

## WHY WE NEED CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT?

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**Abstract** – a curriculum is just a big learning plan. As new research is published and as practices change, we will be forced to make updates to curriculum content. ... You do it with a structured set of activities designed to assess and adjust your curriculum; in other words, with curriculum management.

**Key words:** curriculum, curriculum content, curriculum management

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of curriculum management is to help ensure that all students will get the most out of their education. The more global goal of curriculum management is for students to use all the knowledge and skills they have learned to contribute to society in a meaningful and beneficial way. All stakeholders in any given school district contribute in ways that help to see to it that curriculum management is carried out, as best as possible (Barbara R. Cochran, 2003).

Curriculum is the academic system that imparts knowledge and skills to students in a school environment. More specifically, curriculum refers to what is written to be taught, and what is tested at different student levels, in specific areas or courses. After evaluating test results, administrators and boards can determine what are the most effective methods for imparting knowledge to students (Barbara R. Cochran, 2003).

The first part of curriculum management is curriculum design. At this stage, educational philosophy and practice is taken into consideration. Curriculum implementation follows, after which administrators train teachers so that they will be able to deliver the curriculum in a way that will most benefit the students.

Curriculum monitoring and evaluation are closely related. Administrators monitor curriculum delivery to ensure that it is taught in a way consistent with the design. Teachers, administrators, school board members, and parents all make assessments about the effectiveness of the curriculum in place. Data derived from their input is then used to make any changes that will either lead to more effective teaching, based on the present curriculum, or to other modifications that will improve the curriculum.

With curriculum management, courses of study are aligned. Alignment refers to the coordination of the writing, teaching, and testing of curriculum across grade levels and areas of study. Written curriculum, which is part of alignment, refers to stated learning goals, as well as methods and resources that educators are to employ to reach those goals. The written curriculum typically includes a statement of assessment tools that might be used to evaluate students' learning, and thus, the value of the curriculum.

Taught curriculum refers to the teacher's delivery of the curriculum to the student, according to how it has been written. Teachers formulate the units to be studied, as well as the supporting lesson plans. Approaches for presenting materials to students is also a part of the taught curriculum. Tested curriculum refers the parts of the written and taught curriculum that are assessed, whether formally or informally. It determines if a student has thrived on the basis and implementation of the written curriculum (Barbara R. Cochran, 2003).

### 2. The First part of Curriculum Management is Curriculum Design

Curriculum is an aspect of the education [profession](#) which focuses on developing curricula for students. Some education professionals specialize in curriculum design, and may spend all of their time working on curricula, rather than teaching in the classroom, while in other cases working teachers develop their own curricula. Curriculum design is also practiced by parents who [homeschool](#) their children, sometimes with the guidance

of an experienced education professional who can provide advice and suggestions, and sometimes with the assistance of experienced homeschoolers.

In many nations, specific benchmark standards are set for education to ensure that children across the nation achieve a similar level of education. For example, a government may dictate when children should start to learn multiplication and division, set standards for reading ability, and so forth. One aspect of curriculum design involves reviewing these standards and determining how they can be met or exceeded.

Another aspect involves thinking about the students themselves, and what type of curriculum would be most appropriate. Students come from a wide variety of cultural and class backgrounds, and curriculum design should not be a one size fits all approach. Methods which work in a school located in an upper class district may not be appropriate for a school in an area with many immigrants who do not speak the primary language of instruction, for example, and methods used with students who are language learners would not work for children with intellectual disabilities. A skilled [curriculum designer](#) needs to think about the needs of the student population he or she is serving.

Curriculum design may also include a consideration of limitations. A homeschooling parent, for example, might be able to make time to take a student on a trip to [London](#) to see historical items in museums to learn in context, while an entire classroom in [Beijing](#) could not reasonably replicate this experience. Limitations can include issues like funding, access to textbooks, moral norms in the region where the students are being taught, and limitations set by the school district. For example, someone who works on curriculum design for sexual education programs may be designing curricula for school districts in which certain subjects cannot be discussed, requiring an adjustment to the curriculum.

Flexibility is another important aspect of curriculum design. Many classroom teachers are working with students of different levels of ability, and they need to be able to adjust the curriculum to keep all of the students engaged and learning. It may also be necessary to change the pace of a curriculum to deal with problems as they arise; for example, a class might have more trouble grasping a concept than was expected, and the teacher needs to be able to spend more time on it, rather than racing on to the next subject and leaving students confused (O. Wallace, 2003)

### **3. Why Is Curriculum Management Important?**

By implementing a consistent framework for teaching across the school district, leaders can assess student and teacher performance against common standards, making it easier to spot issues that may need immediate attention, as well as discover best practices that may otherwise be hidden.

However, none of this is possible unless the district has put practices in place to effectively manage their curriculum. To put this in perspective, because of its very nature, digital content is constantly changing, and districts already have a hard time making sense of the mountains of student data that seem to multiply daily. When these forces come together, threats such as content gaps, inefficiencies in developing and adapting curriculum – or worse, missed opportunities for student intervention, become magnified.

### **Outcomes of Effective Curriculum Management**

Talk to any district leader about some of the biggest challenges they face, and you're likely to find that many educators grapple with the same types of issues: difficulty in tracking and comparing student progress; too many systems in place; inefficient processes for curriculum changes; and how to handle previous investment in other resources.

### **Four Strategies for Successful Curriculum Management**

Because your district's vision, goals and philosophies are unique, chances are your approach to curriculum management also differs from other districts around you.

That's why it's important to weigh a variety of options when it comes to deciding the best way to manage your curriculum.

Following are four successful curriculum management strategies used by school districts across the country – all made possible with the help of their learning management system (LMS)

a) Align units, lessons and assessments

Create a system that lets you connect your content to district, state or national standards, as well as established learning outcomes and your own learning objectives.

b) Make it a one-stop solution



Save time with a solution that gives teachers, curriculum managers and parents quick, easy access to courses, resources and student progress – all from one user interface, with one login

c) Adopt a dynamic solution

Drive efficiency by ensuring that all changes are automatically reflected throughout your district, in every school and for every teacher

d) Build in best practices

Encourage best practices by building them into your course design and pedagogy, as well as providing online spaces for resource sharing and teacher collaboration (Tech & Learning newsletter, 2016)

#### **4. The Functions of Curriculum Management**

The curriculum is usually developed by the school district, or college administration so that teachers are aware of what they are expected to teach throughout the year. It typically breaks down what needs to be taught, as well as ideas on how it should be presented to the students. In addition, the curriculum usually lets teachers know how to measure the effectiveness of their teachings, often through standardized testing. It can be used as a guideline for teachers, as many depend on it to develop their coursework (Andrew Jones, 2019).

To choose the best school curriculum, you must first fully understand what the coursework is meant to help students achieve. The age and education level of your students will have a large impact on your decision, as will your own personal preferences. Start by looking through any available options in terms of books and lesson plans, and discover which ones meet your needs the best.

In many cases, the school curriculum you choose will be partially, if not entirely, dictated by the government in your area. Specific topics and lessons are often required for each grade level, with certain tests and exams being required by every student in order to move on to the next grade. You will need to determine what these specifications are and be sure to comply with all regulations to ensure your students are getting a quality education.

Even with guidelines and rules in place, you will probably have some room to get creative with your school curriculum. You can choose your own lesson plans for many subjects, as well as new and fun ways of teaching required lessons. Create games for your students to reinforce learning, and tell plenty of stories from your own experiences to add to the depth of your school curriculum. These techniques will help concepts stay in your students' minds longer.

If you are given any choice in the books from which you teach, read through every option carefully and decide which one best conveys the lessons you are teaching. In some cases, each book will have good and bad points, so you may be able to take a little from each. If buying multiple books for the classroom is not feasible, buy one copy or view them at the library and make photocopies of useful pages to use in class.

Another part of choosing the right curriculum is making out your actual lesson plans and homework schedules. Although you may have to adhere to specific lessons, it is often at your discretion how you go about teaching them. For classroom assignments, homework, and tests; take the best from each book as well as your own ideas and put them together in print-out worksheets. This will give students a much richer classroom experience.

Most importantly, encourage your students to ask plenty of questions and to give input throughout the year on ways you can make the classroom experience more productive and fun. By listening to your class, you can gain a better understanding of what they need in terms of school curriculum and from you as a teacher.

#### **5. Drawbacks of traditional curriculum in Curriculum Management**

A Traditional curriculum is an educational curriculum which follows established guidelines and practices. This term can refer both to a curriculum as a whole, as in the set of courses which students must take to graduate and the order in which they are presented, and to the curriculum in the form of the content taught in an individual class. This curriculum is sometimes criticized for being too narrow, and a number of education professionals have developed alternative educational methods, or suggestions for teaching a traditional curriculum in a more expanded way.

In the sense of an entire curriculum, a traditional curriculum includes core subjects and electives. Core subjects usually include topics like math, science, history, and English. Students may also take courses in the social sciences, and can expand their curriculum with topics like art, foreign languages, music, acting, and so forth.

The curriculum is designed in a progressive way, with each level being slightly more challenging than the last, requiring students to build skills and use them as their work their way through the curriculum.

In an individual classroom, the traditional curriculum involves the presentation of information in the form of blocks or units which are broken into smaller units of information and presented by the teacher to the students. Traditionally, exchange between students and teachers is less encouraged, and the facilitation of class discussion is also not a part of this curriculum. These are seen as shortcomings by some educators, who feel that students are more likely to develop **critical thinking** skills and to internalize and apply the information if they have discussions with the class, present projects which allow them to expand the material, and so forth. Increasingly, such activities are being accepted into curricula around the world.

The traditional curriculum can also be heavily standards-based, with testing used to measure accomplishment and progress. This practice has also been criticized by educators, as standards-based curricula can take on a “teach to the test” format in which students are provided with information which will help them pass a test, but not necessarily with information which they can use. For example, math education might be very based on learning set formulas and ways of doing math, but not on developing math skills which could be useful in real life (Mary McMahon, 2019)

#### **6. How to Choose the Best Creative Curriculum?**

The educational system has mainly focused on making subjects such as math and science core parts of the curriculum and using lectures and textbooks as the main teaching tools. In recent years, educators and parents have come to recognize the benefits of nurturing creativity in students, and incorporate creativity into their academic studies. Whether you're in search of creative curriculum with which to home school your kids, or trying to find a school with the best creative curriculum, there are a number of creative content indicators to look for. A curriculum's textbooks, projects, activities, classes offered, and grading methods can all indicate whether or not it encompasses creativity.

The content of a textbook or workbook that supports a creative curriculum is one which endeavors to engage different students on a variety of levels. For example, a textbook that has lots of photos, illustrations, and other interesting images will attract the attention of students who learn on a visual level, while students who enjoy reading may be attracted to its conversational text. A multimedia approach to teaching is another indicator of a creative curriculum, and could mean deploying videos, games, and other audio and visual tools to support standard textbook material.

Projects and other assignments which offer students choices both foster and reflect creativity. For example, if students are studying outer space and are required to complete an assignment on the topic, they could be presented with the choice of writing a report, making models of planets, or designing their own educational game about space. The diverse range of classes offered in certain schools today is another sign of a creative curriculum. Private schools that specialize in the arts offer a particularly creative curriculum which may include classes focused in such subjects as dance, art, music, and theater.

The way in which a student's performance is evaluated also reflects a curriculum that is creative. Grades which take into consideration a student's attitude, problem-solving abilities, and overall approach to a subject can be assessed along with the student's test scores. This results in a richer, broader curriculum which places value on a student's approach to learning instead of just his or her test results.

#### **Conclusion**

Curriculum Management today is concerned with results, and particularly those peculiar to the enterprise of education. Schools are not factories. A study of school management would reveal that many of the solutions educators have historically selected and implemented are those that have limited schools from becoming more humane places. Effective application of management practice would be to identify poor practices and eliminate those that are contradictory to the results desired. Curriculum management is part and parcel of developing the education system in our modern life.

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