

FROM STANDARDS TO LEARNERS: HOW MUCH INTENDED CURRICULUM ARE STUDENTS EXPERIENCING?

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The word “curriculum” is used widely among teachers, researchers, and policy makers with a variety of meanings (Gehrke, Knapp & Sirotnik, 1992; Porter & Smithson, 2001; Remillard, 2005). We investigated the relationship between intended curriculum and implemented curriculum by analyzing state standards, textbook lessons, and lessons taught. We found the existence of an “extra curriculum,” which we defined as textbook lessons not aligned to the intended curriculum. This work was funded by a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education (# R303T010735).

We identified the intended curriculum to be the *Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics* (2003), the intended-written curriculum to be district adopted textbook lessons aligning to the standards, and collected data from five 7th grade teachers in Minnesota. Each teacher completed a Table of Contents Diary to self-report which lessons were implemented during one complete school year. Our first analysis examined how three textbooks (two textbooks were used by multiple teachers in one district) aligned with the state standards. Both *MATHThematics Book 2* and *Glencoe Course 2* textbooks aligned with 96% of the intended curriculum, while *Glencoe Course 1* aligned with 79%.

Our second analysis determined the intended-written curriculum, or the percentage of lessons in each textbook that aligned to the intended curriculum. We found *MATHThematics Book 2* to have 55% lesson alignment, while *Glencoe Course 2* had 49% and *Glencoe Course 1* had 48%. Approximately 50% of the lessons in each textbook did not align with at least one state standard—the extra curriculum. Our third analysis determined the percentage of intended-written curriculum, as well as extra curriculum, which was implemented. We found both teachers using *MATHThematics Book 2* implemented 46% of the intended-written curriculum and 32% of the extra curriculum. The teacher using *Glencoe Course 2* implemented 39% of the intended-written curriculum and 28% of the extra curriculum. Finally, the two teachers using *Glencoe Course 1* textbooks implemented 32% and 27% of the intended-written curriculum and 30% and 27% of the extra curriculum, respectively.

From our results, we determined that students in these five teachers’ classrooms were not experiencing the entire intended curriculum (based on the district adopted textbooks and their implementation). More research is needed to determine if this is true for a larger population, as well as the effects of limited and inconsistent implementation of intended and extra curricula.

References

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