

HOWLEY, DONAL. Ph.D. Understandings and Experiences of Teaching and Learning Social and Emotional Learning and Meaningful Physical Education in an Alternative Education Setting. (2022)

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The purpose of this study was to explore understandings and experiences of promoting Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in an alternative educational Physical Education (PE) setting. Continuing focus in general education and PE has centered on how SEL theory and practices are explicitly understood and implemented (Wright et al., 2020a). Simultaneously, there is increased advocacy and evidence of pedagogical approaches “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical enactment” (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018, p. 119). Yet, despite the rhetoric, PE has been observed as “yet to maximize its potential with regard to the development of SEL competencies” (Hooper et al., 2020, p. 140). Owing to this, there exists a clear need for contemporary PE curriculum and pedagogy development to better align itself with theory and practice in order to explicitly demonstrate the accomplishment of SEL outcomes and skills. Framing this within the concept of Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) provides the potential to support pupils in coming to value PE through experiencing meaningfulness and recognizing ways participation enhances the quality of their lives (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018). This could be especially valuable in alternative education settings where there is a general paucity of research focusing on evidence-based interventions to improve behavioral and academic outcomes for students (Flower et al., 2011; Kumm et al., 2020; Schwab et al., 2016).

Utilizing social constructivist learning theory, conceptual features of MPE, and a systemic framework for SEL, three questions guide the research: 1) What prior understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE have the teachers and students encountered? 2) How do they

currently understand and experience SEL and MPE within classes? 3) What impact do these teaching and learning experiences have on their understandings of SEL and MPE? A qualitative case study design framed within a participatory action research approach (PAR) was implemented in an alternative high school. Participants included the teacher–researcher, one PE teacher, a critical friend, two teaching assistants, and a class of 16 ninth–grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys). Methods utilized include a teacher–researcher diary, post–lesson teaching reflections, interviews, focus groups, personal biographies, timelines, digital and written reflections, document/artefact examination, photovoice, and class artefacts. The Miles, Huberman, and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis was applied, involving inductive and deductive analysis and three/four step process including data reduction, data display and drawing, and verifying conclusions. Thematic analysis was then applied (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Findings demonstrate how the implementation of democratic and reflective pedagogies explicitly and intentionally promoting SEL competencies and conceptual MPE features helped both teachers and students to develop a more holistic outlook on the purpose and subject matter of PE and physical activity within and beyond classes and their wider lives. Findings can assist researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in further understanding how SEL and MPE can be better implemented into future practice, policy, teacher–education, and continued professional development in PE to influence and enhance holistic teaching and learning.

UNDERSTANDINGS AND EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MEANINGFUL PHYSICAL EDUCATION
IN AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION SETTING

by

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DEDICATION

You have to make your own way in the classroom. You have to find yourself. You have to develop your own style, your own techniques. You have to tell the truth, or you'll be found out.

(Teacher Man, Frank McCourt)

To the teachers and students who participated in this project. Thanks for keeping me honest.

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh siad!

APPROVAL PAGE

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Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends.

(W.B. Yeats)

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Never Mind the Strangers!

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a problem statement foregrounding the rationale for the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, and an overview of each chapter.

Problem Statement

While academic instruction and high stakes assessment commonly dictate and influence approaches to teaching and learning (Flower et al., 2010), pedagogies embodying social and emotional learning (SEL) can help students “learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships, and citizenship” (Jones et al., 2017, p.12). This is especially the case in alternative education settings where there is high prevalence of health-risk behaviors, social and emotional problems, and a paucity of research focusing on behavioral interventions (Johnson & Taliaferro, 2012; Olsen, 2010; Schwab et al, 2016). Within physical education (PE), there is increased advocacy and evidence in K-12 and higher education settings of approaches “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical enactment” (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018, p. 119). However, research also indicates that there is a lack of understanding as to how SEL and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in PE can be promoted and accomplished (Lynch & Sargent, 2020). Additionally, there exists a lack of evidence-based research on the promotion and implementation of such an approach within general and alternative education settings.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore understandings and experiences of promoting Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in an alternative educational Physical Education (PE) setting.

Research Questions

The following three questions guided this research:

- 1) What prior understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE had the teachers and students encountered?
- 2) How did they come to understand and experience SEL and MPE within classes?
- 3) What impact did these teaching and learning experiences have on their understanding of SEL and MPE?

Significance of the Study

A historically existing lack of definition as to what social and affective learning constitutes has been repeatedly emphasized by scholars in the field (Bailey et al., 2009; Pope, 2005). There exists a clear need for contemporary curriculum and pedagogy development to better align itself with SEL theory and practice in order to explicitly link the accomplishment of SEL outcomes and skills with the use of model-based-practices and other forms of best practice (Wright et al., 2020a; Wright et al., 2020b). One such way of doing so is to frame the teaching of SEL competencies using best practices around recognizable features of meaningful PE. However, there also exists “a need for greater clarity in thinking through how personal meaning can become part of subject purposes” (Thorburn, 2018, p. 6), and a lack of understanding as to how MPE can be promoted and accomplished (Lynch & Sargent, 2020). Alternative education settings can help provide a safe pathway towards continued and further education (Hemphill &

Martinek, 2017). In doing so, they can also play a vital role in the development of SEL competencies (Slaten et al., 2015). Owing to this, the social and affective dimension of teachers' work is especially important for students who might lack certain aspects of care and support within their personal lives (Riele et al., 2017). Furthermore, there is a lack of qualitative research and a predominance of quantitative research designs foregrounded in SEL literature (Dyson et al., 2019; 2020b; Corcoran et al., 2018; Hamre et al., 2013). Qualitative work such as this research can serve to improve and inform teaching and learning experiences within alternative education and the PE field more broadly. In doing so, this research set out to assist researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in further understanding how SEL and MPE can be incorporated into future practice, policy, teacher–education, and continued professional development in PE to enhance teaching and learning in the social and affective domains. In the next section, I present an overview of chapters.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter explores research material pertaining to this study. I present a rationale for the selection of the social constructivist learning theory as the guiding theoretical framework. To help utilize and align the theoretical framework with the study's purpose, this section also outlines current literature surrounding SEL and MPE in PE, and then presents the conceptual frameworks and features of SEL and MPE that are utilized to frame the experiences and understandings of participants in the learning experience. It also presents literature on the concept of student voice and a rationale for democratic and reflective pedagogies which were drawn upon to inform the research intervention. I synthesize the literature reviewed and provide

a rationale justifying the significance of the study's purpose in explore understandings and experiences of promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative education setting.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and qualitative Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods which I, as the researcher, utilized to conduct the study. It describes the context within which the study was based and profiles the participants involved. It then presents the methodological procedures implemented. It presents and rationalizes the evidence-based approaches utilized in the intervention and the data collection instruments implemented. It explains the process through which the accumulated data were collected and analyzed to gain findings and themes for discussion. It addresses research positionality, limitations, and how trustworthiness was established.

Chapter IV: Flirting with Meaning, Emotion, and Movement: A Self-Study Exploring One Teacher's Evolving Approach to Implementing Pedagogy Promoting Social and Emotional Learning and Meaningful Physical Education

The purpose of this qualitative self-study is to present and explore one teacher's evolving approach to implementing pedagogy promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative secondary/high school education setting. Utilizing constructivist learning theory, conceptual features of MPE, and a systemic framework for SEL, data was collected over 15 weeks utilizing one critical friend interview, 20 Post Teaching Reflections, 18 observations, and 22 journal entries. A deductive and inductive approach utilizing the Miles, Huberman and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis was implemented with thematic analysis then applied. The following themes were constructed for MPE: *Bringing the fun; steering between shimmering and sensitive social interactions; co-creating and reconsidering challenge; monitoring movements towards motor*

competency; and pursuing personal relevance in, through, and about movement. The following themes were constructed for SEL: *Managing emotions while moving; showing self-awareness more sharply; learning to uplift others; your team needs you; and, stepping back so students step up.* Findings demonstrate how the teacher's approach to evolve pedagogy involved navigating numerous critical incidents, experiences, ideas, and practices, ultimately leading to more explicit and descriptive promotions of SEL and MPE. Findings inform researchers and practitioners working in this way as to some of the potential realities and turning points they too might face in efforts to observe and evolve pedagogy to promote SEL and MPE.

Chapter V: Enacting Student Voice Pedagogies to Promote Social and Emotional Learning and Meaningful Physical Education

The purpose of this study was to explore learners' experiences enacting Youth/Student Voice Pedagogies (SVP) to promote Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in an alternative education setting. Drawing on social constructivist learning theory in understanding and implementing a MPE approach, and a systemic framework for SEL, two research questions guided the research process: 1) How did students interpret and enact these pedagogies? 2) What contribution did the enactment of these pedagogies have in promoting SEL and MPE? This study implemented a qualitative case study design framed by a participatory action research approach spanning 12 weeks from February to May 2021. Participants in this study included 16 ninth-grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys) aged 14-15 who had just returned to face-to-face learning in January 2021 for the first time following COVID-19. A range of traditional and innovative participatory qualitative research methods including focus group interviews, students' personal biographies, timelines, digital and written reflections, photovoice, and class artefacts were utilized. The *Miles*,

Huberman and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis was implemented involving both deductive and inductive combinations of comparative and thematic analysis. The following themes were constructed: *Making responsible decisions; unearthing and sharing mixed emotions; picturing physical activity beyond the classroom; recognizing the role of relationships; considering challenge and competence; and pursuing meaning*. Findings demonstrate how enacting SVP can lead to the development of students' SEL and MPE experiences complimenting multiple learning domains. We call for further embedding of SVP capturing students' physical activity and movement experiences inside and outside of PE in teacher education and professional development that helps teachers and their students make sense of, shape, influence, and enact more MPE and physical activity learning experiences.

Chapter VI: Exploring Understandings and Experiences of Social and Emotional Learning and Meaningful Physical Education utilizing Democratic and Reflective Pedagogies.

The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' and students' understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE utilizing democratic and reflective pedagogies. Utilizing constructivist learning theory, conceptual features of MPE, and a systemic framework for SEL, three research questions guided the study: 1) What prior understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE had the teachers and students encountered? 2) How did they understand and experience SEL and MPE within classes? 3) What impact did the democratic and reflective pedagogies have on their combined experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE? A qualitative case study design framed within a participatory action research approach (PAR) was implemented in an alternative high school setting. Participants included the teacher–researcher, one PE teacher, a critical friend, two teaching assistants, and a class of 16 ninth–grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys). Methods utilized included a teacher–researcher diary, post–

lesson teaching reflections, interviews, and focus groups. The *Miles, Huberman, and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis* was applied, involving an inductive and deductive analysis and three/four step process including data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions. (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The following themes were constructed: *It really made you think; making movement meaningful; being a better classmate; and doing things differently*. Findings demonstrate how the implementation of democratic and reflective pedagogies promoted SEL and MPE and helped both teachers and students to develop a more inclusive learning experience and holistic outlook on the purpose and subject matter of PE and physical activity within and beyond classes and their wider lives.

Chapter VII: Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

This section summarizes the main findings of the study. It highlights areas where more work is needed and suggests avenues for future evidence-based research exploring experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE in PE. A number of implications for policymakers, teaching bodies, and, indeed, teachers themselves is presented. It also draws an overall conclusion from the study. In the next chapter, I present a review of literature outlining the current gap in evidence-based research and the theoretical underpinnings guiding the purpose, approach, and significance of this study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to present and discuss material related to exploring understandings and experiences of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in an alternative education Physical Education (PE) setting. Firstly, I present current interpretations and evidence of the affective domain's presence in teaching and learning in PE. I then align this with understandings and evidence of SEL and MPE in research. I consider emerging democratic and reflective pedagogies embodying student voice that can help elicit understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE. Following this, I present a brief overview of research involving the affective domain, SEL, and PE in alternative education settings. I then present and collectively align social constructivist learning theory, CASEL's *Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning*, and conceptual features of MPE as a means through which experiences of SEL and MPE can be understood. Finally, I will synthesize the literature reviewed in order to justify the need for research in the field.

The Affective Domain in Physical Education

Broadly speaking, the affective domain in teaching and learning refers to “components of affective development focusing on internal changes or processes, or to categories of behavior” (Martin & Reigeluth, 2013, p. 486); a type of learning which emphasizes “a feeling tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejections...internally consistent qualities of character and conscience...interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, and emotional sets or biases” (Krathwohl et al., 1964, p. 7). Within PE, this has been more reservedly described as “the teaching and enhancement of young people’s thinking, attitudes and values” (Casey & Fernandez-Rio, 2019, p. 12); or “a range of outcomes such as motivation, enjoyment, and self-esteem (Bailey et al., 2009), which are significantly associated with positive mental health and psychological well-

being” (Teraoka et al, 2020, p. 1). Yet, while ideologically considered a necessary element of most PE curriculum, the implementation and operationalization of affective learning as observed and described above tends not to be a priority or regularly present in teaching and learning (Goodlad, 1979; Kirk, 2010; 2012; Vertinsky, 2017). We instead find a historically existing lack of definition as to what affective learning constitutes which has been repeatedly emphasized by scholars in the field (Bailey et al., 2009; Pope, 2005). Compounding this, individual studies and reviews have identified and examined affective learning outcomes using different terminology such as personal and social responsibility, personal and social development, psychological outcomes, social outcomes, character education, and emotional outcomes (Dyson et al., 2020a; Opstoel et al., 2019). Continued efforts to position the affective domain more intentionally within PE has seen researchers and practitioners reconsider the teaching and learning of affective outcomes using contemporary theoretical and conceptual educational frameworks. This has led to an increasing focus in the field on how SEL is explicitly understood and implemented within PE curriculum (Wright et al., 2020a; Wright et al., 2020b).

Social and Emotional Learning in Physical Education

Research and practice advocating the successful integration of SEL is increasingly dominating discourse around education and schooling (Jones et al., 2019a; 2019b; Mahoney et al., 2021; Oberle et al., 2016). Broadly speaking, SEL can be defined as “the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2015, p. 5). Several meta-analyses in the last decade support the implementation of SEL programs using evidence-based interventions to develop skills and

promote positive outcomes in academic growth, behavior, and youth development in general education (Corcoran et al., 2018; Durlak et al., 2011; Korpershock et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2017).

PE is seen as a subject where students can “learn to recognize and manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, meet personal and social needs, make responsible decisions, and solve problems” (Ciotto & Gagnon, 2018, p.32); where social and affective learning outcomes can be combined to accomplish SEL as part of a comprehensive program (Dyson, 2014). A small but steadily growing number of studies have explored how established PE pedagogies and contemporary best practices can explicitly align themselves with SEL theory to accomplish related outcomes, most notably model-based practices (Dyson et al., 2020a). However, despite the rhetoric, PE has been observed as “yet to maximize its potential with regard to the development of SEL competencies” (Hooper et al, 2020, p. 140). Wright et al.’s (2020b) assessment of teachers’ interpretations and implementation of SEL within PE curriculum noted how differing interpretations, a lack of experience, and organizational influences contribute to ambiguity and a lack of support for PE teachers when implementing SEL. Owing to this, there exists a clear need for contemporary curriculum and pedagogy to better align itself with SEL theory and practice in order to explicitly link the accomplishment of SEL outcomes and skills with the use of best practice (Shriver & Weissberg, 2020; Wright & Richards 2022; Zhao, 2020). One such way of doing so is to frame the current teaching of SEL around recognizable features of Meaningful Physical Education (MPE).

Meaningful Physical Education

Within PE, there is increased advocacy and evidence in K–12 and higher education settings of pedagogical approaches “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of

learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical enactment” (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018, p. 119). This has led practitioners and researchers to realign teaching and learning with social and affective domains through the concept of Meaningful Physical Education (MPE); where “individuals ascribe meaningfulness by making sense of past, present, and future experiences (including interactions with self and others, artifacts, content, and pedagogies) through a process of synthesis and reconciliation” and an emphasis on “the individual and the contextually-bound nature of a meaningful experience” (Beni et al., 2017, p. 292); “involving a focus on meaningful experiences and the process of making new or revised meanings out of experience” (Quennerstedt, 2019, p. 619). At secondary level, several studies identified in the review by Beni et al. (2017) and more recent efforts from O’Connor (2018), Coulter et al. (2020), Mikalsen and Lagestad (2020), and Lyngstadet al. (2020) demonstrate a research agenda and/or finding related to meaningful experiences at secondary/high school level. However, evidence-based research focusing on the intentional and explicit implementation of a MPE approach in high school/secondary and/or alternative settings specifically utilizing multiple participants and or self-study appears less so in the literature.

Despite increasing interest, the concept of MPE and legitimization of such an approach to teaching and learning is not without scrutiny. Research indicates that there is a lack of understanding as to how MPE can be promoted and accomplished (Lynch & Sargent, 2020). To begin with, there exists “a need for greater clarity in thinking through how personal meaning can become part of subject purposes” (Thorburn, 2018, p. 6). The use of MPE features as an approach to teaching and learning requires a large degree of pragmatic, contextual operationalizing and calculated pedagogical risk taking. Owing to this, there are no best organizational structures, contents, or methods that work the same for every context, which

moves away from the notion of fidelity we have come to associate with evidence-based research and informed-best practices such as model-based practices (Thorburn 2020a; 2020b). In light of this, the increased advocacy and implementation of student voice and democratic pedagogies has helped provide greater understanding of teacher and student experiences of both SEL and MPE.

Student Voice and Democratic Pedagogy

Student voice primarily focuses on democratically grounded student-centered pedagogies that allow the student to understand and take ownership and responsibility for their learning (Lynch & Curtner-Smith, 2019). At the heart of such practice is providing students opportunities to share opinions on their learning experiences alongside influencing analyses, decisions, and practices within schools, curriculum, and subjects (Cook-Sather, 2006; OECD 2017). When we consider the affective domain in terms of learning core content, a student voice approach can help engage and affect students to become more motivated and learn about physical activity, movement, and well-being in an invested and embodied manner (Long & Carless, 2010). Not only this, but it can also help teachers modify their practice and pedagogy in the process; demonstrating an ability and willingness to authentically listen to students and respond over time with respect to “what facilitates and hinders their interest, motivation, learning and ultimately their willingness” to participate in PE (Oliver & Kirk, 2016, p. 317). Examples of such democratic pedagogies include opportunities for reflection and decision making through class consultation and negotiation; negotiating the curriculum; structured student-led discussions; provision of student-led options; opportunities for critique; decision making; written, oral and visual reflection; opportunities setting personally relevant learning outcomes and goals; debating; modifying assessment criteria; personal biographies; timelines; and digitally reflective narratives

(Enright 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; Howley & Tannehill, 2014; Howley & O’Sullivan, 2020; 2021; Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch, 2021).

Moving beyond the idea of simply *giving* students voice and agency over learning and curricular experiences, an increasing number of scholars have looked at student voice and democratic pedagogies in PE from the basis of moral judgments related to the enactment of social justice and equitable forms of community. This has led researchers and practitioners to consider democratically grounded pedagogies less associated with PE and traditional schooling that elicit the voice of students and consider affective learning, democracy, and social justice from a broader human rights perspective. The *Journal of PE, Recreation and Dance* recently published a feature series focusing on how teachers can become knowledgeable about trauma, toxic stress, and adverse childhood experiences by creating trauma-informed and socially just spaces in PE (Walton-Fisette, 2020; Walton-Fisette & Ellison, 2020;). Within this publication, Sutherland & Parker (2020) outline the need to engage with strategies that help participants to: speak and learn about what they know and have experienced about themselves and others within their lives and contexts; build relationships and community; focus on SEL and the use of pedagogies of affect such as cooperative learning, teaching personal and social responsibility, adventure-based learning, and the activist approach (Kirk, 2019). Such pedagogical models have an explicit and intentional focus on learning in the affective domain “of (among other things) interest, motivation, perseverance, valuing, caring, resilience, and joy” and can provide students with access to “cultural and social capital” to deal with precarious situations (p. 151). Through this broadening recognition of the need for socially just and democratic approaches within teaching and learning, the concept of student voice is increasingly recognized as a pedagogical prerequisite within PE and schooling.

However, problematics exist in its interpretation and implementation (Charteris & Smardon, 2019; Hall, 2017; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015), compounded by “time, a crowded curriculum, and accountability pressures placed on teachers” (Mayes et al., p. 5, 2020). Literature in PE highlights the lack of voice and agency given to students (Dyson, 2006; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010a; 2010b; El-Sherif, 2014; Hemphill, 2022; Oliver et al., 2015). Paradoxically, the challenges students themselves encounter when learning to work in this way are often overlooked (Glasby & McDonald, 2004). Compounding this, the implementation of a student voice approach and others grounded in democratic principles have failed to manifest themselves within teacher–education, endorsed curriculum, or the pragmatic practice of PE teachers (O’ Sullivan, 2018). While this is a challenge for all schooling, it is especially the case in alternative education settings.

Locating SEL, MPE, and Student Voice in an Alternative Education Setting

In many countries, alternative and flexible education settings have become part of public education systems (Mills et al., 2017, Olsen, 2010). Within the U.S., such settings serve a vulnerable population of youth affected by “social and individual-level risk factors that contribute to health disparities”, leaving them at risk of school failure and/or drop out, often experiencing “social and emotional problems, as well as chaotic home environments characterized by frequent moves, abuse, or parental substance use” (Johnson & Taliaferro, 2012, p. 79). Such schools can help provide a safe pathway towards continued and further education (Hemphill & Martinek, 2017). In doing so, they can also play a vital role in the development of SEL competencies (Slaten et al., 2015). Owing to this, the social and affective dimension of teachers’ work is especially important for students who lack certain aspects of care and support within their personal lives (Riele et al., 2017). However, there is a paucity of research focusing

on evidence-based interventions to improve behavioral and academic outcomes for students in such settings (Flower et al., 2011; Kumm et al., 2020; Schwab, 2016). Moreover, there is an alarming dearth of interventions and research specifically related to PE in such settings. The lack of research highlights the need for further exploration as to how PE programs in alternative education settings are implemented and experienced by students and teachers to promote SEL and meaningfulness. In order to bridge current gaps between theory and pedagogical practice, I will next look to consider the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings considered necessary for the accomplishment of teaching and learning outcomes related to SEL and MPE as a means to explore experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE in PE.

Social Constructivist Learning Theory

Social constructivist learning theory has challenged and assisted the field in moving away from instructional learning experiences focusing on isolated skills and drills towards a more holistic consideration of learning which is rooted in the contextual lives of its participants (Richards et al., 2018). Personal experiences are often framed within a socially interactive PE environment and the social support received from both peers and teachers can enhance meaningful engagement with PE content (Beni et al., 2017; Gibbons & Gaul, 2004). Such an approach recognizes the classroom as a community of learners where learning occurs through peer interactions, student ownership of the curriculum, and educational experiences that are meaningful and authentic for students and not just teachers (Azzarito & Ennis, 2003). It recognizes that “learning is an active process in which the individual seeks out information in relation to the task at hand and the environmental conditions prevailing at any given time and test out her or his own capabilities with the context formed by the task or environment” (Kirk & MacDonald, 2009, p. 123).

Social constructivism is a suitable learning theory with which to understand experiences of SEL and meaningfulness in PE as it supports the idea that teaching and learning in PE should be learner-centered, recognizing: (a) a deep understanding and multiple connections support transfer to other contexts; (b) prior knowledge and experience; (c) learning is an active process of constructing knowledge; and (d) the social and cultural construction of knowledge (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Within this, interpretations of what learning is meaningful lies in what is “constructed and understood by the individual; not in an individual bubble detached from reality but influenced by affective and social–cultural dimensions” (Beni 2017, p. 292). It emphasizes the need to “understand the multiple cultures of the learner, teacher, school, and society; how these impact learners; and how to plan curriculum and instruction that leads to robust, meaningful knowledge useful in multiple contexts” (Rovegno, 2006, p. 271). This suggests that teachers and students can become active and dynamic agents within their own learning community as they adapt and develop practices and interactions to understand and experience SEL and MPE in PE (Azzarito, 2016).

Interpreting experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE in this way, any efforts to bring about change and evolve pedagogy would involve encountering educative and non-educative situations. Participants would need to reflect and facilitate the reconstruction of past experiences in order to determine the quality of these experiences and those going forward (Dewey, 1938; Ní Chróinín et al, 2021; Morrison & Gleddie, 2019). Dewey describes this *as the continuity of experience*, where educative and mis-educative experiences occur that can help inform learning (Dewey, 1938; Morrison & Gleddie, 2019). Subsequent learning experiences and developing understandings could potentially lead to a deeper consideration of beliefs, emotions and knowledge and allow further experience to grow (Dewey, 1938, 1939). Interpreting the

experiences and understandings in this way can help identify what was and wasn't working for the teacher in this evolving process, building on what works, and eschewing practices that do or not lead to desired outcomes and intentions. As such, utilizing social constructivist learning theory can help provide us with useful learning to inform other teachers who might look to design and implement pedagogies to promote SEL and MPE. Key also to this will be aligning students' learning experiences in PE with conceptual foundations of SEL.

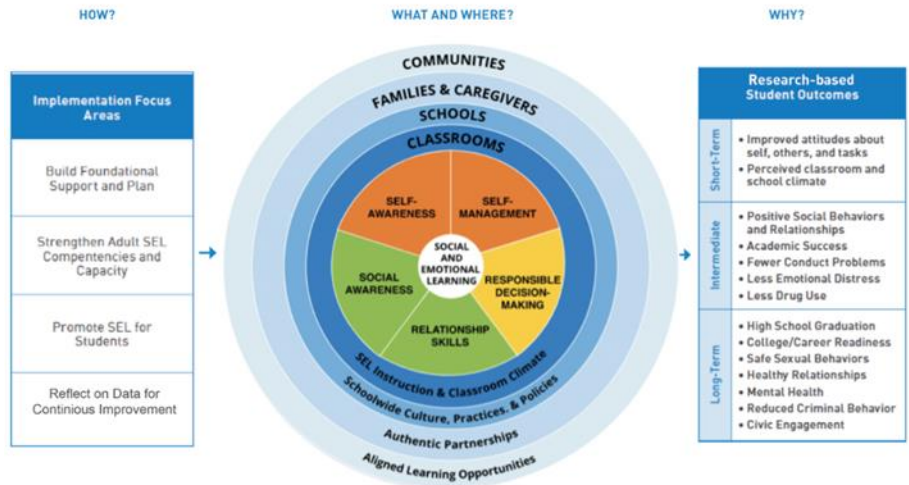
Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning

SEL is seen as taking place in a broad nested and interactive set of contexts, ranging from immediate to more distal, that allows students to feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe (Jones et al., 2017). Considering this, a conceptual framework which recognizes the range and influence of these active ecosystems within which children belong, learn, and live in, such as family, school, and communities, is required (Crosby, 2015; Dusenbury et al., 2019; Papadopoulos, 2020). While different disciplines have produced frameworks describing and defining SEL and bridging theory with practice (Borowski & Blyth, 2019; Garcia, 2014; Jones & Bouffard, 2012), the *Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning* (Borowski, 2019; CASEL, 2015; see Figure 1) is among the most prominent and empirically affirmed, increasingly offered as a "comprehensive multi-dimensional framework of the skills essential for successful social and emotional development" (Ross & Tolan, 2018, p.1188).

The framework identifies five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making) with growing advocacy for its implementation across

educational contexts (Borowski, 2019; Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). These competencies involve the targeting of specific skills that, when logically blended into teaching and learning, can facilitate the accomplishment of a range of learning outcomes.

Figure 1. CASEL Framework for Systemic SEL (2015)



CASEL (2015) defines these competencies and skills as follows:

Self-awareness: The ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.

Self-management: The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Social awareness: The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly,

listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Responsible decision-making: The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the wellbeing of self and others. (p. 5–6)

Research adopting this framework has demonstrated that the teaching and learning of these key competencies is best done through multiple environments in which student learning takes place, including but not limited to: (1) effective classroom curriculum and instruction, (2) school climate, policies, and practices that promote student engagement in positive activities in and out of the classroom, and (3) broad family and community involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation (CASEL, 2015). Within the school and classroom context, the teacher’s pedagogical skills are crucial in accomplishing child-level outcomes, leading to potentially improved child-level impacts. However, challenges in doing so are widely acknowledged with the successful accomplishment of SEL dependent on time, cultural and contextual sensitivity, designing and implementing effective pedagogies, providing training, assessing outcomes, managing conflict, and guiding practitioners who are seeking to implement effective SEL (Blyth et al., 2019; Kaynak Elcan, 2020). While SEL is seen as a necessary part of contemporary schooling, concerns have been repeatedly expressed about the equitable nature through which SEL is understood and implemented with participants across diverse contexts (Brush et al., 2022; Humphries & McKay-Jackson, 2022; Jagers et al., 2019; Williams & Jagers, 2022). Mayes et al. (2022, p. 178) have cautioned that:

...current approaches to SEL can often perpetuate racial hierarchies, apply a deficit lens toward students, and emphasize the need for student-level change while ignoring the historical, social, and cultural influences that created and actively maintain oppressive environments through which students are required to navigate.

Considering this from a PE perspective, the utilization of democratic and reflective practices incorporating SEL and the conceptual features of MPE presents a lens through which some of these challenges can be better addressed within teaching and learning.

Meaningful Physical Education in Practice

Stemming from the previous works of Metheny (1968) and Kretchmar (2000; 2009) and the review of meaningful experiences in PE and sport by Beni et al. (2017), the theoretical foundations of MPE rest on the deliberate prioritization and inclusion of five features when designing and implementing teaching and learning experiences: social interaction, fun, challenge, motor competence, and personally relevant learning. Since this review, researchers have conducted evidence-based research using these features within K-12 settings (Beni et al., 2019a; 2019b; Walseth et al., 2020) and higher education settings (Fletcher et al., 2018; 2020; Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch 2021). To further guide teaching MPE, Ní Chróinín et al. (2018) describe five pedagogical principles of learning that are representative of the range of individual pedagogies they used in their teaching to support pre-service teachers' learning about the value of meaningful participation and how to facilitate meaningful school based physical education experiences: 1) explicitly prioritize meaningful participation; 2) model pedagogies that support meaningful participation; 3) support engagement with features of meaningful participation as a learner and as a teacher; 4) frame learning activities using features of meaningful participation; and 5) support reflection on meaningfulness of physical education

experiences. In presenting these principles, the authors recommended additional research take place to explore MPE in school settings, in particular, “the value of making the prioritization of meaningful experience explicit through modelling and discussion, engaging with meaningful experiences as both a teacher and learner as well as reflecting on those experiences” (p. 131). Central to this translation of theory into practice is the enactment of pedagogies not just eliciting and prioritizing the voice and experience of practitioners in teaching and learning, but the voice of students also (i.e., student voice, democratic and reflective pedagogies). In closing, I look to synthesize the evidence-based and theoretical literature and rationalize the need to explore the experiences and understandings of promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative education PE setting.

Conclusion

Contemporary teaching and learning involving the social and affective domain requires further exploration and understanding in PE settings. Adopting theoretical underpinnings of social constructivist learning theory and the presented conceptual approaches to teaching SEL and MPE serves as one way through which researchers and practitioners can understand how such experiences and understandings manifest themselves in teaching and learning. Additionally, such teaching and learning requires “opportunities for students to reflect and deliberate and to share and discuss performance related ideas through a sense of shared meaning and a commitment to balancing individual and group needs” (Thorburn, 2020b, p. 10). Eliciting and interpreting experiences through student voice and democratic pedagogies can help provide us with some perspective through which to understand and enhance these experiences and understandings. It asks teachers and students to ascertain what practices and outcomes are paramount to SEL and MPE (i.e., what most PE curriculum call for teachers and students to

accomplish and what is necessary to teach and learn in order to do so). Alternative education sites represent “an ideal setting to conduct needed health-related research among an underserved population of youth” (Johnson & Taliaferro, 2012, p. 93). Yet almost a decade on from these comments and echoing Flower et al. (2011), it appears that research and practice still appear to have “significant work to do in an effort to improve the educational programming of youth in alternative education settings” (p. 505). In looking at how this happens in PE, we can also serve to inform the larger field of general education. In the next chapter, I outline the methodology guiding this exploration of understandings and experiences of promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative educational PE setting.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this section is to outline the implemented research paradigm, design, and utilized methods through which I as the teacher–researcher conducted the study based on the context and participants, the processes and sources of data collection and analysis applied, the manner in which trustworthiness was ensured, and an acknowledgement of limitations pertaining to findings.

Positioning the Paradigm

This study was grounded from the outset through the lens of an interpretive paradigm—where “reality is constructed by the individual—people experiencing things differently and hence the research process should try to uncover the meaning that individuals ascribe to an event, experience, or happening” (Tinning & Fitzpatrick, 2012, p. 56). Complementing the theoretical framework of social constructivist learning theory, I sought to interpret and understand the subsequent teaching and learning experiences that ensued within the classroom through a social constructivist lens. It was intended that the implementation of a hermeneutic constructivist approach could help lead me as the teacher–researcher, along with the other participants to identify prior and emerging understandings and experiences we encountered and the implications this held for current and future practice. Principles integral to hermeneutic constructivism center around the relations between the world, language, human experience, and the individual (Peck & Mummery, 2018). Interpreting experiences in this way, participants’ knowledge on SEL and MPE could be viewed as something that was actively constructed, historically and culturally grounded, and possessing moral and political value (Pope, 2006; Schwandt, 1994). Through being actively present and interacting with these locally constructed and co-constructed teaching and learning experiences and interactions (i.e., experiences of SEL and MPE), I looked to

interpret and understand the experiences that occurred (Lincoln et al, 2011). To do so, I utilized Participatory Action Research (PAR) and self-study as my overarching research designs.

Research Design

Ethical approval to conduct research was approved by the University's Office of Research and Integrity (Code#: 21-0312). This study implemented a qualitative case study design (Stake 2006), utilizing both a PAR and self-study approaches. Qualitative research is especially useful in seeking to understand people's beliefs, values, feelings, and motivations (Hastie & Hay, 2012). PAR is "a research design and philosophy that seeks to produce knowledge and action with participants and use this knowledge to improve the life circumstances of research participants during the course of the research itself" (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2012a, p. 129). It is grounded "in the recognition that expertise and knowledge are widely distributed" and "assumes that those who have been most systematically excluded, oppressed, or denied carry specifically revealing wisdom about the history, structure, consequences, and the fracture points in socially unjust arrangements" (Fine, 2008, p. 215). In line with social constructivism and spirit of this study, it is a practical and democratically grounded approach that seeks to evoke "a very active, participatory and critical notion of citizenship" (Hyttén & Bettez, 2011, p. 19); an iterative process of action and reflection, involving participants "co-creating their reality through participation; through their experience; their imagination and intuition, their thinking and their action" (Reason, 1998, p. 262). In adopting this design, I looked to address and respond to preexisting, emerging, and contested realities which arose during the research process around SEL, MPE, inclusion, participation, and empowerment (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2010a; Fitzgerald et al., 2020).

Self-study is defined as “a personal, systematic inquiry situated within one’s own teaching context that requires critical and collaborative reflection in order to generate knowledge, as well as inform the broader educational field” (Samaras, 2011, p. 10). Within PE, self-study has become increasingly common practice, especially among teacher-educators (Baker, 2021; Ovens, 2014; Fletcher & Ovens, 2015; Richards & Ressler, 2016). However, advocacy and evidence of self-study research specifically in K-12 settings with in-service PE teachers is less apparent in literature (Casey, 2012; Trent & Brown, 2011). Regarding MPE, self-study has been utilized to explore teachers’ and teacher-educators’ experiences of developing and implementing a MPE approach (Beni et al., 2019a; 2019b; 2020; Fletcher et al. 2019; Ní Chróinín et al., 2015; 2019). Such a methodology can provide the field with “subjective snapshots of reflexive, personalized accounts of the humanness involved in teaching PE, particularly in the way that authors often share their feelings, assumptions, aspirations, difficulties, and interactions in their attempts to improve personally and professionally” (Fletcher 2020, p. 22). Similar to recent research (Baker, 2021; Beni et al., 2019a; 2019b), in conducting this study, I sought to adhere to five key characteristics of self-study research outlined by LaBoskey (2004): 1) It was self-initiated and focused; 2) it was improvement-aimed 3) it was interactive; 4) it included multiple qualitative methods; and 5) it exhibited a shared and open process to demonstrate its trustworthiness. In the coming sections, I demonstrate how these characteristics of PAR and self-study were frequently visible and implemented through the course and the research process.

Context and Participants

The convenience sampling procedure was used for ease in accessibility to participants (Cooksey & McDonald, 2019). Participants in the study included me as the teacher-researcher,

one PE teacher, a critical friend, two teaching assistants, and a class of 16 ninth grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys). Outside of my identity as the teacher–researcher, additional participants and the school are assigned pseudonyms. The research was conducted in an alternative high school setting working in partnership with a university and the local school district in south-eastern U.S. The U.S. Department of Education defines alternative education schools as any “public elementary/secondary school that (a) addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school; (b) provides non-traditional education; (c) serves as an adjunct to a regular school; or (d) falls outside the categories of regular education, special education, or career/technical education” (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2016, p. B-1). The school provides an alternative educational experience for at-risk high school students and has a high graduation rate. The U.S. Department of Education (n.d) defines this population as:

Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools, who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English learners.

The school’s basic mission is to provide a public education for these students through small class instruction allowing students to explore career possibilities with enrolment in undergraduate university classes also offered. Details on the student participants are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Participant Details

Student Pseudonym	Self-Identified Gender	Self-Identified Race/Ethnicity
Aamira	Female	African American Muslim
AJ	Male	Hispanic
Alisha	Female	Hispanic
Aubrey	Female	African American
Auria	Female	Caucasian
Barry	Male	Caucasian Christian
Channing	Male	African American
Cora	Female	Caucasian African American
Jack	Male	African American
James	Male	Caucasian
Jess	Female	African American Native American
Khalid	Male	African American
Landon	Male	African American
Leo	Male	African American
Melissa	Female	African American
Sarah	Female	Caucasian

The teacher–researcher was a trained PE teacher and had six years’ experience of teaching high school PE in Ireland alongside two years of experience teaching undergraduate students in a U.S. university setting (A more detailed biography which the teacher-researcher shared with his students can be found in Appendix A). The PE teacher was a trained PE teacher with six years’ experience at elementary school level and one year of experience at high school level. Details on the teacher–researcher and PE teacher are presented in Table 2. Additionally, two teaching assistants provided additional support to the teacher and students during teaching. The critical friend was a PE professor with over 30 years of experience in K–12 and higher education PE settings. He observed lessons and debriefed with the teacher–researcher and teaching assistants at the end of selected lessons. Details on the adult participants are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Adult Participant Details

Name	Race/Nationality	Education/Experience
Teacher– Researcher	Caucasian Irish	Ba. Sc. & Ma. Sc. in Physical Education PhD Candidate PE Curriculum and Pedagogy (Four Years) University Instructor and Research Assistant (Four Years) High School/Secondary PE Teacher, U.S. & Ireland (10 Years) PE, Physical Activity & Youth Sports Volunteer (15 Years)
PE Teacher Mee-Hyung	Asian South Korean	BS in Physical Education PhD Candidate PE Curriculum and Pedagogy (Three years) University Research Assistant (Three years) Elementary classroom teacher, South Korea (Four years) High School/Elementary school PE instructor, U.S. (Three years)
Critical Friend	Caucasian New Zealand	PhD, Professor of HPE, Education and Kinesiology across seven higher education institutions in New Zealand, Canada, and U.S. Qualitative Researcher Curriculum and Pedagogy (25 Years) Diploma Elementary & Secondary PE, Ba. Sc in Ed., Ma. of Arts
Teaching Assistant A	African American American	Graduate Student in Counselling Middle College Teaching Assistant (One Year)
Teaching Assistant B	Caucasian American	Graduate Student in Music Middle College Teaching Assistant (One Year)

The Course and Pedagogies

The teacher–researcher and PE teacher were appointed to instruct two ninth–grade PE classes of students at Tyber College in Spring 2021. The outline of the PE course was designed by a group of five researchers and practitioners from the university (See Appendix B). Collectively, the group of five had combined practical experience of teaching PE across multiple international K–12 and higher education settings, ranging in experience from 4 to 30 years. With students returning to face-to-face instruction for the first time since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the course was purposefully designed with the intention of developing students’ understanding and application of SEL and MPE and physical activity. Central to this was the enactment of Student Voice Pedagogies (SVP). Similar to the recent work of Lynch and

Sargent (2020; 2021) in higher education UK settings, a number of what the research team regarded as SVP were drawn upon from their own collective experiences of enacting student voice and teaching SEL and MPE in the field. These pedagogies were modified in order to be made more appropriate and then collectively implemented frequently, or specifically at different points throughout the course. These are presented in Table 3 and further detailed in the Appendix C. For example, Cooperative Learning (Dyson & Casey, 2012; 2016) was used as the primary pedagogical method during Weeks 1–4 when the focus was on building relationship skills with students in class. Structures implemented included *Learning Teams*, *Jig–Saw*, *Think–Pair–Perform*, and *Rally Round Robin*. Particular attention was paid to implementing the cooperative element group processing throughout the course, typically in the form of “an open dialogue or group discussion related to the lesson content that can occur at any time during the lesson” (Dyson, 2012, p. 4). These structures were frequently used throughout the remainder of the course at different times, but alongside other pedagogical practices such as peer tutors, task stations, direct instruction, intra-task variation, mastery learning, play-teach-play, and child-designed activities (Graham, 2009). The course itself was implemented across ten weeks February to April in sixteen 75-minute lessons, typically delivered twice a week, depending on the school calendar. The enacted pedagogies, some of which also doubled as PAR data sources, were implemented in class as well as asynchronously using the school’s online learning platform. After the implemented course, students were presented with information on the larger research study as part of a retrospective recruitment process that had been ethically approved by the local school district and the university’s office of research and integrity.

Table 3. Enacted Pedagogies Drawn from Literature and Research Prioritizing Student Voice

Week(s)	Pedagogy Drawn/Modified from Literature
1–2	Full Value Contract (Tannehill & Dillon, 2008)
1–2	Personal Biography (Betourne & Richards, 2015; Sutherland & Parker, 2020)
1–10	Cooperative Learning and Group Processing (Dyson & Casey, 2012; 2016; Sutherland et al., 2019)
2–10	Continuous Class Consultation & Negotiation (Aarskog et al., 2021; Enright & O’ Sullivan 2010a; 2010b; Howley & O’ Sullivan, 2020; 2021; Howley & Tannehill, 2014)
3–4	Timeline (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012)
4–7	Taster Sessions (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010a; 2010b; Howley & Tannehill, 2014)
7–10	Photovoice Task 1 (Azzarito 2013; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012)
9–10	Photovoice Task 2 (Azzarito 2013; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012)
2–10	Digital Reflections (Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch, 2021)
10	Overall Digital Reflection (Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch, 2021)

Data Collection

This study utilized a range of traditional and participatory qualitative research methods sequentially implemented across ten months from February to December 2021, including a teacher–researcher diary, individual and post-teaching reflections with the critical friend, observational field notes, interviews, focus groups, personal biographies, timelines, digital and written reflections, document/artefact examination, and photovoice.

A teacher–researcher diary was utilized to create a “permanent record of thoughts and experience and a safe outlet for personal concerns” (Spalding & Wilson, 2002, p. 1397). The teacher completed a journal entry before and after each lesson taught. This diary contained 22 entries averaging 1,838 words in length. It involved the teacher–researcher reflecting on his experiences and thoughts throughout the study, openly juxtaposing his own thoughts,

experiences, and observations alongside those he had read from literature, as well as those received from his students, the PE teacher, the critical friend, and the teaching assistants throughout the study.

Supplementing this, the teacher–researcher completed 20 *Post Teaching Reflective Analyses* (Dyson, 1994; 2009; Bodsworth & Goodyear, 2017; Bjørke & Moen, 2020).

Immediately after each lesson he taught, the teacher–researcher participated in recorded post-teaching reflections (ten self–conducted solely by the teacher–researcher and ten conducted with the critical friend), ranging from 10-45 minutes, utilizing the same questions each time alongside new ones to reflect on his teaching and learning experiences (e.g., What were your learning intentions for you as a teacher? How do you know the students meet your learning intentions? What went well in terms of your pedagogical work? What would you change? If anything? What might be your learning intentions for the next lesson?). Accompanying the ten post–teaching reflections, the critical friend conducted ten lesson observations of the teacher–researcher’s lessons, while the teaching assistants conducted three and five lesson observations respectively, subsequently generating field notes to further triangulate the teacher–researcher’s journal entries and reflections during the self-study.

Personal biographies allow participants to engage in critical self–reflection by taking time to reflect on the questions that may help them to gain further insight into how their experiences have shaped them as a person (Betourne & Richards, 2015). Taking time to reflect on the questions related to participants’ backgrounds can help to gain further insight into how these experiences have shaped not just their experiences of PE, but their broader experiences as people (Sutherland & Parker, 2020). Students completed personal biographies and timelines as a method of communication to help make sense of their past experiences with PE and physical activity and

how these had changed over time (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012c). Pavlovich (2007) sees reflection as helping the writer “to stand outside the experience, to see it more objectively, and to become detached from the emotional outcomes” (p. 284). Students completed regular digital and written reflections after classes where they were invited to write/type a script or free talk through a set of guided questions (Lynch & Sargent, 2020). These were completed online and were collected by the teacher–researcher at the end of the study once consent was granted.

Photovoice is seen as a powerful PAR research method where individuals are given the opportunity to take photographs and discuss them collectively (Azzarito & Kirk, 2013; Howley, 2021; Linnan et al, 2001; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2012b). This method involved both the teacher–researcher and students taking prompted photographs that allowed them to engage in critical dialogue eliciting their thoughts and ideas pertaining to their experiences of SEL and meaningfulness in PE (Lorusso et al., 2020; Parker et al., 2020). Students received guidance on the ethics of photographing and basic photography skills. These photos were retained by the teacher–researcher to be used as aids in discussion during the interviews, focus group interviews, and for data analysis once consent was granted.

Interviews allow researchers to “gather descriptive data in the subjects’ own words so that the researchers can develop insights into how subjects interpret some piece of the world” (Bogdan and Biklen, 1995, p. 96). They are a helpful way to gain access to and learn about participants’ perspectives through seeking information, asking focused questions, and encouraging answers in depth and at length (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Similarly, focus groups help gather high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others (Patton, 2015). Following the course, the 16 students participated in two rounds of focus group interviews, once immediately after the course in May 2021, and

again in December 2021, lasting approximately 30–45 minutes each. During these interviews, students were asked to reflect on their experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE prior to and during the course. At the end of the course in May 2021, the teacher–researcher individually interviewed the PE teacher and the two teaching assistants together to further elicit their experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE during the course. These interviews lasted 45–60 minutes. Finally, the teacher–researcher participated an interview led by the PE teacher, who had experience of interviewing, reflecting on his experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE prior to and during the course.

Data Analysis

Following participant consent, the teacher–researcher diary entries (22), post–teaching reflection analyses (20), critical friend interview (1), PE teacher interview (1), teaching assistants interview (1), student focus group interviews (7), personal biographies (16), timelines (16), photovoice task 1 (15), photovoice task 2 (13), digital reflections (71), and overall student digital reflections (15) were collected, organized, transcribed, de-identified, and stored safely. The *Miles, Huberman and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis* (2014) involving data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions was initially implemented, with thematic analysis (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This involved both deductive and inductive combination of comparative and thematic analysis, or abduction. Abduction is a process of mixing data-based inductive analysis and theory–driven deductive analysis, which combines the deductive and inductive models of proposition development and theory construction (Astbury & Leeuw, 2010); a “constant shuttling between theory and empirical data, using both inductive and deductive reasoning” (p. 374). While drawing on our theoretical and conceptual frameworks to

deductively analyze data, we also relied on inductive reasoning to seek out patterns and themes which were generated outside of this.

For the self-study (Chapter 4), a predominantly deductive approach was implemented with inductive thematic analysis applied at the end. For Chapters 4 and 5, both inductive and deductive analysis was applied. I initially read the data and identified frames of analysis and created domains based on semantic relationships. Coding refers to the identification of topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are revealed through the participants' narratives and interpreted by the researcher (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The process of coding broke the data into parts so that the data was manageable with the result of rebuilding the data to tell a storyline (Stuckey, 2015). Open coding was utilized to identify salient ideas related to topics participants had discussed (Ennis, 2008). I read and re-read transcripts and analyze additional data using open coding to identify and categorize codes and subsequently their sub-properties and category dimensions based on the degree to which they occurred, refining these salient ideas. Overarching codes were then broken down into coded properties. Open coding was repeatedly implemented throughout the data analysis as new codes and categories emerged and older ones were recoded. *In Vivo* codes were then analyzed and selected in an effort to pursue meaning and present data that appropriately represented participants' experiences rather than those that neatly line up with the literature. Descriptive codes were used to identify and group interesting statements or events. In order to apply scholarly interpretation to develop themes, comparative analysis was implemented across domains. This involved comparing incident against incident among participants for similarities and differences with incidents found to be conceptually similar to previously coded incidents given the same conceptual label and gradually elaborated and brought into variation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I then used axial coding to contextualize the data

through conceptualizing, defining categories, and developing categories fully in terms of their properties and dimensions and to account for variation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This helped make connections between the different sources of data. The main results of the three studies are presented thematically, followed by a discussion interpreting thematic significance and meaning in relation to theory and literature.

Trustworthiness

Ensuring that research benefits are maximized and research risks are minimized and managed is an integral part of becoming a morally responsible researcher (Wright & O'Flynn, 2012). This is especially the case when it comes to the “messiness” of PAR (Fitzgerald et al., 2020). PAR requires sensitivity to the relationship between “insiders” (in this case, the staff and students in their respective school) and “outsiders” (the teacher–researcher) (Mackenzie et. al, 2012). Incidents and obstacles that challenged the trustworthiness of the study were met at various times throughout. This study challenged me to ensure that I maintained my commitment to establish the credibility or “believability” of my findings and incoming interpretations by carefully paying attending to the establishment of trustworthy research design, data collection, and analysis protocols (Patton, 2015). Creswell (1998) describes eight verification procedures that can help researchers enhance and justify the trustworthiness of their work: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer review and debriefing, negative case analysis, clarification of the researcher bias, member checking, rich thick description, and external audit. By continuously bearing these procedures in mind, I was able to keep myself aware of the challenges and limitations of what I was doing throughout the study, as well recognizing good research practice. Each one is further explained in the context of this study below.

Prolonged Engagement and Persistent Observation

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation are, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), “critical in attending to credibility” (p. 304). When a large amount of time is spent with your research participants, they less readily feign behavior or feel the need to do so; moreover, they are more likely to be frank and comprehensive about what they tell you (Glesne, 1999). Both teachers conducted twenty 75-minute lessons alongside the teaching assistants with their respective classes over a 12-week period. The critical friend attended ten of the teacher-researcher’s lessons and conducted observations and field notes. The teaching assistants conducted five and two observations and field notes of what they had observed in class also. The data sources as a whole were implemented across the course and retrospectively collected following consent as part of a sequenced process of engagement with participants that culminated with the final interviews and focus groups. This was further confirmed by the follow-up focus groups conducted with students in December 2021.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a “word used to name the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon” (Flick, 2005, p. 226) that can aid to “increase scope, depth and consistency in methodological proceedings” (p. 227.) To increase triangulation and gain authentic and purposeful data from all the participants in the study, a variety of systematic data collection methodologies were employed as already outlined in this paper. Four participants and four data sources were triangulated in Chapter 4, 16 participants and seven data sources in Chapter 5, while 20 participants and six data sources were triangulated in Chapter 6. These multiple data sources, drawn from multiple participants throughout the research, helped to triangulate and

confirm findings. For example, in certain lessons, data was triangulated using data collected from the teacher–researcher, teaching assistants, and critical friend at the same time. In other lessons, the critical friend observed the teacher–researcher and assisted them in the post–teaching reflection. Regarding student data, this was triangulated sequentially at each data collection point throughout the course collectively.

Peer Review

My critical friend and the PE teacher served in the role of peer reviewers. They both ensured that the research was ethical, appropriate, and purposeful throughout and led me to a greater appreciation of theoretical frameworks and literature around the topic. The PE teacher assisted the teacher–researcher in further reflecting on my own experiences and understandings of the research process in leading a one-on-one interview. In particular, the critical friend questioned my thinking on measurement procedures and procedures implementing the study prior to and during using them. This was especially the case during the ten post-teaching reflection analyses he conducted. As well as this, he critiqued my data collection protocol and probed the type of questions I had created in my interview guide for focus groups and interviews, ensuring that the data being gathered were pertinent and allowed participants to speak accordingly. In particular, the critical friend reviewed and confirmed the findings of the self-study.

Negative Case Analysis

Power relations embedded within different social and cultural contexts can shape the type of talk taking place with the earnestness of the data gathered dependent on the quality and type of the relationship teachers and researchers have (Biddulph, 2011). A consistent effort was made to search for and discuss elements of the data that did not support or appeared to contradict

patterns or explanations that were emerging from data analysis. This was done through discussions with the critical friend and further elaboration on the data provided by participants in the final focus groups and interviews. This involved me asking participants to review what they had said, asking them whether they were satisfied with my interpretation of what they had said or if they wished to clarify what they were trying to say. This was done through regular discussion inside classes and during the first focus groups and subsequent follow up.

Researcher Bias & Positionality

Clarifying researcher positionality can lead to better understanding of potential biases or assumptions that impact the inquiry (Merriam, 1988). The explicit and implicit philosophical assumptions and biases I bring with me to this study may have tendentially impacted its authenticity if not acknowledged (Creswell, 1998). Acknowledging prominent aspects of my positionality allows for me to exercise reflexivity, questioning and deconstructing what degree of hegemony manifests itself within my role as a researcher (Pillow, 2010). In conducting this study, I recognized that I was (a) a straight, European, Caucasian male, (b) an interpretivist researcher, (c) operating within a constructivist paradigm, (d) previously a K–12 HPE teacher. My own positionality and life experiences have not been too dissimilar to those historically encompassed by HPE’s narrow and hegemonic view of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Considering my positionality in this study as an interpretivist researcher required awareness that such an approach manifests itself through social processes and inquiry in an effort to understand phenomena and access meanings participants assign to them (Hastie & Hay, 2012). Such work means allowing not only for my understanding and meaning making as a teacher–researcher, but also for the understanding and meaning making of participants themselves “in light of the social spaces and histories of their schools, the stories of their lives, and interactions with increasingly

complex groups” (Dowling & Garrett, 2017, p. 340). Positioning myself as a social constructivist researcher required paying attention to “multiple realities and socially constructed meanings” that existed within the social context I will be exploring (Pope, 2006, p. 31). This paradigmatic preference led to issues in this study around my positionality such as when and how to deploy the self, negotiating entry, recognizing the efficiency of my role and interpersonal ones that occurred before, during and after this study, alongside actions demonstrating trust, reciprocity, ethics, and advocacy to each participant (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Doing so unquestionably led to problematics where my voice was mixed with that of the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Being aware of this was important as I actively sought to understand settings and participants’ perspectives; reporting their beliefs, meanings, feelings, and understandings and the implications this might have for PE—especially if they weren’t what I had hoped for (Patton, 2015).

Stemming from my social constructivist paradigm, as a practicing K–12 HPE teacher for six years, I am a strong advocate of teachers and their work. It is my view that practicing teachers are often characterized as tragic heroes—noble but flawed, unable to change their practice despite their willingness and attempts to do so for the betterment of them and their students. Instead, I see them as sleeping giants who can do right by their students once given time and space to *try* do right first. Presenting my positionality and potential bias here demonstrates my continued reflexivity as I review and reconstruct my taken–for–granted assumptions about teaching and learning in PE. As such, my positionality represents less a dichotomy with regard to being an insider or outsider, but rather a fluid continuum; at times detached, at times connected; negotiating a ranging multiplicity of sameness, difference, and in-betweenness when working alone and with participants (Bettez, 2015).

Member Checking

By the nature of PAR, participants in this study became co-enquirers in the research process. Member checking in this study was used as “a platform for reflection to help participants think through their experiences and how they can look forward to integrating what was learned” (Candela, 2019, p. 626). Following the implementation of PAR methods, many of which also served as SVP, the teacher-researcher, PE teacher, and students all engaged in discussions around the data sources during and after the course and especially afterwards in the interviews and focus groups. Participants were presented with their written work during these interviews and invited to follow up on what they had previously said and written. This ensured participants had the opportunity to reflect on and further respond to and articulate their emerging experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE based on the data retrospectively collected and their then reflections and articulations of their experiences and understandings. This was especially the case for students who participated in follow-up interviews in December, six months after the course and initial focus groups. The students checked their and my interpretation of their comments and assignments and approved them as accurate.

Rich Thick Description

As a former English teacher and a writing researcher, I believe the craft of documenting and presenting something that truly reflects its meaning is of critical importance. I consider strongly that “rich descriptions of the social world are valuable” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.12) and that, without them, the true story is never fully told. In providing my narrative voice as the teacher-researcher through self-study along with the multitude of intricate and invaluable voices of the participants, I believe I have made a conscious effort to facilitate the reader in recognizing the *rich* and *real* world within which this study was lived. This is done through the direct use of

participants voices and categorized findings and themed discussion, providing direct access for the reader to the context and perspectives of all the participants in the study.

External Audit

One of the procedures that was crucial to establish trustworthiness in this study was external consultation, where I drew on conversations and experience of others in my university and field with experience of qualitative research initiatives through their own research. In doing so, I was able to share and critique my methodologies and interpretations of data. They were able to inform me on what I was doing well and what I could do better based on their knowledge and understanding of qualitative research and knowledge they were acquiring during this course. Additionally, the dissertation committee provided a pre-and post-audit of the study and its research processes during the dissertation proposal and subsequent defense.

Limitations

Before presenting results, we wish to acknowledge that the dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the data is limited in so far as it relates only to these teachers and students in these two classes in Tyber College, making generalization difficult to apply. Regarding credibility, we have sought to present an accurate representation through providing a backdrop to the context, a description of participants, the study design, methods and procedures, measures to minimize risks, confidentiality of data, methods of recruiting and consent, attempts to establish trustworthiness especially, and a consideration of my own role as the teacher–researcher. Regarding *researcher* effect, owing to ethical compliance, the teacher–researcher was not granted permission to collect data directly from students in his class which limits triangulation of data to his contributions and those of the critical friend and teacher researcher. Dependability of the study was influenced by the return of face-to face instruction for

the first time since the advent of COVID-19 and remote learning. This was teachers and students' first time in a face-to-face setting working together while still adhering to social distancing. The dependability of the study influenced the research approach due to ethical compliance required by the local school district. No observations were conducted on the PE teacher and her students in class, limiting the triangulation of their experiences to the individual interview, the PAR methods they contributed, and the focus groups. The teacher–researcher did not engage or influence the immediate class setting in this regard as requested. Regarding triangulation, we have broadly explained how triangulation was applied within this chapter. Details on how triangulation was applied within each study will be presented in more detail in the following chapters.

Regarding transferability, limitations lie in the use of PAR as a research design. PAR has been critiqued as being a *soft* method of research (Young 2006), ambiguous, untraceable, and, at times, too open ended. By its nature, it lacks a rigidity and fidelity that requires the researcher to acknowledge it as “a complex and situated endeavor” that requires awareness and scrutiny when answering and accounting for fluidly emerging issues such as: “what was planned, what happened, how were any changes and adaptations worked through and why, how did you feel about this, how were the reactions of the research participants read by the researchers and how did this feed into the research process?” (Fitzgerald et al., 2020, p. 13). Despite this, it is difficult to transfer the results of this study. In addressing confirmability and all these aspects to affirm and justify the quality of conclusions, I echo the view of Enright and O’Sullivan (2012a) that “reliability, validity, and ethical acceptability of research with young people is enhanced by using these types of methods that facilitate students in shaping the research agenda and are deemed by young people as relevant and interesting methods to engage with their realities” (p.

126). As you will see in the coming chapters, I argue that to promote SEL and MPE through the utilization of democratic and reflective practices, it is necessary to deploy some forms of participatory methods. In this way, I have been transparent and upfront with you, the reader, every bit as much as I was with the teachers and students I worked with in the research process when presenting findings, which follows next.

CHAPTER IV: FLIRTING WITH MEANING, EMOTION, AND MOVEMENT: A
SELFSTUDY EXPLORING ONE TEACHER'S EVOLVING APPROACH TO
IMPLEMENTING PEDAGOGY PROMOTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING
AND MEANINGFUL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Research and practice advocating the successful integration of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is increasingly dominating discourse around K-12 schooling (Humphrey et al., 2020; Jagers et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2019a; 2019b; Oberle et al., 2016). Broadly speaking, SEL can be defined as “the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2015, p. 5). Physical Education (PE) is seen as a subject where students can “learn to recognize and manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, meet personal and social needs, make responsible decisions, and solve problems” (Ciotto & Gagnon, 2018, p.32). It has been posited that increased integration of social and affective learning outcomes can lead to a more holistic and quality PE learning environment (Wright & Richards 2021a; 2022). However, despite the rhetoric, PE has been observed as “yet to maximize its potential with regard to the development of SEL competencies” (Hooper et al, 2020, p. 140) and has historically struggled to explicitly affirm its consistency in doing so (Dyson, 2014; Dyson et al., 2020; Bailey et al., 2009; Kirk, 2010; 2012; Quennerstedt, 2019). Research focusing specifically on how teachers successfully implement SEL within PE curriculum is growing (Wright et al., 2021a). Recently, the examination by Wright et al.’s (2020b) of Scottish PE teachers’ interpretations and implementation of SEL

within curriculum noted how differing interpretations, a lack of experience, and organizational influences contribute to ambiguity and a lack of support during implementation. There exists a need to explore how contemporary PE curriculum and pedagogy development might better align itself with SEL theory and practice in order to explicitly link the accomplishment of social and affective outcomes with contemporary best practices and approaches in the field.

Focusing on the subject matter and core content of PE more specifically, there have been calls for the need for greater clarity in thinking through how personal meaning can become part of subject purposes (Stolz & Thorburn, 2020; Thorburn 2020a; 2020b), and approaches to teaching and learning “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical enactment” (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018, p. 119). O’Connor (2019) posits that such approaches can provide teachers and students with “new insights into a range of different experiences in movement supporting calls to extend the boundaries of what curriculum is meaningful in PE” (p. 1106). Seeking to expand on historical theorizing and advocacy by scholars such as Metheny (1968), Kretchmar (2000; 2007), and Ennis (2017), the primary theme of a Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) approach is “to support students in coming to value PE through experiencing meaningfulness (i.e., interpreting an experience as having personal significance) and recognizing ways participation enhances the quality of their lives” (Fletcher, et al., 2021, p. 3). To implement a MPE approach, Beni et al., (2017) identified the need for teachers to deliberately prioritize and include six overlapping features when designing and implementing teaching and learning experiences: social interaction; fun; challenge; motor competence; and personally relevant learning; and delight (Beni et al., 2017). Stemming from this articulation of features, Fletcher and Ní Chróinín (2021) outline two pedagogical principles to further support teachers in facilitating meaningful learning experiences

for their students: 1) reflective processes that facilitate evaluation of experience; and 2) democratic approaches that facilitate personalization of experience. The need for further identification, articulation, and understanding of how to implement MPE has resulted in an encouraging growth of empirical research further outlining and substantiating the implementation of the approach by teachers and students within K-12 elementary, middle, and higher education teacher education settings (Beni et al., 2021; Fletcher et al., 2020; 2021; Ní Chróinín et al., 2021; Lynch & Sargent, 2021; Sargent & Lynch, 2021).

At secondary level, several studies identified in a review by Beni et al. (2017) and more recent efforts from O' Connor (2019), Coulter et al. (2020), Mikalsen and Lagestad (2020), and Lyngstad et al. (2020) demonstrate a research agenda and/or findings related to meaningful experiences at secondary/high school level. However, research focusing on the explicit implementation of a MPE approach in high school/secondary and/or alternative settings specifically utilizing multiple participants and self-study appears less so in the literature. Kuriger (2021) observed how Grades 7–9 students were able to identify *what* was important for meaningful experiences in PE and *how* a focus on relationships, a key SEL competency, can facilitate MPE experiences. Similarly, our research exploring the enactment of student voice pedagogies to promote SEL and MPE found that such an approach led to the development of ninth grade students' SEL across multiple competencies, while at the same time complimenting multiple learning domains (Howley et al., 2021). These studies were, by the nature and spirit of MPE we would argue, student centered. However, little is still known about secondary/high school teachers' experiences of learning to work with students with a focus on this pedagogical approach. Both SEL and MPE can be considered as seeking to accomplish similar social and affective outcomes that reflect both the core content and subject matter of PE and broader

competencies and skills deemed successful for schooling and citizenship. Drawing on social constructivist learning theory and conceptual frameworks for SEL and MPE, the purpose of this qualitative self-study was to present and explore one teacher-researcher evolving his approach to implementing pedagogy promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative secondary/high school education setting. Three questions guided the research: 1) What prior knowledge and experience did the teacher-researcher have of promoting SEL and MPE? 2) How did the teacher-researcher's approach evolve throughout the course? 3) What knowledge was constructed from the process that could help inform the teacher's approach in future?

Theoretical Framework

To understand this teacher's efforts to evolve curricular and pedagogical approaches to promote SEL and MPE, we firstly draw on social constructivist learning theory, which aligns with an MPE approach as "an appropriate theoretical basis upon which to ground its teaching and learning principles" (Fletcher et al., 2021, p.6). We view the teacher in this study as a learner whose experiences of teaching and learning in PE would be a continuous work in progress within a socially interactive environment while working with his students (Beni et al., 2017; Gibbons & Gaul, 2004). Any efforts to promote SEL and MPE would require the teacher to especially "understand the multiple cultures of the learner, teacher, school, and society; how these impact learners; and how to plan curriculum and instruction that leads to robust, meaningful knowledge useful in multiple contexts" (Rovegno, 2006, p. 271). The teacher would need to become an active, dynamic, and democratic agent alongside students within the classroom, adapting and developing practices and interactions to understand and experience SEL and MPE in PE (Azzarito, 2016; Kirk & MacDonald, 2009). To be successful in his efforts, the TR would have to align curriculum and pedagogy with the social and affective domain through allowing

“individuals ascribe meaningfulness by making sense of past, present, and future experiences (including interactions with self and others, artifacts, content, and pedagogies) through a process of synthesis and reconciliation” and an emphasis on “the individual and the contextually-bound nature of a meaningful experience” (Beni et al., 2017, p. 292); with “a focus on meaningful experiences and the process of making new or revised meanings out of experience” (Quennerstedt, 2019, p. 619). To this end, the deliberate utilization of democratic and reflective pedagogies by the teacher might assist him and his students to engage and interact with each other in an enjoyable physical activity environment (Ennis, 2017; Fletcher & Ní Chróinín, 2021; Ní Chróinín et al, 2021). The implementation of such approaches would not likely be straightforward, but rather involve encountering educative and non-educative situations that would require the teacher reflect and facilitate the reconstruction of past experiences in order to determine the quality of these experiences and those going forward (Dewey, 1938; Ní Chróinín et al, 2021; Morrison & Gleddie, 2019). The teacher might encounter what Dewey describes as *the continuity of experience*, where educative and mis-educative experiences would occur, which could help inform his learning (Dewey, 1938; Morrison & Gleddie, 2019). These experiences could potentially lead to a deeper consideration of beliefs, emotions and knowledge and allow further experience and learning (Dewey, 1938, 1939). Such experiences could help us understand what was and wasn’t working for the teacher-researcher (TR) in this process, building on what worked, and eschewing practices that did not lead to desired outcomes and intentions. His experiences could provide us with useful learning to inform other teachers who might look to design their teaching and learning utilizing democratic and reflective pedagogies to promote SEL and MPE and what they might encounter.

For focusing on the teacher's efforts to promote SEL specifically, we draw on *The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning* (Borowski, 2019; CASEL, 2015). The CASEL Framework presents "comprehensive multi-dimensional framework of the skills essential for successful social and emotional development" (Ross & Tolan, 2018, p.1188). The framework identifies five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies (self-management; self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills; and responsible decision making) (Borowski, 2019; Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). These competencies involve the targeting of specific skills which, when logically blended into teaching and learning, can help facilitate the holistic accomplishment of broader learning outcomes beyond physical and cognitive subject matter.

Within the school and classroom context, the curricular specifications and teacher's pedagogical skills are crucial in accomplishing child level outcomes, leading to potentially improved child-level impacts. However, challenges in doing so are widely acknowledged, with the successful accomplishment of SEL dependent on factors such as time, cultural and contextual sensitivity, and designing and implementing effective curriculum and pedagogies with policymakers, practitioners, and students (Blyth et al., 2019; Kaynak Elcan, 2020; Wright et al., 2020). From an SEL perspective, teachers themselves are subject to emotional experiences and processes while implementing and promoting SEL in teaching and learning, with attention to these experiences often overlooked (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Using this framework, we hoped to identify whether or not the teacher's evolving approach successfully led to a more desired development of and accomplishment of SEL competencies and skills. In utilizing a self-study approach to do this, we hoped to explore how this teacher's efforts created both welcoming and

conflicting experiences and identify factors creating opportunities and constraints that could help provide some valuable insight through which to understand and enhance SEL and MPE experiences, both in the present and going forward (Ennis, 2017; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). In the next section, we present the methodological approach which guided this study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study forms part of a larger qualitative study exploring experiences and understandings of promoting SEL and MPE in an alternative secondary/high school setting. This particular research was designed and implemented utilizing a self-study approach: “a personal, systematic inquiry situated within one’s own teaching context that requires critical and collaborative reflection in order to generate knowledge, as well as inform the broader educational field” (Samaras, 2011, p. 10). Within PE, self-study has become increasingly common practice, especially amongst teacher-educators (Baker, 2021; Ovens, 2014; Fletcher & Ovens, 2015; Richards & Ressler, 2017). However, advocacy and evidence of self-study research specifically in K–12 settings with in-service PE teachers is less apparent in literature (Casey, 2012; Brown, 2011). Keltchermans and Hamilton (2004) observe “that relationships in educational settings are not without emotional currents and that emotions are a central part of teaching” (p. 785). Adopting self-study can support TRs in better understanding the emotional realities they themselves experience as they “attempt to tease out the ways that attention to emotion can support the development of the professional knowledge” for them and others as they learn to work with students in a more meaningful manner (p. 786). Similar to recent research utilizing self-study to explore MPE (Baker, 2021; Beni et al., 2019a; 2019b), in conducting this study, the TR and critical friend sought to adhere to five key characteristics of self-study research outlined

by LaBoskey (2004): 1) It was self-initiated and focused; 2) it was improvement-aimed 3) it was interactive; 4) it included multiple qualitative, methods; and 5) it exhibited a shared and open process to demonstrate its trustworthiness. In the coming sections, we demonstrate how these characteristics were frequently visible and implemented through the research process.

The Participant, the Context, and the PE Course

Although the first author in this study, The TR is presented herein in third person point of view. The TR, a white, Caucasian, Irish male, graduated as a secondary/high school PE and English teacher in Ireland in 2012. Between 2012 and 2018, he worked within disadvantaged, public, and private Irish secondary/high school settings, working with an array of students including disadvantaged/underserved students, those with moderate to general learning needs, students with physical disabilities, and care-experienced students, typically implementing a variety of behaviouralist and constructivist pedagogical approaches from his training such as peer tutors, task stations, direct instruction, intra-task variation, mastery learning, play-teach-play, and child designed activities (Graham, 2008). During this research, he continuously reflected upon and contemplated his approach to teaching and learning and ways in which he could further implement a more holistic experience for his students. Between 2016 and 2018, he completed a part-time research Master of Science in PE degree on secondary/high school teachers and students' experiences of enacting student voice in PE (Howley & O' Sullivan, 2020; 2021). In 2018, he moved to the U.S. and enrolled in a doctoral degree program concentrating on PE curriculum and pedagogy under the supervision of the critical friend, an experienced researcher and practitioner of over 30 years in multiple international contexts, concentrating specifically on a research agenda around cooperative learning, model-based practices, student voice, and SEL across K-12 PE settings (Dyson et al, 2019; 2020a; 2020b; Dyson et al., 2021a;

2021b). While enrolled, he and a teacher–educator in the university with over 20 years’ experience in the field shared and developed a growing interest in SEL and MPE and wanted to design, implement, and research a PE intervention which promoted SEL and MPE. An opportunity arose for the TR to do so in Spring 2021. As part of his doctoral assistantship, he and another PE teacher, who was also a full–time doctoral student, were appointed to instruct 9th grade PE to two classes of students at Tyber College, an urban alternative high school with 250 students, operated in partnership by the local school district and a university where the school’s campus was situated. Tyber typically enrolled underserved/at–risk students from the local school district and through long established university partnered youth development programs. The school provided an alternative educational experience for at–risk high school students and had a high graduation rate. This allowed the TR and research team flexibility and autonomy in creating and implementing the PE course syllabus. Returning from face-to-face instruction for the first time since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the TR was eager to ensure that the course content reflected what he was coming to learn, value, and prioritize as he continued to evolve as teacher and researcher.

Ahead of Spring 2021, the outline of the PE course was designed by the TR, critical friend, PE teacher, and teacher-educator. Collectively, the group had combined practical experience of teaching and conducting research in PE across multiple international K–12 and higher education settings, ranging in experience from 4–30 years. The course was purposefully designed with the intention of developing students’ understanding and application of SEL and MPE and physical activity. Central to this was the enactment of student–centered pedagogical approaches. Similar to the recent work of Lynch and Sargent (2020; 2021) in higher education UK settings, a number of what the research team regarded as student voice pedagogies were

drawn upon from their own collective experiences of teaching SEL and MPE in the field. These pedagogies were modified in order to be made more appropriate and then collectively implemented frequently or specifically at different points throughout the course. These are presented in Table 1, and further detailed in Appendix C. For example, Cooperative Learning (Dyson & Casey, 2012; 2016) was used as the primary pedagogical method during Weeks 1–4 when the focus was on building relationship skills with students in class. CL Structures implemented included *Learning Teams*, *Jig–Saw*, *Think–Pair–Perform*, and *Rally Round Robin*. Particular attention was paid to implementing the cooperative element group processing throughout the course, typically in the form of “an open dialogue or group discussion related to the lesson content that can occur at any time during the lesson” (Dyson & Casey, 2012, p. 4). These structures were frequently used throughout the remainder of the course at different times, but alongside other pedagogical practices such as peer tutors, task stations, direct instruction, intra–task variation, mastery learning, play–teach–play, and child designed activities (Graham, 2008). The course itself was implemented with by the TR and PE teacher with the help of two teaching assistants across ten weeks from February to April in 2020 and sixteen 75-minute lessons respectively, typically delivered twice a week depending on the school calendar. The enacted pedagogies were implemented in class as well as asynchronously using the school’s online learning platform. As part of the larger study, the TR collected data from the third author, her class of 16 students, and the two teaching assistants (Howley et al., 2021). In order to comply with the ethical requirements of the local school district Tyber was part of, the TR was not granted permission to gather data from the 15 students within his own class. Stemming from this, the TR and critical friend decided to conduct a self–study of his approach to evolve curricular

and pedagogical approaches to promote SEL and MPE with his class, utilizing the data collection methods and procedures outlined in the next section.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collection took place before, during, and after the 20 lessons taught by the TR. A TR diary was utilized to create a “permanent record of thoughts and experience and a safe outlet for personal concerns” (Spalding & Wilson, 2002, p. 1397). This diary contained 22 entries averaging 1,838 words in length written before and after each lesson. It involved the TR reflecting on his experiences and thoughts throughout the study, openly juxtaposing his own thoughts, experiences, and observations alongside those he had read from literature, as well as those received from his students, the PE teacher, the critical friend, and the teaching assistants throughout the study. Supplementing this, the TR completed 20 *Post Teaching Reflective Analyses* (Dyson, 1994; Bodsworth & Goodyear, 2017; Bjørke & Moen, 2020). Immediately after each lesson he taught, the TR participated in recorded post-teaching reflections (10 self-conducted solely by the TR, and 10 conducted with the critical friend), ranging from 10–45 minutes and utilizing the same questions each time alongside new ones to reflect on his teaching and learning experiences (e.g., What were your learning intentions for you as a teacher? How do you know the students meet your learning intentions? What went well in terms of your pedagogical work? What would you change? If anything? What might be your learning intentions for the next lesson?). Accompanying the ten post teaching reflections, the critical friend conducted ten lesson observations of the TR’s lessons, while the teaching assistants conducted three and five lesson observations respectively, subsequently generating field notes to further triangulate the TR’s journal entries and reflections during the self-study.

A deductive strategy was predominantly utilized, before an inductive thematic analysis was applied drawn from The *Miles, Huberman and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis* (2014). Adopting a predominantly deductive approach ensured we would draw on our selected theory and concepts as categories to identify codes and/or key variables (Miles et al., 2014). Given very little research exists at secondary/high school level PE settings, the TR and critical friend made this decision, as we had “a priori constructs and propositions to test and observe” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 238). In utilizing social constructivist learning theory, we sought to identify the teacher’s prior knowledge and experiences of SEL and MPE and how further knowledge was constructed actively within the social and cultural environment of his classroom as he intentionally and explicitly planned for, instructed, and promoted SEL and MPE in each lesson and in the course as a whole. Similar to Lynch and Sargent (2020), we deliberately deductively assigned data codes drawn from the TR’s data that directly aligned with the targeted competencies of SEL and features of MPE as a form of attribute coding to help with organization and focus (Miles et al., 2014; Bingham & Witkowsky, 2021). To further triangulate and confirm these attribute codes, we then drew from the critical friend and teaching assistants as data sources at different times to further confirm the TR’s experience within specific classes and across the course. Following this, we then looked to inductively analyze how these attribute codes aligned to the research purpose, questions, and theory. Drawing on Dewey’s notion of the *continuity of experience*, and from reading Casey & Fletcher’s (2012) self-study, we sought to identify what Bullock and Ritter (2011) described as “turning points” in the data, where (a) there was an affective (e.g., emotional or motivational) element, (b) the data framed a problem of practice, (c) the TR implicitly or explicitly sought to help and address the problem, and (d) the data was bounded by the action-present in that there was still time to take action on the problem and

improve one's practice as a result (Casey & Fletcher, 2012, p. 368-369). The TR and critical friend then conducted a peer review and audit trial looking to confirm these turning points, addressing negative case analysis, before finally inductively weaving findings into what we interpreted as sequenced and progressive thematic representation of the teacher's evolving approach to promote SEL and MPE, which is presented next.

Findings

The following themes were constructed as thematic findings, representing the numerous learning experiences and *turning points* the TR encountered in his efforts to evolve pedagogical approaches to promote SEL and MPE: *bringing the fun; steering between shimmering and sensitive social interactions; co-creating and reconsidering challenge; monitoring movements towards motor competency; pursuing personal relevance in physical activity; managing emotions while moving; showing self-awareness more sharply; learning to uplift others; your team needs you; and stepping back so students step up.*

Bringing the Fun

Promoting MPE required the TR to consider the role of fun and how it manifested itself in the learning experiences he implemented. From the outset, he wanted to position fun in relation to the other features: "I'm trying to move away from just having fun lessons with a lot of physical activity...to try and develop more understanding around movement" (Critical Friend Interview [CFI]). Early on, he identified fun as something of a *springboard feature* in tasks that allowed other features to be brought further into focus: "I could hear the smiles and laughter coming from students as they gestured activities or animals they were assigned. Lift off – some of them were having fun" (Journal Entry[J]2Lesson[L]1). The TR regularly observed his students alluding to fun first when talking about PE and physical activity: "Tasks were slow to

get going...but the students themselves were saying ‘We had a lot of fun there’’. (Post Teacher Reflection Lesson [PTRL]3). In his observations of a golf class, the critical friend also identified fun as a foregrounding feature during tasks: “Positive learning environment from kids; e.g., ‘Yeah, good job, it was really fun playing with you!’” (Critical Friend Field Note [CFFN] 4 L10).

As classes continued, the TR also recognized the need to be more explicit and help students distinguish fun from other features such as challenge: “It’s clearer to me the need to be explicit and help students differentiate between the features...students called for competition as being a fun element. I would view competition as being challenge” (J14 L12). Realizing this, he deliberately rewarded students for demonstrating movements and skills less attributed to competition and challenge during modified basketball games to better promote the idea of fun within tasks: “They were able score points for their team by just simply performing a fun trick...I would have always just rewarded a three–play pass; instead when they got the pass, they had to do something fun; perform a trick; do a figure of eight; a pretzel; a circle” (PTRL 13); “Students started to perform basic skills (trick, ball handling skills), then a pass; rewarding the fun or the trick; interesting novel strategy to get kids engaged” (FN6L13). Notably, promoting and demonstrating fun was not just something confined to the student experience. The TR also observed how embracing fun in numerous forms as the teacher alongside students also contributed to positive moments in class, represented in the following instance he describes from Lesson 14:

I’m not that confident demonstrating basketball...I wanted to make fun of myself in this sense...I took the set shot and missed. Michelle humorously cheered “That’s OK, you can try again”. There rest of the group laughed and smiled. I laughed too. I reciprocated

here comment by thanking her. We were all on the same wavelength. The students were treating me as I was a student too for that moment. It was humorous and well intentioned. They started prompting me, ‘Mr. Howley you should move closer to the hoop’. I did and scored. (J16L14)

The TR observed how the feature of fun tended to be less apparent when the emphasis in learning tasks was placed on physical activity and performance: “When the focus is on challenge, the physical performance and motor competency starts to crank up—there isn’t the same element of fun” (J5L3); “When the activity and movement level becomes more than moderate and closer to intense, the fun evaporates very quickly... the students become frustrated, move less, withdraw. It makes me wonder why I’ve emphasized MVPA in my classes previously - where’s the fun in being out of breath?” (J10L8). The critical friend also observed this in his field notes how a focus on skill reduced the sense of fun students experienced in a pickleball lesson: “Next lesson maybe slow it down a bit; it’s a tough new skill for them, hard to control the ball. Most students’ comments suggest a bit of frustration. Make it more fun next time” (FN8L16). By the end of the course, the TR felt that he and his students had come to better appreciate and facilitate fun as a primary feature, and a prerequisite to promoting MPE, but also in relation to the presence of other features to promote learning within PE and physical activity: “I think students do value the need for fun, but also the need for other things also” (PTRL20). Stemming from the promotion of fun, the TR also came to better appreciate the role and influence of social interaction within PE and physical activity.

Steering between Shimmering and Sensitive Social Interactions

Prior to the course, the TR recognized the vital role social interaction played in facilitating MPE experiences: “I do think that PE is very unique in that it provides a very natural

setting for students to experience social interaction...there are opportunities when you are working in groups and teams” (CFI). From the outset, he felt that such social interaction required an authentic enactment of student voice: “You need to listen to them...you need to find ways to involve them...you have to give them opportunities to critique what's going on” (CFI). In the early lessons, he placed a strong emphasis on dialogue and face to face social interaction to help students familiarize themselves with each other. These interactions required him to open up and make connections with students also:

They slowly started to look at their partners, tell their names, ask the other person theirs. I went around each group and one partner was telling me what they had learned from the other. There were shimmers of social interaction slowly...I was responding myself and as I did I was telling them about me also. Mandy asked me how long I had lived in Ireland and I explained a little bit about my background. Students listened. I doubled up the pairs and they began introducing themselves and sharing information. The atmosphere was much more relaxed and I could hear the small chattering with each other. *OK, they're talking. It might not be much but it's a start.* (J2L1)

As time went on, the TR observed students more openly expressing themselves and positively interacting, as demonstrated when orally sharing their personal biographies and timelines: “The biography discussions in groups was a real opportunity to let students know that everyone's okay with where everyone's at here...to make sure that everyone is made to feel part of the group...that they feel comfortable socially” (PTRL3); “The timeline assignment really helped students...it gave them an opportunity to continue building a relationship with [the TR] because they could relate to many of the experiences he had growing up” (TAFN1L4).

Consistently facilitating group processing challenged the TR's praxis to ensure that intentional time and effort was being allotted in class to facilitate and develop these interactions not just between himself and students, but amongst the students themselves. As the lessons progressed and social interaction and group processing became part and parcel of classroom practice, the TR, critical friend, and the teaching assistants observed students interacting more constructively with each other to the point where they were openly critiquing and appraising their learning experiences when group processing: "They're starting to critique things a bit more. they're starting to think a little bit more critically about it" (PTRL6); "Students seemed to be able to review what they had done and how they benefited from the activities" (TAFN3L6); "Kids feel more comfortable in group processing" (FN3L6). Within activities, the TR regularly found the promotion of social interaction more tasking when students were performing physical tasks and looking to be competitive: "Students were all spaced out and their working partners were on opposite sides of the court...there were few opportunities to interact and critique over the duration of the class" (J19L17).

Importantly, embracing the feature of social interaction also included responding to and navigating times when tension and conflict arose. Recognizing the need to embrace and promote social interaction meant addressing sensitive moments that had occurred: "It was a much more inclusive environment...there was a much better social interaction today than what they would have been last week...students felt supported, they felt encouraged" (PTRL18); "More inclusive; more social" (FN9L18); "There was encouragement; there was patience; not getting too upset when people made errors (PTRL19); "When I observe all the teams they did have in context real "positive interdependence" " (FN10L19). Sensitive navigating and responding to moments of

conflict during social interactions in classes helped the TR plan more thoroughly for inclusion in lessons.

Co-Creating and Reconsidering Challenge

The TR reflected on and planned for different ways in which he could promote challenge. Early on, such efforts were directed and led more so by him as the teacher. In having more control over the level of challenges students were afforded, he hoped to ensure each student could experience *just right* challenge: “How do I make sure that this is still equitable and everybody is accounted for, and everyone feels that they are being challenged?” (PTRL3). Just as the TR1 was seeking to challenge his students to work within and move outside of their comfort zones and experience new movements, so too did he have to consider how he incorporated challenge in developing his pedagogy:

I’ve rarely gone outside of my comfort zone in terms of teaching complex movements or tasks, which I am not competent in. I’ve always been able to demonstrate tasks to my students...just as I’m trying to get the students to feel more challenged, I too have to challenge myself and learn (J8L5)

His ability to modify tasks to create appropriate levels of challenge was observed by the teaching assistant: “[The TR] did a great job of introducing new ways to complete the activity or a more complicated portion of the activity in increments” (TAFN6L8). In particular, the TR came to appreciate the need to entrust his students more to demonstrate agency through negotiating levels of challenge for themselves within tasks: “For challenge, students suggested a number of things: adapt the movements, introduce different conditions. Take turns shooting, play with modified and official rules, set passing targets before shooting, change equipment, differentiate. The wheels were in motion. They’re thinking in this way” (J14L12); “[The TR] is

teaching to the student's level, differentiated instruction...a challenge for kids but students are moving in the right direction" (FN6L13). Moments where the TR intentionally facilitated student agency in creating their own level of challenge, especially when seeking to be inclusive when working in groups, became much more frequent as lessons progressed: "Students talked about how to change the rules of the games and to make sure it was still inclusive; to make sure that they were feeding the ball to allow a person to properly prepare to set themselves up for a forehand or a backhand return" (PTR18L16); "The students were working well within their comfort zones. Students rotated performers and tossed balls at different paces and heights depending on the performer" (J20L18). This, in turn, helped students to learn the required movement patterns for performance while participating in adapted games of pickleball with and without racquets: "The students were demonstrating elementary movement patterns; stepping forward to catch; stepping back to allow the bounce and a better catch. The movements were short but significant. Two steps this way, two steps back, a quick slide to the side—problem solved" (J20L18); "I saw students have rallies and return balls more skillfully than last week (FN9L18).

As with the other features, the TR still struggled at times to get the balance right when implementing teaching and learning approaches to facilitate challenge. This was especially the case when he was trying to facilitate challenge while also promoting physical activity and motor competence: "I feel that when the challenge to perform physical and motor skill aspects are too quickly cranked up in activities, students can quickly disengage" (J5L3); "I noticed some students' body language being tense, rigid, and reserved; standing narrow, hands down by their sides, hands in pockets...students don't feel comfortable in tasks where they are challenged too much" (J8L5); "It was a bit sink or swim. The challenge had gone from 0-100...trying to

perform movements and skills and maintain MVPA did not mix well (J10L8).” Right up until the end, the TR constantly found himself grappling with facilitating appropriate amounts of challenge when trying to make the level of challenge in lessons appropriate and meaningful, something also observed by the critical friend: “The challenge was set at a high level and students were encountering a lot of frustration and very little success...it’s a fine line to dangerously tread” (J19L17); “Groups are struggling to get a serve in—so [they] can’t even start the rally” (FN8L17).

In particular, seeking to promote challenge as a feature of MPE experiences also meant the TR had to explicitly teach students to recognize the feature of challenge as not solely representing competition: “It got a little bit competitive, which wasn’t an intention, but just the way students interpreted the challenge...it was teetering on the brink at times...it was particularly noticeable when we introduce the scoring option” (PTRL8); “The scoring created a bit too much competition in Quidditch” (FN3L8). As lessons continued, the TR made a conscious effort to help students frame challenge in a more inclusive task orientated way: “I don’t like the word competitive. I try to avoid using it nowadays. Instead, I remind students that it’s not about being competitive but setting appropriate challenges for themselves and those around them” (J11L9); “It’s just hard to find that sweet spot between allowing the students to be challenged and just becoming ultra-competitive with certain people taking over and other students starting to feel excluded very alienated” (PTRL16). In seeking to facilitate challenge, the TR also found himself having to be mindful of how representations of challenge influenced students’ motor competency.

Monitoring Movements towards Motor Competence

The TR acknowledged from the outset being conflicted and uncertain regarding his understanding and facilitation of experiences promoting motor competence: “I feel I have not done a very good job of promoting motor competency” (CFI); “I also don't want to go too overboard where we're not moving or the kids are not experiencing motor competence” (PTR1). He observed prioritizing movement over motor competence in the early lessons in an effort to engage students in being physical active first and foremost, observed also by the critical friend: “There was reduced physical activity and movement. I would argue this is necessary for students...they are becoming/have the potential to become physically educated. Isn't all of this a process?” (FN1L1); “I could hear the pitter-patter of their feet gradually increasing around the hall – they were moving at least—I can work with this” (J5L3). He gradually began to teach more intentionally to the feature when working with students: “I used the moment to talk about how it feels to have to try and perform something you've never done before and how it can make you feel incompetent and not good about yourself” (J8L5); Julia commented “[The TR] has a great way of engaging with the students and it is clear in their willingness to participate in the activities” (TAFN2L5). Key to this was creating an atmosphere of positive interdependence and cooperation where the more motor competent students demonstrated interpersonal skills to help and encourage their peers in performing skills: “It was really good to see some of the less motor competent students being encouraged and helped by others” (PTRL5); “By giving students an opportunity to showcase expertise and provide feedback to their peers, they were more engaged” (TAFN6L8); “In creating a cooperative atmosphere I'm setting up the opportunity for students to be successful and develop motor competence” (PTRL10). This was something he came to plan for more intentionally as lessons progressed: “There was a nice dynamic within groups;

competent performers and beginner performers...they worked together to find the balance...the motor competency the motor skills was better today...they returned more balls and serves gently using backhands and forehands” (PTRL18); “In planning, I identified more competent performers...I then looked to link them with students whose competence might be lower. I considered the dynamic between students in each group and how they might interact and work with each other” (J20L18).

Additionally, the TR had to carefully monitor and harness the emotions and actions of competent performers who were frustrated with others during tasks: “Sarah is a competent mover in basketball...at times she’s frustrated in tasks as she is more competent than others. She gets frustrated when others aren’t on her level and when conditions restrict what she can and can’t do” (J17L15). Indeed, there continued to be times when implementing appropriate learning experiences to promote motor competence didn’t always work out, as observed by him and the critical friend in Lesson 17 where the feature was lacking and inhibited the learning experience: “Students finding it hard to control the ball...try to bring it under control (FN8L17); “To hear from the students that they’re frustrated means that I need to think more about allowing them to experience success and become competent in performing some of the basic skills (PTRL17). During this lesson, the TR also found himself conflicted over the amount of agency and freedom he was allowing students in performing movements in an effort to promote motor competency and learn new skills:

There’s a thin line in this process where you try to help them acquire movement proficiency and then allow too much...it felt like I was allowing students to develop bad habits; swinging wildly; the racket face too open; students needlessly performing

smashes. At the same time, maybe these were the movements students wanted and need to perform to feel more competent? (J19L17)

By the end of the course, both the TR and critical noted that the lessons later in the semester had evolved to better facilitate and promote motor competence: “So, after the number of weeks he can focus on motor competence. Why? Because the students are engaged...motor competence evident in their pickleball skills” (FN10L19); “I could see the improvement in performance and motor competency...mistakes and errors were OK and not overwhelming or uncomfortable. If it happened, it happened; move on; next serve; try again” (J21L19). The development of a supportive and cooperative environment allowed students to experience motor competency in a way that was more meaningful with the potential to make activities more personally relevant, among the promotion of the other features.

Pursuing Personal Relevance in Physical Activity

The TR acknowledged coming into the study that he needed to better help students make connections between PE and their physically active lives outside the classroom: “I haven’t spent a lot of time with students really getting to know them...what do they find personally relevant... what is the relevant value of the learning I teach” (CFI). This required him to better understand what students articulated as personally relevant learning experiences. Utilizing written reflective practices such as personal biographies and timelines allowed for this to occur: “I’m inviting students to present their own personal identity, social identity; to talk about their families and their experiences...without understanding these personal connections, how would I create personally relevant PE experience? (J5L3). In facilitating students to reflect on and share their personal backgrounds with him and their peers, he was able to then help students consider how their unique personal backgrounds influenced their relationships with PE and physical activity.

“I’m able to shift that conversation towards physical activity and PE...to start thinking about how these experiences come together to form their relationship with PE and physical activity and what that means for them now and going forward” (PTRL3); “Students are thinking more deeply about critical moments in their life and their relationship with physical activity. What brought them to this point in their lives” (FN2L3). As classes continued, the TR deliberately tried to facilitate students in reflection in an effort to try and make better personal connections with learning tasks that was accessible and contextually relevant to them and helped them look at PE and physical activity differently:

Zara spoke about how yoga could be personally for her and others as it could be a way to relax and calm down...I think this is something of an alien concept to students – that PE and PA is a time and place to relax and be calm. Instead, its seen as a place where you have to be busy and exercising intensely. I asked the students to think about that more deeply and to consider it going forward. (J9L6)

By intentionally making time for students to consider and describe the personal relevance of different movement activities, the TR was able to help both himself and students make connections as to how physical activity was often incorporated in their broader lives without them realizing it: “Students alluded to having played mini-golf with their families” (J12L10); “Relevance—going to mini golf with families—going to parties with family. Personal relevance” (FN5L10).

At the same time, the TR appreciated how students identifying less relevant experiences helped him plan for future ones that were: “I don’t think students have the same sense of personal relevance to pickleball...I’m teaching something that they haven’t experienced before...this isn’t a bad thing. It might help them discreetly towards recognizing what really is

meaningful for them (J19L17). By the end of the course, he had come to recognize the need to engage students in critiquing the personal relevance of their movement experiences in order to better match content he provided within his PE classes to movements and activities students could pursue and perform within and beyond PE: “We need to work with students to present more relevant content in PE classes that draws on their broader lives to make learning in PE more personally relevant” (PTRL20).

Managing Emotions while Moving

The TR looked to teach students how to manage their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors while at the same time being physically active in class: “Self-management is definitely something I think a lot of students should learn—how they respond and conduct themselves in class when moving” (PTRL6). He regularly taught and planned for teaching movements such as yoga emphasizing stillness in movement as well as managing one’s emotions: “There was a stillness and silence that I haven’t always planned for when teaching—an ambience and sense of calm. Why wouldn’t a PE class look like this? Such movement is important as more vigorous ones associated with PE” (J9L6); “There was a clear shift in the energy and emotion of the room after the yoga session and all of the students were much calmer (TAFN3L6)”. At times, he found ways to teach for self-discipline and self-motivation when moving in places he hadn’t planned or expected, like teaching golf:

We had a very rich discussion around our frustrations. I emphasized how in golf, no more than any physical activity, you have to be focused and feel relaxed and comfortable in order to perform. I’m starting to look at movement more in this way. I’ve been teaching for years to get them up and active, and to teach the skills, the cues. But, how often have I considered the stillness? The balance? The need to control one's self when performing. I

hadn't planned for it intentionally, but it was a great moment to teach self-management...It was like a penny was dropping in my head. How often do we teach for this in our classes? The need to be calm and relaxed, the breathing techniques, self-talk etc. This had become part and parcel of the way we were looking at and discussing physically activity. (J12L10)

Golf—some frustration in golf but students seemed to be learning to manage this (FN5L10)

The TR observed students demonstrating personal and collective agency, such as in a written group task where they identified and described skills that promoted planning, organization, and initiative: “Students listed off examples of self-management: believing in yourself, having self-control, sportsmanship, managing diet and exercise, positive behaviors” (J14L12). Group processing in particular served as space for students to identify and consider the different emotions they felt while learning and how to manage them to accomplish personal and collective goals: “Students talk about being frustrated...we can work on that in the next class to help students self-manage themselves” (PTRL17): “Group Processing; good questions—How do we manage our emotions?” (CFFN] 8).

In teaching for self-management, the TR considered how he too was challenged to do so himself: “I need to manage my own emotion also to where I'm able to address the array of emotions that students bring to class” (PTR16); “I need to be able to establish a level of agency with students, where I can work to their preferences and what they find motivating and meaningful to accomplish curricular outcomes” (PTRL19). By incorporating more opportunities for students to experience and respond to emotional encounters, both expected and unexpected, the TR sought to teach self-management to his students. Overlapping with this, was the need to

also help students to better understand their emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influenced behavior within PE and physical activity.

Showing Self-Awareness More Sharply

The TR deliberately sought to “give students an opportunity to develop a sense of self-awareness of who they are, where they're from, what their identity is, what their relationship with physical activity and experience with a physical education has been” (CFI). He facilitated students in sharing their emotions, thoughts, and values with him and others: “I feel they'll be more honest about themselves; honest with me and others...consider why they do or don't have good relationships with physical activity...maybe they've been in different schools, they've moved from other countries, they've been bullied” (PTRL1). In the early lessons, he found students reluctant to be honest and reflective: “They're just not used to work in this way...they're not used to talking and sharing things about themselves...it's difficult for them to respond” (PTRL2). Still, he also observed an environment being created where students were comfortable talking about things: “Olivia spoke about being introverted, described herself as *antisocial*; explained she's shy socially and gets anxious in groups; especially during physical activity” (PTRL3); “I was so glad she felt comfortable to say this...students exchanged their experiences, identities, personalities and talked about their relationship with physical activity (J5L3); “Appeared that students were talking and listening to each other” (FN2L3). This in turn, prompted students to consider their relationship with PE and physical activity: “They are thinking more deeply about their experiences...identifying patterns, behaviors, and critical moments in their life which help explain their relationship with physical activity right now...I want them to start thinking about why/how they enjoy physical activity or why/how they don't” (PTRL3).

Tying this into movement and physical activity, the TR sought to help students consider how they experienced physical feeling and self-efficacy while performing tasks: “They were aware of how their body felt...how they were physically compensating or overcompensating... asking them to consider how comfortable they felt utilizing their bodies in this way” (PTRL4); “Students are very willing to speak about their feelings and states of mind in this way. It’s not something I have done in detail previously” (J6L4). He noted that helping students to reflect on and identify feelings, values and thoughts around their movement experiences in turn promoted a growth mindset to pursue further social, emotional, and motor competency: “During self-assessment, students were very honest about what they were doing well and what needed more work” (TAFN6L8); “Students wrote about being brave and stepping outside their comfort zones, to be confident and *Don’t say you can’t do it till’ you try it*” (J14L12).

Promoting self-awareness meant the TR also had to consider his own experiences, prejudices, and biases around PE and physical activity: “I never really thought deeply about how I ended up gravitating towards certain movement experiences...I ask students to move beyond scraping the surface and dig deeper into their lived experiences...but have I really dug deep into my own?” (J6L4). Prompted by the critical friend, he acknowledged the need to be more self-aware himself and be open and honest about his own emotions: “Should you as the teacher show emotion? Consider how you create that emotionally safe space? Students need to know it is safe, to trust you and trust each other” (FN7L15):

As teachers I don’t think running away from emotion in our classes or pretending it isn’t there is impossible. A classroom is not an emotionally sterile environment, especially not a PE class. Movement causes an energy that generates a range of emotions. That’s before we even consider the emotions students may already have arriving into the class based on

things we do not know and are often out of our control. Indeed, students undoubtedly pick up on the emotions of teachers also. It's a two-way street. How can a teacher expect to teach students to be socially and emotionally competent when they themselves fail to show emotion themselves? Teachers and students are living beings, not robots ...students won't let their guards down if we don't show them we're willing to do the same also. Doing so is an intricate process of give and take and knowing when. As a teacher with some experience, I feel comfortable letting my guard down and allowing such moments to occur...such willingness has come with experience and time. (J17L15).

Through creating more time and space for both him and his students to slowly understand, practice, and better demonstrate self-awareness, the TR was then able to consider how both his own and students' perspectives could be better appreciated and understood to promote broader SEL within the context of PE.

Learning to Uplift Others

The TR made a conscious effort to understand the perspectives of and empathize with his students, as well helping students to do so also. This was something he felt he had neglected in his experiences of teaching: "I haven't spent a lot of time with my students really getting to know them and allowing them to get to know each other" (CFI). Early on, he intentionally sought to acknowledge the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts both he and students shared: "I want to them to be comfortable...I'm going to be sharing my background...they'll be sharing their own backgrounds and learning about the groups also...talking about where they're from, their families, their pastimes" (PTRL1); "Antonio played piano and was interested in Latin music. Nara's name originated from Africa...Amir and Baran spoke about their middle eastern background and heritage...this is the most culturally diverse group of adolescents I have taught"

(J2L1). Before introducing more practical movement content, he established rules, routines, and expectations alongside the students to ensure they understood the need to demonstrate empathy and compassion and show concern for the feeling of others: “It was brilliant to hear students call for elements like kindness, patience, respect. The best one I heard was *uplift others*” (J2L1); “I think they feel they’re being listened to; their identities, their backgrounds – they’re being included...already there is an appreciation of diversity” (PTRL1). Focusing early group processing on establishing and understanding social norms facilitated students in demonstrating awareness and concern for the feelings of others: “I think students are starting to see that sometimes they have to adapt so others can feel comfortable” (J8L5); “Allanah, normally one of the more talkative students, encouraged Maya to speak and to be the group’s spokesperson” (TAFN3L6). As time went on, students were observed as being more comfortable sharing their perspectives of different learning experiences: “Kids felt more comfortable in group processing...there is some real positive interdependence here” (FN3L8); “Social awareness—students helping others—everyone makes a contribution in group processing” (FN4L9); “Students are learning to work in this way and were becoming increasingly comfortable with it” (J11L9).

Drawing on students to recognize situational demands and opportunities ensured that different learning tasks could be made more inclusive: “Students were talking together about creating smaller and bigger spaces on the tennis court...to modify things...thinking about what works for them, but what also works for others” (PTRL12). In Lesson 12, the TR observed one group writing about the need to be “mindful, to encourage and look out for others, to care about others’ feelings and respect people’s ethnicity and race” (J14L12). Students regularly expressed their collective frustrations with the TR when performing challenging tasks so that he could help

them address this: “Asking for their voice; more inclusive, more social...more differentiated instruction today for students (FN9L17) “Hearing other groups share their frustrations helps develop a sense of social awareness—that such frustration and challenge was felt not just by one student, but by nearly everyone” (J19L17). As observed by the critical friend in Lesson 19, in teaching for social awareness, the TR was able to influence student behavior and attitudes towards participation and performance, better catering for inclusion and allowing students to recognize and appreciate their role and the role of others in accomplishing learning: “Students happy in their groups; included; equity; allowed to perform; no one getting too frustrated, students experienced success at their own level” (FN10L19). In doing so, he was slowly establishing a more equitable environment for students that allowed for broader social and emotional development to occur.

Your Team Needs You

The TR acknowledged the role of relationship skills in promoting meaningful student interactions and participation: “Helping students discuss and share their experiences, ideas, and thoughts; this creates a sense of community. It helps develop relationship skills and allows them to communicate more effectively” (CFI). Helping students to connect and communicate effectively early on was not just confined to talking and listening, but also teaching them about how they utilized their body and movements when interacting and performing physical tasks: “Body language is important...the idea that they're able to gesture with each other and make eye contact...sometimes that's where you have to start” (PTR1). Calling for such openness and authenticity meant he too had to reciprocate and open himself up to students also: “It's not just about students knowing about each other; it's about them knowing the teacher as well...how are you going to create a quality PE experience if you don't trust, respect, or appreciate each other?”

(PTRL1). The TR, critical friend, and teaching assistant both observed students' early willingness to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate and work collaboratively: "They were showing that they were able to communicate more effectively and directly with people and they were establishing more personal connection to the people that they were working with" (PTRL3); "In these early lessons, [the TR] is focusing on communication...showing he does care and wants to earn their trust (FN2L3); "He was able to encourage students to open up about their experiences with PE...it gave everyone an opportunity to continue building relationships...they could relate to each other" (TAFN1L4). As classes progressed, he looked to increasingly introduce more advanced movement tasks such as a *tinikling* dance sequence that required students to practice teamwork and collaborative problem-solving, intentionally placing students in "situations where they would have to work together to problem solve and complete sequences" (PTRL5).

Performing tasks promoting Cooperative Learning elements such as positive interdependence, interpersonal/social skills, and group processing through Cooperative Learning structures such as learning teams, think-pair-share, and jigsaw learning allowed students to collectively navigate challenges they faced in the taster sessions where novel and advanced movements and skills were being introduced: "Students were working in groups to solve and negotiate the tasks and adapt and modify them in their own ways as well too" (PTRL8); "The students were actively engaged in class...while they were hesitant at first to move around and provide support to their teammates, they eventually understood the need for it with encouragement" (TAFN6L8). The TR observed students becoming increasingly confident and constructive when participating in group processing. This was especially the case when it came

to working together to negotiate the units of work which students would have to participate in in upcoming classes:

Students led the group processing...we'd reach this point of trust and developed these relationships over the last couple of weeks...it was really impressive. The ideas they're coming out with; the things they're talking about; it was all about the students (PTRL12).

While students were observed resisting negative social pressure and offering leadership, support, and help to others when needed, there were also moments where tension and conflict occurred amongst students and with the TR. The TR looked to embrace these moments as opportunities for him and his students to learn how to negotiate conflict constructively and navigate differing social and sensitive situations that arose when participating in tasks:

I've learned to embrace the give and take of these encounters...initially, this left me feeling vulnerable as a teacher and open to criticism. I came to realize that what instead was happening often is that students had developed a relationship and rapport with me that they felt they could speak their mind about something (J11L9).

Rather than adopt a punitive approach to such moments, the TR instead drew on this approach to negotiate conflict, as demonstrated in lesson 13 when one student did not want to participate in class: "Good personal work with [student]. [TR] aware not to be "heavy handed" navigating these moments of conflict. Their inclusion is important. *Your team needs you.* Tricky and difficult to navigate" (FN6L13); "Navigating that moment, to make the person recognize that their inclusion is important...it's trickier than it looks you know?" (PTRL13). The TR observed how working in this way at times made him feel vulnerable and not in control: "It can be difficult for teachers opening themselves up...navigating these moments...this was my first time dealing with this level of in-class conflict and I was genuinely struggling. I felt like I had lost control of

things” (J18L16). In increasingly demonstrating and promoting relationships skills, the TR came to value the role and responsibility students had in PE.

Stepping Back so Students Step Up

While willing, allowing students make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions was something the TR acknowledged struggling to facilitate: “I’ve always tried to involve students in decisions...give them responsibility of the learning process...I’ve struggled and sometimes find myself taking the control back...removing the opportunity for students to be responsible and make decisions” (CFI). In planning for the classes, he set out to provide students with opportunities to evaluate their learning experiences and take action to make it more meaningful: “I’m conscious that I want the students to be part of this negotiation process and have agency...what’s the point in teaching a lesson that isn’t meaningful or at least reflects something that the students have consensus on?” (J4L2). Although initially onerous, through providing students the option to select activities as part of the taster sessions, he was subtly providing students with more opportunity to critique and make democratic decisions over the selection of class content: “It is a little uncomfortable at times waiting for students to make the decisions...the key is ensuring that, following this, students can continue to critique and feel a sense of agency in the process as we move towards the units of work.”(J5L3). Using learning teams within tasks provided students with the opportunity to evaluate each other’s performances and identify solutions for individual and social problems they encountered such as during activities like frisbee and golf: “I could hear students critiquing/assessing each other in a constructive manner...they were giving attention to each person and the rubric” (J10L8); “During the self-assessment debrief, students were honest about what they were doing well and what needed more work. My group did not utilize calling each other’s names’ or moving around

the space to catch the frisbee” (TAFN6L8); “Strong social dynamic in golf—students being responsible to provide the feedback” (FN5L10); “During golf there was the opportunity to practice and provide feedback to each other...allowing them to be responsible for the learning” (PTRL10). As classes continued, the TR regularly observed moments where students increasingly made more advanced responsible decisions around task differentiation when working in groups: “One group broke into two teams and rotated stations themselves, which I’ve never seen kids do before without being prompted” (PTRL9): “They redesigned the task, allowing them to become more competent and get a feel for the game...I realized the need to let students take the learning in their own direction...They were figuring things out their way and bringing each other along” (J11L9). Following the taster sessions, students participated in a *class conference* in Lesson 12 evaluating and negotiating the selection of two units of work and outlining the expectations of the class before participation began, reflecting on everyone’s role in promoting personal, social, and collective well-being: “They were invested in it, they were taking ownership of their upcoming units...learning to work together and make good decisions as a group” (PTRL12). This led the TR to further consider the significance of this in his journal:

I don’t think their written words do justice to the interactions I was observing in class...they discussed their PE experiences for over half an hour. We had run over time, I couldn’t get them to stop. There was a connection being made and a meaning that couldn’t be fully put into words. I just wish I could have captured every thought, every emotion, every response (J14L12).

The TR increasingly looked to students to enact greater agency in co-constructing knowledge and negotiating learning experiences as the course progressed. He encouraged students in groups to design their own learning tasks incorporating the performance of these

skills in a more inclusive manner: “Giving them responsibility and opportunities to adjust but improve; the autonomy to make it more meaningful...[the TR] letting them decide what’s working well for them and then bringing in the learning” (FN9L18); “They had a lot more autonomy over how they pitched the challenge and performance themselves” (PTRL18); “This meant stepping back from the rigid performance criteria and approach I had used previously towards one where students had opportunities to be creative and responsible in the process...more agency over how they can learn these skills” (J20L18). By the end of the course, he had come to value the importance of allowing students demonstrate curiosity, open-mindedness, and critical thinking skills to accomplish broader learning outcomes together in PE: “Giving the kids responsibility allows it to manifest itself...students feel that they have some agency” (FN10L19); I’m trying to establish that level of agency with students, where I can work to their preferences and what they find motivating and meaningful, while also accomplishing a PE curriculum” (PTRL19). We now look to discuss these findings and consider some of the key turning points in the TR’s efforts to evolve his pedagogy to promote SEL and MPE to help inform others of what to potentially expect when doing so also in an alternative secondary/high school education setting.

Discussion

The findings presented here demonstrate the TR’s explicit and intentional focus on infusing SEL and MPE within already established pedagogies (e.g., cooperative learning, peer tutors task stations, direct instruction, intra-task variation, mastery learning, play-teach-play, and child-designed activities). These pedagogical approaches were also complimented by the addition of innovative democratic and reflective pedagogies (e.g., biographies, timelines, reflections, photovoice, class consultation, and negotiation), which further allowed the TR to

evolve and feel better equipped to teach for and promote SEL and MPE within PE. In drawing on his previous knowledge and experience, or indeed lack of it, the TR committed to teaching cognitive, social, and affective interaction processes more explicitly, doing so “in an integrated way while retaining focus on acquiring subject matter knowledge” (Rovegno & Dolly 2006, p. 250). This meant the TR had to become immersed in the process of learning himself through continuously trialing, observing, reflecting, and seeking out further information in relation to the learning tasks he was presenting students. Drawing on these experiences and his own knowledge, the differing social and affective environments and conditions he found himself opening up to and working with at differing times lead him to test out and evolve his approaches to teaching and learning within the context (Kirk & Macdonald, 2009). In line with Dewey’s *continuity of experience*, this involved a process of trial and error as he found himself increasingly “coming to grips with and making judgments in concrete cases as they emerge inside and outside the classroom in the process” (Cobb & Bowers, 1999).

Thorburn (2020a) suggests a “more pragmatic and phenomenological-informed curriculum planning and pedagogical strategies could contain rich possibilities for achieving greater teacher autonomy and enhance students’ ownership of their learning” (p. 6); wherein “a progressive program of PE which focused on the self and the social, on personally relevant learning and social interaction, could become a plausible basis for arguing that in educational terms, PE is capable of being meaningful” (p. 11). Considering the TR’s evolving approach to teaching and learning through the lens of MPE, we see how the TR learned to develop a better understanding of what these looked like in practice and the role they played in learning, helping him to make more informed decisions around how they were implemented as they occurred throughout the course, lesson-to-lesson, and in the moment (Beni et. al., 2019). Regarding fun,

he developed a broader appreciation of the need for fun to be present and constructively promoted when either occurring intentionally or indirectly within tasks as a catalyst for learning. This led him to teaching students of the need to be equitable and socially aware of others when seeking to promote fun while performing and learning new skills. A core concept of constructivism is that learners acquire knowledge through social interactions (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006, p. 256). Consistently dedicating regular time in classes to group processing became a helpful practice to promote social interaction within and between physical activities. Intentionally providing more time for students to socially interact with each other through reflection and critique helped him to better understand what activities were and were not more meaningful for students. As time moved on, and the TR observed students becoming more comfortable in doing so, the promotion of social interaction took on a more affective and inclusive dimension. By the end of the course, he had to develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics in how students expressed themselves in different ways when experiencing different scenarios. This became especially important when navigating moments of tension and conflict sensitively. The promotion of social interaction facilitated the TR in enacting student voice to better help him and his students make sense of, shape, influence, and enact more meaningful PE and physical activity learning experiences (Howley et al., 2021). Rather than viewing time allotted to social interaction as detrimental to PE and students' active participation in physical activity, he came to view the provision of social interaction as a necessary pre-requisite to enhance PE and make it more meaningful.

Regarding challenge, the need to approach the facilitation of challenge more carefully through thinking ahead, adapting tasks, and especially drawing on the knowledge and creativity of students themselves ensured the TR learned from what was happening in classes to better

facilitate and teach students in seeking out *just right* levels challenge when performing physical activity inside and outside of class (Kretchmar, 2006). Observing and reflecting on times where he had presented too much and, indeed, too little challenge resulting in him regularly acknowledging how he had inadvertently created inappropriate levels of challenge for students (Dismore & Bailey, 2011). Encountering such moments required the TR to continuously revise tasks to make them more accomplishable in future. Through evolving to intentionally plan for students' collective skill development rather than prioritizing individual performance, he was able to better plan for and incorporate motor competence while also overlappingly promoting other features. Sharing and demonstrating his own struggles with motor competency when demonstrating tasks helped students recognize that they were not alone in experiencing frustration at times. This wasn't always a smooth process. The TR regularly found himself conflicted over the amount of agency and freedom he was allowing students in performing movements in an effort to promote motor competency and learn new skills. In his eyes, he still felt was able to accomplish psychomotor learning outcomes while also allowing students more autonomy in how they performed physical tasks, in turn developing their confidence and competence in performing physical skills (Beckey, 2021).

Establishing students' broader personal connections and experiences to PE and physical activity, be they positive or negative, was seen as a necessary starting block by the TR to promote MPE. In helping students to make personally relevant connection to learning through democratic practices and reflection, the TR found himself engaging students in regular tasks and discussions around the types of movement experiences that were more accessible and relevant to them in pursuing meaningfully active lifestyles. This led him to recognize and appreciate an array of physical activity and movement experiences engaged with by students, which were not

always found or facilitated within the content and context of his typically planned for and prescribed teaching and learning experiences (Ní Chróinín & Fletcher, 2021). At the same time, sharing his own personal learning experiences, both positive and negative, around PE and physical activity growing up resonated with students and prompted them to consider their own personal learning experiences in a similar light. In helping students to make personally relevant connections to PE and physical activity, he found himself increasingly engaging students in regular discussion and reflection around the types of movement experiences that were more accessible and relevant to them in pursuing meaningfully active lifestyles beyond his own knowledge and experience and what was occurring in class.

Moving beyond MPE, the TR openly acknowledged that prior to the study, the explicit and intentional promotion of SEL was not something that he had given due attention to in his teaching and learning. Similar to the observations of Wright et al. (2020b) of teachers in Scotland, he struggled initially with understandings as to what strategies he could draw on and utilize to promote these competencies and skills within PE. The TR had to evolve and develop a greater sense of appreciation for the need to allow his students opportunities to feel motivation and agency for themselves to accomplish personal and collective goals when being physically active and connect competencies such as self-management to teaching and learning (CASEL, 2015). This led him to consider novel stress management strategies incorporating movement he could utilize to accomplish this through physical activity and movement in a variety of innovative and different ways such as yoga, barre, and meditation. At times, he found himself conflicted as he cautiously sought to safely manage moments where emotions were heightened as the teacher, while still allowing students the opportunity to practice self-management themselves (Humphrey et al., 2020). Intentionally focusing on self-awareness allowed students to consider prior feelings,

values, and thoughts around PE and physical activity and examine potential prejudices and biases that had occurred and still existed. In helping students to recognize their own strengths and limitations, the utilization of reflective tasks such as personal biographies and timelines allowed him to gain greater insight into the extent of his own and students' personal and social identities. This insight was not just confined to how it applied to PE and physical activity, but also extended to and connected to their wider worlds (Betourne & Richards, 2015; Sutherland & Parker, 2020). This, in turn, led to the promotion of social awareness. Just as the TR observed the need to help students develop a sense of meaning and purpose around PE and physical activity, so too did he recognize the need to be reflective and aware of his own personal experiences and preferred movement origins as a means to examine his own prejudices and biases alongside those of his students. Again, facilitating group processing served as a site for students to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others during class (Dyson et al., 2020; 2021). Helping students to reflect on, recognize, describe, and share their experienced emotions together during PE and physical activity led to increased social awareness (CASEL, 2015; Howley et al., 2021; Dyson et al., 2021). In evolving to become more socially aware of his students' emotions and experiences within this, the TR gradually became more comfortable in embracing student critique and responding to their collective frustrations.

The ability to better establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and navigate conflict constructively with and amongst students within PE was regularly alluded to by the TR when planning for and reflecting on his pedagogical approaches. In particular, utilizing Cooperative Learning structures frequently early on and throughout the course meant he planned for providing students with opportunities to develop relationship skills (Dyson & Casey, 2012; 2016). Using these structures consistently, the TR and critical friend regularly observed students

resisting negative social pressure and offering leadership, support and help to others when needed in class. Rather than adopt a punitive approach, he evolved his approach to conflict management by looking to deescalate sensitive moments constructively by communicating with students to identify the source of conflict and work towards a solution. In the end, through focusing on the development of relationship skills with and amongst students in context, the TR learned to work more dynamically to the sensitive and emotional climates and interactions he and students frequently encountered in PE. By the end of the course, he recognized how his efforts to promote responsible decision making with students in PE was causing him to contest, reconsider, and evolve his own pedagogical approach to be more student centered. Facilitating students to reflect on prior and current moments that shaped and influenced their relationships with physical activity across their lives up to that point in class served as an opportunity for students to demonstrate critical thinking skills. To elicit knowledge construction requires the teacher go beyond simply presenting an activity (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Allowing students increased agency over how knowledge was constructed within tasks was something the TR evolved to incorporate and accept as part and parcel of the learning process. This, in turn, led to the TR a working with students not as passive recipients of knowledge, but instead as active learners “more involved in tasks that stimulate decision making, critical thinking, and problem solving” (Dyson et al., 2004, p. 227). Moving beyond the notion of treating students as active, social, and creative learners (Perkins, 1999), he was making a conscious effort to encourage students to become affective learners in this SEL pedagogical focus.

Findings demonstrate how the TR’s approach to evolve pedagogy became an iterative process involving repeatedly navigating numerous critical incidents, experiences, ideas, and practices, ultimately leading to more explicit and descriptive promotions of SEL and MPE. This

evolution came about through continuous and deliberate and indirect demonstrations, modelling, pinpointing, and intentional prompting of students to reflect and consider how these features and competencies were meaningfully embodied and enacted within lessons. In trying new things, making mistakes, revising and re-applying, and through committing the time, effort, and perseverance necessary, the TR observed an evolution in his approach, which led him closer to a more holistic approach to teaching and learning that was observed also by his critical friend and the teaching assistants.

Conclusion

Continued efforts to position the social and affective domain more intentionally within PE to provide a more holistic movement experience that also promotes more prioritized cognitive and psychomotor outcomes has seen researchers and practitioners reconsider the teaching and learning of associated outcomes using contemporary theoretical and conceptual educational frameworks. To our knowledge, this is the first time that a teacher/TR in a high school/secondary setting has sought to deliberately align their teaching with both MPE and SEL as a means to doing so. In the case here of the TR, rather than detract from his ability to teach and help students learn core PE content, his evolved approach only served to enhance it. We hope this self-study informs and encourages researchers and practitioners working in high school/secondary level settings of the merits of evolving their teaching and learning approaches to work in this way. Additionally, it highlights some of the potential realities and turning points they too might face in efforts to observe and evolve pedagogy to promote MPE and SEL. Such an approach at times leads to uncertainty as much change, meaningless as much as meaning. If MPE experiences are to truly be realized, then teachers' utilization and promotion of democratic and reflective practices focusing not only on its currently conceptualized features, but more

broadly on the social and emotional experiences students have currently and continue to encounter in their efforts to lead physically active lives through effectively applying knowledge, attitudes, and skills will be necessary to do so. Rather than prioritize social and affective learning over other domains, we encourage teachers and researchers to consider how they currently work around the margins in their approaches to do so more consistently and deliberately. We see here how the TR regularly flirted with meaning, emotion, and movement—class by class, moment by moment. While perhaps daunting, the experience presented here demonstrates the benefit of doing so not just for the evolving the TR’s approach to learning, but indeed his students. For those considering committing to such an endeavor, we leave with the closing comments from the TR’s post teaching reflective analysis as a reminder of the ever evolving and reassuring worth of working in such a way:

It’s energy consuming, lot of planning, lot of changing, not a lot of routine to it at times...there’s a lot of uncertainty I guess...ultimately, we should be bringing situations to the classroom that the students aren’t expecting or haven’t asked for...so I feel I’m bringing more than what’s expected. I think this semester I brought more than what students expected...I know we’ve changed a couple of things that have helped improve the students’ experiences of PE...they’re all the better for it...I think I’m all the better for it too...but the job goes on...its very anticlimactic I guess, I don’t think I’ve split the atom, but I’ve only found more way of doing things” (PTRL20).

CHAPTER V: ENACTING STUDENT VOICE PEDAGOGIES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MEANINGFUL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Reflecting trends in education and societies more broadly (Cook-Sather, 2018; Gonzalez et al., 2017; Mills et al., 2017), the last decade has seen considerable scaling up of research and advocacy for enacting youth/student voice within and across Physical Education (PE), physical activity, and youth sport settings (Hooper & Sandford, 2021; Iannucci & Parker, 2021). Encouragingly, such work is increasingly exploring the enactment of Youth/Student Voice Pedagogies (SVP) with historically disengaged, underserved, and marginalized youth also. Such populations include, but are not limited to, girls (Gray et al., 2019; Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010; Oliver & Kirk, 2012; 2016), racial and ethnic minorities (Hamzeh & Oliver, 2012; Pang & Macdonald, 2016; Safron, 2020; Thorjussen & Sisjord, 2018), LGBTIQ+ students (Berg & Kokkonen, 2021; Drury et al., 2017; Safron & Landi, 2021), underserved (Lugueti et al., 2017a; 2017b Ward & Parker, 2013), disabled (Apelmo, 2019; Fitzgerald & Stride, 2012; Maher & Haegele, 2021; Meegan 2010), individuals with neuro-development disorders (Lamb et al., 2016; Thoren et al., 2020), and care-experienced youth (Quarmby et al., 2019; 2021; Sandford et al, 2021). Such work has emphasized the need to enact more transformative, socially just, and democratic approaches to PE that cater for and enhance students’ broader learning beyond PE subject matter (Lynch & Curtner-Smith, 2019).

At the same time, research simultaneously demonstrates the tensions and problematics which exist in enacting such an approach with young people (Azzarito, 2009; 2016; Glasby & Macdonald, 2004; Howley & O’ Sullivan, 2020; 2021; Öhman M, Quennerstedt, 2008). Indeed, when we consider PE settings specifically, the enactment of SVP has not yet truly manifested

itself in contemporary teaching and learning practices globally (Fitzpatrick, 2019; O’Sullivan, 2018, Quennerstedt, 2019). What is often found instead are research methodologies and pedagogies that capture the voice of students primarily as one-off data sources, rather than continuous creators and responders having agency in such a process (Dyson, 2006; Fitzgerald et al., 2021; Lundy, 2007). Distinguishing genuine student voice from adult-dominated research agendas is important in this regard. Any enactment claiming itself to encompass SVP must involve: 1) democratically grounded learner-centered pedagogies that allow participants to understand and take ownership and responsibility for their learning (Lynch & Curtner-Smith, 2019); 2) processes that create communities of learning where collaboration and cooperation are the norm and students have opportunities to participate in decision making (Hyttén, 2017); and 3) provide participants opportunities to share and reflect on their learning experiences while continuing to influence analyses, decisions, and practices (Cook-Sather 2006; 2014). Such spaces require a deliberate focus on pedagogies that can accomplish a range of holistic outcomes through the teaching and of learning PE content. Despite the good work previously completed, the need to better elicit, understand, and work with young people in PE, physical activity and youth sport settings continues. An area of increasingly growing interest in this regard is how the enactments SVP can promote social, emotional, and meaningful learning experiences in PE.

While academic learning and high stakes assessment commonly dictate and influence approaches to teaching and learning in mainstream and alternative education settings (Berry, 2011; Flower et al., 2011), SVP promoting Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can help students “learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioural, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships, and citizenship” (Jones et al., 2017, p. 12). Increased focus in PE has been given to how SEL theory and practices are explicitly understood

and implemented by teachers with students (Wright et al., in press; 2021; Wright & Richards, 2021). Simultaneously, there is increased advocacy for pedagogical approaches “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical enactment” (Ní Chróinín, 2018, p. 119). SVP can help engage and affect students to become more motivated and learn about physical activity, movement, and well-being in an invested and embodied manner (Long & Carless, 2010). Yet, despite the rhetoric, PE has “yet to maximize its potential with regard to the development of SEL competencies” (Hooper et al., 2020, p. 140). Similarly, research also indicates that there is a lack of understanding as to how Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) can be promoted and accomplished (Lynch & Sargent, 2020), with a lack of contextually relevant empirical data drawn from the individual experiences of children and adolescents (Fletcher et al., 2021; Ní Chróinín et al., 2021). Drawing on social constructivist learning theory in understanding and implementing a MPE approach and a systemic framework for SEL the purpose of this study was to explore learners’ experiences enacting SVP (i.e., full value contract, personal biographies, cooperative learning and group processing, continuous class consultation and negotiation, timelines, taster sessions, photovoice, written and digital reflections) to promote SEL and MPE in an alternative education setting. Two research questions guided the research process: 1) How did students interpret and enact these pedagogies? 2) What contribution did the enactment of these pedagogies have in promoting SEL and MPE?

Theoretical Framework

In order to consider how enacting SVP promotes MPE among students, we draw on social constructivist learning theory as “an appropriate theoretical basis upon which to ground its teaching and learning principles” (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 6). Students’ personal experiences are

often framed within a socially interactive PE environment and the social support received from peers, teachers, and others inside and outside of the class, which can enhance meaningful engagement with content (Beni et al., 2017; Gibbons & Gaul, 2004). Doing so requires us to “understand the multiple cultures of the learner, teacher, school, and society; how these impact learners; and how to plan curriculum and instruction that leads to robust, meaningful knowledge useful in multiple contexts” (Rovegno, 2006, p. 271). Such a view posits that students can become active, dynamic, and democratic agents within the classroom, adapting and developing practices and interactions to understand and experience SEL and MPE in PE (Azzarito, 2016; Kirk & Macdonald, 2009). Drawing on the features of MPE recently articulated by Beni et al. (2017) and stemming from the work of Kretchmar (2000; 2007) and Metheny (1968), an MPE approach rests on the deliberate prioritization and inclusion of five features when designing and implementing teaching and learning: social interaction, fun, challenge, motor competence, and personally relevant learning. Such an approach requires practitioners and researchers to align pedagogy with the affective domain through allowing “individuals ascribe meaningfulness by making sense of past, present, and future experiences (including interactions with self and others, artifacts, content, and pedagogies) through a process of synthesis and reconciliation” and an emphasis on “the individual and the contextually-bound nature of a meaningful experience” (Beni et al., 2017, p. 292); requiring “a focus on meaningful experiences and the process of making new or revised meanings out of experience” (Quennerstedt, 2019, p. 619). In this regard, Ní Chróinín et al. (2018) have encouraged researchers to further explore “the value of making the prioritization of meaningful experience explicit through modelling and discussion, engaging with meaningful experiences as both a teacher and learner as well as reflecting on those experiences” (p. 131). Central to MPE is the deliberate enactment of democratic and reflective

pedagogies that embody SVP approaches and help students engage and interact with others in an enjoyable physical activity environment (Ennis, 2017; Fletcher & Ní Chróinín, 2021; Ní Chróinín et al., 2021).

For SEL specifically, we draw on *The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning* (Borowski, 2019; CASEL, 2015; See Figure 1, p. 103). The CASEL Framework presents “comprehensive multi-dimensional framework of the skills essential for successful social and emotional development” and a foundation for guiding the implementation of evidence based SEL pedagogies (Ross & Tolan, 2018, p. 1188). Bridging educational theory with practice, the framework identifies five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making) (Blyth et al, 2019; Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). These competencies involve the targeting of specific skills that, when logically blended into teaching and learning, can help facilitate the holistic accomplishment of broader learning outcomes beyond physical and cognitive subject matter. Within the school and classroom context, the teacher’s pedagogical skills are crucial in accomplishing child level outcomes, leading to potentially improved child-level impacts. However, challenges in doing so are widely acknowledged, with the successful accomplishment of SEL dependent on factors such as time, cultural and contextual sensitivity, and designing and implementing effective pedagogies with practitioners and students (Blyth et al., 2019; Kaynak, 2020). We posited that, if all of these above premises held true, then deliberately and consistently enacting SVP and reflecting on them with students could help provide us and them with some valuable insight through which to understand and enhance SEL and MPE experiences both in the present and going forward

(Ennis, 2017; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). In the next section, we present the methodological approach which guided this study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study implemented a qualitative case study design (Stake, 2013) framed by a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach spanning 12 weeks from February to May 2021. The convenience sampling procedure was used for ease in accessibility to participants (Cooksey & MacDonald, 2019). It was conducted as part of a larger study exploring teachers' and students' understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE. PAR is "a research design and philosophy that seeks to produce knowledge and action with participants and use this knowledge to improve the life circumstances of research participants during the course of the research itself" (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2012, p. 129). We view PAR as an essential component of any research design that claims to enact SVP. In the oncoming sections, you will read how the enactment of SVP and the research methods utilized for data collection went hand in hand with each other during the research process. Doing so ensured participants had opportunities to be included and participate in identifying, addressing, and responding to pre-existing, emerging, consensual, and contested teaching and learning experiences that arose before, during, and after the PE classes and research process (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2010; Fitzgerald et al., 2021).

Setting and Participants

In line with the ethical procedures approved by the school district and university's office of research and integrity, both students and the school have been assigned pseudonyms. The research was conducted in Tyber College, an urban alternative high school with 250 students operated in partnership by the local school district and a university where the school's campus

was situated. Within alternative education settings, there tends to a higher prevalence of health-risk behaviors, social and emotional problems, and a paucity of research focusing on behavioral interventions (Johnson & Taliaferro, 2012; Olsen, 2010; Schwab et al., 2016). The U.S. Department of Education defines alternative education schools as any public elementary/secondary school that (a) addresses the needs of students who typically cannot be met in a regular school; (b) provides flexible/hybrid education opportunities; (c) serves as an adjunct to a regular school; or (d) falls outside the categories of regular education, special education, or career/ technical education (NCES, 2016). Participants in this study included 16 ninth–grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys) aged 14–15 from a class of 18 who had just returned to face–to–face learning in January 2021 for the first time following COVID-19 restrictions and closures in March 2020. Tyber typically enrolls underserved/at-risk students from the local school district and through long established university partnered youth development programs. The U.S. Department of Education defines this population as:

Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools, who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English learners. (<https://www.ed.gov/racetop/districtcompetition/definitions>)

Further details on each student, their gender, race, and ethnicities are presented in Table 1, p. 27. This detail is drawn from the personal biographies they submitted and shared with each other at the beginning of the course in class. In doing so, we emphasize the need for researchers

to ensure participants' voices and input is included across all aspects of student voice research processes - not just the findings.

The PE Course and Pedagogies

The outline of the PE course was designed by a group of five researchers and practitioners from the university. Collectively, the group of five had combined practical experience of teaching PE across multiple international K–12 and higher education settings, ranging in experience from 4 to 20 years. This comprised of the principal researcher, critical friend/supervisor, a designated PE teacher, a teacher education professor, and a faculty instructor. It was purposefully designed with the intention of developing students' understanding and application of SEL and MPE and physical activity. Central to this was the enactment of SVP. Similar to the recent work of Lynch and Sargent in higher education UK settings (Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch, 2021), a number of what the research team regarded as SVP were drawn upon from their own collective experiences of enacting student voice and teaching SEL and MPE in the field. These pedagogies were modified in order to be made more appropriate and then collectively implemented frequently or specifically at different points throughout the course. These are presented in Table 2, p. 28, and further detailed in the Appendix C. For example, Cooperative Learning (Dyson & Casey, 2012; 2016) was used as the primary pedagogical method during Weeks 1–4 when the focus was on building relationship skills with students in class. Structures implemented included *Learning Teams*, *Jig-Saw*, *Think-Pair-Perform*, and *Rally Round Robin*. Particular attention was paid to implementing the cooperative element group processing throughout the course, typically in the form of “an open dialogue or group discussion related to the lesson content that can occur at any time during the lesson” (Dyson and Casey, 2012, p. 4). These structures were frequently used throughout the remainder

of the course at different times, but alongside other pedagogical practices such as peer tutors, task stations, direct instruction, intra-task variation, mastery learning, play-teach-play, and child designed activities (Graham, 2008). The course itself was implemented across ten weeks February to April in sixteen 75-minute lessons, typically delivered twice a week depending on the school calendar. The enacted pedagogies were implemented in class as well as asynchronously using the school's online learning platform.

Data Collection and Analysis

In line with a PAR approach, this study utilized a range of traditional and innovative participatory qualitative research methods including students' personal biographies, timelines, digital and written reflections, photovoice, and class artefacts that had been completed as part of course work. In implementing these methods and in line with the purpose of this study, we aimed to "go beyond simply conversing with young people" about what their experiences in PE look like (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2012, p. 122). After the implemented course and grading process were complete, the teacher-researcher, critical friend/supervisor, and PE teacher contacted students and presented information on the larger research study as part of a retrospective recruitment process that had been ethically approved by the local school district and the university's office of research and integrity. Following the completion of parental consent and minor assent, 16 of 18 students in the class agreed to participate in the study. Their personal biographies (16), timelines (16), photovoice task 1 (15), photovoice task 2 (13), digital reflections (71), and overall digital reflections (n=15) were downloaded from the learning platform, transcribed, de-identified, and stored safely. Each student's data set was transcribed and then presented to them in the focus groups that were conducted at the end of the course and engaged students in reflection of their experiences. The Miles, Huberman and Saldana

Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis involving data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions was initially implemented, with thematic analysis (Miles et al., 2014, Richards & Hemphill, 2018). This involved both deductive and inductive combination of comparative and thematic analysis, or abduction. Abduction is a process of mixing data-based inductive analysis and theory-driven deductive analysis that combines the deductive and inductive models of proposition development and theory construction (Astbury & Leeuw, 2010); a “constant shuttling between theory and empirical data, using both inductive and deductive reasoning” (p. 374). While drawing on our theoretical and conceptual frameworks to deductively analyze data, we also relied on inductive reasoning to seek out patterns and themes that were generated outside of this.

Before presenting results, we wish to acknowledge that the dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the data is limited in so far as it relates to only to these students in this particular class who worked directly with designated teacher and, later, the principal researcher. Regarding bias, neither the principal researcher nor designated teacher had worked with this group prior to the intervention. The principal did not interact with the participants until seeking consent and conducting the focus group interviews and was primarily responsible for analyzing the accrued data set. The dependability of findings might be influenced by the return of face-to-face learning and having to implement social distancing with the PE setting which, in itself, was a new experience for both the teacher and students to contend with. Still regarding dependability, we have drawn from previous studies in the field which have affirmed these pedagogies and participatory research methods both in isolation and in smaller combinations with singular and multiple groups. We have presented information on participants, and how these pedagogies and methods how were consistently implemented, both here in the

paper, and in the appendices. Data from every one of the 16 students who consented to participation in the study out of a total of 18 in the class have been presented in this paper, from a minimum data source of one for both Audrey and AJ to a maximum of six for Aamira, Alisah, and Jack; making for an average utilization of over three data sources per student to make up the 57 data sources presented next in Findings. The multiple methods and range of sources utilized right up until the focus groups to enact each student's voice helps to triangulate and confirm these methods. The critical friend/supervisor served as peer reviewer and regularly debriefed with the principal researcher and evaluated his rereading and probing of the data. The designated teacher also acted as a peer reviewer in interrogating and confirming the findings. The teacher education professor served as a critical friend in designing and implementing the course activities and did not interact with the students. The faculty instructor oversaw the implementation of a soccer taster session. This study represented the research team's most concerted attempt to date in understanding and implementing these combinations of pedagogical and research approaches collectively and in sequence. In addressing all these standards to affirm and justify the quality of our conclusions, we echo Enright and O'Sullivan's (2012) view that "reliability, validity, and ethical acceptability of research with young people is enhanced by using these types of methods that facilitate students in shaping the research agenda and are deemed by young people as relevant and interesting methods to engage with their realities" (p. 126). In this way, we emphasize the need to also be transparent and upfront with you, the reader, every bit as much as we were with the students we worked with in the research process when presenting findings from this kind of work, which follows next.

Findings

The following themes were constructed as thematic findings representing students' experiences of enacting SVP to promote SEL and MPE: *Making responsible decisions; unearthing and sharing mixed emotions; picturing physical activity beyond the classroom; recognizing the role of relationships; considering challenge and competence; and pursuing meaning.*

Making Responsible Decisions

Students recognized their role in making responsible decisions, ranging from establishing rules, routines, and expectations; regular group processing; and making decisions on selecting and negotiating content: “We worked on discussing our values regarding the class” (Auria, Reflection[REF]1); “We got to do what we wanted, like to vote and stuff like that” (Khalid, Focus Group[FG]B); “It was like a main focus to make sure that everyone felt like they had some say” (Barry, FGC). Students cited having the opportunity to critique and modify class content and make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions in different situations: “It was pretty student led...but it wasn't just like us by ourselves coming up with our own games. It was us as like a group” (Leo, FGC); “I liked how it was in our hands...there was some things that we realized we could critique” (Jack, FGD); “How we changed the hockey game a little bit, it was a little bit easier for me than to like play an actual game” (Julia, FGD). This was especially facilitated through frequent group processing after tasks: “We used that in our reflection [group processing] when it went wrong and how we fixed it and what we learned from it too. I think that's a good part. Learning from your mistakes.” (Leo FGC). Providing students with continuous opportunities to reflect on and discuss their learning and make decisions on their

future learning experiences required students like Barry to be responsible and aware of how such decisions affected the group collectively:

When I play a game that I already know how to play but others don't, I have to help them understand how to play the game properly...I think that in the future I will be more willing to help others learn about a sport that they may not have played before. (Barry, Overall Digital Reflection [ODI])

Cathy saw the process of facilitating student decision making as beneficial not just for students, but for the teacher also:

If you have a good understanding of what your students like and what they don't like and what some students can do, and like what all students can do, like you can have fun and people will enjoy it more...it's about listening and understanding people as well. (Cathy, FGB)

In making these decisions students also had to consider their own and others' pre-existing and emerging emotional attachments to PE and physical activity.

Unearthing and Sharing Mixed Emotions

The implementation of pedagogies evoking individual and group reflection helped students develop a sense of self- and social awareness with regard to their collective experiences and relationships with PE and physical activity. Students consistently reflected on and described the array of emotions they and others had experienced: "I started to do tennis...I eventually gave that up too...I had really low self-esteem at that time and I always felt like giving up" (Cathy, Timeline [TL]); "I do feel that [basketball] helps me develop socially and emotionally...I develop emotionally by accepting a challenge instead of feeling defeated" (Auria, Photovoice Task[PT]1). Opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences in class allowed students to

unpack and understand their own and others' emotional states: "I don't like doing physical stuff in front of people" (Alisha, REF1); "After we were done [meditation] my body felt loose and I felt very calm...I think the others were feeling the same way (Channing, REF2); "Everyone was kind of frustrated since the game wasn't as fun as we thought" (Aamira, REF7). Students recognized the vital role of reflecting on and understanding these experiences: "It made you really think if your PE experiences in the past were good or not...if the person had a bad experience" (James, FGD); "Different emotions started to come into play...I just started to think back about different things that happened... yeah, it was like a wow moment" (Landon, FGD); "The environment that she had set, that it made it easy to interact and have emotion" (Jack, FGD); "When I do something, like, I always want it to like affect me in some type of ways, like have like some type of meaning" (Channing FGA). Reflective tasks allowed students to consider the connection and influence of emotions in past experiences and how these both positively and/or negatively influenced and informed their present movement experiences. Through considering and sharing the range of emotional experiences they had previously encountered when engaging in PE and physical activity, students were able to develop a deeper sense of self and social awareness with regard to how their emotions influenced their movement experiences. This was especially encapsulated by Alisha in her ODI, where she describes learning to self-regulate her emotions over time and develop a growth mindset around her participation in movement experiences.

I used to have a bad mindset about myself. I wouldn't even want to play with my friends because I was nervous my own friends would judge me. I've grown from that. I now enjoy and do things worry free...it was a bad feeling but now that I've outgrown these emotions and thoughts I look back and think about how I felt and it makes me not think

badly about myself...I've learned many different movements in PA that I've used in my personal life. (Alisha, ODRJ)

Understanding the emotions of students and how this affected their relationship experienced inside and outside of PE in turn asked students to consider their relationship with physical activity outside of the classroom.

Picturing Physical Activity Beyond the Classroom

Facilitating students in articulating and illustrating how they pursued physical activity and movement in their lives outside of PE promoted self- and social awareness and demonstrated their unique and colorful experiences, many of which varied greatly from those that they encountered in PE: "Outside of school, you kind of go your own way since you don't really have like a coach or a gym teacher" (Aamira, FGC). This allowed students to better understand and establish how they maintained active and healthy lives outside of the PE course through identifying additional significant movement experiences. Students like Jack and Sarah pursued physical activity through formal participation in soccer and dance (see Figure 2 and Figure 3), while students like Aamira, Aubrey and Julia utilized local recreational facilities informally: "I mostly just go to the park, sometimes I bring my ball and play in the field, most of the time I just swing or do the monkey bars" (Aamira, PT1); Aubrey (Figure 4); Julia (Figure 5). For others like Khalid and AJ, they utilized their homes and local environments (Figures 6 and 7). This helped students make sense of their physically active lives beyond PE. Notably, the photovoice tasks helped students like Cathy (Figure 8) and Julia (Figure 9) recognize the

nuanced ways in which they were physically active, whereas previously they didn't see themselves as being so:

During the photo voice activities, I was able to learn that like I was doing more physical activities during my lifespan than I actually thought I was; I was going to the gym more often and like me and my family, we would go and hike or we would go and like walks on trails. I just I didn't think about stuff like that" (Julia FGD)

Through deeper exploration of their worlds, students were able to better understand the role physical activity played in their lives and the lives of those around them.

Figure 2. Jack



I'm a soccer player and I play on a high level academy team. I play every day and I have games on the weekend in the stadium that is in the picture. This is where we play our home games. This is my physically active life (Jack PT1)

Figure 4. Sarah



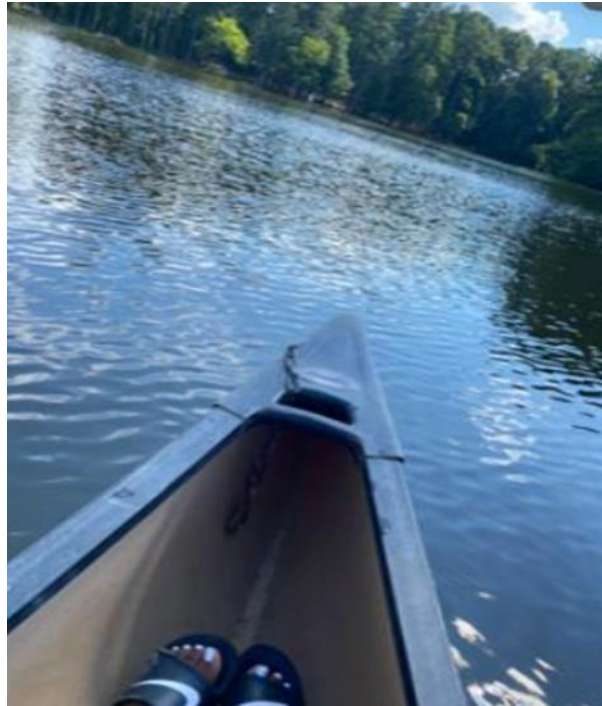
This is the floor I do both point and ballet on as well as modern. It's a wooden surface for the use of nice slides and movements. With socks on the floor can be slippery like all wooden floors are with socks but overall, this is my favorite type of floor to do turns and slides on. (Sarah, PT2)

Figure 3. Aubrey



I don't really have much of a physically active life I'm more of a reader. I do try to go on walks every day and I take my little sister and nephew to the park to play around. I still have to chase after them a lot sometimes so I guess that's me being physically active. (Aubrey, PT1)

Figure 5. Julia



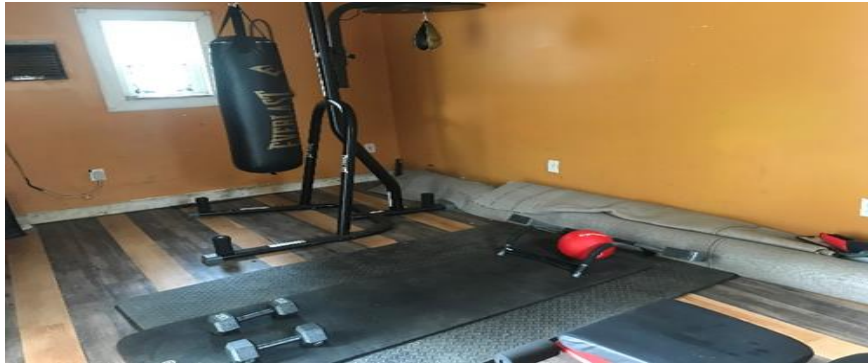
Physical activity facilities nearby: One of the physical activity facilities near me is a park where you can canoe and kayak. This is really important to me because my family loves doing outside activities. (Julia, PT1)

Figure 6. Khalid



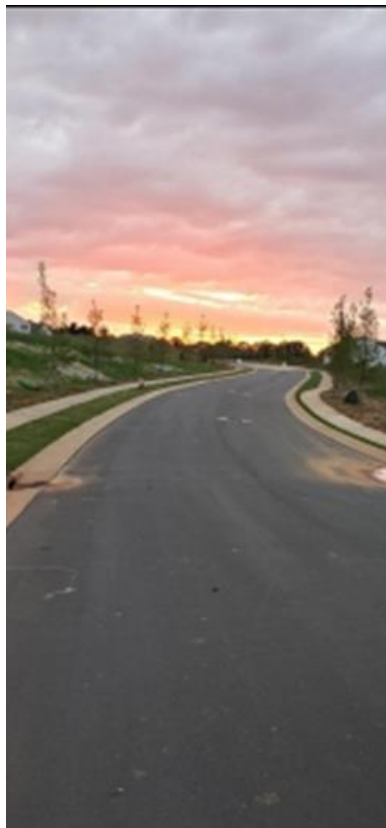
“I play soccer outside in my backyard with my two brothers” (Khalid, PT1)

Figure 8. AJ



“This ties in with my physically activity life because this is where I work out 3 times a week for an hour” (AJ, PT1).

Figure 7. Cathy



“My physically active life: It’s quite literally not there besides walking around in my neighborhood some, that’s about it. This class has made me realize I really need to start working out more!!” (Cathy, PT1)

Figure 9. Julia



Physical activity in the lives of my family and friends: Last summer, my family and I hiked a mountain and once we reached the top, we took this picture. Doing physical activities with my family is fun and also helps me stay active. (Julia, PT1)

Recognizing the Role of Relationships

Students repeatedly reflected on and expressed the importance of social interaction and relationship skills, consistently alluding to positive experiences they experienced in class which enhanced learning: “I felt comfortable with my teammates, and they brought a smile to my face and many laughs...I can be myself around other students” (Sarah, REF1); I learned that, with group activities and working together, we can actually accomplish many things. I like working with groups I think it’s really great. (Aamira, REF1); “I learned that the more your peers get opportunities to practice, the better they get” (Jack REF4). Students emphasized the importance of supportive relationships and sensitively navigating learning experiences with peers: “Being able to laugh, smile, even struggle with someone can make everything so much better” (Alisha, ODR); “You just had to know when to back off and then know when to push forward and, yeah,

let others shine” (Melissa, FGA); “Learning to interact with people on different levels, coming from different backgrounds...learning to be a patient, to help others even if they're on higher or lower level” (James FGD). This was especially the case when dealing with moments of frustration, which occurred throughout the course. An example of this was towards the end of the course when students were asked to create their own games and share them with the class: “We played our game, it was interesting, everyone was kind of frustrated since the game wasn’t as fun as we thought, but it was ok” (Aamira, REF7); “The emotions that I was going through triggered plenty of misunderstanding at the start while people were explaining their game. But, after I understood how to play them, I started to have fun playing” Khalid (REF7). The need to practice teamwork and collaborative problem-solving, resolve conflicts constructively, and offer support and help when needed was a regularly observed by and alluded to by students, encapsulated here by Jack in his ODI:

If you don't work together then it's not fun and it gets frustrating...when we played volleyball, you needed to communicate to see who was going to get the ball. If you didn't then your team wouldn't be successful...you have to work harder to help your team when this happens.

Reflective tasks also helped students identify and share how friends and family influenced their movement experiences: “I started working out with my brother and his girlfriend...it was fun working with him; it made me realize working with someone you know can make it more fun” (Alisha, TL); “My brother is in a soccer team, and when he’s home, my sister plays against him, and I would be the goalkeeper...we’re basically a soccer family” (Aamira, PT 1); (Julia, Figure 9). The need for social interaction and relationship skills was

especially useful when experiencing moments of challenge which affected their levels of competence.

Considering Challenge and Competence

The SVP implemented allowed students to reflect on and consider the variety and level of challenge they faced in performing different movements and tasks: “Some challenges I faced were trying to remember people's names” (Jack, Ref2); [Soccer] is a challenge for me because I don't really have any type of foot and eye coordination” (Melissa, PT2); “The challenges I faced this week was struggling to hold the hockey stick the correct way at first, but I was later able to do it” (Auria, REF4); “I've learned that physical education and physical activity is challenging when I don't understand the thing we're doing, it makes it difficult to have fun and enjoy the game if I'm stressed out” (Cathy, ODR). Overlapping with this was the opportunity for students to also appraise their levels of competence in skill performance when challenged. Within classes, students regularly reflected on challenges they faced in their movement experiences and how this influenced motor competence: “When the class played basketball that tested my motor competence to improve because I was working on passing and dribbling better and learning new techniques” (Khalid, ODR). Sarah considered the role of challenge and cognitive and motor competence outside of class in performance of ballet:

Ballet is a challenge because you're constantly thinking while doing other things; you think about arm my arms in the right position? What are my facial expressions? Are my toes pointed? What's the next move? Am I spotting? Am I doing this correct? What is my body posture? All these thoughts are going through your head (Sarah PT 2).

Facilitating students to continuously appraise their experiences of challenge and motor competence prompted students like Landon to think more deeply about how they experienced meaningful movement in class and physical activity:

I'd never knew what motor competence was until I went to this school. I've never ever talked about it in any PE class. So it's like, we're starting to learn these new things and starting to apply it to what we're doing (Landon, FGA)

In considering challenge and motor competence, students were able to better articulate their movement experiences, moving towards a better understanding of how PE and physical activity was meaningful for them.

Pursuing Meaning

By the end of the course, students were able to develop and articulate a deeper understanding of what made PE and physical activity meaningful for them; "I've learned that physical activity is more meaningful than I thought it was. It can help you gain social skills, leadership skills, and obviously have positive effects on your health" (Alisha, ODR); "It needs to focus on mental health more instead of physical ability... make it a way to say: 'It's okay if you can't do it'; like make everyone feel comfortable with their body and their capability" (Auria, FGB). Facilitating students to reflect on, elicit, and share their previous and current experiences while also looking forward helped them consider how to continue shaping and influencing their pursuit of MPE and physical activity: "I never really had to like reflect on what I've done with my physical activity. So it felt different in a way" (Channing, FGA); "It started making me think about the future and stuff like that - how PE is going to affect my life" (Landon, FGA); "It makes you reflect on your experiences with PE in the past. And like, maybe how that kind of could have affected you today and how you use PE that you've learned previously and apply that now"

(Cathy, FGB); “I feel like it ties in with what we're doing in the future...I can look back and say ‘Oh, my high school PE teacher taught me this...introduced me to new things that I never thought I would try’” (Melissa, FGA). For Alisha, taking what she had learned in PE and transferring it to her life outside the class made for personally relevant and meaningful learning and experiences:

When I take the knowledge that I’ve learned from PE and I apply it outside of school I know that’s when I’ve taken the class to a personal level.... throughout my school years I’ve made memories and experiences, movements, motions in PE that I can look back on.
(Alisha, ODR)

Ultimately, the enactment of SVP allowed students to consider how PE was meaningful for them and the role SEL played in doing so. We now look to understand and discuss what can be learned from these students’ experiences enacting SVP to promote SEL and MPE.

Discussion

The discussion is organized around the two research questions presented in the introduction of the study.

How Did Students Interpret and Enact These Pedagogies?

Interpretations of what learning is meaningful lies in what is “constructed and understood by the individual; not in an individual bubble detached from reality but influenced by affective and social–cultural dimensions” (Beni et al., 2017, p. 292). In interpreting and enacting these pedagogies (i.e., full value contract, personal biographies, cooperative learning and group processing, continuous class consultation and negotiation, timelines, taster sessions, photovoice, written and digital reflections), students came to appreciate and make greater sense of their experiences of PE and physical activity alongside those of their peers. The deliberate and

consistent enactment of individual and group discussion and reflection helped ascertain students' prior knowledge and experience to assist in their ongoing learning across multiple domains (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). As Cathy noted, such a process was not only beneficial for students, but for the teacher also when it came to curricular planning and decision making. Notably, when doing so, students openly reflected on and expressed the array of mixed emotions they experienced and observed when participating in PE and physical activity as individuals, as well as when interacting with others. In interpreting and responding to the intentionally social and affective elements of these pedagogies, their subsequent and consistent enactment helped students elicit and reflect on their current and pre-existing learning experiences more deeply. This assisted them in identifying opportunities and constraints that respectively promoted and detracted from their pursuits of physically active and healthy lifestyles. This was a new and novel experience and something which they had not been involved in during PE previously. SVP pedagogies successfully elicited and illustrated how students performed movement and physical activity beyond the content of the course itself, helping them to connect what they were doing in PE to experiences across varying social and environmental contexts (O'Connor, 2019). For students like Julia, pedagogies such as the photovoice tasks led students to realize how physically active they were, allowing them to reconsider what being physically active meant, looked, and felt like beyond on their understandings and experiences of PE. This was a new departure and highlights the need to also directly engage students in what O'Connor and Jess (O'Connor & Jess, 2019) describe as *border-crossing*; a broad concept of sharing thought, practice and resources within intellectual communities and between contexts (p. 410). As demonstrated here, embedding SVP in PE has the potential to lend itself to "a broadening of the skills, knowledge and understanding encompassed within curricula and for a lifelong curriculum

to be acknowledged as the collective responsibility of organizations and individuals within and beyond existing formal education structures” (Penney & Jess, 2004, p. 269). The utilization and selection of a variety of movement activities through the taster sessions, and elicitation, illustration, and subsequent sharing of students’ movement experiences outside of class provided students with experiences and opportunities to consider PE and physical activity beyond traditional PE-as-sports techniques/multi-activity PE and “a one-size-fits-all approach” (Kirk, 2013, p. 978).

There is a tendency in PE programs to steer clear of recognizing, understanding, and addressing the range of emotions that manifest themselves within learning experiences (Hooper et al., 2020; Dyson, 2014; Dyson & Howley 2020; Bailey et al., 2009). Students came to interpret and understand these pedagogies, which prioritized SEL and MPE, as a necessary part of their learning experience, assisting them in making more inclusive and considerate decisions about class content, physical activity, and how they interacted with others and participated in physical activity. In this way, the deliberate enactment of democratic and reflective pedagogies deepened students’ understandings of their experiences and helped them make multiple connections supporting transfer to other contexts in their lives (Rovegno, 2006; Fletcher & Ní Chróinín, 2021). While early days, enacting SVP helped students become successful, active, dynamic, and democratic agents within their learning community, adapting and developing practices to promote participation in PE and physical activity through these continuous interactions (Azzarito, 2016). Enacting student voice cannot be perceived and implemented as a fixed process, but rather a fluid continuum of practice that involves trial and error—an idea largely detached from students’ previous experiences of schooling and the notion of fidelity in evidence-based research (Howley & O’Sullivan, 2020; 2021). In helping students to engage in,

reflect on, and embrace their array of experiences with physical activity and movement, we see how these democratic and reflective pedagogies ultimately led students to identify, reduce, and eliminate “mis–educative or noneducative aspects that detract from participation” within PE (Ní Chróinín et al., 2021, p. 12) slowly but surely. While this was by no means a transformative or finished process, students’ initial interpretations and enactment of these pedagogies led them to be more engaged and invested in their PE classes and think more deeply about how they participated in PE and physical activity inside and outside of school, encapsulated for example by Alisha’s ODR when she considers what she had learned in PE and how it was personally relevant and applicable to her broader life.

What Contribution did the Enactment of These Pedagogies Have in Promoting SEL and MPE?

The extent to which SVP are enacted in research by participants to directly improve learning and assessment in relation to PE curriculum often results in democratic practices eclipsed by circumspect curricular practices designed to navigate high stakes examinations (Hooper & Sandford, 2021; Iannucci & Parker, 2021; Howley & O’Sullivan, 2020; 2021). The findings of this study are significant in this regard as they demonstrate a clear connection between the aim of the PE course and the learning outcomes which subsequently transpired through the enactment of SVP. The explicit, deliberate, and consistent emphasis on SEL and MPE when enacting SVP allowed students to develop more uniform understandings and a common language around both concepts and how they related and contributed to PE, physical activity, and students’ broader lives. We see from the words of the students how the prioritization of these competencies and features contributed to their broader PE experiences and learning within the subject. Through facilitating students in identifying and sharing previous and

present understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE in PE and physical activity participants developed a deeper sense of self and social awareness through identifying and understanding their own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they have influenced their physical activity experiences and behaviors across contexts, while also learning to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others (Borowski, 2019; CASEL, 2015). This in turn assisted students to make responsible decisions around selecting content and their behaviors when working with others in class to create an emotionally safe and inclusive environment. It also helped them to consider how they experienced and applied SEL and meaningfulness to physical activity outside of class individually, and amongst friends, family, communities, and other organizations. In particular, students acknowledged how the explicit focus on developing relationship skills was crucial to the quality of their learning experiences in PE (Glasby & Macdonald, 2004; Howley & Tannehill, 2014). In prioritizing SVP, SEL became part and parcel of each lesson.

Looking at PE more specifically, encouraging students to reflect on their experiences through a MPE lens allowed them to assess and further understand the significant role each feature had in promoting quality physical activity and movement experiences. Attempting to articulate students' sense of meaningfulness required them consider the "complex mix of individual cognitive and affective elements as well as relational, social, and cultural dimensions" (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 4). The variety of oral, visual, and written SVP utilized allowed for students to make sense of these dimensions and their interplay at different times and in different ways. While fun and social interaction appeared frequently in students' reflections and discussions, we see also how the SVP facilitated students to consider their experiences in relation to cognitive and physical learning when considering the features of challenge and motor competency. Vital to this was the facilitation of reflection and group processing before, during,

and after tasks. Again, the opportunity for students to critique, reflect, and ascribe meaning to their physical activity experiences inside and outside of PE provided them with a guide through which to shape future PE, physical activity and movement experiences. Echoing previous work by Ennis (2017) and drawn upon more recently by Ní Chróinín et al. (2021) in their work with primary/middle school level students, findings here also emphasize the need for teachers to continuously assist “students in their search to find meaningful experiences in which they seek to engage and affiliate with others in an enjoyable physical activity environment” (Ennis, 2017, p. 248). We see how the SVP engaged students in a deep and continuous process of assessment for learning, culminating in a deeper sense of what a meaningful PE and physical activity experience was for them and the significant role SEL played in this pursuit. In this way, students’ ODR marked the departure point for their continued pursuit of MPE rather than the end.

Conclusion

This study highlights the significance of enacting SVP deliberately and consistently with findings demonstrating how doing so can lead to the development of SEL and MPE experiences complimenting multiple domains. Crucially, we see here that enacting student voice is an innately social and affective learning process—the latter being something the subject and practitioners have historically struggled to accomplish (Bailey et al., 2009; Dyson, 2014; Dyson & Howley, 2020; Wright & Richards, 2021; Dyson, 2014). We need to find better ways of consistently listening and responding to students in PE that are also feasible for teachers to implement, and we also need to provide better parity for SEL. Of great lament is that this was the first-time students had engaged in such a process in PE. We approached this class with students utilizing simple practices to enact SVP explicitly prioritizing SEL and MPE to intentionally facilitate a more holistic learning experience as well as a means through which to assess

subsequent student learning. Future work must look to further bridge the gap between enacting and drawing on the voices of the students we work with and providing them with the agency and space to make responsible decisions around their participation in physical activity and movement on their own and with others, inside and outside of class. We encourage practitioners to draw from and utilize some, if not all, of these SVP, and modify them in a practical manner that aligns with their own curricular outcomes that target student voice and SEL. Future research should also look to examine how SVP such as these might serve as potentially useful formal assessment tools to ensure such outcomes are being met and can help create a language and routine around reflection and decision-making which is often lacking in PE settings. We see from this study how the benefits of drawing on the prior and current knowledge and emotional experiences of students and doing so in a continuously democratic and reflective manner can help inform and influence current and future learning. If youth/student voice is to be authentically enacted, it requires everyone's authentic attention—students, teachers, policymakers, and researchers.

This is the first time we have attempted to combine these SVP all at once. If the field is serious about providing students with *voice and choice*, then it is important to be transparent about what this looks like in practice—it is an intricate and fluid process. So too must we better consider how we enact *choice of voice* also when seeking to work more democratically with students through multiple pedagogies and research methods similar to those we have presented here. We encourage both practitioners and researchers in future to utilize these SVP as starting blocks rather than end points in enacting student voice. As pointed out by one of the reviewers, fidelity is not really at the heart of this kind of work, more so a continuous pursuit of sound pedagogical decision making that is accessible and understandable to students and responsive to their voices, needs and abilities. We especially recommend further embedding and exploration of

SVP within early years and elementary education, where such pedagogies are especially lacking, (Iannucci & Parker, 2021) with a view to their continued refinement through to adolescence.

In implementing and researching these SVP all at once, we were concerned from the outset as researchers and practitioners that we may have been *changing too much too quickly* and moving away from what might be considered *conventional PE*. What subsequently occurred suggests the change in approach to enact student voice to prioritize MPE and SEL was welcomed and embraced. We call for further embedding of SVP capturing students' physical activity and movement experiences inside and outside of PE in teacher education and professional learning and development that helps teachers, and their students, make sense of, shape, influence, and enact more meaningful PE and physical activity learning experiences. In closing, we consider the final words of Auria as to why:

If you want me to be honest with you, at first, I was like 'This is stupid...you don't do work in gym'. 'Cause I was never used to getting to express myself in gym or I've always been used to just actually like testing, like on your physical ability. Yeah, so now that I look back at it, I like it because we get to express ourselves. And, instead of testing on our, like, physical ability, you're kind of looking back at people's mental ability and seeing what they like and what they don't like. And maybe like, say for instance, you're asking us what we're struggling with and why and what we want to continue. So, I felt like it was really good. But at first, I was like 'This is not gym' (Auria, FGB).

CHAPTER VI: EXPLORING UNDERSTANDINGS AND EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MEANINGFUL PHYSICAL EDUCATION UTILIZING DEMOCRATIC AND REFLECTIVE PEDAGOGIES

Introduction

The role and place of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), “the process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioural, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships, and citizenship” (Jones et al., 2017, p. 12), has become a topic of debate and interest in Physical Education (Wright & Richards, 2021). On one hand, scholars have argued that “making SEL the primary learning domain for school PE programs is problematic” (Lund & van der Mars. 2022, p. 5) and that the educational and political rhetoric surrounding SEL is not matched by a body of empirical research using contemporary theory, framework, and assessment within PE (Dyson et al., 2020). On the other, it is argued that historically “personal, social and emotional development is inextricably woven into PE” (Wright & Richards, 2022). Focusing on the subject matter of PE specifically, there have been calls for the continued need to revise and consider the “development of PE curricular that are more deeply connected with the lives of students and which promote well-being” (Thorburn & MacAllister, 2013, p. 458). Historically, discourse persists as to the extent to which holistic learning experiences are truly occurring in contemporary classrooms (Dyson, 2014; Thorburn, 2018; 2020; Kirk, 2013). Aligning with the viewpoint that SEL processes should be further integrated into teaching and learning experiences, there is growing evidence of the benefits of supporting teachers and students “in coming to value PE through experiencing meaningfulness (i.e., interpreting an experience as having personal significance) and recognizing ways participation enhances the quality of their lives” (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 4). Such

endeavours are innately social and affective processes that require researchers and practitioners to adopt more democratic and reflective approaches to teaching and learning with students that can target both social and emotional as well core cognitive and psychomotor outcomes in PE (Ennis, 2017; Howley et al., 2021; Ní Chróinín et al., 2021). The purpose of this study was to explore both teachers' and students' understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE when utilizing democratic and reflective pedagogies. In doing, it is intended to better understand how their immediate utilization was experienced and understood before, during, and after. Utilizing constructivist learning theory, conceptual features of MPE, and a systemic framework for SEL, three research questions guided the study: 1) What prior understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE had the teachers and students encountered? 2) How did they understand and experience SEL and MPE within classes? 3) What impact did the democratic and reflective pedagogies have on their combined experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE?

Theoretical Framework

In order to consider how the utilization of democratic and reflective pedagogies might promote SEL and MPE, we draw on social constructivist learning theory as “an appropriate theoretical basis upon which to ground its teaching and learning principles” (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 6). Teachers' and students' personal experiences are often framed within a socially interactive PE environment, and the social support received from both peers, teachers, and others inside and outside of the class, which can enhance meaningful engagement with content (Beni et al., 2017; Gibbons & Gaul, 2004). Doing so requires us to “understand the multiple cultures of the learner, teacher, school, and society; how these impact learners; and how to plan curriculum and instruction that leads to robust, meaningful knowledge useful in multiple contexts” (Rovegno, 2006, p. 271). Such a view posits that both teachers and students can become active,

dynamic, and democratic agents within the classroom, adapting and developing practices and interactions to understand and experience SEL and MPE in PE (Azzarito, 2016; Azzarito et al., 2004; Kirk & Macdonald, 2009). Dewey recognized education as a social endeavour connected to issues of democratic societies, arguing that “the true center of correlation of the school subjects is...the child’s own social activities” (Dewey, 1897, p. 90) and “failure to take into account the significant social factors means, nonetheless, an absence of mind and a corresponding distortion of emotional life” (Dewey, 1916, p. 91). Drawing on the features of MPE recently articulated by Beni et al. (2017) and stemming from the work of Kretchmar (2000; 2007) and Metheny (1968), a MPE approach rests on the deliberate prioritization and inclusion of five features when designing and implementing teaching and learning: social interaction; fun; challenge; motor competence; and personally relevant learning. Such an approach requires practitioners and researchers to align pedagogy with the affective domain. In this regard, Ní Chróinín et al. (2018) have encouraged researchers to further explore “the value of making the prioritization of meaningful experience explicit through modelling and discussion, engaging with meaningful experiences as both a teacher and learner as well as reflecting on those experiences” (p. 131). Central to MPE is the deliberate enactment of democratic and reflective pedagogies that embody SVP approaches and help students engage and interact with others in an enjoyable physical activity environment (Ennis, 2017; Fletcher & Ní Chróinín, 2021; Ní Chróinín et al., 2021).

For SEL specifically, we draw on *The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning’s (CASEL) Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning* (Borowski, 2019; CASEL, 2015). The CASEL Framework presents “comprehensive multi-dimensional framework of the skills essential for successful social and emotional development”

and a foundation for guiding the implementation of evidence based SEL pedagogies (Ross & Tolan, 2018, p. 1188). The framework identifies five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies: self-management; self-awareness; social awareness; relationship skills; and responsible decision making (Blyth et al, 2019; Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). These competencies involve the targeting of specific skills that, when logically blended into teaching and learning, can help facilitate the holistic accomplishment of broader learning outcomes beyond physical and cognitive subject matter. Within the classroom context, which is the focus of this study, the teacher's pedagogical skills are seen as crucial in accomplishing child level outcomes, leading to potentially improved child-level impacts. However, challenges in doing so are widely acknowledged, with the successful accomplishment of SEL dependent on factors such as time, cultural, and contextual sensitivity, and designing and implementing effective pedagogies with practitioners and students (Blyth et al., 2019; Kaynak, 2020). We posited that, if all of these above premises held true, then deliberately and consistently enacting democratic and reflective pedagogies, tracking the teachers' experiences of implementing these with students in class, and following up on the experience of doing so with both them and students could lead to more explicit and intentional experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE being constructed. This, in turn, could help justify their utilization and inform the refinement of such pedagogies in future work. In the next section, we present the methodological approach which guided this study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study implemented a qualitative case study design (Stake, 2006) spanning ten months from February to December 2021. The convenience sampling procedure was used for ease in accessibility to participants (Cooksey & MacDonald, 2019). It was conducted as part of a larger study exploring teachers' and students' understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE. In the oncoming sections, you will read how the enactment of democratic and reflective pedagogies and the research methods utilized for data collection went hand in hand with each other during the research process. Doing so ensured participants had opportunities to be included and participate in identifying, addressing, and responding to pre-existing, emerging, consensual, and contested teaching and learning experiences that arose before, during, and after the PE classes and research process (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2010; Fitzgerald et al., 2021).

Context and Participants

In line with the ethical procedures approved by the school district and university's office of research and integrity, participants and the school have been assigned pseudonyms. The research was conducted in Tyber College, an urban alternative high school with 250 students, operated in partnership by the local school district and a university where the school's campus was situated. Participants in this study included the male teacher-researcher (TR), two female teaching assistants, and one female PE teacher (Myung-Hee) and her class of 16 ninth grade alternative high school students (eight girls/eight boys) aged 14–15 from a class of 18 who had just returned to face-to-face learning in January 2021 for the first time following COVID-19 restrictions and closures in March 2020. The teaching assistants worked with both the TR and the PE teacher. Owing the school district ethics, the TR was unable to recruit participants from his

class. The outline of the PE course was designed by a group of five researchers and practitioners from the university. It was purposefully designed with the intention of developing students' understanding and application of SEL and MPE and physical activity. Central to this was the enactment of SVP. Similar to the recent work of Lynch and Sargent (Lynch & Sargent, 2020; Sargent & Lynch, 2021) in higher education UK settings, a number of democratic and reflective pedagogies were utilized. These pedagogies were modified in order to be made more appropriate and then collectively implemented frequently, or specifically at different points throughout the course. These are presented in Table 1, p. 27, and further detailed in Appendix C. These pedagogies were frequently used throughout the remainder of the course at different times, but alongside other pedagogical practices such as peer tutors, task stations, direct instruction, intra-task variation, mastery learning, play-teach-play, and child designed activities (Graham, 2008). The course itself was implemented across ten weeks February to April in sixteen 75-minute lessons, typically delivered twice a week depending on the school calendar. The enacted pedagogies were implemented in class as well as asynchronously using the school's online learning platform.

Data Collection

This study utilized a range of qualitative methods sequentially implemented across the 10 months including a TR diary, individual and post-teaching reflections with the critical friend, interviews, focus groups. The TR diary contained 22 entries averaging 1,838 words in length. It involved the TR reflecting on his experiences and thoughts throughout the study, openly juxtaposing his own thoughts, experiences, and observations alongside those he had read from literature, as well as those received from his students, the PE teacher, and the teaching assistants throughout the study. Supplementing this, the TR completed 20 *Post Teaching Reflective*

Analyses (Dyson, 1994; Bodsworth & Goodyear, 2017; Bjørke & Moen, 2020). Following the course, the TR participated in one interview with a critical friend and conducted interviews with the PE teacher and two teaching assistants to further elicit their experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE during the course. These interviews lasted 45–60 minutes. The 16 students in the PE teacher’s class participated in two rounds of focus group interviews, once immediately after the course in May 2021, and again in December 2021, lasting approximately 30-45 minutes each. During these interviews, students were asked to reflect on their experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE prior to and during the course. Data was then organized for analysis.

Data Analysis

The TR diary entries (22), post-teaching reflection analyses (20), critical friend interview (1), PE teacher interview (1), teaching assistant interview (1), and student focus group interviews (7) were collected, organized, transcribed, de-identified, and stored safely. The *Miles, Huberman and Saldana Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis* (2014) involving data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions was initially implemented with thematic analysis (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This involved both deductive and inductive combination of comparative and thematic analysis or abduction. While drawing on our theoretical and conceptual frameworks to deductively analyze data, we also relied on inductive reasoning to seek out patterns and themes which were generated outside of this. Open coding was utilized to identify salient ideas related to topics participants had discussed (Ennis, 2008). The TR read and re-read transcripts and analyzed data using open coding to identify and categorize codes and subsequently their sub-properties and category dimensions based on the degree to which they occurred, refining these salient ideas. Overarching codes were then broken down into coded

properties. Open coding was repeatedly implemented throughout the data analysis as new codes and categories emerged and older ones were recoded. *In Vivo* codes were then analyzed and selected in an effort to pursue meaning and present data that appropriately represented participants' experiences, rather than those that neatly line up with the literature. Descriptive codes were used to identify and group interesting statements or events. In order to apply scholarly interpretation to develop themes, comparative analysis was implemented across domains. This involved comparing incident against incident among participants for similarities and differences, with incidents found to be conceptually similar to previously coded incidents given the same conceptual label and gradually elaborated and brought into variation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Axial coding was then applied to contextualize the data through conceptualizing, defining categories, and developing categories fully in terms of their properties and dimensions and to account for variation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This helped make connections between the different sources of data. The credibility of findings and interpretations depended on the careful attention to establishing trustworthy research design and data collection and analysis protocols which also formed part of the larger study (Patton, 2015). The TR and PE teacher had no prior relationship with the teaching assistants or the students prior to the study. The students themselves had not met face to face with each other owing to COVID-19. Regarding prolonged engagement and member checking, the students were interviewed first in May 2021, with a follow up interview in December 2021. In utilizing multiple perspectives, the TR, PE Teacher, teaching assistants, and students, we looked to address potential bias and instead demonstrated a conscious effort to triangulate findings that reflected the comments of all participants. A consistent effort was made to search for and discuss elements of the data that did not support or appeared to contradict patterns or explanations that were emerging from data analysis. This was

done through discussions with the supervisor and further elaboration on the data by participants involved. The research supervisor served as critical friend and peer reviewer. The main results are presented thematically, followed by a discussion interpreting thematic significance and meaning in relation to theory and literature.

Findings

The following themes were constructed as thematic findings representing teachers and students' experiences of promoting SEL and MPE: *It really made you think; making movement meaningful; being a better classmate; and doing things differently.*

It Really Made You Think

Coming into the course, both the teachers and students acknowledged that they had rarely experienced or applied reflective practices in PE: “Previously, I would never like ask for a personal biography, or a timeline, or ask them to reflect” (TR, Critical Friend Interview [CFI]); “I really didn't have a lot of experience and knowledge of embedding reflection” (Myung-Hee, Interview [I]); “It wasn't something that I hadn't done before” (Melissa, FGF). The opportunity to utilize reflection within and outside of classes allowed teachers to draw on students' prior knowledge and experiences when planning for teaching and learning: “Getting students to think and reflect in this way helps them to identify moments which have contributed to their current relationship with PE and physical activity” (TR, Journal [J]6); “It was a great opportunity to learn about students...I could understand them more” (Myung-Hee, I). Reflective practices such as the personal biographies, timelines, photovoice, and proclamation of meaningfulness required them to think more deeply about their relationships with PE and movement across their own lifetimes up to that point: “We gave them a lot of opportunities to reflect on their own physical activity experiences...to have more self-awareness” (Myung-Hee, I). Not only that, it allowed

the teachers and students to learn about each other's relationships and experiences also: "It's allowing social awareness to occur. Students and I are learning more about each other" (TR CFI); "It made me look back at all I've done...it was like the first time someone actually told me to think about it...looking back, I realized I need to calm down, like, take a break, help out some people" (Channing, FGA); "We shared a little bit of what we wrote down with our groups...we were able to learn about our peers in the classroom" (Aubrey, FGD). Doing so meant reflecting on and recognizing the array of emotions each person experienced: "It was positive and negative because I did have some downs...it was good to reflect back on it" (Melissa, FGA); "If another person had a bad experience, it made it really made you think" (Justin FGD)"; "The reflections really opened your mind...it made you open your eyes" (Landon, FGE).

The regular digital class reflections in particular provided students with the opportunity to reflect on their immediate PE and movement experiences: "We gave them a lot of opportunities to reflect on their PE experience" (Myung-Hee, I); You could see in the reflections how some of them were frustrated at certain times and how they felt better when they did things differently or worked around challenges" (TR, CFI); "They were a way of me expressing myself after what I had done in the PE class" (Cathy, FGB); "It taught me like how to express myself" (Khalid, FGB); "The questions required you to do a lot of thinking and responding and applying that to what we were doing" (Aubrey, FGG). Within classes, consistent opportunities for group processing were seen as beneficial for reflection. While such opportunities were something that took time for teachers to successfully implement, they became a regular feature of classes: "Allowing students time themselves to reflect and consider their own thoughts, ideas, opinions, and those of others...I think that all worked really well... we have to make time to allow students to explicitly reflect on and discuss these experiences" (TR, Post Teaching Reflection

Lesson [PTRL]12); “It was an open space for students to speak... ..they could speak more honestly about their feelings and thoughts without the teacher” (Myung-Hee, Interview); “We talked through it, everything we did...I could feel somebody else's perspective, like if they were or weren't enjoying it” (AJ, FGC). While the increased integration of reflective practices meant less time engaging in physical activity, it was viewed upon by the TR as essential in promoting a more holistic learning experience: “These are the types of reflections that students need to be provided with in order to make sense of their relationship with PE and PA...each person’s meaning is different. (TR, J4); What am I losing in slowing down and incorporating increased reflection and discussion into my classes? (TR, J9); “By taking a step back from physical activity we're opening up much more discussion about what it is we're doing, why we’re doing it, and how we can do it in a way that makes it more meaningful for students” (TR, PTRL12).

Making Movement Meaningful

For the teachers, they had to continuously reconsider how they themselves understood, planned for, and presented meaningful movement experiences to students: “We all have different understandings of meaningfulness...should we be looking at activities and movements more differently and getting a sense from students themselves as to how they experience it and how they want to perform the movements?” (TR, CFI); “What is meaningful to them in physical activity or PE? These questions are something we miss in our daily lives, we really don’t have time to think about that...I really tried to communicate with my students about this” (Myung-Hee, I). Ultimately, the experience led both the teachers and students to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of what meaningful physical education and activity can encompass and how it manifested itself within their lessons and broader lives: “A meaningful movement experience comes from understanding such moments and acknowledging and

appreciating them for what they are and involve. They become worthwhile by allowing students develop a sense of what exactly it is that is meaningful about them” (TR, J19); “Finding your strengths in an activity...finding something that amplifies them really helps me love physical activity and learn to like it” (Cathy, FGF); “It's just the little things that I do that really matters...doesn't always have to be a sport, but like a little game or activity to me can be meaningful” (Melissa, FGF). The following subthemes articulate teachers’ and students’ experiences and understandings of each MPE feature as they were observed and described during the course. The five features are: fun, challenge, motor competence, and personally relevant learning.

Fun

Students alluded most frequently to fun as an overarching feature in the PE: “It was really fun when we got to come together and play each other's games because you can see how creative other people can be” (Sarah, FGD); You need to have like a positive attitude, positive environment, people having fun" (Jack, FGD); “They said themselves they were all having a lot of fun together” (TR, PTRL18). Facilitating fun as a primary feature of PE served to then further promote and integrate other features within learning experiences. Fun and social interaction were frequently alluded to together by students: “I feel like when people meet new people, that's when the fun really starts to happen...putting your two heads together...understanding what you like and stuff...you can really feel the enjoyment” (Landon, FGA); “I feel that people were having fun and you could definitely see how we were able to interact with each other” (Auria, FGB); We wanted to have fun and we wanted to play with our friends” (Aubrey, FGD).

Social Interaction

Utilizing Cooperative Learning elements such as face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, and interpersonal and social skills within structured tasks allowed teachers place a deliberate emphasis on social interaction: “I tried to embed a lot of social interaction because I felt some students really didn't like to socialize with others” (Myung-Hee, Interview); “We tried to help facilitate conversations about what was going on in class...what was going on between students” (Teaching Assistant [TA]1, I); “We would create a sense of positive interdependence...they had to have face to face interaction and work on their interpersonal and social skills” (TR, CFI). This, in turn, helped students to interact, communicate and work together while learning: “[The teacher] did a great job helping us meet new people...got us to talk more, interact with each other” (Melissa, FGA); “We could all learn about each other...it was easier to interact and perform together” (Jack, FGD).

Challenge

Teachers consciously planned for differentiation and encouraged students to identify and implement appropriate levels of challenge within tasks: “I really wanted to make them feel some kind of challenge...think about what are some strategies to feel more challenged” (Myung-Hee, Interview); “How do I make sure that this is still equitable and everybody is accounted for, and everyone feels that they are being challenged?” (TR, PTRL3). This, in turn, allowed individual students to embrace challenge in different ways together: “Some people who are physically active, it came easy to them rather than people who weren't...it was hard for them but I feel like they like everyone was challenged” (Barry, FGC); [The teacher] modified a lot of the games to make it easier for people who hadn't really played before. And, it was also not too easy for the people who had played the sport and had experience with it” (AJ, FGC); “There weren't a lot of

times where you were uncomfortable...you had time to like understand things” (James, FGD); “I learned how I can get out of my comfort zone and participate in things that I’ve never really done before” (Auria, FGF). In doing so, the teachers and students learned to have a broader view of challenge beyond interpersonal competition: “I remind students that it’s not about being competitive but setting appropriate challenges for themselves and those around them (TR, J11L9); “A lot of people in class are really competitive...it’s hard for me to back off sometimes” (Melissa, FGA); “Wanting to be the best and knowing you’re the best kind of gives you maybe a better ego, but it can go good and bad both ways” (Cathy, FGF).

Motor Competence

Through creating a fun, socially interactive, and challenging learning environment, students repeatedly described experiencing and observing improved motor competence: “I never knew what motor competence was...I've never ever talked about it in any PE class...we're starting to learn these new things and applying it to what we're doing (Landon, FGA); “I don't respond well to not knowing how to do something. I don't like to do it in front of people until I learn. I was able to come out of my comfort zone and learn...I got better with that” (Cathy, FGB). The need for more motor competent students to responsibly work together and support others who felt less competent was also acknowledged by students, as exemplified here by Landon and Jack when reflecting on their social and affective roles in supporting others to demonstrate cognitive and psychomotor learning.

I really, I feel like I pushed everybody on my team. Even if you didn't play sports...I feel like I pushed to everybody on my team to do something like go and hit the ball, go kick it, go use the hockey thing to hit it, you know? Like, I want to do it. So, even if you've

never played physical activity, like sports or anything like that, I felt like I pushed everybody that was on my team (Landon, FGA)

I was already physically active. I'm a motor competence person. I can drive myself...I think it may have helped us look at how to make the experience for others that maybe aren't as physically active better for them...the main overall should be improvement throughout the class (Jack, FGG)

Personally Relevant Learning

When it came to personally relevant learning, teachers felt students struggled to articulate and make personal connections between PE and their physically active lives beyond school: “A lot of students, asked me “What is personal relevance?”. They really did not have any ideas about it...they were kind of struggling at first” (Myung-Hee, Interview); “We need to work with students to present more relevant content in PE classes that draws on their broader lives to make learning in PE more personally relevant” (TR, PTRL20). This was also reflected in students’ comments: “There were students that went for walks with their family and they did not see that as physical activity...they did not see that as being like meaningful or personally relevant” (TR, CFI); “I included a picture I took of a hiking trip and it made me look back and realize that I may not really enjoy hiking, but it's just nice to be outside and really just see nature” (AJ, FGC). For others, the physical and emotional feeling was something that gave them a sense of personal satisfaction: “It's just the feeling. I don't know how to pinpoint. It's just different. I push myself harder I would say for my sport than I would do school” (Melissa FGF); “I feel like it gives me a different feeling; like, the adrenaline rush that comes with it, I don't know...just makes me hyper...gives me a lot of energy” (Cathy, FGF).

Being a Better Classmate

Prior to the course, both teachers and students acknowledged shortcomings in their experiences and understandings of SEL in PE: “SEL skills are something that I have not taught very well in my classes...from my experience, I haven’t been doing this properly” (TR CFI); “I really didn’t have a lot of experience and knowledge about embedding SEL in PE” (Myung-Hee, Interview); “My middle school...they just throw a bunch of balls out, basketballs, footballs, and we just went and played with the people that we knew. We didn't really make new friends” (Landon, FGA); “We would just sit around the gym and be on our phones and stuff...we would have one test and that would be the pacer test...we didn't do any activities with each other” (Aubrey, FGD); “Experiences in middle school were way different...teachers really wouldn’t interact with students...you would see like different types of people...they wouldn’t really mix in” (AJ, FGG). Explicitly and intentionally planning, teaching, and assessing for SEL targeting the five competencies using a variety of practices meant teachers were able to do so more deliberately and consistently: “When I do this explicitly, I’m finding myself actually teaching these while I teach PE. I’m able to target them in my planning and lessons now” (TR, CFI); “I was embedding more and more SEL into my teaching and students realized that they were doing more and more SEL activities” (Myung-Hee, I).

Ultimately, the increased focus on accomplishing SEL related outcomes within PE led to a safer and more inclusive environment and was seen by the teachers and students as an essential prerequisite to learning experiences: “We need to do more as teachers to ensure that we are teaching SEL in PE” (TR CFI); “I think SEL should be embedded in daily teaching...for me like it starts from the moment the students come in classroom” (Myung-Hee, I); “I don’t think there was ever too much emotion” (Auria, FGB); “The environment that she had set up...it made it

easy to interact and have emotion” (Jack, FGD). The following subthemes articulate teachers and students’ experiences and understandings of each SEL competency as they were observed and described during the course.

Self-Management

Regarding self-management, teachers and students alluded to having to focus on managing their varying emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations in PE to pursue a physically active life: “I’ve found students able to talk about their frustrations while performing and moving. I love hearing this...it allows them to think about how they can self-manage” (TR J19); “I hate cheaters, that makes me so frustrated...I hate it...but we always ended up having a lot of fun...the annoyance goes away” (Auria, FGB); “I need to keep that physical fitness with me...find myself a challenge...relieve stress and things like that that” (Khalid, FGG); “You can’t just take it to the heart all the time” (Barry, FGC). In particular, students spoke about learning how to demonstrate personal and collective agency in classes: “we were allowed to make our own games...really just utilize different skills...she would tell us as a group to decide” (AJ, FGC); “She gave us directions and then asked us to make up other parts” (Leo, FGF). Working in this way meant students were less restricted when performing skills and tasks and were instead repeatedly encouraged to take initiative and use planning and organization skills.

Self-Awareness

Regular opportunities occurred for students to develop self-awareness through learning to understand their own emotions, thoughts, and values and how these influences their behavior in PE and across contexts: “There were moments the students learned about themselves that will be useful for them in the short term and long term” (TR, CFI); “Their own history, family backgrounds, personal backgrounds I wanted them to understand themselves through sharing

those stories” (Myung-Hee, I); “The ability to grow, like in your mental mind...if I start doing something and it is bringing my mental health down, I need to stop if it’s affecting my physical health” (Auria, FGB); “We had to talk about ourselves and I feel that made me going on in the future more confident and less shy to talk” (Sarah, FGE). In this way, students were required to demonstrate honesty in an effort to examine their feelings, values, and thoughts with the aim of promoting self-efficacy.

Social Awareness

Similarly, teachers and students recognized the need to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others with different experiences and backgrounds not just in relation to PE and physical activity: “Students are aware of how other students feel about movement...how they may emotionally respond in situations where they’re out of their comfort zone” (TR, CFI); “I wanted them to understand others” (Myung-Hee, I); “Understanding people’s individuality...a lot of people really just don’t enjoy activity or sports...to understand a person’s experience, you have to understand them...letting people express themselves...we need to be more like ‘we accept you’...it’s just a more comfortable environment” (Cathy, FGB); “When you knew the people around you, you weren’t as shy or scared to engage” (Sarah, FGD). Participants’ words here demonstrate how they look to take others’ perspectives, demonstrate empathy and compassion, and show concern for the feelings and experiences of others.

Relationship Skills

Students described numerous instances of developing relationship through the seeking and offering support and help during classes: “There are opportunities when you are working in groups and teams to develop relationship skills” (TR CFI); “I really tried to embed relationship skills and communication skills into my teaching” (Myung-Hee, I); “They were so willing to

work with each other and encourage each other” (TA2, Interview). Students regularly alluded learning to communicate effectively and develop positive relationships with others: “We just all grew like a friendship relationship” (Melissa, FGA); “I liked that she find a way for all of us to know each other and communicate and collaborate with each other” (Khalid, FGB); “We worked on communication skills...getting to know each other through physical activity” (Jack, FGD); “I think making friends was a big part of it. That helped a lot. We just kind of got to know each other” (Cathy FGF). Opportunities for teamwork and collaborative problem solving were noted: “You’re going to have to work with somebody you’re not going to be alone ever...I learned it in PE...it really made me realize like, dang, I’m always going to need somebody” (Landon, FGA); “I would say it was big on teamwork too” (Melissa, FGA). The emphasis on learning and demonstrating relationship skills required students to resolve conflicts constructively and resisting negative social pressure when working with others: “Connecting with other people through PE...I think it’s hard... just helping you be a better classmate” (Jack, FGG); “When you come together as a team it’s difficult...you still have to work with others to accomplish the group” (Khalid, FGG); “It taught us like togetherness and how to work with people doing different things” (Landon, FGE); Students described numerous instances of learning to receive, seek, and offer support and help during classes: “Taking instructive criticism from people...I got better with listening to what people had to say” (Cathy, FGB); “When they saw other people doing it and struggling, then they felt more comfortable and then they started to participate” (Auria, FGB). In this way, students were able to better navigate tasks on PE with differing learning demands and opportunities.

Responsible Decision Making

The explicit and intentional emphasis on SEL when utilizing a range of pedagogies during learning experiences meant that teachers looked to make caring and constructive choices related to their personal behavior and social interactions with students: “It was a much more inclusive environment” (TR, PTRL18); “I really try to be inclusive when teaching in my class...the important thing is they feel ‘My teacher is trying to care about inclusion and equity, she’s trying to engage everyone in her class’”(Myung-Hee, Interview); “It was pretty inclusive...everyone was willing to work together and they were willing to include each other (TA2, Interview). Demonstrating a commitment to responsible decision making, students regularly acknowledged the need to be more inclusive within PE, acknowledging the benefits and consequences of their actions for personal, social, and collective wellbeing: "I learned not to judge people. That was very important.” (Khalid, FGB); “I feel like that class was very open and like very inviting for everyone. Like, nobody felt out of place or left out. Everybody was included” (Cathy, FGF). In this way they were able to make more reasoned judgments about their behaviors and actions in class.

Doing Things Differently

For teachers, the explicit and intentional promotion of SEL and MPE represented a shift from their previous approaches to teaching: “I’ve been guilty of teaching things one way only always. *This is the way it has to be done*” (TR, J11); “This teaching style is kind of different from my previous teaching experience” (Myung-Hee, Interview). For students, the learning experience was positively received and viewed upon as innovative and distinctive from previous learning experiences in PE: “I liked it cause it was all different and somehow it just connected” (Melissa, FGA); “I think everyone came at it like open mindedly...it’s like a new way that we

found” (Khalid, FGB); “It was different because we were doing like different activities every day and we were engaging in stuff...I was able to actually enjoy physical activity” (Aubrey, FGD); “I really enjoyed it because it's not something that I usually do...giving an opportunity to try new things...get involved...it just opens up like neat new things” (Sarah, FGE). Innovatively drawing on past and present experiences of PE and physical activity allowed both teachers and students to develop an appreciation of the need to do so in order to develop a better understanding of MPE: “We need to frame PE classes to ensure they are more outward looking than inward obsessed. Why are we here? What is it we do here that helps you live a physically active life outside of here?” (TR, J9); “It was just kind of like opening up to teachers because we never did assignments in class” (Leo, FGC); “My past experiences with gym, I didn’t like it...it was more of like, *this is what you're going to do*...it wasn’t anything fun for me” (Cathy, FGB) ; “My previous experience with PE at middle school was we did the same things every week...in this class you actually wanted to come to PE” (Sarah, FGD). Key to this was the enactment of the democratic pedagogies which allowed students to exercise more agency over the selection and implementation of lesson content: “We never had a say before, it was always what the gym teacher wanted...I felt very listened to, I felt like she understood (Auria, FGB); “She encouraged you to show autonomy” (Barry, FGC). Observing the students demonstrate individual and collective agency in classes, the teachers themselves developed a greater appreciation of the need to work more democratically with students: “You need to listen to them. You need to find ways to involve them...give them responsibility over designing the planning or the learning...you have to give them opportunities to critique what's going on” (TR, CFI); “Empowering them to choose what to do is really important...to think ‘OK, I will do this’...I really wanted to give them more agency in terms of learning” (Myung-Hee, Interview).

In experiencing and embracing these different approaches to promote SEL and MPE, teachers and students came to establish a more holistic understanding around the purpose and presentation of PE: “We need to wrap emotion around physical activity in a way that makes it more meaningful and accessible” (TR, J14); “There were definitely students who had a broader sense of understanding of what physical activity could be...understanding that PE didn't have to be moving so quickly, and you know getting a heartbeat up” (TA1, Interview); “Showing us like what physical activity can look like in different ways...you don't have to be so one minded on what physical activity is...it can be anything (Channing, FGE); “I learned that you don't have to be very physically active to be able to participate and you don't have to be the strongest or the fastest, you know? You can still participate without being that” (Cathy, FGF). Through increased focus on the application of SEL and MPE within classes, teachers and students repeatedly reflected on and interrogated what the subject matter of PE should really encompass: “PE needs to take a step back from the physical elements and encompass more holistic and broader components...in being physically educated are we just physically competent or competent in pursuing physical activity and movement?” (TR, J9); “I think it should add more time for SEL...how you're feeling mentally, your individuality, and what you want to do as far as like your goal for physical exercise” (Auria, FGB); “I think it should be like a good mix between like reflecting and also giving grade on your performance” (James, FGG). Regarding transfer, the TR emphasized to the need to ensure better transfer of learning pertaining to SEL and MPE beyond PE classes:

Just doing it in PE, I still don't think that is enough...it has to happen across the school...it has to happen at home...we have to try and create some connection with the

community...find all these different spaces in the students' world...try and fill those spaces with opportunities for students to experience SEL and MPE” (TR, CFI)

We now look to understand and discuss what can be learned from these understandings and experiences of utilizing democratic and reflective pedagogies to promote SEL and MPE.

Discussion

Findings from this study demonstrate how the utilization of democratic and reflective pedagogies explicitly and intentionally promoting SEL and MPE helped both teachers and students better identify and articulate these experiences and understandings within and outside of class. In doing so, they were able to facilitate a more inclusive holistic learning experience and broaden their understandings around the purpose and subject matter of PE and physical activity within and beyond classes and their wider lives. From a social constructivist learning perspective, providing students with “a mix of movement and play experiences that trigger instances from which each student can reflect on and analyze their involvement in learning” offered a means through which the teachers could promote “opportunities for students to develop both personally and in terms of their wider class and whole school contribution” (Thorburn, 2020, p. 11). Prior to the course, both teachers and students acknowledged shortcomings and limitations in their experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE in PE. Enacting democratic pedagogies such as the full value contract, taster sessions, and continuous class consultation promoted novel and established meaningful movement experiences (Howley et al., 2021; Howley & O’Sullivan 2020; 2021). The utilization of reflective pedagogies within and outside of classes allowed teachers and students to draw on and share prior knowledge and experiences of PE and physical activity when planning for teaching and learning (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Through sharing and making sense of their individual and combined knowledge and experiences,

students were then able to make multiple connections between PE and their day-to-day physically active lives within and beyond PE.

Adopting an MPE approach to teaching and learning also represented a new departure for both teachers and students that helped broaden their experiences and understandings of PE, physical activity, and movement. Learning how to ascribe meaningfulness to movement experiences required the teachers and students to better understand and articulate the role each feature played and how they overlapped both inside and outside of PE. In doing so they were able to increasingly recognize and appreciate how such a process involved “a complex mix of individual cognitive and affective elements as well as relational, social, and cultural dimensions” (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 6). This led teachers and students to better understand, identify, and distinguish between each feature as classes went on while also recognizing where they overlapped. Beyond recognizing fun as a primary feature, students came to value the need for social interaction when working together in learning tasks. An area of regular contention for students and teachers was the role competition played in class. Moving beyond the previously existing and narrow lens of competition as encompassing challenge, teachers and students increasingly recognized the need to view challenge as involving the setting of “personal process-oriented goals across domains during competitive activities, such as encouraging teammates, limiting erroneous decisions in game play, or focusing on efficient or consistent skill execution” (Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 7). This was also reflected in more competent students’ increasing efforts to facilitate other students in experiencing motor competency. The utilization of MPE features in this study ensured the continued promotion of students’ motor competency and ongoing accomplishment of psychomotor outcomes through “positioning the personal, affective and intrinsic meanings of learners at the core of curriculum development and pedagogical

enactment” (Ní Chróinín et al., 2018, p. 119). Through encouraging students to reflect on and consider the “the individual and the contextually-bound nature of a meaningful experience” within and beyond PE, teachers were able to help students make connections to and better understand their relationships with PE and physical activity in their broader lives (Beni et al., 2017).

Explicitly and intentionally planning and teaching for SEL using a variety of democratic and reflective practices meant teachers were able to do so more deliberately and consistently. Similar to the experiences and understandings that were constructed around the features of MPE, the targeting of the five competencies and associated skills when planning and teaching led to a more inclusiveness and equity compared to students’ previous experiences (CASEL, 2015; Dyson et al., 2020; 2021). Intentional and explicit opportunities promoting agency required students to work together and demonstrate self-management and responsible decision making. Providing opportunities for student reflection on these learning experiences prompted both teachers to modify lesson content and practices to better meet their needs and interests (Sutherland & Parker, 2020). In doing so, they were able to develop a deeper understanding of their individual and combined experiences, developing a greater sense of self and social awareness amongst the teachers and students of their pre-existing and developing relationships with PE and physical activity. In particular, the ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and navigate conflict constructively with and amongst students within PE was regularly alluded to and observed by teachers when planning for and reflecting on their pedagogical approaches within learning experiences. In this regard, the implementation of Cooperative Learning elements and structures provided a platform through which social learning could be promoted within PE specific tasks (Dyson & Casey 2012; 2016).

Aligning these democratic and reflective approaches with CASEL’s framework *and* the features of MPE allowed students to reflect, interrogate and discuss how movement experiences inside and outside of PE influenced their pursuit of a physically active life “by making sense of past, present, and future experiences (including interactions with self and others, artifacts, content, and pedagogies) through a process of synthesis and reconciliation” (Beni et al., p. 292). Through continuously enacting reflection and democratic practices, teachers and students were able to further identify and articulate experiences and understanding of SEL and MPE, which led both teachers and students to call into question the pre-existing subject matter and presentations of PE they had previously encountered (Coulter et al., 2020; Alfrey & O’ Connor, 2022; O’ Connor, 2019). The skewed emphasis and educational value placed on movement, levels of physical activity, and teaching sports techniques repeatedly as the crux of PE curriculum and practice in prior experiences was evident (Kirk, 2013). Both teachers and students articulated how the utilization of democratic and reflective pedagogies led them to a broader more holistic experience and understanding of what PE and physical activity could be beyond a narrow “understanding that winning, skill, competitiveness, perseverance, discipline, speed, strength, fitness and aggression are valuable” (Pringle, 2008, p. 217). Similar to recent work by O’Conner et al. (2022), viewing PE and physical activity in this way facilitated teachers and students to further consider “teaching and learning opportunities that particular activities and different forms of participation ‘open up’ for PE” (p. 12).

Conclusion

Calls for a shift in emphasis in teaching and learning in PE to further align with and accomplish SEL competencies and skills continues to attract discourse and debate. The democratic and reflective pedagogies utilized here represented a consistent, explicit, and

deliberate attempt to do so, and was a new experience for both teachers and students. In this regard, they represent innovative approaches that can be utilized to do so. Teachers and students repeatedly articulated how they intentionally experienced and learned SEL through reflection and decision making and within classes, leading them towards a more improved articulation and identification of what SEL competencies and skills encompassed and how they could be taught and learned beyond previously existing experiences and understandings. Justified concern exists that a greater emphasis on SEL might detract from the accomplishment of cognitive and psychomotor outcomes in PE (Lund & van der Mars, 2022). Utilizing the features of MPE within these pedagogies supplemented the accomplishment of cognitive, psychomotor, and SEL outcomes related to PE. Their incorporation into cognitive tasks served as catalysts prompting students to reflect on and articulate their experiences and understandings within and beyond PE, ultimately leading to a broader appreciation of how movement and physical activity was, currently, and could be further pursued and incorporated into their lives. Notably, doing so led both teachers and students to question the very relevance and benefit of established and prioritized subject matter typically found in PE relative to the movement cultures and lifestyle activities they more commonly pursued and found meaningful. In this regard, this study demonstrates the need to think about perhaps *doing things differently* in PE to ensure a more holistic learning experience relevant to students' prior and ongoing experiences and lives is provided. In closing, we call for further embedding of democratic and reflective pedagogies in PE teacher education and professional development that provides teachers and students with the opportunity to do so going forward in order to better facilitate students in *really thinking, being a better classmate, and making movement meaningful*.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore understandings and experiences of promoting Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) in an alternative educational Physical Education (PE) setting. This chapter summarises the main findings and significance, considering the need for practical promotion and implementation of methodology utilized in this study within future PE practice and research design. This study represented an innovative attempt to ascertain prior and emerging experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE with contemporary frameworks. It also explored whether the promotion of both in teaching and learning of SEL and MPE could be done more efficiently through the enactment of student voice and deliberately designing and implementing democratic and reflective pedagogies to do so. Utilizing social constructivist learning theory, conceptual features of MPE, and a systemic framework for SEL, three questions guided the research: 1) What prior understandings and experiences of SEL and MPE had the teachers and students encountered? 2) How did they understand and experience SEL and MPE within classes? 3) What impact did these teaching and learning experiences have on their understanding and promotion of SEL and MPE? Next, each research question is addressed drawing from the combined findings of all three studies followed by a consideration of some of the implications and recommendations these overall findings bring with them for researchers, practitioners, and additional stakeholders.

What Prior Understandings and Experiences of SEL and MPE Had the Teachers and Students Encountered?

Despite advocacy for further integration of SEL and MPE into schooling, the prior experiences and understandings of these concepts students and teachers brought with them into the study were limited and lacking cohesion. From the outset, both teachers and students understood and experienced SEL and MPE in different ways and using broad conceptual articulations. This finding aligns with contemporary literature both within PE and schooling (Hooper et al., 2020; Shriver & Weissberg, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Wright et al. (2021) recently observed differing interpretations, a lack of experience, and organizational influences contributed to ambiguity amongst teachers when implementing SEL in Scottish schools. Similar findings were observed prior to this study by the teacher–researcher (TR) and PE teacher when they considered how they had implemented SEL and MPE within their teaching and learning previously. They also noted how they previously tended to prioritize cognitive and psychomotor outcomes as the basis of subject matter in previous experiences. Teachers’ own SEL competence and well–being plays a crucial role in influencing the successful infusion of SEL (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015; Weissbourd et al., 2013). Their underlying beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes around program implementation, efficacy, and longevity in relation to SEL was limited in this regard (Humphrey et al., 2018). In Chapters Four and Six, we repeatedly saw how the teacher–researcher and PE teacher acknowledged the need to develop a better understanding of both concepts through creating common terminology and consistent and deliberate practices intentionally targeting the promotion of SEL competencies and skills and the MPE features.

Similarly, in Chapters Five and Six, evidence suggested that the teachers’ limited understandings and experiences were mirrored by their students. This highlights that the lack of

intentional promotion of experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE is not solely a problem for teachers and schools, but for their students also. Without any concrete experiences and understandings to draw on themselves, students might also find the SEL and MPE experiences difficult to embrace in the first instance. In particular, students collectively acknowledged a lack of student voice and agency they had been afforded in previous PE experiences and physical activity experiences. Reflecting the lack of conceptual and definitional clarity more broadly across schools and contexts (Jones et al., 2017; Fletcher et al., 2021), this suggests that the curricular experiences both teachers and students had engaged with prior to this study had not placed a major emphasis on SEL and MPE. This comes as no surprise, given the lack of research focusing on meaningful experiences in PE and on differential effectiveness of SEL interventions in high school PE settings (i.e., what works, for whom it works, and under what conditions) (O' Conner et al. 2019; Dyson et al., 2020). Utilizing social constructivist learning theory to draw on teachers' and students' prior knowledge and experience to establish this, we then set about a deliberate and active process of constructing knowledge to address the knowledge and practice gaps (Rovegno, 2006).

How Did They Understand and Experience SEL And MPE Within Classes?

Social constructivist learning theory posits that “learning and learning behavior change are a holistic process in which the learner is actively constructing knowledge and behavior within the cognitive, physical, and social constraints of the environment” (Chen et al., 2007, p. 500). Teaching and learning in this way requires the social and cultural construction of knowledge and a deep understanding of the multiple connections that support transfer of learning to other contexts, both towards and out of PE (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). In teaching explicitly for SEL competencies and associated skills and the features of MPE, both teachers and students

developed a common language and understanding around the articulation and demonstration of both concepts within and outside of PE. In Chapter Four, we saw how the differing social and affective environments and conditions the teacher–researcher found himself opening up to and working with at differing times required him to test out and evolve his approaches to teaching and learning within the context (Kirk & Macdonald, 2009). Promoting SEL and MPE was not something the teacher–researcher was initially experienced and competent in doing. In line with Dewey’s *continuity of experience*, this involved a process of trial and error as he found himself increasingly “coming to grips with and making judgments in concrete cases as they emerge inside and outside the classroom in the process” (Cobb & Bowers, 1999). The teacher–researcher’s ongoing subjective experience demonstrates the challenges but also the benefit of a teacher learning to change their pedagogy to promote SEL and MPE as a means to enhance, not diminish, the teaching of core PE content. In Chapter Six, we saw how the PE teacher too observed increased confidence and an improvement in their ability to facilitate a more inclusive holistic learning experience and broaden their own understanding around the purpose and subject matter of PE and physical activity within and beyond classes and their wider lives.

Similarly, we saw in Chapters Five and Six how it too took time for students to better understand and open up to the idea of promoting SEL and MPE within PE. Learning to identify, articulate, and demonstrate the competencies, skills, and features was not something students had previously encountered, and it required them to work in more innovative and collaborative ways. For both teachers and students, this was made possible by the consistent and deliberate enactment of student voice and the utilization of democratic and reflective pedagogies designed to specifically promote SEL and MPE. Explicitly planning for, identifying, and articulating SEL competencies and skills as well as the features of MPE within tasks and activities ensured

teachers were helping students to actively construct and apply their knowledge and relate it not just to their ongoing learning experience in PE, but to their broader physically active lives also. In doing so, both teachers and students reciprocally and regularly became active and dynamic agents in the construction of knowledge that then informed their collective decision making. The utilization of full value contracts, biographies, timelines, and digital reflections helped students to reflect and articulate their relationships with PE and physical activity, gaining a deeper appreciation of how both they and their peers interpreted and engaged with PE and physical activity inside and outside of class time. The utilization of cooperative learning, in particular, group processing, was identified by both teachers and students as a cognitive and social process that provided them with the opportunity to reflect on their learning through the lenses of SEL and MPE (Dyson et al., 2020; 2021). The promotion of responsible decision making through continuous class consultation and negotiation not only promoted SEL, but also allowed teachers and student to critique and identify movement activities that were more and less meaningful to them individually and collectively (Howley & Tannehill, 2014; Howley & O’Sullivan, 2021; Enright, 2010a). The use of photovoice led students to illustrate and share the numerous ways in which they were physically active, allowing them to reconsider what being physically active meant, looked, and felt like beyond on their previous understandings and experiences of PE (Enright, 2012b; Azzarito & Kirk, 2013). In Chapters Five and Six, we saw how the utilization of these innovative democratic and reflective approaches encompassing student voice allowed them to experience SEL and MPE more within PE, in turn leading to an ongoing reconstruction of knowledge throughout the course. This required students to recognize and understand SEL and MPE concepts not just through the rich array of emotional and movement experiences they encountered in class. It also required them to consider experiences in their broader, physically

active lives historically and on a day-to-day basis, helping to make multiple connections beyond their previous and, at times, often narrow PE experiences of the past. Ultimately, promoting SEL and MPE through a commitment to student voice and the utilization of democratic and reflective practices deliberately led to the development of SEL and MPE experiences complimenting multiple domains throughout the course (Ní Chróinín et al., 2021). The findings suggest that in order to promote SEL and MPE within PE classes, teachers and students should look to work and learn together at different times to ensure that PE is made more relevant to students' lives, is equitable and inclusive, and allows for them to ascribe a deeper sense of meaning to physical activity.

What Impact Did These Teaching and Learning Experiences Have on Their Understanding and Promotion of SEL And MPE?

Ultimately, the experience of engaging with and promoting SEL and MPE led teachers and students towards a deeper cognitive understanding of the role these concepts played in their learning and movement experiences within and outside of PE. Planning for these concepts in class meant that learning experiences consistently required students to draw on their understandings and experiences within and outside class to demonstrate competencies and skills, which extended their knowledge and application of SEL and MPE. Aligning these democratic and reflective approaches with CASEL's framework *and* the features of MPE allowed students to reflect on, examine, and discuss how movement experiences inside and outside of PE influenced their pursuit of a physically active life "by making sense of past, present, and future experiences (including interactions with self and others, artifacts, content, and pedagogies) through a process of synthesis and reconciliation" (Beni et al., p. 292). We saw in Chapters Four, Five, and Six how teachers and students came to increasingly understand, articulate, and place

value on SEL and MPE within teaching and learning. Teachers and students acknowledged how utilizing these concepts supplemented the accomplishment of cognitive, psychomotor, and SEL outcomes related to PE. This led to a broader holistic appreciation of how movement and physical activity could be further pursued and incorporated into their lives (Dyson, 2014). Such was the successful enactment of student voice through the embedding of democratic and reflective practices, teachers and students openly critiqued the subject matter they engaged with PE relative to the movement cultures and lifestyle activities they more commonly pursued and found meaningful (Coulter et al., 2020; O' Connor, 2019), leading at times to paradoxical perspectives of what the purpose and content of the PE should involve in order to be meaningful (Alfrey & O' Connor, 2022). For teachers and students, promoting SEL and MPE led them to think of and view PE and physical activity in an unfixated and less determined light. Rather than being viewed as a drawback, this broadening of what PE and physical activity was and could be helped teachers and students make multiple connections beyond PE through which they could pursue physical activity in the future. In the next section, we look to consider the practical implications of these findings.

Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study have a number of theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically speaking, we saw from the findings how utilizing democratic and reflective approaches grounded in social constructivist learning theory has the potential to promote SEL and MPE within PE settings. Asking teachers and students to collectively identify and make connections between their individual backgrounds, experiences, and social contexts facilitated the construction of knowledge in a personally meaningful manner (Richards et al., 2018). While advocacy for social constructivist approaches is plentiful in the field, applying such learning

theory to practice requires learning experiences that go beyond simply changing the learner's behavior. We saw in this study how the experiences teachers and students encountered involved numerous changes in their understandings and application of SEL and MPE based on the experiences they had encountered previously and during the course and subsequently reflected on in order to process and construct further knowledge (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Findings demonstrate how the teachers' and students' approach to learning became an iterative process involving repeatedly navigating numerous critical incidents, experiences, ideas, and practices, rather than a focus on always getting things right, ultimately leading to more explicit and descriptive promotions of SEL and MPE. Adopting such a theoretical stance to practice should be further encouraged if teachers are going to provide a more holistic movement experience that promotes SEL, cognitive, and psychomotor outcomes.

Conceptually speaking, researchers and practitioners in PE and general education continue to reconsider the teaching and learning of SEL and MPE using various contemporary conceptual educational frameworks and approaches (Dyson et al., 2020; Fletcher et al., 2021; Mahoney, et al. 2021). To our knowledge, this is the first study at high school level that has sought to utilize the concepts of SEL introduced in CASEL (2015) and the features of MPE outlined by Beni et al. (2017) together in an effort to promote a more holistic learning experience. Teaching for SEL and MPE using common language and terminology around pre-identified and defined competencies, skills, and features drawn from these conceptual frameworks as demonstrated here can help contribute to more concrete and uniform learning experiences within and across settings. Working in such a way can provide more clarity in teaching and learning for both teachers and students.

Practically speaking, the utilization and promotion of democratic and reflective practices proved successful in promoting SEL and MPE. Teachers should look to implement innovative practices such as those utilized in this study to draw on and further construct knowledge. It is important to note that many of the pedagogical approaches utilized were already established pedagogies in the field. The only modifications were an intentional and explicit promotion of SEL and MPE within their application. Just as the teacher–researcher did in Chapter Four, we encourage teachers to think creatively around how they look to incorporate SEL and MPE into PE, but also being aware of potential challenges that may arise. In order to do so, Chapter Five demonstrated the need for teachers to bridge the gap between enacting and drawing on the voices of the students we work with and providing them with the agency and space to make responsible decisions around their participation in physical activity and movement on their own and with others, inside and outside of class. Chapter Six goes one step further on this call by challenging teachers *and* students to think and *do things differently* together to ensure a more holistic learning experience relevant to their prior and ongoing experiences and lives is provided. Embedding democratic and reflective pedagogies in PE teacher education and professional development that provides teachers and students with the opportunity to think more deeply about SEL and MPE has the potential to provide a more holistic experience for all involved.

From a research perspective, there is a lack of qualitative research and a predominance of quantitative research designs foregrounded in the SEL literature in high school PE, general education, and alternative education settings (Corcoran et al., 2018; Dyson et al. 2020; Kumm et al., 2020). Contrastingly, research seeking to understand the implementation of and promotion of MPE have tended to take on a more subjective design incorporating traditional qualitative research methods and self–study (Beni et al., 2017). Both topics would benefit from a

methodological balancing in this regard. Very little research on MPE has taken place in high school settings, and more needs to be done. What both SEL and MPE share in common is a lack of research combining teacher *and* student experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE that align with contemporary theoretical and conceptual frameworks as has been highlighted in this study. Future research must continue to address this oversight in examining evidence-based practice exploring experiences and understandings of SEL and MPE. Research must look to find more accurate and accessible ways through which SEL and MPE can be assessed in schools, something the field historically has struggled to do (Bailey et al., 2009; Dyson, 2014; Lund & van der Mars, 2022). We hope the practices implemented here present innovative suggestions through which this could potentially be done more frequently and comprehensively in future. Finally, this study demonstrates how experiencing and understanding SEL and MPE involves innately social, emotional, democratic and reflective processes. If research promoting SEL and MPE is truly authentic, we recommend that some form of Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods be utilized as a prerequisite when engaging in such a process. Doing so ensures participants have opportunities to be included and participate in identifying, addressing, and responding to pre-existing, emerging, consensual, and contested teaching and learning experiences that arise before, during, and after learning and the research process (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010; Fitzgerald et al., 2021). Not only do these serve as practical research methods, so too can they be used by teachers and students as practical learning methods, allowing them to engage in the process, which is ultimately what this type of school-based research is all about.

Final Words

It is posited that established pedagogies in the field such as models-based practices and *pedagogies of affect* accomplish SEL and MPE (Kirk 2019; Wright & Richards, 2022; Fletcher

et al., 2021). In this sense, SEL and MPE are already viewed by some as an embedded part of teaching and learning in PE—something that the field has *been doing all along* (Dyson et al., 2020; Fletcher et al., 2021). However, very few innovative contemporary practices have been developed and implemented in PE research that align directly with and comprehensively accomplish the targeted SEL competencies, associated skills, and drawn from contemporary frameworks. The same can be said for MPE. This study highlights and presents the significance of promoting SEL and MPE within teaching and learning experiences more intentionally and how *as we go along*—not just in PE, but potentially beyond the classroom also. Findings emphasize the need for teachers and students to better draw on prior and current knowledge and experience of teachers and students in more innovative ways, and to do so in a continuously democratic and reflective manner that informs, influences, and enhances current and future learning. In doing so, not only can teachers and students look to promote SEL and MPE within PE, but so too can they learn to engage in a continued process of reflection and decision making that leads them to continue their pursuit of and participation in meaningful physical activity. We saw from this study how doing so explicitly, deliberately, and consistently utilizing contemporary frameworks and terminology can lead to a better understanding and application of these concepts, ultimately leading to a more holistic PE experience which does not neglect already established core content and subject matter needed to do so practically. If researchers and practitioners are serious about promoting SEL and MPE, then it is time to *talk and walk* more with this in mind as this study sought to do—not just with hearts, hands, the best of intentions, and unenacted hyperbole, but through wrapping teachers and students’ heads around the science of doing so better going forward. At the end of the day, we’re not just physically moving bodies

in PE—we're moving minds, memories, and emotions in the pursuit of a lifetime of autonomous wellbeing beyond immediate PE and school settings.

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APPENDIX A: TEACHER-RESEARCHER PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

What was your experience of physical education and physical activity growing up in your family group, school community?

Growing up, physical activity was fun, social, challenging, and personally relevant to my life. I grew up on a farm in the West of Ireland, Europe, and spent large portions of my childhood outdoors working and playing. I had two older brothers and plenty of green space where we would play games together and be physically active. My local school was small and everyday my friends and I played different physical activities at lunch time. We had a safe community so we could cycle to each other's houses and play outside of school hours, at weekends, and during summer. Physical activities were cheap, easy to organize, and facilities were safe and made accessible to me. I always had people to be physically active with. My first experiences of formal sport came at 8 years of age with the local Gaelic Football club. Even from an early age, my coaches tended to be competitive and wanted to win. At 13, I remember one game where I was brought on as a substitute in the second half and taken off before the end of the game as I was not playing well. My experiences of physical education in school were not the best. They were not very well organized, and we ended up playing competitive sports a lot which wasn't very fair or inclusive for everybody. I wanted to work and help others have positive experiences of physical activity and physical education. When I made the decision to go to college, I figured physical education was an obvious choice for me given my love and passion for physical activity at the time.

What is your social identity and personal identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, social class/socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, (dis)abilities, and religion/religious beliefs)?

I am an Irish Caucasian (White), male, teacher working as a physical education teacher and a volunteer with youth sports organizations. I have parents, two brothers, and a girlfriend that I love very much. Being a teacher gives me a sense of purpose and allows me to work with young people and help them develop a love for physical education and physical activity. Volunteering with youth sport organizations allows me to take my work outside the classroom and into the community providing local kids in my community the same great opportunities and experiences of physical activity that I had as a kid also. Most importantly for me personally, I identify as Irish. I'm very proud of my Irish culture and heritage, now more than ever since I moved to live here as an immigrant in the USA. Irish people see ourselves as friendly and fun. Because Ireland is a small country, many like me leave the country to work or travel. Also, many people from around the world visit Ireland on holidays. This means I have been fortunate to meet, work, and be physically active with a lot of people from different backgrounds and social identities. There are times when I miss being with my family and friends I grew up with in Ireland. I hope to go home and visit them soon. For now, I feel like I have a home here in Greensboro and the USA.

How do you think these experiences have shaped your relationship with physical education and physical activity?

All of these experiences have unquestionably shaped my relationship with physical education and physical activity. I was very fortunate to have the time and space to be physically active at home as a kid. This helped me develop a lifelong love of physical activity. Growing up on a farm meant I spent a lot of time outdoors working with my father taking care of animals. This was very hard work at times and meant I was always physically active. When I wasn't working on the farm, I was active with my brothers in the safe open green space where we lived

playing games and cycling. In school, I would spend lunchtimes playing with my friends. We had a small and safe community, so I was able to participate in physical activity in so many different ways as a kid. I developed a love and passion for physical activity as a result. My love and passion for physical activity led me to becoming a physical education teacher so I could spend all my time being active and teaching others to be physically active also. Physical activity has helped me to make many friends, appreciate diversity and to learn about and respect people's identities. This has allowed me to make friends all over the world and especially here in the USA. In my spare time, I still play I still participate in the physical activities I grew up playing at home here in the USA. I feel fortunate that I still find my relationship with physical activity allows me to have fun, socially interact, challenge myself, learn skills, and be personally relevant to my everyday life. I enjoy meeting and participating with people through physical education and physical activity who have similar and/or different experiences and identities to my own.

APPENDIX B: COURSE SYLLABUS & STRUCTURE

Course Description: The purpose of the class is to help develop students' understanding and application of social and emotional learning and meaningfulness in physical education and physical activity.

1. Student Learning Outcomes:

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- a. Correctly identify and explain basic concepts of social and emotional learning and meaningful physical education.
- b. Demonstrate and reflect on experiences of social and emotional learning and meaningful physical education and physical activity to develop further understanding and assist future experiences.
- c. Apply competent motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- d. Understand concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics that apply to the learning and performance of movement
- e. Understand the importance of achieving and maintaining a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
- f. Use behavioral strategies that are responsible and enhance respect of self and others and value activity.
- g. Present an evolving understanding of social and emotional learning and meaningful physical education to guide you in goal setting in your present and future life.

2. Philosophy of the Course

The objective of this course is to provide a safe, high-quality, and meaningful educational experience for enrolled students, one that is focused on the development of social and emotional learning and meaningfulness in physical education. You all have different experiences of physical education and physical activity prior to your arrival at UNCG. We want to help you reflect and understand these experiences and hopefully help you experience positive and meaningful ones during and beyond this course. We want you to be actively present and involved in these experiences as well as being present and involved with your peers. As teachers and students, we will work together to negotiate and establish additional expectations of ourselves as a group.

3. Course Materials

All course materials and resources will be provided by the teachers in person and on Canvas.

4. Class Attire

You must wear appropriate exercise attire during exercise sessions. Athletic shoes, tee shirts, capri pants, athletic pants, athletic shorts and similar attire are acceptable. Shoes should fit appropriately and be worn with socks at all times to reduce the chance of blisters. Because some classes may take place outdoors across the campus and the weather is unpredictable, students must come prepared with clothing options for all weather. This may include rain gear, winter head ware, gloves, sweatpants, and extra articles of clothing. We encourage students as a group

and individually to discuss class attire with us. The teachers reserve the right to make final decisions regarding acceptable attire for students.

5. Guidelines for Graded Tasks

1 - Class Participation 25%

Like all courses at the collegiate level, students are expected to attend class and be on time to be successful in this course. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence and a point

deduction from this grade. Exceptions will be made for excused absences. Students will receive this credit for being present and actively physically participating in that day's class. This involves:

- (1) arrives to class on time
- (2) arrives to class prepared (having already accomplished homework)
- (3) stays off his/her cell phone unless instructed to use it for learning
- (4) self-management
- (5) self-awareness
- (6) social awareness
- (7) demonstrates relationship skills
- (8) demonstrates personally social and responsible behavior
- (9) contributes to group work, when applicable

More will be added to this following class discussions and recommendations/suggestions from students.

2- Weekly Diary Entries (Submitted to Canvas) 15%

From the beginning of Week Two, at the end of classes each week, you will be asked to take some time to think back on your learning experiences in the last two classes. In your own words, you will reflect on these experiences and the experiences of those around you. The following questions will be used to help initially guide you in your first reflection.

- What happened?
- What kind of actions and movements were you performing?
- What kind of emotions and thoughts were you thinking about/experiencing?
- How do you think it felt for others?
- What challenges did you face?
- What have you learned from these two classes?
- What would you like to see more/less of in the next class?
- Any other thoughts?

Reflection questions will change over the duration of the course. These reflections will be submitted on canvas and can be submitted in written or recorded form. If you have another idea or means by which you would like to complete a diary entry (e.g., drawing, poem, song, etc.), we encourage you to discuss this with your teacher.

3 - Personal Biography (Submitted to Canvas or via Hard Copy) 10%

At the end of Week One students will complete a personal biography to help them reflect on their previous life experiences. This will allow students to understand how their experiences and the experiences of their peers have shaped who they all are as a person.

Use the following three questions to help guide you:

- What was your experience growing up in your family group, school community?
- What do you feel is your social identity and personal identity?
- How do you think these experiences have shaped your relationship with physical education and physical activity?

This biography will be submitted on canvas and can be submitted in written or recorded form. If you have another idea or means by which you would like to complete this biography (e.g., drawing, poem, song, etc.), we encourage you to discuss this with your teacher. You will be asked to share selected elements of your biography with the class in Week 2.

4 - Timeline (Submitted to Canvas or Hard Copy) 10%

At the end of Week Two, you will be asked to reflect on your experiences of physical education and physical activity across your life up to now. Create a timeline identifying a minimum of 5 or a maximum of 10 significant moments in your life that have impacted on your health and wellness. These can be positive or negative experiences. Examples might include experiencing an activity for the first time, injury, illness, or personal circumstances which you may have already discussed in your personal biography. Provide (a) some detail about each event (b) the impact you think it had on your relationship with physical activity (d) how you responded (c) what you learned from each event.

This timeline will be physically created using writing, drawings, and artwork in class. If you have another idea or means by which you would like to complete the timeline (e.g., digitally, poem, song, etc.), we encourage you to discuss this with your teacher. You will be asked to share selected elements of your timeline with the class in Week 3.

5 - Photovoice Task 1 (Submitted to Canvas or Hard Copy) 10%

You will be invited you to take a minimum of 5 photos based on the following five prompts: 1) Where I spend my leisure time; 2) my physically active life; 3) physical activity facilities nearby; 4) physical activity in the lives of my family and friends; and 5) the things that are important to me. These photos should not include human subjects. You are then asked to explain what each photo represents in one sentence. You will be trained on the appropriate used of photographing. We encourage you to discuss this with your teacher. You will be asked to share/explain your selection of pictures with the class.

6 - Photovoice Task 2 (Submitted to Canvas or Hard Copy) 10%

For Task 2, you are required to seek out and describe a “meaningful” experience in relation to physical education and/or physical activity outside of class (i.e. one that is fun, involves social interaction, challenge, motor competence, and personally relevant to you. You will be invited you to take a maximum of 5 photos. You will then be asked to explain why this movement activity is meaningful for you using the following prompts: Explain how/why/or if it involves: 1) fun; 2) social interaction; 3) challenge; 4) motor competence;

and 5) personally relevant learning. You will be asked to share/explain your selection of pictures with the class.

7 - Personally Relevant Learning Experience Presentation (Practical Peer Assessment) 10%

Following Photovoice Task 2, you will be invited to present your selected meaningful physical activity to your peers in group presentations. In this presentation you will be graded by your peers on your ability to make the experience 1) fun; 2) socially interactive 3); challenging 4) involve competence; 5) explain how it is personally relevant to you and how it might be to your peers.

8 - Proclamation of Meaningfulness (Submitted to Canvas or Hard Copy) 15%

For your final assignment, based on your learning experiences in the class, you will be asked to create a proclamation of meaningfulness describing the types of emotions, experiences, and movements involving physical education/activity that are meaningful to you and why. You will be asked to consider how you can look to make these emotions, experiences, and movements a regular part of your day-to-day life both now and in the future. We encourage you to be as creative as you like in creating this proclamation. You will be asked to share and present your statement of meaningfulness with a group of your peers in class.

Graded events

Graded Task	%
Class Participation	25
Weekly Diary Entries	10
Personal Biography	10
Timeline	10
Photovoice Task 1	10
Photovoice Task 2	10
Personally Relevant Learning Experience Presentation	10
Proclamation of Meaningfulness	15
Total	100

This is the grade scale common to all activity courses in the Department of Kinesiology.

Grade Scale

L etter Grade	% pts accumul ated	L etter Grade	% pts accumul ated	L etter Grade	% pts accumul ated	L etter Grade	% pts accumul ated
A	≥ 93	B +	8 7-89	C +	7 7-79	D	6 0-69
A -	9 0-92	B	8 3-86	C	7 3-76	F	≤ 59
		B- 8	0-82	C- 7	0-72		

Note: The teacher will use commonly accepted rounding convention when calculating grades in this class. Numerical values < 0.5 will round to the next lower whole number while values ≥ 0.5 will round to the next higher whole number. For example, an earned score of 92.49 would round to 92 points, while a score of 92.50 would round to 93 points.

5. Academic Integrity

Please review UNCG's academic integrity policy (<http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>) paying particular attention to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. You are required to understand and abide with this policy with respect to your participation in this course.

6. Punctuality and Attendance Policy

You must arrive to class prepared to engage in that day's activity. No student may receive credit for being present without physically participating in that day's class (i.e., no passive observation from the sideline).

All students must participate in PE class to the best of their ability. Participation, regardless of ability or manner, is mandatory in Physical Education classes. We encourage students to work collaboratively with each other and the teacher. We believe that every student has something to offer to any given experience. Through their participation, students can recognise and appreciate peers' individuality, to work with it, and enhance their learning experience. If a student has an illness (common cold, sore throat, etc.) or injury which reduces their ability to participate, they must still get changed and participate to the best of their ability. If they are too ill to do this then they should not be in school. If a student has an illness, they must bring in their PE uniform and a note from their parent/guardian, alongside a medical cert stating the nature of the illness and prescribed treatment.

If a student has an injury, they must bring in their PE uniform and a note from their parent/guardian, alongside a medical cert stating the nature of the injury and prescribed treatment. The student can still participate in whatever elements of the class that are suitable, particularly the low impact parts of the warm-up and the elements of the class which focus on flexibility. This can prove beneficial to the student, as the PE teacher can take the opportunity to advise the student on exercises which will help in the rehabilitation of the injury or on stretches suitable for preventing the injury re-occurring in the future. The PE teachers will modify their lesson or prescribe an activity so that, if possible, a suitable participatory role will be given to the student with the injury.

If the student feels physically uncomfortable during part of the class, they will be prescribed a low to moderate intensity activity or role. For instance, they will then engage in a more theoretical based lesson, usually by observing and recording information about the relevant topic being covered in class, or encouraged to focus on activity which will prevent further injury and promote rehabilitation.

If a student has an injury, which is accompanied by a note from their parent/guardian and a medical cert, which makes it unsafe for them to participate in the PE class, the student will

participate in learning about the theory elements of the activity being covered in PE class. This will be achieved by reading and taking notes from a work sheet given to them by the PE teacher. The student must present the notes to the teacher at the end of the class for inspection and must then file the notes away safely.

If you have a medical condition that will impact your attendance or long-term performance in the course, you must present written documentation to the teacher during the first week of class or as soon as the event occurs. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as possible and to set up an appointment to discuss the situation.

7. COVID-19 Syllabus Statement

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in Spring 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG’s culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth.
- b. Observing social distance in the classroom.
- c. Engaging in proper hand washing hygiene when possible.
- d. Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.
- e. Staying home if you are ill.
- f. Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

The teachers will have social distancing arrangements in place. These are important for maintaining appropriate social distance during class and facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students carefully adhere to these in every class meeting and must not move equipment or furniture unless requested. Students are advised not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Students who do not follow masking and social distancing requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow these basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action.

8. Course Schedule

Group A (Monday/Tuesday)

Mon/Tuesday Group A Dates	Lesson	Lesson Focus	Task Due for Class	Task for Homework
Monday		Introduction Course Outline		Complete Parent

2/ 22		Establishing Rules, Routines, & Expectations Full Value Contract Cooperative Activities		Permission Slip
Tuesday 2/ 23		Cooperative Activities Personal Biography	Parent Permission Slip	Personal Biography
Monday 3/ 8		Cooperative Activities Personal Biography Presentations	Personal Biography	
Tuesday 3/ 9		Cooperative Activities Timelines		Reflection 1 Timeline
Monday 3/ 15		Cooperative Activities Timeline Presentations	n 1 Reflection Timeline	Photovoice 1
Tuesday 3/ 16		Negotiating Units of Work Introduction to Tasters Taster 1 – A=Spikeball B=Dance Identifying Students' Other Calls		Photovoice 1 Reflection 2
Monday 3/ 22		Taster 2 A=Dance B=Spikeball	ce 1 n 2 Reflection	
Tuesday 3/ 23		Taster 3 Choice of: Soccer, Gaelic Games, Frisbee, Golf, Quidditch, Yoga.		Reflection 3
Monday 3/ 29		Taster 4 Choice of: Soccer, Gaelic Games, Frisbee, Golf, Quidditch, Yoga. Negotiation of Units of Work	n 3 Reflection	
Tuesday 3/ 30	0	Taster 5 Class Call: Choice of: Tae Kwon Do, Soccer, Frisbee, Golf, Yoga, Bouldering or Other Negotiation of Units of Work		Reflection 4
Monday 4/ 5	1	Unit of Work 1 -	n 4 Reflection	

Tuesday 4/6	2	Unit of Work 1 -		Reflection 5	Reflect
Monday 4/12	3	Unit of Work 1 -	n 5	Reflection	
Tuesday 4/13	4	Unit of Work 1 -		Reflection 6	Reflect
* Async 4/13-4/16	5	Unit of Work 2 -			
Monday 4/19	6	Unit of Work 2 -	n 6	Reflection	
Tuesday 4/20	7	Unit of Work 2 -		Reflection 7	Reflect
* Async 4/20-4/23	8	Unit of Work 2 -	n 7	Reflection	
Monday 4/26	9	PRLE Demo – Gaelic Games			PRLE
Tuesday 4/27	0	PRLE Presentations			PLRE
Monday 5/3	1	PRLE Presentations			PRLE Reflection 8
Tuesday 5/4	2	Presentations/Proclamations/Students Call	n 9	Reflection	PRLE
* Async	3	Proclamation Discussion (Canvas)		PRLE	Reflection 9

5/ 4 -5/6			Procla mations
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Group B (Thursday/Friday)

Thur/ Fr Group B Dates	Les son	Lesson Focus	Task Due for Class	Task for Homework
Thur sday 2/25	1	Introduction Course Outline Establishing Rules, Routines, & Expectations Full Value Contract Cooperative Activities		Comple te Parent Permission Slip
Frid ay 2/26	2	Cooperative Activities Personal Biography	Parent Permission Slip	Personal Biography
Thur sday 3/11	3	Cooperative Activities Personal Biography Presentations	Perso nal Biography	
Frid ay 3/12	4	Cooperative Activities Timelines		Reflecti on 1 Timelin e
Thur sday 3/18	5	Cooperative Activities Timeline Presentations	Refle ction 1 Timel ine	Photovo ice 1
Frid ay 3/19 *Re mote Class	6	Negotiating Units of Work Introduction to Tasters Taster 1 – A=Spikeball B=Dance Identifying Students’ Other Calls		Photovo ice 1 Reflecti on 2
Thur sday 3/25	7	Taster 2 A=Dance B=Spikeball	Photo voice 1	

			Refle ction 2	
Frid ay 3/26	8	Taster 3 Choice of: Soccer, Gaelic Games, Frisbee, Golf, Quidditch, Yoga.		Reflecti on 3
*As ync 3/29 -4/2	9	Taster 4 Choice of: Soccer, Gaelic Games, Frisbee, Golf, Quidditch, Yoga. Negotiation of Units of Work		
Thur sday 4/8	10	Taster 5 Class Call: Choice of: Tae Kwon Do, Soccer, Frisbee, Golf, Yoga, Bouldering or Other Negotiation of Units of Work	Refle ction 3	
Frid ay 4/9	11	Unit of Work 1 -		Reflecti on 4
*As ync 4/12 -4/14	12	Unit of Work 1 -		
Thur sday 4/15	13	Unit of Work 1 -	Refle ction 4	
Frid ay 4/16	14	Unit of Work 1 -		Reflecti on 5
*As ync 4/16 - 4/21	15	Unit of Work 2 -		
*Ay snc 4/16 -4/21	16	Unit of Work 2 -		
Thur sday 4/22	17	Unit of Work 2 -	Refle ction 5	
Frid ay 4/23	18	Unit of Work 2 -		Reflecti on 6
*As ync	19	PRLE Demo – Gaelic Games		PRLE

4/26 - 4/29				
Thursday 4/29	0	2	PRLE Presentations	PLRE
Friday 4/30	1	2	PRLE Presentations	PRLE Reflection 7
Thursday 5/6	2	2	Presentations/Proclamations/Students Call	Reflection 7 PRLE
*Asynchronous 5/3 - 5/6	3	2	Proclamation Discussion (Canvas)	PRLE Reflection 8 Proclamations

Note:

a. This course schedule is a general plan which is subject to change due to unforeseen issues such as inclement weather. The teacher will announce changes using emails generated through the Announcements function in Canvas; therefore, you should frequently check both sources to stay current with respect to course changes.

b. The column designated “Assignment(s) Due” shows any assignments due on the date indicated. All assignments are due *at the beginning of the respective class*, in paper copy unless otherwise indicated by the instructor.

c. The instructor maintains the right to change the syllabus and course schedule to better serve the purpose of the course and students.

APPENDIX C: EXPANDED DETAIL ON PEDAGOGIES DRAWN FROM LITERATURE
AND RESEARCH PRIORITIZING STUDENT VOICE

Week(s)	Enacted pedagogy drawn from literature and research prioritizing YSLV	Details of Enactment within this Study
1–2	Full Value Contract (88)	The teacher presented their rules, routines and expectations (RRE’s) with students at the beginning of the course. Students were then invited to modify and provide additional RRE’s for subsequent PE lessons.
1–2	Personal Biography (89, 90)	<p>Students completed a personal biography to help them reflect and share their previous life experiences and relationship with PE and physical activity with their peers in class, guided by the following three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your experience growing up in your family group, school community? • What do you feel is your social identity and personal identity? • How do you think these experiences have shaped your relationship with physical education and physical activity?
1–10	Cooperative Learning and Group Processing (85, 86, 91)	Cooperative Learning was used as the primary pedagogical method during Weeks 1-4 when the focus was on building relationship skills with students in class. Structures implemented were Learning Teams, Jig-Saw, Think-Pair-Perform, Rally Round Robin. Cooperative Learning structures were frequently used throughout the remainder of the course at different times, but alongside other instructional pedagogical practices such as XXXX. Particular emphasis was placed throughout the course on the cooperative element of group processing. Students regularly engaged in group processing during and after tasks throughout the course (e.g., <i>What happened? So what? Now What?</i>). This occurred in pairs and/or small groups who then shared their discussions with the teacher and class to help inform future lessons and planning. The Learning Team structure was implemented during the final unit of work (floor hockey) when students were invited in

Week(s)	Enacted pedagogy drawn from literature and research prioritizing YSLV	Details of Enactment within this Study
2–10	Continuous Class Consultation & Negotiation (7, 34, 35, 78, 92, 93)	<p>heterogenous groups to <i>invent a game</i> incorporating the basic rules and skills of floor hockey which they learned, performed, and taught to other groups while reciprocally learning and performing theirs.</p> <p>Outside of the formal methods listed, students were continuously encouraged to reflect on and discuss their experiences of PE, critiquing them, and providing feedback before, during and after classes to inform the planning, content, learning and assessment through opportunities for: discussion; questioning; verbal feedback; taking quick votes and debriefing. Students engaged in regular dialogue and discussion on PE experiences to negotiate curriculum and lesson content outside of the methods listed here. This was especially conducted during the facilitation group processing when using Cooperative Learning, which required the shared reflection and planned action of students and teachers going forward (<i>What happened? So what? Now What?</i>). At different times, students were asked to appraise their experiences after lessons using verbal and written feedback to help inform future planning and these were collected as artefacts. In Week 8 following the final taster sessions, the teacher and students discussed and negotiated what unit of work to pursue based on the activities they selected in the taster sessions. After agreeing to select floor hockey, they discussed how it could be meaningfully taught in lessons through a collaborative reflection of their experiences up to that point, outlining group expectations reflecting a commitment to FVC and the oncoming lessons. Within the unit of work, students then worked their way through the content, eventually designing modified games which they learned, performed, and taught to other groups. while reciprocally learning and performing theirs.</p>
3–4	Timeline (94)	<p>Students created a personal timeline identifying a minimum of 5 or a maximum of 10 significant moments in their life that impacted on their health and wellness, be they positive or</p>

Week(s)	Enacted pedagogy drawn from literature and research prioritizing YSLV	Details of Enactment within this Study
4–7	Taster Sessions (7, 78, 93)	<p>negative experiences. In doing so, they were asked to provide (a) some detail about each event (b) the impact they think it had on their relationship with physical activity (d) how they responded (c) what they learned from each event. They then shared some of these experiences with others in class.</p> <p>In Week 4, students were presented with a grouped list of movement activities. Students were asked to vote on their preferred two activities from each group (Selected activities highlighted in bold). They were also invited to suggest two more not on the list (Students’ Call). They then participated in a 30-minute taster of the selected movement activities with a view to pursuing one as a full unit of work.</p> <p>Group 1: Meditation, Yoga, Barre, Gymnastics</p> <p>Group 2: Tag Rugby, Ultimate Frisbee, Quidditch</p> <p>Group 3: Spikeball, Pickleball, Badminton</p> <p>Group 4: Floor Hockey, Orienteering, Rounders, Golf</p> <p>Students’ Call: Basketball, Soccer.</p> <p>These highlighted activities were then later voted on and discussed by students and the teacher when negotiating and selecting the final unit of work to implement (See Continuous Class Consultation and Negotiation).</p>
7–10	Photovoice Task 1 (94, 95)	<p>Students were invited to take a minimum of 5 photos based on the following five prompts: 1) Where I spend my leisure time; 2) my physically active life; 3) physical activity facilities nearby; 4) physical activity in the lives of my family and friends; and 5) the things that are important to me. These photos could not include human subjects. Students were then asked to explain what each photo represented in one sentence. They were invited to orally share/explain their selection of pictures with peers class.</p>
9–10	Photovoice Task 2 (94, 95)	<p>Students were invited to seek out and describe a “meaningful” experience in relation to PE and/or physical activity outside of class (i.e. one</p>

Week(s)	Enacted pedagogy drawn from literature and research prioritizing YSLV	Details of Enactment within this Study
2–10	Digital Reflections (55, 84)	<p>that is fun, involves social interaction, challenge, motor competence, and personally relevant). They were invited to take a maximum of 5 photos that helped them describe and represent the activity as they experience it. (e.g. take photos of the space where you perform this activity, or the equipment you use). They could not include human subjects in the photos. Students were then asked to explain why this movement activity was meaningful for using the following prompts:</p> <p>Explain how/why/or if it involves: 1) fun; 2) social interaction; 3) challenge; 4) motor competence; and 5) personally relevant learning.</p> <p>They were asked to begin each section with the following statement "I find this..." (e.g., I find this fun because; I find this socially interactive because). Finally, they were asked to think about how this meaningful PE/physical activity experience they presented and described contributed to their SEL development? (e.g. Does it help them to self-manage, be self-aware, socially aware, develop relationship skills, and make responsible decisions?</p> <p>At the end of classes each week, students were asked to take some time to think back on their learning experiences in the previous two classes, reflect on these experiences and the experiences of those around them. The following questions were used as prompts to help guide reflections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened? • What kind of actions and movements were you performing? • What kind of emotions and thoughts were you thinking about/experiencing? • How do you think it felt for others? • What challenges did you face? • What have you learned from these two classes? • What would you like to see more/less of in the next class? • Any other thoughts?

Week(s)	Enacted pedagogy drawn from literature and research prioritizing YSLV	Details of Enactment within this Study
10	Overall Digital Reflection (55, 84)	<p>These reflections were submitted digitally in written and recorded form. Students were invited to submit using other ideas other formats (e.g., drawing, poem, song, etc.) but chose not to.</p> <p>Based on their learning experiences inside and outside of the class, students asked to create a <i>proclamation of meaningfulness</i> describing the types of emotions, experiences, and movements involving physical education/activity that were meaningful to them and why. They were asked to complete the following five statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - I've learned that physical education and physical activity is fun when.... 2 - I've learned that physical education and physical activity is socially interactive when.... 3- I've learned that physical education and physical activity is challenging when.... 4 - I've learned that physical education and physical activity improves my motor competence when... 5 - I've learned that physical education and physical activity is personally relevant to me when... <p>Finally, they were invited to consider and explain how to make these emotions, experiences, and movements a regular part of their day-to-day life and in the future.</p>