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Rules, Routines, and Expectations of 11 High School Physical Education Teachers

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Management of conduct has been considered the number one concern facing American schools (Gallup, 1988). Principals are concerned with the numbers of daily discipline problems, and reports indicate the average class is disruptive enough to have significantly impaired student progress (Vogler & Bishop, 1990). The National Education Association (NEA) reported that 44% of teachers in public schools saw more disruptive classroom behavior in schools during 1986–1987 than in the previous 5 years (Office of Educational Research and Improvement [OERI], 1987). Hoerr and West (1991) commented that “the persistent prevalence of student misbehavior is a major school problem” (p. 1). Concern for teachers’ control of their learning environments has been expressed at national conferences (Ballinger, 1992). Yet, despite the concern of teachers and administrators for the seemingly growing discipline problems in American schools (OERI, 1987), little research has been conducted on student discipline (Fernández-Balboa, 1991; Henkel, 1991; Vogler & Bishop, 1990).

Good and Brophy (1986) found that achievement was greater where serious misbehaviors were uncommon and where teacher praise during classroom discussions was frequent. Higher achieving teachers utilized better management strategies and spent less time on transitions and discipline activity. Doyle (1986) noted that master teachers were relatively free from student deviance, were aware of what was going on in their classrooms, and communicated their awareness to prevent the spread of off-task behavior. Such effective discipline increased students’ opportunities for learning. In a study of elementary teachers’ perceptions of discipline, Brophy and Rohrkemper (1981) reported that teachers generally saw internal student factors rather than themselves as the cause of discipline problems, and teachers did not perceive handling behavior problems as part of their teaching.

There is little research on discipline in physical education lessons, though much has been written about the importance of both discipline in the gymnasium and effective strategies to deal with misbehavior of students in the gymnasium (Belka, 1991; Fernández-Balboa, 1991; Siedentop, 1991). Fernández-Balboa (1991) studied student teachers’ perceptions of discipline and misbehavior. These student teachers believed they were not responsible for their students’ misbehavior and were not in any position to prevent it. This perceived lack of control over student behavior generated feelings of frustration, anger, and inadequacy among the student teachers, and they had problems establishing and reinforcing rules and routines for their classes. In a study by Bain and Wendt (1983), managing disruptive students

was ranked fourth by physical educators among reasons for stress in teaching physical education. Although Siedentop (1991) emphasized a positive approach to discipline, emphasizing preventative management strategies, there is little research on how experienced teachers in physical education view discipline issues or the nature and frequency of disciplinary behavior in their classes.

Though there has been little research on discipline, there are a substantial number of studies on how teachers establish themselves and their subject matter with students in the first few days and weeks of school (Clark & Elmore, 1979; Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980; Leinhardt, Weidman, & Hammond, 1987; Sandford, Emmer, & Clements, 1981). These studies have addressed issues of management and control and are a product of the process-product research on effective teaching. A consistent finding has been that good teachers quickly establish a regulatory system and that most of the time teachers establish all the rules for this system to function. In reviewing the findings of this literature, Leinhardt et al. (1987) noted the following:

The effective teacher at the beginning of the school year has an objective of setting up an efficient and smoothly running classroom where instruction, not management, is a major thrust. The first few days involve explicit statements of the teachers' expectations . . . and rehearsals of the routines. As these expectations and routines become internalized the teacher can call up these routines with minimal cues to the students. (p. 137)

The study of rules, routines, and expectations of physical education teachers has been limited to three studies, two of elementary specialists (Fink & Siedentop, 1989; Nelson, Lee, Ashy, & Howell, 1988) and one of middle school physical educators (Oslin, 1992). The findings from these studies show that the start of the school year is used to establish managerial and instructional rules, routines, and expectations that ultimately allow for the smooth operation of class activities and student learning. According to Fink and Siedentop (1989),

[Physical education] teachers described routines clearly, provided students with opportunities to practice them, and gave ample amounts of feedback relative to performance. . . .

Specific rules were used by some teachers, but the formal consequences with them were not used. Teachers appeared to have the skills to develop and maintain appropriate student behavior without the need to rely on formal consequences. (pp. 211-212)

Nelson et al. (1988) reported that most of the routines their expert teachers established were introduced in the first day of class and dealt with managerial concerns such as spacing and formations, how students might question and be questioned by the teacher, and routines to facilitate instruction. Oslin (1992) compared her findings on the rules, routines, and expectations of her middle school teachers with the findings from the elementary studies and noted three primary differences: (a) an emphasis on "housekeeping" routines, (b) an expectation for students to "behave," and (c) the spontaneous "arranging" of students prior to and during instruction. Oslin (1992) stated,

Housekeeping routines appeared to dominate the beginning of the year activities of these six middle school teachers. Approximately half of the

housekeeping routines were directly related to dressing-out. This housekeeping focus also dominated the format of the department "policy sheet." (p. 17)

While the teachers in Oslin's study frequently asked students to behave or act appropriately, they rarely provided specific feedback that described appropriate behavior.

There is a paucity of research on rules, routines, and expectations of physical education teachers in general and high school physical education teachers in particular and a paucity of research on the impact of disciplinary issues on teachers' expectations. Thus, the purposes of this aspect of the larger research project were to describe how rules, routines, and expectations for students entering the physical education programs of 11 high school teachers were established, to describe the nature and frequency of disciplinary actions in these settings, and to determine the teachers' perceptions of discipline and how these perceptions impacted the programs. The following research questions guided the data collection:

1. What were the rules, routines, and expectations for students entering the high school physical education programs of these teachers?
2. What was the nature and frequency of disciplinary actions by the teachers and students in these settings?
3. What were the teachers' perceptions of discipline and its impact on their programs?

Method

Subject Selection

Subjects for this study were part of the larger year-long high school physical education research project. Teachers taught in both urban ($n = 6$) and suburban ($n = 5$) school districts. Sandy, Bill, Mary, Penelope, and Molly taught in suburban schools, and Jocko, Pucky, Carrie, Phil, Kay, and Leigh taught in urban settings.

Instrument Development

Data collection involved several strategies. First, 30 lessons at the beginning of the first or second semester were observed and coded for rules, routines, and expectations, and field notes were taken using a modified version of the rules, routines, and expectations (RRE) instrument (Fink & Siedentop, 1989) developed several years earlier during our study of elementary physical education specialists. The codes were modified primarily to reflect the nature of routines typically found in secondary schools such as attendance taking, sign in procedures for class, and handling of equipment (see the technical manual for details). A *rule* was defined as a student requirement for which there were consequences and which was typically stated by the teacher as a rule (Fink & Siedentop, 1989). A *routine* was defined as a habitual task of the teachers or their students that was intended to contribute to the managerial or instructional systems of the lessons (Fink & Siedentop, 1989). An *expectation* was defined as a statement by the teacher to the students of expected outcomes hoped for and expected of them.

All handouts provided to students for their first physical education unit of the year were collected and analyzed for evidence of expectations, rules, and routines.

The teachers completed a questionnaire and a structured interview to probe their perceptions on discipline issues. Content and construct validity of the questionnaire and the interview protocol were assessed and reviewed as part of the development of the instruments. A Likert scale questionnaire was used to obtain an overview of the teachers' values and perspectives on discipline issues (see the technical manual for details). The questionnaire was pilot tested on 10 high school physical education teachers who were tested and retested to determine instrument reliability. Questions with low reliability were eliminated. A Fisher exact chi-squared test revealed no significant differences. Acceptable test and retest scores ranged from 1.00 to 0.80 (Bishop, Fienberg, & Holland, 1982). A field test was carried out for the interview protocol by interviewing 3 public school principals and 3 physical education teachers to refine the questions for the questionnaire (see the technical manual for details).

Finally, a task-structure observation system (Jones, 1992; Marks, 1988) was adapted to gather data on the nature and frequency of teacher- and student-initiated discipline behaviors for physical education lessons throughout the school year (see the technical manual for details). The task-structure observation system instrument has been utilized to describe tasks in both elementary and high school physical education classes (Jones, 1992; Lund, 1992; Marks, 1988). The task-structure observation system was modified by adding a section to the instrument that recorded teachers' responses to misbehavior, and coders were asked to describe students' off-task behavior and teachers' disciplinary reactions in a field note section of the instrument (see the technical manual).

Procedures

Data were collected throughout the 1991-1992 academic year. The RRE instrument was used in the natural setting to code 1-4 lessons of the first unit of the semester for each teacher. Coding started on the first day of the unit and finished when the teacher began teaching the content of the first activity unit. The questionnaire on discipline was hand delivered in late winter to each teacher, and all 11 were returned by mail. The interviews were conducted with the teachers in early spring, after they had completed the discipline questionnaire. We conducted the interviews on teachers' perceptions of discipline using the interview protocol we had developed from information collected during the literature review and the field and pilot tests. Prior to the interview each teacher agreed to have the interview audiotaped. The audiotapes were transcribed for future analysis. The teachers were asked to indicate their strongest unit of instruction and 5-7 lessons distributed throughout each of those instructional units were observed. A total of 65 classes were coded live using a modified version of the task-structure observation system, and the off-task data were extracted from the coding sheets for analysis.

Results and Discussion

Rules, Routines, and Expectations

Bill took one class period to discuss the expectations and requirements for physical education and to assign students lockers, whereas Penelope spent 4 days

dealing with similar tasks. The other teachers spent 1-1/2 to 3 days addressing these tasks. During this time, communication of the expectations, rules, and routines was almost entirely a teacher-centered monologue during which students sat and listened from the gymnasium bleachers. The teachers talked at length on managerial rules and expectations for physical education. The discussion was dominated by two things: class rules and expectations for the semester.

Most of the time was spent on rules for dress. All teachers required students to dress for class, and four teachers (Bill, Pucky, Kay, and Phil) had a uniform requirement; for example Bill required students to wear "a red cotton shirt and black stretch shorts and gym shoes." Even with a note from home indicating a student was sick, Bill expected the student to dress, though she or he did not have to participate. In all schools but Bill's, failure to dress resulted in nonparticipation for the day and affected a student's grade for the class. Kay had students who failed to dress do written reports on a sport or fitness issue, but all the others had students either sit or assist them with equipment or scoring. Most of the time students sat out and chatted with other nondressers or sat quietly doing homework for an upcoming class. Penelope, however, forbade completion of homework while sitting out of her class.

The number of dress cuts that were allowed before a student would fail physical education varied considerably. Two dress cuts in Penelope's class resulted in course failure, but a student in Sandy's class could have 10 dress cuts before failing outright. In most other instances 3-5 dress cuts were tolerated before being dismissed from class. More than half of the printed material to students about physical education was related to some aspect of dressing: Time to dress and undress was tightly controlled, type of clothing was specified, and how each dress violation related to the grade exchange was clearly spelled out.

Consequences for nondress or tardiness, in addition to failing the class, were varied and predominantly negative. Phil had several consequences, the first two of which were 5 and 10 laps of the gymnasium. A third violation resulted in a detention. Mary had a warning for the first dress cut and parental notification on the second violation. In contrast, Kay had an incentive scheme for attendance and dress: Students who had perfect attendance and were "B average" students (related mostly to dress and participation in lessons) could have the unit exam waived. Attention to dress in the rules and expectations of elementary specialists studied earlier (Fink & Siedentop, 1989) was minimal, though Oslin (1992) reported that of the RREs observed for the physical educators she studied during the first 5 days of middle school, "approximately half of the housekeeping routines were directly related to dressing out," and housekeeping routines accounted for 211 of the 275 routines initiated and rehearsed.

The second dominant theme of these first few days related to expectations for physical education. A clear message to all students in these classes was that physical education was predominantly about dressing for class, participating, and cooperating with and having respect for each other and the teacher. During the first day, Carrie spoke to her students about expectations for good grades. She told them that for physical education "grading is fairly easy: You dress, you play, you pass. [It] takes two things. You do the best you can, and you'll be fine in this class. We [her co-worker and herself] don't expect you to be a top quality athlete." Similarly, Mary told her students that there was "no reason to flunk this class: All you need is effort and attendance." For Bill's classes a good grade

could be acquired by "building a record you could fall back on: [a record of] dressing, participating, cooperating, and effort."

The expectation to respect themselves and others was communicated to students by several teachers. Penelope told the students she expected them to have empathy for classmates who had limitations and encourage them. Pucky encouraged her students to practice assigned tasks without constant prompting from her and "be dependable and respect and cooperate with each other and the teacher," and she would try to provide tasks with which they could have success. Carrie told her students that respect meant "do not use profanity. Talk to me like a human being, [and] I'll treat you like an adult. Follow directions and there will be no problem." Her co-worker continued, stating, "There is no excuse to fail gym. It's a disgrace. Something is wrong if you fail gym."

Leigh and Penelope were the only teachers in the first several days to spend any time talking to their students about the purpose of their physical education programs. Lifetime activity and lifetime fitness were the foci of Leigh's course, and she told her students she was there to teach and they to learn: "I expect you to learn in PE. [It is the] best place to learn and have fun." Penelope told her students she tried to offer a variety of PE activities from independent study (community classes taken by students could count for school physical education credit if approved by the department) to outdoor pursuits (weekend courses offered by the department) and that the department wanted "to teach you appreciation and sportsmanship as well as skills." She encouraged them to make wise choices in course selection so that they would gain maximum benefit from the programs' offerings. Penelope described many of the physical activities in the program that students had to choose from in terms of the dress code required to participate (needed to dress for softball, to have shoes for table tennis), whereas other courses were described in terms of the unit focus (team handball is highly competitive and has physical contact, whereas golf focuses on beginning skills for a novice and should not be chosen by intermediate golfers).

A purpose for attending physical education or what was to be learned by students during specific units of instruction was not addressed at the beginning of the semester or at any time during the course of our observations beyond a statement to students about the specifics of the day's lesson such as "play a game" or "practice the crossover dribble." In many cases such expectations were not stated; students arrived and began the assigned tasks of the day.

Nature and Frequency of Disciplinary Actions

The off-task behavior of students in 65 different physical education lessons taught by the 11 teachers during the course of the year was coded using a modified version of the task structure observation system (see the technical manual). These teachers did not have major discipline problems in their classes (see Table 1). For the 65 lessons coded, a total of 88 discipline episodes were recorded; an average of just over one disciplinary episode per class. No major discipline problems were recorded during the data collection phase. The largest number of discipline episodes in a lesson occurred during Bill's volleyball unit in which two boys were desisted seven times and eventually sent to time out. The teachers showed firm management of student behavior using verbal desists with students when necessary, which usually brought immediate student compliance.

Table 1 Off-Task Behaviors of 9th- and 10th-Grade Students in High School Physical Education Classes

Lesson in unit	Teacher										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Lesson 1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	2
Lesson 2	1	4	2	1	1	2	4	0	1	1	1
Lesson 3	2	1	0	5	2	3	3	0	1	0	3
Lesson 4	2	0	4	7	1	1	1	0	1	2	0
Lesson 5	0	4	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	1
Lesson 6	2	1	-	-	-	2	0	-	1	0	2
Lesson 7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Total	7	10	6	15	6	11	10	0	7	6	10

Note. This table compiles the 5-7 lessons observed in the strong unit of instruction. Dashes indicate that no lesson was observed.

The most frequent disruptions by students were talking while the teacher was talking, not dressing, and off-task behavior. The most common form of disciplinary action taken by the teachers was a mild verbal desist where a teacher typically used a student's name to alert him or her to an inappropriate behavior. The quick targeting and timing (Kounin, 1977) of minor disruptive behavior by these teachers using clear and specific desists resulted in few class disruptions.

Penelope had the largest number of observed disciplinary episodes ($n = 15$), whereas no disciplinary episodes were observed during Mary's lessons. The disciplinary effectiveness of these teachers supported Fernández-Balboa's (1991) assertion that the quickness and accuracy with which teachers identify and act upon student misbehavior "are critical factors" (p. 60) that influence the effectiveness of the teachers' actions. There was little use of constructive alternatives to punishments other than Bill's infrequent use of time out (Wurzer & McKenzie, 1987). Minor misbehaviors (talking while the teacher was talking) were attended to by the teacher. Major problems (fighting) were dealt with immediately, and students were referred to the office. Most teachers did not refer anyone to the office during the course of the study.

Teachers' Perceptions of Discipline

Data from the questionnaire and interview were analyzed to answer this question. None of the teachers believed discipline was a major problem in their classes. Ten of the 11 teachers did not think the number of student instances needing discipline had increased in the last 5 years. Phil represented many of their views about the effect of discipline issues in their classes, noting that "I don't think it effects us a lot." He described the relationship between setting rules and expectations and good discipline in the following way: "A lot of kids are conditioned, after you do this, we expect you to do that, expect you to do

this. You set the tone early. . . . Discipline is a not a big thing. It's not a big issue in my classes."

The teachers described major discipline problems in their schools as fighting, arguing, breaking safety rules, resisting authority, showing lack of respect for authority, and demonstrating low maturity levels, though these problems were not such a concern in their teaching space. Different problems were highlighted by different teachers. There was significant variability in the teachers' views of misbehavior (Hoerr & West, 1991). Sandy, a suburban teacher, and Carrie, a city teacher, felt nondressing was a major issue in that it caused disruption to their classes, although the other 9 teachers considered it a minor problem or of little concern. Bill noted dressing for class used to be a problem at his school before teachers were allowed to use what he viewed as meaningful punishment for frequent offenders:

If we take their free time away from them, that is a concern to them, and that will bring them in line, and it has. If a kid does not dress three times, they get Saturday school, and that really stomps on their attitude, and if the behavior continues, the office requires that the parents come in for a conference before they ever let them back into class.

Sandy, Carrie, Mary, Penelope, and Pucky presented strict discipline codes at the beginning of the year, requiring students to dress appropriately for physical activity, and failure to do so resulted in a decreased grade.

Jocko, who taught in the city, saw general respect for authority as a more significant discipline issue and said,

[In the] inner-city school you face different problems from other areas. Basic problem is that students don't respect authority, in the gym, class, and the school in general. They don't think they have to follow rules. They don't think the rules are set for them.

Students' grade level was the key discipline variable for Molly:

Since I teach freshman phys. ed., I feel the major problem is the maturity level of the students. . . . When it comes to like two guys, they'll be pushing and hitting each other. I'll be going through the two lines for attendance. I elbow you, and you hit me, and did you see him hit him. They're just joking around, but joking around is going to lead to somebody hitting someone too hard, and then we'll have a fight. Basically it's immaturity and keeping your hands to yourself.

Several of the teachers spoke of the tension that builds gradually as the result of minor but frequently occurring offenses such as students not attending to instructions, being off-task, tardiness, inappropriate usage of language, not dressing for class, and talking while the teacher talks. Foul or inappropriate language or actions bothered Mary most as she tried to impart instructions to students. All teachers were confident they dealt with students in a fair and firm manner. They believed it was their responsibility to discipline students who misbehaved in their classes. Phil felt teachers should handle discipline themselves, as "too many teachers send students to the office for minor discipline problems," which he believed undermined teachers' authority. Carrie suggested teachers

need to attend to their own problems in the gymnasium, proclaiming that she would not "defer her authority to the office." This was similar to the findings of the Phi Delta Kappa Commission (1982) report, which noted that in effective schools teachers handled all or most of the routine discipline problems themselves, although 10 teachers agreed that there were some students they preferred the administration would discipline. For major discipline problems the teachers said they would send students to the office, though we never witnessed this during any of our observations.

Dealing With Misbehavior

Nine of the teachers reported strict discipline was a key component of an effective high school, requiring a structured school policy that was implemented consistently and fairly, yet only 3 teachers indicated they followed their school-wide discipline policies closely. All teachers believed it was imperative to set rules, routines, and expectations at the beginning of the year, and they felt they had discipline policies in their gymnasiums that students understood and adhered to strictly. They provided students with a handout on class rules on the first day of class, and many of them posted their class rules in the gymnasium. On the second day of classes they reviewed the rules. Jocko and Sandy held students accountable for their understanding of rules and routines of physical education with a test over rules, routines, and discipline policy on the second day of class. Pucky tried to give the students clear messages in order to establish and maintain her credibility with students:

First of all, when the kids come in on the first day, we go over the rules with them slowly, carefully. We actually take a day and a half to do that. And then I reinforce them when we meet in the locker room. Then they are posted. Each kid gets a copy. . . . and then I have one posted on my office window. . . . The kids see; they know what I will and will not tolerate.

If Pucky saw a student chewing gum, she would point to the trash and he or she would comply with her implied request (put gum in the trash) without hesitation, as the student knew Pucky would not allow this in class. Leigh defined good discipline: "It's really little things. If you catch the little ones, the big ones don't come along."

Sandy and Jocko held different perspectives on discipline. Carrie, who did not post rules, engaged students at the beginning of the year in a discussion of appropriate behavior for the gymnasium, and once decided upon, said, "I expect students to follow appropriate behavior guidelines. I don't mandate rules." Sandy believed students had to take responsibility for their actions:

They have a lot of responsibilities in my class. I make them responsible for themselves, for their dress, and for following rules, and for making choices. . . . Within the class structure I think their rights are as free as their ability to adhere to their responsibilities.

Bill believed that for punishment to be effective and credible it must be a consequence that is undesirable to the student, is applied consistently and fairly, and is stated in advance. The teachers felt they had high expectations for students.

Mary represented the feelings of the group, suggesting that discipline problems were minimized because of teacher expectations: "Due to cooperation of students and high teacher expectations, we have few problems to deal with. It's their own education, and a lot is expected." Bill gave students the benefit of the doubt: "I assume they know the differences between right and wrong, and I assume that until proven wrong." Sandy, Mary, and Molly believed students needed to learn to become responsible and only then would they attain more rights.

Nine of the 11 believed students' rights needed to be protected. Jocko supported students' rights, believing they should be treated equitably: "All students have rights. . . . I think you need to treat them with courtesy and respect, until they have no longer earned that courtesy from you, and I think that everybody is entitled to be treated fairly." Mary described students' rights and responsibilities as follows:

Every student has a right to an education, the opportunity to choose an activity [and] express themselves in an appropriate manner. Their responsibility is to pass this course and to act in a manner so that they can pass the course. Effort is required each day to do what they can do. I see the two of these go hand in hand.

Conferencing with students was one of the most frequent discipline strategies utilized. Most teachers had a set of procedures to deal with misbehavior that had not ceased with a verbal desist. These were first to talk to the student during class, second to talk to him or her after class, third to call a parent, and, if all else failed, to send the student to the administration. Although 6 teachers felt behavior contracts were an appropriate discipline strategy, only 1 listed behavior contracts as a frequently used discipline strategy, and none was observed using a contract during the year. Bill said he used time out to allow students to "cool down." He believed he could prevent inappropriate behavior from occurring by being well prepared and organized. This notion of preventative management has been well supported in the literature (Siedentop, 1991; Wayson, 1989).

Ineffective punishments for misbehavior were listed as overreacting, embarrassing a student, shouting, backing them into a corner, and getting them to do laps or push-ups for inappropriate behavior. All the teachers believed using physical exercise as punishment was the least appropriate discipline strategy for high school students except Phil, who used running laps or push-ups as a punishment for inappropriate behavior. Out-of-school suspension was seen by Penelope, Phil, and Bill as an ineffective deterrent for frequent discipline offenders at their schools, because they felt school policies were inconsistently implemented, and many students wanted the time out from school. Phil spoke of his first 3 years of teaching as a difficult time. He believed he has become less anxious since then, enjoys his job more, is more aware of his actions, and no longer yells, degrades, or belittles students: "My first 2 years when I saw someone doing something wrong, I would get upset. . . . I am a lot more laid back and at ease, and I'm a lot happier."

In the interviews the teachers reported that large class size, the chemistry of the class make up, and nondressing students made their jobs more difficult. Sandy believed student nondressing was a discipline problem:

Primary is the dressing problem, which is a standard throughout the program. I speak to that behaviorally. They can choose to dress or not to dress.

. . . When the child is dressed, they are not a behavior problem. When they are not dressed, it presents a whole new scheme of things. We remove them from the class when they have a maximum number of dress cuts, which is 10.

Both Jocko and Carrie, both relatively young urban teachers did not feel supported by their older physical education colleagues in their teaching environments, and this lack of support made their jobs more difficult when dealing with misbehavior or making curricula decisions. Jocko established his own discipline policy separate from his co-worker. He felt the students would respond more favorably to one consistent discipline policy in the gymnasium and throughout the school. Carrie felt that only when there was a major discipline problem (a fight) would she have the support of the other physical educator.

Discipline and Running the Class

Phil, Molly, Penelope, and Mary believed that discipline was not an issue in their classes. Jocko held the view that his classes would carry on whether there were discipline problems or not: "Our classes usually carry on no matter what happens." Kay and Carrie believed their discipline policies allowed them to maintain student control and helped in the day-to-day running of their classes. Carrie said, "I tell the kids that if you do this, this is going to happen, and by God, I stick to that, and they know that. That's why we don't have too many problems in here. We stick to our guns."

Even though these teachers had few discipline incidents during their lessons, discipline issues appeared to affect their teaching, and they believed appropriate student behavior was a direct reflection of "how well they were teaching." Minor discipline problems were perceived as a distraction, and their energy levels changed when dealing with student misbehavior. In the questionnaire, 10 teachers noted that taking time to discipline students detracted from other students' enjoyment in physical education. Pucky summed up their feelings by commenting that discipline either "makes or breaks your day." Bill believed that "Every day you are going to have some discipline issue that you have to deal with."

Prevention was identified as a key factor in effective classroom management. The teachers felt it important to set rules, routines, and expectations at the beginning of the year and to be consistent with their implementation. This was consistent with both research in the classroom (Emmer & Evertson, 1981) and in physical education elementary schools (Fink & Siedentop, 1989). Carrie indicated that "maintaining discipline was hard work in the inner city" and commented that "usually student behavior was appropriate, but not always." Jocko stated that prevention was an important teaching strategy for him:

I try to prevent things from happening. I try to get a wide range of activities to keep their interest and spark their interest. If the kids aren't enjoying what you're doing, I think you're going to have more discipline problems. By keeping everybody busy and providing a wide range of activities, you can help keep their attention and ward off some problems.

The teachers did not believe their school-wide discipline policies were followed closely by other teachers, though there was no consensus on this issue. Two teachers felt teachers in their schools followed discipline policies closely,

and 2 felt their teachers did not. Four agreed with the discipline policy at their schools and adhered closely to it. The other 7 teachers did not strongly support their school-wide discipline policies. Kay, Phil, and Pucky did not believe the administration was "stern enough" and Penelope believed that "inconsistencies in the policies and their implementation have created mixed messages to the students." Mixed messages referred to inconsistent disciplinary action by staff members with implementation of the disciplinary policy. Phil was frustrated because "there is supposed to be an order of discipline: Order one, detention; order two, two detentions; then Saturday school . . . but I don't think it's followed all the time." Consequently, teachers developed gymnasium discipline policies that they followed closely. Carrie thought their school-wide discipline policy was "adequate, familiar, and served its purpose," although she did not think that she followed it closely.

Pucky felt her school had a discipline policy, but it was not followed consistently by teachers at her school. She attributed this to a lack of communication between teachers and administration. She believed these inconsistencies affected students' attitudes to her discipline policy in the gymnasium. The lack of administrators' visibility was a concern for Mary, who felt their presence could deter inappropriate behavior. She felt the administration could monitor the busy school areas, the halls and cafeteria, to hold the students and the teachers more accountable for acting within the school discipline policy. The lack of support from the administration meant that more of their time was spent on discipline issues.

All the teachers felt they could have an important role in establishing and maintaining discipline in their schools. Bill and Mary, both senior members of their faculty, felt they had substantial input into school discipline. The other teachers were less optimistic about their role in school governance. Phil believed the administration did not take notice of his ideas: "You can have a great idea about discipline, but the administration won't go with it." Mary, Bill, Molly, Sandy, and Leigh contributed to the development of the discipline policies at their schools and believed they had a valuable contribution to make in the continual development of their school-wide discipline policy. The other six teachers did not contribute to the discipline policies at their schools.

The latest trends in public school restructuring suggest decision making on school policies should be a collaborative effort between teachers and administrators (Newman, 1993). Current literature on school reform supports the notion that teachers must share in decision making so that they can take ownership of their curriculum and move toward site-based management (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Locke (1992) suggested that leadership is a key variable to improve education:

"Bottom-up" is not the only prescription for significant improvement in education. In many cases it may not be the best. [What is needed is] leadership that understands change not as something you do to people, but as something they must do for themselves.

Only two of the schools in the study were implementing site-based management. Sandy's school was now implementing site-based management, and she noted how difficult it was to get teachers to work together on making school-wide decisions even when the opportunities are provided:

We have tried to get teachers interested in working towards consensus building. . . . So the staff has a good amount of input if we choose to use it. Still can't get the majority of the staff to contribute. Perhaps 15 work towards a consensus-building process, and the other 50 still want the top-down method of managing, so we probably won't have the quality style of school until we have a staff who buys into all of those things that make quality education and quality education for students.

Conclusions

These 11 teachers did not perceive major discipline problems in their physical education classes, and this perception was supported by the small number off-task behaviors observed in their classes. They believed rules, routines, and expectations needed to be set at the beginning of the school year, and they spent a great deal of time attending to these aspects of management. In fact, the teachers saw rules, regulations, and expectations as important curricular content and carefully taught and thoroughly reinforced them with the students.

The teachers believed that effective management required planning and structure and that each teacher should have an important role in establishing and maintaining discipline. They preferred to handle most of the discipline problems in their classes themselves. The teachers supported the notion of early intervention. Prevention was a key focus of their discipline strategies, but it required that they have effective organization and management strategies for student misbehavior. They felt that to be effective and credible, selected consequences must be viewed as undesirable by the student, must be consistently and fairly applied, and must be stated in advance. Most teachers reported that conferencing with their students was one of the most frequent discipline strategies utilized.

To these teachers, effective discipline involved developing respect, showing interest in the students, and being able to communicate with the students, attributes similar to those found in the *Handbook for Developing Schools With Good Discipline* (Phi Delta Kappan Commission on Discipline, 1982). Large class size, the chemistry of the class make up, and lack of support from the administration made their work harder. Nondressing students was a major issue for two teachers, but the other teachers felt nondressing was a minor discipline problem.

It seemed the teachers traded compliance with the instructional system for managerial compliance. There was no doubt that each of these teachers ran a relatively smooth and efficient classroom, although it was more difficult to achieve order for some teachers than for others. These teachers were in some senses similar to the math teachers described by Leinhardt and Smith (1985) who had established and ran smooth and efficient managerial systems. However, they differed in that the focus of their efforts was predominantly managerial and not ultimately instructional, as was the case with the math teachers. Not only were these gymanisia efficiently run, they were also places that generated a casual atmosphere, and before-, during-, and after-class interaction between students and teachers might best be described as casual banter with little sense of urgency or pressure to accomplish specific instructional tasks. Maintaining the boundaries of the managerial system may, to the lay observer, have seemed a relatively simple task. However, these teachers worked consistently to maintain the efficient and smooth operation.

These findings are contrary to the frequently stated concerns of teachers and administrators for the growing discipline problems in schools (OERI, 1987). Although teachers appeared to have effective discipline techniques with few off-task behaviors, the ecology of the instructional environment led us to believe that gains in students' skillfulness or fitness were moderate at best (see the companion article by Siedentop, Doutis, Tsangarisou, Ward, & Rauschenbach, 1994). The teachers' primary concern may have been to gain and maintain the cooperation of their students by reducing instructional demands and support findings from Doyle's (1979) early work on task structures in physical education. How these teachers developed and maintained an instructional and curricular ecology is addressed in the companion article by Siedentop et al. (1994). The findings provide more questions than answers: Does the casual nature of these lessons and the few demands on students to perform or be accountable, explain a seemingly discipline-free environment in these high school physical education settings? The teachers suggested that what they were asking the students to do was what they believed they could accomplish while maintaining positive approach tendencies to regular physical activity, which was a primary focus in their programs. The teachers believed it was necessary to reduce instructional demands to gain and maintain the cooperation of their students. Many felt they had decreased their expectations of students over the years because more students were more challenging and less willing to engage intensively with their subject matter. The result was that little was asked of these students by their teachers in terms of skill development, intensity of effort over a sustained period of time, or their understanding of the significance of physical activity, sport, and exercise in their own lives as young adults or in the larger society in which they lived. We were left to ponder whether these young adults could not be better motivated about one or more of these issues and whether the physical education experiences, as framed and presented in these schools, can make the necessary connections to the interests and needs of contemporary adolescent lives.

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