

Design Your Neighborhood: An Evaluation of a Middle School Action Civics Intervention

By

Kathryn Yvonne Morgan

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Vanderbilt University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Community Research and Action

August 11, 2023

Nashville, Tennessee

Approved:

Brian Christens, Ph.D.

Maury Nation, Ph.D.

Paul Speer, Ph.D.

Brooke Blevins, Ph.D.

Copyright © 2023 Kathryn Morgan
All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Introduction	1
Civic Identity Development.....	4
Sites of Civic Learning and Development.....	6
Action Civics	7
<i>Strengths</i>	9
<i>Challenges</i>	11
Theory of Change.....	15
Frameworks and Findings	19
Civic Development	19
Psychological Empowerment.....	21
Education Outcomes.....	24
Health Outcomes	26
Positive Youth Development.....	26
Theoretical Framework.....	29
Place Attachment.....	29
Sociopolitical Control	32
Neighborhood Context, Place Attachment, and Sociopolitical Control.....	34
The Current Study	39
Study Context.....	39
The Civic Design Center	43
Design Your Neighborhood.....	44
In- and Out-of-School Pilots	44
Curriculum Development.....	45
Project Development	47
Teacher Training	48
Teacher Support and Volunteers	48
Curriculum Implementation.....	49
Methods.....	53
Research Questions	53
Participants and Procedures	54

Recruitment, Consent, and Compensation.....	55
Characteristics of the Sample	56
Data and Measures	61
Student Surveys	61
Teacher Survey Measures.....	63
Student Focus Groups.....	65
Observations and Teacher Feedback.....	67
Study 1 Analytic Approach, Results, and Discussion.....	70
Research Design.....	70
Quantitative Analysis	70
Qualitative Analysis.....	73
Results.....	73
Factorial ANCOVA for Place Attachment	73
Factorial ANCOVA for Sociopolitical Control	77
Qualitative Insights from Student Focus Groups.....	80
Discussion.....	86
Study 2 Analytic Approach, Results, and Discussion.....	91
Analytic Approach.....	91
Quantitative Analysis	91
Qualitative Analysis.....	94
Results.....	95
Hierarchical Linear Models	95
Qualitative Insights	99
Discussion.....	103
Individual Factors.....	103
Contextual Factors	105
Qualitative Insights	107
Conclusion, Positionality, Limitations, Implications, and Future Directions	111
Positionality	113
Dual Roles	113
Intersectional Identity.....	114
Limitations	115
Design and Measurement.....	115

Impacts of the Pandemic	117
Contextual Considerations.....	118
Implications for Practice	119
Teaching Pedagogy	119
Education Policy.....	121
Intervention Design.....	123
References	126
Appendix A.....	145
Appendix B.....	149
Appendix C.....	150
Appendix D.....	155
Appendix E	156
Appendix F	158
Appendix G.....	160

List of Tables

Table 1	Demographic Characteristics of the Teacher Sample	57
Table 2	Demographic Characteristics of the Student Sample	59
Table 3	Demographic Characteristics of the Student Sample and MNPS Middle Schools	60
Table 4	Design Your Neighborhood Study Data Sources	61
Table 5	<i>Characteristics of Focus Group Classrooms and Schools</i>	66
Table 6	Means and Standard Deviations for Sociopolitical Control (SPC) Place Attachment (PA).....	72
Table 7	Unadjusted and Covariate Adjusted Descriptive Statistics for PA Scores.....	74
Table 8	Analysis of Covariance for PA Posttest Scores by Experimental Group	74
Table 9	Unadjusted and Covariate Adjusted Descriptive Statistics for SPC Scores	77
Table 10	Analysis of Covariance for SPC Posttest Scores by Experimental Group	78
Table 11	Multilevel Diagram for PA and SPC Models	93
Table 12	Multilevel Models Depicting Change Scores for PA and SPC Classrooms.....	96

List of Figures

Figure 1 Action Civics Theory of Change.....	16
Figure 2 Posttest PA Estimated Marginal Means by Race/Ethnicity	76
Figure 3 Posttest SPC Estimated Marginal Means by Race/Ethnicity	80

Chapter 1

Introduction

Civic education plays a crucial role in preparing young people for active participation in democratic societies. However, traditional approaches to civic education often fall short in providing authentic civic experiences and promoting comprehensive civic learning and development. This limitation disproportionately affects youth from marginalized communities, including youth with low incomes and youth of color. To address this gap, alternative approaches to civics education have emerged. Action civics offers one such approach, supporting students in leveraging youth voice, expertise, and collective action to address local problems.

This dissertation investigates the impact an action civics intervention called Design Your Neighborhood (DYN) on place attachment and sociopolitical control among middle school students. DYN is a place-based action civics curriculum designed to engage students in understanding and addressing disparities in Nashville's built environment. It is a cross-curricular program aligned with state standards, involving seventh and eighth-grade students in a three-week project that spans five content areas. The intervention creates the conditions for students to analyze their communities, select relevant issues, conduct research, plan and take action, and reflect on their experiences. By emphasizing equity in community design, DYN aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills to assess their neighborhoods critically and actively work toward positive social change.

The study centers two constructs crucial for civic learning and development: place

attachment and sociopolitical control. Place attachment refers to the emotional bonds youth have with their communities, while sociopolitical control relates to perceptions of self-efficacy, motivation, confidence in civic leadership, and the ability to influence community decision-making. The study draws on survey, focus group, interview, and observation data from students and teachers in treatment and control groups across two grade levels over a four-year period to understand these constructs. Through a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design, this study explores how sociodemographic factors, including race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status, influence the effect of participating in a place-based action civics curriculum on students' place attachment and sociopolitical control, how sociodemographic and contextual factors contribute to variance in student change scores in place attachment and sociopolitical control, and what students' and teachers' narratives reveal about the impact of engaging with place-based action civics on place attachment and sociopolitical control.

Civic Learning and Development

Youth are socialized into civic life by engaging with their communities and schools (Winthrop, 2020). Through these experiences, youth internalize societal values and norms that direct how they relate to one another, their communities, institutions, and the nation-state (Dewey, 1923). This socialization process happens both passively through participating in civil society and actively through deliberate civic instruction (Crittenden & Levine, 2018). In these spaces, youth develop, codify, and internalize beliefs, commitments, and capabilities as civic agents. Learning about civil society and developing a civic identity has implications for children's futures and the future of democracy. Childhood and adolescence are the stages of human development associated with the lowest levels of civic attachment; attachment

increases as youth gain autonomy and have opportunities to participate in civic life (Ravitch & Viteritti, 2001). Therefore, becoming a civic agent is a developmental process that can be taught and learned.

Civic learning and development involve promoting the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for future citizens to pledge their allegiance and demonstrate loyalty to the state (Gutmann, 1995). For example, Aristotelian conceptions of citizenship, which outline the rights and responsibilities that distinguish the citizen class, are foundational in understanding of what it means to exist in civic society (Pring, 2016). In this model of civic life, citizens are expected to take an active role in shaping the rights and duties they carry out. To educate for this idyllic, classical conception of citizenship, youth need to develop civic values, including a desire to promote justice and care for the well-being of others (Lord, 1996). In a pluralistic, democratic society, there is no unified definition of citizenship that encompasses the many ways that individuals take part in civic life (Feinberg, 2003).

Because no one definition of citizenship exists, the best pathway for preparing future citizens is contested. In civic learning and development contexts, youth engage with many interpretations of what citizenship means, what identity citizenship confers, what political beliefs and interpretations of public life are acceptable, and what prerequisites exist for being a full participant in civic life (McLaughlin, 1992). This results in many pedagogical challenges for educators, researchers, activists, and youth-serving professionals to grapple with as they engage young people in civic learning and development in a culturally and socially diverse society.

Civic Identity Development

As young people enter adolescence, they develop a *civic identity*, or the capacity to think about their relationship to the world beyond their own experiences, understand their place in contemporary history, and consider how politics shapes their daily lives (Rubin & Jones, 2007; Youniss, 2011). Civic identity development is a social process. In adolescence, youth belong to many communities, including their school and their neighborhood (Atkins & Hart, 2019). Youth form civic identities as they gain a sense of belonging to and responsibility within these contexts. Real-world opportunities for civic engagement range from informal community activities to formal political participation. Civic identity development is possible in these settings because youth learn about their community, learn how to civic actors participate in the community, and have opportunities to practice civic engagement.

In sites of civic and learning and development, youth gain civic knowledge, skills, and experiences that shape their current and future levels of civic engagement (Levinson, 2010). *Civic knowledge* considers that, to be an active citizen, students must possess a critical baseline understanding of government and history. As students come to understand the civic world, they are better prepared to take part in it. Civic knowledge is easily gained, but it does not prepare youth to be engaged civic actors (Malin et al., 2015a). *Civic skills* are a range of abilities like self-control, empathy, and critical thinking that allow youth to participate meaningfully in civic life. Developing these skills prepares youth to communicate effectively, deliberate, reach consensus with people who have different viewpoints, and problem-solve with others for the common good (Larson, 2000; Rubin & Jones, 2007). Finally, *civic experiences* are critical for the formation of habits that help youth see themselves as capable of contributing to society (Malin

et al., 2015a). These experiences include having a voice in collective decision-making, volunteering or engaging in community service, or getting involved in the political process through activism or advocacy efforts. As young people take part in public life, they form and negotiate identities that link them to their communities. Civic identity is built upon the civic processes described above—knowledge, skills, and experiences—and continues to develop over the lifespan (Larson, 2000; Levinson, 2012). As youth engage in civic society as co-constructors of knowledge within civic learning and development contexts, they reflect on and make meaning of their role in their communities and develop a sense of themselves as civic actors (Nasir & Kirshner, 2003).

Opportunities for civic engagement play a significant role in civic identity development among youth. Disparity in the amount and quality of opportunities for civic engagement creates a *civic opportunity gap* that disproportionately affects youth living in low-income communities and youth of color (Levine, 2009). Youth in these groups are significantly less likely to have access to locally relevant, applied opportunities for civic learning and development in their schools and communities (Chan et al., 2014; Levinson, 2010; Smith, 2012). Across their lifespan, students who experience a civic opportunity gap take part in civic actions like voting, volunteering, and engaging in advocacy and activism far less frequently than their peers (Gaby, 2017; Youniss, 2011). Many youth live in *civic deserts*, or communities without civic engagement opportunities for young people. Youth in civic deserts rarely have access to out-of-school youth programming that happens in civic hubs (e.g., arts and culture organizations, community centers, and religious spaces) (Atwell et al., 2017). The lack of local, meaningful opportunities for civic engagement may contribute to disparities in civic participation over time

(Youniss, 2011). Opportunities for participatory civic learning and development are entry points into civic life. Such civic opportunities can shape sociopolitical environments, with implications not only for youth empowerment but also for creating a thriving society (Flanagan & Christens, 2011).

Sites of Civic Learning and Development

Civic learning and development take place in both formal (e.g., in-school) and informal (e.g., out-of-school) learning settings. Preparing youth to be responsible and active citizens is a foundational tenant of compulsory public education (Dewey, 1923; Gutmann, 1995; Rebell, 2018). The public education system has long promoted a narrative that civic education prepares youth to be adults who participate fully in civic life. Mandated school-based civics instruction is a contested space because it is value-laden and therefore raises important pedagogical questions (Hess, 2009; Love, 2019; Sabzalian, 2019). For example, school-based civic education has historically been used to reinforce political ideologies and legitimize dominant power structures. In shaping civic education, schools ultimately shape the future political arena and maintain the status quo. These traditional approaches to civic education have primarily sought to develop *personally responsible citizens* who obey laws, pay taxes, and act morally (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Traditional approaches differ from participatory approaches to civic education, which seeks to develop *participatory* and *justice-oriented* civic agents (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). In applied approaches to civic education, youth practice participatory and justice-oriented citizenship by selecting a local issue rooted in structural inequity and working collaboratively to address it. These opportunities reimagine schools as sites for civic mattering (Love, 2019), with a goal of ensuring that all youth can participate in

immersive, relevant, and hands-on civic opportunities. These are lofty goals that require a paradigm shift away from viewing youth as future citizens who will one day be a part of civic life. Instead, youth are seen as “already civic beings with identities and experiences that inform their ideas about what problems matter and how they can be solved” (Swalwell & Payne, 2019, p. 127).

Action Civics

Action civics is an applied approach to civics instruction that is rooted in experiential learning (Gingold, 2013; Warren, 2019). Through action civics, youth “engag[e] in a cycle of research, action, and reflection about problems they care about personally while learning about deeper principles of effective civic, and especially political, action” (Levinson, 2012, p.224). Action civics curricula emphasizes youth voice, youth expertise, collective action, and reflection (CIRCLE, 2013; Levinson, 2014). Typically, programs cover a six-step, student-centered process: 1) community analysis, 2) issue selection, 3) issue research, 4) planning for action, 5) taking action, and 6) reflection (Fitzgerald, 2020; Pope et al., 2011; Warren, 2019).

Action civics emphasizes collective forms of citizenship. There are elements of action civics that support youth in developing into participatory citizens who are active in their communities and into justice-oriented civic agents who think about how power works in society (Blevins et al., 2018; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). In action civics, students practice participatory civic agency by selecting a local issue and addressing it through active community engagement. Students practice justice-oriented civic agency by critically analyzing their selected issue’s root cause to consider it structurally. This root cause analysis is an important feature of the action civics model and other participatory approaches to civic engagement, like youth

organizing and youth participatory action research. Although action civics is a participatory and justice-oriented model, action civics programs do not uniformly prepare justice-oriented civic agents or result in more just realities (Bauml & Blevins, 2022; Blevins et al., 2018). However, through interrogating systemic injustice, students are introduced to new ways to engage civically, which can help them move closer to disrupting unjust patterns in their communities.

Work toward what is now known as action civics began twenty years ago. A network of educators and researchers convened in 2010 to create the National Action Civics Collaborative (NACC), which brought together nonprofit organizations, universities, research institutes, and others committed to supporting experiential civic education for all youth (Gingold, 2013; NACC, n.d.). Evidence that youth in the United States were experiencing political polarization and civic disengagement at unprecedented rates illuminated the need for school-based interventions that would attempt to support students' civic development (Levinson, 2012; 2014; Youniss, 2011). This sparked the creation of a new form of civic curricula that drew on strengths-based approaches, positive youth development, and Deweyan experiential education (CIRCLE, 2013). Two years later, leaders in the Obama administration endorsed action civics, describing it as "the new generation of civic education" (Duncan, 2012; Gingold, 2013). Since then, action civics has gained popularity. Proponents argue it is an immersive alternative to traditional civic education, which fails to address shortcomings of the United States political system and the structural forces that shape students' experiences in U.S. civic life (Abramowitz et al., 2018; Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2017).

Action civics primarily takes place in schools, but a few iterations take place in educational summer programs and camps (e.g., Magill et al., 2020). Partnerships between

educational settings and action civics intermediary organizations often take place to support implementation. Intermediary organizations enhance educators' capacity to support high-quality civic education through providing a standards-aligned curriculum, teacher training and coaching, volunteer training and coordination, and curricular extension opportunities. Many intermediary organizations have been active since NACC's founding (NACC, n.d.; Warren, 2019). Funding strategies for action civics intermediaries vary. They include paid partnerships with school districts, often on a needs-based sliding scale, or grant funding from foundations and other parties invested in civic education. Intermediary organizations support youth by brokering youth-adult partnerships that can advance student-led policy and advocacy solutions and mobilize their networks to build public will and garner public support for student projects (see Morgan & Ballard, in press). Partnerships between schools and intermediary organizations are particularly beneficial for schools in civic deserts. Such partnerships position schools as civic hubs, where youth have the resources needed to enact social change. For these reasons, intermediary networks make up the bulk of National Action Civics Collaboration organizations and play a crucial role in the field's growth by providing direct curricular support to teachers and advocating to expand action civics (NACC, n.d.).

Strengths

Action civics strives to engage students in local change-making. This local approach often facilitates direct contact between students and those with significant power in their communities (Blevins et al., 2021; Gustafson et al., 2019; Morgan et al., 2022). This level of engagement is atypical in traditional approaches to civic education, which focus primarily on higher levels of government. Direct engagement in local issues supports students' civic identity

development (Andes et al., 2021; Blevins et al., 2021). A local focus also allows students to learn about their communities and act on issues related to their own lived experience. Because youth cannot engage in traditional civic channels like voting, their proposed solutions to local issues are “often uniquely grounded in ameliorating challenges students experience on-the-ground, regardless of adults’ common narratives or debates about these issues” (Andes et al., 2021, p. 290). Action civics also supports trust, connection, and relationship building in unique ways. Engaging with local issues and local people also creates a space for dialogue across groups, whether within a classroom, with members of students’ broader community, or across ideological differences (Andes et al., 2021; Fitzgerald, 2020).

Trained teachers often implement action civics as part of the regular school day, and curricular participation encourages positive teacher-student and peer-to-peer relationships (Andolina & Conklin, 2018). Through action civics, youth have opportunities to build relationships with classroom volunteers who support them in their projects, which can foster meaningful relationships with community members (Maker Castro & Cohen, 2021). Partnerships with community stakeholders are highly generative as they act as gateways to power for youth (Morgan & Ballard, in press). Coordinating volunteers and providing them with the training they need to work effectively with youth is a time and resource intensive service that action civics intermediaries provide to their school partners. Over time, youth-adult partnerships brokered through action civics support youth legitimacy to outside groups who might not yet recognize youth as change agents (Camino & Zeldin, 2002).

Action civics has shifted the focus of civic education to include younger grades, and has been implemented and evaluated with youth as young as nine and ten (Cipparone & Cohen,

2015). If schools provide opportunities for elementary-aged students to act on issues in their community in developmentally appropriate ways, they may develop skills that will support future civic engagement, including the ability to work together to solve a common goal, understand the perspective of others, and feel part of something larger than themselves. These developmentally appropriate early introductions to civic life may have long-term implications for elementary school students and may open doors for more robust action civics opportunities for middle and high school students.

Perhaps the most unique opportunity present in action civics is its ability to be implemented in schools and school districts at scale, thus reaching young people who may otherwise not have access to civic learning and development opportunities (Morgan et al., 2022). To build scalability, action civics intermediary organizations are engaging in policy work, lobbying for increased time for civic education in schools, and funding mechanisms to prioritize action civics in future legislation (Generation Citizen, n.d.a). Specifically, intermediaries are advocating for shifts in policy that would prioritize experiential and project-based civic education and funding (Gustafson et al., 2021). In some instances, action civics alumni are leading these policy and advocacy campaigns using the skills they learned through participating in the curriculum (Generation Citizen, n.d.a).

Challenges

Action civics curricula face a range of barriers to implementation. Many of these challenges are rooted in the same inequitable policies and practices that action civics aims to address. First, action civics is a complex approach that requires flexibility, which is often at odds with the realities of accountability and standardization within the United States public school

system (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; LeCompte & Blevins, 2015). Priorities are ever-evolving in the United States education policy landscape and schools have many competing requirements. Current school reform efforts which emphasize standardized testing have resulted in disinvestment and deprioritization of time and funding for civic education. This has hindered innovation in federal and state education policy aimed at supporting youths' civic identity development (Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2007). Although all states have civics standards, they often prioritize rote memorization over helping students develop civic skills. (Levine, 2009; Rebell, 2018). Action civics is often limited to enrichment and elective courses, meaning only academically advanced students are offered the curriculum while their peers participate in courses aimed at improving standardized test scores. In others, constraints on time and pressure to align instruction to testable material may cut short students' final projects, reducing or eliminating the action portion of the curriculum. Even when school leaders want to offer high-quality civic education, they may be unsure how to support the development of active citizenship. This is especially true given the pressure schools face to adhere to standards and raise test scores (LeCompte & Blevins, 2015).

Action civics may appear to be an uncontroversial approach to increasing civic engagement, as promoting active citizenship has, at face value, bipartisan support (Rebell, 2018). However, civic action that does not align with White, middle-class norms is often challenged by lawmakers. To then end, action civics has faced critiques for being too politically progressive and activist-oriented, despite many action civics intermediary organizations espousing nonpartisanship (Morgan & Ballard, in press). As action civics gains traction as a viable response to addressing gaps in civic education, conservative groups have criticized the

field and deemed action civics as radical and politically divisive (Kurtz, 2021). Such critique may create barriers to implementation in the United States' increasingly polarized climate if school administrators believe families might not support action civics for political reasons. Recent research on Generation Citizen, an action civics curriculum implemented in culturally and politically diverse communities across the United States, combats the partisan critiques levied at action civics (Andes et al., 2021). Despite challenges posed by the increasingly segregated nature of schools and communities across the country, they argue that action civics offers a scaffolded approach to promoting perspective-taking, dialogue, collaboration, and compromise across ideological differences, which they attribute to the curriculum's focus on locally relevant issues.

Challenges also arise when adult action civics facilitators are unprepared to engage students in addressing systemic injustice. Action civics engages students in exploring deep-rooted community issues with complex solutions. For example, a recent review of action civics project topics found that many are related to traumatic events rooted in students' lived experiences (Gustafson et al., 2021). Teachers may feel unprepared to facilitate an open classroom climate in which youth can discuss complex topics relevant to their communities (Godfrey & Grayman, 2014; Hess, 2009), or may not be prepared to provide trauma-informed support to students in their pursuit of addressing their selected issues (Gustafson et al., 2021). Teachers may also feel unprepared to share power with youth through experiential project-based civic education (Abramowitz et al., 2018; Magill et al., 2020). As action civics seeks to bring youth voice into otherwise adult spaces, both groups may struggle to navigate shared decision-making and the promotion of youth-adult partnerships. To address this, some action

civics intermediaries have moved away from training outside volunteers to deliver action civics curricula and instead enhanced teacher and supplementary volunteer training to aid youth in taking on new responsibilities within the civic sphere (Magill et al., 2020). This change has come about as intermediaries realize that action civics has implications for creating social change only if adults respect and value youths' funds of knowledge and their local expertise. For these reasons, training and supporting teachers in developing the professional skills needed to implement action civics is crucial (Deakin et al., 2014).

Finally, students in school-based action civics programs may not be interested in the mandatory curriculum (Pope, 2015) or may struggle to situate themselves as viable actors in addressing social issues (Bauml & Blevins, 2022). Without in-school curricula, the pool of youth who have access to action civics would be inequitably limited to those who are already active in extracurricular organizations aimed at fostering social change. Intermediary networks are implementing action civics through school-wide partnerships, embedding the curriculum in students' core courses and making it mandatory and assessed. This reinforces existing power dynamics and hinders students' feelings of agency. This creates an important tension, as teachers may struggle to engage students in the process (Butler, 2017; Pope, 2015).

Many school-based, action-oriented projects do not result in concrete changes or generate lasting campaigns for change, especially when they are not coupled with out-of-school opportunities built on the momentum generated in school. (Morgan & Ballard, in press). Learning about the root causes of inequitable social conditions without opportunities to address these conditions may ultimately result in students' disempowerment as students reflect on injustice without scaffolded opportunities to act (Christens et al., 2013; Watts &

Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). Youth need multiple, consistent experiences engaging in their communities to build efficacy, but action civics is a bounded, short-term curricular innovation (Bauml & Blevins, 2022). Therefore, school-based action civics programming is increasingly being considered a conduit for engaging students in long-term systems change efforts happening outside of schools.

Theory of Change.

A report by the National Action Civics Collaborative (NACC) revealed overlap in the outcomes evaluated by various action civics intermediaries, leading NACC to develop a common action civics theory of change (NACC, n.d.b). Alternatively, several large action civics intermediary organizations have offered theories of change that are specific to their curricula. Figure 1 extends the existing models to offer a theory of change that accounts not only for the process through which action civics intermediaries work to strengthen democracy through youth voice (illustrated in the top row) but also points to inherent assumptions that are not articulated in existing models (illustrated in the bottom row).

Figure 1

Action Civics Theory of Change

Problem	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
The civic opportunity gap in the United States	Intermediary network partners	Teacher trainings	Increase in civic and positive youth development outcomes	Students' long-term academic success	Democracy is transformed to be more inclusive of youth perspectives
Youth are excluded from civic life and decision-making	Action civics curricula, training, and wraparound supports	Teachers engage their students in an action civics curriculum	Opportunities for youth to participate in the civic sphere	Schools come to value youth voice and support youth civic participation	
Assumptions					
	Partners choose to adopt action civics in their schools and classrooms	Partners have the resources needed to effectively implement action civics	Action civics pedagogies are integrated into the school's culture	Action civics is brought to scale through state-level mandates	

Note. Elements are adapted from the Mikva Model (Mikva Challenge, n.d.), NACC Theory of Change (Gingold, 2003), and Generation Citizen Theory of Change (Generation Citizen, n.d.b)

Drawing on theories of positive youth development and project-based learning in response to the realities of civics education in the United States public education system, action civics seeks to address two complementary issues. First, action civics addresses a lack of youth perspectives in democratic life, seeking to increase youth voice in the civic sphere. (Mikva Challenge, n.d.). This lack of youth participation is tied to the civic opportunity gap (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Levine, 2009).

To address these problems, action civics intermediaries build partnership networks with school leaders, teachers, and other youth-serving personnel. Intermediary network staff introduce youth-serving adults to the action civics process model. While the process model differs slightly across curricula, all are rooted in a shared set of values that ground the field

(Gingold, 2013). Underlying assumptions necessary to move action civics partnerships forward at this stage of the theory of change include partner interest in action civics. Partners must see the civic empowerment gap as being a problem worthy of the significant resources they will have to commit to train teachers to implement action civics effectively.

Teacher and out-of-school instructor training is a central activity in the action civics theory of change, particularly as intermediaries come to rely on teacher implementation to achieve scale (Warren, 2019). Program partners must understand the process model and enact it in their classrooms or out of school learning spaces for action civics to be successful. Once trained, teachers engage their students in the action civics process, and the theory of change progresses under the assumption that teachers and other partners have the pedagogical, instructional, material, and temporal resources needed to engage their students effectively in action civics.

Proximal outputs of action civics include the measurable effects and immediate results that stem from action civics activities. Positive indicators are typically assessed through pre-post survey designs; these findings make up much of the literature on action civics. The most frequently assessed outputs at the level of the individual student include increased indicators of civic knowledge, skills, and experience (Hart & Wanderer, 2018; LeCompte et al., 2020) and increases in outputs associated with positive youth development (Ballard et al., 2016; Morgan & Christens, 2023). Outputs are also measured at the level of the school or classroom to understand the efficacy of the action civics intervention in addressing the civic opportunity gap. To understand if an action civics intervention is increasing opportunities for youth to participate in the civic sphere, intermediary organizations track students' projects descriptively (via counts

and percentages) to understand the nature of the problems they are seeking to address (Gustafson et al., 2019), their opportunities to collaborate with local decision-makers (Maker-Castro & Cohen, 2020) and their opportunities to carry out advocacy campaigns in the local civic sphere (Warren, 2019).

These outputs support the development of more distal outcomes, including long-term changes at the student and institutional levels. Student-level outcomes include increases in academic success, measured through improved grades, graduation rate, attendance, college enrollment, etc. At the institutional level, action civics intermediaries track culture shifts within youth-serving institutions (Warren, 2019). The extent to which action civics implementation supports school climates that value youth voice and support youth civic participation is assessed as a distal outcome of action civics. Embedded in the logic of student and institution-focused outcomes is an underlying assumption that action civics pedagogies are integrated into the school's culture. Changes in a single classroom integrating action civics would not result in increased academic outcomes for students across the entire school, and as the field expands, intermediaries have worked to bring action civics to scale across school buildings for these outcomes to support long-term benefits beyond the individual student. Doing so has implications for school-wide pedagogical orientations, classroom climate, and the physical environment of the school. Increased youth voice within school-level decisions may influence these outcomes.

Finally, the long-term impacts for action civics include strengthening democracy through including youth perspectives (Gingold, 2013; NACC, n.d.a). This societal impact that action civics hopes to achieve is difficult to measure. Because theorized long-term impact of action civics will

produce systemic change, achieving it will require a significant scale-up of action civics interventions, ideologies, and pedagogical approaches. Action civics intermediaries are increasingly looking to policy-oriented pathways to support this scaling (Generation Citizen, n.d.a; Warren, 2019). These shifts combat dominant narratives about the role of young people in the civic sphere, which will drive policy changes that support youth inclusion in civic life.

Frameworks and Findings

Empirical literature in the action civics field is growing. A review of the literature reveals five frameworks that are emphasized in the action civics literature: civic development, psychological empowerment, educational outcomes, health outcomes, and positive youth development. Here, each framework and the resultant empirical findings from studies using each framework is discussed.

Civic Development

A central goal of action civics is to develop youths' sense of themselves as actors in the civic sphere. While the literature offers a range of frameworks for understanding and assessing civic development, most studies address either 1) civic empowerment, 2) civic engagement, or 3) civic competence/civic self-efficacy.

The action civics literature often draws on a civic empowerment framework to assess civic development. This work seeks to address the civic empowerment gap, which describes how wealthy and White youth are more empowered to participate in civic life than their peers (Flanagan & Watts, 2009; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Levine, 2009; Levinson, 2012). Studies among low-income youth of color have assessed a range of action civics approaches that may address the civic empowerment gap (Andolina & Conklin, 2018; 2020; Ballard et al., 2019). For

example, students in Project Soapbox reported increased feelings of empowerment after giving speeches on topics they are passionate about (Andolina & Conklin, 2018). Teachers facilitating the process noted that this increased sense of agency and empowerment was most pronounced among marginalized students (Andolina & Conklin, 2020). Later studies of the same curriculum found both teachers and students reported increased empathy, sense of connection, and understanding across differences after listening to students' speeches during the curriculum (Andolina & Conklin, 2021).

Research driven by a civic engagement framework largely seeks to explore patterns in civic participation among youth. For example, a study of the Generation Citizen action civics curricula coded students' selected projects to understand which issues youth most are interested in acting upon (Gustafson et al., 2019) Their analysis revealed that over half of projects involved either 1) advocating for new or different services or 2) advocating for or against legislation. Research has also sought to understand the extent to which these measures of civic engagement are consistent across racial groups and developmental stages (Littenberg-Tobias & Cohen, 2016). These studies reveal that traditional measures of civic engagement may not adequately capture the experiences of youth in marginalized groups.

Studies of civic competence (sometimes referred to as civic self-efficacy) seek to assess the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that support civic involvement (Watts & Flanagan., 2007). Many studies of action civics curricula have assessed civic competence, with mixed results. For example, in a study of rural Latinx students' experiences in a middle action civics classroom, Hart and Wandeler (2018) found that students had high and relatively stable levels of civic competence before and after participating in the curriculum, with results showing no

statistically significant changes in civic competence. A longitudinal study of the iEngage action civics curriculum reveals some gains in civic competence across time (LeCompte et al., 2020). Specifically, they note significant increases in students' ability to get people to care about a problem, organize and run a meeting, write an opinion piece to express their views on an issue, and contact an elected official or community leader to address an issue, but did not see an increase in other forms of civic competence, including creating a plan to address a problem, expressing views in front of a group, and identifying people to who could help solve a problem (LeCompte et al., 2020). Alternatively, a study of Generation Citizen used hierarchical linear models to demonstrate that engaging with the curriculum was associated with gains in civic self-efficacy, particularly among students who chose projects focused on increasing safety or making change outside of school (Ballard et al., 2016).

Overall, the study of civic development in action civics offers a robust image of the strengths and limitations of action civics in fostering lifelong participation in the civic sphere. The literature attends to sociodemographic variation and attempts to measure civic development longitudinally are emerging.

Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment is an ecological and contextually oriented construct youth develop as they work together to build power within community settings (Cattaneo et al., 2014; Christens, 2013; Zimmerman, 2000). Through psychological empowerment, youth experience positive developmental processes that allow them to exert control over their own lives, have a voice in community decisions, and critically evaluate their sociopolitical environments (Ballard & Ozer, 2016).

Several studies of action civics have included measures of community participation, which is a behavioral component of psychological empowerment. The accumulation of civic experiences through prolonged community participation is fundamental to psychological empowerment (Itzhaky & York, 2000). Community participation is a precursor to gains in other components of psychological empowerment, such that youth gain psychological empowerment through experiences in empowering community settings. For example, studies of Generation Citizen frequently inventory or describe youth community participation (Ballard et al., 2016; Ballard et al., 2019), and studies of the iEngage summer civics camp have demonstrated gains in youths' perceived readiness for community participation (Blevins et al., 2020). As a new field, the action civics literature lacks studies that explore the extent to which early engagement facilitates a long-term commitment to social action, which is well-documented in the youth organizing literature (Christens et al., 2022; Nicholas & Eastman-Mueller, 2020). Future research should assess the extent to which participants remain active in change-making years after these formative experiences.

Some research has assessed the emotional component of psychological empowerment within action civics. This component is typically operationalized as sociopolitical control, or the feeling that one's active participation and involvement can influence the sociopolitical environment (Christens, 2019). For example, a longitudinal study of the iEngage action civics curriculum also demonstrated that gains in civic competence, a construct related to the emotional component of empowerment, are most pronounced after students' first exposure to action civics but continue to increase as students engage in additional action civics projects (LeCompte et al., 2020). Although the study followed action civics camp attendees for four

years, gains in civic competence were only significant during participants' first year, with first-time attendees experiencing significantly larger gains in civic competence than repeat attendees (LeCompte et al., 2020).

The cognitive component of psychological empowerment involves developing a critical awareness of community power. This includes understanding how systemic and institutional forces shape society and how social change occurs (Christens, 2019). Research on the cognitive component is emergent and particularly limited in studies of youth (Speer et al., 2019), as it develops over time through iterative cycles of action and reflection. Studies of critical consciousness development in action civics suggest that participation raises youth's critical consciousness of systemic injustices and their power to address these injustices. Similarly, a study of critical consciousness development in the school-based action civics curriculum Design Your Neighborhood finds that engagement supports critical reflection and critical motivation but has limited efficacy in facilitating critical action (Morgan & Christens, in press). A study of iEngage similarly found that youth in action civics feel motivated to make a change, but face many barriers in bringing the changes they wish to see through to fruition (Bauml & Blevins, 2022). A study of Generation Citizen suggests five ways that the curriculum aligns with critical consciousness development, such as emphasizing action and incorporating critical reflection (Ballard & Cohen, 2023). This suggests action civics may not always be effective in bringing about social change, but may still foster the psychological components of critical consciousness and support the development of cognitive empowerment, given the conceptual overlap between these two constructs (Christens et al., 2016a).

Finally, the relational component of psychological empowerment addresses the way relationships facilitate the development and exercise of power at multiple levels (Christens, 2012). Action civics has been found to support listening, empathy, trust, emotional safety, and deliberation, especially among groups of students with differing perspectives, views, attitudes, and experiences (Andolina & Conklin, 2018). This may be conceptually related to relational empowerment, particularly the bridging social divisions element, which “refers to the set of competencies necessary for building trust and reciprocity across lines of differences” (Christens, 2019, p.71).

Taken together, this literature reveals a small but growing body of research addressing the impacts of engaging with action civics on psychological empowerment among youth. Overall, quantitative evaluations of these interventions reveal modest gains in constructs related to psychological empowerment.

Education Outcomes

Action civics is often integrated into schools and stands to support educational outcomes at the institutional and individual levels (Gingold, 2013; Warren, 2019). The research on educational impacts action civics explores both what students learn and how learning happens in schools (Pope, 2015). This literature is typically informed by sociocultural theories which emphasize that learning is a social process in which students and teachers co-construct knowledge through partnership, listening, and collaboration (Kohfeldt et al., 2016; Walsh, 2018). It is also frequently informed by critical and humanizing pedagogies in which students and teachers work together to produce knowledge aimed at transforming unjust conditions (Freire, 2018). These frameworks emphasize the potential for action civics to deconstruct

power structures in schools and support the conditions for authentic learning. Through action civics, classrooms become spaces where teachers and students are encouraged to examine the production and reproduction of social disparities (Pope, 2015), building alliances with students to alter social conditions.

Given that action civics contexts are not “homogenous interventions” (Ballard et al., 2016, p. 378), the literature points to a range of factors that impact student’s educational outcomes, including variation in implementation techniques, instructional techniques, curricular innovations, and classroom climate (Andolina & Conklin, 2020; LeCompte & Blevins, 2015). As students and teachers work collaboratively to implement participatory curricula, individual and institutional factors converge to impact student learning. For example, in a study of an action civics curriculum that controlled for the influence of gender, socioeconomic status, and family political socialization, Andolina and Conklin (2020) found several factors related to the structure of the curriculum and the instructional context that contributed to students’ learning, including students’ autonomy in selecting a project topic and their assessment of the classroom climate. The more respected and supported students felt in their classrooms, the more likely they were to express a desire to remain engaged in the issue their project addressed (Andolina & Conklin, 2020), which aligns with previous research on the importance of student voice and choice (e.g., Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; LeCompte & Blevins, 2015).

While these studies suggest a range of student and school-level factors that might be improved through action civics, more research is needed to measure the educational impact of engagement empirically.

Health Outcomes

Although health outcomes are frequently topics of students' action civics projects (Ballard et al., 2016; Gustafson et al., 2021), few studies have linked participation in civic learning and development approaches with self-reported individual health outcomes for youth. Notably, Ballard et al. (2019) tested for links between participation in the Generation Citizen action civics curriculum and self-reported physical and mental health. To empirically evaluate the theoretical argument that an intervention aimed at youth empowerment is inherently health-promoting, Ballard et al. (2019) drew on self-reported mental and physical health assessments collected from students before and after engaging with the action civics intervention. Findings revealed small but statistically significant gains in students' self-reported physical health, but no change in students' mental health.

Literatures on youth organizing and youth participatory action research have attended more closely to the impacts of participation on both physical and mental health than the action civics literature has. These related fields have illustrated that approaches to civic learning and development may have spillover effects that contribute positively to students' health (Ortega et al., 2020). More research on health-centered action civics curricula is needed to understand if engagement supports long-term health impacts for individual youth and their communities.

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an intentional approach to engaging youth in their communities. PYD is characterized by settings-level outcomes that support youth thriving (Gootman & Eccles, 2001). Action civics has demonstrated opportunities for skill-building aligned with a PYD framework. Studies have indicated that action civics teaches students how

to examine the root causes of inequalities and oppression (Gingold, 2013; Ballard & Cohen, 2023). Civic skills and knowledge are also frequently cited as being developed through participation in action civics; through the curriculum, youth develop critical thinking, public speaking, planning, and deliberation skills (Andolina & Conklin, 2020).

There is some evidence that action civics contributes to positive social norms through enhancing participants' commitment to lifelong activism. Action civics has been theorized to promote school policies and norms that allow for better outcomes through youth-driven, locally relevant learning (Pope, 2015). This represents a radical shift in normative structures in most schools, where teachers, administrators, and policymakers determine the scope and sequence of a class period with little input from students (Pope et al., 2011). By giving youth agenda-setting power as they prioritize and select the local issue that their class will address collectively, youth expand what can be addressed in schools to include issues that were previously not up for debate (Christens, 2019).

The literature emphasizes that for young people to remain involved, participatory approaches must support a sense of efficacy and mattering among youth (Watts & Flanagan, 2007). Social and emotional development occurs not only through fostering positive relationships and supporting feelings of belonging but also through ensuring that youth have a voice and are taken seriously (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Supporting a sense of mattering and efficacy is especially important for youth who must negotiate structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, and heterosexism in their journey toward positive development and identity (Ozer, 2017). Watts and Flanagan (2007) note that a sense of agency is "considered as both an antecedent and as an outcome of involvement" (p.788). Therefore, action civics approaches

must look to suggested pathways for supporting efficacy and mattering to bring youth into the work and keep them involved. One approach is through integrating family, school, and community efforts. Youth navigate many institutions, including family, school, and community organizations, which shape their understandings of the social world (Conner & Cosner, 2016). Action civics attempts to “bridge academic learning, civic understanding, and community involvement, and to allow youth to connect with their community in ways that are not revealed in a voting or political arena” (Blevins et al., 2016, p. 349).

Empirical evidence of action civics as an empowering setting is emergent, and of the literature on the promotion of positive youth development within action civics is still theoretical (see Morgan & Ballard, in press). More research is needed to assess the extent to which action civics contexts adhere to the principles of positive youth development.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

The current study is rooted in the ecological perspective, which emphasizes the importance of a young person's environment on civic learning and development across the lifespan (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). This paradigm centers context as critical in youth civic engagement. Youth are nested within both supportive and destructive systems that impact how they relate to their neighborhood (e.g., place attachment). These systems also impact youths' self-efficacy, motivation, and confidence to engage in civic leadership and influence policies and systems within their communities (e.g., sociopolitical control).

Place Attachment

Place attachment occurs when people form emotional and symbolic relationships with the built and natural environment (Lewicka, 2011). Common conceptualizations of place attachment emphasize the importance of *place dependence*, a positive attachment based on the degree to which a place meets personal needs, and *place identity*, the intangible feelings, thoughts, memories, and senses that tie a person to a particular place (Anton & Lawrence, 2014; Brown et al., 2015). Experiences that facilitate person-place bonds engender a range of positive developmental outcomes for youth, including rootedness and sense of belonging (Morgan, 2010). However, much less is known about the features of places that inspire greater or lesser degrees of attachment (Lewicka, 2010). There is some evidence that certain built environments are associated with low levels of place attachment, including areas facing persistent environmental threats (Anton & Lawrence, 2014), or dense urban areas with few socialization opportunities (Stefaniak et al., 2017). Alternatively, urban design and urban

planning hold that certain neighborhood-level characteristics, including green spaces and residential stability, facilitate positive interactions with and perceptions of place (Scannell & Gifford, 2017; Ziersch et al., 2004).

Place attachment shifts over the lifespan (Vaske & Korbin, 2001), with adolescents reporting stronger place attachment than adults (Hay, 1998). Although place attachment is positioned as a construct that builds across time, there is also evidence to suggest length of residence negatively predicts perceptions of safety (Guo et al., 2018). Retrospective studies with adults illustrate that childhood place attachment informs adults' sense of belonging to the neighborhood in which they are currently living, but adult place attachment often centers childhood place, or a formative location from the individual's youth (Morgan, 2010). Place attachment is not universal, and those seeking to understand place attachment as a developmental phenomenon are yet to fully clarify the processes through which attachment forms or fails to form (Chawla, 1992; Lewicka, 2011).

Psychosocial examinations have found that place attachment facilitates some elements of positive youth development, including belonging, autonomy, and personal growth (Scannell & Gifford, 2017). Neighborhoods characterized by dense social networks likely instill a stronger sense of community among youth (Mesch & Manor, 1998; Putnam, 2000). Local ties may decrease in importance as youth become more independent and subsequently more mobile, given that connecting to others has become instantaneous and less place-based in the wake of globalization (Gustafson, 2006). However, social networks formed within neighborhoods are still important for fostering the support necessary for positive youth development. Evidence suggests that the dispersal of social networks brought on by increased mobility likely will not

correspond to a decrease in place attachment in future generations (Lewicka, 2011; Devine-Wright et al., 2020).

Youth is the stage of the human lifespan that simultaneously provides some of the most opportunity for flexibility and exploration and the least spatial mobility. Place attachment for youth is developed in the *home range*, or the loosely bounded area where an individual spends their time, negotiates wants and needs, and maintains relationships (Brown et al., 2015). Similarly, developmental perspectives illuminate the intersection of place attachment and perceived neighborhood safety, as home ranges encompass the physical space that youth can explore and assess to generate informed decisions about how they connect with and make sense of their world.

Threats to youths' place attachment abound. For example, neighborhoods are rapidly changing due to gentrification, and these changing contexts, despite some positive neighborhood outcomes like increased wealth or community diversity, threaten the development of place attachment by disrupting psychological sense of community (Neal & Neal, 2014). The environmental psychology literature has also explored the impact of living in a threatened location, examining natural threats like flooding and fire, but less is known about threats to the built environment, such as selective disinvestment and displacement, which disproportionately impact low-income neighborhoods (Morgan, 2010). However, there is evidence to suggest that youth with strong place attachment have better perceptions of neighborhood safety despite the reality of crime or other risk factors present in their neighborhood (Scannell & Gifford, 2017).

Sociopolitical Control

Sociopolitical control (SPC) is a measure of people's perception of self-efficacy, motivation, and confidence to engage in civic leadership and have an influence on policies and systems. Sociopolitical control includes both *leadership competence*, the perceptions of one's abilities necessary for leading a group, and *policy control*, the perceptions of one's ability to exert influence over policy decisions in community and organizational settings. Sociopolitical control is an essential component of interpersonal empowerment, which is the element of empowerment that includes beliefs and abilities, including self-perceived competence, efficacy, and mastery (Peterson, 2014). The degree to which individuals feel empowered in their sociopolitical environment influences their level of self-efficacy, which affects their behavior (Zimmerman, 2000).

Interest in defining and measuring sociopolitical control grew as community members became increasingly involved in planning, executing, and maintaining community programs aimed at improving public health (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). The Sociopolitical Control Scale (SPCS) was first created to assess the construct unidimensionally among middle-class samples of adults using 17 items. It was later found to be bidimensional with two subparts: leadership competence and policy control (Peterson et al., 2006). An abbreviated version was then created to assess the construct among youth (Peterson et al., 2011), and has since been validated with a range of populations, including girls of color (Opara et al., 2020), immigrants, (Paloma et al., 2018), and youth outside of the United States (Christens et al., 2016b; de Silva, et al., 2021; Vieno et al., 2014).

Sociopolitical control is an important predictor of many constructs associated with positive youth development and psychological well-being. Sociopolitical control has been found to function as a protective factor for youth, reducing the extent to which youth engage in risky behaviors and lowering feelings of hopelessness (Zimmerman et al., 1999). Young people with higher levels of sociopolitical control report better self-esteem and mental health (Peterson et al., 2012; Zimmerman & Farrell, 2017). High levels of sociopolitical control are also associated with neighborhood and school outcomes, including perceived social support, psychological sense of community, school importance, connection to school, and neighborhood attachment (Christens et al., 2016b; Lardier, 2018; Peterson et al., 2011; Vieno et al., 2014). There are also associations between sociopolitical control and indicators of civic engagement, including critical consciousness, perceptions of agency, cognitive empowerment; and political efficacy (Christens et al., 2016b; Lardier et al., 2018; Speer et al., 2019; Zimmerman & Farrell, 2017). Alternatively, individuals with low levels of sociopolitical control are more likely to feel disconnected from community life, hesitant to engage in community organizations, or disengaged from local politics (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Individuals who belong to marginalized and oppressed groups may also experience low levels of sociopolitical control, which can have negative consequences for their psychological well-being and mental health (Zimmerman et al., 1995).

Sociopolitical control has been found to increase with prolonged experience engaging in community-based activism (Itzhaky & York, 2000), but belonging to an organization alone does not necessarily lead to gains in youths' sociopolitical control. Instead, it is the opportunities for active participation and decision-making in positive youth development organizations that support youths' authentic engagement with social issues and increase their sociopolitical

control (Kirshner, 2009). When youth are denied opportunities to have a voice in community issues, they are denied opportunities for sociopolitical development, which is detrimental to their overall development (Christens & Peterson, 2012). Community-based interventions aimed at increasing youths' control over their sociopolitical environment provide young people with the tools and resources they need to effect change. In these settings, youth find a sense of belonging, strengthen their leadership, increase their critical thinking and form meaningful relationships that support them in their social change efforts (Kirshner, 2009; Opara et al., 2022).

Neighborhood Context, Place Attachment, and Sociopolitical Control

Place attachment and sociopolitical control are both critical for understanding students' experiences in an action civics intervention that centers the neighborhood as the setting for social change. Much of what is known about how youth experience their neighborhoods comes from studies exploring the impact of maladaptive neighborhood contextual factors (e.g., Hay, 1998; Foster & Hipp, 2011; Lawman & Wilson, 2012; Zimmerman & Farrell, 2017). Risk factors and protective factors embedded within neighborhood contexts are interdependent and are constantly shaping adolescents' sense of place attachment and sociopolitical control (Foster & Hipp, 2011; Hay, 1998; Lawman & Wilson, 2012). Having a positive perception of their neighborhood, for example, is a key protective factor that increases resilience and wellbeing among adolescents in high-poverty neighborhoods, despite a range of risk factors, including racial discrimination (Riina et al., 2013) exposure to violence (Ahlin et al., 2015), and concentrated disadvantage (Zimmerman & Farrell, 2017).

Neighborhood mechanisms that facilitate positive youth development are often attributed to formal and institutional resources, including schools and centers for out-of-school programming (Rankin & Quane, 2002; Stedman, 2002). Positive youth development in neighborhoods also happens through collective socialization, including the interpersonal processes through which neighborhood adults provide informal support to youth (Formoso et al., 2010). Connections to others within a neighborhood are crucial for developing a positive place attachment and sociopolitical control. Through unstructured time and exploration, youth reciprocally influence and are influenced by their environments. For example, increased self-actualization in youth is linked to the development of independence, which involves spending increased amounts of free time outside of the home but within the confines of the neighborhood (Morgan, 2010).

There is some evidence to suggest that engagement in efforts to address local issues may support the development of both place attachment and sociopolitical control. For example, researchers interested in environmental activism have created new dimensions of the sociopolitical control scale to better assess how individuals develop their efficacy for and motivation to contribute to social change through environmental activism (Smith & Propst, 2001). More recently, studies aimed at understanding how humans engage with the built and natural environments have included measures of place attachment and sociopolitical control to account for how one's surroundings can foster both constructs by bolstering community participation (Jeong et al., 2021; Stroope, 2021). These constructs may be fostered through place-based action civics education and warrant further examination.

Student Identity, Place Attachment, and Sociopolitical Control

Research on sociopolitical control and place attachment among youth in action civics should attend to the complex interplay of sociocultural, economic, and historical factors that impact and are impacted by students' intersectional identities. To understand these dynamics, it is crucial to examine gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status as factors that may contribute to students' place attachment and sociopolitical control.

Race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status may have significant impacts on sociopolitical control. Race and ethnicity play a crucial role in determining the access and representation youth have within local political spheres (Levy & Akiva, 2019). Systemic racism can lead to the underrepresentation of historically marginalized racial groups in government and public life, which may limit students of color in their ability to exercise control and influence over decision-making processes. Gender may also intersect with sociopolitical control, as women often face gender-based discrimination and exclusion from positions of power, limiting their agency in shaping policies and institutions (Malin et al., 2015b, Wray-Lake et al., 2020). Socioeconomic status may impact students' civic engagement and subsequent sociopolitical control, as youth with lower socioeconomic backgrounds may encounter economic barriers that limit their access to resources for and opportunities to engage in local change making (Wray-Lake & Shubert, 2019). These factors should be considered to understand variation in sociopolitical control across youth with varying lived experiences.

The impacts of race, gender, and socioeconomic status should also be considered to understand variation in students' place attachment. Racial disparities that manifest in the built environment, including the impacts of residential segregation and discrimination, can decrease the availability of resources and social cohesion in neighborhoods. This may impact young

peoples' ability to remain in their neighborhoods, and thwart their sense of community (Clark et al., 2017). The relationship between place attachment and gender outlined in the literature is complex (Scannell & Gifford, 2017), and women may face unique challenges related to safety concerns, access to public spaces, and cultural expectations that influence their connection to a place. Impacts of socioeconomic status may be present in youth's place attachment, as lower-SES youth may face economic barriers to long-term residency, may live in areas that have less opportunities for participating in public life, or may face residential displacement at greater rates than their more affluent peers (Laszkiewicz et al., 2018). All of these factors may weaken students' social networks and impact their sense of belonging.

Action Civics as a Context for Exploring Place Attachment and Sociopolitical Control

Studying place attachment and sociopolitical control within the context of an action civics intervention may provide valuable insights into both constructs on a broader scale, beyond the intervention under study. Unlike many existing studies that focus on exploring place attachment and sociopolitical control among youth cross sectionally, either drawing on entire populations of young people or employing convenience samples, this quasi-experimental and longitudinal investigation provides an opportunity to understand these constructs over time, within and between classrooms and schools, and across experimental conditions. By capturing changes in these constructs over time, the study can explore the factors that might contribute to variation in sociopolitical control and place attachment. The study's quasi-experimental design allows for the comparison of treatment and control groups, and paired with an exploration of individual demographic characteristics, may offer insights into baseline variation in these constructs across various intersections of identity. Understanding elements of

classroom and neighborhood contexts may illustrate the conditions that facilitate or inhibit the development of these constructs more broadly. Extrapolating these insights may lead to a better understanding of how to support the development of place attachment and sociopolitical control in other educational and community contexts. Taken together, this research may provide valuable insights into addressing disparities in these positive developmental outcomes for all youth and may reveal features of empowering community contexts that support the development of sociopolitical control and place attachment among youth from diverse backgrounds.

Chapter 3

The Current Study

The literature points to a need for school-based interventions that promote place attachment and sociopolitical control, as these constructs support youth in becoming active agents for change in their communities. Although they are often excluded from decision-making, young people have a stake in their neighborhoods and can exert influence when effectively engaged (Checkoway, 1998; 2013). Critiques of traditional approaches to civic education point out a lack of attention to the role of structural forces in shaping students' lived experiences and argue that this inhibits youths' authentic engagement in civic life (Hope, 2016; Nasir & Kirshner, 2003). Action civics education fuses several promising practices not present in traditional civic education, including experiential learning (Hildreth, 2012), place-based education (Demarest, 2014; Smith & Gruenewald, 2007), and youth participatory action research (Bautista et al., 2013).

Design Your Neighborhood, the action civics approach explored in this study, blends action civics and local knowledge, with grounding in the issues Nashville faces in its built environment (Gaston & Kreyling, 2015; Kreyling, 2005), in ways that stand to support youths' development of place attachment and sociopolitical control. The current study therefore scrutinizes one intervention's effort to position schools as spaces for democracy and social change (Noguera, 2017), through place-based action civics.

Study Context

Design Your Neighborhood (DYN) is a place-based action civics curriculum that engages students in understanding and addressing disparities in Nashville's built environment. DYN is

situated within the Civic Design Center, a nonprofit organization in Nashville, Tennessee. In 2017, the Civic Design Center set out to produce a middle school curriculum in partnership with the Metro Nashville Public School District (MNPS). DYN draws on principles of equitable urban design to explore local issues rooted in histories of structural inequity in Nashville, including access to transit and housing. A very brief urban design education provided at the outset of the curriculum offers a shared language to describe central issues (e.g., displacement, gentrification, redlining) and responses/solutions (e.g., placekeeping, community land trusts, multimodal transit) that underly Nashville's housing and transportation crises. This becomes a lens through which youth engage with issues of local importance.

As a place-based curriculum, what students learn through DYN is deeply connected to historical and current conditions on the ground in Nashville. In this section, I situate the study in place by situating the research with the history of 1) rapid growth and change in Nashville 2) the establishment and expansion of the Civic Design Center and 2) the creation of the DYN curriculum.

The Nashville Context

Nashville, Tennessee has experienced rapid growth and development in recent years, earning a reputation as the "It City" (Severson, 2013). Nashville's economy has grown through the expansion of the healthcare, entertainment, and manufacturing industries, and in doing so the city has attracted an influx of new residents, businesses, and tourists (Webb, 2022). This has led to extensive urban development, including the construction of high-rise buildings, mixed-use and luxury developments, and the revitalization of neighborhoods. As Nashville's has gained residents and become more popular among tourists, property values have increased and

the real estate market has been ranked in the top 5 nationally (Kennedy, 2023). These shifts have contributed to gentrification and the displacement of long-time residents, as neighborhood development has led to rising housing costs that make it difficult for existing residents to remain in their communities. As property values rise and neighborhood amenities improve, the original residents, often low-income and predominantly people of color, face challenges in affording increased living costs, property taxes, and the loss of affordable housing options (Schnake-Mahl et al., 2020). The effects of gentrification and displacement are particularly pronounced in Nashville's historically African American neighborhoods (Plazas, 2018). These communities have experienced significant changes that have led to concerns about the loss of neighborhood identity, the displacement of long-standing residents, and the impact on neighborhood diversity within the city.

Efforts to address gentrification and displacement in Nashville have gained traction in recent years. Nonprofit organizations, community activists, and policymakers have worked to develop affordable housing strategies, such as inclusionary zoning and community land trusts, to provide housing options for low-income residents (Metro Human Relations Commission, 2020). There is also a growing focus on preserving the history and identity of neighborhoods undergoing rapid change. Community-driven planning processes have been crucial for encouraging public participation and ensuring that the voices of impacted communities are heard. Despite these efforts, the challenges posed by rapid growth, development, gentrification, and displacement in Nashville continue to shape the city in ways that may impact the place attachment and sociopolitical control of young people who are growing up in these rapidly changing neighborhood conditions.

Rapid growth in Nashville has outpaced necessary investments in the city's transportation system, leading to a range of challenges. Despite the pressing need for improved transportation infrastructure, a transit referendum aimed at increasing investments was overwhelmingly rejected by citizens in 2018. This setback has hindered the city's ability to address the mounting transportation issues effectively, derailing plans for a 28-mile light rail system and impeding immediate improvements to the city's bus service (McGee, 2019). This ultimately led to the privatization of the city bus system, which has impacted communities with limited resources, as several key bus routes have been eliminated. The reduction in bus services has disproportionately affected individuals who rely heavily on public transportation, exacerbating the problem of transportation accessibility. Five years after the failed referendum, public transportation funding has stagnated, and community organizations continue petitioning the city and future mayoral candidates for a new multimodal transit plan to be set forth in 2024 (Warrick & Wethington, 2023).

Nashville also lags behind in pedestrian and active transit infrastructure when compared to peer cities. This is seen in the city's deficient sidewalk system (Ong, 2020), which has resulted in a disturbingly high number of pedestrian fatalities. Only 19% of the city's streets currently have sidewalks, and much of the existing sidewalk infrastructure is in need of repair. The lack of safe and well-maintained sidewalks has made walking in Nashville perilous, highlighting the urgent need for improvements. Similarly, Nashville currently holds a Bronze-Level Bicycle Friendly Community designation (League of American Bicyclists, 2015). However, to catch up with nearby cities like Louisville, KY, and Chattanooga, TN, which have attained the Silver-Level status, Nashville would need to triple the current mileage of bike lanes and increase daily

ridership levels by over 1000 percent. Addressing these transportation challenges would require that the city prioritize investments in its transportation infrastructure, enhance public transit options, improve pedestrian safety through sidewalk expansions and repairs, and significantly expand the bicycle network. Without these improvements, youth in Nashville will continue to face constraints caused by a transit system that has not kept up with the needs of the city's growing population.

The Civic Design Center

The Civic Design Center has a long history of addressing equity issues in the urban environment. The Civic Design Center was formed in the 1990s when Nashville residents representing a range of design professions organized to oppose a plan for a new highway. The highway was slated to bisect Nashville's burgeoning downtown. Through their advocacy, the group ensured that what would have been a highway ultimately became a walkable boulevard with bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure. Afterward, this group of residents formed an organization to continue to educate and advocate for equitable design as Nashville grew. They eventually incorporated as a nonprofit with support from city agencies, universities, and philanthropic funders. Since incorporation, the Civic Design Center has worked with neighborhood groups to generate community-based designs and increase resident voice in city planning. They have also taken on large-scale projects aimed at shaping future growth in Nashville to promote equity. This includes a project called the Plan of Nashville (Gaston and Kreyling 2015; Kreyling 2005), a participatory process that involved hundreds of Nashville residents in planning sessions. Inspired by Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago a century earlier, the Civic Design Center set out to create a 50-year plan to guide design and development

decisions in the city.

Despite these successes, the Civic Design Center's early work was limited in that it only engaged adults. Ten years after the Plan of Nashville was published, 22% of Nashville's residents were estimated to be 18 or younger. The Civic Design Center saw the importance of engaging youth in developing equitable cities and again looked to the Plan of Chicago as a model. Burnham's plan had been adapted into an eighth-grade civics textbook called Wacker's Manual and was taught as a standard curriculum in all Chicago schools for two decades (Baker, 2010; Moody & Wacker, 1916). The Civic Design Center hoped to follow suit, integrating the Plan of Nashville into the public school system to be adopted and supported by residents. This inspired the launch of the DYN curriculum.

Design Your Neighborhood

In 2016, the Civic Design Center hired an architect with several years of secondary teaching experience to serve as Education Director and lead the development of an action civics curriculum with a built environment focus. The Civic Design Center was then positioned to develop DYN into a Nashville equivalent of the Wacker's Manual.

In- and Out-of-School Pilots

The Civic Design Center began laying the groundwork in 2017 for programming that would bring youth voice into the urban design process, with the goal that every young person in Nashville would engage with the Plan of Nashville during their secondary education. To pilot the curriculum, the Civic Design Center held summer DYN internships for a group of 10th-12th grade students in the summer of 2017. The internship model helped the DYN team refine the curriculum, and the Civic Design Center concluded the summer of 2017 eager to pilot the DYN

initiative in schools.

In the 2017 school year, the internship program was integrated into elective courses in two charter schools. Several barriers to implementation that emerged in the pilot projects were rooted in concerns over school accountability and standardized testing. In one school, high-achieving classrooms engaged with DYN while their peers took courses aimed at improving their standardized test scores. The other pilot school could not implement the final project due to time constraints and pressure to align instruction to testable material, thus leaving out the critical community action portion of the curriculum altogether. These barriers are reality in United States schools, but the DYN team thought they might be mitigated by drawing explicit links between curricular standards and the curriculum. Integrating DYN into core courses through alignment with grade-level academic standards would make it possible to reach students who have historically experienced a civic opportunity gap (Jain et al., 2019; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Pope et al., 2011). With insights from their pilot program, the Civic Design Center produced a standards-aligned, place-based action civics curriculum for core courses that could be brought to scale across the school district.

Curriculum Development

In the spring of 2018, the DYN team began meeting with the Metro Nashville Public School District (MNPS) officials to discuss ways to partner formally with them to bring the DYN curriculum into all MNPS middle schools. The district helped the Civic Design Center assemble a team of teachers with experience using project-based learning in their classrooms. The Civic Design Center hired these teachers to be a part of their Curriculum Team. The Curriculum Team co-wrote Design Your Neighborhood in the summer of 2018. The writing process began with

Civic Design Center staff giving teachers on the Curriculum Team an introduction to urban design and the built environment so that they were prepared to write curricula outside of their realm of expertise. Teachers then worked with Civic Design Center staff to create three-week cross-curricular units for seventh and eighth-grade social studies, English, science, math, and visual arts classes. Ultimately, the Team created ten curricular units, one for each grade in each content area, that were cross-disciplinary and aligned to grade-level academic standards. All units addressed an urban design issue that had exacerbated inequality in Nashville, with seventh graders focusing on public transportation and eighth graders focusing on affordable housing.

Seventh Grade Curriculum: Public Transportation. The Curriculum Team wrote 7th-grade units that explored active transit in Nashville. The essential question which guided each unit was “How can young people reconnect Nashville’s growing neighborhoods?” Over the last several decades, Nashville had experienced rapid growth and change in its built environment. The seventh-grade curriculum responded to how Nashville’s growth had not been matched by investments in its transportation system. Specifically, it explored a recent transit referendum that citizens overwhelmingly rejected. This referendum would have increased investment in light rail and bus rapid transit. Instead, the city bus system was privatized, and several key bus routes in communities with fewer resources were cut. The referendum failure reflected larger trends in the city’s neglect of infrastructure for active and public forms of transportation. For instance, in 2020, Nashville set a record for pedestrian deaths, which was linked to their inadequate sidewalk infrastructure (Ong, 2020). Through introducing these issues via DYN, students could consider and critique existing transit options before learning how to advocate

for more equitable ways to move around the city.

Eighth Grade Curriculum: Affordable Housing. The essential question which guided the 8th-grade curriculum was “How can young people disrupt displacement in Nashville’s growing neighborhoods?” As the curriculum was being written, many once-affordable neighborhoods were experiencing rapid gentrification, disrupting long-standing social and institutional networks. As these neighborhoods gentrified, residents with fewer resources were displaced, often relocating to more affordable (typically more suburban/remote) areas. Displacement accelerated during the 2010s, as Nashville became known as a tourist destination. A New York Times article in 2013 labeled Nashville as the “It City” (Severson, 2013), which drove tourism to increase from 10 million per year in 2010 to 16.2 million per year in 2019 (Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation, 2020). Rises in tourism in Nashville co-occurred with residential population growth of around 100 new residents per day in the metropolitan area. New residents exacerbated displacement and sparked unprecedented levels of real estate investment and development. In the curriculum, students learned the origins of residential displacement before learning strategies to mitigate it.

Project Development

After establishing the topical areas for the 7th and 8th grade curricula and creating lessons that introduced students to housing and transit issues, the curriculum team got to work on project development. They developed a suite of final projects that students could complete in their classes that were actionable within the confines of a school, but had implications for addressing disparity in the built environment. For instance, projects in ELA included creating a podcast in which students introduced built environment issues to other youth by interviewing

neighbors, reaching out to government officials for comment on their position, and spotlighting community organizations that focus on these issues. Projects in social studies classes included generating an advocacy campaign, including a power map, community research, and a social media strategy, to advance the classes' position related to housing or transit in their neighborhood. Art and science classes focused on equitable community development processes and design. Projects for these subjects included designing sustainable micro-units to address housing affordability and locating spaces that could accommodate affordable housing infill. Students also worked with the local transit authority to locate, design, build, and install bus stops based on results from community surveys. The bus stops feature student artwork on public transit infrastructure that is illustrative of the culture of their school's neighborhood.

Teacher Training

To prepare teachers to engage their students in this curriculum, the Civic Design Center led professional development sessions open to all middle school teachers in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) during the fall of 2018. The training introduced urban design and the built environment as critical topics of classroom conversation. This included a crash-course in Nashville's history of neighborhood displacement, school bussing policies, and environmental racism in historically Black communities (Erickson, 2016). The training was designed to benefit teachers whether or not they adopted DYN in their classrooms, as the Curriculum Team wanted attendees to leave feeling more prepared to talk to their students about how inequity manifested in Nashville's built environment.

Teacher Support and Volunteers

After the training, attendees were given the option to teach the DYN curriculum. The

Civic Design Center provided all teachers who chose to participate with the curriculum, supplementary materials, and follow-up planning support. They also coordinated volunteers from their network of architects, urban planners, community organizers, engineers, government officials, and artists to assist teachers with curriculum implementation. The Civic Design Center’s history of engaging adults interested in design and city planning meant that they had access to an extensive network of professionals who consulted with students and teachers during the intensive design portions of the projects.

Curriculum Implementation

After receiving training and support, teachers implemented the curriculum in their classrooms. Implementation began in the spring of 2019. In May 2022, DYN concluded its 4th year of implementation. Variation across each year of implementation was considerable due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic not only fundamentally altered schooling in Nashville (and the world) but also exacerbated the issues of equity in Nashville’s built environment that students were exploring through DYN. In what follows, each year of the study is briefly described, with an emphasis on salient historical conditions that shaped students’ and teachers’ experiences with DYN.

DYN Year 1: 2018-2019. The first year of curriculum implementation was highly successful. DYN concluded the 2018-2019 school year with 31 teachers partnering to engage around 2,000 students across 18 MNPS middle schools, with 620 students enrolled in the treatment group for the study. In May 2019, DYN hosted a Youth Design Exhibition to showcase student projects. As part of the curriculum, students invited community stakeholders (e.g., business leaders, school and government officials, community organizers, and design

professionals) to attend the Exhibition. Students set up stations to share their projects with attendees and hosted a panel to address topics relevant to the curriculum. Attendees circulated between groups of students to learn about their projects, offer feedback and next steps for their work, and support students' ongoing efforts toward improving Nashville's built environment. This Exhibition generated momentum for the second year of the study, and increases in engagement were expected.

DYN Year 2: 2019-2020. After teacher training in the fall of 2019, 63 teachers in 23 middle schools signed up to teach DYN the following spring. However, in March 2020, Nashville was hit by a tornado that devastated many students' communities and schools. Weeks later, the coronavirus pandemic shuttered schools across the city indefinitely. The Civic Design Center immediately began restructuring the curriculum to work in a virtual learning environment. To transition to virtual learning, the Civic Design Center contracted with several teachers from the Curriculum Team to develop lessons on MNPS's virtual learning platform. The virtual curriculum covered the same content as the original curriculum but added resources to help teachers consider how the pandemic was impacting access to public transit and affordable housing. It also gave students space to consider how to build and maintain community while remaining physically distanced from one another. For example, the Curriculum Team created a virtual mapping process that allowed classes to share their experiences with the pandemic spatially. This included mapping spaces that students could still access during the pandemic, mapping spaces they could not access and missed, reflecting on what their home and neighborhood meant to them in these new times, and commenting on each other's contributions to ease the anxiety of isolation. Implementation of the full curriculum was low, with only 4 teachers

completing the DYN curriculum in their virtual classrooms, although many more sampled from it. Engagement in the research was also low, with only 56 student participants.

DYN Year 3: 2020-2021. By the start of the 2020-2021 school year, the Curriculum Team had refined the virtual DYN to support students as they resumed online learning. The curriculum team also created virtual webinar trainings for teachers who were interested in implementing DYN. The Civic Design Center, like all other stakeholders in education, was unsure of how long school would remain virtual, and what in-person instruction might look like when and if it was reinstated. For MNPS, the fall semester took place virtually. When school resumed after winter break, MNPS adopted a hybrid approach, which allowed families to decide if their children would attend school in-person or continue with virtual learning. DYN remained virtual during the school year, as guests, volunteers, and other non-school personnel were prohibited from entering schools to slow the spread. Civic Design Center staff supported teachers through online workshops, and volunteers made virtual visits to classrooms. The Youth Voice Exhibition, which was eliminated entirely in 2020, was translated to a small virtual event in 2021, allowing students to share their design and advocacy work once more. Curriculum uptake in 2020-2021 mirrored the 2019-2020 school year. Seven teachers engaged their students in DYN, but research participation was still low, at just 75 students opting to participate in the research.

DYN Year 4: 2021-2022. The 2021-2022 school year marked a return to in-person learning, but the impact of the pandemic on DYN implementation was far from over. Some elements of the original curriculum were still augmented to fit the current context, including holding school-specific exhibitions instead of one multi-school event due to ongoing limitations on field trips. Additionally, DYN teachers faced many competing pressures from their principal

and the district to address the learning loss attributed to the pandemic. During the summer of 2021, Tennessee Governor Bill Lee signed a bill into law that would withhold funding from schools if students were taught about topics related to Critical Race Theory. Given the inextricable links between equity in the built environment and systemic oppression in society, this law had implications for DYN implementation. As district priorities and state politics shifted, the Civic Design Center responded with supports for teachers who were advocating to keep DYN in their classrooms. In addition, teachers were facing ongoing struggles to remain in the profession that were exacerbated by the pandemic. Teacher shortages in the district grew substantially during the pandemic, and those still employed increasingly struggle to afford housing in the city where they teach. Despite these struggles, participation in the curriculum and research were both on the rise by the end of 2022, with over 200 students enrolled in the treatment group, although teacher uptake had not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Chapter 4

Methods

Using a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design, this research responds to a call to develop pedagogical practices that contribute to more robust democracy (Levine, 2012), and engage in a rigorous evaluation of these practices to strengthen the emerging field of action civics (Ballard et al., 2016; Blevins et al., 2016; Gingold et al., 2013).

Research Questions

Drawing on developmental pathways previously theorized in the literature, this research positions place-based action civics as an instructional strategy with the potential to support middle school students' development. Through a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design, this study addresses the following questions:

RQ1a: What is the effect of participating in a place-based action civics curriculum on students' place attachment and sociopolitical control?

RQ1b: How do sociodemographic factors, including race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status, influence the effect of participating in a place-based action civics curriculum on students' place attachment and sociopolitical control?

I hypothesize that engaging in place-based action civics will have a significant positive impact on students' place attachment and sociopolitical control. Additionally, I hypothesize that students of color and students with low income will experience a stronger positive effect on place attachment and sociopolitical control after participating in place-based action civics when compared to their White peers and their peers with higher socioeconomic status.

RQ2: What individual- and classroom-level factors are associated with variance in student change scores for place attachment and sociopolitical control?

I hypothesize that classroom-level factors will be associated with variance in student change scores, such that students nested in classrooms that reflect best practices in action civics education and students whose teachers have higher pretest scores for place attachment and sociopolitical control will exhibit more growth in PA and SPC than their peers in classrooms that do not reflect best practices and/or students with teachers with low pretest place attachment and sociopolitical control scores. Additionally, I hypothesize that some individual sociodemographic factors will be associated with variance in student change scores, such that students of color and students with lower socioeconomic status will experience more growth in their place attachment and sociopolitical control than their White and their peers with higher socioeconomic status.

RQ3: What do students' and teachers' narratives reveal about the perceived impact of engaging with place-based action civics as it relates to place attachment and sociopolitical control?

I will draw on teachers' and students' qualitative accounts of their experiences with DYN to contextualize the quantitative findings presented, particularly as it relates to my two hypotheses.

Participants and Procedures

All students and teachers in the DYN sample were drawn from MNPS middle schools between 2018-2022. MNPS currently serves over 82,000 students across 550 square miles throughout Davidson County, and MNPS middle schools serve 15,563 students across 29 schools. The district serves a high-poverty population, with 71% of students considered economically disadvantaged (Jaggers, 2019). MNPS is also highly diverse, with students representing 145 countries and speaking 129 languages (MNPS, 2022).

Recruitment, Consent, and Compensation

DYN recruitment took place in three stages: teacher curriculum training, teacher research recruitment, and student research recruitment.

Teacher Curriculum Training. Seventh and eighth-grade math, English, social studies, science, and visual arts teachers from across the district were invited to attend professional development sessions to learn how to incorporate the DYN curriculum into their classrooms. Teachers received flyers via email from their Content Lead, a district administrator responsible for supporting teachers in each content area, inviting them to attend the session. Training sessions were offered twice each year: once before each school year and again during an optional, paid district professional development day in the fall. Trainings took place during each year of curricular implementation, but they were moved to an online platform during Year 3 due to the pandemic.

Teacher Sample Recruitment. After participating in a DYN teacher training, all attendees were invited to participate in administering the curriculum. Teachers who either 1) attended a DYN teacher training and chose not to engage students in the curriculum, 2) signed up to teach DYN and ultimately could not engage their students in the curriculum, or 3) taught at the same school as DYN teachers were recruited as a quasi- control group. Because DYN has curricular units in 5 content areas, some teachers signed up along with their grade-level teaching team to engage students in more than one DYN content area. Students are randomly assigned to teachers and teaching teams in MNPS, and therefore, major baseline differences between treatment and quasi-control groups were not expected (Shadish & Luellen, 2012).

Student Sample Recruitment. All students with teachers who implemented the DYN

curriculum or took part in the control group were included in the initial sampling frame. Students could then opt-in to participate in the study by providing parental informed consent and student assent. Students in classrooms where teachers implemented DYN engaged with the curriculum regardless of their participation in the research. Caregivers of students in the treatment group could provide consent for their students to participate in both the survey and the focus group or just the survey. A letter explaining the DYN curriculum was sent home along with the consent form. Consent documents and letters were provided in both Spanish and English.

Students in the control group classrooms could similarly opt-in to take part in the pre- and post-survey by providing parental informed consent and student assent, but they did not engage with the DYN curriculum. Students were recruited to the control group from the classes of all teachers who elected to either incorporate the curriculum but ultimately could not, or teachers who elected to participate in the control group. From this group, all students whose guardians provided consent to participate and who completed surveys at both time points of data collection were included in the control sample. A letter explaining the research was sent home along with the consent form, and consent documents and letters were provided in both Spanish and English.

Characteristics of the Sample

Action civics projects were carried out by teachers in 23 of the 29 middle schools in Nashville between 2018 and 2022 (school n=16 control, 23 treatment). Seventh and eighth-grade teachers (teacher n=38 treatment, 25 control) opted-in to carry out the action civics projects either in their individual classrooms or as part of a teaching team. Table 1 includes

information about participating teachers' occupational status (e.g., number of years in the classroom, pathway to teacher certification) and pertinent demographic information (e.g., age, gender, household income). Most of the teachers in the sample are White, middle-class women. This is consistent with demographic trends in the teaching profession across the United States (Taie & Goldring, 2020).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Teacher Sample

	Treatment		Control	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	6	16%	2	8%
Female	32	84%	24	92%
Nonbinary	0	0%	0	0%
Race / Ethnicity				
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0	0%	0	0%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%
Black / African American	10	27%	3	12%
Hispanic / Latino	5	14%	7	28%
Middle Eastern / North African	0	0%	0	0%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%
White	22	59%	15	60%
Grade				
Seventh	13	34%	7	27%
Eighth	11	29%	10	38%
Seventh & Eighth	14	37%	9	35%
Subject Area				
ELA	9	24%	6	23%
Science	8	21%	6	23%
Social Studies	5	13%	3	12%
Art	14	37%	8	31%
Math	2	5%	3	12%
Certification Type				
Undergraduate	10	27%	9	35%
Graduate	16	43%	9	35%
Alternative Route	11	30%	8	31%
Age				
20-24	3	8%	5	19%
25-35	8	22%	8	31%
35-44	14	38%	4	15%

25-54	10	27%	3	12%
55-64	2	5%	5	19%
65+	0	0%	0	0%
Household Income				
Less than \$25,000	0	0%	1	4%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2	6%	3	13%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9	25%	8	33%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14	39%	5	21%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8	22%	4	17%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	3	8%	3	13%
\$150,000 or more	0	0%	0	0%
Years of Experience				
1-5	11	39%	12	46%
6-10	7	25%	4	15%
10-15	9	32%	4	15%
16-20	5	18%	2	8%
20+	6	21%	4	15%

Note. *n* denotes the number of participants and % denotes the percentage of the sample in each category.

Since 2018, over 5,000 students in MNPS have been engaged with the DYN curriculum in their classrooms. Between 2018 and 2022, 1539 students have engaged in the research (student *n*=963 treatment, 576 control). Student research participants are diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2*Demographic Characteristics of the Student Sample*

	2018-2019				2019-2020				2020-2021				2021-2022			
	Treatment		Control		Treatment		Control		Treatment		Control		Treatment		Control	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender																
Male	258	41%	101	40%	33	57%	49	26%	25	40%	21	28%	110	49%	30	48%
Female	328	54%	136	54%	24	41%	90	48%	32	52%	42	56%	92	41%	27	43%
Nonbinary	13	2%	4	2%	0	0%	7	4%	1	2%	7	9%	0	0%	1	2%
Prefer not to answer	21	3%	10	4%	1	2%	41	22%	4	6%	5	7%	14	6%	11	17%
Race / Ethnicity																
American Indian / Alaskan Native	2	>1%	3	1%	0	0%	1	1%	1	2%	1	1%	2	1%	1	2%
Asian	29	5%	11	4%	1	1%	11	6%	4	6%	2	3%	7	3%	0	0%
Black / African American	186	30%	105	42%	13	22%	48	26%	17	27%	29	39%	77	35%	21	33%
Hispanic / Latino	95	15%	40	16%	7	12%	23	12%	12	19%	6	8%	31	14%	18	29%
Middle Eastern / North African	19	3%	7	3%	0	0%	3	1%	0	0%	1	1%	14	6%	1	2%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1	>1%	1	>1%	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	1	1%	2	1%	1	2%
White	115	19%	49	20%	18	31%	35	19%	11	18%	19	25%	58	27%	10	16%
Multiracial	136	22%	23	9%	16	28%	57	30%	14	23%	14	19%	19	9%	7	11%
Prefer not to answer	37	6%	12	5%	3	5%	7	4%	3	5%	2	3%	6	3%	4	6%
Grade																
Seventh	154	25%	154	61%	32	55%	82	44%	25	40%	26	35%	51	23%	26	41%
Eighth	466	75%	97	38%	26	45%	105	56%	37	60%	49	65%	172	77%	37	59%

Note. *n* denotes the number of participants and % denotes the percentage of the sample in each category.

The DYN student sample largely mirrors the population of MNPS middle schools (see Table 3). Male students are slightly underrepresented in the DYN data, and MNPS does not report the number of students who identify as nonbinary or gender-nonconforming. Hispanic and Latino students are also underrepresented in the DYN data. The DYN survey has racial and ethnic categories not available in the MNPS data, including a Middle Eastern/North African category. Similarly, while the percentage of people who reported multiple races increased more than any other group according to the 2020 Census, MNPS does not yet report the number of multiracial students in the district (Jones et al., 2021). The DYN survey included an option to select as many racial categories as apply.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of the Student Sample and MNPS Middle Schools

	DYN Sample		MNPS Middle Schools	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	627	41%	7499	51.82%
Female	771	50%	8064	48.18%
Nonbinary/Gender Nonconforming	33	2%	N/A	N/A
Prefer Not to Answer	107	7%	N/A	N/A
Race / Ethnicity				
American Indian / Alaskan Native	11	1%	12	.08%
Asian	65	4%	319	3.96%
Black / African American	496	32%	3058	37.92%
Hispanic / Latino	232	15%	2568	31.85%
Middle Eastern / North African	45	3%	N/A	N/A
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	8	1%	12	.21%
White	315	20%	2091	25.93%
Multiracial	286	19%	N/A	N/A
Prefer Not to Answer	74	5%	N/A	N/A

Note. *n* denotes the number of participants and % denotes the percentage of the sample in each category.

Data and Measures

This quasi-experimental mixed-methods study includes survey, focus group, and observation data collected from students and teachers in treatment and control groups across two grade levels over four years. Table 4 outlines the data and measures collected at different stages within each year of the study.

Table 4

Design Your Neighborhood Study Data Sources

	Pre-Survey	Observation	Post-Survey	Focus Group	Interview
Treatment Group Teachers	X	X	X		X
Control Group Teachers	X		X		
Treatment Group Students	X	X	X	X	
Control Group Teachers	X		X		

Student Surveys

Survey data were collected from students in treatment and control groups across two grade levels. Sixty-question self-report surveys were administered at two time points during the academic year. Pre-surveys took place during the term preceding DYN. Post surveys took place immediately after the project exhibition in Years 1, 3, and 4, and immediately after the final project was completed in Year 2. Students completed the survey during the class in which DYN was being implemented. Students who had not provided consent to participate in the study had an alternative assignment while research participants completed the survey. Participants who completed the survey were entered into a drawing for a gift card, and one gift card was drawn per class. The student survey instrument (provided in [Appendix A](#)) was designed to capture civic and education-related outcomes, as well as covariates. A complete list of validated quantitative

instruments used in the student survey is provided in [Appendix B](#).

Sociopolitical Control. The abbreviated Sociopolitical Control Scale for Youth (SPCS-Y) (Lardier et al., 2018) was used to assess shifts in students' sociopolitical control during the action civics intervention. Sociopolitical control is considered a bi-dimensional construct including a leadership competence subscale (e.g., *I am often a leader in groups*) and policy control subscale (e.g., *There are plenty of ways for youth like me to have a say in what our community or school does*) (Peterson et al., 2011). The 8-item SPCS-Y used 1-100 scale responses ordered from disagreement to agreement. Analyses explored changes between pre- and post-survey scores for the overall scale and its subscales. This is consistent with previous studies which illustrate that community-based interventions may differentially cultivate youths' civic participation skills via leadership competence and civic participation expectations via policy control (Peterson et al., 2011).

Place Attachment. Place attachment was measured through nine questions from the Place Attachment Scale (Lewicka, 2011). This scale was included to assess the extent to which engaging with a place-based curriculum impacted students' emotional and symbolic relationships with the built and natural environment (Lewicka, 2011). Questions addressed participants' present (e.g., *I miss my neighborhood when I am not here*) and future (e.g., *I would not like to move out of my neighborhood*) perceptions of their neighborhood. Three negative questions from the original scale were dropped, and responses were ordered from strongly disagree to strongly agree with a neutral response. Responses were averaged to create a composite score.

Family Affluence and Material Hardship. Covariates related to students' socioeconomic

status included measures of family affluence and material hardship. The Family Affluence Scale (FAS) was used as a youth-friendly alternative measure of family income, assessing wealth in ways that youth were more likely to identify accurately (Boyce et al., 2006). Family affluence was assessed through three questions that asked students about the number of items owned by the people they live with most of the time (e.g., *how many cars, trucks, or SUVs does your family own?*) An ordinal composite was calculated to assign students to low affluence category, (scores of 3 or 4), medium affluence category, (scores of 5 or 6), or high affluence category (scores of 7 or 8). Two questions related to food insecurity and residential instability were included from the Material Hardship Scale (Gershoff et al., 2007). Questions assessed instances of material hardship within the past year (e.g., *In the past year, have you needed food but couldn't afford to buy it?*) and were dichotomous. Responses were considered separately during data analysis.

Demographic Information. Students provided two forms of demographic information for inclusion as covariates: gender and race/ethnicity. Gender was coded as a binary variable, and nonbinary and gender nonconforming students were not included in the analysis due to a small sample size. Students selected all of the racial/ethnic categories that applied from the following list: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern North African, Asian American/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, White, Asian. For the following analysis, each student was assigned to one of four racial/ethnic categories: Nonhispanic Black (n=408), Hispanic/Latinx(n=237), Nonhispanic White(n=253), and Other(n=308).

Teacher Survey Measures

Survey data were collected from teachers in treatment and control groups. Surveys

were administered at two time points during the academic year. Pre-surveys took place when teachers signed up to administer the curriculum. Post surveys took place immediately after the project exhibition in Years 1, 3, and 4, and immediately after the final project was completed in Year 2. The teacher survey instrument (provided in [Appendix C](#)) was designed to capture civic and vocational outcomes, as well as covariates. A complete list of validated quantitative instruments used in the teacher survey is provided in [Appendix D](#).

Perceptions of Urbanism. Five questions from the Perceptions of Pedestrian Proximity Scale (Audirac, 1999) assessed the extent to which teachers' values were aligned with New Urbanist design norms, which rely on building a sense of community through cultivating dense, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. The scale asks respondents whether they would trade large yards for shared neighborhood amenities (e.g., *How likely would you be to live in a smaller home on a busier street if you could live within walking distance of food resources and shopping?*). These items were included given the design-based nature of the curriculum. The scale used 5-point Likert-type questions ordered from very unlikely to very likely, and responses were averaged to create a composite score.

Sociopolitical Control. Five items drawn from the Sociopolitical Control Scale (SPCS) were used to assess shifts in teachers' sociopolitical control during the curriculum (Christens et al., 2011). SPCS items assessed individuals' self-perceptions of their ability to organize people and influence policy decisions in a local community. These items are conceptually linked to the SCPS-Y included in the youth survey, but are validated for adults and use a 5-point Likert scale ordered from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Responses were averaged to create a composite score.

Demographic and Occupational Information. Teachers provided three forms of demographic information for inclusion as covariates: age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Teachers also shared occupational information for inclusion as covariates, including their certification type, number of years teaching, subject area, and total household income. Zip codes were also collected for geocoding to examine differences associated with teachers' residential neighborhood contexts.

Student Focus Groups

Descriptive data were collected through semi-structured focus groups with treatment group students. A semi-structured protocol was used as it allowed questions to be consistent across focus groups, while also maintaining flexibility to tailor questions to specific groups of students based on their content area, interests, and experiences with DYN (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Focus groups were well-suited for the evaluation of DYN as a space for collective learning, as they allowed participants to build upon or interrogate one another's ideas (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). Topics covered in the focus groups were aligned with topics explored in the curriculum, including civic participation (e.g., *What are some ways that you can be involved in making decisions in your community?*) and equity in the built environment (e.g., *Do the housing options in your neighborhood fit the needs of the people?*). The complete focus group protocol is included in [Appendix E](#).

A purposive sampling method (Patton, 1990) was used for focus group school site selection. From all schools engaging in the DYN curriculum, a sub-sample was chosen to capture the experiences of students in schools that are diverse based on neighborhood characteristics. Because surveys used self-generated identification codes for cross-wave linking, focus group

data could not be linked to survey responses, and demographic data is not available for the focus group participants. Table 5 provides contextual information about the classrooms and demographic characteristics of the schools included in the focus group sample. Only students in the treatment group were recruited to take part in the focus groups because the goal of the focus groups was to contextualize results from the surveys and better understand civic and educational outcomes for students who completed action civics projects. Treatment group students whose caregivers provided consent for them to participate in focus groups were randomly selected and invited to participate. Between 11 and 12 students were selected for each focus group (n=149). Each student that elected to participate in the focus group was compensated with a \$20 gift card.

Table 5

Characteristics of Focus Group Classrooms and Schools

School	Grade	Year	Subject	% ED	% LEP	Primary Race/Ethnicity
Stewart	8	2019-2020	English	39	28%	Black/African American
Turner	8	2019-2020	Social Studies	60	27%	Black/African American
Parker	8	2019-2020	Art	29	10%	White
Evans	8	2019-2020	Social Studies	41	49%	Hispanic/Latino
Edwards	7	2019-2020	English	23	8%	Black/African American
Cruz	7	2019-2020	English	28	45%	Hispanic/Latino
Phillips	7	2019-2020	Art	40%	49%	Hispanic/Latino
Kim	7	2019-2020	Social Studies	41%	3%	Black/African American
Kelly	7	2021-2022	Art	65%	71%	Hispanic/Latino
Ward	7	2021-2022	Art	7%	3%	White
Ward	8	2021-2022	Art	7%	3%	White
Perry	7	2021-2022	Science	54%	31%	Black/African American
Perry	8	2021-2022	Science	54%	31%	Black/African American

Note. School names are pseudonyms. % LEP represents the percentage of students who have limited English proficiency within a given school. % ED represents the percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged within a given school.

Thirteen focus groups took place at eleven schools during May 2019 and May 2022.

Focus groups did not take place in 2020 or 2021 due to an MNPS virtual learning policy that required a teacher to be present in breakout rooms and other virtual learning spaces. Focus groups took place after the DYN curriculum and Exhibition. Students were pulled for focus groups from the class in which they engaged with DYN. Groups were held in libraries and other shared spaces on school campuses during the school day. Focus groups lasted for one class period, which ranged from 50 to 75 minutes depending on the school schedule.

Before the start of the focus group, participants were informed that their information would remain confidential. Focus groups were audio recorded and recordings were uploaded to a secure file storage platform until transcripts could be made. Participants and schools were given pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. All focus groups were first transcribed using Otter.AI software and then edited as needed for accuracy. Because focus groups took place at the end of the school year, member checking was not possible, and therefore transcripts were not returned to or reviewed by participants following the transcription cleaning process.

Observations and Teacher Feedback

Finally, the quality of student experience with DYN was likely to vary across classrooms, given the challenges teachers face that can affect the quality of implementation with all forms of progressive education (Kohfeldt et al., 2011; Ozer et al., 2010). Implementation variance, particularly within innovative educational approaches, has likely been further exacerbated by the pandemic (Olsen, 2021). Therefore, two forms of information were collected from treatment group teachers and their classrooms to gain insights into settings-level characteristics that may be associated with shared variance within and across classes.

First, The Civic Interactions motiVating diVerse Individuals in Classroom Settings

(CIVVICS) Observation Tool was used to understand variation in DYN implementation. The CIVVICS Tool was validated in Generation Citizen action civics classrooms to understand how teachers foster and support students' civic development in action civics courses (Stolte et al., 2014). It assessed four domains: Lesson Planning and Implementation (e.g., *Is there a clear purpose and goal for the lesson?*), Classroom Interactions (e.g., *Are relationships (between educators and students and between students) warm, supportive, and respectful?*), Student Engagement (e.g., *Are all students consistently interacting with teachers and peers, asking questions, sharing ideas, and using materials?*) and Civic Empowerment (e.g., *Do classroom practices reflect democratic ideals of fairness, freedom, and equality?*). Observations occurred at least once during curriculum implementation. The complete observation tool is included in [Appendix F](#).

Second, teachers in the treatment group were asked to provide feedback on their experiences with the DYN curriculum. Methods for collecting teacher feedback have evolved during the project; in Year 1, feedback was provided through a survey, but in subsequent years, teachers were given the option to take part in a brief interview. The survey version of the Teacher Feedback Tool remained available as an option for teachers who preferred not to engage in an interview. The survey version includes 18 dichotomous and open-ended questions. The interview version ranged in duration from 20 to 60 minutes, based on the length of teachers' responses. Interviews took place on school campuses or over zoom during the month following DYN implementation.

Questions in the Teacher Feedback Tool explored motivations for engaging (e.g., *What made you interested in teaching DYN?*), perceptions of the curriculum (e.g., *Did the final project*

allow students to demonstrate what they learned?), perceptions of wrap-around supports (e.g., *Was it useful to have access to a classroom volunteer?*) and pedagogical implications (e.g., *What (if anything) did you learn about your own teaching practice this experience?*). The complete interview guide is included in [Appendix G](#). Upon completion, teachers were provided with a \$100 gift card as compensation for completing the two teacher surveys, attending curricular planning support meetings, collecting student consent forms, coordinating time for student pre- and post-surveys, and completing the Teacher Feedback Tool. Control group teachers were provided with a \$50 gift card. Compensation was reduced for this group because they did not attend curricular planning support meetings, coordinate volunteers, or provide feedback on the curriculum. Both the Teacher Feedback Tool and the CIVVICS Observation Tool allowed for triangulation with other data sources, including teacher and student surveys and student focus groups.

Chapter 5

Study 1 Analytic Approach, Results, and Discussion

To assess the effect of participating in a place-based action civics curriculum on place attachment and sociopolitical control across a range of demographic variables and across quasi-experimental groups, factorial ANCOVAs were conducted. Findings from quantitative analyses are paired with qualitative insights from student focus groups that related to place attachment and sociopolitical control.

Research Design

Quantitative data were analyzed in SPSS Version 29 using the univariate general linear models function for factorial ANCOVA (Leech et al., 2005), and qualitative data were analyzed in MaxQDA 2022.5 using a flexible coding process (Deterding and Waters, 2021).

Quantitative Analysis

To understand whether the posttest mean scores adjusted for pretest mean scores differ across sociodemographic variables and between the DYN treatment and control groups, a factorial ANCOVA approach was used (Boslaugh, 2012; Field, 2018; Leech et al., 2005). The factorial ANCOVA approach combines ANOVA and linear regression, allowing for the examination of the effect of the action civics curriculum while controlling for pre-DYN place attachment and sociopolitical control. An ANOVA first divides the total variance of the dependent variable into three parts: the variance explained by each independent variable (the between-groups variance of the main effect), the variance explained by all independent variables combined (the interaction effect), and the unexplained variance (the within-group variance). The factorial ANCOVA then focuses on the unexplained variance and seeks to explain

some of it using covariates, controlling for the effect of confounding factors on the relationship between independent variables (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity) and the dependent variable (posttest score). This is done by analyzing the semi-partial regression and correlation between the covariate and the dependent variable, which helps to isolate the effect of the sociodemographic independent variables on DYN posttest scores.

A factorial ANCOVA approach is well-suited for this data because it helps to explain the within-group variance of a factorial ANOVA by analyzing the unexplained variance and attempting to account for some of it using pretest scores as a covariate. Because posttest scores for place attachment and sociopolitical control correlate strongly with pretest scores for both measures, the pretest variable should be considered when assessing change in scores across the curriculum. This is done by adding a covariate to an ANCOVA in order to reject the null hypothesis that all sample means are equal when controlling for covariates, thereby demonstrating an intervention effect. The adjustment for the pretest score in ANCOVA ensures that any posttest differences truly result from the treatment, and aren't a left-over effect of pretest differences between the treatment and control groups. ANCOVA also accounts for variation around the posttest means that comes from variation in where the students scored on both the sociopolitical control and the place attachment measure at pretest. This allows for estimation of treatment effect size.

Assumptions of factorial ANCOVA include that at least four variables are needed; two or more nominal-scale independent variables (group, gender, and race/ethnicity), a continuous-level dependent variable that is homoscedastic and multivariate normal (posttest scores), and a continuous-level covariate that moderates the impact of the independent variables on the

dependent variable (pretest scores). Normality of the data was confirmed for each group using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The condition of equal variance was verified using Levene’s test, and the Bonferroni correction was used to adjust the p-values for multiple comparisons. Results of the factorial ANCOVA were used to test the null hypothesis that the DYN intervention results in equal mean post-scores for place attachment and sociopolitical control across treatment and control groups. They were used to calculate partial eta squared, an indicator of effect size, for place attachment and sociopolitical control to understand the practical significance of engaging in place-based action civics on both outcome variables.

Data for this analysis comes from all participants who completed a pretest and posttest during the 2018-2019 school year. Due to extenuating factors, pretest and posttest scores were only collected from the control group during the 2018-2019 school year. From 2020 forward, all control group members were only assessed at one time point, and therefore all data from subsequent years of the study are not included in this analysis. Table 6 includes sample means and standard deviations for place attachment and sociopolitical control pre- and posttest scores among students in the treatment and control group.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Sociopolitical Control (SPC) Place Attachment (PA)

	Pretest		Posttest	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Treatment Group Sociopolitical Control	57.515	15.880	62.509	15.827
Control Group Sociopolitical Control	61.470	13.831	61.679	14.216
Treatment Group Place Attachment	3.09	.779	3.120	.781
Control Group Place Attachment	3.208	.784	3.238	.763

Qualitative Analysis

Student focus group data were analyzed using MaxQDA 2022.5 software for qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis rooted in the constructivist paradigm is well-suited for exploring the nature of student learning and development in DYN. Flexible coding was used, which is an exploratory approach in which theory can be both applied to and drawn from qualitative data, and researchers can move iteratively between inductive and deductive coding (Deterding & Waters, 2021).

In the initial coding pass, interviews were structurally coded in their entirety in alignment with questions from the student focus group protocol. Then, two questions from the focus group protocol were selected for analysis: *“Do you think students should learn about their neighborhoods in school?”* and *“What are some ways that students can be involved in making decisions in their communities?”* Segments of texts from these questions were then assigned one of two thematic codes: Place Attachment and Sociopolitical Control. Subsequently, index codes rooted in place attachment theory and sociopolitical control theory were applied to the data. Index codes under Place Attachment theory were Place Identity, Place Dependence, and Neighborhood Safety. Index codes under Sociopolitical Control were *Leadership Competence and Policy Control*. After the index coding process, a final round of analytic codes was applied to each index code.

Results

Factorial ANCOVA for Place Attachment

First, a factorial ANCOVA was run to account for variation across DYN treatment and control groups in the mean posttest place attachment scores. Table 7 illustrates pretest means

posttest means, and posttest covariate adjusted posttest means, which account for DYN pretest placed attachment scores. Both average and covariate-adjusted mean posttest scores were higher than pretest scores for treatment and control group participants. By adjusting the posttest mean scores, ANCOVA provides the best estimates of how the comparison groups would have performed if they had all possessed statistically equivalent means on the pretest. Covariate-adjusted mean posttest scores were increased for the treatment group and lowered for the control group.

Table 7

Unadjusted and Covariate Adjusted Descriptive Statistics for PA Scores

	N	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)	
		Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean
Treatment	653	3.09	.031	3.120	.031	2.896	.015
Control	246	3.208	.049	3.238	.049	3.171	.025

The first factorial ANCOVA model included place attachment posttest scores as the dependent variable. Independent variables included the experimental group (treatment or control) and four sociodemographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity, material hardship, and family affluence). Place attachment pretest scores were included as a covariate. The model also included an interaction term for the experimental group and each sociodemographic variable. Results of the factorial ANCOVA for place attachment are included in Table 8.

Table 8

Analysis of Covariance for PA Posttest Scores by Experimental Group

	SS	df	MS	F	p	η ²
--	----	----	----	---	---	----------------

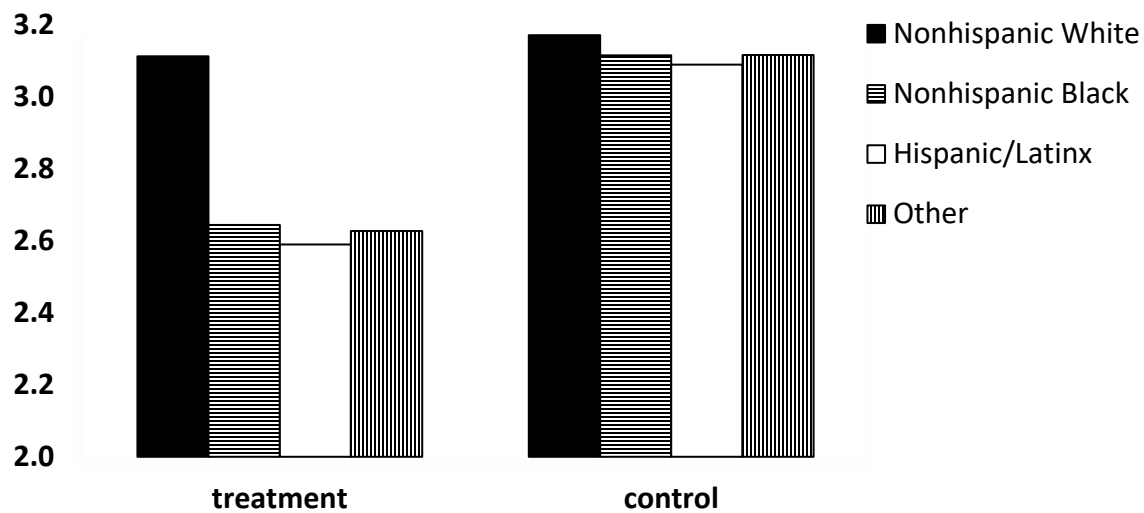
PA Pretest (Covariate)	45.823	1	45.823	88.400	<.001	.093
Experimental Group	1.219	1	1.219	2.351	.126	.003
Nonhispanic Black	9.366	1	9.366	18.068	<.001	.021
Hispanic/Latinx	10.311	1	10.311	19.892	<.001	.023
Other (Nonwhite)	7.770	1	7.770	14.989	<.001	.017
Female	.239	1	.239	1.400	.237	.001
Material Hardship	.446	2	.223	.430	.651	.001
Family Affluence	2.882	9	.320	.618	.783	.006
Group x Nonhispanic Black	2.452	1	2.452	4.731	.030	.005
Group x Hispanic Latinx	2.710	1	2.710	5.229	.022	.006
Group x Other (Nonwhite)	2.826	1	2.826	5.451	.020	.006
Group x Female	.453	1	.453	.875	.350	.001
Group x Material Hardship	.046	2	.023	.044	.957	.000
Group x Family Affluence	4.429	7	.633	1.221	.288	.010
Error	445.788	860	.528			
R2R Squared = .161 (Adjusted R Squared = .132)						

The main effect of experimental group membership on posttest place attachment scores was not significant, and therefore the null hypothesis that the DYN intervention results in equal mean post-scores for place attachment was not rejected, $F(1, 860) = 2.351$, $p = 0.126$. As expected, place attachment pretest scores were found to have a significant main effect on posttest scores with a small effect size, $F(1, 860) = 88.400$, partial $\eta^2 = .093$, indicating that the level of place attachment students have before engaging with either DYN or participating in the control group is highly correlated with their place attachment at posttest. Results also revealed a significant negative main effect for Nonhispanic Black participants ($F(1, 860) = 18.068$,

$p < .001$), Hispanic/Latinx participants ($F(1, 860) = 19.892, p < .001$), and Other (Nonwhite) participants ($F(1, 860) = 14.989, p < .001$), on place attachment posttest scores. This finding indicates that, after controlling for pretest scores, White students have higher posttest place attachment scores than their peers, whether or not they engage with the DYN curriculum. Plots of the estimated marginal means of posttest place attachment presented in Figure 2 graphically illustrates the mean difference in place attachment by race/ethnicity, showing that estimated marginal means of White students' posttest place attachment scores are higher than their Nonwhite Nonhispanic Black peers, their Hispanic/Latinx peers, and their other peers of color in both the treatment and control groups.

Figure 2

Posttest PA Estimated Marginal Means by Race/Ethnicity



Although posttest scores across all groups were not significantly different from pretest scores, significant interaction effects were found between group and Nonhispanic Black, $F(1, 860) = 4.731, p = .030$, group and Hispanic/Latinx, $F(1, 860) = 5.229, p = .022$, and group and Other (Nonwhite), $F(1, 860) = 5.451, p = .020$. These findings indicate that, after controlling for pretest

place attachment scores, White students engaging with DYN have higher average posttest scores than Nonhispanic Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and other students of colors. Figure 2 illustrates this variability across groups by race. Taken together, the main effects and interaction effects for race ethnicity suggest that whether or not White students engage in DYN, they are significantly more likely than their peers to have higher place attachment scores at posttest, and that engaging with DYN does little to increase Nonhispanic black, Hispanic/Latinx, and other students of colors sense of connection to their communities.

Factorial ANCOVA for Sociopolitical Control

Another factorial ANCOVA was run to account for variation across DYN treatment and control groups in mean posttest sociopolitical control scores. Table 9 illustrates pretest means, posttest means, and posttest covariate adjusted means, which account for DYN pretest sociopolitical control scores. As in the place attachment model, covariate adjusted mean posttest scores for sociopolitical control were increased for the treatment group and lowered for the control group. The 100-point scale used to measure sociopolitical control resulted in a larger pretest score range than place attachment, which is on a 5-point Likert scale. Therefore, covariate adjustments made to this model were larger than those made to the place attachment model, as the degree of adjustment in ANCOVA depends on the range of the control variable.

Table 9

Unadjusted and Covariate Adjusted Descriptive Statistics for SPC Scores

N	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)	
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean

Treatment	652	57.036	.622	62.378	.617	61.776	.342
Control	246	61.470	.881	61.679	.900	55.966	.554

The second factorial ANCOVA model included sociopolitical control posttest scores as the dependent variable, experimental group (treatment or control) and sociodemographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity, material hardship, and family affluence) as independent variables, and sociopolitical control pretest scores as a covariate. The model also included an interaction term for the experimental group and each sociodemographic variable. Results of the factorial ANCOVA for sociopolitical control are included in Table 10.

Table 10

Analysis of Covariance for SPC Posttest Scores by Experimental Group

	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
SPC Pretest (Covariate)	27675.535	1	27675.535	139.140	<.001	.139
Experimental Group	2049.775	1	2049.775	10.305	.001	.012
Nonhispanic Black	503.120	1	503.120	2.557	.106	.003
Hispanic/Latinx	161.783	1	161.783	.813	.367	.001
Other	537.825	1	537.825	2.704	.100	.003
Female	.376	1	.376	.002	.965	.000
Material Hardship	707.076	2	65.402	.329	.966	.003
Family Affluence	588.618	9	126.480	.648	.523	.001
Group x Nonhispanic Black	1195.228	1	1195.228	6.009	.014	.007
Group x Hispanic/Latinx	116.994	1	116.994	.588	.443	.001
Group x Other	307.814	1	307.814	1.548	.214	.002
Group x Female	307.814	1	307.814	1.548	.214	.002
Group x Material Hardship	255.690	2	127.845	.643	.526	.001

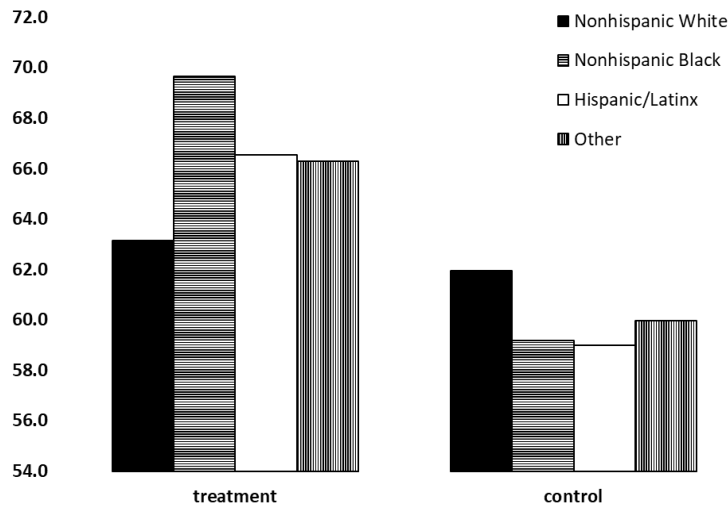
Group x Family Affluence	4285.977	8	535.747	2.693	.194	.002
Error	171256.926	861	198.905			
R2 = .192 (Adjusted R Squared = .163)						

The main effect of experimental group membership on posttest sociopolitical control score was significant, and therefore the null hypothesis that the DYN intervention results in equal adjusted mean post-scores for sociopolitical control was rejected, $F(1, 861) = 10.305$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .012$. As expected, sociopolitical control pretest scores were found to have a significant main effect on posttest scores with a large effect size, $F(1, 861) = 139.140$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .139$. This finding indicates that the level of sociopolitical control a student has before engaging with DYN or participating in the control group is highly correlated with the sociopolitical control at posttest. No additional main effects were found, indicating that students did not vary significantly in their posttest score due only to the effect of any sociodemographic variables.

One significant interaction effect was found between Nonhispanic Black and experimental group, $F(1, 861) = 6.009$, $p = .014$, partial $\eta^2 = .007$. After controlling for pretest place attachment scores, Nonhispanic Black students engaging with DYN had significantly higher posttest scores than their peers. Figure 3 illustrates the variance in posttest scores across groups by race/ethnicity. Estimated marginal means of posttest scores for Nonhispanic Black students in the control group are almost 10 points higher than scores of Nonhispanic Black students in the control group. In the control group, Nonhispanic Black students' posttest scores fall below their Nonhispanic White and Hispanic/Latinx peers, and are less than a point higher than their peers who are of other Nonwhite races/ethnicities. However, posttest

Figure 3

Posttest SPC Estimated Marginal Means by Race/Ethnicity



sociopolitical control scores of Nonhispanic Black students in the treatment group are 2.96 points higher than their peer group with the closest posttest score, Nonhispanic (Other). This suggests that the effect of the intervention is greater for Nonhispanic Black students than their peers such that it overcomes potential baseline differences exhibited in the control group.

Qualitative Insights from Student Focus Groups

Place Attachment.

In focus groups, students reflected on how their city and neighborhoods have changed across time. Their interpretation of these changes offers insights into their place attachment. For example, an 8th grade student described how they have watched the city change over the years: “I head from [neighborhood] on the bus to [school] every day, so like, I see like the differences between the different communities I go through every day, and like, see the changes that have happened in the past 8 years.” Another student similarly reflected on the changes they’ve seen, noting “in some parts you see like small little homes and then you see these giant buildings and it’s like, oh my god, what has Nashville turned into?”

Students also offered insights regarding the sources of changes they see in Nashville. For example, one group of students discussed how affluent White people in Nashville were exacerbating the displacement of people of color and people with low incomes from their neighborhoods:

Student 1: Nashville used to be a really low income place I remember, but now it's becoming more expensive. Especially people for that can't afford it.

Student 2: I think what she's saying is Nashville, especially North Nashville and West Nashville was a lot of African American people with low incomes.

Student 1: And South.

Student 2: And South. And now it's been more White Americans moving in those homes and building them bigger and taller.

Student 3: What they are basically saying is White people are changing the world. They trying to change Nashville kind of make it a better place where their people can come and do more.

In another focus group, students framed similar reflections using language they'd learned in DYN the curriculum, describing the impacts of gentrification and displacement as Nashville rapidly expands.:

Student 1: So higher-income people and White Americans are changing the way that Nashville is—and making us move to like, [suburb of Nashville] and stuff.

Student 2: Yeah, making people live further out, gentrification.

Student 3: And I feel like higher-income people aren't really thinking about the low-income people's lives after their neighborhood has been gentrified.

Student 2: They're not thinking about what the effects of them living in that neighborhood is...

Student 3: Like "I'm about to build a bigger house," not thinking "hope it doesn't affect you." They don't even think about it, even though there is ways to go about it to where it doesn't have to affect us so much.

In both instances, students are reflecting on how changes impact their place attachment and sense of belonging. They question who is driving change in Nashville, who stands to benefit, and who will be most impacted by changes, namely gentrification and displacement, as Nashville grows. Students also reflected on how approaches to urban development that are

often thought to mitigate the negative impacts of gentrification still threaten their place attachment. For instance, when discussing mixed-income development, one student shared that people with high incomes “aren’t going to want to live around a whole bunch of, in their words, ghetto people. I don’t think they will. So, mixing us in one neighborhood won’t change anything. It’s just not going to be a comfortable environment. For us.”

Students’ desire to maintain place attachment despite rapid changes was demonstrated through discussions of their futures in Nashville. Many students described hopes that the city would grow in ways that could accommodate them as adults. For instance, one student noted, “I want to stay here and have Nashville be more affordable so I could actually provide something, say if I have like kids, I can actually provide for them.” Another group of students discussed their fears that Nashville would change in ways that would cause the city to feel unrecognizable to them as adults:

Student 1: To be honest. Like, I really haven’t been saying nothing about it, but it’s really like kinda getting to me because, like, right now as us being kids, it’s like we don’t care. But I’m scared that when I get older, we might go back to the neighborhood and be like, “what is this? We didn’t grow up in this.”

Student 2: Plus, knowing some of us, some of us are going to have children. We’re gone want to go back and be like “we grew up in this neighborhood” or “we grew up in that neighborhood,” but going back and seeing that we can’t, we can’t go back and show them, that’s gonna hurt me. A lot.

This hope that Nashville would continue to feel like home in the future was echoed by students who expressed concern that, if rapid growth continued, Nashville would lose some of its cultural vibrancy. For instance, one student shared, “we lose so much culture and diversity in Nashville when we get rid of houses and restaurants and businesses just ‘cause they are a little old. It’s the people that create the culture and diversity, so I just want people besides just us to care instead of just plowing over them.”

Students described ways that the curriculum itself contributed to their learning in ways that have implications for place attachment. They discussed the benefit of community surveying and neighborhood audits that created space to “get our neighbors’ perspective” and “step back... look around and think about what we want Nashville to be like.” Students who lived in areas facing displacement described “learning how to talk about what is happening in my neighborhood,” and “put[ting] words to what I see every day.” Alternatively, students in more affluent communities described the curriculum as “eye-opening for me, since I don’t face that struggle.” Overall, students gained insight into the problems that threaten place attachment for youth, noting, “it wasn’t until this project that I learned this happens every day in Nashville, kids just don’t talk about it.”

Sociopolitical Control. In discussions about their perceptions of the curriculum and their capacity for making change through action civics, students offer insights into their sociopolitical control. Many students expressed a sense that adults were not adequately addressing social problems they had learned about and sought to address through the DYN curriculum. For example, a group of students discussed potential causes for what they see as a lack of action on improving Nashville’s transit system:

Student 1: People really hate the transit and want to see it fixed like immediately but they don’t really know, like, don’t give ideas on how to do it, just say, I want it fixed. So, it shows that people will want a new solution, but they are not gonna provide any help to make one.

Interviewer: Why not?

Student 1: They are just not educated on it.

Student 2: I guess they think they’re like, one person in like a city that it’s like, is almost like a million people now. So, they think they won’t be able to make a change. So, they don’t like to let their voice be heard.

Through speculating that change in Nashville's transit system has been stalled by citizens' lack of efficacy in engaging effectively in the policy sphere, these youth are pointing to elements of sociopolitical control that are crucial for driving positive social change as Nashville grows.

Other students pointed to a lack of leadership competence that might exacerbate social problems in Nashville, noting that adults don't get involved because they "think that someone else is going to make the solution." Students also pointed to a lack of perspective-taking as a potential factor:

I feel like a lot of times people don't care about an issue unless it actually affects them. Like, when we're talking to people who are pedestrians, they would talk about the problems that pedestrians have, but if we talked to the people that have a car, they talk about the problems that people with cars have, they wouldn't talk about the other side.

Many students described the perspective that young people bring to decision-making about Nashville's communities, and the barriers youth face to having their voices heard. For example, one student described a general lack of diversity in conversations about change-making:

Usually, we hear about all these older White people's generations and what was important to them, what they did, what they were affected by. But I never really hear the same thing from other diverse places and people...Like, how did you feel about this? And you might not even hear the same story, because I feel like this tension, I guess, some type of like, separation between the races. And it's not helpful in making changes.

Here, students are reflecting on how both racial and generational diversity in perspectives are crucial for promoting positive social change in the city. Some student described feeling doubly marginalized in conversations and decision making about Nashville due to their identities as young people and people of color:

Student 1: It's your sense of authority. Like if we was a police officer, a teacher, if we could vote, then it would feel like [adults] would listen. But since we kids, I don't think they would listen.

Student 2: I don't really wanna say this but a lot of impact is on our skin color, because our skin color has gone through a lot and we've got a lot of history. And I just feel like it's coming back. That's just how I feel.

Despite a sense that cultural norms require that youth are "seen and not heard," students shared unique experiences that make them well-positioned to support positive social change in their communities. For instance, one student argued that "youth also care more, because we're the ones that are facing these problems. And we're the ones who are going to be left with the problems. So, we're fixing it now that it's like, reducing kind of the issue that's at hand...the older generations, sorry, are kind of like, 'well, it's not going to be our problem.'"

Youth described many elements of the DYN curriculum that may have contributed to their sociopolitical control. For example, two students in a class that installed crosswalks as part of the art curriculum shared how their design work contributed to incremental change:

Student 1: We are like putting in installments that are addressing the issues, and getting like people with the power that we were talking about before, like lawmakers and politicians, to actually listen to what the community wants.

Student 2: Yeah, that's what I think as well. It is more about getting the word out and letting it grow little by little.

Many youth noted that DYN helped them understand their role in addressing local issues. For example, when discussing results of a community research process in which they discovered the unique challenges posed by differing modes of transportation, students noted that a lack of perspective-taking impacts community members' ability to "see the big picture in the struggle between traffic and people." Another student shared a similar reflection about housing:

If we are educated about it that's huge. I feel like people don't think that housing is this big of a problem because I didn't really think that like I knew it was expensive, but I didn't think it was like this big of a problem. But like after this, unit, like, I think like more people have realized that this is a big problem we need to work towards to end it or like help improve it.

Finally, students' reflections on their final project presentations at the DYN Student Showcase reflect their burgeoning sense of their leadership competence and policy control. Many students discussed the importance of sharing what they learned with adults through "present[ing] what we were learning about and show[ing] them we actually know what we're talking about when it comes to making Nashville a good place."

Discussion

The present study aimed to assess the effect of a place-based action civics curriculum on place attachment and sociopolitical control among middle school students enrolled in a quasi-experimental mixed-methods study of the Design Your Neighborhood intervention, and offer insights into sociodemographic variation among post-test place attachment and sociopolitical control scores.

Results of the factorial ANCOVA for place attachment indicated that there was no significant difference between the treatment and control groups in terms of their posttest scores on place attachment. This finding is unexpected given the existing research which suggests that place-based interventions, such as community-based initiatives or place-based education program that let youth explore and interact with their physical environments, can increase place attachment (Kudryavtsev et al., 2012; Olesy & Wnuk, 2017). The finding that White students have higher posttest place attachment scores than their Nonhispanic Black peers, Hispanic/Latinx peers, and peers of other races/ethnicities has important implications for understanding sociodemographic variability in place attachment. Race/ethnicity is associated with place attachment in this model both as a main effect and an interaction effect, meaning that White students have higher place attachment whether or not they engage with the placed-

based action civics curriculum. Plots of estimated marginal means suggest that engaging with the curriculum may compound White students' place attachment scores, but not increase the scores of their peers. This may reflect variation in neighborhood experiences across groups. Students of color may face structural barriers such as poverty, discrimination, and residential segregation at greater rates than their White peers. This may limit their ability to form strong attachments to their communities (Rankin & Quane, 2002). These structural barriers may also explain why engaging with the placed-based action civics curriculum does not have a significant impact on Nonhispanic Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and other students of colors' place attachment scores.

The significant main effect for experimental group membership in the sociopolitical control model indicates that students who participated in the curriculum had higher posttest sociopolitical control scores than their peers in the control group. Participating in the DYN curriculum may have fostered a greater understanding of the social and political structures that influence civic issues and the power dynamics involved, which may have increased students' efficacy in contributing to positive social change. This finding is consistent with previous research that has demonstrated the potential of action civics to foster a sense of agency and empowerment among students (Ballard et al., 2016; LeCompte et al., 2021), but it is unique in that this is the first study to employ a quasi-experimental design to test if place-based action civics has the potential to foster psychological empowerment. Additionally, one significant interaction effect was found, which indicated that Nonhispanic Black students engaging with DYN had significantly higher posttest scores than their peers. This study is the first to empirically examine differences in psychological empowerment following an intervention

among middle school youth of color, and demonstrates that there may be variability in how youth of color experience action civics, with Nonhispanic Black students being more positively impacted by the curriculum than their peers. This outcome may reflect variation in the way that students experience the course content, as DYN explores disparities in Nashville's built environment that have had the greatest negative impact on African American communities (Plazas, 2018; Thurber, 2021).

As hypothesized, there were no significant differences across gender in students' place attachment or sociopolitical control at posttest. There were also no observed differences in place attachment and sociopolitical control posttest scores across socioeconomic status, despite hypothesized variation in student outcomes. Material hardship and family affluence, which were used in the study as proxy variables for socioeconomic status, did not have a significant effect on student place attachment and sociopolitical control scores. This finding is interesting considering previous research that has demonstrated that individuals with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to experience a sense of powerlessness and have low perceptions of control over their lives (Lechner et al., 2018; Torres-Vega, 2021). Similarly, individuals living in economically disadvantaged communities tend to have weaker place attachment (Bailey et al., 2012). The lack of an interaction effect may be due to the effect of the DYN intervention. Recent research has shown that positive youth development contexts with where youth are united in common cause can increase students' expected sociopolitical participation in ways that do not vary across socioeconomic status (Salado et al., 2022). Similarly, research has shown that place-based interventions can increase place attachment for people living in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty (Ahlin et al., 2015;

Zimmerman & Farrell, 2017). Another explanation for the lack of significant effects may be related to the measurement of socioeconomic status in the study. While material hardship and family affluence are useful proxy measures of socioeconomic status that youth can answer more readily than questions related to family income, they may not fully capture the complexity of the socioeconomic factors that impact place attachment and sociopolitical control.

Qualitative findings support the results of the factorial ANCOVAs, highlighting instances in which the DYN curriculum appears to have contributed to students' place attachment and sociopolitical control. In focus groups, students shared reflections related to place attachment, noting the many changes they had seen in Nashville. Students' recognition of gentrification and residential displacement as sources of this change reflect a growing level of critical consciousness related to equity in the built environment (Morgan & Christens, 2023). Their hope that Nashville will continue to feel like home, and their fear that it may become unrecognizable as it rapidly grows, suggests that their place attachment is also tied to their understanding of Nashville's cultural identity (Lewicka et al., 2010). Students also reflected on approaches to urban development that are meant to combat displacement and support place attachment, but they did so with skepticism. Students' shared concerns that mixed-income development could ultimately threaten their already precarious residential stability and local ties, both of which are central to place attachment development (Scannell & Gifford, 2018; Mesch & Manor, 1998). Students' reflections illustrate a growing sense of how neighborhood identity and social identity intersect (Morgan, 2010). Students also reflected on several curricular elements that may have implications for increasing place attachment, which indicates

that engaging in DYN may have supported them in developing a stronger connection to their city, despite the rapid change they are experiencing as Nashville grows.

Students also shared reflections related to sociopolitical control, describing how they developed efficacy in understanding their role in addressing local issues and developed motivation for civic participation (Lardier et al., 2018). The curriculum appears to have offered some youth tools for sociopolitical engagement, despite the barriers to traditional forms of civic participation they face as youth (Watts & Flanagan, 2007). For example, students discussed instances when their design work contributed to incremental change and helped them educate adults about local issues. Other students reflected on elements of their identities that made meaningful civic participation difficult. They voiced frustrations with a perceived lack of action by adults in understanding and addressing social problems they learned about through the DYN curriculum. Many students expressed adults were not adequately addressing social issues, especially as they relate to Nashville's housing and transit system. Students struggled to make inroads for enacting the changes they want to see in their communities due to their age, and sometimes due to their race or ethnicity. They discussed how elements of their identity gave them unique insights for how to make the city better and also made it difficult to gain a seat at the table. This may reflect the bi-dimensional nature of sociopolitical control; students believe that teaching adults is their most viable pathway to social change, which suggests growth in leadership competence, but they struggle to envision themselves as actors with political power, which suggests barriers to policy control (Morgan & Christens, 2023).

Chapter 6

Study 2 Analytic Approach, Results, and Discussion

To understand which individual- and classroom-level factors are associated with variance in student change scores for place attachment and sociopolitical control, a two-level hierarchical linear model was run. Results offer insights into the extent to which change in place attachment and sociopolitical control varies across schools, and reveals the relationship between change in both outcome variables and a range of sociodemographic factors. These models account for the potential impact of features of the classroom context and teacher dispositions on students' growth in place attachment and sociopolitical control. These results are paired with teachers' narratives about their implementation experiences and how engaging their students in place-based action civics shaped their teaching practices as they relate to place attachment and sociopolitical control.

Analytic Approach

Quantitative data were analyzed in SPSS Version 29 using the mixed models function for hierarchical linear modeling. Qualitative data were analyzed in MaxQDA 2022.5 through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Quantitative Analysis

Two sets of hierarchical linear models were run to understand if change in student place attachment and sociopolitical control scores vary significantly across DYN classrooms. HLM was well-suited for this data because it allows for clustering and accounts for the similarities that may exist within schools and classrooms (Heck et al., 2022). By accounting for the distribution

of outcomes across classrooms and schools, HLM offers insight into the settings that are best situated for promoting positive outcomes through action civics (Ballard et al., 2016). Given the structure of the data, with students nested within schools and classrooms, variables were modeled at two levels: students (n=957) at level 1 and classrooms (n=46) at level 2. While classrooms are nested within schools in this dataset, a third level was not possible due to the small number of schools (n=23) and the variability in the number of students engaged in the study within each school, which ranged from 3 to 184 (Heck et al., 2022; Raudenbush & Bryck, 2002). All treatment group students with complete data for the outcome variables who participated in the DYN curriculum between 2018 and 2022 were included in the analysis.

To understand change in students' place attachment and sociopolitical control over the course of their participation in DYN, a change score for place attachment and sociopolitical control were calculated. Change scores functioned as the dependent variable in the two models. Change scores were calculated by subtracting the posttest score from the pretest score for treatment group participants. Change scores are well-suited for understanding growth in the treatment group because they offer an unbiased estimate of individual change for repeated measures (Jennings & Cribbie, 2016). Positive change scores indicate growth in the construct of interest from pretest to posttest, while negative change scores indicate decline.

Table 11 represents the multilevel diagram for this study. To understand the relationship between change in place attachment score and a range of individual sociodemographic factors, gender, race/ethnicity, material hardship, and family affluence were included as level-1 predictor variables. To understand if features of classroom contexts and teacher dispositions moderate the relationship between change scores and individual

demographic characteristics, two classroom-level variables were added into each model. To account for classroom context, teacher scores on the Civic Interactions motivating diVerse Individuals in Classroom Settings (CIVVICS) Observation Tool were added as a predictor variable at level 2. One additional predictor variable was added to each model to account for the potential impact of teacher dispositions on student scores. In the place attachment model, teachers' perceptions of urbanism at pretest were used as a measure of teachers' willingness to move in order to better access resources. This was used as a proxy for their place attachment; teachers who were less willing to move to access resources are exhibiting more place attachment. In the SPC model, teachers' pretest scores for sociopolitical control were used to assess the extent to which teachers' leadership competence and policy control might impact their students. Pretest teacher variables were chosen for each model in order to assess teachers' dispositions at baseline, and only the theoretically linked teacher disposition predictor for each outcome variable was included in order to specify the most parsimonious model possible (i.e., teachers pretest sociopolitical control was not included in the place attachment model and vice versa).

Table 11

Multilevel Diagram for PA and SPC Models

Level	Variable	Values	Measurement
Classroom	Class ID	1 to 47	Ordinal
	CIVVICS Score	15 to 31	Scale
	Pretest Perceptions of Urbanism (PA Model Only)	1.80 to 4.60	Scale
	Pretest Sociopolitical Control (SPC Model Only)	1.2 to 4.60	Scale
Student	Student ID	1 to 957	Ordinal
	Female	0 to 1	Nominal
	Nonhispanic Black	0 to 1	Nominal

Hispanic/Latinx	0 to 1	Nominal
Other (Nonwhite)	0 to 1	Nominal
Material Hardship	0 to 2	Nominal
Family Affluence	3 to 10	Nominal
Place Attachment Change Score (PA Model DV)	-2.78 to 3.22	Scale
Sociopolitical Control Change Score (SPC Model DV)	-53.50 to 54.58	Scale

Qualitative Analysis

Triangulation of Teacher Feedback Tool data (both interview and survey versions) with multilevel models allows for a deeper understanding of the curriculum’s impact on both teachers and students. Data were analyzed in MaxQDA 2022.5 to generate an iterative codebook by applying inductive codes to the data. A thematic analysis was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2012) by drawing on questions from the Teacher Feedback Tool to develop initial thematic domains. Two questions from the Teacher Feedback Tool were examined independently to describe themes within and across interviews: 1) “Describe your experiences teaching DYN” and 2) “What did you learn about your own teaching practice through this experience?” Responses from both the interview and open-ended survey version of the Tool were included in the analysis. After structurally coding the data to each question of interest, I revised and organized the codebook themes that fell within the domains constructed through the two questions of interest for this analysis: teachers’ implementation experiences and what they learned about their teaching practice through implementation. This round of coding revealed particular affordances and constraints that were salient for DYN teachers during their implementation period. I then coded for links between teachers’ reflections and the student-level constructs of interest in the study: place attachment and sociopolitical control. Responses were examined for patterns across teachers, as well as teacher, classroom, and school-specific contrasts. I shared a short report of preliminary findings with my community partner, who

served as a critical friend (Kember et al., 1997). I integrated their reflections and contextual knowledge to enhance the trustworthiness of the data and to enrich my findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Results

Hierarchical Linear Models

Table 12 presents the results of two-level hierarchical linear models, both with a randomly varying intercept and randomly varying slopes, fitted using maximum likelihood estimation.

Table 12*Multilevel Models Depicting Change Scores for PA and SPC Classrooms*

	Place Attachment						Sociopolitical Control					
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β (SE)	<i>p</i>	β (SE)	<i>p</i>	β (SE)	<i>p</i>	β (SE)	<i>p</i>	β (SE)	<i>p</i>	β (SE)	<i>p</i>
Intercept	.376 (.073)***		1.243 (.177)***		2.168 (.495)***		7.948 (.965)***		2.660 (3.259)		10.075 (7.436)	
Female			-.046 (.056)		-.043 (.060)				3.218 (1.065)**		3.264 (1.066)**	
Nonhispanic Black			-.851 (.082)***		-.852 (.082)***				5.611 (1.545)***		5.600 (1.544)***	
Hispanic/Latinx			-.958 (.087)***		-.957 (.087)***				1.408 (1.658)		1.410 (1.657)	
Other			-.936 (.083)***		-.936 (.083)***				.766 (1.586)		.811 (1.585)	
Material Hardship			.062 (.063)		.062 (.063)				1.213 (1.193)		1.213 (1.192)	
Family Affluence			-.023 (.020)		-.023 (.060)				.123 (.379)		.126 (.373)	
Teacher CIVVICs Score					-.036 (.018)†						-.248 (.258)	
Teacher Urbanism					-.023 (.060)						—	
Teacher Sociopolitical Control					—						-.451 (.777)	
R2 Marginal/Conditional	.000/.184		.144/.294		.162/.292		.000/.087		.030/.108		.035/.108	
ICC Adjusted/Conditional	.184/.184		.176/.151		.156/.131		.087/.087		.080/.077		.075/.072	
AIC	2581.70		2388.130		2383.977		8053.946		7926.236		7906.928	
BIC	2602.296		2458.762		2462.45		8077.528		7969.848		7982.232	

† $p < .6$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Model 1. First, single-level unconditional models were specified to determine how much of the variance in place attachment and sociopolitical control change scores exists across classrooms. In the place attachment model, the intercept is estimated at .376, which represents an increase of a 1/3 of a point in the grand mean of the change score from pre- to posttest. The intraclass correlation (ICC) provides evidence of substantial clustering of variation in place attachment change scores between classrooms at .184. Intercepts vary significantly across classrooms ($p < .001$) and the ICC suggests that 18.4% of the total variability in place attachment change scores lies between classrooms. In the sociopolitical control model, the intercept is estimated at 7.948, indicating an increase in almost 8 points in the grand mean of the change score from pre- to posttest. The ICC for sociopolitical control is .087, indicating that 8.7% of the variance exists between classrooms. In both cases, ICCs indicate that a multilevel model is warranted to explain the variability within and between classrooms (Heck et al., 2022).

Model 2. Next, single-level models with a fixed level 1 predictor and randomly varying intercepts were built to examine variability in intercepts across classrooms. These models were run to determine if there is evidence of clustering by classroom within the data regarding place attachment and sociopolitical control change scores. Gender, race/ethnicity, material hardship, and family affluence were added to the models as predictors at level 1 to analyze mean change scores in place attachment and sociopolitical control across classrooms controlling for sociodemographic variables. Three significant main effects emerged in the place attachment model: students who are Nonhispanic Black ($\beta = .851$, $SE = .082$, $p > .001$), Hispanic/Latinx ($\beta = .958$, $SE = .087$, $p > .001$), and Other (Nonwhite) ($\beta = .936$, $SE = .083$, $p > .001$), have smaller place attachment change scores than their White peers. The slope for each group of students

indicates that a significant amount of variation in means across classrooms can be attributed to differences in the race of students in those classrooms. The initial variability in place attachment growth scores observed between classrooms is reduced after controlling for the impact of race/ethnicity; the ICC of this model drops to 17.6% from 18.4%. The sociopolitical control model had two significant main effects: students who are female ($\beta = 3.218$, $SE = 1.065$, $p = .002$) and Nonhispanic Black ($\beta = 5.611$, $SE = 1.545$, $P < .001$) have larger change scores than their White and male peers. This accounts for some of the variation across classrooms, as reflected in the ICC decreasing from 8.7% to 8.0%. Across both models, family affluence and material hardship were not significantly associated with growth in change scores on the outcome variable.

Model 3. Finally, two-level models with fixed level 1 and level 2 predictors and randomly varying intercepts were built to account for differences across classrooms in place attachment and sociopolitical control change scores. CIVVICs scores were added to the models as level 2 contextual variables to account for features of the classroom context that might impact students. In the place attachment model, there was a negative trend between CIVVICs scores and change in the outcome variable over time ($\beta = -.036$, $.020$, $p = .052$). In the sociopolitical control model, there was no association between CIVVICs scores and change in the outcome variable. One variable representing a conceptually related teacher disposition at pretest was also added to each model. There was no significant association between growth in change scores for sociopolitical control and place attachment and teachers' pre-test sociopolitical control and perceptions of urbanism scores.

Qualitative Insights

Through action civics, teachers engage their students in exploring and addressing sociopolitical issues in their communities. Adopting DYN introduces unique challenges for teachers as they integrate new curricular approaches (e.g., project-based learning, action civics) and new disciplines (e.g., urban planning, public health) into their teaching practice. These shifts have implications for teachers' place attachment, leadership competence, and policy control.

Place Attachment. Some teachers described how a collective investigation of place helped foster relationships in the classroom. For example, a second-year teacher noted that the project offered her and her students' insights about each other's 'neighborhoods:

Our school buses from two parts of town so it was difficult for me to help students to come together on one topic. We spent a long time just learning about everybody's neighborhoods, figuring out what a neighborhood really meant to everybody before we really got anywhere. ...I realized how much I didn't know, even though it was May, about [my students] and how much they didn't know about each other... I wish I had done this with my kids last year, we missed out on that connection.

DYN offered teachers important insights into their students' experience in place.

In light of this new knowledge, many teachers reflected on their own place attachment and neighborhood experiences. For example, one teacher shared that she "learned about my neighborhood through hearing my students... and just realized that we were coming from really different standpoints and I really couldn't understand as much as I wanted to". Many teachers also shared that their previous experiences with project-based learning did not prepare them for action civics' focus on place-based analysis. For example, one teacher remarked that they "like to teach about real-world issues, but this is the first [city] issue we've covered. I like the local focus more but it's more work on me to educate myself so I can educate them".

Some teachers, especially White teachers and teachers who were relatively new to the area, noted feeling unprepared to engage their students in a critical analysis of place. For example, one White, Alternative Route teacher described a misalignment between her position as an “outsider” in her school neighborhood and her desire to engage her students in action civics:

The [DYN] training was like if you’re gonna talk about a city it means you’re gonna talk about racism, you’re gonna talk about gentrification. In training I was like ‘yes!’, because it was the same stuff we learn in TFA, but the reality of it was hard, because I’m an outsider, I’m not from Nashville, I don’t know enough about the [school] community and the neighborhood.

Other teachers similarly alluded to differences between their place identity and the local issues that the curriculum brought to light. For example, teachers mentioned they were “new to [city], and there were a lot of questions my students had that I didn’t have answers for,” or mentioned that they “grew up in a small town so I felt like I didn’t relate.”

Leadership Competence. The choice to adopt DYN had many implications for teachers’ perceived leadership competence, particularly as it relates to their instructional leadership in the classroom. Many teachers, especially those with a long history of engaging their students in project-based learning, were surprised find that DYN “was deeper than other projects,” “required more than what [they] were used to” and “had way more moving parts.” Given the curriculum’s emphasis on leveraging design as a tool for systems change, a few teachers described feeling “underprepared for the artistic aspect,” of the work and noted that their “kids needed a lot more hands-on support than they do with other projects.” Even a teacher who had engaged students in design-based projects before described a disconnect between her previous

experiences facilitating “gamified projects with students in the past like building a city in Roblox,” noting that DYN “was pretty involved in comparison.”

Teachers also shared that DYN challenged them to push past disciplinary norms. For example, one teacher noted that while “math teachers don’t usually get to bring equity and access into the classroom,” DYN offered such a pathway. Many teachers found their first time implementing DYN to be particularly challenging, especially around exploring topics that are “too sensitive for me to cover well” within their classrooms. They described this feeling as an incongruence between their values and perceived leadership competence, noting that “this is what I’m passionate about my classroom looking like, but it’s not easy.” For example, one teacher described her continued commitment to engaging her student in place-based action civics despite initial challenges:

[Design Your Neighborhood] was a pretty messy unit and didn’t go exactly as planned... but this is the style of learning that I want for my kids, what gets me excited for teaching and gets me out of bed. ...I learned a lot and I’ll do a better job with my next group, but this group of kids still got to really think about their community, what it needs, what it already has that makes it great.

Here, the teacher is simultaneously considering the implications DYN had for her own learning and leadership, her students’ learning and leadership, and her future teaching practice.

Policy Control. Many teachers reflected on how action civics implementation connected to their school’s policies and practices. Some teachers noted that their administrators “were all on board for the project,” and “gave me great review when they came in to evaluate [during DYN].” Some even described leveraging the success of DYN in their classrooms to advocate for more opportunities to engage their students in project-based learning. For example, one teacher shared that “after seeing their design work, it clicked with [her principal] that this is

good for our kids.” Another teacher noted that DYN “showed [administration] that the students could handle it,” which functioned as a source of support for teachers’ ongoing efforts to advocate for more applied, real-world learning opportunities for their students.

However, for some teachers, action civics exacerbated sources of ambiguity and uncertainty already present within their school’s policies, particularly as it related to standardized testing. Teachers shared they were given conflicting messages from their school leadership while trying to carry out action civics. Many noted that their schools are known to “talk up anything and everything PBL to the district,” but in reality, they are “all about testing” and “testing is the number one priority.” They noted being inundated with “nonstop interruptions to instructional time” that made action civics implementation difficult. Teachers also described feeling “overwhelmed, overworked, and underappreciated” by their administrators. These feelings were particularly acute due to standardized testing, where their administrators “expect us to leave our plans at the door and only think about test scores.” Teachers noted that this breach between expectation and reality negatively impacted their implementation of Design Your Neighborhood.

Some teachers shared that competing requirement on their time due to school priorities meant they had to alter the curriculum. For example, one teacher shared that they “rushed through it because of so many unanticipated testing delays and lost a lot of the nuance” or cut parts of the curriculum because of time and subsequently “didn’t get [my students] invested in the social justice aspect.” Teachers reflected on the difficulty they faced in “doing something project-based with the massive amount of work already in play at the end of the year.” Many shared how they were adjusting their expectations for how they would engage their students in

the curriculum in future years, particularly through “planning in the summer and starting before state testing.” and through “getting my kids and parents excited since that’s who [the principal] listens to.”

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the impact of a place-based action civics curriculum on place attachment and sociopolitical control, as well as the individual- and classroom-level factors that may influence the effectiveness of this curriculum.

Individual Factors

Through hierarchical linear modeling, this study identified two individual sociodemographic factors associated with growth in sociopolitical control and place attachment: gender and race/ethnicity.

Place Attachment. The finding that White students grew more in place attachment than their Nonhispanic Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and Other (Nonwhite) peers may be due to both cultural and socio-historical factors. For example, there is some evidence that interventions meant to increase sense of belonging in place impact White college students and not their Nonwhite peers (Hausmann et al., 2009), but there is very little research on demographic variability in place attachment among middle school students. There is, however, evidence that home ownership and long-term residency is significantly associated with place attachment (Brown et al., 2004), and people of color in Nashville are disproportionately impacted by neighborhood displacement in ways that may negatively impact Nonwhite students’ place attachment. Modern-day displacement is situated within a history of racist policies and practices that have made securing long-term housing difficult for people of color in Nashville

(Metro Human Relations Commission, 2020; Thurber, 2021). The cumulative impact of Nashville's long history of racist housing policy may be that youth of color, on average, have a less stable sense of connection to their residential communities.

Sociopolitical Control. The finding that Nonhispanic Black students grew more in sociopolitical control compared to their White peers is unique in studies of sociopolitical control as a construct. Nonhispanic Black student's growth suggests that the DYN intervention creates the conditions of sociopolitical growth among youth of color. Previous research on demographic differences in pathways to civic engagement highlights civic education that centers action-oriented democratic engagement can be a generative space for promoting growth in civic self-efficacy among youth of color (Littenberg & Cohen, 2016). These types of civic experiences may be particularly impactful for young people of color, who may have fewer opportunities to engage in social change efforts at school due to the civic opportunity gap (Chan et al., 2014; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Levinson, 2010; Smith, 2012). Opportunities for school-based civic engagement that are not attuned to structural factors that shape Nonhispanic Black students' lived experiences may not feel relevant for them, and researchers have been calling for civic interventions to attend to the realities of systemic racism (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Kirshner et al., 2003). The finding that Nonhispanic Black students' sociopolitical change scores were larger than change scores of their Hispanic/Latinx peers and other peers who are students of color suggests that elements of the DYN curriculum may be particularly relevant to the lived experiences of Nonhispanic Black students, as the curriculum introduces students to the historical legacies of discriminatory housing policies in historically African American communities and points to both historical and modern-day instances where

African American communities pushed back against residential segregation and displacement. These curricular elements may have particular resonance with Nonshipanic Black students, and may support them in the development of sociopolitical control. .

Research on gender-based differences in sociopolitical control are limited, and this study offers the first insight into gendered variation in growth of sociopolitical control following an intervention. Gender may be related to sense of community and empowerment, as women with higher levels of empowerment tend to participate within organizations and engage in collective decision-making processes, while men with high levels of empowerment are likely to participate as representatives in hierarchical leadership roles (Itzhaky & York, 2000). The finding that girls experienced more growth in sociopolitical control during DYN aligns with this prior research, as action civics employs processes that are participatory and allow for shared decision-making. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests that gender may play a role in shaping civic engagement among youth. Girls are more civically engaged than their male peers, are more likely to participate in activities that promote social change, and express a greater desire to remain civically engaged into adulthood (Malin et al., 2015b). Despite being more involved as youth, gender gaps in political participation widen as youth enter young adulthood (Wray-Lake et al., 2020). DYN may decrease this gap; girls engaging in DYN may benefit from the equity focus of action civics, and may be particularly motivated to learn new ways of leveraging their voice to promote social change.

Contextual Factors

HLM also revealed interesting and unanticipated outcomes related to the importance of classroom context in the development of place attachment and sociopolitical control. The

CIVVICs observation tool was used to assess the quality of the classroom environment. Interestingly, in the place attachment model, higher CIVVICs scores were negatively trending with growth in students' change scores. The CIVVICs Observation Tool is a validated tool that assesses four domains: Lesson Planning and Implementation, Classroom Interactions, Student Engagement, and Civic Empowerment. The tool was used to understand variation in DYN implementation, and each teacher was assessed during the pretest administration period. Previous research using this tool in action civics classrooms found that classes with lower CIVVICs scores would focus more on knowledge acquisition and employ more teacher-centered instruction, both of which could negatively impact students' civic engagement (Stolte et al., 2011). Given that findings from this study showed either the opposite trend in the place attachment model or no association in the sociopolitical control model, it is possible that observer bias and/or observer effect influenced the scores attributed to each classroom. Additionally, observations took place in both virtual and in-person classrooms as DYN transitioned to virtual learning during the pandemic, although the CIVVICs tool was only validated for use in school-based settings.

Contrary to hypotheses, the inclusion of data related to teacher dispositions was not found to be significantly associated with student place attachment and sociopolitical control. There was no association found between place attachment and teacher's perceptions of urbanism (a reverse proxy for place attachment), despite previous findings that teachers who are rooted in their community may be more likely to have a deep understanding of the local sociocultural context, which they can use to engage students in place-based education and facilitate students' attachment to their community (Demarest, 2014). There was also no

indication that teachers' pretest sociopolitical control was associated with students' growth in sociopolitical control, although there is evidence that sociopolitical control, like all forms of empowerment, takes place in empowering settings that create space for youth voice in decision-making, and teachers with high levels of sociopolitical control may be better positioned for facilitating youth-adult partnerships (Maton, 2008; Zeldin et al., 2003).

Qualitative Insights

Triangulating qualitative data with hierarchical linear models offers a more nuanced understanding of the curriculum's impact on teachers, and how teacher's experiences with action civics may impact their implementation in ways that are difficult to assess quantitatively. Qualitative insights reveal that DYN introduces unique opportunities and challenges for teachers as they integrate a new curricular approach into their teaching practice. These shifts have implications for teachers' place attachment, leadership competence, and policy control.

Teachers reflected on how their sense of community and perceptions of place influenced how they engaged their students in the curriculum. This suggests that teacher place attachment may be a significant factor in the successful implementation of action civics curricula, particularly in a teachers' first implementation of action civics. Teachers found that action civics fostered relationships in the classroom, and ultimately led them to feel a deeper sense of connection to their school communities. DYN offered teachers important insights into their students' experience in place, which led to teachers reflecting on their own place attachment and neighborhood experiences. However, some teachers, particularly White teachers and those without deep ties to Nashville, initially felt unprepared to engage their students in a critical analysis of place. This suggests teachers may benefit from additional

training and support in order to understand the context of the communities in which their students live. The finding that engaging in action civics offered teachers a space to reflect on their own place attachment and neighborhood experiences is an important contribution to the literature on action civics education and teacher professional development. That teachers drew comparisons between their own experiences and those of their students highlights the potential for action civics to foster meaningful connections between teachers and their students, particularly in the context of a predominantly White teaching force and a Nonwhite student population. This aligns with previous research that suggests teachers who feel connected to the communities in which they work and can connect the curriculum to their students' lived experiences will be more effective at engaging students in authentic civic education (Kahne & Sporte, 2008). Teachers also reflected on ways that DYN impacted their own competence as instructional leaders in their classrooms. Teachers highlight the potential of action civics to challenge the status quo in their classrooms, as engaging in action civics requires experimenting with new teaching methods and challenging traditional power dynamics through student-centered approaches. This represents an important shift away from teacher-centered banking models of education that are not responsive to students' lived experiences (Freire, 2018). There may also be baseline differences in leadership competence across teachers who choose to teach DYN and those who do not. Teachers with high levels of leadership competence may be more likely to seek opportunities to engage their students in models of learning that required them to engage in youth-adult partnerships, sharing power with students and allowing them to guide their learning through local investigations (Zeldin et al., 2005). In

either case, by empowering their students to take an active role in their own learning and civic engagement, DYN teachers promote more equitable and democratic classrooms.

Finally, teachers reflected on instances in which implementing DYN may have offered opportunities to develop or deepen their policy control. Some teachers noted that their successful implementation of DYN provided a pathway to advocate for more project-based learning opportunities in their classrooms and schools. By being able to effect change in policies related to students' experiential learning opportunities, teachers may feel a greater sense of agency in addressing other structural issues within the school system. Alternatively, many teachers recognized that policy decisions outside of their control could impact the implementation of DYN. The public school system is highly bureaucratic, and teachers have to navigate a complex system of policies and practices that can limit their ability to employ applied and experiential pedagogies like DYN (Kornbluh et al., 2015). Teachers who continued with the curriculum despite logistical challenges and resistance from administrators may push past feelings of frustration and disempowerment due to their deep commitment to incorporating action-oriented learning in their classrooms. In this way, remaining committed to the curriculum despite challenges may reflect teachers' growth in sociopolitical control.

Taken together, these findings suggest that place-based action civics can be an effective instructional strategy for promoting students' place attachment and sociopolitical control. The effectiveness of the DYN curriculum is influenced by a range of individual- and classroom-level factors that should be taken into consideration when designing and implementing action civics programs. Teachers' reflections suggest that place-based action civics may have broader positive impacts on their teaching practice and on the schools in which they are nested, but

teaching action civics is not without challenges. Understanding these challenges may help inform future efforts to support teachers in implementing innovative curricular approaches.

Chapter 7

Conclusion, Positionality, Limitations, Implications, and Future Directions

In this concluding chapter, I synthesize the findings of Study One and Study Two, offering conclusions that can be drawn from the dissertation as a whole. I then discuss elements of my positionality that influenced the research process, consider limitations present in both studies, and highlight overarching implications for practice. Throughout, I outline possibilities for future research on sociopolitical control and place attachment both within and outside of the field of action civics.

Conclusion

In Study 1, results of the factorial ANCOVA for sociopolitical control indicate that the DYN intervention had a significant main effect on students' sociopolitical control overall, and Nonhispanic Black students engaging with DYN had significantly higher posttest scores than their peers. The curriculum's exploration of disparities in Nashville's built environment, which have disproportionately affected African American communities, may have contributed to this finding. The qualitative insights from this study further support these findings, with students reflecting on their increased understanding of local issues and their role in addressing them. Alternatively, the place attachment ANCOVA model did not illustrate a significant main effect between the treatment and control groups in terms of posttest scores on place attachment, but did reveal that White students had higher posttest place attachment scores compared to their Nonhispanic Black peers, Hispanic/Latinx peers, and peers of other races/ethnicities, regardless of their participation in DYN. This variation across racial and ethnic groups highlights the impact of race/ethnicity on place attachment, as students of color may face structural barriers such as

poverty, discrimination, and residential segregation which limit their ability to form strong attachments to their communities. Qualitative insights reveal students' concerns about displacement and loss of cultural identity as Nashville rapidly grows.

Study 2 further explores the impact of individual and contextual factors on sociopolitical control and place attachment using HLM. Findings highlight the influence of sociodemographic factors on students' growth in both constructs. Consistent with findings from Study One, Nonhispanic Black students, Hispanic/Latinx students, and other students of color exhibit less growth in place attachment than their White peers, which may be attributed to inequity in the built environment that disproportionately impacts students of color. Nonhispanic Black students, on the other hand, experienced more growth in sociopolitical control than their White peers, suggesting that place-based action civics may create the conditions for promoting growth in feelings of efficacy in addressing issues in the built environment among youth who have been the most deeply impacted by neighborhood displacement in Nashville. Female students also showed more growth in sociopolitical control than their male peers, which aligns with previous research on gender differences in civic engagement. The classroom context and teacher dispositions were not found to be significantly associated with student outcomes, but further research is needed to explore these factors in greater depth. Qualitative findings offered some insights into differences across schools and classrooms that did not show up in the HLM. These include reflections on teachers' readiness to support their students in local investigations due to their own attachment to the school community, and insights into how challenging traditional power dynamics through student-centered approaches and advocating

for more project-based learning opportunities in their classrooms and schools impacted their sociopolitical control.

This dissertation contributes significantly to the literature as the first examination that explores place attachment and sociopolitical control in a place-based action civics intervention, employs a quasi-experimental longitudinal mixed-methods research design, and engages teachers in an evaluation of their growth while engaging their students in action civics. Taken together, findings of these studies reveal important sociodemographic variations in place attachment and sociopolitical control, contribute to the growing body of knowledge on these positive developmental constructs and highlight the importance of considering demographic and contextual factors in designing and implementing place-based interventions with youth.

Positionality

I have been involved in the Design Your Neighborhood curriculum since its inception. Because of my background as an English teacher and my interest in curriculum design, I was an active contributor to the Curriculum Writing Team during the DYN curriculum development and piloting process. It was through co-writing the DYN curriculum and leading the pilot evaluation that I saw how my interests in progressive education and action-oriented, community-based research could converge through doctoral training. My longstanding connection to the curriculum and my lived experience as a former English teacher informs and introduces bias into my examination of DYN that is important to acknowledge.

Dual Roles

Throughout this research, I have played a dual role, both shaping the DYN intervention and leading the DYN evaluation. There are many ethical considerations necessary when

functioning as both a co-designer of an intervention and as a researcher studying the impact of said intervention. My contributions to the action civics literature demonstrate that I do not seek to promote DYN in particular or action civics in general as the most effective youth-oriented approach to social change. Instead, my scholarship largely argues that while DYN is one mechanism for increasing youth voice in schools, features of the model are insufficient for engaging youth in long-term social change efforts (Morgan et al., 2022) or supporting youth's critical action (Morgan & Christens, in press). I have applied these critiques of DYN to the larger field of action civics through comparative case studies with other curricula (Morgan & Ballard, in press). Through this research, I aim to contribute to an understanding of how and where civic learning and development happens. I also aim to use this research to design better interventions that support civic learning and development among youth. To that end, my research benefits from variation in civic and educational outcomes that are illustrated in the quantitative data, as well as variations in students' and teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of DYN in supporting civic learning and development that are illustrated in the qualitative data. Despite my connection to the curriculum, I am equally interested in both instances when DYN supports civil learning and development and instances when it fails to do so, as the latter raises new empirical and pedagogical questions.

Intersectional Identity

I also bring my multiple and intersecting identities into my research on DYN. I am a White woman with experience as an English teacher in an urban school in the southeastern United States. My research is filtered through the lens of these identities. Because this research is school-based, I share a unique set of experiences with participating teachers. I also share

many intersections of identity with the majority of teachers in the workforce and in my sample due to my race, gender, and occupational experiences. This places me somewhere in the middle of the insider/outsider research continuum, with insiders being a part of the group under study and outsiders being unaffiliated with the group (Louis & Bartunek, 1992). Having a teaching background offers unique insights into school and classroom contexts and helps me build a positive relationship with DYN teachers. However, to equate their teaching experiences with my own would be reductionist and essentializing. Awareness of how my identity introduces bias helps me approach this research reflexively, enhancing the trustworthiness of my findings and supporting my capacity to evaluate Design Your Neighborhood with trustworthiness and credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Limitations

Findings from this study should be interpreted in light of limitations caused by 1) elements of the study design and selected measurements, 2) the impact of COVID-19 on the intervention and the study, and 3) the contextual considerations related to the place-based nature of action civics.

Design and Measurement

The current study offers a snapshot into a just a few potential pathways for sociopolitical control and place attachment development. Findings presented here include just two outcomes of interest and seven conceptually related potential predictor variables. There are many additional possible predictors of place attachment and sociopolitical control within the larger dataset from which this study was derived. Findings from this study also illuminate new potential predictors of sociopolitical control that might be included as the DYN study

continues. Future research can explore new patterns in the development of sociopolitical control and place attachment among youth involved in action civics interventions.

Due to unequal group sizes across classrooms and schools, the current dataset only allowed for two levels of analysis: individual and classroom. This limits exploration of contextual factors in students' schools and neighborhoods and macro-influences in society that impact youth in their social change efforts (Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Rappaport, 1987). Future research should attend to features at multiple ecological levels that may promote sociopolitical control and place attachment. Understanding these features is important for creating the conditions for youth-driven collective action and social change.

Reliance on self-report measures to assess familial socioeconomic status introduces an important limitation. Although the Material Hardship Scale and the Family Affluence Scale are widely used and validated, they may not fully capture the complexity of socioeconomic status as it relates to place attachment and sociopolitical control. For example, these scales may not capture variability in residential instability, rapid population growth and displacement, or macro-level trends, such as recessions or the socioeconomic challenges introduced by the pandemic. As a result, students' socioeconomic status may not be fully represented in the study. Future research could benefit from incorporating additional measures of socioeconomic status, such as parents' education level or occupation. Similarly, the present study found that higher CIVVICs scores were either not associated with or negatively associated with growth in students' change scores. These findings may have been due to observer bias, observer effect, and/or the tool's ability to accurately capture the dynamics of virtual classrooms. To address these issues, future studies should triangulate classroom observations using the CIVVICs tool

with other measures, including students' assessment of their learning environment, teachers' reflections on the pedagogical elements included in the CIVVICs tool, and researcher observations using the CIVVICs tool that take place both before and during the intervention.

Impacts of the Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the implementation of Design Your Neighborhood and the data collection for this study as middle schools experienced closures and transitioned to remote learning. This may have impacted the quality of the data collected, as students' experiences during the pandemic may have influenced their perceptions of place attachment and sociopolitical control. The pandemic has had significant effects on students' mental health, which likely impacted their responses as part of the study. Students of color may have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, leading to differences in their perceptions of place attachment and sociopolitical control (Graham, 2021). The pandemic has also led to changes in how students engage with their communities and their school environment, which could have influenced their sense of place attachment and sociopolitical control (Counted et al., 2021; Saladino et al., 2020). The studies included in this dissertation do not account for variation due to the pandemic, and in the case of the factorial ANCOVA, control-group data was collected from students only in the 2018-2019 school year, before the beginning of the pandemic. Future research should assess variation in experiences and perceptions of DYN and other action civics curricular between students who participated in person and students who participated virtually. This may offer insights into variations in student outcomes across the course of the pandemic.

Contextual Considerations

Finally, all participating treatment group teachers chose to adopt DYN in their classrooms. From a curricular standpoint, this represents a unique strength. Teachers' opportunities for autonomy and control in their classrooms were limited before the pandemic, and curricular standardization has only increased in response to post-pandemic learning loss (Middleton, 2020). From a research perspective, however, the opt-in nature of the intervention and study may limit the generalizability of the findings. This study did not account for baseline differences between teachers in the treatment and control group that may have influenced elements of the classroom context. Many action civics interventions are implemented at scale across a school district without teacher opt-in (e.g., Ballard et al., 2016; Andolina & Conklin, 2018). Because DYN teachers chose to participate, they may have characteristics that differentiate them from teachers implementing other action civics interventions. This limits the external validity of the study and may make it difficult to generalize the findings across all action civics interventions. Future research should assess the extent to which teachers in the DYN treatment and control group exhibit differences that may account for growth in student outcomes of interest. This includes comparison groups of teachers who opted out of the curriculum and teachers who began engaging their students in DYN but could not successfully complete the curriculum. Cross-group comparison may illuminate important patterns related to who engages students in action civics. It may also reveal baseline differences in teacher efficacy across groups. Future research should also follow teachers longitudinally to understand growth trajectories in each subsequent implementation of the DYN curriculum. Understanding how

teachers grow over time as they teach DYN may have important implications for curricular development and training.

Generalizability may also be limited due to the contextual boundedness of place-based action civics. The DYN curriculum is city-specific and addresses the most pressing problems in Nashville's built environment. The effectiveness of the intervention, and therefore the findings of this study, may be influenced by various contextual factors in the built environment, including the availability of community resources, the presence or absence of health-promoting features in the built environment, and the political climate and priorities (Gaston & Kreyling, 2015). Future research should attend to questions of generalizability through comparisons across cities and across action civics curricula to better understand the influence of context on student and teacher outcomes.

Implications for Practice

Taken together, these studies have important implications for 1) teaching pedagogy, 2) education policy, and 3) intervention design.

Teaching Pedagogy

Action civics is a promising practice for supporting educators' commitment to justice-centered and liberatory pedagogies that engage youth in real-world learning and honor youths' lived experiences. However, facilitating this approach to education is a challenging task for teachers, and teachers faced a range of barriers when implementing DYN. They entered their DYN experiences with expectations that the school environments they were embedded in may not adequately support them, but they still participated, which reflects their commitment to providing their students with unique, action-oriented, locally relevant learning experiences.

Teacher's pedagogy may be reciprocally influenced by psychosocial factors like the ones measured in this study. Through DYN, teachers may reflect on their own neighborhood experiences and develop a deeper understanding of their students' communities, reflect on their own teaching practices and leadership styles, experiment with new teaching methods, and challenge traditional power dynamics in the classroom. Future research is needed to evaluate how teachers' learning in action civics contexts translates to efficacy in other domains of their practice. This may include exploring the potential interconnections among place attachment, sociopolitical control, and other outcomes aligned with pedagogical development among teachers, including the development of critical consciousness and the deepening of teachers' commitment to real-world learning.

Variations in action civics project approaches have been found to be associated with variance in youth civic outcomes (Ballard et al., 2016), and findings from this study similarly indicate that variation in teacher's dispositions might impact student outcomes. Findings suggest that the impact of action civics curricula may vary across demographic groups, highlighting the need for educators to be aware of and sensitive to the diverse backgrounds and experiences of their students. This may include paying close attention to the unique experiences of students of color, as findings suggest that they may have a less stable sense of connection to their residential communities, but may also more motivated than their White peers to engage in social change efforts to disrupt these inequities. Teachers may need additional training to prepare for these variations. This may be especially important for White teachers and teachers who are new to the cities in which they teach. Teachers may require support in facilitating curricula that intersect with structural issues that students face in their

daily lives and teaching about structural oppression in the built environment. As such training is implemented, future research should assess the impact of teachers' participation in it on their pedagogy and practice. Future research may also explore the potential value of incorporating place-based curricular approaches into teacher education programs. Creating space for pre-service teachers to explore their relationship to place and to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to support students in engaging in social change efforts could simultaneously support preservice teachers' critical consciousness and increase their efficacy in teaching in ways that are applied, student-centered, and culturally responsive.

The Communities of Practice model offers one approach to supporting teacher pedagogy in action civics. Action civics intermediary organizations could host these learning communities across several participating schools as an optional resource for support before, during, and after curricular implementation. Participating in a Community of Practice may support teachers in their growth through providing a space for teachers to reflect on their own learning, enhance their pedagogical practices, and deepen their commitment to place-based, action-oriented learning. By fostering collaboration and the exchange of ideas, these learning communities might go beyond supporting teachers to act as an advisory committee for action civics intermediaries to gain feedback to continuously improve the curricular resources they provide in ways that are responsive teachers' needs.

Education Policy

Policymakers have a vested interest in intervening in order to alleviate the civic opportunity gap in order to fulfill their mission of ensuring a functioning democracy (Shapiro & Brown, 2018). Closing the civic opportunity gap through supporting the implementation of

action civics is a politically expedient issue with bipartisan support. Despite the demonstrated promise of action civics and longstanding local support within partnering school districts, federal and state education policy poses an ever-increasing threat to action civics implementation.

At the federal level, action civics faces barriers rooted in the legacy of neoliberalism on schooling, particularly a hyper-focus on curricular standardization and high stakes testing. This often occurs at the expense of empowering civic experiences, which are shortened or eliminated in favor of focusing on test-taking strategies and content (Kornbluh et al., 2015). This negatively impacts action civics implementation, which relies on students being given the time and resources to explore topics in depth and to collaborate with their peers on meaningful projects. Recently, conservative policies that oppose critical race theory have threatened the implementation of action civics. For example, Tennessee passed a bill in 2021 that bans discussions of systemic racism and White privilege, both of which are deeply connected to the inequities in Nashville's built environment that DYN students learn about and seek to disrupt. Tennessee lawmakers are now considering a bill that would expand who can report the instruction of prohibited concepts to include groups without direct connections to schools (Aldrich, 2023). If passed, this policy could have a profound chilling effect on the implementation of action civics in the state.

As the field of study on action civics intervention grows, additional consideration of academic outcomes associated with action civics participation are needed. If real-world learning is to be politicized in conservative states, evidence for the academic benefits of action civics on participating students and schools may curb the chilling effect that these policies have.

Large action civics intermediary organizations have already begun aggressive lobbying efforts as they seek to expand nationwide, but rigorous research that speaks to outcomes beyond the psychosocial realm seems increasingly necessary for overcoming barriers to implementation posed by competing demands on schools' time and opposition from conservative political groups.

Intervention Design

This study offers insights into the impact of the Design Your Neighborhood curriculum as it expands into new communities. As a community-based participatory research project, uncovering instances in which DYN contributed to student growth and helping the curriculum achieve scale is a central goal of this multi-year evaluation. The finding that students of color and girls grew significantly in their sociopolitical control after completing the curriculum has implications for DYN and other action civics intermediaries seeking to design culturally responsive civic education interventions that provide opportunities for authentic civic participation. The approach the DYN took to co-creating the curriculum with teachers who were deeply engaged in their communities and committed to culturally responsive pedagogy may have contributed to the gains students experienced. Action civics intermediaries may look to DYN as a model for building locally relevant curricula that accounts for demographic variability in outcomes and systemic factors that shape students' lived experiences. Future research should explore the mechanisms underlying these findings to support program improvement. This can be accomplished by investigating the extent to which specific instructional elements of DYN support place attachment, sociopolitical control, and other outcomes of interest as the study evolves.

Findings from this study will also offer the DYN team important insight into elements of the curriculum that must be improved to support more equitable student outcomes. Specifically, given the knowledge that students of color trail their White peers in place attachment, the DYN team can seek ways to improve the curriculum in order to support youth of color in developing a stronger sense of connection to their community. Such shifts have already begun, as preliminary findings prompted the Civic Design Center to include a culture-building lesson in the curriculum that had students critically deconstruct the idea of a “good neighborhood” and a “bad neighborhood.” Additional steps to build attachment among students of color may include celebrating stories of resistance to displacement taken by communities of color in Nashville, or highlighting instances where community activists have preserved neighborhood identity in spite of gentrification. As these changes are implemented, more research will be required to assess their impact.

This study has implications beyond school-based action civics curricula. Findings illustrate the importance of civic engagement programs and interventions that prioritize youth voice, community engagement, and real-world application to foster growth in sociopolitical control and place attachment. If trends toward standardization and censorship in school policy and practice continue, action civics may no longer be well-suited for school-based implementation. This will require action civics intermediaries to explore the possibility of moving their programming to community contexts that can support psychological empowerment and civic engagement among youth. Future research can expand on these findings by examining growth in a range of positive developmental outcomes when action civics is implemented in other empowering community settings. By doing so, the field will benefit

from new insights concerning how to design interventions that are inclusive, accessible, and community-based.

References

- Abramowitz, M.J., Blinken, A., & Kuzmich, H. (2018). The democracy project final report. https://www.democracyprojectreport.org/sites/default/files/2018-06/FINAL_POLL_REPORT_Democracy_Project_2018_v5.pdf
- Ahlin, E. M., João, M., & Antunes, L. (2015). Locus of control orientation: Parents, peers, and place. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 44, 1803-1818. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-015-0253-9>
- Aldrich, M.W., (2023, March 17). Tennessee bill would widen who can complain about teaching of banned concepts. *Chalkbeat Tennessee*. <https://tn.chalkbeat.org/2023/3/17/23645451/tennessee-schools-prohibited-concepts-law-legislature>
- Andes, S., Fitzgerald, J. C., Cohen, A. K., & Warren, S. (2021). Teaching students to be political in a nonpartisan way: Reflections from action civics education across red and blue states. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 96(3), 285–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2021.1942707>
- Andolina, & Conklin, H. G. (2021). Cultivating empathic listening in democratic education. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 49(3), 390–417. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2021.1893240>
- Andolina, M. W., & Conklin, H. G. (2018). Speaking with confidence and listening with empathy: The impact of Project Soapbox on high school students. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 46(3), 374-409. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2018.1435324>
- Andolina, M. W., & Conklin, H. G. (2020). Fostering democratic and social-emotional learning in action civics programming: Factors that shape students' learning from Project Soapbox. *American Educational Research Journal*, 57(3), 1203-1240. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219869599>
- Anton, C. E., & Lawrence, C. (2014). Home is where the heart is: The effect of place of residence on place attachment and community participation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 40, 451–461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2014.10.007>
- Atkins, R., & Hart, D. (2019). Neighborhoods, adults, and the development of civic identity in urban youth. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 156–164. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_6
- Atwell, M. N., Bridgeland, J., & Levine, P. (2017). Civic deserts: America's civic health challenge. In *National Conference on Citizenship*. Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, Tufts University.

- Audirac. (1999). Stated preference for pedestrian proximity: An assessment of new urbanist sense of community. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19(1), 53–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X9901900105>
- Bailey, N., Kearns, A., & Livingston, M. (2012). Place attachment in deprived neighbourhoods: The impacts of population turnover and social mix. *Housing Studies*, 27(2), 208–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2012.632620>
- Baker, L. (2010). Civic ideals, mass culture, and the public: Reconsidering the 1909 Plan of Chicago. *Journal of Urban History* 36(6), 747–770. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144210374015>
- Ballard, P. J., Cohen, A. K., & Littenberg-Tobias, J. (2016). Action civics for promoting civic development: Main effects of program participation and differences by project characteristics. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 58(3-4), 377-390. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12103>
- Ballard, P. J., & Ozer, E. J. (2016). Implications of youth activism for health and well-being. In J. Conner & S. M. Rosen (Eds.), *Contemporary youth activism: Advancing social justice in the United States* (pp. 223–244). Praeger.
- Ballard, P. J., Cohen, A. K., & Duarte, C. (2019). Can a school-based civic empowerment intervention support adolescent health? *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 16, 100968. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2019.100968>
- Ballard, P.J. & Cohen, A.K. (2023). Critical consciousness development in the context of a widespread school-based civics intervention. In E. B. Godfrey & L. J. Rapa (Eds.), *Developing critical consciousness in youth: Contexts and settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bauml, D.S.V., & Blevins, B. (2022). “Who cares?”: Young adolescents’ perceived barriers to civic action. *RMLE Online: Research in Middle Level Education*, 45(3), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2022.2033069>
- Bautista, M. A., Bertrand, M., Morrell, E., Scorza, D., & Matthews, C. (2013). Participatory action research and city youth: Methodological insights from the council of youth research. *Teachers College Record*, 115, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811311501005>
- Blevins, B., LeCompte, K., & Wells, S. (2016). Innovations in civic education: Developing civic agency through action civics. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 44(3), 344–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2016.1203853>
- Blevins, B., LeCompte, N. L., & Bauml, M. (2018). Developing students’ understandings of citizenship and advocacy through action civics. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 13(2), 185–198. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SSRP-02-2018-0009>

- Blevins, LeCompte, K. N., Riggers-Piehl, T., Scholten, N., & Magill, K. R. (2021). The impact of an action civics program on the community & political engagement of youth. *Social Studies*, *112*(3), 146–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2020.1854163>
- Boslaugh, S. (2012). Factorial ANOVA and ANCOVA. In *Statistics in a Nutshell*. O'Reilly Incorporated.
- Boyce, W., Torsheim, T., Currie, C., & Zambon, A. (2006). The family affluence scale as a measure of national wealth: Validation of an adolescent self-report measure. *Social Indicators Research*, *78*(3), 473–487. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-005-1607-6>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). *Thematic analysis*. American Psychological Association Press.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Sage Publications.
- Brown, G., Brown, B. B., & Perkins, D. D. (2004). New housing as neighborhood revitalization: Place attachment and confidence among residents. *Environment and behavior*, *36*(6), 749–775. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916503254823>
- Brown, G., Raymond, C. M., & Corcoran, J. (2015). Mapping and measuring place attachment. *Applied Geography*, *57*, 42–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2014.12.011>
- Butler, T. (2017). “We need a song”: sustaining critical youth organizing literacies through world humanities. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *50*(1), 84–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2016.1250233>
- Camino, L., & Zeldin, S. (2002). From periphery to center: Pathways for youth civic engagement in the day-to-day life of communities. *Applied Developmental Science*, *6*(4), 213–220. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0604_8
- Cattaneo, L., Calton, J., & Brodsky, A. (2014). Status quo versus status quake: Putting the power back in empowerment. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *42*(4), 433–446. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21619>
- Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement [CIRCLE] (2013). *Civic learning through action: The case of Generation Citizen*. Tufts University. https://circle.tufts.edu/sites/default/files/2019-12/civic_learning_action_generation_citizen_2013.pdf
- Chan, W. Y., Suh, Ou, R., & Reynolds, A. J. (2014). Adolescent civic engagement and adult outcomes: An examination among urban racial minorities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *43*, 1829–1843. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-014-0136-5>

- Chawla, L. (1992). Childhood place attachments. In *Place Attachment* (pp. 63–86). Springer Publications.
- Checkoway, B. (1998). Involving young people in neighborhood development. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 20(9–10), 765–795. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0190-7409\(98\)00044-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0190-7409(98)00044-9)
- Checkoway, B. (2013). Education for democracy by young people in community-based organizations. *Youth & Society*, 45(3), 389–403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X11419535>
- Christens, B. D., Peterson, N. A., & Speer, P. W. (2011). Community participation and psychological empowerment: Testing reciprocal causality using a cross-lagged panel design and latent constructs. *Health Education & Behavior*, 38(4), 339–347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198110372880>
- Christens, B. D. (2012). Toward relational empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 50, 114–128. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-011-9483-5>
- Christens, B. D., & Peterson, N. A. (2012). The Role of Empowerment in Youth Development: A Study of Sociopolitical Control as Mediator of Ecological Systems' Influence on Developmental Outcomes. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(5), 623–635. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-011-9724-9>
- Christens, B.D. (2013). In search of powerful empowerment. *Health Education Research*, 28(3), 371–374. <https://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyt04>
- Christens, B. D., Collura, J. J., & Tahir, F. (2013). Critical hopefulness: A person-centered analysis of the intersection of cognitive and emotional empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 52(1-2), 170–184. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-013-9586-2>
- Christens, B. D., Winn, L. T., & Duke, A. M. (2016a). Empowerment and critical consciousness: A conceptual cross-fertilization. *Adolescent Research Review*, 1(1), 15–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-015-0019-3>
- Christens, B. D., Krauss, S. E., & Zeldin, S. (2016b). Malaysian validation of the sociopolitical control scale for youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 44(4), 531–537. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21777>
- Christens, B. D. (2019). *Community power and empowerment*. Oxford University Press.
- Christens, B. D., Morgan, K. Y., Cosio, M., Dolan, T., & Aguayo, R. (2022). Persistence of a youth organizing initiative: Cultivating and sustaining a leadership development ecosystem. *Journal of Community Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22791>

- Cipparone, P., & Cohen, A. K. (2015). Action civics in fourth grade: Tackling school-and community-based issues. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 27(4), 11-15.
- Clark, W. A., Duque-Calvache, R., & Palomares-Linares, I. (2017). Place attachment and the decision to stay in the neighbourhood. *Population, space and place*, 23(2), 2001. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2001>
- Conner, J. O., & Cosner, K. (2016). Youth change agents: Comparing the sociopolitical identities of youth organizers and youth commissioners. *Democracy and Education*, 24(1), 1-12.
- Counted, V., Cowden, R. G., Ramkissoon, H., (2021). Place attachment during the COVID-19 pandemic: a scoping review. In *Place and Post-Pandemic Flourishing: Disruption, Adjustment, and Healthy Behaviors* (pp. 15–32). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82580-5_2
- Crick, & Yu, G. (2008). Assessing learning dispositions: Is the effective lifelong learning inventory valid and reliable as a measurement tool? *Educational Research (Windsor)*, 50(4), 387–402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131880802499886>.
- Crittenden, J., & Levine, P. (2018). Civic education. In E. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/civic-education/>
- Deakin, C., Ruth, M., Coates, M., and Ritchie, S. (2014) *A systematic review of the impact of citizenship education on the provision of schooling*. Research Evidence in Education Library. EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.
- Demarest, A. B. (2014). *Place-based curriculum design: Exceeding standards through local investigations*. Routledge.
- Deterding, N. M., & Waters, M. C. (2021). Flexible coding of in-depth interviews: A twenty-first-century approach. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 50(2), 708-739. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124118799377>
- Devine-Wright, P., Pinto de Carvalho, L., Di Masso, A., Lewicka, M., Manzo, L., & Williams, D. R. (2020). “Re-placed” - Reconsidering relationships with place and lessons from a pandemic. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 72, 101514–101514. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2020.101514>
- Dewey, J. (1923). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. Macmillan.
- Duncan, A. (2012, January 10). *Secretary Arne Duncan’s Remarks at “For Democracy’s Future” Forum at the White House*. [speech]. <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/secretary-arne-duncans-remarks-democracys future>

- Erickson, A. (2016). *Making the unequal metropolis: School desegregation and its limits*. University of Chicago Press.
- Feinberg, K. M. W. (2003). *Citizenship and education in liberal-democratic societies: Teaching for cosmopolitan values and collective identities*. Oxford University Press.
- Field, A. P. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. Sage Publications.
- Fitzgerald, J. (2020). Civic thinking and public policy analysis: A comparative approach to political decision-making. *Journal of International Social Studies*, 10(2), 12-36.
- Flanagan, C., & Levine, P. (2010). Civic engagement and the transition to adulthood. *The Future of Children*, 20(1), 159–179. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.0.0043>
- Flanagan, C., & Christens, B. (2011). Youth civic development: Historical context and emerging issues. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2011(134), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.307>
- Formoso, D., Weber, R. N., & Atkins, M. S. (2010). Gentrification and urban children’s well-being: Tipping the scales from problems to promise. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 46, 395-412. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9348-3>
- Foster, K. A., & Hipp, J. A. (2011). Defining neighbourhood boundaries for social measurement: advancing social work research. *Social Work Research*, 35(1), 25–35. <https://doi.org/10.1093/swr/35.1.25>
- Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Gaby, S. (2017). The civic engagement gap: Youth participation and inequality from 1976 to 2009. *Youth & Society*, 49(7), 923-946. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X16678155>
- Gaston, G., & Kreyling, K. (2015). *Shaping the healthy community: The Nashville plan*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Generation Citizen. (n.d.a). Policy and advocacy. Generation Citizen. <https://generationcitizen.org/our-impact/theory-of-change/https://www.generationcitizen.org/what-we-do/in-research-advocacy/>
- Generation Citizen. (n.d.b). Theory of Change. Generation Citizen. <https://generationcitizen.org/our-impact/theory-of-change/>
- Gershoff, E. T., Aber, J. L., Raver, C. C., & Lennon, M. C. (2007). Income is not enough: Incorporating material hardship into models of income associations with parenting and child development. *Child Development*, 78(1), 70–95. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2007.00986.x>

- Gingold, J. (2013). *Building an evidence-based practice of action civics: The current state of assessments and recommendations for the future* (CIRCLE Working Paper No. 78). https://civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/WP_78_Gingold.pdf
- Ginwright, S., & Cammarota, J. (2007). Youth activism in the urban community: Learning critical civic praxis within community organizations. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(6), 693-710. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390701630833>
- Ginwright, S., & Cammarota, J. (2002). New terrain in youth development: The promise of a social justice approach. *Social Justice*, 29, 82– 95.
- Godfrey, E., & Grayman, J. (2014). Teaching citizens: The role of open classroom climate in fostering critical consciousness among youth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43(11), 1801–1817. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-0084-5>
- Gootman, J. A., & Eccles, J. (2001). *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. National Academies Press.
- Graham G. (2021). Addressing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 8(2), 280–282. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-021-00989-7>
- Guo, M., Duffany, K. O. C., Shebl, F. M., Santilli, A., & Keene, D. E. (2018). The effects of length of residence and exposure to violence on perceptions of neighborhood safety in an urban sample. *Journal of urban health*, 95(2), 245-254. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0229-7>
- Gustafson, E., Cohen, A., & Andes, S. (2019). Youth civic action across the United States: Projects, priorities, and approaches. *Youth & Society*, 53(4), 654–675. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X19883737>
- Gustafson, P. (2006). Place attachment and mobility. In *Multiple dwelling and tourism: Negotiating place, home and identity* (pp. 17-31). CABI. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9780845931202.0017>
- Gutmann, A. (1995). Civic education and social diversity. *Ethics*, 105(3), 557-579. <https://doi.org/10.1086/293727>
- Hart, S., & Wandeler, C. (2018). The impact of action civics service-learning on eighth-grade students' civic outcomes. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement*, 6(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.37333/001c.6878>
- Hausmann, L. R., Ye, F., Schofield, J. W., & Woods, R. L. (2009). Sense of belonging and persistence in White and African American first-year students. *Research in Higher Education*, 50, 649-669. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9137-8>

- Hay, R. (1998). Sense of place in developmental context. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18(1), 5–29.
- Heck, R. H., Thomas, S. L., & Tabata, L. N. (2022). *Multilevel and longitudinal modeling with IBM SPSS (3rd Edition)*. Routledge.
- Hess, D. E. (2009). *Controversy in the classroom: The democratic power of discussion*. Routledge.
- Hildreth, R. W. (2012). John Dewey on experience: a critical resource for the theory and practice of youth civic engagement. *Citizenship Studies*, 16(7), 919–935.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2012.716209>
- Hope, E. C. (2016). Preparing to participate: The role of youth social responsibility and political efficacy on civic engagement for Black early adolescents. *Child Indicators Research*, 9, 609–630. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-015-9331-5>
- Itzhaky, H., & York, A. (2000). Sociopolitical control and empowerment: An extended replication. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(4), 407–415.
[https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629\(200007\)28:43.0.CO;2-R](https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629(200007)28:43.0.CO;2-R)
- Jagers, R. (2019) *Poverty and low income households challenge to Nashville Public School Teachers*. The Tennessean. <https://www.tennessean.com/story//2019/07/18/metro-nashville-school-teachers/1746625001/>
- Jain, S., Cohen, A. K., Kawashima-Ginsberg, K., Duarte, C. D., & Pope, A. (2019). Civic engagement among youth exposed to community violence: Directions for research and practice. *Journal of Youth Development*, 14(1), 24–47.
<https://doi.org/10.5195/jyd.2019.596>
- Jennings, M. A., & Cribbie, R. A. (2016). Comparing pre-post change across groups: Guidelines for choosing between difference scores, ANCOVA, and residual change scores. *Journal of Data Science*, 14(2), 205-229. [https://doi.org/10.6339/JDS.201604_14\(2\).0002](https://doi.org/10.6339/JDS.201604_14(2).0002)
- Jeong, E., Shim, C., Brown, A. D., & Lee, S. (2021). Development of a scale to measure intrapersonal psychological empowerment to participate in local tourism development: Applying the sociopolitical control scale construct to tourism (SPCS-T). *Sustainability*, 13(7), 4057-4067. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13074057>
- Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., & Rios-Vargas, R. (2021). *Census illuminates racial and ethnic composition of the country*. United States Census Bureau.
<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html>

- Kahne, J., & Middaugh, E. (2008). Democracy for some: The civic opportunity gap in high school. Circle Working Paper 59. *Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811420271>
- Kahne, J., & Sporte, S. (2008). Developing citizens: The impact of civic learning opportunities on students' commitment to civic participation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45, 738–766. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831208316951>
- Kember, D., Ha, T. S., Lam, B. H., Lee, A., NG, S., Yan, L., & Yum, J. C. (1997). The diverse role of the critical friend in supporting educational action research projects. *Educational Action Research*, 5(3), 463-481. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650799700200036>
- Kennedy, P. (2023). *Nashville ranked 5th hottest real estate market of 2023, Zillow says*. WKRN. <https://nashtoday.6amcity.com/top-industries-nashville-tn>
- Kirshner, B. (2009). “Power in numbers”: Youth organizing as a context for exploring civic identity. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 19(3), 414-440. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2009.00601.x>
- Kirshner, B., & Ginwright, S. (2012). Youth organizing as a developmental context for African American and Latino adolescents. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6(3), 288-294. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2012.00243.x>
- Kirshner, B., Strobel, K., & Fernandez, M. (2003). Critical civic engagement among urban youth. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, 1, 1– 20.
- Kohfeldt, D., Bowen, A. R., & Langhout, R. D. (2016). “They think kids are stupid”: YPAR and confrontations with institutionalized power as contexts for children’s identity work. *Revista Puertorriqueña de Psicología*, 27(2), 276-291.
- Kohfeldt, D., Chhun, L., Grace, S., & Langhout, R. D. (2011). Youth empowerment in context: Exploring tensions in school-based yPAR. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 47(1–2), 28–45. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9376-z>
- Kornbluh, M., Ozer, E. J., Allen, C. D., & Kirshner, B. (2015). Youth participatory action research as an approach to sociopolitical development and the new academic standards: Considerations for educators. *The Urban Review*, 47(5), 868-892. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-015-0337-6>
- Kreyling, K. (Ed.) (2005). *The plan of Nashville: Avenues to a great city*. Vanderbilt University Press.
- Kudryavtsev, A., Stedman, R. C., & Krasny, M. E. (2012). Sense of place in environmental education. *Environmental education research*, 18(2), 229-250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2011.609615>

- Kurtz, S. (2021, January 26). "Action civics" replaces citizenship with partisanship. *The American Mind: A Publication of the Claremont Institute*. <https://americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/>
- Lardier, D. T., Reid, R. J., & Garcia-Reid, P. (2018). Validation of an abbreviated Sociopolitical Control Scale for Youth among a sample of underresourced urban youth of color. *Journal of Community Psychology, 46*(8), 996–1009. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22087>
- Larson, R. W. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist, 41*, 170-183. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.170>
- Łaszkiwicz, E., Kronenberg, J., & Marcińczak, S. (2018). Attached to or bound to a place? The impact of green space availability on residential duration: The environmental justice perspective. *Ecosystem Services, 30*, 309-317. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2017.10.002>
- Lawman, H. G., & Wilson, D. K. (2012). A Review of family and environmental correlates of health behaviors in high-risk youth. *Reviews in Behavior and Psychology, 20*(6), 1142-1157. <https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2011.376>
- League of American Bicyclists (2015). *Bicycle friendly community report card: Nashville, Tennessee*. League of American Bicyclists. <https://bikeleague.org/bfa/search/map?bfaq=37212¢roid=001G000000w8yLCIAY>
- Lechner, C. M., Pavlova, M. K., Sortheix, F. M., Silbereisen, R. K., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2018). Unpacking the link between family socioeconomic status and civic engagement during the transition to adulthood: Do work values play a role? *Applied Developmental Science, 22*(4), 270–283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2017.1291352>
- LeCompte, K., Blevins, B. (2015). Building civic bridges: community-centered action civics: a journal for readers, students and teachers of history. *The Social Studies, 106*(5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2015.1059792>
- LeCompte, K., Blevins, B., & Riggers-Piehl, T. (2020). Developing civic competence through action civics: A longitudinal look at the data. *The Journal of Social Studies Research, 44*(1), 127-137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2019.03.002>
- Leech, N., Barrett, K., & Morgan, G. A. (2005). Factorial ANOVA and ANCOVA. In *SPSS for Intermediate Statistics*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Levine, P. (2009). The civic opportunity gap. *Educational Leadership, 66*(8), 20-25.
- Levine, P., & Kawashima-Ginsberg, K. (2007). *The republic is (still) at risk—and civics is part of the solution*. Medford: Tufts University. <https://www.civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/SummitWhitePaper.pdf>

- Levinson, M. (2010). *The civic empowerment gap: Defining the problem and locating solutions*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Levinson, M. (2012). *No citizen left behind*. Harvard University Press.
- Levinson, M. (2014). Action civics in the classroom. *Social Education*, 78(2), 68-72.
- Levy, B. L., & Akiva, T. (2019). Motivating political participation among youth: An analysis of factors related to adolescents' political engagement. *Political Psychology*, 40(5), 1039-1055. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12578>
- Lewicka, M. (2011). Place attachment: How far have we come in the last 40 years? *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 31, 207–230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2010.10.001>
- Lewicka. (2010). What makes neighborhood different from home and city? Effects of place scale on place attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 35–51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.05.004>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Littenberg-Tobias, J., & Cohen, A. K. (2016). Diverging paths: Understanding racial differences in civic engagement among White, African American, and Latina/o adolescents using structural equation modeling. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 57(1-2), 102-117. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12027>
- Littenberg-Tobias, J., & Cohen, A. K. (2016). Diverging paths: Understanding racial differences in civic engagement among White, African American, and Latina/o adolescents using structural equation modeling. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 57(1-2), 102-117. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12027>
- Lord, C. (1996). Aristotle and the idea of liberal education. *Dēmokratia: A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern*, 271-288.
- Louis, M. R., & Bartunek, J. M. (1992). Insider/outsider research teams: Collaboration across diverse perspectives. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 1(2), 101-110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105649269212002>
- Love, B. L. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom*. Beacon Press.
- Magill, K. R., Davis Smith, V., Blevins, B., & LeCompte, K. N. (2020). Beyond the invisible barriers of the classroom: iEngage and civic praxis. *Democracy and Education*, 28(1), 1-11.
- Maker Castro, E., & Cohen, A. K. (2021). Fostering youth civic engagement through effective mentorship: Understanding the college student volunteer mentors who succeed. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 49(2), 605-619. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22482>

- Malin, H., Ballard, P. J., & Damon, W. (2015a). Civic purpose: an integrated construct for understanding civic development in adolescence. *Human Development*, 58(2), 103–130. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000381655>
- Malin, H., Tirri, K., & Liauw, I. (2015b). Adolescent moral motivations for civic engagement: Clues to the political gender gap? *Journal of Moral Education*, 44(1), 34–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2015.1014324>
- McGee, J. (2019). *A year after transit vote failed, Nashville leaders eye 2024 for next plan while they focus on solutions, consensus*. The Tennessean. <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2019/05/02/nashville-next-transit-plan-may-come-2024-referendum/3506780002/>
- McLaughlin, T. (1992). Citizenship, diversity, and education: A philosophical perspective. *Journal of Moral Education* 235–250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724920210307>
- Mesch, G. S., & Manor, O. (1998). Social ties, environmental perception, and local attachment. *Environment and Behavior*, 30(4), 504–519. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001391659803000405>
- Metro Human Relations Commission (2020). *Understanding Nashville’s housing crisis*. <https://www.housing101.us/>
- Metro Nashville Public Schools (January 2022). *Exploring MNPS data*. Metro Nashville Public Schools. <https://www.mnps.org/about/communications/opendata>
- Middleton, K. V. (2020). The longer-term impact of COVID-19 on K–12 student learning and assessment. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 39(3), 41-44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emip.12368>
- Mikva Challenge. (n.d.). *Mikva model: Action civics theory of change*. Mikva Challenge. <https://mikvachallenge.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Mikva-Model.pdf>
- Moody, W. & Wacker, C. (1916). *Wacker’s manual of the plan of Chicago*. Calumet Publishing Company.
- Morgan, K. Y., Christens, B. D., & Gibson, M. (2022). Design your neighborhood: The evolution of a city-wide urban design learning initiative in Nashville, Tennessee. In R. Stoecker & A. Falcón (Eds.), *Handbook on participatory action research and community development*. Edward Elgar.
- Morgan, K.Y. & Ballard, P.J. (in press). Action civics. In B. Christens (Ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of power and empowerment in community settings*. Cambridge University Press.

- Morgan, K.Y. & Christens, B.D. (2023). Critical consciousness development in place-based action civics. In E. B. Godfrey & L. J. Rapa (Eds.), *Developing critical consciousness in youth: Contexts and settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Morgan, P. (2010). Towards a developmental theory of place attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 11–22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.07.001>
- NACC. (n.d.). *History*. National Action Civics Collaborative. <https://actioncivicscollaborative.org/about-us/history/>
- Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation, (2020) *Research and Hospitality Stats*. Visit Music City. <https://www.visitmusiccity.com/research>
- Nasir, N. I., & Kirshner, B. (2003). The cultural construction of moral and civic identities. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7(3), 138-147. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_4
- Neal, Z. P., & Neal, W. (2014). The (in)compatibility of diversity and sense of community. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 53, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-013-9608-0>
- Nicholas, C., & Eastman-Mueller, H. (2020). Supporting critical social analysis: Empowering processes in a youth organizing group. *The Urban Review*, 52(4), 708–720. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-020-00548-0>
- Noguera, P. A. (2017). Introduction to “Racial inequality and education: Patterns and prospects for the future”. In *The Educational Forum*, 81(2), 129-135. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2017.1280753>
- Oleksy, T., & Wnuk, A. (2017). Catch them all and increase your place attachment! The role of location-based augmented reality games in changing people-place relations. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 76, 3-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.06.008>
- Olsen, B. (2021). Adapting education innovations and their ‘knock-on effects’ in the time of COVID. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2021/11/08/adapting-education-innovations-and-their-knock-on-effects-in-the-time-of-covid/>
- Ong, L. (2020). *Special sidewalk committee calls for urgent changes, dedicated funding*. WKRN. <https://www.wkrn.com/news/local-news/special-sidewalk-committee-calls-for-urgent-changes-dedicated-funding/>.
- Opara, I., Lardier, D. T., Garcia-Reid, P., & Reid, R. J. (2022). Measuring intrapersonal psychological empowerment and ethnic identity: Highlighting strengths of urban Black girls. *Youth & Society*, 54(4), 573–592. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X20970226>

- Opara, I., Rivera Rodas, E. I., Lardier, D. T., Garcia-Reid, P., & Reid, R. J. (2020). Validation of the abbreviated Socio-Political Control Scale for Youth (SPCS-Y) among urban girls of color. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 37(1), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-019-00624-9>
- Ortega-Williams, A., Wernick, L., DeBower, J., & Brathwaite, B. (2020). Finding relief in action: The intersection of youth-led community organizing and mental health in Brooklyn, New York City. *Youth & Society*, 52(4), 618–638. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X18758542>
- Ozer, E. J. (2017). Youth-led participatory action research: Overview and potential for enhancing adolescent development. *Child Development Perspectives*, 11(3), 173-177. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12228>
- Ozer, E. J., Ritterman, M. L., & Wanis, M. G. (2010). Participatory action research (PAR) in middle school: Opportunities, constraints, and key processes. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 46(1), 152–166. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9335-8>
- Paloma, V., Lenzi, M., Furlanis, N., Vieno, A., & García-Ramírez, M. (2018). Sociopolitical control for immigrants: The role of receiving local contexts. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 62(1-2), 41-50. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12263>
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. SAGE Publications.
- Peterson, N. A., Lowe, J. B., Hughey, J., Reid, R. J., Zimmerman, M. A., & Speer, P. W. (2006). Measuring the intrapersonal component of psychological empowerment: Confirmatory factor analysis of the sociopolitical control scale. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 38, 287-297. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-006-9070-3>
- Peterson, N. A. (2014). Empowerment Theory: Clarifying the Nature of Higher-Order Multidimensional Constructs. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 53(1-2), 96–108. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-013-9624-0>
- Peterson, N. A., Peterson, C. H., Agre, L., Christens, B. D., & Morton, C. M. (2011). Measuring youth empowerment: Validation of a sociopolitical control scale for youth in an urban community context. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 39(5), 592-605. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20456>
- Plazas, D. (2018). *The costs of growth and change in Nashville*. The Tennessean. <https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/columnists/david-plazas/2017/01/29/costs-growth-and-change-nashville/97064252/>
- Pope, A. (2015). *Opportunities for civic engagement: A study in five secondary social studies classes*. Columbia University. [Dissertation].
- Pope, A., Stolte, L., & Cohen, A. (2011). Closing the civic engagement gap: The potential of action civics. *Social Education*, 75(5), 265-268.

- Pring, R. (2016). Preparing for citizenship: Bring back John Dewey. *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 15(1), 6-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2047173416646467>
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Rankin, B. H., & Quane, J. M. (2002). Social contexts and urban adolescent outcomes: The interrelated effects of neighborhoods, families, and peers on African-American youth. *Social Problems*, 49(1), 79–100. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.2002.49.1.79>
- Raudenbush, S. W., & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods* (Vol. 1). Sage Publications.
- Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(2), 121-148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00919275>
- Ravitch, D., & Viteritti, J. P. (Eds.). (2001). *Making good citizens: Education and civil society*. Yale University Press.
- Rebell, M. A. (2018). *Flunking democracy: Schools, courts, and civic participation*. University of Chicago Press.
- Riina, E. M., Martin, A., Gardner, M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2013). Context matters: links between neighborhood discrimination, neighborhood cohesion and African American adolescents' adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43, 136-146. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-012-9804-5>
- Rubin, B. & Jones. C. (2007). "There's still not justice": Youth civic identity development amid distinct school and community contexts. *Teachers College Record*, 109(2), 449-481. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146810710900202>
- Sabzalian, L. (2019). The tensions between Indigenous sovereignty and multicultural citizenship education: Toward an anticolonial approach to civic education. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 47(3), 311-346. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2019.1639572>
- Saladino, V., Algeri, D., & Auriemma, V. (2020). The psychological and social impact of Covid-19: new perspectives of well-being. *Frontiers in psychology*, 2550. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.577684>
- Salado, V., Moreno-Maldonado, C., Moreno, C., & Rivera, F. (2022). The influence of developmental contexts in adolescent's expected sociopolitical participation through the sense of unity: An analysis of the mediation model invariance through sex, age, and socioeconomic status. *Child Indicators Research*, 15(1), 107–136. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-021-09853-w>

- Scannell, L., & Gifford, R. (2017). The experienced psychological benefits of place attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 51*, 256–269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2017.04.00>
- Schnake-Mahl, A. S., Jahn, J. L., Subramanian, S. V., Waters, M. C., & Arcaya, M. (2020). Gentrification, neighborhood change, and population health: a systematic review. *Journal of Urban Health, 97*, 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-019-00400-1>
- Schneider, S. H., & Duran, L. (2010). School climate in middle schools: A cultural perspective. *Journal of Character Education, 8*(2), 25-34.
- Severson, K. (2013). *Nashville's Latest Hit Could Be the City Itself*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/09/us/nashville-takes-its-turn-in-the-spotlight.html>.
- Shadish, W. R., & Luellen, J. K. (2012). Quasi-experimental design. In *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 539-550). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203874769-37>
- Shapiro, S., & Brown, C. (2018). The state of civics education. *Center for American Progress*.
- Smith, D. A., & Gruenewald, G. A. (Eds.) (2007). *Place-based education in the global age: Local diversity*. Routledge.
- Smith, P. D., & Propst, D. B. (2001). Are topic-specific measures of socio-political control justified? Exploring the realm of citizen participation in natural resource decision making. *Journal of Community Psychology, 29*(2), 179–187. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629\(200103\)29:2](https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629(200103)29:2)
- Smith, R. (2012). Set charge about change: The effects of a long-term youth civic engagement program. *Journal of Community Engagement Scholarship, 5*(2), 50–60. <https://doi.org/10.54656/ZJCJ5948>
- Speer, P., Peterson, N., Christens, B., & Reid, R. (2019). Youth cognitive empowerment: Development and evaluation of an instrument. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 64*(3-4), 528–540. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12339>
- Stedman, R. C. (2002). Toward a social psychology of place: Predicting behavior from place-based cognitions, attitude, and identity. *Environment and Behavior, 34*(5), 561-581. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916502034005001>
- Stefaniak, A., Bilewicz, M., & Lewicka, M. (2017). The merits of teaching local history: Increased place attachment enhances civic engagement and social trust. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 51*, 217–225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2017.03.014>

- Stewart, D. W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (2014). *Focus groups: Theory and practice*. Sage Publications.
- Stolte, L. C., Isenbarger, M., & Cohen, A. K. (2014). Measuring civic engagement processes and youth civic empowerment in the classroom: The CIVVICS observation tool. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 87(1), 44-51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2013.842531>
- Stroope, J. (2021). Active transportation and social capital: The association between walking or biking for transportation and community participation. *Preventive Medicine*, 150, 106666–106666. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2021.106666>
- Swalwell, K., & Payne, K. A. (2019). Critical civic education for young children. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 21(2), 127-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2019.1606641>
- Taie, S., & Goldring, R. (2020). Characteristics of Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the United States: Results from the 2017-18 National Teacher and Principal Survey. First Look. NCES 2020-142. *National Center for Education Statistics*.
- Thurber, A. (2021). Just Practice in a Gentrifying City. In J. Finn (Ed.) *The Just Practice Framework in Action: Contemporary Case Studies*. Oxford University Press.
- Torres-Vega, L. C., Ruiz, J., & Moya, M. (2021). Dangerous worldview and perceived sociopolitical control: Two mechanisms to understand trust in authoritarian political leaders in economically threatening contexts. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 603116–603116. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.603116>
- Vaske, J. J., & Korbin, K. C. (2001). Place attachment and environmentally responsible behavior. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 32(4), 16–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00958960109598658>
- Vieno, A., Lenzi, M., Canale, N., & Santinello, M. (2014). Italian validation of the Sociopolitical Control Scale for Youth (SPCS-Y). *Journal of Community Psychology*, 42(4), 463–468. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21621>
- Walsh, D. (2018). Youth Participatory Action Research as Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 57(2), 127–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2018.1433939>
- Warrick, M & Wethington, C. (2023). *Nashville-based orgs call on city to fund new, improved public transportation*. WSMV. <https://www.wsmv.com/2023/05/01/nashville-based-orgs-call-city-fund-new-improved-public-transportation/>
- Warren, S. (2019). *Generation citizen: The power of youth in our politics*. Counterpoint Press.

- Watts, R., & Flanagan, C. (2007). Pushing the envelope on youth civic engagement: A developmental and liberation psychology perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*(6), 779–792. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20178>
- Watts, R. J., & Hipolito-Delgado, C. P. (2015). Thinking ourselves to liberation?: Advancing sociopolitical action in critical consciousness. *The Urban Review, 47*(5), 847-867. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-015-0341-x>
- Webb, S. (2022). *Top Five Industries in Nashville*. Nash Today. <https://nashtoday.6amcity.com/top-industries-nashville-tn>
- Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(2), 237–269. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312041002237>
- Winthrop, R. (2020). *The need for civic education in 21st-century schools*. The Brookings Institute.
- Wray-Lake, L., & Abrams, L. S. (2020). Pathways to civic engagement among urban youth of color. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 85*(2), 7-154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mono.12415>
- Wray-Lake, L., & Shubert, J. (2019). Understanding stability and change in civic engagement across adolescence: A typology approach. *Developmental Psychology, 55*(10), 2169–2180. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000772>
- Youniss, J. (2011). Civic education: What schools can do to encourage civic identity and action. *Applied Developmental Science, 15*(2), 98-103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2011.560814>
- Yurek, L. A., Vasey, J., & Sullivan Havens, D. (2008). The use of self-generated identification codes in longitudinal research. *Evaluation Review, 32*(5), 435-452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193841X08316676>
- Zeldin, Camino, L., & Mook, C. (2005). The adoption of innovation in youth organizations: Creating the conditions for youth-adult partnerships. *Journal of Community Psychology, 33*(1), 121–135. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20044>
- Ziersch, A. M., Baum, F. E., MacDougall, C., & Putland, C. (2005). Neighbourhood life and social capital: the implications for health. *Social Science & Medicine, 60*(1), 71-86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.04.027>
- Zimmerman, G. M., & Farrell, C. (2017). Parents, peers, perceived risk of harm, and the neighborhood: Contextualizing key influences on adolescent substance use. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 46*, 228–247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-016-0475-5>

- Zimmerman, M. A. (2000). *Empowerment theory: Psychological, organizational, and community levels of analysis*. In J. Rappaport & E. Seidman (Eds.), *Handbook of Community Psychology* (p. 43–63). Kluwer Academic Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-4193-6>.
- Zimmerman, M. A., Ramírez-Valles, J., & Maton, K. I. (1999). Resilience among urban african american male adolescents: A study of the protective effects of sociopolitical control on their mental health. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 27*(6), 733–751. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022205008237>
- Zimmerman, M. A., & Zahniser, J. H. (1991). Refinements of sphere-specific measures of perceived control: Development of a sociopolitical control scale. *Journal of Community Psychology, 19*(2), 189-204. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629\(199104\)19:2<189::AID-JCOP2290190210>3.0.CO;2-6](https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6629(199104)19:2<189::AID-JCOP2290190210>3.0.CO;2-6)

Appendix A

Design Your Neighborhood Student Survey

Today you will be filling out a multiple-choice survey that takes about twenty minutes to complete. The survey asks your opinion about many different things. For example, you will be asked if you think students can make their neighborhood a better place to live. There are no wrong or right answers to the questions; we are just interested in what you want to tell us.

We also want your answers to be private. You will not be asked to put your name on the survey, and your teachers will not ask to see your answers. Please don't say answers out loud or show your answers to others. You may skip any question that you don't want to answer. Raise your hand if you need help or have a question. If you aren't sure of an answer, just make your best guess.

Fill in the circle

In groups, I am often _____.

A follower A leader

When I am involved in a group project, I would rather have _____.

A following role A leading role

I can _____ organize peers to get things done.

Almost never Almost always

I find it _____ to talk in front of a group.

Very hard Very easy

I can _____ what's going on with my community.

Not understand Really understand

Most leaders in my community would _____ listen to me.

Almost never Almost always

I have _____ to participate effectively in activities and decision-making in my community.

Very little ability Great ability

There are _____ for youth like me to have a say in what my community does.

Very few ways Very many ways

How important to you is finishing high school?

Not at all important Very important

How important is it to your parents that you finish high school?

Not at all important Very important

How important is a high school diploma to reaching your life goals?

Not at all important Very important

How important is going to college to reaching your life goals?

Not at all important Very important

Answer each question about your neighborhood.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know my neighborhood very well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I defend my neighborhood when somebody criticizes it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I miss my neighborhood when I am not here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel secure in my neighborhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud of my neighborhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My neighborhood is a part of myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to be involved in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would not like to move out from my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am rooted here in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Choose the answer that sounds the most like you.

	Not at all like me	A little bit like me	Quite a bit like me	Very much like me
I expect to go on learning for a long time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to be able to improve the way I do things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I continue to improve as a learner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't like to accept an answer till I have worked it out for myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to question the things I am learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting to the bottom of things is more important to me than getting a good grade.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree
It is a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It would be good if groups could be equal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Group equality should be our ideal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All groups should be given an equal chance in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally.

Answer each question about your neighborhood.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel safe on my way to and from school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe outside my school building before and after school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school provides a safe and secure environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe at the park closest to my house.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe outside of my house.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel safe walking around my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to be involved in my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I learn interesting and useful things at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy going to school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Only by working together can students make change in their community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The only way I can affect community issues is by working with other students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve the community, it is better to work with a group than alone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The only way I can improve the community is by working with other students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If students are making changes in their community, sooner or later, they will face difficulties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Those with power try to stop students who challenge them too much.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When students work for change, it doesn't take long for them to experience negative consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adults undermine students that work for changes that these adults dislike.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When students raise issues, schools and communities ignore the issues they don't agree with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influential people work to keep students unaware of issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Those with power can get most students to believe what the powerful want.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School leaders, politicians, and other authorities can get students to see most things from their point of view.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
When I grow up, I would like to have a job as a community leader.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I grow up, I would like to have a job as an architect or designer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I grow up, I would like to have a job as government official.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This diagram shows five types of society. Please read the descriptions and look at the diagrams to answer the following questions.

Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E
A society with a small group at the top, very few people in the middle and most people at the bottom.	A society like a pyramid, with a small group at the top, more people in the middle and a lot at the bottom.	A pyramid, except that just a few people are at the very bottom.	A society with most people in the middle.	A society with many people at the top and only a few near the bottom.

	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E
In your opinion, which type of society does the United States look like today?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In your opinion, which type of society should the United States look like?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer these questions about yourself and the people you live with most of the time.

How many computers does your family own?	None <input type="radio"/>	One <input type="radio"/>	Two <input type="radio"/>	More Than Two <input type="radio"/>
How many cars, trucks, or SUVs does your family own?	None <input type="radio"/>	One <input type="radio"/>	Two <input type="radio"/>	More Than Two <input type="radio"/>

Do you have your own bedroom to yourself? Yes No

In the past year, have you needed food but couldn't afford to buy it or couldn't afford to go out and get it? Yes No

In the past year, have you been evicted from your home? Yes No

What is your zip code?
(If you don't know, write the school's zip code).

What is the first letter of your first name?
(Write the letter in the box).

On what day of the month were you born?
(Write the number in the box).

What is your gender?	Male <input type="radio"/>	Female <input type="radio"/>	Nonbinary <input type="radio"/>	Prefer not to answer <input type="radio"/>
----------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------------------	---

What is your ethnicity? (Choose all that apply).	Asian <input type="radio"/>	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander <input type="radio"/>	Black/ African American <input type="radio"/>	White <input type="radio"/>	Hispanic/ Latino <input type="radio"/>	American Indian <input type="radio"/>	Middle Eastern/ North African <input type="radio"/>	Other <input type="radio"/>
---	--------------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------	--	--	---	--------------------------------

Appendix B

Design Your Neighborhood Longitudinal Student Survey Measures

Construct	# of Items	Reference
Sociopolitical Control	8	Peterson, N. A., Peterson, C. H., Agre, L., Christens, B. D., & Morton, C. M. (2011). Measuring youth empowerment: Validation of a sociopolitical control scale for youth in an urban community context. <i>Journal of Community Psychology</i> , 39(5), 592-605.
School Importance	4	Goodenow, C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i> , 30(1), 79-90.
Lifelong Learning	6	Crick, & Yu, G. (2008). Assessing learning dispositions: is the Effective lifelong learning inventory valid and reliable as a measurement tool? <i>Educational Research (Windsor)</i> , 50(4), 387–402. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131880802499886 .
Egalitarianism	6	Diemer, M.A., Park, C.J., Perry, J.C., Rapa, L.J. (2016). Development and Validation of the Critical Consciousness Scale. <i>Youth & Society</i> . 49(4), 461-483.
Youth Cognitive Empowerment	12	Speer, P. W., Peterson, N. A., Christens, B. D., & Reid, R. J. (2019). Youth cognitive empowerment: Development and evaluation of a measurement instrument. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology</i> .
Place Attachment	9	Lewicka. (2010). What makes neighborhood different from home and city? Effects of place scale on place attachment. <i>Journal of Environmental Psychology</i> , 30(1), 35–51. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.05.004
School Belonging and Personal Safety	8	McIntosh, H., & Muñoz, M., A. (2009). Predicting civic engagement in urban high school students. <i>Journal of Research in Character Education</i> , 7(1), 41-62.

Family Affluence	3	Boyce, W., Torsheim, T., Currie, C., & Zambon, A. (2006). The family affluence scale as a measure of national wealth: validation of an adolescent self-report measure. <i>Social Indicators Research, 78</i> (3), 473-487.
Material Hardship	2	Gershoff, E. T., Aber, J. L., Raver, C. C., & Lennon, M. C. (2007). Income is not enough: Incorporating material hardship into models of income associations with parenting and child development. <i>Child Development, 78</i> (1), 70–95.
Societal Distributions	2	ISSP Research Group. (2012). International Social Survey Programme: Social Inequality IV-ISSP 2009. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5400 Data file Version, 3(0).

Appendix C

Design Your Neighborhood Teacher Survey

Today you will be filling out a multiple-choice survey that takes about twenty minutes to complete. The survey asks many questions about your approaches to and beliefs about teaching.

There are no wrong or right answers to the questions; we are just interested in what you want to tell us. We also want your answers to be private. You may skip any question that you don't feel comfortable answering.

Answer each question about your classroom

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am capable of creating a safe atmosphere that welcomes imagination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If there were more creative people, more problems would be solved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My administration encourages me to foster innovative thinking in my students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am capable of promoting flexible thinking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We really need creative people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a priority in my school to increase students' inventiveness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am capable of enhancing my students' abilities to create unique solution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovative ideas can move society forward.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My school's priorities do not include teaching students to think creatively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have helped many students to become more creative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Without new and innovative ideas, America will be left behind.

My current school environment places little value on the development of student creativity

I am capable of fostering creative problem solving in my classroom.

Choose the answer that sounds the most like you.

Not at all like me A little bit like me Quite a bit like me Very much like me

I expect to go on learning for a long time.

I like to be able to improve the way I do things.

I continue to improve as a learner.

I don't like to accept an answer till I have worked it out for myself.

I like to question the things I am learning.

If you were to move into a new residence, how likely would you be to live in a smaller home on a busier street if you could live within walking distance of...

Very Unlikely Unlikely Neutral Likely Very Likely

Open spaces and parks

Public transportation, such as buses, rail, or bike lanes

Food resources and shopping

Jobs and employment

Community centers, such as post offices or churches

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

I am often a leader in groups.

I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower

I can usually organize people to get things done

I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say in running government as possible.

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

My teaching focuses on societal change, not the individual learner.

Individual learning without social change is not enough.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For me, teaching is a moral act as much as an individual activity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My intent is to challenge people to seriously reconsider their values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I expect people to be committed to changing our society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use the subject matter as a way to teach about higher ideals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I emphasize values more than knowledge in my teaching.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I link instructional goals to necessary changes in society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

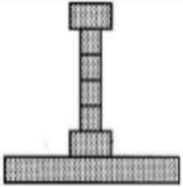
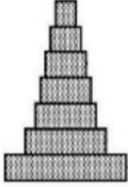
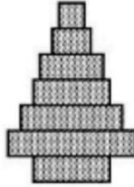
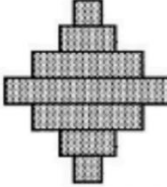
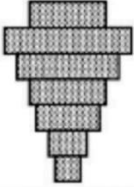
Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Youth and adults learn a lot from working together in my classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In my classroom, it is clear that youth and adults trust each other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth in my classroom have enough chances to express their ideas, concerns, and opinions publicly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If a young person disagreed with what everyone else said in this group, s/he would not hesitate to speak out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Young people's ideas and suggestions are taken seriously in my classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Choose how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
When the government provides programs for free, people tend to get lazy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, everyone has an equal chance of getting ahead in our society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When the government provides programs for free, people tend to cheat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any person willing to work hard can make a good living in our country.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This diagram shows five types of society. Please read the descriptions and look at the diagrams to answer the following questions.

				
Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E
A society with a small group at the top, very few people in the middle and most people at the bottom.	A society like a pyramid, with a small group at the top, more people in the middle and a lot at the bottom.	A pyramid, except that just a few people are at the very bottom.	A society with most people in the middle.	A society with many people at the top and only a few near the bottom.

	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E
In your opinion, which type of society does the United States look like today?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In your opinion, which type of society should the United States look like?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answer these questions about yourself.

How many years of teaching experience do you have?

What is your zip code?

What is your first and last initial?

What is your gender?

Male
 Female
 Nonbinary
 Prefer not to answer

What is your ethnicity? (Choose all that apply).

Asian
 Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
 Black/ African American
 White
 Hispanic/ Latino
 American Indian
 Middle Eastern/ North African
 Other

How did you obtain teacher certification?

University recommended for certification, undergraduate
 University recommended for certification, graduate
 Alternate Routes (TOP, TFA, Teaching Fellows, Peace Corps Fellows)
 Transcript Review (Direct Application to the State)
 Temporary Certificate

What was your total household income before taxes during the past 12 months?

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$34,999

- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999

- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

What is your age?

- 20 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years

- 35 to 44 years
- 45 to 54 years

- 55 to 64 years
- Age 65 or older

Appendix D

Design Your Neighborhood Longitudinal Teacher Survey Measures

Construct	# of Items	Reference
Belief in a Just World	4	Lipkus, I. (1991). The construction and preliminary validation of a global belief in a just world scale and the exploratory analysis of the multidimensional belief in a just world scale. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i> , 12(11), 1171-1178.
Social Reform Perspective	8	Collins, J. B., & Pratt, D. D. (2010). The teaching perspectives inventory at 10 years and 100,000 respondents: Reliability and validity of a teacher self-report inventory. <i>Adult Education Quarterly</i> , 61(4), 358-375.
Teaching for Creativity	13	Rubenstein, L. D., McCoach, D. B., & Siegle, D. (2013). Teaching for creativity scales: An instrument to examine teachers' perceptions of factors that allow for the teaching of creativity. <i>Creativity Research Journal</i> , 25(3), 324-334.
Lifelong Learning	4	Crick, & Yu, G. (2008). Assessing learning dispositions: is the Effective lifelong learning inventory valid and reliable as a measurement tool? <i>Educational Research (Windsor)</i> , 50(4), 387-402. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131880802499886 .
Perceptions of Urbanism	5	Audirac. (1999). <i>Stated Preference for Pedestrian Proximity: An Assessment of New Urbanist Sense of Community</i> . <i>Journal of Planning Education and Research</i> , 19(1), 53-66.
Supportive Adult Relationships	5	Zeldin, Camino, L., & Mook, C. (2005). The adoption of innovation in youth organizations: Creating the conditions for youth-adult partnerships. <i>Journal of Community Psychology</i> , 33(1), 121-135. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20044
Sociopolitical Control	5	Christens, B. D., Peterson, N. A., & Speer, P. W. (2011). Community participation and psychological empowerment: Testing reciprocal causality using a cross-lagged panel design and latent constructs. <i>Health Education & Behavior</i> , 38(4), 339-347.
Societal Distributions	2	ISSP Research Group. (2012). International Social Survey Programme: Social Inequality IV-ISSP 2009. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5400 Data file Version, 3(0).

Appendix E

Design Your Neighborhood Focus Group Protocol

Part 1: General Program Questions

In this focus group, I'll ask you about your thoughts what you've been learning in class during the Design Your Neighborhood unit. If you change your mind about participating at any time during our talk, that's fine. I like to audio record focus groups so that I don't miss any of your feedback. I'm the only person who will hear your recording, and I'll delete the recording as soon as possible. Is it okay for me to audio record this focus group? Any questions before we begin?

Questions	Probes
1. What is your idea of a perfect neighborhood?	Walk me through what a day in a perfect neighborhood would be like.
2. What does it mean for a community to be healthy?	Make sure they discuss physical health of community members?
3. What do you know about Nashville beyond your neighborhood?	What do you know about the different people and cultures that make up Nashville beyond your neighborhood? What do you know about issues in other parts of the city?

Part 2: Content-Focused Questions:

Now we are going to talk about some of the things you learned about during the unit. These questions are mostly about how you would improve your community. There are no right or wrong answers, I just want to hear your opinion. Any questions?

Questions	Probes
4. How does the neighborhood that a person lives in impact their quality of life?	Probe with domains of wellness.
5. You are writing a letter to your council member about [class issue] in your neighborhood. What would you recommend, and why?	
6. A group of city planners have asked for your input on [class issue]. What would you say, and why?	
7. Do the [class issue] options in your neighborhood fit the needs of the people? Why or why not?	
8. What are some ways that you can be involved in making decisions in your community?	In your school community?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 9. What do you know about the decision makers and leaders in your community? | How are they chosen?
How do community members communicate with them? |
| 10. If you were the president of your neighborhood association, what would be your top three priorities, and why? | |
| 11. What are some ways that designers can get input from the public before they start designing? | What is the process of getting public input? |
| 12. What are some careers that help build healthy communities? | Ask student to summarize job description. |
| 13. What did you like about the Design Your Neighborhood Project? What did you dislike? | |
| 14. Do you think students should learn about their neighborhoods in school? | |
-

Appendix F

Civic Interactions motiVating diVerse Individuals in Classroom Settings (CIVVICS) Observation Tool

	Low	Medium	High
--	-----	--------	------

Lesson Planning and Implementation Domain			
<i>Is there a clear purpose and goal for the lesson?</i>	What students are doing and why they are doing it are both unclear.	While the general purpose of the lesson may be understandable, there is not a clear goal for the day's work, or there may be clear goals, but students may ask why they are important.	Educator(s) and perhaps even students express a clear purpose and goal for the lesson, and student attention is focused on reaching that goal.
<i>Are resources (program, curriculum, outside resources, students background knowledge) used creatively and effectively to meet learning goals?</i>	Program curriculum is followed with no regard for students' unique needs, or lesson does not appear to be related to program goals.	Educators may attempt to draw upon relevant outside resources or students background knowledge to enhance or adapt the curriculum but knowledge of these resources or their connection to the learning goal is limited.	Educator(s) effectively use a range of resources, including adapting the program curriculum and using outside resources, knowledge of the community, and student background knowledge, to meet learning goals.
<i>Are connections made between academic, civic, and personal goals?</i>	There is little sense of how their work is important personally or civically. Few connections are made between personal experience, academic learning, and social and political issues, as well as between prior and future classes.	Some connections may be made between personal experience, academic learning and social and political issues, as well as between prior and future classes, primarily by the educator(s).	Students and teachers can articulate how goals are important civically, academically, and personally. Frequent connections are made between personal experience, academic learning, and social and political issues, and between prior and future classes.
<i>Does assessment of students' mastery occur?</i>	Mastery of learning goals is not assessed.	Mastery of learning goal is assessed informally. For instance, by asking a few students).	Checks for understanding are frequently used, and all student's mastery of the learning goal is systematically assessed in a way that can be used to plan future classes (for instance, exit tickets).

Observer Notes:

Classroom Interactions Domain			
<i>Are relationships (between educators and students and between students) warm, supportive, and respectful?</i>	There is little evidence of positive relationships; they are characterized by: physical distance, lack of cooperative peer interactions, disconnect in affect between teachers and students, lack of interest in each other, few positive comments, flat tone, and little use of names.	Relationships are at times warm, supportive, and respectful; however, interactions are not consistent and may not appear as genuine. Educators and students may try to respond to students' individual needs but may not always notice issues or effectively address problems.	Relationships warm, supportive, and respectful, as evidenced by: physical proximity, cooperative peer interactions, positive affect shared between educator and students (such as laughing or smiling), social conversation, specific positive comments, respectful language and tone, and use of names.
<i>Do people listen and respond to one another?</i>	Educators and students do not listen to each other, and do not respond to each other' emotional needs or disengagement. Relationships may be characterized by irritability, anger, and disrespect.	Mild negative interactions occur, sometimes without clear reason, and may not always be resolved effectively.	Educator and students listen to each other and are responsive to others' feelings and needs. If negative interactions (such as irritability, anger aggression, or humiliation) are evident, they are mild, rare, connected to a specific cause, and resolved quickly.
<i>Do educators (teacher and volunteer) contribute to class facilitation in complementary ways?</i>	Educators may contradict each other or engage in power struggle, or educators may not be participating in class facilitation.	Educators both contribute to class facilitation (in similar or unique ways); however, they may seem unclear on their role at times.	Educators contribute to class facilitation in complementary ways; it is clear they have planned the roles each will play.

Observer Notes:

Student Engagement Domain

<p>Are all students consistently interacting with teachers and peers, asking question, sharing ideas, and using materials?</p>	<p>Most students are distracted or disengaged for extended periods of time. They do not respond to the educator, interact constructively with peers, ask questions, volunteer information, share ideas, or use materials. Off task behaviors, such as using phones or talking about unrelated concepts, are evident.</p>	<p>Most students appear to be passively listening and following directions, but only occasionally responding to the educator, interacting constructively with peers, volunteering information, sharing idea, or using materials. Engagement may vary over time, or vary greatly between students in the same class.</p>	<p>All students are consistently and actively engaged and focused on the class's work. They respond to the educator, interact constructively with peers, ask questions, volunteer information, share ideas, and use materials.</p>
---	--	---	--

Observer Notes:

Civic Empowerment Domain

<p>Do students have choices, responsibilities, and opportunities for leadership?</p>	<p>Students have few choices, responsibilities, or opportunities for leadership.</p>	<p>Students have some choice, but opportunities to assume responsibility are limited. Students may not be pushed to try new roles or skills, or may not be given instruction and practice needed to have success.</p>	<p>Students have choices, responsibilities, and opportunities for leadership. Students are encouraged to try new roles, and given instruction and practice to develop new skills and apply them in real-world situations.</p>
<p>Are students given encouragement, instruction, and practice to develop and apply new skills of group collaboration, critical analysis, and persuasive oral and written communication?</p>	<p>Students are not taught skills of group collaboration, critical analysis, or persuasive oral or written communication necessary for effective action, or may be taught skills in isolation from real-world application.</p>	<p>Although people may discuss how to apply learning to real-world contexts, little action actually happens. Students sometimes are encouraged to share ideas and opinions but may not always be taken seriously. There are opportunities for peer interactions, but they may not be structured to lead to effective collective work.</p>	<p>Students have frequent opportunities to share ideas and opinions and interact constructively with peers.</p>
<p>Do students use reflection to identify strengths and areas for growth and transfer learning to new situations?</p>	<p>There are few opportunities for students to reflect on their learning.</p>	<p>Reflection may be used inconsistently or superficially.</p>	<p>Reflection is used to identify strengths and areas for growth and promote constant improvement and transfer to new contexts.</p>
<p>Do classroom practices reflect democratic ideals of fairness, freedom, and equality?</p>	<p>There is little reference to or regard for democratic values of fairness, freedom, equality; for instance, student movement might be tightly controlled, or only select students are chosen to take leadership roles.</p>	<p>Educators may espouse deals of fairness, freedom, and equality but not “practice what they preach,” or one democratic value might take precedence over others. For example, there may be open classroom discussions but no structures in place to make sure all students have a chance to participate.</p>	<p>Classroom practices reflect ideals of fairness, freedom, and equality. Educators and students thoughtfully address conflicts between these values. For example, teachers open discussion on most democratic way to proceed in class decision-making.</p>

Observer Notes:

Observation Details

<p>Date</p>	<p>School</p>
<p>Teacher</p>	<p>Curriculum</p>

Adapted from Stolte, L. C., Isenbarger, M., & Cohen, A. K. (2014). Measuring civic engagement processes and youth civic empowerment in the classroom: The CIVVICS observation tool. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 87(1), 44-51.

Appendix G

DYN Teacher Feedback—Interview Version

Today I'll ask for your feedback on the Design Your Neighborhood curriculum. There are no wrong or right answers to the questions; we are just interested in what you want to tell us. You may skip any question that you don't feel comfortable answering. If you change your mind about participating at any time during our talk, that's fine. I like to audio record these discussions so that I don't miss any of your feedback. I'm the only person who will hear your recording, and I'll delete the recording as soon as possible. Is it okay for me to audio record this discussion? Any questions before we begin?

Questions	Probes
How did you learn about the Design Your Neighborhood Curriculum?	
What made you interested in teaching DYN?	Personal connections?
Tell me about your experience teaching DYN.	Barriers/challenges?
Is this timeline to complete the unit realistic?	Why/why not?
Are the learning objectives addressed effectively in the unit?	Why/why not?
Did the final project allow students to demonstrate what they learned?	Why/why not?
Were the provided materials (maps, lesson plans, PPTs, handouts) useful?	Why/why not?
Was it useful to have access to a classroom volunteer?	Why/why not?
Did communication from and with the DYN team meet your expectations?	Why/why not?
Did you find the DYN professional development session useful?	Why/why not?
Would you recommend this unit to other teachers?	Why/why not?
Are you interested in teaching this unit again next year?	Why/why not?
What (if anything) did you learn about your own teaching practice through this experience?	
Do you have any other ideas for improvement that were not yet captured?	