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# Differences in Eighth Grade Science Student and Teacher Perception of Students Level of Input into Academic Planning and Decision Making

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STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

DIFFERENCES IN EIGHTH GRADE SCIENCE STUDENT AND TEACHER PERCEPTIONS  
OF STUDENTS' LEVEL OF INPUT INTO ACADEMIC PLANNING AND DECISION  
MAKING

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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We hereby approve the dissertation of

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Teachers are expected to improve their planning, instruction, and assessment as they progress through their career. An important component to teachers knowing what to modify in their teaching style is being able to solicit meaningful feedback from students. This mixed-methods study was conducted to provide teachers with a quantitative method to collect data about their teaching using the Constructivist Learning Environment Survey (CLES). Phase 1 allowed students to provide anonymous feedback to their teachers that the teachers could later reflect upon in conjunction with the students' other feedback. Using measures of central tendencies, it was determined that of the five categories of the CLES the area of student negotiation was statistically different from the other categories. While eight teachers had sufficient ( $n > 10$ ) student data to be invited to participate in Phase 2, only five of the teachers choose to participate in a semi-structured interview to further examine the potential differences between teacher and student perception of student negotiation with the curriculum, instruction and assessment that occurs in the classroom. Coding the interview transcripts led to three categories: 1) teaching style (with themes including curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and sub themes of teacher centered and student centered); 2) external pressures (with themes of standards, standardized tests, and socioeconomic conditions); 3) effectiveness of student negotiation (with themes of positive effect or no effect on motivation). The five teachers who participated in Phase 2 had varying levels of awareness and willingness to adjust their classroom

curriculum, instruction, and assessment to include student negotiation. All but one teacher, however, saw the value in increasing student negotiation in the classroom and desired to continue to change their teaching to include more student negotiation.