education curricula and ideas on culture in physical education curriculum.

### ***Theoretical Perspective***

The theoretical perspective that guides my study is critical theory, a view that is deeply rooted in Marxism, and has long-term ties to the Frankfurt School (Crotty, 2003). Anyone who is vaguely familiar with Karl Marx knows that he wanted to change government and society. Through examining

government and economics, he developed a new way to examine social issues, and the theory used was based on realism and constructionism (Crotty, 2003). Many different types of research are done to examine social issues. Critical theory's focus is different from other theories because the ultimate goal of the research is the emancipation of someone who is oppressed. Marx, Habermas, Adorno and Freire have all tried to give a voice to the oppressed (Crotty, 2003). Critical theory, like the other theoretical perspectives, has both similar and different traits. When further examining the basic premises of the Freire critical social theory, the reader can find that the basic assumptions include the views that: some type of injustice or inequality exists in society; the use of self-reflection; use or liberating ideas and a dialogue; and use problem-posing sessions with the participants (Crotty, 2003). Going into an interpretive ethnography study, the researcher may know that something is wrong with a situation but in order to cross over to the critical side, they would assume that something is wrong and their goal would be to reduce injustice, not merely report it as they see it.

Another part of Freire's theory is self-reflection and needed reform, much like post-structuralism (Crotty, 2003). Critical theory differs from other perspectives because it requires the researcher to take a stand and commit to a value

orientation. Some critics of the theory may consider this a weakness. An example of this stand would be Freire's literacy campaign where he attempted to set up classes to help the poor and oppressed citizens in Latin America learn how to read. By teaching them to read he gave them a voice -- a tool for revolution. Freire's *Pedagogy for the Oppressed* (1970) explains his methods for accomplishing this form of liberation. He starts each session of the literacy program by asking the people what they want to learn (problem-posing) and the dialog is geared toward the peoples' needs.

In recent years, few physical education researchers have used the techniques of problem posing and an over-all critical lens when examining the problems faced by school teachers. Culp (2005) used critical theory to examine teachers' instructional strategies in a large urban southeastern city. Using race comparisons, Culp was able to determine whether there was a significant difference between races in the realm of pedagogy. Multicultural physical education studies also have used critical theory to explore race, ethnicity and culture in physical activity (Chepyator-Thomson & King, 1996; Sparks & Wayman, 1993). Whether writing reviews, editorials or conducting qualitative research, physical educators have the option of using critical lenses to examine current problems in physical education. The commonality among all these research studies is

the creation of a pluralistic society for a modern and diverse global population. Overall, critical theory is a way to help bring about systematic change in society and the school system, and in turn, society.

### **Research Purpose and Questions**

The purpose of this study was to examine urban high school physical education teachers' ideas and perspectives on curricula used in their schools and secondly, to discover evidence of curricula ideas used in urban environments, and to discover how they impact daily physical education classes. To address the purposes of the study, the following questions guided the dissertation research:

#### *Research Questions:*

1. What ideas do Physical Education teachers hold about the curriculum in their schools?
2. What changes do teachers perceive are needed to reform their curriculum?
3. What and how are multicultural units and lessons used in the classroom? (If any)
4. How do PE teachers make the decision that these curricula promote multiculturalism?
5. How do these curricula units meet NASPE diversity standard? (If any)



Due to the vernacular used in the field of physical education the operational definitions will be displayed the below:

### **Operational Definitions**

Assimilate- to absorb immigrants or a cultural group into the prevalent culture (Merriam-Webster).

Constructivism- an epistemology assumes learners construct their own knowledge on the basis of interaction with their environment (Crotty, 2003).

Culturally relevant curriculum- students can connect new knowledge to their own experiences, thus empowering them to build on their personal background knowledge (Banks & Banks, 1995).

Culturally responsive curriculum- involves culturally responsive teachers that are: (a) are socioculturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students, and (f) design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar

Ecological integration- is also referred to as the Personal-Global curriculum orientation is based on the assumption that each individual is a unique, holistic being, continuously in the

process of becoming, seeking full personal integration in a changing environment. It advocates balanced priorities between individual [personal] and global societal concerns. It acknowledges the need for social change (Jewitt, Bain, & Ennis, 1995).

Equity- teaching strategies and classroom environments that help students from diverse ethnic backgrounds attain knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to function in a democratic society (Banks & Bank, 1995).

Idea- it is a formulated thought or opinion (Merriam-Webster).

Innovative Curriculum- a course of study that has not traditionally been used in physical education, often thought of a creative and less sport oriented (Hastie, Siedntop, Van der Mars, 2004).

Minority- it is an ethnic or racial group that is a smaller number than the ethnic or racial majority.

Multiculturalism- teaching and learning based on democratic values that foster cultural pluralism (Bennet, 2007). In its most comprehensive form, a commitment to achieving educational equity; developing curricula that build on understanding about ethnic groups; and combating oppressive practices.

Perspective- point of view (capacity to view things that are relevant and important (Merriam-Webster).

Self actualization- being able to understand one's self in physical activity, movement, time and space (Jewett, Bain, & Ennis, 1995).

Social Change- the outcome of social reconstructionist and social justice curricula (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

Social Responsibility- five themes to consider when encouraging students to "take personal and social responsibility (TPSR)." He believes these themes are the "essence" of teaching these practices. These include: respecting the rights and feeling of others; participation and effort; self-direction; helping others and leadership; and helping outside of the gymnasium (after school) (Hellison, 2003).

Social Justice- It is John Rawls theory of combating injustice in society through use of equal liberty and primary goods (Oakes & Rogers, 2006).

Social Reconstructionist- reform oriented philosophy and paradigm that focuses on power struggles, critical reflection and culture (Brameld, 1950).

Urban High School- it refers to a city greater than 100,000 people and grades 9-12 (Kozol, 1991, 2005).

## **Chapter 2**

### ***Review of Literature***

The purpose of this investigation was to examine urban high school physical education teachers' ideas and perspectives about curriculum. Therefore, a review of literature was performed to gain a better understanding of urban education research to inform chapters three, four and five. Hermeneutic phenomenology, specifically, theme-by-theme analysis was used to determine the themes of each article, book or dissertation. This literature review was conducted to examine multiple topics that have guided previous studies, as well as, help theorize, guide, and find gaps; to assist in narrowing my research focus in this investigation, and finally to discover gaps in the reviewed literature. Guided by the research questions from Chapter One, a review of literature was performed to identify literature related to urban high school curriculum, teachers' ideas on physical education curriculum and curricula programs or units about social or behavior change. Furthermore, social justice literature, as related to urban education problems, was included in this literature search. Due to the strong ties between social justice and the plight of urban areas, it is only natural to examine the key components of social justice that were found in urban education articles. The themes that emerged from the review of literature include: critical theory, theory of social

justice, research in social justice, urban education, and theoretical perspectives related to kinesiology.

### ***Critical Theory***

Critical theory is a theoretical perspective that examines power struggles and injustice in society (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2005). Critical theory has several research lines which include: feminism, neo-Marxism, and critical race theory (Lynn, Benigno, Williams, Park, & Mitchell). These theories focus on challenging the status quo and fights for equality in society (Bain, 1998). This framework allows the researcher to question dominant values and views, objects normal elite power structures and activity, and opens a dialogue for social change (Crotty, 2003). Adding to existing literature Gordon (1995) summarized critical theory as follows:

Critical theory seeks to understand the origins and operation of repressive social structures. Critical theory is the critique of domination. It seeks to focus on a world becoming less free, to cast doubt on claims of technological scientific rationality, and then to imply that present configurations do not have to be as they are.

Some researchers utilize a form of critical theory in terms of race. Critical race theory focuses on oppression and racism. Moreover, Crenshaw (1995) focused on what is viewed as double oppression by examining race and gender. Overall, critical theory is used as a theoretical perspective in many urban education studies and has additionally been utilized in urban

physical education studies. Throughout the remainder of this review of literature many of the studies deal with giving voice to the oppressed, pointing out injustices and offer options to combat racial issues in urban schools. The next section focuses on the theory of social justice, which many researchers tie directly into the main principles of critical theory.

### ***Theory of Social Justice***

The great poet Robert Frost wrote about the "road less traveled..." This phrase lends itself to my view on social justice in education. Social Justice Theory is defined as examination of unequal powers in society and informs the need to reform issues between citizens and governments in a social setting (Connell, 1993). The on going struggle between teachers, students, society, administrations and government all deal with issues of social justice in curriculum in urban schools. The foundations of social justice theory began several centuries ago. John Rawls examined the social contract between the government and the citizens of its respective nation (Apple, 2004). This contract helps formulate ideas to foster social justice to remove social injustice and to encourage social change, following discourse in government and in children's schooling. Social responsibility and social justice have been linked to the creation of contracts between governments, individuals, and society (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997).

Many social justice researchers focus on power struggles in education and the role power plays in government structures. Key advocates of social justice include Dr. Martin Luther King, J.R. and Paulo Freire (Crotty, 2003; Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). Both of these change agents fought against oppression and unequal access to education. The two principles of John Rawls Theory of Social Justice played a large role in the theoretical foundations of schooling and social development in society (Apple, 2004; Connell, 1993).

The two foundational principles of John Rawls are the principle of the primary goods (least advantaged) and the principle of equal liberty (Apple, 2004; Connell, 1993). The principle of the primary goods applies to all members of society, regardless of their financial standing. For education, this means that curriculum should address the most oppressed people (Apple, 2004; Connell, 1993). Equality and funding in education are of a primary focus within curriculum discourse, with access to equal supplies, facilities and certified teachers contributing to the gap between those that have it and those that do not (Oakes & Rogers, 2006). In the society of the United States, education is an enterprise and is therefore the primary gate keeper of knowledge (Oakes & Rogers, 2006). Essentially, administrators and elected officials decide what should be included in a curriculum, and the least advantaged

people subsequently have no input. Through Rawl's reasoning, all people should have equal voice in curriculum creation, or better, people of all social classes should sit on the board to decide which knowledge is of most worth.

The second principle of equal liberty addresses all individuals' liberty regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation, which allows people to enjoy their freedom and to have equal freedom under the law (Social Justice Training Institute, 2003). In the present day U.S. Society, there is a constant argument that calls for a social contract between individuals and society to uphold everyone's liberty. Included in this liberty is the right to free speech and to participate in a democratic society. To become active members in society, students should have a voice and their voice should be heard well beyond graduation from high school. The students' ideas should promote reflective and active politicians and voters in society.

Connell (1993) added to Rawls principles and developed the principle of historic reproduction. This principle states that if the previous two principles are not carried out then reproduction of injustices will occur. Overall, social justice educators can help fight oppression by teaching the students critical thinking skills and making them ready to become change agents in society. This means that teachers use the principle



of equal liberty and the principle of the least advantaged to combat historic reproduction of power (Coffey, 2001; Connell, 1993; Vanheinst, 2004).

A Nation at Risk is a power investigation into what actually was going on in American schools:

A Nation at Risk April 1983

*Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur--others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments (Goldberg & Harvey, 1983).*

The basic findings suggest that for the first time since the induction of mandatory schooling, U.S. students would not surpass their parents, in terms of productivity. This executive summary lead to research that supports all three principle of social justice.

### ***Least Advantaged***

No Child Left Behind is a perfect example of how the government does not create curriculum that can lead to the

upward mobility of classes in the present day U.S. society (Arce, Luna, Conrad, & Borjian, 2005). The curriculum is based on the "haves" and not the "have nots". The law was enacted by President Bush and was a modification of the Elementary and Secondary act of 1965 (Arce, Luna, Conrad, & Borjian, 2005). According to Coles (2003) and Garan (2004), this law strongly hinders the traditional "disadvantaged student" and puts English language learners even further behind native speakers. The law does not take the least advantaged (non-English speaking) into consideration and only further widens the gap in school accountability and funding.

### ***Equal Liberty***

Democratic participation in curriculum and schooling is very far off the radar in current U.S. education policy. According to Scott (2006) the *Revolution will not be televised*, teachers are going to have to take initiative to attempt to learn how to implement relevant pedagogy in their classroom. This means that the teacher is going to be in charge of taking hold of the curriculum and modifying it to meet the ideas set forth in critical pedagogy. Scott (2006) has created a curriculum that addresses the voiceless and the need for critical reflection and action through active participation by bringing modern musical lyrics into the classroom. This article strengthens the needs for a grass-roots effort to meet state mandated standards and

invoke social change in the classroom. Another significant study raises questions that critique education: it focuses on stages of multicultural awareness that tie combat historic reproduction (Paccione, 2000). Paccione's study revealed that personal experiences are the most important factor when making an effort to create a multicultural curriculum. Furthermore, she suggested that having multicultural experiences in teacher education programs can lead to "life changing" experiences.

Service learning activities in education can lead to understanding both social change and social justice (Warren, 1998). It is imperative that teachers provide learning activities that look at power struggles so that their students can compare what they are studying with their own life experiences. In order to be an active change agent, one must understand justice and social service, and to actively accomplish the principles behind the theory. She distinguished social service as a step individuals can now take, where as social change occurs over time.

### ***Urban Education***

Many early urban education studies focused on race and legislation that affected the make-up of urban schools. Following *Brown versus the Board of Education*, most city schools slowly became desegregated and thus began the "White flight". The Brown decision unintentionally removed 33% of the White

students from 104 of the largest urban schools between the years 1967-1968 (Farley, Richards, & Wurdock, 1980). Furthermore, studies found not only Northeastern U.S. cities but also Southern cities started to open academies that the white students would attend, thus keeping segregation alive through the 1970's (Morris, 1999).

Dating back to the post Civil Right Era urban curriculum has been a topic of discussion among researchers (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003). Topics such as academic achievement, racism, standardized test and innovative programs have been reviewed and discussed. Project SEED of the Marcus Garvey School in Los Angeles was one such curricula program that attempted to bring higher level instruction and subject matter performance to a traditionally low performing population (Perry et. al., 2003). This program succeeded in producing higher level math performance from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade population in Los Angeles. Furthermore, regardless of race, programs like Achievement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in San Diego, which challenged inner city youth were very successful (Mehan, Hubbard, & Villanueva, 1994). These two programs both used innovative teaching methods and powerful curricula models (heavily weighted test preparation) to teach important college prep skills to urban students. Not only have mathematics and reading programs been successful in urban curriculum, but also arts and dance

programs that were used, which show similar results. In 1981 several grants from the National Endowment of the Arts funded extracurricular dance programs for a predominantly African American school, and the goal of the program was to provide innovative, liberating education to urban student population (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2006). Although all of the teachers were White, the program had a profound effect on students' creativity, management and confidence. Programs like dance and art provide an outlet for many urban students to participate in the development of responsibility and time management skills, both of which are helpful in developing academic skills in the classroom. In conclusion, if a district is going to use a program that is innovative they should give the curriculum time to produce positive results because it is important not to give up or short change urban students with an inferior curriculum.

Many researchers can not write about urban education without speaking of students of color. English language learners (ELL), African Americans and unqualified teachers have been cited as the dominant populations within the walls of most urban schools. It is imperative to have well planned curricula outcomes that drive the students to possess critical thinking skills and life skills as opposed to memorization of subject matter facts (Kopetz, Lease, & Warren-King, 2006). Urban teachers are expected to have a repertoire of critical pedagogy,

multicultural knowledge of the population being taught, which could help to modify curriculum to meet the needs of a diverse population (Kopetz et al., 2006). It is ever so important to infuse cultural values and provide unique learning experiences to all students regardless of race or gender (Ormrod, 2003). New curricula units should be created and implemented without bias and favoritism toward one ethnicity. Rather than view urban students as victims of the administrators and the teachers, those who implement curriculum need to use the uniqueness of the city to promote a diverse learning environment that is void of ethnocentrism and deculturalization (Nieto, 1995; Yeo, 1997). Students that are respected for their culture and are considered in the planning of units can be an asset to the design of the curriculum and in daily implementation of standard based curriculum (Sleeter & McLaren, 1995; Solomon, 1992). Finally, ELL students have long been thought of as inferior to native English speakers, but this is the 'glass half empty mentality' for it is important to rally behind fluent Spanish speaking students and attempt to move toward a bilingual curricula model (Yeo, 1995; Soto, 1992).

Multicultural education is often seen in the headlines of urban education books. Multicultural education is fluid and ever changing and therefore not a unit or lesson plan and teachers should plan each lesson to focus on a group or groups

of people (Irvine, 2003). Many urban curricula have no connection to the development of critical thinking skills in their students or to immersion in the student's culture or home lives. Teachers in an urban environment need to have knowledge of many ethnic groups' learning styles, customs and to avoid using all inclusive lessons when teaching diverse population (Irvine, 2003). Multicultural education needs to be used constantly and adapted to new students' culture, there by putting positive experiences of different cultures at the fore front of lessons, thus avoiding a Eurocentric curriculum.

One program that has been labeled 'cultural literacy' has been adopted into many state curricula and the goal of one such program is to educate students from a multicultural standpoint, as well as, to develop an urban education curriculum unique to cities (Brady, 2002). Curricula revisions and cultural ideals were moving forward in the 1990's until *No Child Left Behind* came of age in the early 2000's. During this period, many colleges started to focus on the development of multicultural curricula and to focus on cultural change in teacher education programs (Irvine, 2003). Nearly 15 years later, many colleges continue to prepare students to design culturally relevant curriculum, but the majority of teacher education programs have shifted to standard based curricula that teaches toward a specific test (Irvine, 2003).

A move toward smaller city schools and new school building has been discussed in educational circles. The problem in most city schools is the fact that most of the budget is being used on heat and building repairs (Weiner, 2006; Ogbu, 1978; Kozol, 2005). Small schools, with freedom to use faculty and administrators to create a meaningful and relevant curriculum, have been proven to work in some urban areas (Sanchez & Eddine, 2006). Meaningful connections have been made between teachers and students when they work together to design and implement a curriculum that focuses on critical thinking and practical skill application (Sanchez & Eddine, 2006). It is important to know that reading and writing will still remain the focal point of these small schools but the formation of the curricula goals will take that of a social just plan that includes community members and teachers (Lyon, 2000; Hooks, 1994).

A large wave of research about funding and law requirements, targeting urban area schools with similar predicaments, occurred following the boom of research about segregation. Programs such as Head Start and English Language Learners (ELL) received much news coverage as well as educational research about the quality, or lack there of, of these programs in inner city schools. According to the majority of federal policies, schools must comply with the rules set forth by the funding agency, which in most places inadvertently means these city schools will give up



power to the funding agency (Hunter & Donahoo, 2003; Brown, 2003). School vouchers, which target low performing schools found in urban areas, have been a hot topic in education during the past several presidential elections. Most vouchers that are given to students will remove money from the students former school's budget, which leads to less funds, hurting already under funded urban schools (Brown, 2003). Between loosing control of the district due to "No Child Left Behind" and losing money from vouchers, urban schools have developed administrative and financial troubles that have negatively impacted both curriculum and instruction in urban schools.

Besides funding of these urban schools, teacher quality has been another problem within urban districts. Giving jobs to uncertified teachers will unduly affect the way the curriculum is implemented and the knowledge of what curriculum should look like in an urban high school (Kozol, 2005; Urban Teacher Collaborative, 2000). Research on teacher turn-a-round rate in inner city schools indicated that many alternative certification programs are in place in these cities, which attracts second career adults (Ng, 2003). By allowing these adults to teach in urban schools, a hole is filled in the faculty but hiring these teachers many damage the curriculum being taught (Kozol, 2005).

Multicultural education has been a buzz word circulating around urban schools for several decades. Researchers such as

Yeo, Banks, Grant, Sleeter, and Ladson-Billings have each conducted multifarious studies involving urban schools and multicultural education. According to Grant (1998), urban teachers can improve the curricula through use of culturally relevant curriculum and instruction with responsive multicultural methods. Additionally, use of new multicultural text books can help facilitate the new curriculum that includes all cultures (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

New multicultural books are non-gender bias and culturally sensitive, which in the former text book additions were considered problematic. This is applicable to physical education because of the collaboration between the classroom teacher and the physical education teacher, in their incorporation of multicultural units. These ideas were built upon from Banks' (1974, 2003) notion of multiculturalism in curriculum and instructional strategies, which should be the driving force for the inner city and national schools alike. It is important in urban areas to present culturally relevant curriculum that includes: American Indians, Middle Eastern, African American as well as Jewish and other under-represented groups (Banks, 2003). This pluralism is important to the very foundations of curriculum (Jaki, 1998). Pluralism is necessary to blend the cultures of the past with that of the future, which also can lead to more understanding and acceptance in schools

and in turn society. These research articles and books all lead to a growing body of knowledge that directly affects what is being researched in physical education.

### ***Theoretical Perspectives Related to Kinesiology***

Physical education housed in the area of kinesiology uses different theoretical perspectives from other fields. Innovative curricula can start with a theory that drives the foundations of the program. Whether the teachers' goals concern teaching responsibility, decision making, or participation in an appropriate level of activity or use of critical thinking skills, social constructivist view can help drive schools curricula (Lave & Wegner, 1991; Ennis, 1997, 1999; Kirk & MacDonald, 1998). Using a constructivist point of view permits physical educators to create multiple opportunities to develop diverse learning experiences (Ennis, 1999). The Purpose-Process Curriculum Framework involves teachers' and students' perspectives on knowledge and belief systems in physical education (Jewitt & Mullan, 1977; Ennis, 1999). In this framework of curriculum, ideas and meanings of physical educators and students are used to create curriculum (Ennis, 1999). Other possible frameworks used for creating curriculum and for developing research on self-reflection are the Expectancy theory (based on Pygmalion Effect) and the Cognitive Mediation Model (Martinek, 1981; Lee & Solmon, 1992). Expectancy

theory states that the teacher will be motivated to create curriculum based on the outcome of the units used. When implementing a physical education program that is based on the expectancy theory a physical educator would start with the NAPSE standards, which are the following NAPSE standards: Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities. Standard 2: Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities. Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity. Standard 4: Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness. Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings. Standard 6: Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction. After examining these six standards the physical educator that is using the expectancy theory could then create their goals (see appendix for complete NASPE overview).

An additional theory is Vygotsky's cognitive mediation model, which uses scaffolding technique to curriculum and believes that learning comes before development and therefore promotes development (Sigelman & Rider, 2006). The model that critical theorists have found to work within their conceptual

framework is titled Critical Thinking in Physical Education and involves "reflective thinking that is used to make reasonable decisions regarding movement tasks" (McBride, 1991, p.115). An additional model that could be used in physical education is the social reconstructionist model, which involves a utopian point of view, incorporating diverse cultures to change society in response to the needs required in a technologically charged era (Brameld, 1950; Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). Physical educators that use this theory for curriculum creation need to address inequality, critical reflection, injustice and use of multicultural games in their scope and sequence in curriculum (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001).

### ***Urban Physical Education***

In the examination of major U.S. journals of physical education, the published rate of urban physical education research is limited. These physical education journals include: Quest, the Physical educator, JOPHERD, Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport and the Journal of Teaching Physical Education. These journals have all had a handful of urban education articles that examined teachers, students, curricula and other topics in urban environments. Programs are the first to be examined in this review due to the fact that programs alter the instruction in the curriculum being implemented.

### ***Research-focused Urban Programs***

Popular physical education programs that drive curriculum in urban schools are Sports Play and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK), Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health (CATCH) and Middle School Physical Activity and Nutrition (MSPAN) (McKenzie, 1998). In collaboration with the National Institute of Health, the CATCH program was in operation from 1987-2000 and targeted concerns about smoking, nutrition, and physical activity in 3-5 grade students. The SPARK program was in operation in over 14 states and its curricula goals include improvement in physical fitness and motor skills within a student centered learning context (McKenzie, 1998). The final program developed and tested by San Diego State University was the MSPAN program which focused on middle school students. This program also tried to help change eating habits and physical activity levels in middle school children.

The SPARK program has had much research to support its worth in physical education curriculum (Sallis, McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Marshall, & Rosengard, 1999). This program increases physical activity levels in students and has been shown not to decrease academic standardized test scores. This strengthens the justification for an increase in national physical education program on schools because spending more time in physical education classes did not equate to worsened performance on

tests (Jensen, 1998; Shephard, 1997; Pellegrini, 1995).

According to Pahnos and Butt (1995), the United States is referred to as a "salad bowl" and has different racial and ethnic communities. In urban schools, these neighborhood schools do not receive equal funds, which impact, textbooks, faculty selection, the quality of facilities and curricula being implemented (Pahnos & Butt, 1995). The dominant physical education programs seen in these schools foster the cultural games of the dominant group (European) (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). By using the games from one group only, all the students can experience adverse consequences. The most prevalent curricula deprive the student of the opportunity to experience and use others' cultural games to add to their knowledge. Also, by using non-dominant cultural games, the students can learn from other's point of views, and acquire critical thinking skills (Pahnos & Butt, 1994). Specifically, urban teachers need to facilitate diversity by considering ethnicity and gender in team selection, allowing the students to share their cultural backgrounds, and providing students with activities that are authentic and help foster the diversity of each city (Gay, 1988). Activities such as dance and ethnic games can add to the growing understanding of content knowledge that is related to multicultural and responsive curriculum. Incorporating American Indian games into the course of study adds to the diversity of

the traditional curriculum. Lacrosse and Long ball are primary examples of games that make up units that can break away from the traditional urban physical education curriculum. Using these Iroquois games can foster understanding of tradition and the American Indian way of life (Ninham, 2002). Using programs, such as the Physical Activity and Teen Health (PATH) program, can lead to curriculum that invokes positive health and lifestyle decisions for urban school students (Fardy, Azzolini, & Herman, 2004). Additional programs focus on intervention, such as the "Model for Success" which uses a holistic approach to implementing curriculum (Jones & Jones, 2002). Urban schools' educators need to design and develop multiple methods that create meaningful and engaging experiences for urban, at-risk youths (Knop, Tannehill, & O'Sullivan, 2001). An important aspect of using various programs is fostering an idea of community within the walls of the urban gymnasias (Ennis, 1997). Overall, the programs used carry with them diverse instructional methods and curricula modifications, but most importantly the programs would match the values of the teacher, student, and community centered in implementation.

### ***Teachers' Values***

Value orientations play a large role in what is being taught at a school regardless of the location (Ennis & Chen, 1995). Teachers' values are what teachers think are important



in the ways they implement and design curricula. Ennis and Chen (1995) modified a regular education survey (VIO) that poles physical education teachers to determine their values on curriculum. In a study of preservice teachers and experienced teachers, the concepts self-actualization (S.A.), social reconstruction (S.R.) and ecological integration (E.I.) were placed over skill mastery in the eyes of the preservice teachers (Meek, Cutner-Smith, & Matthew, 2004). In an additional study, Behets' (2001) survey focused on 1000 teachers, which included: preservice and certified teachers, and the results indicated that urban teachers place their greatest curricular concentration on social responsibility orientation, over disciplinary mastery. This means that teachers at the beginning of their careers will try to implement affective concepts associated with the self-actualization, social reconstruction, ecological integration and social responsibility in their implementation of the curriculum. Going further into the future of a teacher's career in an urban school, a teacher serves as the mediator of culture (Sparks & Wayman, 1993). Multi-activity curricula should allow the teachers' values to show through, thus allowing the teacher to decide to mix the culture of the student with the games and activities in the classroom (Ennis, 1997). In physical education, the national standards of NASPE (see appendix) give direction to teachers in guiding students to

lead a healthy and active lifestyle. This is important for the teacher who is implementing the curriculum in order to build in awareness of activities that the students find authentic and applicable to their day-to-day lives (Azziritio & Ennis, 2003). Most importantly, once the teachers' values and the students' values are taken into consideration, an urban teacher can design a culturally responsive curriculum.

### ***Students' Values***

Student motivation and what they value also play a role in developmental approaches to curriculum creation in urban schools. According to Kirchin and O'Sullivan (2003), students that are less competitive like less structured games, which would lead a teacher to apply the use of modified games and less tournament play. The more the teacher places value on the students' opinions the more the students will be interested in the school curricula implemented (Chen & Ennis, 2004). Using interviews from urban teachers and students, Chen and Ennis concluded that if the students like the activity, they will enjoy and possibly participate outside of class. With obesity on the rise, it is important for physical education teachers to use innovative approaches in both instruction and curriculum. The design in urban schools should have a built-in motivation aspect in the curriculum, which would include the students' interests about why they participate in physical activity

(Ennis, Solmon, Satina, Loftus, Menchen, & MaCulley, 1999).

When the students are motivated, they tend to take an ownership of what they are learning, and in urban schools independence is important to growth and development of the students (Azziritio & Ennis, 2003).

### ***Multicultural Physical Education***

According to Banks (2003), the first step to multicultural education strives to create a pluralistic society in which many cultures are represented. It is important to know that the traditionally dominant sports should not be the focal point of the curriculum; each unit should use many ethnic games to teach and to provide an opportunity for development of fitness as well as appreciation for diversity. It is also very important to have the lesson involve strategies that have all students working together to understand each individual's differences (Pahnos & Butt, 1995). Sutliff (1996) examined different strategies that urban teachers, which concentrated on the teaching methods, used: content integration, prejudice reduction strategies, and cultural responsive pedagogy. Sutliff (1996) built upon Banks' approach to multicultural education and developed ways in which 'American Indians' could be taught in schools. Culturally responsive pedagogy involves the teacher researching ethnic-specific child care methods that influence how and why students act the way they do. An example of this

would be not asking a 'Native American' student to look the teacher in the eye when talking to them, as this is not culturally appropriate for many indigenous children (Sadker & Sadker, 2005). Secondly, prejudice reduction strategies focus on breaking down stereotypes that the student and teacher may bring to class. A popular method of prejudice reduction is to have the students work in peer-led groups that revolve around interaction and initiative problem solving content (Rohnke, 1990). These problem solving activities were made popular in adventure education (not outdoor education) and could be used in all units and lessons in the urban setting in order to increase critical thinking and group interaction skills. Adventure education is based on group problem solving and various activities that focus on team work and planning. This can then lead to less discrimination, inculcating a greater understanding of differences between ethnic groups. Cunningham's (2004) study centered on possible negative affects of group diversity and the results indicated that students will often focus on differences and make fun of each other. This is awareness of differences is termed "hidden curriculum", which indicates lessons that are inadvertently learned as part of what is being taught. It is imperative to have the teacher be aware of problems like this and to try to maintain an open channel of discussion of multicultural attitudes and perspectives.

### ***Critical Thinking***

Stanley (1995) acknowledged that critical inquiry and action research are an important part of preparing physical educators to teach in diverse, city schools. Therefore, critical thinking is a very important idea to attempt to incorporate when developing an urban curriculum. Arguably, urban teachers face many problems that rural and suburban teachers do not have to address. These include gangs, violence, crowding, and language barriers that add to the militant school environment that urban physical education teachers face on a day-to-day basis. These issues call for relevant pedagogy and responsive curriculum in schools, including the utilization of critical thinking skills. Critical thinking and thinking skills constitutes practical life skills for making healthy life style choice decisions.

A study that took place in Indianapolis examined various routes to teach inner-city children, ranging from how to make better decisions regarding family and friends to the use of a variety of activities in teaching (Smith, 1999). Often a sports team can make up for families disorganization or lack of family time; the team fills the gap left at home. By participating in sports, children learn teamwork, fair play and role modeling. Families and communities that are 'Hispanic' often are more involved with fostering a bond that supports the cultural uniqueness of the neighborhood (Smith, 1999). If urban teachers

can break down language barriers, students of non-'Hispanic' decent can learn the importance of making positive family decisions through the use of critical thinking approach. Critical thinking involves reflecting, respect, role-playing, and the use of peer council (Smith, 1999). Urban teachers can add this element to their curriculum with sports education, multicultural games, and taking personal and social responsibility. Often critical thinking is part of the humanistic paradigm that requires use of personal and social responsibility model to create a culturally responsive curriculum.

### ***Personal and Social Responsibility Model***

Hellison's (2003) work focuses on a teaching style which leads to a pseudo-curricular unit model called taking personal social responsibility (TPSR). This method of teaching has been implemented in many curricula in San Francisco and Chicago. The literature states that urban students' parents often work long hours and are not home for their children, which may lead to a void in positive social behaviors. The purpose of Personal and Social Responsibility model is to help the student make positive life style decisions through the use of reflection and informed decision making. A Lickhert scale is used to allow the students to assess the level at which they feel they are acting; zero, meaning disruptive and disrespectful or violent, and five

meaning helping others outside the gym setting (Martinek, McLaughlin, & Schilling, 1999).

Hellison (2003) and his colleagues developed this tool to help underserved youth avoid violence and gangs. Many of his studies support the retention rate of positive decision making after the completion of the program. Many of the studies examined school time physical education classes plus the after school program, which many considered to be part of the extended school curriculum. Adding both character development and physical activity to the curriculum help improve both mental and physical health in students (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). In a nine-year study that examined 'at-risk' and 'inner city' youth, ages 5-21, peer coaches that used TPSR were shown to have the participants take leadership roles in school, which led to limited altercations between students.

It is important to recognize that the drop-out rates are higher in urban than suburban schools. This challenge is unique to urban teachers and puts the students at risk for a cycle of poverty. TPSR is an avenue that physical education teachers use to allow the students to participate in their own decision-making process (Compagnone, 1995). Several other studies have focused on urban schools utilizing TPSR with positive outcomes. Student crime rate and violence have decreased during the TPSR lessons, which in turn have led to a more positive change in

student participation and peer leaders participation (Martinek, McLaughlin, & Schilling, 1999). Other urban studies display findings that reflect affective goals such as compassion, effort, cooperation and following directions, all of which are integral parts of TPSR (Martinek & Schilling, 2003). Some researchers and teachers have infused TPSR and sports education curriculum to create a hybrid model, helping bring about a change in student behavior. Other research focused on the same 'at risk' or 'underserved' youth.

### ***'Underserved' Youth in Schools***

Many city school children have been termed 'underserved' leading researchers to define 'underserved' as those students that do not receive adequate funds, unclear program goals, and lack of community outreach for their schools (Martinek, 1997). Lack of discipline and poor social behavior is one key factor that influences what educators feel 'underserved' youth are missing (Lawson, 1997). Research in this area has incorporated different programs that keep kids busy with 'midnite' basketball and after school activities. Moreover, many of these urban programs need to address at-risk students with a focus on theories of change, which incorporate student collaboration and family/community outreach to help develop a responsibility for society as a whole.

Beginning back in 1972, a program in Boston's city schools



helped teacher education majors at Boston University to gain valuable field experience working with 'at-risk' students in a variety of movement activities (Cheffers, 1997). The curriculum that has been implemented for nearly 30 years focuses on cooperation, problem solving, and discovery initiatives. There are so many findings that it would be hard to address one key outcome. This pivotal study was at the forefront in research to mix teacher educators with voiceless children of the U.S. Additional research indicated that other programs focused on fitness and teamwork strategies in urban schools (Collingwood, 1997).

Following public outcry of violence in cities, many companies and communities developed after school recreation programs to keep kids off the streets and to allow youths to participate in programs such as Midnite basketball and Nike's PLAY program (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). The key goal of outside recreation is to encourage physical activity participation and give the kids something productive to do, rather than be involved in gangs and violence.

### ***Teaching in an Urban Environment***

Understanding urban teaching habits involves understanding control and order, in a sometimes chaotic environment, that is found in some inner city schools. To create an effective learning environment, urban teachers were found to use humor,

redirection and knowing the students behaviors (Duke & Henninger, 2002; Dodd, 1995). It is important for curricula creators to encourage teachers to add elements of these findings into every lesson, and one way to do so is to research innovation in physical education curricula.

### ***Innovative Curriculum***

Issues involving gender have been a subject of change since Title IX in the 1970's. Ideally in contemporary physical education curriculum a variety of activities such as dance, adventure education and multicultural activities would include women (Humberstone, 1995). Each of these curricula attempts to bring about role reversals and change in typical gender roles. This restructuring of traditional roles is an example of all three of Connell's principles: historic reproduction, principal of citizenship and principle of the less advantaged.

The aforementioned change in physical education unit selection is prevalent in Outdoor/Adventure Education and dance education (Humberstone, 1995; Fullerton & Madjeski, 1996; McGreevy-Nichols & Scheff, 2000). Connell (1993) stated that "when creating a curriculum the makers should develop the curriculum for the least advantaged population" (p.43). This view is opposite of the utilitarian approach to curriculum, which focuses making decisions based on the largest number of students (Rachels, 2003). Still Connell's approach can be

illustrated through many initiative activities (adventure education). Connell (1993) may view the less skilled students as the least advantaged and therefore, units should be planned with them in consideration.

Secondly, social justice through Outdoor Education can be explained in terms of stripping away strength, power and speed in physical education and making the class work together as a team for a common goal. This is a feasible practice because there are many clubs and intramurals for competitive athletics. Class activities such as "turn the leaf" and "trust falls" cater to people of all shapes and sizes because strength is not an issue but rather wit and creativity (Rohneke, 1990).

Similarly in an ethnic dance lesson the skills needed for the class to perform their own interpretation of the dance makes the playing field level (McGreevy-Nichols & Scheff, 2000). This means traditionally marginalized groups such as women, under-represented groups, and non-athletic individuals will be able to contribute as much as, or more so, than traditional "athletes" (Fullerton & Madjeski, 1996). If we consider non-athletic individuals as the "least advantaged" in physical education then the teacher and curriculum advisor would be morally obligated to make choices based on what the least motor skilled individual would be able to accomplish. This is

certainly not true in any physical education curriculum that I have seen in my 23 years of physical education experience.

Another example of a curriculum that can initiate social justice is Project Adventure. Rather than focus on motor skills, strength, and other traditional "athletic" skills Project Adventure focuses on group initiatives, problem solving, self-reflection and role reversals (Rohneke, 1990). This is very similar to the power shift in creative dance, which shifts focus from male dominant to female dominant. Furthermore, the class or group can create many of the dances, which is not teacher directed but is student directed. These ideas are key components of social justice and are reviewed in several curriculum texts (Jewitt & Bain, 1985; Grant & Gomez, 1997). Another way to view this curriculum shift is to think of an aerobic dance unit. This may require steps, a video and a lot of gym space, which may not be available for a student who lives in a two bedroom apartment with little funds. A solution to this problem can be making Hip-Hop the dance unit, which requires nothing other than a radio and a hip-hop station. Even your 'disadvantaged' students have access to this equipment and they would receive equal health benefits.

Injustice in society is seen on a daily basis (Crotty, 2003). Using physical activity to create peace is not a new idea. As far back as the Greeks and Romans, games were used to

bring people together and put their differences aside. The way contemporary physical education makes societal problems conspicuous can be revealed through urban education, multicultural education and personal and social responsibility (TPRS) curriculum. Poverty, crime and threats to the student's daily lives are some injustices that urban teachers and students face (Chen, 1999). Using programs such as TPRS help develop critical thinking skills that enable the students to figure a way out of "gang" life and can help them break the cycle of hardened city life (Hellison & Wright, 2003). The principle of historic reproduction is found in these specific examples (Connell, 1993, p43). Each student is being taught the ways to avoid fighting and taking an active role in decision-making, both of which can help them break out of the prison cycle (Hellison, 2003).

Injustices like reading problems and language issues have been long been an issue in education (Crotty, 2003; Freire, 1970). Physical education teachers have the ability to take part in knowledge construction and create political awareness in many urban students (Chen, 1999). The answer for leveling the playing field can start at the community level and spread from there to include improvement in safety and remove class injustices in the United States (Chen, 1995). By helping students understand English and using Spanish to build bridges

between the English language learner population and the native speakers, teachers can facilitate change in citizenship, which leads to democratic decision making. If the students can communicate with each other and the teachers, the students can gain a voice (Freire, 1970). This voice adds to the democratic citizenship that all educators can hope to create in the classroom or gymnasium. Empowerment of a diverse student population, where all males, females, African American, gay, 'Hispanic', and other 'minority' groups can help accomplish much more than any single lesson.

To invoke change in society a teacher has many a channel in which is to accomplish their objectives. Critical theorists' aim is on the emancipation of the individual where as social reconstructionist want to work within the system and move toward a group restructuring, either way they both invoke social justice (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). Along with this acquisition of knowledge comes a push for change in the current structure of society (Grant, 1992). Curriculum designed for a change in health behaviors is a needed to help society change in the United States. Giving students the tools to overcome the obesity epidemic in the nation can only help society move forward. The more knowledge the student walks away with from a physical education class, the more the student can start changing themselves and continue to help their friends and classmates

move forward. These concepts reflect an element of historic reproduction in accordance to Connell's work. Students are breaking away from the "cycle" of obesity and poverty to better their life chances in ways that, in turn, better society. Reviewing this literature enabled me to focus my research into a more well developed and thorough study.

### ***Summary***

The purpose of this chapter was to gain a better understanding of research related to urban physical education. With this purpose in mind, the theory of social justice, urban education, as well as articles related to urban physical education were read, coded, and divided into themes to better formulate the methods that I have used in my dissertation. The following chapter focuses on the methods used to collect and on ways to analysis the data.

## **Chapter 3**

### ***Methods***

The primary purpose of this study was to interview urban high school physical education teachers to find out about their ideas and perspectives on curriculum. Specifically, in this investigation, I examined programs to discover and understand how teachers incorporated social change outcomes, multicultural games and reform strategies in their yearly curriculum. This chapter focuses on the methods that I used in this research investigation. The methods include: A) Research Design, B) Theoretical Perspective C) Methods D) Pilot Study E) Site and Sample F) Criteria for Trustworthiness G) Summary.

### ***Research Questions***

This study used qualitative methods that included interviews, survey and artifact collection to discover and understand ideas and perspectives of teachers working in urban high schools. The main research questions used included the following:

1. What ideas do Physical Education teachers hold about the curriculum in their schools?
2. What changes do the teachers perceive are needed to reform their curriculum?
3. What and how are multicultural units and lessons used in the classroom? (If any)



4. How do physical education teachers make the decision that these curricula promote multiculturalism?

5. How do these curricula units meet the NASPE diversity standards? (If any)

These research questions were used in conjunction with a qualitative research design that incorporated interviews to answer these questions. Many researchers caution the use of naturalistic methods due to their dynamic state and possible changes in the research setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A interview protocol was used due to the limited lack research on urban high school physical education curriculum (Patton, 1990). Theme-by-theme analysis was pivotal for data analysis.

### ***Theoretical Perspective***

The epistemology used for this dissertation was constructivism, a view that sees knowledge as constantly changing, and participants use a meaning making process to understand a phenomenon specific to a place and time (Crotty, 2003, Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Following the constructivist epistemology, I solicited critical theory as my theoretical lens to guide this study. Using critical theory allowed me to make critiques about social problems to develop questions that examine social issues in education (Crotty, 2003). Chapter four, the findings, will utilize theme-by-theme analysis, but in chapter five the findings are discussed in regards to critical

theory. The guiding principles of critical theory include: questioning power relationships, emancipation/empowerment of participants, and reflection/action in society (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2001).

### ***Methodological Procedures***

Hermeneutic phenomenology was used to analyze the transcriptions of interviews. Hermeneutic phenomenology refers to a framework used to discover the meanings behind the data collected (Laverty, 2003). "Hermeneutic phenomenological reflection, specifically theme-by-theme analysis, enables researchers to delve into the meaning behind the statements that the participants said in response to the interview questions" (Heidegger, 1962). "The ultimate goal of the dissection of interviews is to gain a better understanding of the 'essential meaning' of the responses" (Van Manen, 1990). The following quotation lends understanding to what is meant by 'essential meaning':

"Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditionary text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which it speaks" (Gadamer, 1998, p.295)

There are several ways to develop themes in results: holistic, selective, and line-by-line analysis approach (Van Manen, 1990). Through reflection on the participants' answers, all three of these theme development approaches were used. The

transcriptions were read for content, and then certain sections were labeled for main ideas, which led to the line-by-line analysis approach. An example of using the line-by-line approach would be closely examining several sentences to determine the main goal of a response. Following an exhaustive use of the three approaches, the answers were labeled and charts were used to create a picture of the themes found (Van Manen, 1990).

### ***Subjectivities Statement***

Our past shapes who we become in the future. I have been in the field of kinesiology for nearly a decade. I received a B.S. in Exercise Science from Lander University, as well as a M.S. in Physical Education from Hofstra University. Currently, I am working on a Doctorate of Education in Kinesiology at the University of Georgia. All of these educational experiences have shaped my view of the world today, yet none more powerful than my two and one half years teaching experience in New York City public schools. I taught at two high schools and three different elementary schools. My teaching experiences in large urban schools have led to my pursuit of a concentration on multicultural curriculum. Much of my research focuses on social change, social justice, social reconstruction and multicultural education. All of these perspectives, paradigms, and philosophies have shaped my view of reality, knowledge construction and consumption.

First, I feel that physical education curriculum needs to be changed and it can be based on affective outcomes. Secondly, interviews are valid and trustworthy ways of gathering information based on the relative questions asked (Crotty, 2003). Finally, I think that my experience as a New York City public school teacher provided me with significant access and focus on daily strife, administrative carelessness and overall teaching in a bleak environment.

### ***Ethics Statement***

Ethical issues in this study could have arisen in the coding used to identify which types of curricula participants used (deMarrais & Lappan, 2004). The interviews remain confidential and the questions did not cause psychological harm. Measures were taken to allow for comfort throughout the research process.

### ***Pilot Study***

A pilot study was conducted in the spring of 2006 with physical education instructors at a large southeastern institution. The participants interviewed were 20-40 years old with either bachelors or masters degrees in kinesiology. The sample size was three people with both male and female participants. The instructors were notified of the researcher's intent and the participants provided their signature, allowing for consent and participation in the research study. After the

information was collected and disseminated the researcher and the major advisor reexamine the transcriptions of the interviews, to make adjustments on the instrument and to improve the quality of the questions that were used in the final interview questions. Each question was changed and modified to correct any misuse of wording or if most interview answers were not in line with the purpose of the question. For example, the terms like social reconstruction, social justice and innovative curriculum were removed due to the lack of knowledge of these terms or the broadness of the term. Each question was changed to better answer the research questions.

### **Site**

The site for this investigation was a large urban city in the northeast. I selected this site because of my former teaching experiences. I chose high school physical education teachers because I was a former high school teacher, and I was interested in interviewing them and finding out their ideas and perspectives on curriculum in an urban physical education program. The teachers were from various schools within a large urban area, and they came from two different areas within this large metropolitan area (see appendix for demographic data of the areas). This was done to get ideas and perspectives from a diverse group of teachers. Interviewing teachers from various

districts and schools led to the discovery of different ideas and perspectives.

### **Sample**

I chose a large northeastern city and this population because of the book *Savage Inequalities* and *The Shame of A Nation* by Johnathan Kozol. The institution's research review board approved the study. Ten urban high school physical education teachers were the population selected for the purpose of this investigation. I selected the participants from a group of sixteen volunteers and I narrowed it down to ten in order to have a mixed demographic sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Locke, Spiduso, & Silverman, 2000). Prior to the selection, a website search of the city's physical education department was conducted to ensure an adequate number of potential participants to be interviewed. The criteria for participants were as follows: current high school teacher with either a master's degree or a bachelor's degree in kinesiology, physical education, exercise science or a related field. I emailed a physical education administrator and asked for a list of possible participants for my study. Following contact with several teachers from that district, I used snowballing (chain sampling) to find the remainder of the participants. Snowballing involves participants' suggestions on who they knew about other qualified people who would be interviewed for this study (Patton, 2002).

Following the suggestions, I contacted these people via email and phone calls. Snowballing continued to be used until I had a sample pool of 16 potential participants. Once an adequate number of qualified participants were found, a selection was made based on diverse demographic features (Patton, 2002). A purposeful sample was obtained based on the demographic questions that were asked during phone and email recruitment (Maxwell, 2005). Moreover, criterion-based selection was used by talking to the potential participants to find out if they were qualified to be a part of the study (Maxwell, 2005).

### ***Data Collection***

#### ***Demographics of Participants***

The ten participants of this study were diverse and this section displays the demographic questions that were distributed prior to the start of the interview (see appendix). The study sample consisted of seven males and three females. The participants' age ranged from 27-49 years old, with five to twenty years of experience. The ethnic backgrounds include four Caucasians, three African Americans, two Latinos, and one Asian. All of the participants had undergraduate degrees in physical education, with five possessing master's degrees in a variety of fields in education. Nine out of the ten participants were United States Citizens, while one was a Philippine Citizen. Additionally, each participant chose pseudonyms for me to use.

Table 1: Demographic Data

Name	Age	Years	Sex	Race(*) :	Citizenship	Licence	Other
David	40	7	M	Latino	US	BSPE	NO
Miguel	31	7	M	Latino	US	BSPE MSSE	Health
Marilyn	43	13	F	Caucasian	US	BSPE	NO
Reggie	49	20	M	African American	US	BSPE	Health
Sasha	49	12	F	African American	US	BSPE	Special education
Jasmine	35	14	F	Caucasian	US	BSPE MSC	NO
Zadine	33	8	M	Asian	International	BSPE	Health
John	30	5	M	Caucasian	US	BSPE MSSM	Health
Kevon	27	5	M	African American	US	BSPE MSPE	NO
Howard	31	8	M	Caucasian	US	BSPE MSSM	NO

\* The participants self-identified by race through filling the demographic survey, therefore the above reflects the answers of the participants. In research the term for several would be ethnicity.

The next section discusses the questions that the participants were asked in interview one and two. The follow-up questions were based on the participants' individual answers to these questions; therefore, they varied from person to person. The final interview questions included ten close-ended and open-ended questions, and each question had several sub-questions



that asked ideas and perspectives from the participants (see appendix). Each participant was interviewed twice and the interviews were 30-60 minutes in length. Following the first interview, a copy of the transcription was emailed to the participants to see if any clarification needed to be made. Then a second interview took place, lasting 30-60 minutes and the transcriptions were once again sent via email to confirm the answers to the questions. Following the data collection process, and once the data were confirmed, final copies were typed, read, and examined for content (Patton, 1991). This procedure allowed me to ask insightful follow up questions via phone and email. These responses were then added to the end of interview two, which were examined for themes.

I then read the interview transcripts answers independently to determine emerging themes using theme-by-theme analysis (Van Manen, 1990). Negative cases were reread and the answers in question were coded again. After this, I presented the findings to my major advisor to see if she agreed with the findings and themes. The next step was analyzing the data as per themes, and as they emerge from the data. This means comparing each participant's theme based on the main ideas that were apparent in the interview. Once the data interpretation component was complete, the results were written and the discussion section was created to display the data that answered the research

questions. The following were used to strengthen the results of the study.

### ***Criteria for Trustworthiness***

#### ***Trustworthiness***

Trustworthiness has four components, which include transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability. First, I will discuss trustworthiness and transferability together. I will then discuss the other subcomponents of the concepts. The extent to which a study is valid has been referred to as trustworthiness, indicating how close reality and the findings match one another (Russell, 2002). Findings that can be used in other situations are said to deal with external validity, which is a term used in quantitative research but in qualitative research transferability is used. "The extent to which research findings can be replicated" is what makes studies reliable (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). The primary objective of qualitative research is to make sure that the data are logical and the findings are trustworthy, instead of attempting to replicate uses in other studies. Qualitative research focuses on the phenomenon at a give place at a specific time, therefore making each experience individualized (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000).

Examining multiple realities and attempting to make sense of each meaning are both key components of qualitative research.

The researcher's main goal is to ensure that the participants' views of meaning and reality are consistent and accurate when being thematically reviewed. For the purpose of this investigation, the results are not generalized to other groups of physical educators, working in different cities.

In trustworthiness, the qualitative researcher must take a close look at transferability (Patton, 2002). Transferability involves the transfer of the results from this study to another situation. The scope of this investigation is limited to urban high school physical education teachers' views but another investigator may extrapolate the findings to a different group of teachers. This investigation may lead scholars in other teaching fields to look closely at curricula in their specific area. To help ensure reliable data several techniques are used: a) credibility b) member checks c) peer reviews.

### ***Credibility***

Credibility refers to the internal validity of the study, or how true the researcher's data analysis is conducted. This is ensured through use of member checks, peer reviews, and subjectivities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Creditability is controlled by the researcher through use of theme-by-theme analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Using quotes is the major way I displayed the interview answers and raw data corresponds to what is being discussed in the analysis. By using

member checks, peer reviews and understanding of my own subjectivities, I can share the views of the participants and confirm that what is actually being said is as accurate as possible (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000).

### ***Member Checks***

Member checks were used for accurate portrayal of presentation of the responses that were typed on transcriptions. Following transcription of the interviews, each interview was read and coded based on the ideas and perceptions that emerged from the participants recorded data. After the broad essence of the paragraphs was found, a note was made to distinguish their topics (Van Manen, 1990). Member checks are done following the data collection, during the analysis phase. The data is taken back to the participants and they are asked to verify their responses (Merriam, 1998). If the researcher comes across an answer that is unclear, the researcher will email the respondent to receive feedback on the answer that was given. The ultimate outcome of the member check system is to allow the 'voice' of the participant to be heard (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

### ***Peer Reviews***

Peer reviews involve an outside researcher to help the primary research analyze themes (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Another researcher in the area of physical education served as my council during the data analysis. The peer reviewer checks and

provides guidance to the primary researcher (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2005).

### ***Triangulation***

Triangulation deals with accuracy in the findings that come from different data collection methods and examining the data in various ways, while improving assurance in the conclusions (Patton, 2002). Triangulation occurred through individual face-to-face interviews, artifact collection, and follow-up telephone interviews, which led to the same themes from the various data sources. Therefore, the different data sources displayed the same theme, which strengthen the credibility of the data.

Another method of triangulation occurred once the researcher had completed member check procedures. Then, the major advisor was given the answers to confirm the themes and trends that emerged from the transcriptions. The second person's view of the themes validates the primary researcher's theme formulation (Van Manen, 1990). Following all of these steps helped validate the data and increase its trustworthiness.

### ***Confirmability and Dependability***

Confirmability is the degree to which the data can be corroborated by other researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This is accomplished using triangulation within theme-by-theme analysis. Additionally the researcher remains objective through providing subjectivities (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I remained

objective through constant reflection during the coding of the data. Furthermore, dependability was used, which is ensuring that my participants and I are knowledgeable of the topic being discussed. Finally, reliability in the qualitative paradigm is addressed in all terms by trustworthiness (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000).

### ***Summary***

The methods used in this study have been used for decades in physical education research studies (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2000). The data collected from the ten urban high school physical education teachers indicate a variety of themes that express the teachers' ideas and perspectives on curriculum. In the next chapter, I will provide the results of this research investigation in terms of using qualitative analytical procedures.

## Chapter 4

### Research Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate urban physical education teachers' ideas and perspectives of their curriculum. The method of investigation was through qualitative inquiry, which specifically uses the interview protocol as the methodological technique for data collection. The data collection took place in a large northeastern city during the fall of 2007. Initially, the themes were going to be broken down into categories by race but as the data analysis occurred it became apparent that there was no significant difference between themes among the various races of the participants. Van Manen's (1990) theme-by-theme analytical framework was used to identify emergent themes, which was done through the process of coding, categorizing and theme naming. The primary research questions that guided this study were:

1. What ideas do physical education teachers hold about the curriculum in their schools?
2. What changes do teachers perceive are needed to reform their curriculum?
3. What and how are multicultural units and lessons used in the classroom? (If any)
4. How do PE teachers make the decision that these curricula promote multiculturalism?

5. How do these curricula units meet NASPE diversity standard? (If any)

### ***Introduction***

Based on the interview questions the research questions were answered in terms of themes. The ideas that the participants' held about their curriculum are addressed in the following sections: perceptions on curricula development, ideas on priorities in physical education curriculum, ideas on social responsibility and cooperation, and the importance of lifetime activities. What changes teachers perceive are needed to reform their curriculum are clearly answered in the following sections: perceived needed changes in physical education curriculum, obstacles to implementing culture in curriculum, and thoughts on curricula funding. Finally the following questions were answered: What and how are multicultural units and lessons used in the classroom? How do physical education teachers make the decision that these curricula promote multiculturalism? How do these curricula units meet the NASPE diversity standard? All of these questions are answered in the theme entitled, 'lack of multicultural knowledge.' The following section provided detailed information on the emergent theme-based perspectives that were found during data analysis.



### ***Emergent Theme-Based Perspective***

In terms of the purpose of this study, urban physical education teachers conveyed ideas and perceptions that inform the current curriculum in their schools. Emerging themes that represent the majority of the participants' ideas and perspectives showed that the teachers possessed similar ideas, thus creation of a section devoted to the ideas and perspectives that were most common when theme-by-theme analysis was used. The following themes emerged from the data: (a) lack of multicultural knowledge; b) perceptions on curricula development; c) ideas on priorities in physical education curriculum; d) importance of life time activity units; e) perceived needed changes in physical education; f) obstacles faced when implementing curriculum of culture in physical education; g) ideas on social responsibility & cooperation; and h) thoughts on curricular funding. The first theme to be examined is the lack of multicultural knowledge.

#### ***Lack of Multicultural Knowledge***

In 2008, many schools in urban areas have students that come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and speak many languages. In relationship to the research questions of this dissertation, it was found that multicultural units and lesson were infrequently used in the participants' implementation of the curriculum. All of the teachers that were interviewed thought

that multicultural sports and games were a great idea for their physical education programs, but did not often use such games in the gymnasias. They expressed the need for more culturally diverse curricula as the students' ethnic backgrounds changed.

"Cultural diversity plays a role in my curriculum in that I teach at a very culturally diverse school. I have encouraged each student to research their family history and share their findings with the class. Once this is done, the student will then introduce an individual sport or activity that is specifically related to their culture. Being that some students share the same culture I encourage that students research cultures that are not directly related to them. In the past I have had students provide information on the cultures of Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Africa, Jamaica, Italy, Ireland and the United States. Students that are fluent in other languages are encouraged to share their skills and to teach other students words and phrases that can be used in class for specific activities. The use of culturally diverse activities makes students more accepting and understanding of lifestyles and ideas that they may not be used to seeing in their everyday lives. A culturally diverse physical education curriculum allows students to teach and learn in a comfortable environment that is highly conducive to learning," (Miguel's Interviews).

The main problem with multiculturalism and participants' ideas and perspectives was the lack of diverse curricula knowledge. Most admitted that they did not know that much about it and thought that in college, they were not prepared for creating or implementing a well-rounded multicultural curriculum in public schools. The teachers' teaching experiences ranged from five to 20 years, and none of them could remember a class that taught them about games from foreign lands. This may be a

problem with the physical education teachers' education curriculum and not with the lack of cultural knowledge of the participants.

"Multicultural education and physical education... to me, that seems like an untouched area in the school district that I work in. The kids are from many different cultures and backgrounds and they come from other places, where they learn different activities, and I think it would be great and would motivate them to show what they do in their country," (Jasmine's interview).

Tying in activities related directly to the students' interests and background led them to appreciate part of the school curriculum. Thus, allowing students to take pride in both their heritage and the work they do in class. In order to develop curricula plans and goals in line with these ideas, a teacher would have to shift focus. John's comment supported this idea that: "The main focus will be shifted towards being more diverse not simply skill related." This next idea shows that NASPE's diversity standard was not met in John's curriculum. He goes on to say at another point in the interview that:

"... multicultural knowledge, not too much from what I know and how it relates to what I know. For example, I can't teach an activity that I'm not aware of or I don't know about that comes from another country. Okay so that's a limitation based on what I know and my own experiences."

Thoughts like these illustrate how beneficial it would be to have courses in undergraduate or graduate programs that focus

on multicultural studies, both in curriculum creation and teaching methods. The teachers that were interviewed were concerned with the growing number of Latino students in school and how they could make the course content relevant and culturally diverse for these students. When looking back at the research questions, this is how teachers view units that promote multiculturalism. Sasha stated:

"We are trying to get [multicultural} because we do have a very diverse population of 'Hispanic', you know and students who are from Africa so they also share how they do things in their country too, which makes the whole outcome better and more interesting."

This is an example of the teacher using naturally occurring cultural differences and allowing the foreign students to have a voice, as well as take part in the lessons. This is mostly in reference to soccer and its status as the 'world's game'. Others still did incorporate netball and lacrosse directly into the curriculum. "I [Jasmine] try to incorporate netball during my basketball unit... to put a world slant on it." Miguel attempted to combine a social studies unit with his physical education unit. "A couple of times I tried to add Lacrosse for a Native American game to show the kids about what other cultures have to offer... we made the sticks in class, and when it came time to work on motor skills we used the equipment that they created." Kevon wanted to actively search and add new games to his curriculum.

"We try to introduce them to one or two new activities a year or even things we don't know. We will look on line and learn how to play them and then we introduce them. We will see how it goes and if it doesn't work out so well we will cut the unit short. We want people to learn! European handball, last year we introduced an Indian Sport (Bahk-ra), it was a mix between tennis and soccer. The kids really liked that, the kids that were into Hacky-Sac really got to show off their skills, this stuff is fun for them."

Having to search on-line for these types of international games seemed like a problem when trying to add new lessons to the curriculum; however the teachers made the necessary adjustments to add new games. Compounding upon the teachers' lack of knowledge is the simple fact that the money required was not present to purchase the equipment to play the sports. Lacrosse equipment, like hockey equipment, is a lot more expensive than, say, footballs and basketballs.

Marilyn's idea of culture related to the promotion of multiculturalism in her physical education class can be summed up in this statement:

"... I think it's important to get them involved in other sports; it breaks down a cultural barrier and it's important for their life to engage in new things, and educationally they will be more open minded as a result of being introduced to these new sports. Sometimes they are a little resentful when playing new sports, but then after they played for a while they did begin to enjoy it or they don't like it but they at least learned about it and can adapt."

Furthermore, she goes on to say that:

"I think it helps to break down the obstacles, whatever stereotypes they have about a different group; it helps

break it down and see everyone is part of a family and social situations in the neighborhood; they can all benefit from a different curriculum. Very different multicultural games going on in your curriculum is important.

Half of the participants interviewed expressed a major issue with the fact that most of their students only want to play basketball or football, saying that soccer and tennis are 'White sports.' This quote from Howard addresses this topic as related to how he attempts to meet the NASPE standard of diversity.

"Cultural diversity is very important in my units. It is a major challenge for me to get the students to understand that there is more to sports and physical education than just basketball. I try to get them to understand and appreciate the different activities other cultures have to offer. At first, the students are very apprehensive about trying new things. A big response I get is they "Don't want to play no White boy sports". Usually once they give it a try and participate they end up enjoying the activity. Something I really try to do is incorporate at a least one activity or unit to the different cultures in my class. Whether my students are Black, White, Hispanic, Asian or Muslim, I want them all to be included. I feel it is important to recognize every culture so all students feel they are on the same level.

Howard did go on to say that his school had the same

'Hispanic' and African American students, and these are his thoughts about the future:

"Working in an inner-city district our demographics do not change much. The biggest challenge I face is getting the students to open their minds and realize there is more out there than basketball. I like to introduce different sports from all different cultures to my students so they have a better understanding of people that may be different from them... In the future, I do not really see the demographics changing.

My school population will stay the same. What I like to do is each year to introduce a new game or sport from a culture that the students do not know much about. In doing this, they will learn something new and it will not be the same activities year after year."

In summary of multicultural curriculum, the majority of teachers did not have any training on other cultures; but they would attempt to address multicultural games if given the proper training and equipment. If the curriculum is handed down from either the district or the school and the teacher has a \$150 budget a year, it is safe to assume that teachers will get the most equipment for the money. In terms of professional development, districts cannot afford to send them to workshops to learn about these various games and culturally relevant curricula. This places the burden on teachers to be creative and use students and the Internet to explore what lies beyond health related fitness activities. It is important to recognize that multicultural lessons were rarely used, indicating the teachers' promotion of multiculturalism to be at the bottom level of Banks' (2003) stages of curriculum, and showing most of the participants To fail to meet the goals of NASPE standard on diversity.

### ***Perceptions on Curricula Development***

The ideas the participants held about their curriculum will be discussed in this section. It is important to acknowledge

that designing a curriculum involves taking in to consideration various facts, concepts, realities and people's views. Teachers, administrators and researchers can cooperate to design a curriculum. Curricula design begins with the following: goals, outcomes, benchmarks, units and a set of standards (Jewett, Bain and Ennis, 1995). Most physical education curriculum is created from a previous curricula model (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). The majority (8) of the participants received their curriculum from the school or the district, while others (2) were left to create a curriculum on their own. Regardless of where the curriculum came from, equipment and facilities influenced what was actually implemented. Each participant had various ideas on what a physical educator needs to know about curriculum development.

Teaching for the specific population seemed to be a very prevalent idea. Howard's views of what needs to be examined when working on creating a physical education curriculum can be demonstrated as follows:

"... They [teachers] need to learn what can work best to motivate kids; they need to use whatever you learn at your college and apply it to a smaller space and modify it to reach urban kids. They've never done this before and that's understandable... do not try and use activities for a college sized gym, you need to gear it toward your facilities, equipment and demographic make up of your students."



Kevon supported Howard's idea of having a constantly evolving student-centered curriculum in their schools in indicating that:

"Well obviously the curriculum needs to take into account the students, that the curriculum is being created for... a curriculum that is done in a high school in the suburbs is not going to work in the city, because the kids have completely different backgrounds and different issues. You have to take into account all the kids and inclusion. We are also trying to hit on the Nintendo Wii to draw in the video game generation."

Kevon later added:

"Curriculum should be new and should be ever-changing and dynamic. Curriculum that was done ten years ago is not appropriate curriculum for today. They might have these new ideas and any kids coming out of school [P.E.T.E.] very well may have better ideas; and, if they could voice those ideas in a way that will or won't be accepted, they could have a huge influence on curriculum. They have all the new information and new techniques, I think they do know and need to be confident about their education and what it provides for them."

Furthermore, others had the same perception of creating a student-centered curriculum, which is an idea that these teachers' held about their current curriculum. "The first concern is what kind of students you have; what level will you be teaching," said Zadine. Jasmine's statements are nearly the same; "You need to know to include all levels of what kids can do. You need to include beginning, intermediate and advanced. I also think that you need to think about kids with IEP's." Sasha supported the concept that one needs to "...try to get the kids

enthusiastic about what's going on, make it fun or whatever because it's easier for them to show interest... so you need to modify the curriculum to meet the students' interests." As the interviews continued, more and more people talked about the fact that when developing the curriculum, one needs to think about the kinds of kids you have.

John stated: "Universities don't teach us how to motivate the students... how to encourage them." To follow right along with that quote is Miguel's view: "I try to take into account if the students benefit more if they want to do it and if it's a sign that they don't like it [not participating], then they take less out of it." Having students in mind when you are developing the units and sports that you are going to place in the curriculum is very important to both participation and class morale. Another important thing to do when implementing the curriculum is actually implementing and following it.

"The curriculum is important and they [teachers] would do best to stick to the curriculum as much as possible; even though they are going to be adding their own personal teaching style to the curriculum, they should stick to it as closely as possible." (David's Interview)

John thought the same way about following the curriculum and using it as a blue print, so that teachers are not oblivious to what is going to be implemented. Furthermore, Zadine replied: "A physical education teacher should, as the first

thing, follow it [the curriculum] by heart. A lot of teachers change what they are supposed to do and the goals of the schools are not met." Following the curriculum that is laid out before a teacher will help both the teacher and the school. Decision-making, in terms of what units and sports are offered, seemed almost unchangeable. Sasha's opinion is that one should "... implement the curriculum that's all you need to know, just follow it, it's right there and it needs to be in your face." Another key point on curriculum development would be talking to other physical education teachers and finding out what they are doing.

Physical education textbooks and curriculum classes offer the teacher a guide to what can be done in class, yet most participants felt that an invaluable resource was other physical educators. David stated: "Meeting with other physical education teachers, I mean just to learn about what other teachers are doing in their programs, hopefully it would be something I can learn from and apply to my program." John showed support for this idea commenting that: "having a mentor is very good for support, for their knowledge and for assistance. There is only so much studying an individual can do, but another physical education teacher can give you many different things." Furthermore, Zadine adds: "Team teaching helps you to share your goals and ideas and gives the PE teachers more ideas; the

teacher would not have a hard time to introduce the new concepts." The idea of teachers communicating with one another when it comes time to develop a curriculum is supported by Jasmine's statement: "I think that staff development needs to be encouraged a lot more. Sometimes a once a month staff meeting is not enough... you could sit and talk and see someone else's experience, that would be a great thing."

Additionally, Howard had the curriculum handed to him from a committee and had this to say:

"I think it is a big mistake by not incorporating diversity into established goals. The way society is today, no matter where you go there will most likely be a diverse group of students. I think it is very important for students to understand the aspects of different cultures, and physical education can help with that. Whether it comes from a sport, a game, or dance, these are all ways for students to get a taste of what other cultures do. Physical education teachers should pick certain days of the year and devote them to specific activities related to different cultures that are represented in the school."

The participants' all indirectly answered research question number one, which was: what ideas do they hold about their curriculum. The participants' views and ideas on development of curriculum were diverse and touched on many different positive and negative thoughts on their current curricula. Overall, most of them thought they needed to put their own spin on what is being taught and how to teach it. Finally, the views on how to

develop curriculum led to ideas and value placement on fitness and lifelong activities.

### ***Ideas on Priorities in Physical Education Curriculum***

What ideas do physical education teachers hold about their curriculum will be addressed in the following theme. All of the participants thought that health related fitness and lifelong activities should be considered the most important part of their curriculum. Moreover, many used a specific "physical best" program and the "fitness gram" as the foundation of their curriculum (see appendix for Physical Best). In the next several sections, ideas on priorities in physical education are examined. The teachers unanimously decided to weigh personal health related fitness as one of the most important parts of their curriculum. The participants believed that the growing obesity rate among children in the United States made them to implement physical activities that revolve around improving the five components of health related fitness. Nearly all of the units focused on some type of fitness at the beginning of the class, if not directly incorporated into the lesson. Goals such as improving cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, muscle endurance, and flexibility became part of the ongoing curriculum implementation. For many of the teachers, such as Jasmine, the goal was to "...move away from team sports and move toward

improvement of health and life long sports..." Moreover, Howard's views point that,

"The biggest problem I have with the curriculum I follow is that there is not much fitness incorporation. Fitness testing is not a high priority. I have to include that on my own. Whatever fitness the students get is because of how I include fitness into the sports skills being taught. I believe fitness is very important, so I try to add as much as I can within the limits of what I have to teach."

This view points out Howard's idea of perceiving to change from traditional sports to more fitness based activities. He went on to say that, he thought his 'non-athletes' would increase their enjoyment level of physical education, while athletes are thought to prefer these fitness activities less, because they are not "practicing" their sport. A good example of this is found in a quote from Jasmine:

"The non-athletes actually enjoy the physical fitness part of the lesson as much as the athletes enjoy their team sports. So the body conditioning thing allows these non-athletes a chance to test themselves and possibly succeed rather than get into a competitive game that they don't really like."

Whether doing cardiovascular units or body conditioning units, the teachers wanted the students to think about fitness. Some even tried to incorporate 10,000 steps a day, and use of pedometers while others used the first 20 minutes of class as daily fitness time. Each unit would have a component that does not have a direct correlation with the sport, instead, shifted focus to improving all of the health related fitness components.

David said: "... at least some type of jogging at the beginning of class to meet the minimal requirements of cardiovascular endurance would be essential for meeting the goals of cardiovascular fitness." Miguel, added that:

"Well obviously physical fitness, where students learn about their bodies... everyday uses that can be used. When you incorporate physical fitness you always have to talk about nutrition and normal everyday things that seem to be taken and used on a daily basis."

Each teacher had their own way of adding fitness into the daily lessons, including David, Marilyn and John who had included fitness components into the "Physical Best" program. This program starts the year off with fitness activities and ends the year with the fitness gram, which is a formal fitness evaluation. For these individuals, the district physical education coordinator handed down the curriculum and the teachers modified it based on available equipment. For example, when a teacher had forty students, but only six basketballs, the teacher created basketball unit plans that focused on group fitness within skill building in basketball. John explained:

"... an example would be dribbling, but because of the space, making a game out of it, and the kids are constantly moving so they are working on their cardiovascular fitness."

Others like Zadine and Sasha thought that fitness ranked 9 out of 10, or second to skill development in importance to the overall curriculum. Most teachers' ideas on fitness focused on

the view that it needs to be a part of the curriculum, and it should take a large part of planning for the year. Technological advancements have led to the development of many sedentary or nonphysical activities for children. Consequently, sometimes physical education class is the only chance the child has to be active all week. John commented:

"It's not like when we were kids... [when] I would be outside all day playing wiffleball or football or something... these kids have iPods and video games to entertain them."

There is a growing apprehension in the society of the United States due to the rise in diabetes in children and an increase in body fat to an average of nearly thirty percent. In order to combat obesity in his students, Kevon presented these ideas during his interview:

"... I've been trying to get the school together to buy heart rate monitors; the girls love a five week walking unit... With the monitors, we can get the girls to understand how this affects the heart and cardiovascular endurance."

In summary, the participants thought that personal fitness improvement and individual competition tend to drive many students in the gymnasium. This is an idea that each of the teachers held about their physical education curriculum. Additionally, many participants thought that they would have a large part of their curriculum devoted to fitness based regardless of the curriculum being used. This means that they



would add in a fitness-based warm-up or fitness-based skill building sessions. Finally, this is where physical education programs will have to change in the years to come, due to the increase of fast food consumption and video game playing, which is a reality in the current state of affairs in the United States.

### ***Importance of Lifetime Activity Units***

This section centers on ideas about lifetime activity units, which directly correlates to research question one. Movements are sometimes complex and physical contact can have an added burden, such as injury. Sports and games have all different degrees of difficulty. The answer to these types of physical activities is lifelong sports such as golf, tennis, jogging, walking, and softball. Kevon's views on lifetime activities are displayed in this statement. "We also do a lot of leisure time activities; we try to teach them a little golf, a little ping-pong, a little hacky-sac, and the girls do jump rope. We try to get them into an active lifestyle and a healthy environment."

In any city in the United States, there are coed recreation leagues that offer fun physical activities for people of all ages. Whether a person chooses 5-K walk/run or an adult tennis league, these movement-based activities can be modified to accommodate people into their golden years. With these ideas in

mind, physical educators have started incorporating these individual and partner activities into their curriculum. As a result, when the students graduate and for the rest of their lives, they may have the basic knowledge to sign up for a league or play a pickup game. Those teachers that did not focus that much on fitness thought that lack of fitness was a negative part of their curriculum.

Howard commented:

“the bad thing about our curriculum is that there is too much sports orientation and we need to have more fitness, rather than teaching sports... fitness improvement is very important to me more so than what I'm doing right now, fitness is very important and rates highly in my ideas and beliefs of how curriculum should be... I really want to add more fitness; I would like to bring in a 'Jump-rope-for-Heart' in March”

Many of the interview subjects thought that health related fitness activities could and should be considered as lifelong activities that the students can take part in daily. Sasha explains that: “By teaching them aerobic activity, they can help deal with daily stresses that may come down the road.” Whereas Miguel stated: “talk about fitness and nutrition often, so the students can take it home and build up a working knowledge to use later in life.” Both of these teachers have the same basic perspective involving the incorporation of fitness concepts into their curricula, which may then help their students' in future lifelong physical activity endeavors. David agreed that fitness

is something one can do on their own, and continue doing into older adulthood. Others like Jasmine thought that softball and tennis are activities that are relatively less competitive and can be played for little cost. Jasmine expressed that:

"I would say units like tennis for sure, because we emphasize that it is a lifetime activity and an activity they can do on their own and only need one other person... softball too as an activity they carry later on that a lot of people play coed softball as they get older.... social activities that involve exercise."

Overall, many participants thought of their students as existing outside the confines of the gymnasium, and wanted them to partake in some type of physical activity outside of class. This idea indicates that team sports, such as football, may not be a good unit to have in a physical education curriculum because of the unavailability of football leagues outside of high school. More importantly, the toll that such a sport takes on the body is great. Finally, we need to understand that students may not like the activities. However, incorporating activities into this curriculum that students like and provide long-term benefits is a true act of planning on the part of both the physical education teachers and the district curricula planners.

### ***Perceived Needed Changes in Physical Education***

Research question number two concerns what the teachers perceived needed to be changed in their physical education

curriculum. The participants' views on various reforms that need to take place focused on the school and the demographics of the students. Miguel's thoughts on the topic can be seen in this statement:

"I feel that it is a mistake for planners to not incorporate diversity into any curriculum goals, because as Americans we clearly live in a very diverse place. When devising a curriculum the location and demographic of a school will always be the first priority. With this being said, certain schools are located in highly populated areas. Curriculum goals for heavy populated city schools would have different curriculum goals than those located in rural areas. By limiting curriculum diversity, we are clearly limiting the way our students learn and think. All curricula should require different and diverse types of activities, teaching strategies as well as learning environments. Curriculum should contain some concrete standards but it should also allow the teacher enough flexibility to change and adjust the curriculum so that it meets the needs of the students in a particular location. Flexibility given to teachers would allow state wide and regional curricula the ability to shape lessons and goals to suit the needs of schools and students in their designated area."

Zidane supports Miguel's idea of individual school curricula and addressing student's needs by saying that:

"Every school is independent in terms of its curriculum; the staff headed by the principal sees how it fits in the kind of curriculum the school should have; ours is a bilingual school and therefore we are concentrated in ESL English as second language. Through implementation of modified exams and lesson plans such as having them interpreted in Spanish for example. The future is more unpredictable and therefore, as teachers, we should be ready for abrupt and long term changes; remember everything depends on the type/composition of students at hand."

The evolution of curriculum in physical education has now taken a new turn and many schools are attempting to move away from team sports and move toward lifetime activities and fitness. Curriculum in traditional physical education programs focused on sports. Not until after the Korean War did John F. Kennedy start to ask educators to begin implementing the Presidents Fitness Challenge. Now, nearly 50 years later, physical education programs are being designed at the regional and district level and being handed to the physical education staff. Most teachers thought that the well-thought out units are sound, well rounded and drive the entire year, leaving out guesswork. All of the participants thought that a centralized curriculum within a city would be a good idea; though, it should be modified based on equipment. Eight out of ten participants had the curriculum given to them by the school or the district; the two teachers that did not have the curriculum given to them worked at the very low performing schools (self-stated). These teachers felt out of the loop and one even commented that there was an article in the paper about a large city physical education training program when the new mayor took office. He had to read about it the next day, rather than being there because he had no knowledge of the event. The following is a statement based on Reggie feeling "out-of-the-loop".

"So a new mayor took office and he comes in with all these changes, like making the Fitness Gram mandatory for all physical education curricula but then I look in the paper and find out that there was a 2 day city wide physical education conference before school started and I wasn't aware of it... How can I implement something when I don't even get an email or a call or a letter, you see what I'm working with here..." {frustration}

The participants that did have the district or school give them a curricula layout thought it helped. Previously, the curriculum was 'every-man-for-himself' and they had to create how they envisioned a proper, usable physical education curriculum. The group generally felt that the new curriculum meets either the state or national physical education standards but is sometimes hard to implement due to behavior problems and facilities. Teachers had their own ideas on state and nationally mandated curricula. Sasha said: "I think it would be a great idea, I think they really need to strongly implement that [curriculum] and make it 'really' mandatory, starting in kindergarten [through 12<sup>th</sup>]." To support Sasha's statement, John expressed:

"Absolutely, if they were able to create a curriculum and get it right... but to have something state wide that would be universal for physical education, would be good and it would give credit to the physical education programs; that a state has mandated."

The negative part about having a state or nationally mandated curriculum was the disparity in equipment and

facilities in an inner city versus other areas of the country. Often city physical educators have a small gym and no outside access, so with large classes, issues with space would arise. Jasmine's ideas on facilities were that: "... many programs, the state, especially in the city, usually don't take advantage of the outdoor activities and so they just stay inside, and there are certain things that we can do outside." Although space, gymnasias, and equipment may be different between a city and a suburb or a rural school, the same basic concepts can be the foundation of a well-rounded curriculum.

"I think in terms of fitness in general, a nationally mandated curriculum would work really well because pretty much that works; I should say we all have the same basic needs. All students' bodies need the same basic things and we can all do the same types of exercises and get pretty much the same results... I think a nationally mandated curriculum would be great, requiring that all students are able to... for example jog..."

Furthermore, Howard agrees with a state mandated curriculum as a guide to be modified at the school level.

"I think it does [need to be reformed], each school does its own thing and some schools have more advanced equipment than others... but then there's the school where the gym teacher rolls out the ball and sits in his office and reads the newspaper; this is how some schools are; if there was a mandated curriculum schools had to follow the teachers would start to teach and in the processes the class would be tougher for the kids... I think a mandated curriculum would in itself lead physical education curriculum reform."

Some teachers thought that there was not a smooth transition between elementary, middle and high school and that the physical education teachers are not all on the same page. Reggie pointed out that: "Many programs classes are so large that no real teaching goes on... it is more like free time. So, you get these kids in high school and they expect basketball all the time and you start to teach volleyball and they are very unused to a P.E. Teacher teaching..." Jasmine shows support for this idea: "I think it does [need to be reformed] because there is not a good transition from each level ... elementary level they don't really transition from the middle school level to the high school ... I would say that we don't know exactly what skill level is done at the elementary school... so we waste time at the high school [doing the same thing]." Not having a flowing curriculum can lead to many problems. Students come from a wide variety of elementary schools, leaving them with different skill sets, occurs because curricula are not paralleled. More importantly, there are many basic motor movements that everyone should possess, and basic games that all children should know, at least able to participate at a minimal skill level. Reggie explains: "Not being able to throw a ball by the time you are in high school should be a red flag that somebody was not doing their job!"



Kevon's thoughts on curricula reform recognized the gap between the "older" generation of teachers and the new physical educators.

"I do believe it needs to be reformed; actually I don't think it needs an entire tear down and rebuild. From my own experiences of running into a problem with the younger generation has a newer approach to physical education but unfortunately there are a lot of older teachers around that are traditional phys. ed. kind of people and that's what they were taught. I'm not hating on what they're doing right but right now we need to get out of the basketball, volleyball and soccer; it can't be traditional sports all the time. Traditional sports are scaring kids out of phys. ed. and making them uncomfortable and I'll like it if there is any way we can find more lifestyle activities and teach kids about important parts of physical activities."

Physical education reform needs to be a joint effort, and based on the participant's statements, both the national and state standards are moving in the correct direction. The problem truly exists between the schools, districts and most of all, within the field of physical education. Finally, teachers themselves need to want to change or no reform can begin to take place.

### ***Obstacles to Implementing Culture in Curriculum***

The participants in this study indicated changes needed in order to reform the participants' curriculum, which included large class sizes and lack of space. The Participants in this study indicated that large class sizes and lack of space led to overcrowding in the gymnasium. Whenever you get a large group

of teenagers together, they are going to want to talk and 'fool' around. However, most teenagers are responsible enough to know that class time is time to learn. It seems that the population of the inner city schools that I interviewed had a hard time deciphering class time from free time. Sasha pointed out that: "You get them as teenagers and it's harder because it didn't happen at their younger or earlier grades when they really should begin implementing it [discipline], now it is a problem in high schools." Behaviors that have been present since elementary school are now taking place in high school, which makes it very challenging for many of my participants to try innovative games and give more freedom of choice in the gym. In an attempt to combat these behavior problems, teachers have set a behavior modification plan as simple as cooperation with others, teamwork and respect for the speaker. To lend support to this idea, Howard said:

"... working together and having respect for each other and the other staff during class. I try and keep the goals simple. The affective and social goals should be geared toward, working together throughout the whole year; I follow a couple of standards and they understand they don't follow those rules..."

More social and behavioral goals were present throughout the transcripts of the interviews. Jasmine said: "One goal is to get them to focus and get into the team and support one another because they're so young and they like to make fun of

each other. We try to calm them down and those are proper behavioral goals that we use in our lessons." These behaviors seem like something that should have been learned in K-6 but here, high school teachers are focused on getting students to focus enough to make teams. In this regard, Jasmine expressed: "...especially boys, it takes them a longer time to sit down and they are very touchy with one another and play fighting and so forth..." To lend another view of this problem, David felt that behavior problems may lead to safety problems. If students are messing around, they are probably not paying attention to what is going on. When this occurs in a physical education setting, a ball or stick could hit students and hurt them.

"One of the main concerns I've always had and still have to this day is because of a small gym; we don't have the outside area so... safety in a sport [becomes a behavioral goal] ... concerned with TOO much body contact, especially when you're getting near the walls... the students need to be careful and just to be aware of their surroundings and get near students without putting their hands on them, so those types of safety social behaviors," said David.

A statement like this makes a reader wonder how small the gym really is and how many kids are really in there. It is hard to imagine the impact that a simple push or lack of concentration would have on a student getting hurt, which leads to goals like working well with others. Zadine stated: "How to communicate within the school. Communicating with all the teachers and everything... this is important because it builds

values." John supported Zadine's statement stating: "The important skill is to work well with other people; that would be a huge skill that they can learn, and when they get older and in the workforce, especially if they're working in a job where you have to work with a lot of people." If behavior and social skills are prevalent in most physical education curricula, it shows that physical education teachers have the opportunity to provide a positive social climate to foster teamwork skills and development of cooperation techniques that are applicable to today's society.

The lack of teamwork and cooperation skills affects the curriculum that teachers implement. Howard added teamwork into nearly every lesson of his curriculum.

"It (teamwork) is usable outside the gym walls. Working well with others, with partners, is a vital because they are isolated in the classroom a lot of the time and there's not a lot of interaction among them in the classroom, so they come to the gym, and they understand that they can work together to accomplish something and it teaches them that you need to rely on other people to help you sometimes... they are definitely not getting that in the classroom so I try to focus them and get them to work as a team."

Many teachers have instant activities for when the students walk into the gym. For example, if the unit is handball the students would walk in and there can be skill cards spread out throughout the gym with all the equipment ready. The students then go through the stations as individuals or groups. This is

an example of a modern warm-up that really focuses on skill development and individual direction. Many teachers would love to provide such starter activities but their students are not responsible enough for these ideas. John had a great comment on the topic: "some schools and teachers use activities at the beginning of class, or students can come in a class and practice or play with items related to the units... schools like mine you can't give the activity or equipment because you spend the rest of the day trying to get it back."

David had similar problems with his classes: "I would have to stop the class and have everyone sit down... by stopping the class they would get upset and they would have to stop the behavior; it would become less and less because they really wanted to be active." A conclusion that can be drawn from this is that if the students want to be in the gym, they will stop behaving inappropriately. Therefore, the curriculum and lessons are working if they are willing to stop. Thus by taking time away from them early in the year, class time later in the year will be more productive.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is Marilyn that felt that all she could do is encourage sportspersonship and encourage teamwork due to the class size. "Well that's [physical best curriculum] ideal for small class setting and when you don't have behavioral issues... our underperforming

students it is very difficult to implement with 50 students". Reggie had nearly the same problem in his physical education class.

"Implementing a curriculum with 50 kids in a small crowded gym is often tough, you don't want to roll out the ball because then they [the students] win, I know a lot of teachers do that... I try to aim for a couple of students at a time, the ones with big behavior issues and hopefully the others fall into line," (Reggie's Interview)

Physical educators attend college (PETE programs) to learn how to teach, yet when they get to the gymnasium, they are almost starting at a lower level. Even a well-designed curriculum cannot help when you do not have the space or equipment to implement the curriculum. Adding behavior issues to the equation further limits teachers in terms of what they want to do and what they can actually do. In order to combat behavior problems, many teachers have invoked teamwork and cooperation sections to their lessons. All of these concepts can aid in reforming physical education curriculum at the school and district level.

### ***Ideas on Social Responsibility & Cooperation***

Other key ideas about reforming the participants' curricula were cooperation, social responsibility, and teamwork. Teamwork is a skill that is a mainstay in physical education since the beginning of formal classes. When you play a sport or activity, working with others is ingrained in the team model. Even sports

that involve partners at least call for the students to work with one other person, if not three, due to the fact that you are playing against two other students. Due to the strong tie of teamwork to sports, most participants gave a very high importance level to cooperation and teamwork during the interviews.

"You can't just go on with the unit and start activities until you get to know each other and trust each other and form a bond. So, what I do in the beginning is usually in the first few weeks is a lot of project adventure... activities such as the trust fall, the blindfold. We also play problem solving games to figure out a solution... it does help you out the whole year because I feel like if they don't do that they really don't get to connect as much... you need binding in the beginning in order to have successful curricula and a successful school year," (Jasmine's Interview).

Project adventure and outdoor education are often associated with a sense of teamwork and cooperation. Kevon has an adventure unit that he thought met the standards associated with social responsibility.

"The ABLE program is much more about team building. There's a lot of team building exercises you're trying to get them to break some barriers to try to work with each other because a lot of our students have a tough time listening to ideas and working with others and delegating responsibility. This unit really gives us a chance to sit down and really do some of the teamwork stuff; because the traditional activities such as basketball and volleyball don't... this unit [ABLE see appendix] gives them a chance to show off."

Teachers do not have to go as far as project adventure to bring team building into the curriculum. Many teachers allow

their students to create teams under their direction. By choosing captains based on shirt color or birth month, teachers allow different people to take roles that they may not normally take in physical education class. "By allowing the students to choose teams they become more enthusiastic... we also allow them to referee if they want, it's not mandatory or anything," (Sasha's Interview). Reggie relates to the development of teamwork skills in physical education class.

"The students develop a bond based on the team they are on during physical education class; you normally get them to interact with people that they don't really talk to... then you might see them in the hallways later, outside of class, so it must be working a little."

Communication and listening to others' ideas is another way that physical educators start to develop a sense of team or community. Kevon discussed these topics when answering a question on goals of a unit.

"We try to get them to understand that everyone has an idea and it's not just your idea, out there. They need to listen to everyone else's ideas and then decide on what the best one is. This can work and be positive, where everyone alters one another's thinking... their ideas are allowed too. Teamwork is about respect and how to communicate... they then understand that there are roles and talking specifically about leadership, we try to touch on this every day."

In conclusion, some teachers believed that they did not inadvertently put teamwork projects into their curricula. These individuals' ideas of sport and activity expressed the idea that



it comes out naturally by having students practice with partners and play with various teams. John's idea on sport is very true as "most sports that the teachers had in their curriculum—football, baseball, soccer, and basketball—calls for teams to function together for a common goal, so cooperation is there." This is an idea that most physical education classes enjoy boasting about: the point of interaction between the students that is inherently ingrained in physical education curriculum.

### ***Funding Based Curricula Thoughts***

The final concept that informed the perceived needed change in the participants' curricula was adding more money to each of their programs. Only one of the ten participants felt that funding was not a problem in relation to curriculum development. Most participants thought that funding and facilities were a major problem when designing and implementing curriculum. Kevon's ideas on money problems in physical education can be explained by this quotation:

"Funding is a huge problem because the resources are terrible. Equipment is very, very little. We don't have the funding to purchase equipment; we can't play important games... With more funding, the kids would get a richer learning environment. I'm trying to get funding for heart rate monitors; but I'm not getting too much feedback on that; physical education is always last and we can definitely be more funded."

Howard added to this plight on funding by commenting that:

"... in a heartbeat, because I can have more equipment, improve the facilities, build more facilities, that is the biggest issue. The gym we have is smaller than most high school gyms with 40-45 kids, there's not much I can do. If I get more funding and better facilities and more equipment the curriculum would be a lot different and this would be good."

David had this to say about the topic of funding in inner-city schools:

"I think, for the students I work with, many of them have low self-esteem because of the environment where they lived. Where they come from and I think that if they saw a better facility and/or better equipment it would help them be happier and apply to their sense of self or self-esteem. They would feel that the district or the school, itself, is really concerned about the type of equipment that they are using. You know [if the students know] how much I got funded or how much the equipment costs they would not use the equipment the way they do. I definitely think that it (money) would assist in (changing) a student's thinking about how they treat the equipment."

Each teacher felt that funding directly influences what he or she can do in the gymnasium. Both the units and lessons are limited to time, space, equipment and facilities. Miguel had this to say:

"...with a lot more equipment, you can do a lot more things. You can basically revolve your curriculum around what kind of equipment you have. The curriculum should come first regardless of what kind of units you have, but we base it on what type of equipment we have."

Marilyn had this to strengthen the idea of funding physical education:

"Definitely! If there was more funding, we could have more equipment, more equipment means more balls and if

we're playing volleyball everybody has a ball in their hand and everybody can learn to serve. Everybody has a basketball to dribble in their hand and we can stand in one spot and do that."

Some participants felt that they had ample resources but with more, they could get more interest from their students. Sasha explained: "I think more funding, if we have more funding we can get more cardio equipment in our weight room. We have a great selection of weights but not enough cardio equipment and when they are working on the machines such as a treadmill they're having a great time on it, and if we have more equipment then their involvement will be much stronger." Reggie summarized the participants' thoughts on more funding and lack of funding in urban physical education programs. Reggie's ideas and view of what he has worked with provides a teachers perspective to what is really going on in physical education facilities. Reggie stated:

"Funds, in terms of facilities yes, definitely, we need a REAL gym and more lines than the basketball lines. Maybe a track or a field or something... I have taught at schools with no gym and you go outside, I had one closet full of balls and stuff. Money would help programs give more stuff to the kids. Each kid could have a ball or a glove or whatever, so they don't have to have 10 kids to a ball. But big money would help with building space and getting out of these dungeons of gyms built in the 1930's. I would settle for a gym with 2 real basketball courts and 40 balls. It's tough though, funds are scares, especially P.E. Funds."

Currently in U.S. Society, a lot of emphasis is placed on test scores, with funds being directed toward to

improving those scores; it makes funding physical education programs seem less important. The insights that the teachers provided showed ideas that concern lack of equipment and poor, substandard buildings. The U.S. Media brings complaints about raising obesity rates in school-aged children. Yet, administrators and school boards do not provide enough funds to help physical educators enact an ample curriculum. How can reform begin without the funds to help create change in curriculum?

### ***Summary***

The teachers provided insights into what is actually being implemented in the daily teaching that takes place in their schools. Each of the themes created directly or indirectly answered the five research questions that were presented at the beginning of the chapter. The themes were coded and discussed to accurately portray the participants' views, and support or negate the findings of previous research. Each theme relates back to previous research in the study of curriculum. Specifically, lack of multicultural knowledge, ideas on priorities in physical education curriculum, perceived needed changes in physical education, obstacles faced when implementing curriculum, perceptions on curricula development, and thoughts on funding that influenced curricula. The next chapter will discuss in detail how the participants' views and perspectives

support or negate previous studies' findings in curricula research. Furthermore, chapter five will add implications and suggestions for future research.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion, Recommendations and Implications

#### ***Discussion & Conclusions***

Literature examining urban physical educators and curriculum is limited (Culp, 2005). This study was conducted to determine what physical education teachers from various ethnic backgrounds thought of their currently used curriculum. The main purpose of this study was to examine urban physical education teachers' perspectives and ideas on curriculum. An additional goal of the research was to add to existing literature regarding curricula in urban physical education programs. In this chapter, I will discuss my theoretical perspective and methodological analysis. Additionally, I will compare and contrast themes and discuss them in context of previous research. Finally, I will provide recommendations for future research and implications for practicing teachers followed by a conclusion.

#### ***Theoretical Perspective***

The theory that guides my chapter five discussion is critical theory. This theory allows me to critically analyze the participants' answers as related to previous research (Crotty, 2003). Moreover, I will specifically examine the problems that exist within the structure of urban schools, while attempting to give voice to urban physical educators. Finally,

critical theory allows me to understand curricula problems in urban schools and to take a stance on issues revealed in my dissertation.

### ***Methodological Framework***

The methodological framework that guides this chapter's analysis and discussion is hermeneutic phenomenology, with the specific type being theme-by-theme analysis (Van Manen, 1990). This framework allows me to analytically examine the themes of past research, and compare and contrast them with the themes found in my research findings. This is performed through line-by-line analysis, as well as paragraph-by-paragraph theme dissection (Van Manen, 1990). In general, the goal of using this process is to better understand the essence of what was discovered and identify similarities to and differences from previous research (Laverty, 2003). Furthermore, theme-by-theme analysis allows me to utilize my own views as compared and contrasted with previous research. Additionally, it allows me to reflect on curriculum and teaching in physical education.

Qualitative data collection methods were used in this study. An initial demographic survey was used to enable a diverse sample. Secondly, an interview questionnaire was developed to obtain information about physical education teachers' ideas and perspectives on curriculum. Finally, the participants provided copies of their curricula as data

artifacts. Themes that emerged from the data include lack of multicultural knowledge, perceptions on curriculum development, priorities in physical education curricula, importance of lifetime activity units, perceived needed changes in physical education, obstacles faced when implementing curriculum of culture in physical education, ideas on social responsibility and cooperation, and thoughts on curricula funding. The first concept discussed, as related to previous research, concerns curricula programs and lack of multicultural knowledge.

#### ***Curriculum and Lack of Multicultural Knowledge***

Curricula programs are largely based on the values of the teacher and administrators (Jewitt, Ennis, & Bain, 1995). It is important when choosing a program to consider multicultural based games, to ensure a culturally diverse student body. I feel that it is a great injustice to allow physical education curriculum to continue to be largely traditional sport based (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001). When referring back to the theory of social justice, specifically, the least advantaged and historic reproduction, then allowing football, softball, and basketball to continue year after year are a travesty. Furthermore, nontraditional games, such as netball and cricket do not even get a second thought. More importantly, it is imperative for readers to acknowledge only adding games from different cultures serve as a baseline for multicultural education (Banks, 2003).



Merely incorporating games from a different culture is only the first step of Banks' stages of multiculturalism. Opening the doors to such games can enable physical education programs to think more in depth about the concepts of multicultural education as well as culturally relevant curriculum.

Several previous studies concluded that a culturally relevant curriculum is needed in urban physical education (Kulinna, McCaughtry, Cothran, & Martin, 2006; Rovegno, 2008). The participants of this study thought that culture plays a large role in the way each lesson unfolds. However, they also thought that multicultural games were not present in their current curriculum. One perceived reason for this lack of multicultural sports was that the curriculum was created at the district level. This finding supports previous urban physical education curriculum research that concluded that programs were designed at the district level and implemented by physical education teachers (Kulinna, McCaughtry, Cothran, & Martin, 2006). The administrators of each district handed down the outline of curriculum for each semester. All of the sports listed were traditional U.S. physical education sports and fitness based activities that included: soccer, football, basketball, softball and fitness units, which were offered throughout the year. This finding supports existing literature; several studies found that physical educators used programs

created by other people and merely implement what is given to them (McKenzie, 1998; Sallis, McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Marshall, & Rosengard, 1999; Jensen, 1998; Shephard, 1997; Pellegrini, 1995).

Sports, play and recreation for kids (SPARK), Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health (CATCH), Middle School Physical Activity and Nutrition (MSPAN), and physical activity for total health (PATH) are programs that are similar to the Physical Best Program (Fardy, Azzollini, & Herman, 2004; Sallis, McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Mashall, & Rosengard, 1999). The physical best program and the aforementioned programs use health related fitness curriculum and various fitness tests are utilized (McKenzie, 1998; Sallis, et al. 1999; Jensen, 1998; Shephard, 1997; Pellegrini, 1995). The concept of switching from traditional physical education curricula to fitness-based curricula is also present in both CATCH and in the curricula that the participants used in this study. Furthermore, previous research indicated school curricula to continue to focus on traditional U.S. Sports; i.e. football, baseball and basketball (McKenzie, 1998). In SPARK and MSPAN, units are set up based on seasons that were heavily represented in the participants' curricula. The teachers in previous studies thought that these programs work well for teaching sports skills and fitness;

teachers interviewed in this study indicated that fitness and game based curriculum met benchmarks that the state set.

The participants in this study thought that the lack of multicultural games was directly related to their own lack of knowledge and lack of diverse available equipment (Rovegno, 2008). Obviously, if a teacher does not know how to play a game and does not have the equipment for the game it would be impossible for them to put the multicultural game in their curriculum. These findings show that programs need to incorporate both fitness and multicultural games; moreover, teacher preparation programs need to include diverse games from all over the world in their curriculum and instruction. The need for more programs, such as these, supports the findings of Culp (2005), who expressed that educational practica should include materials that support multicultural education in urban schools.

All the participants from this study valued the goals of multicultural education, which lends support to Pahnos and Butt's (1995) ideas of diversity and understanding differences. Teachers want their curriculum to meet the needs of their learners. Previous research stated that inner city teachers work with a wide variety of ethnicities and each program should incorporate a wide variety of games (McCaughtry, Barnard, Martin, Shen, Kulinna, & Hodges, 2006). The findings in this dissertation also state that a diverse curriculum with many

games is critical to curricular implementation in urban physical education. By including diverse units, a pluralistic and accepting curriculum can be implemented, thus allowing the curriculum to meet both health related fitness goals and team sport based outcomes (Chepyator-Thomson, 2001).

### ***Funding and Needed Changes***

Reform is a hot button issue in many educational programs (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). When examining the idea of oppression and equity in funding it has become important to point out injustices in finance. Receiving \$150 a year, for physical education equipment is problematic to both the quality of the program and the reform of the education system. For many years Jonathan Kozol (1991, 2005) has pointed out the concepts behind social injustice and the plight of the urban school. This study adds to the idea of physical education being the "low man on the totem pole" by allowing the participants to tell their side of the story and pointing out how wrong it seems to be expected to run a quality physical education curriculum with limited resources and poor facilities.

Lack of funding is a key problem in many urban school districts (Kozol, 2005). Physical education equipment is very expensive and it takes many pieces of equipment to run a well-rounded physical education program. Most participants thought that their programs would be positively impacted with more

funding. Although they thought that they could improve their programs with more money, facilities were not considered in the money to fund their programs. Having more equipment is only solving half the problem with urban physical education programs. Perhaps a larger problem is having a small gymnasium with no outdoor facilities to engage in sports that need larger surfaces to play. Previous research examined the lack of funding in city schools. The problem in most city schools is the fact that most of the budget is being used for heat and building repairs (Weiner, 2006; Ogbu, 1978; Kozol, 2005). Additionally, school vouchers remove students from the schools' population, which leads to the removal of funding attached to that student (Brown, 2003). This affects the budget of the school, which results in a decrease of the physical education budget. Overall, money does not solve problems but can help physical educators implement a well-rounded curriculum in their schools.

### ***Needs of Students and Social Responsibility***

Reproduction of class and democratic participation in society are two key principles in the theory of social justice. When looking back at the review of literature, it is imperative to think critically about how, as a teacher, you can help students become active participants in society and help them become proactive in moving above the poverty line. One way a teacher can do this is to give them skills that are applicable

inside the gymnasium's walls, as well as the outside world. Developing sustainability and responsibility for your own actions is a key skill that my participants wanted to impart on their students. I feel that giving students key social behavior skills and directing them to be leaders can help them become active in leadership roles in society and help them try to better their lives through attaining their affective physical education goals.

Affective goals have long been a part of aims and goals in physical education. Based on the research findings, teachers indicated that their students lacked personal and social responsibility traits in their behavior because previous physical education experiences allowed them to develop these traits. Teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) is part of the NASPE goals for a physical educated person and has long been researched by people like Don Hellison (2003). Many of the participants thought that behavior and safety were two very important goals for each lesson, and should be included in unit planning. Dealing with students that have behavioral issues can be trying for any teacher, and it is especially hard for classes of 50 or more students. Activities that foster teamwork, respect and cooperation were highly regarded by most participants in this study. This supports previous research conducted by Martinek and Hellison (1997) which displayed that

teachers want to incorporate character development into physical activities.

Teachers want to make students think about the decisions they make inside the gymnasium walls and to think about the consequences of their actions. This is an important piece to participation in society and to overall personal responsibility. To allow the students to make behavioral decisions and own their actions was prevalent in Compagnone's (1995) study with inner city youths. The findings also concluded that the students need to follow directions and they should not make fun of others while participating in the activities. These findings support the Martinek & Schilling (2003) article about Teaching person and social responsibility based curricula to 'at-risk' youth. Many physical educators think that students lack discipline and have poor social behavior skills, which are factors that influence the way the curriculum is implemented (Lawson, 1997). Several participants in the study supported this idea. Research can be debated by researchers on whether or not it is a societal problem or a home problem. Overall, based on the participants' perspectives and my own personal inner city teaching experiences, I would think it is appropriate to include TPSR in every unit. I think this is useful because if the students are not getting these social skills at home, then it is the schools role to teach them appropriate behaviors.

### ***Priorities and Curricula Development***

When developing a physical education curriculum that is multicultural and fitness related, it is a good idea to look at critical thinking and teaching students how to activity reflect on your class. Once you give the students ideas of how to look problems from different vantage points, you give them the skills to accomplish various goals in life. Priorities of my participants were rather different then my view. I place a lot of value on fitness and cardiovascular activities but not at the expense of multicultural games and critical thinking skills. In an ideal setting, a teacher would have an all encompassing curriculum that places equal value on a variety of aspects when designing a curriculum.

Priorities and value orientations on what is considered important in a physical education curriculum are topics that give a voice to physical educators who are implementing these curricula in inner city schools (Jewitt, Bain, & Ennis, 1995). Overall, the question, "What is important to you?" comes to mind. The participants in this study, like many others, agree that health related fitness is of great value to them, and is in the best interest of the students that they teach. Due to the alarming number of overweight and obese students, the participants thought cardiovascular-based activities, such as basketball, soccer and running games were essential activities



for combating the national obesity problem. The U.S. population is overweight (60%) and 25% of the population is obese with over 20% of the population being completely sedentary (Fahey, Insel, & Roth, 2007). Statistics like this makes it so much more important for physical educators to use the time they have with the students in the most effective manner possible. "Best bang for your buck!" Activities like adventure games and softball are great for teaching teamwork, cooperation and developing social and cognitive skills, yet the heart rate and activity levels of the students is so low during these activities that it does not meet their daily 20 minutes of target heart rate cardiovascular fitness time (McCaughtry, Barnard, Martin, Shen, Kulinna, & Hodges, 2006). This idea supports past studies of fitness-based curriculum and the importance of including cardiovascular-based activities in physical education (McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Marshall, & Rosengard, 1999). SPARK, CATCH, PATH, and MSPAN all focus of health related fitness and the importance of increasing muscle strength, muscle endurance, cardiovascular fitness and flexibility, while helping to maintain a overall healthy body composition (McKenzie, 1998; Sallis, McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Marshall, & Rosengard, 1999; Jensen, 1998; Shephard, 1997; Pellegrini, 1995).

Teachers value overall fitness levels or health related fitness and social responsibility in their students which

supports a series of studies that Ennis & Chen completed (1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1999). Additionally, multi-activity curriculum was present in the participants' curricula and this confirms previous research that utilized a variety of units (Ennis, 1997). It is important to realize that physical education teachers, as a group, most likely view fitness and being able to play well with others as a high priority. An effective way of accomplishing this goal would be to use many different sports and games to keep the students and their interests levels high (McCaughtry, Martin, Kulinna, & Cothran, 2006). Finally, attempting to have the students become engaged in a "basketball culture" directly affects the amount of resistance to new curriculum. McCaughtry (2007) has previously explored how to move away from basketball in urban settings. The next section will discuss my recommendations for future research based on (a) the current lack of published articles in this area and (b) the findings of this study.

### ***Recommendations for Future Research***

Future studies in physical education curriculum in urban areas should examine the role of administrators in the creation of curriculum. Based on the results of this study, most of the participants' curriculum was created at the district level. This can lead the teacher to believe that administrators, long removed from the "front lines" of teaching' are making important

decisions about what is being taught in urban schools. A well-designed study that focuses on both the administrators and their interaction with the teachers may help both the teachers and the district administrator to design a curriculum that is more diversified and aligned with the NAPSE goals. Furthermore, long-term studies should compare and contrast fitness-based curriculum versus multicultural game-based curriculum. Many multicultural games incorporate health related fitness that could also help to teach about culture with highly cardiovascular games.

In order to truly understand what role funding plays on the development and implementation of physical activities, occurring in a physical education class, a study involving a large equipment budget could be conducted to see what types of equipment physical educators would purchase if money were not an obstacle. Perhaps a more in depth study of facilities that have both indoor and outdoor opportunities could also help urban school districts understand the dynamics of running a well-funded physical education program.

In terms of teacher education, I would recommend that future studies should focus on how teachers can find materials via clinics and workshops to add to their content knowledge on multicultural games. Physical education teacher preparation program need to teach students how to create activities that are

multicultural and appropriate. Making mandatory multicultural physical education college classes could help future teachers change outdated curricula. Finally, with the heavy influx of Spanish speaking students, a study involving English language learners (ELL) students, an ELL physical educator and a specific Hispanic/Latino based curriculum would be advantageous to the field of physical education as a whole. Understanding the culture and language of the students would open doors to the educational experience of the students and add to the knowledge base of physical educators. The primary goal of suggesting these studies is to encourage a change in the field of physical education curriculum so that overall sport and activity-based programs can grow to meet the needs of changing demographics of school districts.

### ***Implications for Practicing Teachers***

It is our duty, as physical education teachers, to increase our curricula knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in order to meet the needs of a diverse student body. By using the Internet and reading journals, practicing teachers can learn about sports and games from around the world. Current physical educators should seek out these resources to help gain a more clear understanding of students' interests from various ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, professors of physical education teacher preparation programs should attempt to infuse multicultural

curricula into practica and challenge their teacher preparation majors to use outside resources when developing diverse teaching units. Overall, with the world population diversifying, expanding technology, and the mixing of cultures, a new teacher should attempt to seek out and change before their knowledge becomes outdated. Finally, teachers should express their voices at district meetings and address the need for education in multicultural activities, as well as express how they would like to add to the curricula in their schools through increasing the teacher's curricula knowledge.

#### ***Limitations of the Study***

These are the limitations to this study. First, due to the small sample size, a larger longitudinal study may produce different results. Conducting an ethnography or case study with an increased number of participants may lead to varied results. Another limitation of this study is the fact that the sample population was from the inner city, thus making it nontransferable to rural and suburban populations. Additionally, the participants had five to 20 years experience in teaching, making the results less useful for beginning teachers. Most importantly, a major limitation of the study was not having the input of the administrators that created the curriculum. Without their views and rationalizations for why they included certain activities and not others, the study lacked a comprehensive

explanation for the curricula used.

### ***Reflections on the Research Process***

The research questions that guided this study were answered in terms of themes, which are displayed in chapter four and are discussed in this chapter. Overall, the themes thoroughly answered the research questions on the teachers' ideas on their curriculum and their perceived needed changes to reform their school curricula, which were questions one and two. Questions three, four and five dealt with multiculturalism, multicultural games and diversity as related to the NASPE standards. These questions were answered by the lack of multicultural knowledge that the participants' possessed. Overall, I think that this study was valuable to me because of the experience I had in interviewing the participants, and I through research I acknowledged that most physical educators have limited knowledge of the concepts of social justice, and multiculturalism. My goal, as an educator, is to help my students look at physical education through several different lenses, to gain a global perspective on what physical education can be using reflection and action processes.

### ***Summary***

The purpose of this study was to examine the ideas and perspectives that urban physical education teachers possessed. The findings, as connected to the research questions of the

study, are discussed in this section. My perspectives on this study include the view that my participants are not reaching the minimal goals of multiculturalism, as set forth by James Banks (2003). Additionally, the driving principles behind social justice are limited in the teacher's perspectives on curriculum implementation. None of the teachers discussed how they thought they were the least advantaged in the education realm, many physical education teachers are thought of as coaches or the old adage comes to mind, "those how can do... those how can't do teach... and those who can't teach... teach physical education. Even more disheartening was the fact that they did not express the idea that they should focus on power struggles that their students below the poverty line face. Some participants thought it was a travesty that their students receive an unequal physical education curriculum, compared to the suburban schools 20 miles away. Ultimately, these concepts are left up to the teachers, to explore and gain curricula knowledge of such concepts.

The following ideas center on the main points learned from this study. First, urban school districts are developing curriculum plans and the teachers are implementing their versions based on available facilities and equipment. Secondly, a very important result was that the teachers thought they were unprepared to incorporate multicultural games into the

curriculum, and thus, did not meet the NASPE standards on diversity. Finally, the participants showed that fitness and cardiovascular activities seemed to be the most important concepts that physical educators wanted to pass on to their students. Overall, the ten urban physical educators gave us a look into what they are doing with their schools' curricula. It is important to use the results of this study to attempt to modify current curricula in order to meet the needs of each student, and to remain in line with the goals of NASPE. This modification may create a "physically educated" student. Furthermore, teachers should take advantage of the cultural resources that their students bring to the class and help foster an understanding and appreciation of differences, while attempting to improve health related fitness. Overall, it is my goal to take this data and previous research and bridge the gap between urban physical education curriculum and the goals of both social justice and NAPSE standards (see appendix).



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## **Appendix A**

### ***Informed Consent***

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in the research study, Urban High School Physical Education Teachers' Ideas and Perspectives On Curriculum, conducted by Robert Schmidlein (646-236-2853 in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Georgia under the direction of Dr. Rose Chepyator-Thomson, Department of Kinesiology at the University of Georgia, Tel. (706) 542-4434. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have all information about me, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

I understand that:

1. The reason for this research is to discover what ideas are being used in curriculum implementation in urban high schools.
2. This study will benefit high school physical education teachers because it provides research information to help them become more aware of curricula that they use successfully in teaching children from different backgrounds.
3. I will participate in two: thirty minute to one hour interviews that will ask for information regarding curriculum, educational history and demographics. The interview is expected to take at least 30-60 minutes.
4. If I choose to participate in the study, my information will be kept confidential unless required by law. If information about me is published, it will use pseudonyms. Interview information will be destroyed three years from the date following completion of the dissertation. I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. My participation is entirely voluntary, and I will receive a copy of this consent form for my records.



**Appendix B**

***Demographic Survey***

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Degree (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Years teaching PE \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Race \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Citizen or Foreign Citizen

Initial license:

Undergraduate Teacher prep./Graduate Teacher Prep or

Alternative Route

Other subjects taught: (Leave blank if none) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### *Interview protocol*

#### **Questions:**

- 1) Please explain the extent to which the curriculum you use is prepared by (please explain)
  - (a) the district
  - (b) the school
  - (c) your own (physical education staff)
  - (d) Amount of time?
  - (e) Previously used?
- 2)
  - A. What are your thoughts on the current curriculum that you use?
  - B. What are your thoughts on a state mandated curriculum?
  - C. What are your thoughts on a nationally mandated curriculum?
- 3)
  - A. Please tell me about the typical Physical Education units you have used?
  - B. Do you think these PE units include social and behavioral goals?
  - C. If so what kinds/type social and behavioral skills do your students acquire from your implemented curriculum?
- 4)
  - A. What units/lessons provide students with skills that they could use to be active participants in today's society?

B. How do these units/lessons meet the current state or national physical education standards?

(Please explain... If they do?, If they don't? And why do you feel this way?)

5) A. Please describe problem solving strategies that are used in your curriculum?

B. Please describe any problem solving skills that are useful outside of the gym walls?

## **Interview protocol: 2**

### **Questions:**

- 1) A. Describe goals of your curriculum? (please explain, provide copy)  
B. To what extent are the following used? (outcome, goals, aim, percents or time allotment)  
(I) Sport skill development (II) Fitness improvement  
(III) Developing healthy behaviors (IV) Empowering students  
(V) Creating critical thinkers  
(VI) Developing cooperative skills (VII) Multicultural Knowledge (VIII) Write in:
  - 2) Do you think your curriculum/ program would be different with more funding?  
Why? Why not? (please explain)
  - 3) Do you think physical education curriculum needs to be reformed?  
Why? Why not? (please explain)
  - 4) A. What ideas do you have about the development of PE curriculum?  
B. What ideas of curriculum do you think new PE teachers should possess?

Please add any comments on physical education curriculum you think were not addressed in this interview?

- A) Do you have any closing thoughts?

B) Do you have a summation of what you want people to know about urban physical education curriculum?



## **Appendix D**

### ***City Demographics***

Area one= 1.3 million people. Racial or ethnic make-up 29% Black or African American, 20% Hispanic or Latino, 14.5% White (non-Hispanic), 3% Asian and nearly 33.5% being other or multiracial.

Area two= 2.5 million people. Racial or ethnic make-up: 36% Black or African American, 20% White (non-Hispanic), 19% Hispanic or Latino, 7.5% Asian, and 17.5% other or multiracial.

These Figures are based on the projected 2005 census by the U.S. Census Bureau and was retrieved on June 19, 2008 from <http://www.census.gov/>

\*note that the majority of the teachers interviewed reported that they had 'few' White students and reported a large Black and Hispanic student population in their schools.

## **Appendix E**

### ***Adventure Based Learning Experience***

(A.B.L.E.)

#### Philosophy

To provide an opportunity to be challenged both physically and emotionally in a supportive, fun-oriented, safe and non-threatening environment.

#### Goals:

To increase an individual's sense of confidence and self esteem through positive and emotional risk-taking activities.

To involve students in activities which promote self responsibility and responsibility to others.

To demonstrate personal commitment to group success.

To increase the level of participation and sense of fun.

#### Basic Elements of the Program

Trust

Communication

Cooperation

FUN

#### Methods:

Challenged by Choice

This philosophy offers each participant the free-do to choose without traditional performance pressures. The components of challenge by choice are:

1. The chance to try a potentially difficult and/or frightening challenge in an atmosphere of support and caring.
2. The opportunity to "step back" when performance pressures and/or self doubt become too strong, knowing that an opportunity for a future attempt will always be available.
3. The chance to try difficult task, recognizing that the attempt is more significant than performance results.
4. Respect for individual ideas and choices.

#### Full Value Contract

An important strategy in the development of constructive interaction of group members is to establish an agreement regarding ground rules. Basically, participants agree to honor three provisions:

To work together as a group and to work toward individual and group goals.

To follow safety and group behavior guidelines.

To give and receive feedback, both positive and negative, and to work toward changing behavior when it is appropriate.

#### Activities

##### Ice Breaker/Acquaintance

###### Objective:

To provide opportunity for group members to get to know each other and to begin feeling comfortable with each other

through activities, initiative and games that are primarily fun, non-threatening and group based.

Features:

- \*fun is a major component.
- \*Group members interact in a non-threatening manner.
- \*Success-oriented; tasks can be easily accomplished with minimal amount of frustration.
- \*Requires minimal verbal interaction and decision-making skills.

De-Inhibitizer Activities

Objective:

To provide a setting wherein group participants are able to take some risks as well make improvement in commitments and a willingness to appear inept in front of others.

Features:

- \*Activities involve some emotional and physical risk to take some risks which may arouse some discomfort and frustration.
- \*Success and failure are less important than trying and making a good effort.
- \*Fun activities allow participants to view themselves as more capable and confident in front of others.

Trust Activities

Objective:

To provide an opportunity for group members to trust their physical and emotional safety with others by attempting a

graduated series of activities which involve taking some physical and/or emotional risks.

Features:

- \*Involve group interaction both physically and verbally.
- \*Generally involves fun, but some fear as well.
- \*Involves the support and cooperation of the group members to care for the safety of others.
- \*Risk taking occurs at many levels in most of the trust activities.
- \*The development of trust occurs in the group gradually.

Trust activities are chosen with the intent of building trust; basic trust activities are initially chosen and can be performed repeatedly to reinforce and insure the safety of group members.

Communication Activities

Objective:

To provide an opportunity for group members to enhance their ability and skill to communicate thoughts, feelings, and behaviors more appropriately through activities which emphasize listening, verbal, and physical skill in the group decision-making process.

Features:

- \*Physical activity, verbal interaction and discussion are major components in the sharing of ideas.

\*The solving of the problem is the established goal.

\*Some frustration is generally evident in the solving of the problem.

\*Leadership abilities and skills usually evolve from participants within the group.

#### Decision-Making/Problem-Solving Activities

##### Objective:

To provide an opportunity for group members to effectively communicate, cooperate, and compromise with each other through trial and error participation in a graduated series of problem-solving activities which range from the more simply solved to the more complex.

##### Features:

\*Physical activity and verbal communication are involved in order to solve stated problems.

\*Arousing a higher level of frustration teaches that patience is a virtue.

\*Activities demand that group members can demonstrate an ability to listen, cooperate and compromise.

\*Leadership rolls evolve in the attempt to solve the stated problem or reach the stated goal.

\*Trial and error approach to learning is most often employed by the group in the problem-solving/decision making process.

#### Social Responsibility Activities

Objective:

To provide a setting wherein group participants can build upon previous gains in areas of acquaintance, trust, communications, and decision-making, to develop skills in assessing and working effectively with the strengths and weaknesses of individuals in a group.

Features:

- \*Success in these activities is somewhat dependent upon individuals being able to learn how to support and encourage each other's efforts.
- \*Activities tend to help participants learn the value of thinking and planning ahead rather than reacting in an impulsive and random manner.
- \*Activities tend to emphasize that participants in the group communicate and cooperate verbally and physically.
- \*Activities help participants develop skills in assessing problems and formulating solutions.
- \*Activities help relate the group to the world "outside" in an empathetic and concerned manner.
- \*Activities tend to help individuals and the group identify and develop leadership in the group.

Personal Responsibility Activities

Objective:

To provide activities and initiative of a somewhat more individualistic nature which challenge participants to develop persistence and resistance to develop persistence and resistance to frustration in attempting to reach a desired goal.

Features:

\*Most activities are classic ropes course events that are both the most difficult and challenging and the most exciting.

\*Activities help group members acknowledge individual and common reaction to fear, stress, and physical limitation.

\*Participation in these activities encourages group support for individual efforts.

\*Participation helps group members extend the limits of their self-perceived competence and build self confidence by successful completion of a difficult task.

\*Activities help group members to act on what they have learned about working together, supporting one another, and taking responsibility for one another's safety.



## Appendix F

### *Physical Education District Curriculum Guide*

<b>Module</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Area to Develop</b>	<b>Standards</b>
1a	Orientation	2 weeks	Procedures, rules and goals	NASPE 1,4 NYS 1,2
1b	Pre test assessment	2 weeks	Establish present level of Fitness	NASPE 1,4 NYS 1,2
2a	Fitness introduction	1 week	Learning the health related fitness components	
2b	Fitness/ flexibility	2 weeks	Body composition, methods of measuring BMI proper stretching	NASPE 1,4 NYS 1,2
2c	Aerobics	2 weeks	Define aerobics, HR, pacing, self-assessment	NASPE 1,4 NYS 1,2
2d	Muscle strength and endurance	2 weeks	Types of muscle, how they work, resistance training	NASPE 1,4 NYS 1,2
3	Cooperative games	2 weeks	Intro to non competitive sports to promote self control, sportsmanship	NASPE 3,5,6 NYS 1,2
4	Team Sports	6 weeks	Basic beginners	NASPE 5,6,7 NYS 1,2

			level team sports: basketball, soccer, softball, etc.	
5	Individual Sports	6 weeks	Basic beginner level tennis, badminton, handball	NAPSE 3,4,7, NYS 1,2
6	CHOICE	6 weeks	Choose between dance, team sports and individual	NASPE 3,4,5 NYS 1,2
7	Fitness Gram	3 weeks	Students will be assessed and data will be collected for the completion of the fitness gram report.	NASPE 2, 4, 7 NYS 1,2
8	Field Day	3 weeks	Olympic type events	NASPE 2,4,7 NYS 1,2,3

## Appendix G

### *Physical Education Curriculum*

Unit:	Time:	Goals:
Fitness	September	Create a foundation of health related fitness
Soccer	October	Basic skills through full game
Flag Football	November	Learning several positions and different plays in football
Basketball	December	2 on 2, 3 v. 3 and full sided games
Dance/Aerobics	January	Learning hip hop and Tai-Bo
Volleyball	February	Full sided whole class volleyball learning all the basic skills
Wiffleball	March	Modified games with tactical games for understanding approaches
Handball	April	Team handball with modified rules and basic skills
Basketball/Wiffleball	May	Rotating between games based on the day of the week
Fitness	June	Fitness Gram testing

## **Appendix H**

### ***Physical Education Program***

Unit: 6 weeks Soccer and Fitness

Unit: 4-6 weeks Flag Football

Unit: 3 weeks ABLE

Unit: 2-3 weeks Dance

Unit: 4-6 weeks Basketball

Unit: 3 weeks Hackey Sac, Soccer-Tennis, Badminton

Unit: 3 weeks Softball

Unit: 3 weeks Fitnessgram

## Appendix I

### *Physical Best Workshop for New Teachers*

**(Target Audience: Grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 Physical Education Teachers)**

In this highly-interactive, full-day session, participants will learn basic components of health-related fitness and strategies for instruction and assessment leading to specialist certification in *Physical Best*, the K-12 core curriculum for fitness and physical education for the New York City public schools, and NYC FITNESSGRAM, the citywide health-related fitness assessment system. This course is designed to be an introduction to health related fitness curriculum and assessment for new physical education teachers. *Physical Best* differs from what is commonly referred to as "traditional" physical education, where students are taught what to do, but not why. Instead, the curriculum emphasizes the use of authentic physical activity that students enjoy, and promotes individual choices wherever possible, encouraging greater transfer to real-life settings. *Physical Best* enables students to learn why activity is important and how it benefits them today and for a lifetime, while NYC FITNESSGRAM is a criterion-referenced assessment tool that supports personal evaluation, planning, and goal-setting, rather than comparison to a peer sample.

All workshops will be held from 8:00am - 3:00pm at the Genovese center at St. Francis College located at 180 Remsen Street in Brooklyn Heights. Select from one of the following dates:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Saturday September 29	8:00am - 3:00pm	Genovese Center St. Francis College 180 Remsen Street Brooklyn Heights, NY
Saturday November 17	8:00am - 3:00pm	Genovese Center St. Francis College 180 Remsen Street Brooklyn Heights, NY
Saturday January 5	8:00am - 3:00pm	Genovese Center St. Francis College 180 Remsen Street Brooklyn Heights

**This represents a power point slide show of the clinic on**

**Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup>:**

The Physical Best Health-Related Fitness Education Program

Presentation Outline

What is Physical Best?

Why Choose Physical Best?

Physical Best Partners, Resources and Workshops

For More Information

- What?

Physical Best is a program of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), an association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)

- It is a comprehensive, health-related fitness education program, for use in K-12 physical education programs.

- What?

Comprehensive

When combined with the FITNESSGRAM/ACTIVITYGRAM assessment, it provides a complete fitness education and assessment program with teacher training and resources- What?

Health-Related

The emphasis is on students' work toward obtaining and maintaining a healthful level of:

Aerobic Fitness

Muscular Fitness

Flexibility

Body Composition

- What?

For Use With Existing Curricula

Physical Best is not intended to be a stand-alone program. It focuses primarily on NASPE standards 3 & 4, and the concepts and activities are designed for integration into a physical education program throughout the school year.

- Why?

Many Physical Educators have chosen to implement Physical Best

into their programs because it is -

Non-competitive & inclusive

Positive & individualized

With ready-to-use / practical information and activities

- Why?

Practical - yet research-based

It incorporates the latest youth fitness research & practices

Standards-based

It incorporates and supports the national physical education,  
dance education, and health education standards

Why?

Supports Government Reports -

Healthy People 2010

The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease  
Overweight and Obesity (2001)

Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health (1996)

Emphasizes -

Lifelong physical activity participation

Physical Best Partners...

Physical Best Workshops

What Workshop Participants Say:

Physical Best Resources

For More Information

Visit: [www.naspeinfo.org/physicalbest](http://www.naspeinfo.org/physicalbest)

E-mail: [physicalbest@aahperd.org](mailto:physicalbest@aahperd.org)

Or call: 1-800-213-7193 x489.

## Appendix J

### ***National Standards for Physical Education***

Physical activity is critical to the development and maintenance of good health. The goal of physical education is to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

A physically educated person:

**Standard 1:** Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

**Standard 2:** Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

**Standard 3:** Participates regularly in physical activity.

**Standard 4:** Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

**Standard 5:** Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

**Standard 6:** Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.



## **Appendix K**

### ***New York State PE Learning Standards***

*Standard 1 - **Personal Health and Fitness:***

Students will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physical fitness, participate in physical activity, and maintain personal health.

*Standard 2 - **A Safe and Healthy Environment:***

Students will acquire the knowledge and ability to create and maintain a safe and healthy environment.

*Standard 3 - **Resource Management:***

Students will understand and be able to manage their personal and community resources.