Curriculum mapping

To design a standard-based curriculum is one thing, but to translate the standards into actual classroom practices and to assess student mastery is one of complexity and non-conformity which does not help the learners reach high achievements. Lesson planning attempts to describe in detail what and how a teacher intends to teach on a daily basis [1]. However, curriculum mapping is a process for collecting and recording curriculum-related data that identifies core skills and content taught, processes employed, and assessments used for each subject area and grade level. The completed curriculum map then become a tool that helps teachers keep track of what has been taught and plan what will be taught[2].

History Fenwick English (1980), a curriculum leader and theoretician pioneered curriculum mapping[3], defined it as a description of the content taught and the amount of time spent teaching it. He believed that the quantity of time spent teaching the curriculum affects student achievement and curriculum reform should be based on accurate data, not opinions[4]. In the 1990s Heidi Hayes Jacobs broadened and deepened the concept wherein she introduced curriculum integration and provided a template designing rich, rigorous and relevant standard-based integrated units. The Teaching/Learning Mapping Strategy (TLMS) process developed at the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc. (AEL) has its focus on the quality of a learning task and the amount of time learning it[5].

The process promotes both a vertical and horizontal alignment. Vertical alignment of a subject matter permit teachers to quickly assess what students mastered in the preceding grade and to focus on building skills and knowledge [6] as in " spiraling" which involves reinforcing and extending

those skills with increasing complexity within and across grades [7]; as opposed to consuming valuable time with unnecessary reviewing and re-teaching [8]. Horizontal alignment, often referred to as " pacing guide" assures that all teachers of a common grade level address specific subject matter following the same timeline [9].

Evolution of Curriculum Mapping In the late 1970s and early 1980s, data collection, compilation and analysis of information were delayed. With the advent of the computer era, these electronic tools provided the " time on task" approach where teachers can complete curriculum mapping weekly, quarterly or yearly. The Curriculum Creator, a software developed at AEL is a Web-based tool. It allows teachers to develop, archive, search, sort information, and print curriculum maps by subject, grade or standard. It helps identify and assess areas that may require further attention [10]. Purpose of Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping provides a process by which educators can become active participants in improving teaching and learning. It builds on teacher's strengths and creativity and focuses on student's learning strengths, it is a teacher-owned and student-centered process. When teachers record their student's actual learning experiences, teachers " own" the curriculum and, therefore, have a greater investment in implementing and sustaining improvements [11]. It also encourages student creativity. The maps shows students what they will study, students are motivated to think about questions they may have about the topics or ideas for projects they may wish to pursue. Since curriculum mapping is a tool that builds on teacher and

student strengths and creativity, curriculum mapping may be the most

effective process for improving education[12].