

# Systematizing Curricular Planning and Implementation: What a Supervisor Can Do

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*Sketched here are significant areas to be examined by curriculum specialists. Also given is a plan for revising curriculum at all levels on a regular basis.*

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Regardless of the Dunn and Bradstreet reports and the Dow-Jones averages, education is America's largest and most significant business endeavor. Every citizen regardless of age is either a product of the educational system, a current participant, or a potential customer. Our profession bears a heavy responsibility to provide a qualitative education for all of our citizens, with curriculum development personnel in the center of that responsibility.

What is to be included in a system's or a state's curriculum guides? Many individuals and groups are concerned with the process whereby the *what* is to be developed and taught. Because of such concern, a curriculum supervisor needs to develop an acceptance of ideas for consideration—if they fall within the parameters of the system's basic philosophy of good learning and teaching. Next, a plan needs to be made for field testing and piloting the most worthwhile ideas that are advanced. An advisory committee must also be assembled to test the ideas so that board members and school administrators will be assisted in making effective decisions. Otherwise, the curriculum leader will either assume a chameleon-like role as a political ploy of numerous publics or become the puppet of a professional bureaucracy.

## Significant Areas To Be Considered by Curriculum Supervisors

- All tax-paying stockholders in the educational "corporation" regard themselves as masterful consultants who are able to advise on any and all curriculum questions.

- Another major problem is the demise in recent years of the public's confidence in school systems.

- Contradictory views held by two factions within most communities appeal to curriculum program developers to concentrate all energies on the basic skills; and conversely, another segment wants to build a comprehensive learning program that includes directed teaching aimed at such tangential areas as the population explosion and family planning or peace education.

- The management of good instructional programs means some teacher paperwork; even if it is only filling in computer sheets to record and report pupil progress.

- School principals are often very good building administrators, but poor instructional leaders. In their preparation for administration, they learned little instructional management, and so programs are too often structured for administrative convenience.

- Inflation has hit school operation as well as corporate management. Thus we see the recent trend of defeats of bond issues and district budgets going into the red. These trends restrict the amount of money that can be allocated to such low visibility activities as curriculum development.

- Changing the *modus operandi* for schooling operations from a traditional isolation decision-making process on the part of school boards and administrators to a partnership endeavor is a slow, arduous process; but one that pays sure dividends in the long run.

- Staff development is a necessary part of curriculum implementation. Input from field personnel supports the development of a cycle of events for implementation, and a set of suggested procedures to be used as a curriculum change is phased into operation. If curriculum supervisors include such input and develop a well thought

out, gradual phasing plan for curriculum change, budget makers are able to do effective long range planning in such a way that smaller annual cost increments are more palatable to boards of education and taxpayers.

- The malpractice of using measurement devices inappropriate for the intent and purposes for which they were developed makes the resulting data invalid. Failure to identify methods of appraisal appropriate to the objective sought and the activity carried out is a shortcoming of our educational evaluation components.

### Logical Planning Alleviates Major Problems

With a well trained staff of curriculum supervisors, the rational process of curriculum development and implementation usually follows these steps:

1. An assessment is made of where students are in knowledge and skills, using numerous methods of appraisal.
2. According to where students are and need

to go, and considering the aspirations that they, their parents, teachers, and interested citizenry perceive as desirable, a set of appropriate goals and a workable philosophy should be developed with input from each of these groups. The goal statements then need to be translated into objective terms.

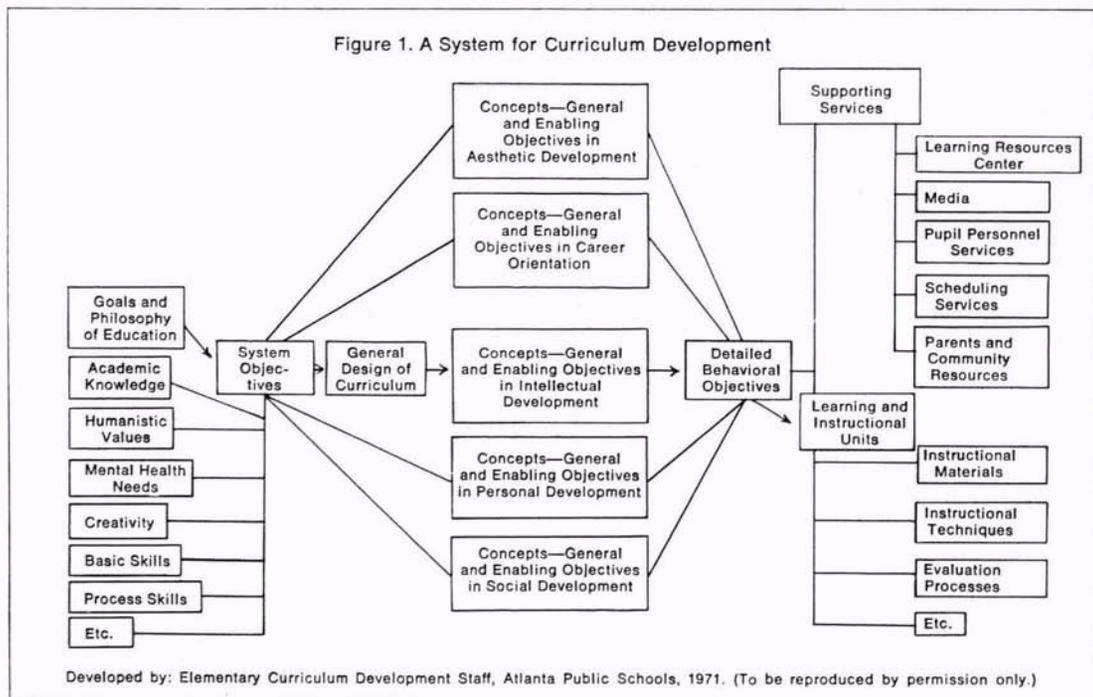
3. Whatever curriculum components, both cognitive and affective, are needed to take students from where they are to where they want and need to go must be developed within a framework of the goals and philosophy, field-tested, piloted, refined, and implemented.

4. Whatever training is necessary to equip teachers to deliver the curriculum should become the accompanying staff development program.

5. Evaluation must be continuous and varied, and its most highly valued purpose must be the use of feedback to provide direction for changes and further development.

The Curriculum Development Model in Figure 1 was a "Topsy" that grew out of an esoteric development of elementary curriculum in Atlanta, Georgia, over a three-year period, 1970-72.

Figure 1. A System for Curriculum Development



Early in the process, educators and community personnel working together spelled out the philosophy and goals, and curriculum writing committees translated them into systemwide objectives, which were divided into areas of literacy. Literacy here connotes the possession of a base of knowledge accompanied by the skills and attitudes necessary to operate within the framework of that knowledge. Using the spiral curriculum design, committees identified concepts, general and enabling objectives, checking to see that the full gamut of Bloom's taxonomy was included in the defining of enabling objectives. To pull all instructional levels together to ensure a continuum of learning, the development of a sequence of skills in each subject area, career, study, and thinking proved helpful.

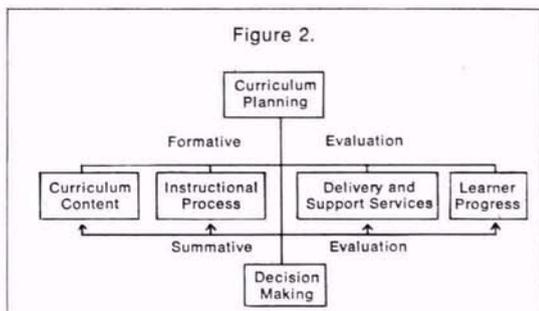
### Guide Development

If time and money do not permit the immediate completion of a full guide, it is advantageous to delay identifying specific skills to be dealt with within each concept, and the suggested activities, resources, and methods of appraisal until many good teachers have worked with the concepts and objectives and fed back the most effective practices and materials they have identified in use. These same persons who have worked with the learning program can serve effectively to design an appropriate recording and reporting system for student achievement and progression.

### Phasing in Implementation

Field testing of the sample units for each concept can be done by teachers who assist in writing the curriculum. The belief that persons support change they help to design is borne out usually when an invitation is given for schools to volunteer to pilot the curriculum.

A leadership team composed of the principal; a teacher selected by his or her peers from each instructional level at the elementary level, by each subject area at the middle and secondary levels; the media specialist; and one or more parent representatives can best make the curriculum and instructional decisions within a school. Then in turn, each member of the leadership team returns to the group that he or she represents, known as



the instructional team, and takes and receives input to be discussed at weekly meetings. Such a leadership plan helps the principal share his or her instructional leader role in a realistic way. The staff development plan can be developed and implemented by the curriculum supervisors. Leadership teams then can return with a well thought out plan following a workshop, and give a mini-workshop for their colleagues using activities most needed by their staff.

In large systems, pairing of schools for phasing implementation magnifies the far reaching effects of each supervisor, who cannot be omnipresent at each decision point to give encouragement and support.

### Evaluation Must Be Continuous

An evaluation committee can be assembled early from the cadre of persons involved in the total curriculum change. Members can be divided into special task forces to study in operation the various components listed in the model, and to gather data to be furnished to decision makers relative to funding for full implementation.

### Process of Revision

The process of revising curriculum after basic development has occurred in each literacy at all levels and can be carried out with a five-year regularity on a cyclical plan such as the following:

#### *Year 1. Planning*

1. Review test results in subject for three-five years.
2. Review system and state guides.
3. Review trends nationally in curriculum in subject.

4. Review future predictions in subject.
5. Identify major content, format, and processes to be used.

6. Make plans for revision.
7. Make appropriate budget and submit.

#### Year 2. Revising

1. Delete materials that are inappropriate.
2. Add materials needed.
3. Further develop weak areas (rewrite).
4. Update all activities and identify resources.

5. Add skills in content, thinking, study, and career areas.

6. Create new curriculum areas and courses as need requires.

7. Prepare working drafts for piloting.

#### Year 3. Piloting

1. Select pilot sites at each instructional level. [E]

2. Orient pilot teachers to pilot process, evaluation form, and so on.

3. Visit to each site by coordinator or resource teacher during pilot process.

4. Collect piloted materials, review suggestions, and make appropriate changes and refinements.

5. Prepare all curricula for printing and distribution to all schools.

6. Identify basic resources needed, and distribute copies to all schools so that resources can be on hand for implementation.

7. Plan with staff development department and supervisory staffs appropriate experiences to orient staffs to revised curriculum.

#### Year 4. Implementing

1. Orient all leadership teams, department chairmen, and principals to new curriculum.

2. Distribute curriculum guides.

3. Work with staff development department and supervisory staffs to plan further support experiences for school staffs as particular needs are identified.

4. Keep a running file on suggestions, questions, and identified needs that merit further refinement.

5. Identify minimum skills to be accomplished at all levels of instruction in subject areas being implemented.

6. Identify indicators for each minimum skill, which will be accepted as evidence that competence is present.

7. Identify high school courses in each subject being implemented that will be required for graduation.

The middle level of management typified by the supervisory-development staff must see that all school personnel are fully aware that curricu-

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## LETTERS

(continued from page 6)

sent to me, in which he writes: "I've just received some copies of Bob Goldhammer's book, *Clinical Supervision: Special Methods for the Supervision of Teachers*, and in re-reading my foreword I was suddenly reminded of the tremendous investment that you have in the ideas Goldhammer has presented." (Dated January 12, 1970.)

In all the welter of Reavis' research on the development of clinical supervision, the strangest may be the omission of any mention of my 1973 model (*Clinical Supervision*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company) which sets out in detail the rationale and processes of his 8-phase cycle of clinical supervision, which superseded his 5-phase model.

Morris L. Cogan  
Brooklyn College

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### Future ASCD Annual Conferences

1979	March 3-7	Detroit	Cobo Hall
1980	March 29-April 2	Atlanta	Georgia World Congress Center
1981	March 7-11	St. Louis	Congress Center
1982	March 20-24	Anaheim	Convention Center

lum change is not just a project, but is an ongoing program. Introductions to guides, plans of action, and important directives need to be signed by superintendent level personnel to show that they endorse major instructional decisions and accompanying budgets.

### Good Supervisors Do Not Overlook Affective Concerns

Supervisors must in the words of Emerson, "inspire, cajole or insist that folks do what they themselves already know they should be doing," when it comes to implementation of good instruction. The areas of personal, social, career, and aesthetic literacy must be interwoven with the intellectual development—built in as we go, so to speak. In so doing, we motivate the learner sociometrically, rather than directly; by approaching him or her through his or her senses, feelings, interests, wishes, attitudes, and desires. What we do with what we know cognitively is determined by our affective, visceral decisions and choices. So perhaps the bottom line in all of our endeavors becomes the ability to be an autonomous learner, capable of making realistic decisions, coping with change, and enhancing the quality of our lives wherever we find ourselves. Educational leaders must attain these attributes and must master the communication skills as well, and use them in all areas of media to keep school personnel, board members, and the tax paying public apprised of programs and progress.

In short, the curriculum supervisor is of necessity a Renaissance person, but he or she must never assume that he or she has arrived at that pinnacle; but should continuously aspire to reach that quality of performance. [E]



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