

Curriculum and Instruction

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Curriculum coordinators are involved in designing curriculums and observing the process of teaching and implementation. The three components of education are related to each other. From my short experience as curriculum coordinator for Arabic language and Science, I can provide brief observation and comments regarding this matter:

1- Some of the present curriculums are very confusing for the teachers and ultimately for the students. In case some parts are not confusing, they are very brief and provide little information or direction. Some interdisciplinary ties fail in reinforcing the concepts and instead branch in every direction and lack the focus.

What is needed is more focused curriculum having the ability to expand the thinking of the students, emphasizing on the important concepts (scientific specially). It should be based on teaching the concepts, reinforcing and reinforcing with focused various activities and teaching strategies. The curriculum should also be very detailed with step by step explanation on teaching the concept. Technology must be present to accommodate the interest of the new generation. A technology based curriculum emphasizing less on the ability of the teacher and does not restrict the information given to the students on the knowledge of the teacher in the subject matter. This allow more teachers to perform their jobs in a more satisfactory way and on the other hand give more chance for the students to learn to their abilities

2- The capability of the students should not be underestimated. The students are capable to learn by themselves when provided with the appropriate guidance. Instructions should be student based rather than teacher based. In other words, we are moving toward a society where the attention span of the students to listen to the teacher is very brief. However, with the appropriate resources, some students may give excellent results searching by themselves. Instruction should be focused on teaching the concepts clearly "less talking but making more sense" and not "a lot of information and less knowledge".

3- A major part of the standardized assessment tests (science from my experience) are concepts based. With a clear and appropriate concept based curriculum, clear students-based instruction, assessment of the concepts should provide good results. Multiple choice examinations should not be the sole method. Students need to be given the opportunity to express themselves and expand their thinking with essay questions, which also provide a clue on their misconceptions, if present.

It is important to keep in mind that it is not beneficial to fill the minds of the students with information. However, it is important to help them absorb the important concepts and keep some space in their minds for their creativities.

4- Books play important part in the process. They should be reviewed in details to match

the new GLCE and reading level of the students at the school. With the new scientific educational reform, we should see in the future more books talking mainly to the students. In other words, the students should be able to read in the book and understand the meaning with little to no assistance from the teacher.

5- Assistance should always be provided to the teacher in terms of clarifying the curriculum, looking for appropriate resource, having representative from publishing companies to provide workshop on using the resources of the books, recommending and model good teaching strategies, etc.....

I believe the issue of curriculum, instruction and assessment is the core. When accurately designed and tied together, it may provide the Elixir of many educational problems and drive our generation to achieve success.

PAGE

PAGE 2