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THE NATURE OF CURRICULUM

QUESTIONS ADDRESSED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- What is the concept of curriculum?
- What are the types of curriculum?
- What are the components of curriculum?
- What are mastery, organic, and enrichment curricula?
- What is meant by the *hidden curriculum*?

This introductory chapter provides curriculum leaders and teachers with a general overview of the curriculum field and a set of concepts for analyzing the field. The discussion that follows focuses on the following outcomes: defining the concept of curriculum, examining the several **types of curricula**, describing the contrasting nature of curriculum components, and analyzing the **hidden curriculum**. Some fundamental concepts essential for understanding the comprehensive field of curriculum can be established at the outset.

THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM

In a sense, the task of defining the concept of curriculum is perhaps the most difficult of all—certainly challenging—for the term *curriculum* has been used with quite different meanings ever since the field took form. Curriculum, however, can be defined as prescriptive, descriptive, or both.

Prescriptive [curriculum] definitions provide us with what “ought” to happen, and they more often than not take the form of a plan, an intended program, or some kind of expert opinion about what needs to take place in the course of study. (Ellis, 2004, p. 4)

Analogous to **prescriptive curricula** are medical prescriptions that patients have filled by pharmacists; we do not know how many are actually followed. “The best guess is that most are not” (Ellis, 2004, p. 4). This is parallel to the prescribed curriculum for schools where the teacher, like the patient, ultimately decides whether to follow the prescription. In essence, “the developer proposes, but the teacher disposes” (p. 4).

To understand the nature and extent of curriculum diversity, it is important to examine the prescriptive and descriptive definitions offered by some of the past and present leaders in the field. The prescriptive definitions in Table 1.1, arranged chronologically, have been chosen for their representativeness.

The descriptive definitions of curriculum displayed in Table 1.2 go beyond the prescriptive terms as they force thought about the curriculum “not merely in terms of how things ought to be . . . but how things are in real classrooms” (Ellis, 2004, p. 5). Another term that could be used to define the **descriptive curriculum** is experience. The experienced curriculum provides glimpses of the curriculum in action. Several examples, in chronological order, of descriptive definitions of curriculum are listed in Table 1.2.

TABLE 1.1 ■ Prescriptive Definitions of Curriculum

Date	Author	Definition
1902	John Dewey	“Curriculum is a continuous reconstruction, moving from the child’s present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies. . . . [T]he various studies . . . are themselves experience—they are that of the race” (Dewey, 1902, pp. 11–12).
1957	Ralph Tyler	“[The curriculum is] all the learning experiences planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goals” (Tyler, 1957, p. 79).
2010	Indiana Department of Education	“Curriculum means the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources, and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives” (Indiana Department of Education, 2010).

Note: Prescriptive curriculum provides us with what “ought” to happen and, more often than not, takes the form of a plan, an intended program, or some kind of expert opinion about what needs to take place in the course of study.

In your opinion, which prescriptive definition is most appropriate today? Why?

TABLE 1.2 ■ Descriptive Definitions of Curriculum

Date	Author	Definition
1935	Hollis Caswell and Doak Campbell	“Curriculum is all the experiences children have under the guidance of teachers” (Caswell & Campbell, 1935).
1960	W. B. Ragan	“Curriculum is all the experiences of the child for which the school accepts responsibility” (Ragan, 1960).
2013	Edward S. Ebert II, Christine Ebert, and Michael L. Bentley	“Curriculum is only that part of the plan that directly affects students. Anything in the plan that does not reach the students constitutes an educational wish but not a curriculum” (Ebert, Ebert, & Bentley, 2013, p. 2).

Note: Descriptive curriculum explains how curricula “benefit or harm all individuals it touches.” For example, one descriptive concept from **curriculum theory** is that of the hidden curriculum, which is some of the outcomes or by-products of schools, particularly those situations that are learned but not openly intended.

In your opinion, which descriptive definition is most appropriate today? Why?

The definitions provided for prescriptive and descriptive curricula vary primarily in their breadth and emphasis. It would seem that a useful definition of curriculum should meet two criteria: It should reflect the general understanding of the term as used by educators, and it should be useful to educators in making operational distinctions. Therefore, the following definition of curriculum will be used in this work:

The curriculum is a set of plans made for guiding learning in the schools, usually represented in retrievable documents of several levels of generality, and the actualization of those plans in the classroom, as experienced by the learners and as recorded by an observer; those experiences take place in a learning environment that also influences what is learned.

Several points in this definition need to be emphasized. First, it suggests that curriculum includes both a set of plans made for learning and the actual learning experiences. Limiting the term to the plans made for learning is not enough because, as will be discussed next, those plans are often ignored or modified. Second, the term *retrievable documents* is sufficiently broad in its denotation to include curricula stored in a digital form—that is, software and/or shared on the Internet. Also, those documents, as will be more fully explained next, are of several levels of specificity. Some, such as curricular policy statements, are very general in their formulation; others, such as daily lesson plans, are quite specific. Third, the definition notes two key dimensions of actualized curriculum: the curriculum as experienced by the learner and that which might be observed by a disinterested observer. Finally, the experienced curriculum takes place in an environment that influences and impinges on learning, constituting what is usually termed the hidden curriculum.

KEY TO CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

Curriculum specialists, school administrators, and teacher-leaders should review and monitor curriculum policies to make sure they align with curricular goals and support student learning.

Although the definition for curriculum does not deal explicitly with the relationship between curriculum and instruction, an implicit relationship does exist. Instruction is viewed here as an aspect of curriculum, and its function and importance change throughout the several types of curricula. First, in the **written curriculum**, when the curriculum is a set of documents that guide planning, instruction is only one relatively minor aspect of the curriculum. Those retrievable documents used in planning for learning typically specify five components: a rationale for the curriculum; the aims, objectives, and content for achieving those objectives; instructional methods; learning materials and resources; and tests or assessment methods.

Consequently, instruction is a component of the planned curriculum and is usually seen as less important than the aims, objectives, and content at the actualized level; when the planned or written curriculum is actually delivered, instruction takes on a new importance. In the end, a quality curriculum is based on concepts over routines and favored learning through solving problems as well as developing newly formed strategies (Remillard, 2016). For that reason, administrators and teacher-leaders should view the curriculum as the total learning experience for students and focus on instruction—how teachers are teaching.

THE TYPES OF CURRICULA

The definition stipulated previously suggests a major difference between the planned curriculum and actualized curriculum. Yet even these distinctions are not sufficiently precise to encompass the several different types of curricula. It is important to note that the word curriculum (as defined from its early Latin origins) means literally “to run a course.” For example, if students think of a marathon with mile and direction markers, signposts, water stations, and officials and coaches along the route, they can better understand the concept of types of curriculum (Wilson, 2005).

As early as 1979, Goodlad and associates were perhaps the first to suggest several key distinctions. As Goodlad analyzed curricula, he determined there were five different forms of **curriculum planning**. The ideological curriculum is the ideal curriculum as construed by scholars and teachers—a curriculum of ideas intended to reflect funded knowledge. The formal curriculum is that officially approved by state and local school boards—the sanctioned curriculum that represents society’s interests. The perceived curriculum is the curriculum of the mind—what educators, parents, and others think the curriculum to be. The operational curriculum is the observed curriculum of what actually goes on hour after hour in the classroom. Finally, the experiential curriculum is what the learners actually experience.

While those distinctions in general seem important, the terms are perhaps a bit cumbersome, and the classifications are not entirely useful to curriculum workers. It seems to be more useful in the present context to use the following concepts with some slightly different denotations: the **recommended curriculum**, the written curriculum, the **supported curriculum**, the **taught curriculum**, the **tested curriculum**, and the **learned curriculum**. Four of these curricula—the written, the supported, the taught, and the tested—are considered components of the **intentional curriculum**. The intentional curriculum is the set of learnings that the school system consciously intends, in contradistinction to the hidden curriculum, which, by and large, is not a product of conscious intention.

The Recommended Curriculum

The recommended curriculum is that curriculum that is endorsed by individual scholars, professional associations, and reform commissions; it also encompasses the curriculum requirements of policymaking groups, such as federal government and state agencies. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in 2015, which dramatically shifts authority of our nation’s system of public education back to state and local control, is similar to Goodlad’s *ideological curriculum*. It represents a curriculum that stresses “oughtness,” identifying the skills and concepts that ought to be emphasized, according to the perceptions and value systems of the sources.

CURRICULUM TIP 1.1

Recommended curricula are typically formulated at a rather high level of generality; they are most often presented as policy recommendations, lists of goals, suggested graduation requirements, and general recommendations about the content and sequence of a field of study, such as mathematics.

Several influences seem to play key roles on the shaping of the recommended curricula. The primary influence is the prevailing decline of American education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels; its low international educational ranking; and the achievement gap between students of different races. As a result, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA) committed to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI). This educational initiative in the United States detailed what K–12 students should know in English language arts and mathematics at the end of each grade.

The CCSSO and the NGA organizations selected representatives from 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia to write the standards for the common core. The task for writing the standards engaged the talents and expertise of educators, content specialists, researchers, community groups, and national organizations, including an advisory group of experts from Achieve, American College Testing (ACT), the College Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education, and the State Higher Education Executive Officers. Although the professional association subject area specialists for which the standards were written were not included in writing the standards, they were invited to critique the CSS draft standards prior to their release for public comment. “In addition, the draft standards were [reviewed] and feedback [provided] from teachers, parents, business leaders, and the general public” (Kendall, 2011, p. 1).

CURRICULUM TIP 1.2

First, we must define what we mean by standards. Second, we must create a set of standards that are “doable” in the classroom. Finally, teachers must view standards as an important part of their work. I call these the three Ds—definition, doability, and desirability.

—Jim Cox (2000). President of JK Educational Associates, Inc., Anaheim, California

As part of a recommended curriculum, many states relied greatly upon Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to spur curriculum change in a number of schools across the country. Note, however, that Minnesota only adopted the Common Core English language arts standards in their entirety and added some supplementary content. Regardless of an ongoing debate over CCSS, there appears to have been more attention given to explicit practice standards since its inception (Walkowiak, 2015). Although standards existed prior to the CCSS, a comparison of standards in different periods of time is shown in Table 1.3.

The Role of Professional Associations

In addition to a focus on state standards and the previously established CCSS recommendations, professional associations will continue to have a major impact on curricular change. Foremost, the professional associations representing several disciplines, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), have been active in generating recommended curricula. These associations also influence school administrators who have membership in their professional associations comprising the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and National Associations for Secondary School Principals (NAESP), Middle School Principals (NAMSP), and Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

In essence, the professional associations serve as the public voice for the numerous academic disciplines. They provide a vision, leadership, and **professional development** to support teachers, ensuring learning of the highest quality for each and every student. In addition, the professional associations are dedicated to ongoing dialogue and constructive discussion with all stakeholders about what is best for our nation’s students.

TABLE 1.3 ■ A Comparison of Education Before Standards-Based Education, During the Standards Movement, and Under the Common Core State Standards

	Before Standards-Based Education	During the Standards Movement	Under the Common Core State Standards
Appropriateness of expectations to instructional time	Time available = time needed.	Varies by state; no explicit design criteria. Often not enough instructional time available to address all standards.	Standards are designed to require 85 percent of instruction time available.
Curriculum support	Curriculum is defined by the textbook.	Standards drive the curriculum, but curriculum development lags behind standards development.	Standards publication is followed quickly by curriculum development.
Methods of describing student outcomes	Seat time; Carnegie units (emphasis on inputs over outcomes).	State standards; criterion-based.	Cross state standards; consortia of states.
Source of expectations for students	The expectations in textbooks or those described in Carnegie units; historical, traditional influences.	Varies by state; over time, moved from traditional course descriptions to college- and career-ready criteria.	The knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready; international benchmarks; state standards.
Primary assessment of purposes	Infrequent comparison of students against a national sample; minimum competency tests in the 1970s.	Accountability; to clarify student performance by subgroup (NSLB).	Accountability; to learn and improve teaching and learning.
Systemic nature of reform	Not systemic; reform is enacted through programs at the school or district level.	Reform varies by state and within states; “local control” states are much less systemic.	Standards curriculum and assessment are shared among participating states and territories.

Source: Kendall (2011). Reprinted by permission of McREL International.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP TIP

A professional association is a great place to be mentored in whatever skills you need to learn.

—Laura Raines for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

The Written Curriculum

The written curriculum, as the term is used here, is the curriculum embodied in approved state and district **curriculum guides**. It is intended primarily to ensure that newly adapted educational goals of the system are being accomplished and that the curriculum is well managed. This enables all students, regardless of ethnicity, cultural background, or challenges, to be able to graduate from respective high schools and be prepared for postsecondary education and careers. Typically, the written curriculum is much more specific and comprehensive than the recommended curriculum, indicating a rationale that supports the curriculum, the general goals to be accomplished, the specific objectives to be mastered, the sequence in which those objectives should be studied, and the kinds of learning activities that should be used. Curriculum leaders are thus able to develop well-documented and technologically driven implementation plans, goals and objectives, as well as timelines that can be used as reference points for future change and improvement.

CURRICULUM TIP 1.3

The written curriculum is an important component of authentic literacy—the ability to read, write, and think effectively.

Regarding school curriculum administrators and teacher-leaders, the authors believe that written generic and site-specific curriculum must be authentic. Equally important, shared leadership continues to garner recognition as a successful reform approach when restructuring written curriculum (Stanulis, Coer, Dear, Johnston, & Richard-Todd, 2016). Generic curricula are those written for use in various educational settings. Initially, during the 1960s, numerous generic curricula were produced by federally funded research and development laboratories; now, more typically, they are produced by state and federal education departments and intended for use throughout the individual states and/or country, with some local leeway provided. Site-specific written curricula are those developed for a specific site, usually for a local school district or even for a particular school.

Site-specific written curricula are influenced by several different sources. First, as will be explained more fully in Chapter 4, federal and state legislation and court directives play a role. The passage of Public Law 94–142, prescribing that schools provide the “least restrictive environment” for handicapped learners, undoubtedly precipitated much local curriculum work to help teachers work toward “inclusion.” The textbooks and standardized tests in use in the district seem to influence decisions about the inclusion and placement of content. The expectations of vocal parent and community groups seem to have at least a constraining influence on what can be done.

In general, however, the guides seem to reflect the preferences and practices of a local group of elites: a director of curriculum, a supervisor of that subject area, a principal or teacher-leader with a strong interest in curriculum, and experienced teachers. They, in turn, seem most influenced by the practice of “lighthouse” districts. It is important to note that we are entering a new kind of shared leadership in the 21st century.

KEY TO LEADERSHIP

It is important to note how managers seem only to manage while, in contrast, leaders actually lead. A major key to school success is focusing on the quality of leadership, as well as shared leadership with teachers.

Supporting teacher-leaders continues to evolve as classroom teachers gain a global view of what affects their perception of good schools. However, overturning the old ways of management is not easy, especially in school districts comfortable with the status quo (Saltzman, 2016). Subsequently, the authors strongly believe that people will support what they help create so that all stakeholders, especially teachers, share the commitment of curriculum leadership.

Equally important as quality leadership is a need for quality written curricula. The three chief functions of written curricula seem to be mediating, standardizing, and controlling. They first mediate between the ideals of the recommended curriculum and the realities of the classroom; in this sense, they often represent a useful compromise between what the experts think *should* be taught and what teachers believe *can* be taught. They also mediate the expectations of administrators, teacher-leaders, and the preferences of faculty and staff. The best of them represent a negotiated consensus of administrators and teacher-leaders. An example of the “how-to” in developing and implementing curriculum is illustrated in Chapter 10.

Written curricula also serve an important role in standardizing the curricula, especially in larger districts. Often, they are produced as a result of directives from a superintendent who is concerned that students in School A are studying a social studies curriculum or using a reading series quite different from those in Schools B and C.

TABLE 1.4 ■ Principal and Teacher-Leader Curriculum Responsibilities

Responsibilities	The Extent to Which the Principal or Teacher-Leader Does the Following:
Knowledge of curriculum	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
Curriculum, instruction, assessment	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
Resources	Provides faculty and staff with needed curriculum material and professional learning opportunities necessary for the successful execution of their roles
Focus	Establishes clear curriculum goals and keeps those goals at the forefront of the school's attention
Change agent	Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo in curriculum development and implementation
Monitor/evaluator	Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of school curriculum practices and their impact on student learning
Intellectual stimulation	Ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current curriculum theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture

Undeniably, standardized and centralized curricula are generally used by school administrators and teacher-leaders as tools to guide teaching. That said, focusing on standards and student achievement is not new. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) compiled more than three decades of research on the effects of instruction and schooling on student achievement and found a substantial relationship between curriculum leadership and student achievement (see Table 1.4). The results of this study continue to provide practitioners with specific guidance on the curricular, instructional, and school practices that, when applied appropriately, can result in increased student achievement.

In reviewing the research on the effects of instruction and schooling on student achievement, it becomes readily apparent that any written curriculum must be adapted to emerging technologies. Similarly, written curriculum should represent a useful synthesis of recommended curricula and local practice and be well conceptualized, carefully developed, and easy to use.

Unfortunately, many written curricula still lack these qualities. A careful review of a large number of such curriculum guides reveals a series of common faults: Objectives are often not related to the stated goals, instructional activities are not directly related to the objectives, the activities do not reflect the best current knowledge about teaching and learning, and the guides are generally cumbersome and difficult to use. Allan A. Glatthorn (1987), author of several curriculum leadership books, questioned the comprehensiveness of some curriculum guides. He recommended that the written curriculum should be delivered to teachers as a loose-leaf notebook, containing only a scope and sequence chart, goals, a list of course objectives, and a brief list of materials. This simpler format, he argued, would make the written curriculum more likely to be used.

In addition to the common faults of curriculum guides, the problem of mismatched textbooks exists in many school districts nationwide as well. Research by Allington (2002) showed that numerous classrooms used textbooks written two or more years above the average grade level. In other words, if schools use textbooks as the key curriculum provider, then students need textbooks that are readable and understandable.

The Supported Curriculum

The supported curriculum is the curriculum as reflected in and shaped by the resources allocated to support and deliver it. Four kinds of resources seem to be most critical here: the time allocated to a given subject at a particular level of schooling (How much time should we allocate to social studies in Grade 5?); the time allocated by the classroom teacher within that overall subject allocation to particular aspects of the curriculum (How much time shall I allocate to the first unit on the explorers?); personnel allocations as reflected in and resulting from class size decisions (How many physical education teachers do we need in the middle school if we let PE classes increase to an average of 35?); and the textbooks and other learning materials provided for use in the classroom (Can we get by with those old materials for one more year?).

Equally important is the role of special education, as well as an understanding of how curriculum can support special education programs. Increasing the support of special education services is perhaps one of the best approaches to foster and strengthen curriculum, as well as to disrupt inequities that many students with disabilities experience. Thus, educational leaders need to mobilize a wide range of support across three dimensions: personal, curriculum, and technology (Fisher & Frey, 2016).

Unfortunately, the harsh reality is that school leaders often have minimal guidance when facing continued budget cuts for supported curriculum. Decisions dealing with economic conditions are generally represented by two distinct lines of thought. First, there is the response to cut back leadership or management. Second, there is a move toward crisis management, such as advocating slashing budgets, reducing programs, and eliminating teachers and staff. Given these two limited options, school leaders need to explore all possibilities if they are to accommodate needed curricular changes. Thus, with more waves of

digital innovation on the way, school leaders are clamoring to find creative ways to finance curriculum adequately. This conundrum is of paramount importance and is clearly critical if future generations of children are to remain educationally, socially, and economically competitive on a global level. Most assuredly, the benefits of learning about and from the world are many, especially for those students in schools having a global-competency focus (Tavangar, 2016–2017).

Clearly, the patterns of influence bearing on the supported curriculum seem rather complex. First, both federal and state governments exercise a strong influence on the supported curriculum: State curriculum guidelines go even further by specifying minimum time allocation, as well as state-approved lists of basic texts that restrict the choice of textbooks to a relatively small number.

In addition, the local school board, under the leadership of its superintendent, seems to be playing an ever-increasing role in supporting curriculum. In many districts, boards adopt curriculum policies specifying minimum time allocations to the several subjects, approve district-purchased texts, and make major budget decisions that strongly affect the personnel and material support provided. At the school level, principals and teacher-leaders also seem to have a major influence. They usually have some discretion in the allocation of funds for textbooks, media, and other learning materials. And the school leaders are often given some latitude in their requests for additional staff.

Because the classroom teacher is so vital to the process, it is not surprising that a key to strengthening and deepening what is taught relies largely on **professional learning**. As a result, school leaders at all levels are now recognizing the critical importance of teacher growth and the role of professional learning communities (PLCs). Like students, it is best if educators remain in a consistent state of discovery and learning. For these reasons, curriculum staff, administrators, and teacher-leaders need to work collaboratively if they are to set the direction for 21st-century learning. Innovative concepts like m-learning and e-learning don't just happen. It takes planning, strategy, and collegial reform to make it happen. By building awareness and strategic alliances, teachers can, and often do, make a significant difference in the lives of their students. For that reason, one cannot circumvent the importance of high-quality professional training in today's globally changing society.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TIP

As educators, I think that we learn best, or we are more receptive to presentations, when we know that the experts are practitioners themselves. Also, it makes us feel valued as practitioners when others are coming to learn from us.

—Aman Dhanda, Senior Fellow, Educator Engagement (ASCD, 2017)

Undeniably, problems with textbooks and materials are a recurring issue. It should be shared that current elementary school reading series appear to contain several flaws: Stories written for use in the primary grades do not give enough insight into characters' goals, motives, and feelings. Many of the so-called stories do not actually tell a story and textbooks lack a logical structure often emphasizing a trivial detail rather than a fundamental principle. Harder textbooks, as well as media-related texts, unfortunately, have captured the attention of educators and policymakers who want to raise academic achievement.

The role of supportive curriculum is to lead students to mastery in any subject by creating scenarios in which learners see themselves in that subject—because they grasp its potential to extend their capacities and to benefit other people (Tomlinson, 2013–2014). In their earlier book, *The Parallel Curriculum*, Tomlinson et al. (2002) share that parallels can be used to develop or support curriculum for individuals, small groups, and entire classes. The term *parallel* indicates several formats through which educators can approach curriculum design in the same subject or discipline. Tomlinson and her colleagues referred to the four parallels as core curriculum, curriculum and connections, **curriculum of practice**, and **curriculum of identity**. These parallel processes can be deductive or inductive and can be used as catalysts either to discover student abilities and interests or in response to student abilities and interests. They believe that these parallels act as support for thematic study and help connect content that might otherwise seem disjointed to learners. Using this model, a teacher might establish a definition of change, identify key principles related to change, and introduce students to key skills and specific standards.

The supported curriculum plays a central role at several stages of the curriculum cycle—first in developing curricula and second in implementing the curriculum. Those involved in aligning the curriculum should assess to what extent a good fit exists between the written, the supported, and the taught curricula (see Chapter 11). Finally, any comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum should assess the supported curriculum because deficiencies in support will undoubtedly be a major factor in student achievement.

Value of Later School Start Times

Another factor that needs support to improve the curriculum and student achievement is to study the value of later school start times for teenage students. For example, Kyla Wahlstrom et al. (2014) conducted a 3-year research study that included over 9,000 students in eight public high schools in three states. The results revealed that high schools that start at 8:30 a.m. or later allow for more than 60% of students to obtain at least 8 hours of sleep per school night. Teens getting less than 8 hours of sleep report significantly higher depression symptoms, greater use of caffeine, and are at greater risk for making poor choices around substance use. Academic performance outcomes, including grades earned in core subject areas of math, English, science, and social studies, plus performance on state and national achievement tests, attendance rates, and reduced tardiness, showed significantly positive improvement with start times of 8:30 a.m. or later.

In support of Wahlstrom's et al. research study, Carolyn Crist (2017) referenced the study in a published article in *Sleep Health*, the journal of the National Sleep Foundation. This study included data for 30,000 students in 29 high schools from eight school districts across seven states. The results showed that 2 years after a delayed start was implemented at these high schools, average attendance rates increased 90%, and graduation rates increased from 79% to 88%.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION EFFECTS

Negative effects for adolescents are academic, social, mental, and physical. Insufficient sleep can be related to attention problems both in and out of school, general cognitive functioning, emotional regulation, mood disorders, engaging in risky behaviors, and academic outcomes.

—Carolyn Crist (2017)

The Taught Curriculum

The extent to which consonance exists between the written curriculum and the taught curriculum seems to vary considerably. At one extreme are those school systems that claim to have achieved a high degree of balance between the two by implementing **curriculum alignment** projects. At the other extreme are schools where a state of curricular anarchy exists: Each teacher develops his or her own curriculum, with all sorts of disparate activities going on across the school.

How does the taught curriculum, regardless of its fit with the written curriculum, become established? The question is a complex and important one that can best be answered by synthesizing studies

CURRICULUM TIP 1.4

The taught curriculum is the delivered curriculum, a curriculum that an observer sees in action as the teacher teaches.

of teacher quality and classroom responsibility. These interacting variables often provide teachers the support needed to be successful (Quaglia & Lande, 2016). However, two questions remain: How does a teacher connect students with the subject? And how does the teacher meet the needs and interests of the **whole child**?

Teachers, in most schools, are given material such as courses of study or curriculum guides, textbooks, and other supporting material to teach students. In most schools, the way the material is taught, connecting the student with subject matter, is left entirely to the discretion of the teachers. Some schools have a genuine concern about the teaching and learning process. For example, a survey conducted by one school district over a 2-year period of 1,220 graduating high school students sought to find out what their perceptions were of the curricular program. The survey fleshed out the qualities and characteristics of the “best” and “weakest” teachers. The descriptors indicated that the best teachers

- were caring, understanding, outgoing, loving, patient, dedicated, and respecting of students;
- conducted classes that had strict discipline, used different methods—discussion, lectures, group activities—didn’t exactly follow the books and weren’t determined to finish the books, made material interesting, and gave practical uses of information;
- communicated well, listened well, were open in their attitudes toward students, had energy, were humorous, and enjoyed their jobs.

By contrast, the weakest teachers

- were boring, grumpy, disorganized, and complaining;
- lectured only, did not explain the **lesson** well, had no lesson plan, spoke in monotone voice, put students down, used poor teaching methods, went too fast, gave notes without explanation, lacked good oral communication skills, assigned too much book work, went over the material too fast, and had little classroom control. (Hughes & Orr, 1989)

Teaching the Whole Child

Nearly 30 years after the study by Hughes and Orr, study after study shows the single most important factor determining the quality of education a child receives is the quality of his or her teacher (GreatSchools Staff, 2016). Teaching is one of the most complicated jobs today. It demands broad knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, and standards; enthusiasm, a caring attitude, and a love of learning; knowledge of discipline and classroom management techniques; and a desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. With all these qualities, GreatSchools Staff summarized some of the characterizations of great teachers.

- *They set high expectations for all students.* They expect that all students can and will achieve in their classroom, and they don't give up on underachievers.
- *They have clear, written-out objectives.* Effective teachers have lesson plans that give students a clear idea of what they will be learning, what the assignments are, and what the grading policy is. Assignments have learning goals and give students ample opportunity to practice new skills. The teacher is consistent in grading and returns work in a timely manner.
- *They are prepared and organized.* They are in their classrooms early and ready to teach. They present lessons in a clear and structured way. Their classrooms are organized in such a way as to minimize distractions.
- *They engage students and get them to look at issues in a variety of ways.* Effective teachers use facts as a starting point, not an end point; they ask "why" questions, look at all sides and encourage students to predict what will happen next. They ask questions frequently to make sure students are following along. They try to engage the whole class, and they don't allow a few students to dominate the class. They keep students motivated with varied, lively approaches.
- *They form strong relationships with their students and show that they care about them as people.*
- *They are warm, accessible, enthusiastic, and caring.* Teachers with these qualities are known to stay after school and make themselves available to students and parents who need them. They are involved in schoolwide committees and activities, and they demonstrate a commitment to the school.
- *They are masters of their subject matter.* They exhibit expertise in the subjects they are teaching and spend time continuing to gain new knowledge in their field. They present material in an enthusiastic manner and instill a hunger in their students to learn more on their own.
- *They communicate frequently with parents.* They reach parents through conferences and frequent written reports home. They don't hesitate to pick up the telephone to call a parent if they are concerned about a student.

ASCD's Whole Child Initiative is an effort to transition from a focus on narrowly defined academic achievement to one that promotes the long-term development and success of all children. To fully prepare students for college, a career, and citizenship, a new approach to education is required to meet the demands of the 21st century. As research, practice, and common sense tell us, the **whole-child approach** to education does develop and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow. However, students' comprehensive needs must be met through shared responsibility with students, families, school personnel, and communities (ASCD, 2012).

We know that true school improvement is hard. However, we must remember that it's not about a single passionate leader. It's not about fixing teachers and teaching or parents and parenting. It's not about poverty. It's not about money. And it's not about high standards. It's about all of them—and more. It becomes obvious that only a whole-child approach, aligned across curriculum and instruction, school climate and structures, professional development, and student learning, can truly ensure that each child in our schools is prepared for long-term success in further education, a career, and civic life (ASCD, 2012).

Teaching With Technology

Modern-day education is not focused on simply learning concepts or facts as they are laid out in a curriculum. Instead, it should be about the process of building connections to transform learning environments with the goal of deepening learning for all students. As a result, by giving students access to technology and helping teachers transform their teaching practices, students are better engaged in the learning process and have ownership in their learning. In addition, students gain an awareness of the importance and value of communication. Today, with a single laptop, a webcam, a projector, and an Internet connection, a teacher can broadcast and begin collaboration with any other classroom. As groups of learners coalesce around shared passions online, they experience something that is difficult to replicate in physical space (Technology in Schools, 2015).

TECHNOLOGY TIP

Using technology in the classroom can help impede the “lecture style” system of education and accommodate a variety of learning processes.

Teaching is one of the most complicated jobs today. It demands broad knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, and standards; enthusiasm, a caring attitude, and a love of learning; knowledge of discipline and classroom management techniques; and a desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. With all the qualities required to be an effective teacher, school administrators should strongly consider those characteristics when hiring teachers for their school district.

The Tested Curriculum

The benefits of assessment and preassessment depend largely on its purpose, form, and utility (Guskey & McTighe, 2016). The tested curriculum is that set of learned knowledge and skills that are assessed in teacher-planned classroom assessments; in district-developed, curriculum-referenced tests; and in standardized tests. To what extent are these assessments related to the taught curriculum? The answers seem to vary. There were early problems in student assessment preparation. Tests previously concentrated on assessing students' comprehension and memory of objective information, and their attempts to measure understanding of concepts resulted in multiple-choice items that really assessed students' guessing ability.

The evidence on the congruence between curriculum-referenced tests and instruction suggests a somewhat different picture. In districts using curriculum-referenced tests as a means of monitoring teacher compliance, the assessment seems to drive instruction, and the result is a closer fit. Yet, here, the congruence is not reassuring to those who value higher-order learning. An examination of a curriculum-referenced test used in a large district's alignment project indicated that the assessment items were concerned almost exclusively with such low-level objectives as punctuation, spelling, and parts of speech. The research also

suggests that there is a widening gap between standardized tests and what some instructors are teaching. The consequences of inadequate alignment and poor assessments are serious.

From a historical perspective, Berliner took the lead in 1984 in pointing out that achievement was lower in schools where there was not a close fit between what was taught and what was assessed. Students were put at a disadvantage when the teaching and testing did not match, and their scores were probably not a valid measure of what they had learned. And there were serious legal consequences when poorly fitting tests were used to make decisions about promotion and graduation. The courts ruled that when assessments were used for purposes that denied constitutional guarantees of equal protection or due process (as in retention or denial of graduation), schools needed to provide evidence that those tests assessed skills and concepts actually taught in the classroom. As Popham (2007) stated,

If we plan to use tests for purposes of accountability, we need to know that they measure traits that can be influenced by instruction. . . . Instructionally insensitive tests render untenable the assumptions underlying a test-based strategy for educational accountability. (p. 147)

Within this milieu of court orders, schools began facing greater problems with local testing. The result has been high-stakes testing for accountability of not only schools and school districts but also individual teachers (Zirkel, 2013). Not surprisingly, new court cases seem to suggest another level of high-stakes testing: state laws and local policies that provide for student test performance as one of the criteria for summative evaluation of educators. Likewise, test performance criteria may play a carefully circumscribed rather than exclusive role in evaluations having disciplinary consequences.

Despite the many challenges facing teachers and schools, more teachers are using state-approved, online-based programs to ease the alignment of local assessment to state and national standards. Classroom teachers are also using data analysis of student strengths and weaknesses. In furthering this endeavor, a series of web-based programs now allow classroom teachers to create pre- and posttests online easily and quickly and to adjust instruction as needed. Equally helpful is the availability of valid and reliable test questions (aligned with state standards) that can be selected from large banks of assessment items. These types of online-based programs also provide valuable teaching strategies that can address specific areas of need for individual students.

CURRICULUM TIP 1.5

Components of the curriculum determine the fit between what is taught and what is learned.

It might be useful at this juncture to note again that the four curricula discussed previously—written, supported, taught, and tested—might be seen as constituting the intentional curriculum, which comprises that set of learning experiences the school system consciously intends for its students. For school reform to be broad, lasting, and effective, local school communities must have the opportunity and authority to address the issues that most directly affect the conditions of teaching and learning, such as inadequate and inequitable funding; control of budgets, staffing, scheduling, curriculum, and assessment; and broad involvement of parents and community in the school. The focus on test scores diverts our attention from the crucial issues that our schools must address if they are to be transformed. Rather than relying on the

coercive power of tests, people truly interested in improving schools would be better served by placing their faith in the people who know the students best.

The Learned Curriculum

The term *learned curriculum* is used here to denote all the changes in values, perceptions, and behavior that occur as a result of school experiences. As such, it includes what the student understands, learns, and retains from both the intentional curriculum and the hidden curriculum. The discussion here focuses on what is learned from the intentional curriculum; the last part of the chapter analyzes what is learned from the hidden curriculum.

What, then, do students learn and retain from the intentional curriculum? Obviously, the answer varies with the student, the teacher, and the curriculum. Some subtle transformations, especially between the taught curriculum and the learned curriculum, however, occur in most classrooms, regardless of the specific conditions. Yet an accepted axiom, something that is true and universal for effective teaching, should reflect what is known about learning. Figure 1.1 presents the data on learning and remembering that is applicable to all ages.

Currently, with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015, educators have a renewed opportunity to shape school reform. For example, there is an emerging educational trend centering on personalized learning or competency-based learning. This type of learning involves identifying crucial learning skills in a developmental sequence. For crucial skills, students are given instruction and practice for as long as needed to develop deep understanding. Students advance and move ahead in the sequence of skills based on demonstration of mastery (Sornson, 2016).

Although assessment and accountability remain in the forefront of education, the concept of a data-driven cycle of improvement is tremendously exciting and continues to spark creative innovations with instructional methodologies (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016). The same holds true for flipped instruction. Unlike a traditional classroom—where knowledge is conventionally delivered by a teacher—a teacher using a flipped instructional approach might first have students study a topic on their own utilizing a variety of technological media. For example, research suggests that flipping instruction is best suited to a curricular approach that integrates the method with many other research-based strategies (Moran & Young, 2015). Nonetheless, flipped instruction is not a new concept and is occasionally referred to as a backward classroom, a reverse instruction, or reverse teaching.

FIGURE 1.1 ■ Learning to Remember

Alcorn, Kinder, and Schunert (1970) noted that “people generally remember

- 10 percent of what they READ
- 20 percent of what they HEAR
- 30 percent of what they SEE
- 50 percent of what they Hear and See
- 70 percent of what they SAY
- 90 percent of what they SAY and DO a thing” (p. 216)

Consider which “learning to remember” concept will produce the greatest results for the teaching and learning process and academic achievement.

LEARNING AND RETENTION TIP

There is mounting evidence that active learning methods—collaboration, simulation, small-group sessions, and “flipped classrooms”—produce better results for students, both in terms of test scores and information retention.

Authors’ research and experience

In addition to techniques such as data-driven or flipped instruction, schools are focusing on different ways to use mobile devices and are implementing BYOD or BYOT (bring your own device or bring your own technology) policies. In fact, mobile devices were recommended for use in schools as early as 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education in the National Education Technology Plan (NETP) (Scholastic Administrator, 2012).

Along with new developments in technology, systemic planning is melding with up-to-date technological advancements to create digital-aided schools across the globe. Moreover, systemic designs are redirecting educational technology away from its use as a mere tool toward its role in addressing the academic needs for a different generation of learners. The concentration of this approach makes implementation and regular use of technology even more student centered while providing a shared vision as well as awareness on how technology can advance teaching and learning (Whitehead, Jensen, & Boschee, 2013).

COMPONENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

Although several texts in the field seem to treat curriculum development as if it were one undifferentiated process, the realities are quite different. The concept subsumes several distinct entities that might best be described as components of the curriculum. Each of these will be analyzed briefly next and then discussed more fully in the chapters that follow.

Curricular Policies

The term *curricular policies*, as used here, designates the set of rules, criteria, and guidelines intended to manage curriculum development and implementation. In reviewing the literature, Kirst (as cited in Glatthorn, 1987) led the way by noting that there are macro-policies, such as a board policy on courses required in high school, and micro-policies, such as a set of recommendations for a curriculum unit in mathematics. Policymaking, as Kirst noted, is essentially the “authoritative allocation of competing values” (p. 15). Thus, as a board makes a policy requiring 3 years of science in the high school curriculum but does not require any study of art, it is perhaps unwittingly according a higher value to science as a way of knowing than it does to aesthetics. Saylor, Alexander, and Lewis (1981) made a useful distinction between *de jure* policymaking (as implemented in court decisions, national and state legislative acts, and local agency regulations) and *de facto* policymaking (as carried out by community networks, testing bureaus, accrediting associations, and advisory boards).

CURRICULUM TIP 1.6

Administrators and teacher-leaders are well advised to reexamine policies affecting curriculum and the accepted practices at their schools.

The decisions that a school makes regarding established policies and practices can affect students enormously. In this regard, school boards have multiple policies and practices that can and do affect curriculum development. Some policies are deliberately set in place, while others evolve with time.

Curricular Goals

Local district curricular goals are often generated from state standards and/or nationally recommended standards. The development of overarching goals is based on giving sufficient time to develop, articulate, and rationalize a series of well-established objectives (Nidus & Sadler, 2016). These established goals are generally long-term educational outcomes that the school system expects to achieve through its curriculum. As a result, three critical elements can be included in this definition. First, goals are stated much more generally than objectives. Thus, one goal for English language arts (ELA) might be this: Learn to communicate ideas through writing and speaking. One objective for fifth-grade language arts would be much more specific: Write a letter, with appropriate business letter form, suggesting a community improvement. Second, goals are long-term, not short-term, outcomes. The school system hopes that after 12 years of formal schooling, its students will have achieved the goals the system has set.

Finally, curricular goals are those outcomes the school system hopes to achieve through its curriculum. Here, it is important to make a distinction between educational goals and curricular goals. Educational goals are the long-term outcomes that the school system expects to accomplish through the entire educational process over which it has control. The term *21st-century skills* is generally used to refer

TABLE 1.5 ■ Essential Critical 21st-Century Skills

Skill	Why It's Important
Problem solving	Students need the ability to solve complex problems in real time.
Creativity	Students need to be able to think and work creatively in both digital and nondigital environments to develop unique and useful solutions.
Analytic thinking	Students need the ability to think analytically, which includes proficiency with comparing, contrasting, evaluating, synthesizing, and applying without instruction or supervision.
Collaboration	Students must possess the ability to collaborate seamlessly in both physical and virtual spaces, with real and virtual partners globally.
Communication	Students must be able to communicate not just with text or speech, but in multiple multimedia formats. They must be able to communicate visually through video and imagery as effectively as they do with text and speech.

Source: Reprinted by permission of Global Digital Citizen Foundation, 2016. URL: <https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/21st-century-skills-every-student-needs>. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

to certain core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem solving that advocates believe schools need to teach to help students succeed in today's world. In a broader sense, however, the idea of what learning in the 21st century should look like is open to interpretation—and controversy. To be a global digital citizen, Crockett (2016) provides a list (see Table 1.5) of the essential critical 21st-century skills every student needs for life beyond the classroom.

How do curricular policies and curricular goals interrelate? In a sense, the policies establish the rules (“Take 3 years of health education”), and the goals set the targets (“At the end of those 3 years, you will have adopted constructive health habits”). In this sense, they should determine in a rational system the form and content of all the other components that follow. As will be evident throughout this work, however, educational organizations are usually not very rational. Typically, policies are not related to goals, and goals are not related to fields and programs of study.

Fields of Study

A **field of study** is an organized and clearly demarcated set of learning experiences typically offered over a multiyear period. In most school curricula, such fields of study are equivalent to the standard school subjects: ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, and so on. At the college level, fields are more narrowly defined; thus, students pursue majors in history or anthropology or sociology—not “social studies.” Thus, a middle school might offer a 4-year field of study called “Humans and Their Environment,” which would bring together concepts from the social sciences, the natural sciences, and English language arts.

Programs of Study

A **program of study** is the total set of learning experiences offered by a school for a particular group of learners, usually over a multiyear period and typically encompassing several fields of study. The program of study is often described in a policy statement that delineates which subjects are required and which are electives, with corresponding time allocations and credits. Here, for example, is a typical program of studies for an elementary school:

- Reading and language arts: 8 hours a week
- Social studies: 3 hours a week
- Mathematics: 4 hours a week
- Art: 1 hour a week
- Music: 1 hour a week
- Health and physical education: 1 hour a week

At the college level, a student's program of studies includes all the courses he or she will take or has taken.

Courses of Study

A **course of study** is a subset of both a program of study and a field of study. It is a set of organized learning experiences, within a field of study, offered over a specified period of time (such as a year, a semester, or a quarter) for which the student ordinarily receives academic credit. The course of study is usually given a title and a grade level or numerical designation. Thus, “third-grade science” and “English II” are courses of study. At the college level, courses of study seem to be the most salient component for both students and faculty: “I'm taking Economics I this term”; “I'm offering Elizabethan Literature this quarter.”

Units of Study

A **unit of study** is a subset of a course of study. It is an organized set of related learning experiences offered as part of a course of study, usually lasting from 1 to 3 weeks. Many units are organized around a single overarching concept, such as “Mythical Creatures” or “The Nature of Conflict.” Units of study generally follow established standards.

Robert Marzano (as cited in Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001) noted that when developing units of study at any level, it is best to view the process as a series of phases. The planning phases of unit development include the following:

- At the beginning of a unit, include strategies for setting learning goals.
- During a unit, include strategies
 - for monitoring progress toward learning goals;
 - for introducing new knowledge; and
 - for practicing, reviewing, and applying knowledge.
- At the end of a unit, include strategies for helping students determine how well they have achieved their goals.

It is a best practice for teachers to present students with components and subcomponents of the unit process and then structure tasks to emphasize a specific component or subcomponent. Marzano’s intent is for teachers to systematically utilize strategies that work. These are best-practice approaches and will eventually lead to mastery. As noted by Guskey and Anderman (2014), students who focus on mastery are more likely to persist at academic tasks, especially challenging ones.

Lessons

A **lesson** is a set of related learning experiences typically lasting 20 to 90 minutes, focusing on a relatively small number of objectives. Ordinarily, a lesson is a subset of a unit, although, as noted previously, the unit level is sometimes omitted by teachers while planning for instruction.

These distinctions among the several components of a differentiated curriculum have an importance that transcends the need for conceptual clarity. Each seems to involve some rather different planning processes. Thus, to speak generally about “curriculum planning,” without noting the difference between planning a program of studies and planning a course of studies, is to make a rather serious mistake.

Improving and differentiating lessons based on current brain research and curriculum design is becoming a critical component in the search for best practices. Moreover, foundations of differentiated lessons include such strategies as curriculum compacting, flexible grouping, tiered activities, and individual student contracts (Parsons, Dodman, & Burrowbridge, 2013). As part of the differential process, educators often use innovative techniques such as **student learning objectives (SLOs)**. These specialized objectives can be content centered or course specific. Therefore, a key to successful teaching is for teachers to anticipate the instructional supports students need and integrate these supports into a lesson—just in time for new learning. Clearly, **just-in-time learning** can lead to exciting moments in the classroom as well as in education (Rollins, 2016). New learning spaces and innovative applications are providing teachers with instant access to up-to-date information. Teachers wanting to develop creative and exciting lessons are now able to readily reach out to a strong network of colleagues (Ferriter & Provenzano, 2013). Nonetheless, it remains practical to tie new lessons to tried-and-true strategies that have proven effective over time.

Marzano and his colleagues (2001) identified nine categories of strategies, still relevant today, that have a vast effect on student achievement:

1. Identifying similarities and differences
2. Summarizing and note taking
3. Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
4. Doing homework and practicing
5. Allowing for nonlinguistic representations
6. Enhancing cooperative learning
7. Setting objectives and providing feedback
8. Generating and testing hypotheses
9. Formulating questions, cues, and advance organizers

Obviously, students need a fair amount of guidance when learning these complex processes. Thus, curriculum planning should emphasize metacognitive control of all processes. These processes are similar to skills in that they often produce some form of product or new understanding. Classroom teachers intuitively recognize the importance of **metacognition** but may not be aware of its many dimensions. Metacognitive ability is central to conceptions of what it means to be educated. The world is becoming more complex, more information rich, and more demanding of fresh thinking.

THE MASTERY, THE ORGANIC, AND THE ENRICHMENT CURRICULA

One additional classification system first proposed by Glatthorn (1980) has proven useful, especially in developing and improving fields of study.

CURRICULUM TIP 1.7

Curriculum leaders should distinguish between the three types of learning in each field of study. The three types of learning are mastery, organic, and enrichment.

The three types of learning result from the following analytical steps. First, divide the learnings in that field between those that are basic and those that are enrichment. Basic learnings are those that, in the views of knowledgeable educators, are essential for all students (all, in this use, refers to the top 90% of learners, excluding the least able and those with serious learning disabilities [LD]). Enrichment learnings are the knowledge and skills that are interesting and enriching but are not considered essential; they are simply “nice to know.” Thus, in fifth-grade social studies, curriculum workers might decide that the early settling of the Vikings in Iceland would be interesting enrichment content.

TABLE 1.6 ■ The Three Types of Curricula

	Basic	Enrichment
Structured	Mastery	Enrichment
Nonstructured	Organic	

Nonstructured learning, on the other hand, includes all those skills, knowledge, and attitudes that can be mastered without such careful sequencing, planning, testing, and delineation. Structured and nonstructured learning yield the three types of curricula depicted in Table 1.6: mastery, organic, and enrichment.

Once the first division between basic and enrichment is made, then further divide the basic learnings into those that require structure and those that do not require structure. *Structured learning*, as the term is used here, has four characteristics:

1. Sequencing
2. Planning
3. Measurable outcomes
4. Clearly delineated content

Mastery learnings are those that are both basic and structured. Thus, in mastery-based learning, a student and teacher discuss specific next steps to gain a better foothold on the path to master (Nolan, 2016). An example of a mastery objective for language arts, Grade 2, is the following: Use a capital letter for the first word in a sentence.

Organic learnings, however, are those that are basic but do not require structuring. They are the learnings that develop day by day, rather naturally, as the result of numerous interactions and exchanges. They tend not to be the focus of specific learnings. They are just as important as the mastery outcomes (if not more so), but they do not require sequencing, pacing, and articulating. Here is an example of organic learning for language arts, Grade 2: Listen courteously while others speak.

The teacher might emphasize learning on every occasion, not just devoting a specific lesson to it. And enrichment learnings, as noted previously, are those learnings that simply extend the curriculum; they are not considered basic.

This tripartite division is more than an interesting intellectual exercise. It has significant implications for curriculum development. In general, district curriculum guides and scope-and-sequence charts based on individual state and/or CCSS standards should focus solely on the mastery elements. The nurturing of organic components can be enhanced through effective professional learning; such outcomes do not need to be explicated fully and carefully in guides. The enrichment components can be included in a supplement for those teachers who want to share enrichment activities.

Likewise, curriculum-referenced tests should focus only on mastery elements; organic elements should not be tested. This distinction also has implications for the purchase of texts: Textbooks should focus on the mastery objectives; the teacher can nurture the organic without the aid of textbooks.

Finally, the distinction helps resolve the issue of district versus teacher control. In general, the district should determine the **mastery curriculum**, to the extent of specifying objectives. The district emphasizes the important outcomes but gives the teacher great latitude of choice in nurturing them.

In addition, the **enrichment curriculum** is the teacher's own: Here, the teacher can add whatever content he or she feels might be of interest to the students.

CURRICULUM TIP 1.8

The key to enriching curriculum is to involve students in real-life problem-solving scenarios.

THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

The concept of hidden curriculum expresses the idea that schools do more than simply transmit knowledge. In fact, the challenges one faces by a student inside the school can easily be connected to and compounded by things that are happening outside of school or in the community (Hatch, 2009). As part of this process it is important to peel back layers of curricula and data to uncover any systemic inequities (La Salle & Johnson, 2016–2017). Thus, there are differences between written and hidden curricula in that teachers teach and students learn implicit concepts and patterns (Deutsch, 2004). Hidden curriculum, which is sometimes called unstudied curriculum or implicit curriculum, might best be defined in the following manner: those aspects of schooling, other than the intentional curriculum, that seem to produce changes in student values, perceptions, and behaviors.

As the definition suggests, students learn a great deal in school from sources other than the intentional curriculum. Although the term *hidden curriculum* is often used with negative connotations, those learnings can be both desirable and undesirable from the viewpoint of one aspiring to optimal human development. In examining the specific nature of hidden curriculum, it seems useful, at this point, to distinguish between what might be termed the constants (those aspects of schooling that seem more or less impervious to change) and the variables (those aspects that seem susceptible to reform).

CURRICULUM TIP 1.9

The hidden curriculum might be seen as those aspects of the learned curriculum that lie outside the boundaries of the school's intentional efforts.

Another aspect of the hidden curriculum is that of the extracurriculum or cocurriculum. This curriculum embodies all of the school-sponsored programs that are intended to supplement the academic aspect of the school experience. Athletics, band/choral groups, clubs, drama, student government, honor societies and/or student organizations, school dances, and social events all fall under the heading of extracurricular activities. However, participation in these activities is purely voluntary and does not contribute to grades or credits earned toward advancement from one grade to the next or to graduation. Extracurricular activities are typically open to all, though participation often depends on skill level (Ebert, Ebert, & Bentley, 2013).

The Constants of the Hidden Curriculum

Certain aspects of the hidden curriculum are so intrinsic to the nature of schools as a cultural institution that they might be seen as constants. Historically, the depiction of those constants presented next has been influenced by a close reading of several early curricular **reconceptualists** such as Apple (1979), Pinar (1978), and Giroux and Penna (1979); sociologists such as Dreeben (1968); and educational researchers such as Jackson (1968) and Goodlad (1984). One of the constants of the hidden curriculum is the ideology of the larger society, which permeates every aspect of schooling. Thus, schools in the United States inevitably reflect the ideology of democratic capitalism.

A key component of the school as an organization is the classroom, where the most salient aspects of the hidden curriculum come into play. The classroom is a crowded place, where issues of control often become dominant. Control is achieved through the differential use of power; the teacher uses several kinds of power to control the selection of content, the methods of learning, movement in the classroom, and the flow of classroom discourse. Control also is achieved by the skillful use of accountability measures; teachers spend much time evaluating and giving evaluative feedback. In such a classroom, students unconsciously learn the skills and traits required by the larger society; they learn how to be punctual, clean, docile, and conforming. They learn how to stand in line, take their turn, and wait.

Even though the previously given features of the hidden curriculum are presented here as constants relatively impervious to change, it is important for curriculum leaders to be aware of their subtle and pervasive influence. Being aware of aspects and variables of the hidden curriculum is crucial for the success of our future administrators and teacher-leaders.

The Variables of the Hidden Curriculum

Several other important aspects of the hidden curriculum can be more readily changed by educators. The most significant of these can be classified into three categories: organizational variables, social-system variables, and social and culture variables.

Organizational Variables

The term *organizational variables* is used here to designate all those decisions about how teachers will be assigned and students grouped for instruction. Here, four issues seem worthy of attention: team teaching, promotion and retention policies, ability grouping, and curriculum tracking. The evidence on the effects of team teaching on student achievement is somewhat inconclusive. Even though many school systems have implemented “promotional gates” policies that promoted students solely on the basis of achievement, several syntheses of the research indicate that social promotion results in better attitudes toward school, better self-image, and improved achievement.

Grouping practices in the schools often have been attacked by critics as one of the most baleful aspects of the hidden curriculum. Here, the denunciation of Giroux and Penna (1979) is perhaps typical of the era then and now:

The pedagogical foundation for democratic processes in the classroom can be established by eliminating the pernicious practice of “tracking” students. This tradition in schools of grouping students according to “abilities” and perceived performance is of dubious instructional value. (p. 223)

According to Bavis (2016–2017), tracking practices led to a great variability in his Illinois school district’s curriculum. It also led to an inconsistency of expectations, assessments, and semester exams,

resulting in a student experience that largely depended on a student's placement and teacher. By restructuring curriculum and detracking students, the district was able to raise expectations for all students.

The chief problem with curriculum tracking, according to researchers, is the lack of challenge in the general curriculum. Many approaches to tracking have been developed to prevent an exodus of public school students to private schools. In contrast to tracking, cooperative heterogeneous learning allows students to be active and social in the pursuit of academic excellence. Learning groups within a heterogeneous classroom have been shown to result in higher achievement, little or no psychological harm to the students, and reduced segregation. Students also gain experience in individual accountability and responsibility, as well as acquiring skills in working with others. Few would argue that increased cooperative learning, along with advanced technology skills, can help to more evenly distribute students. Additionally, student interaction through the use of collaboration and technology promotes the use of higher-level thinking skills and enables students to apply knowledge in new ways (Larson, 2013).

Clearly, the weight of the research suggests that educational leaders interested in improving organization should focus attention on promotion policies and curriculum tracking as the key variables. In this regard, they can ensure that the general curriculum is neither dull nor trivial.

Other organizational variables might include connections such as class size, better libraries, breakfast and lunch, no categorical special help, and better assessment, as well as outside connections such as community activities. Each of these hidden curriculum variables can—and do—affect school change in various ways.

Much discussion has taken place regarding the impact of class size on curriculum planning and implementation. Many authors and researchers believe that smaller class sizes facilitate better teaching and more personalized instruction. Conversely, some authors and researchers do not. The key is that smaller class size may facilitate but does not necessarily ensure better teaching and learning. Most individuals do agree, however, that class size does affect how the curriculum is delivered, and thus, the curriculum's nature can be implicit.

Breakfast and lunch may lie outside the boundary of curriculum, but they still may have an important impact on planning. For example, classes have to be scheduled around these activities, especially if the cafeteria is located in the gymnasium. Children having to eat late or not having proper nutrition may also influence when and how the curriculum is delivered.

Noncategorical special help has a substantial and yet hidden impact on a school's schedule in that staff may have to adjust classes to compensate for students' being out of the room. Teachers also have to adjust their classroom organization to accommodate students' arriving back into a classroom after receiving special help in another setting.

Of particular interest are special phonics-based programs that can have an impact on curriculum as well. Most educators would agree that a student's knowledge of academic language is vital (Overturf, 2013). As a result of this emphasis on language arts, many classes are scheduled around special phonics-based programs such as Reading Recovery and Read Well. The hidden aspect of these special phonics-based programs is that primary teachers must now schedule their units and lessons around these intensive reading programs to accommodate high-risk children. Nonetheless, there is little doubt as to the positive impact these special programs have on students.

Another factor involves schools with better libraries and/or those providing students with better access to books; they may have an advantage over schools that do not. Getting reading and informational materials to students in a timely manner can be a key to learning. Albeit hidden, the ability of a teacher to access books and materials will make a big difference in how that teacher will teach.

Equally important is the issue of assessment and accountability, both of which continue to play a role in what is taught, when it is taught, and how it is taught. This is especially the case when developing a data

inquiry cycle. A data inquiry cycle provides a structure for reflection and self-assessment, identification and analysis of data, the development of a learning plan, and cycles of reflection and analysis of impact (Anderson-Davis & Smith, 2016).

Although the impact of assessment is not totally understood and often goes unnoticed, extended days and after-school programs appear to be having a major impact on curriculum planning and implementation. Teachers are now being paid extra for extended days to complete in-service and professional learning requirements. Additional professional learning opportunities often mean that teachers will be learning new material and trying different approaches in their classrooms. The impact of this change on curriculum may be obscure to some, but it is often immeasurable in scope.

Social-System Variables

CURRICULUM TIP 1.10

Social and economic issues can affect aspects of the hidden curriculum.

Students need safe, supportive learning environments to thrive in school—and to prepare for life (Dusenbury, Weissberg, & Meyers, 2016). Keeping with this perspective, social- and economic-related programs such as Head Start and Even Start are designed to assist economically challenged preschool children. Head Start is a federal program that has been around since the 1960s. Some school districts are designing their school operation to have Head Start on campus. This allows a good transition for the Head Start children to matriculate into a kindergarten program. Having Head Start on-site in a school district also enhances opportunities for professional learning and offers a way to improve staff relations. Head Start teachers and administrators have an opportunity to plan their curricula so that it threads unnoticed into the district curriculum. On-site Head Start teachers are better able to understand the goals and objectives of the school district and better able to correlate their programs with district primary teachers.

Two great achievements prevailed in the design of Head Start. First, the program highlighted social and emotional development—emphasizing health, comprehensive services, and social services to families. Second, Head Start introduced parent participation.

Even Start is a family literacy program that includes preschool children and their parents. The implicit aspect of this program is that children are provided with an enriched preschool curriculum. Another social aspect of curriculum that may be hidden is the involvement of parents and community. Although parents may not directly create a change in curriculum, their approval or disapproval can have a tremendous impact on how a school is operated, what is taught, and how it is taught. An example might be the involvement of parents at the primary level and their support of technology. When parents are in the school at the primary level and see the impact that technology is having on their children, they often become major supporters of educational technology. This support is generated in the passage of special levies and bonds that affect the use of technology at all grade levels—even high school.

The involvement of the community can have an impact on curriculum development in much the same way. If members of the community feel positive about what is happening in their schools, they are much more apt to support the schools financially. This financial support might include more staff, improved facilities, materials, and/or professional learning. The connection to the curriculum may not be readily apparent to some, but it is definitely a major factor in the success of the school.

Equally important are concerns over social media and cyberbullying. As the shift of responsibility for safety and proper use of technology moves into a shared framework among educators, students, and families, curriculum and teacher-leaders have a variety of constructs they need to address. Often, in the form of mean or threatening text messages, e-mails, rumors, or gossip posted on websites, cyberbullying is becoming a major concern. This misuse of social media can be devastating for any individual, as well as very disruptive in any school setting (Whitehead et al., 2013).

Social and Cultural Variables

Developing understandings involving social, cultural, and gender bias is becoming increasingly important in education. According to Medlin and Bang (2013–2014), social and cultural issues exist throughout many, if not most, school districts and classrooms. Although sometimes hidden or unseen, cultural differences, gender bias, and individual socioeconomic circumstances often relate to student learning and academic performance, as well as to how children see themselves with others. For this reason alone, it is paramount that administrators and teacher-leaders understand the importance and role of individual diversity. Of particular importance is the selection of materials. When reviewing possible texts and resources, educators need to be sensitive to individual needs. According to Silva, Delleman, and Phesia (2013), a focus on skills should include the following:

1. Identifying support for main ideas
2. Recognizing bias
3. Distinguishing arguments and corresponding counterarguments
4. Evaluating relative strength of arguments
5. Drawing conclusions based on evidence

Creating and implementing instruction that supports social and cultural capital awareness is a major aspect of addressing hidden curriculum concerns. Likewise, formulating challenging units and lessons that meet the rigor of Common Core State Standards recommendations, as well as state standards, is a crucial step in providing equity for all students.

Although cultural differences, organizational factors, and social systems are often a part of any hidden curriculum, they are nevertheless a very real part of everyday school life and in every classroom. Because hidden curriculum is so prevalent, it can have numerous implications for student learning. For example, Glatthorn and Jailall (2009) identified a number of key factors relating to hidden curriculum:

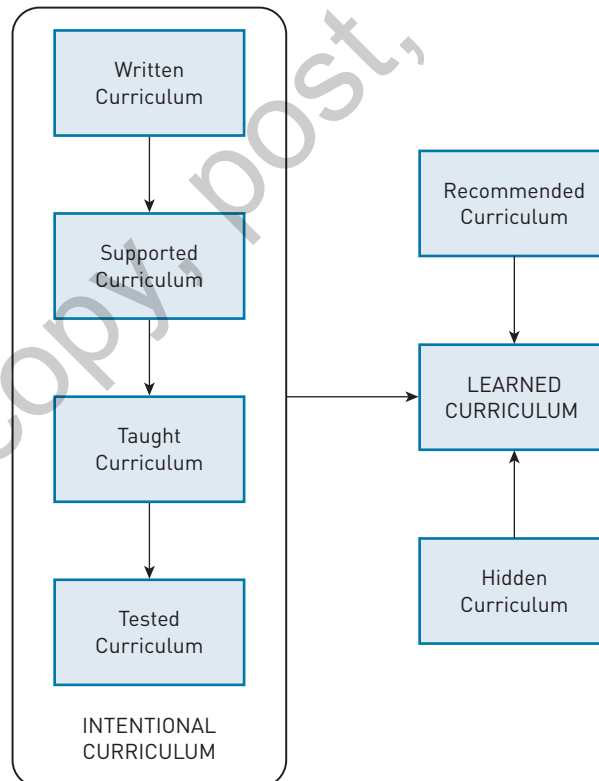
- *Time allocation:* For example, are health and physical education allocated sufficient time to change the behavior of children and youth?
- *Space allocation:* How much space is allocated for teacher conferring and planning?
- *Use of discretionary funds:* How are such funds expended, and who decides this?
- *Student discipline:* Do suspensions seem to reflect an ethnic bias?
- *Physical appearance:* Does the appearance of facilities suggest that those in the building care for the school? Are walls decorated with student artwork?
- *Student activities program:* Does this program reflect and respond to student talent diversity?

- *Communication*: Are most of the messages over the public address system of a positive nature? How often are student voices heard?
- *Power*: Do teachers have power in the decision-making process? Do students have any real power over the factors that matter? (pp. 115–116)

These aspects of the hidden curriculum can be greatly minimized by administrators and teacher-leaders as well as other faculty and staff working collaboratively. Identifying problem areas and addressing concerns together can move any school toward success.

To summarize, the hidden curriculum is perceived as both constant and variable aspects of schooling (other than the intentional curriculum) that produce changes in the student. The constants—the ideology of the larger society, the way in which certain knowledge is deemed important or unimportant, and the power relationships that seem necessary in large bureaucratic institutions—seem unlikely to change. However, the variables—those aspects of the organizational structure, the social systems, and the culture of the school that can be influenced—require the systematic attention and collaboration of administrators and teacher-leaders, as well as other faculty and staff.

FIGURE 1.2 ■ Relationships of Types of Curricula



Source: Developed by Mark A. Baron, Associate Dean, School of Education, and Professor, Department of Educational Administration, the University of South Dakota.

In reviewing the intentional, recommended, and hidden curriculums, a coming together of the three can be observed. Figure 1.2 illustrates how the intentional curriculum and the hidden curriculum extend into the learned curriculum.

SUMMARY

This introductory chapter provided a general overview of the curriculum field and a set of concepts for analyzing that field. The chapter defines the concept of curriculum and standards, examines the several types of curricula, describes the contrasting nature of curriculum components, and analyzes the hidden curriculum to provide some fundamental concepts essential for understanding the comprehensive field of curriculum. The chapter includes the topics of what curriculum is and why it is important; the types and components of curricula and how they have changed over the years; what mastery, organic, and enrichment curricula are and the roles they play in

the development of curriculum; and why knowledge of the hidden curriculum is so important for school success.

This chapter also shows that it is the power of a well-developed curriculum that shapes students—and ultimately society—that takes curriculum development out of the realms of philosophy and education and into the political arena. Children learn through the formal curriculum, made up of goals, objectives, and textbook assignments, and through the more subtle lessons of the hidden, null, and extracurricular. As well, a student's sense of belonging at school is important to his or her academic achievement.

APPLICATIONS

1. By reviewing the definitions of *curriculum* provided in this chapter and reflecting on your own use of the term, write your own definition of *curriculum*.
2. Some educators have suggested that the profession should use simpler definitions for *curriculum* and *instruction*: Curriculum is what is taught; instruction is how it is taught. Do these definitions seem to suffice, from your perspective? Why, or why not?
3. Descriptive curriculum has numerous definitions, which can be slightly confusing. Based on the general definitions provided by educators and their operational distinctions, rank the three examples provided in Table 1.2 and explain why your selection meets the criteria.
4. Review the comparison of standards in Table 1.3, and determine which period—before, during, or under—enhances curriculum development and implementation. Defend your selection.
5. Some leaders have argued for a very close fit between the written and the taught curriculum, suggesting that faculty and staff should teach only what is in the prescribed curriculum. Others have suggested faculty and staff should have some autonomy and latitude, as long as they cover the essentials. What is your position on this issue?
6. Although most curriculum texts do not make the distinctions noted here between programs of study, fields of study, and courses of study, those distinctions do seem to matter. To test this hypothesis, do the following: (a) List the steps you would follow in designing a program of studies for one level of schooling, such as elementary or middle school, and (b) list the steps you would follow in designing a field of study, such as social studies, preK–12.
7. It has been suggested here that the “constants” of the hidden curriculum are not easily changed. Others would argue that they should be changed if we truly desire democratic and humanistic schools. As a school leader, would you attempt to

- change any of those constants, or would you give more attention to the “variables”?
8. Should the extracurriculum or cocurriculum be part of the hidden curriculum? Yes or no? Explain your reason(s).
 9. Outline a change strategy you would use in attempting to improve the “culture” variables that seem to be associated with improved attitude and achievement.
 10. It seems that in our profession, every year is the year of something—critical thinking, self-esteem, site-based management, portfolio assessment, outcome-based education, Goals 2000, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and now the focus is on the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA). They come, and they go. With this in mind, how will the standards movement move us ahead in some great way? Or will it not? Why?
 11. School district and state-level education leaders are charged with developing and administering educational curricula to best prepare students for their future. Yet there can be tension between a curriculum that develops a well-rounded student and a curriculum that helps create a student who is career ready. Does tension exist? Yes or no? Why?
 12. Explain how curricular goals assist the outcomes that a school system hopes to achieve?
 13. Research on sleep deprivation shows the value of later school start times for teenage students. If your school district does not have a later school start time for teenagers, what must be done to convince the school board and administrators that such should be considered?
 14. Based on the research on sleep deprivation showing that test scores go up, attendance goes up, and graduation rates go up, among other things, the California legislature passed a law on June 20, 2017, that California teenagers wouldn't be required to start their school day before 8:30 a.m. effective in 2020. Should the state where you are employed pass a similar law? Support your yes or no answer.
 15. Respond to the challenge and each of the key issues or questions in the case study.

CASE STUDY: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Dr. John Summers was hired to be the curriculum director to enhance the teaching and learning process for the Dover School District. Dr. Summers was the superintendent's choice for the position because he was highly qualified in the area of curriculum development, and his performance at a somewhat smaller school district with 5,000 students, in a neighboring state, was outstanding. The district Dr. Summers came from was known for its high academic achievement, which was attributed to a well-planned curriculum supported by the principals, teacher-leaders, and teachers.

In contrast, the Dover School District was in curriculum disarray, and student achievement was low when compared with statewide achievement scores. As Dr. Summers soon discovered, some administrators, teacher-leaders, and teachers in the Dover School District construed their current curriculum as ideal because it met their standards. They also felt that if something was being taught, a curriculum existed. Others in the district, however, felt that a planned curriculum was vital for the district, but they were unable to generate the necessary leadership to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

THE CHALLENGE

How should Dr. Summers utilize administrators and teacher-leaders to help bridge the gap between curriculum theory and practice?

KEY ISSUES OR QUESTIONS

1. To what extent do you believe a written curriculum for the various disciplines plays a role in this case?
2. To what extent do you believe the supported, tested, and learned curricula for the various disciplines play a role in improving the intentional curriculum?
3. Do you think there is any hope of changing attitudes? If so, how would you attempt to do this? If not, why?
4. Do you feel that the intentional curriculum is prescriptive or descriptive or a combination of both? Why?
5. What roles do the recommended curriculum and hidden curriculum play in developing the intentional curriculum?
6. In planning curricula, mastery curriculum should require from 60% to 75% of the time available. Do you agree that Dr. Summers should place an emphasis on mastery curriculum? Why?

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