

Pragmatist curriculum



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I. Introduction As the writer of this paper tried to look around his school, he eventually listened to the noisy swarm of students and suddenly quiet as pupils and teachers move into classrooms and doors close. Suddenly, questions came into the writer's mind; what's happening behind those doors? What are students learning? How are the teachers teaching? As school leader, you are bombarded with so many student needs, parent's concerns, teacher concerns, paper works that it seems futile to think of improving the teaching of every teacher. What, indeed, can the writer as only one person, do?

Thinking about curriculum is an old thinking about education; it is difficult to imagine any inquiry into the nature of education without deliberate attention to the question of what should be taught. The question of what to teach and how to teach it involves a selection from a vast array of knowledge and beliefs within a culture. Since it is impossible to teach everything, that selection from the culture reflects in part some sense of what is most worthwhile in that culture as seen in relation to the kind of institution the school is and what it can reasonably accomplish.

According to Dewey education is " a continuous lifelong process which had no ends beyond itself but is its own end". Within learning organizations, Senge stated that " humane, sensitive and thoughtful leaders transmit their value system through daily behavior". Bolman and Deal developed a unique situational leadership theory that analyzes leadership behavior through four frames of reference: structural, human resources, political and symbolic. Each of the frames offers a different perspective on what leadership is and how it operates in organizations; and in this case, schools.

These frames are maps that aid navigation, tools for solving problems and getting things done”. Leaders especially administrators need to understand their own frame preference and its limits and ideally, combine multiple frames to gain “ clarity, generating new options, and finding strategies that work”. As in all organizations, schools need leaders who can impart a persuasive and durable sense of purpose and direction. In the area of curriculum design and planning, educational researchers shared values, and tacit knowledge about what “ should as a defining aspect of school culture.

Values are often ‘ espoused’ as opposed to “ in-use’, that is, what people say should and ought to be is often inconsistent with their actual behavior.

Schein said that one must look deeper than values to find the essence of a culture. Values, enduring beliefs or tendencies to prefer certain modes of conduct or state of affairs over others are often viewed as the most articulated component of culture. The writer, as the institutional head of the organization is composed of 9 teachers, 4 non-teaching staffs and 1financeofficer which find it easy to lead the organization as one.

On the other hand, since this is a parochial school, the organization is connected to the Diocesan Bishop as the president of the corporation and led by the school director. Values define a standard of goodness, quality and an excellence that undergirds behavior and decision making and what people care about. Values are not simplygoalsor outcomes, values are deeper sense of what is important. Deal and Peterson posited that values focus attention and define success. Given the moral ppluralism of today’s society, moral discipline closely related to intellectual values is important.

The goals of academic excellence and value-centeredness need to be operational in the education we offer. II. The Need to Revise: Diocesan Goal of Catholic Education Social forces that can influence curriculum planning can come from far and wide. The ideas and values of various groups of people include their social goals, ideas about cultural uniformity and diversity, social pleasures, ideas about social change, their plans for the future and their concept of culture. Educational decision making as it relates to the school's mission is important.

For example, various groups may attempt to influence educational policy and therefore curriculum better meet the needs of children in urban environments and on the other hand, a group may be trying to do the same for rural children. This illustrates how social forces, issues and values can influence curriculum design. Doll a famous curriculum designer once stated that there tends to be a crisis in current social forces and cultures: economic, political and standards funding as well as technology, special needs, ethnic diversity and mobility issues. These rapidly changing demographic factors call for self directed curriculum planners who show responsibility for their local and world communities. Global perspectives and understanding, the ability to communicate clearly and the ability to relate well interpersonally are critical in a multicultural society and a technology- orientated world market. Curricula for the future emphasize the learner's development as much as the content to be learned. Critical and creative thinking serve as the point and counterpoint as students construct knowledge using multiple perspectives, talents, modalities and mediums.

Throughout our lives, in the various stages of development, we experience change in our behavior, feelings, attitudes, thoughts, values, etc. Many of these changes are highly individual and can be a response to life events to a simple unfolding of our unique characteristics. Nonetheless, there are regular and predictable physical, mental and social changes that most people undergo in some way. Part of our life is determined by biological heritage (nature) while part is due to environment (nurture).

The interplay of these has been studied by developmental psychologists and three have become legendary in the fields of development: Piaget (cognitive), Kohlberg (moral) and Erickson (identity). Like Piaget, Erickson came to the conclusion that children should not be rushed in their development, that each developmental phase was important and should be allowed time to full unfold. Kohlberg followed the development of moral judgment beyond the stages studied by Piaget, who said that logic and morality develop through constructive stages.

Kohlberg determined that moral development continues through the person's life. Curriculum is no longer a simple matter of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Today, curriculum includes what students can do with the content and how well they think, problem solve and work as a member of a team. Instruction goes beyond isolated memory drill to helping students synthesize information to gain a deeper understanding of concepts and generalization that will have lasting value as they structure knowledge and interpret their world.

Thus, diocesan directors of parochial school are currently working on the transition for change of curriculum. It is very crucial to know and be very cognizant to the changes, and as much as possible to have a paradigm shift of accepting contemporary techniques and curriculum, as connected to the instruction itself. Curriculum planners must ask themselves what skills; knowledge, attitudes and abilities must students possess to operate successfully in the 21st century. Thus, the curricular design of the Diocese in connection to K to 12 caters to the challenges of the 21st century education.

Some curricula draw lessons from the past and all curricula prepare students for the future. To successfully prepare student to live and work within globally networked systems, curriculum developers must listen to business and economic futurist. Curriculum and instruction are heavily weighted with innovation, in deciding how to proceed; curriculum planners need to weigh today's educational needs against past practices and their beliefs about teaching and learning for the future. III. Revising the Whole Curriculum: Religion as Core of the Curriculum

As a neophyte administrator, the writer dreamt big especially in his school. Thus, he decided to try and suggest to have a taste of a different curriculum where both teachers and students would benefit. As committee of the new curriculum starts the design for the diocesan school, it was decided to have a transition plan so that in one way or another it will be very helpful in implementing the curriculum to the member schools. As a member of the committee, the researcher was task to craft the necessary transition plan for the velvetiness of the transition.

Thus, the transition plan of the Catholic School of the Diocese of Imus was attached to this action research for reference. The new time allotment of the subjects for the new curriculum is also attached to be able see and determine the strengths and weaknesses for better development in each subject area. As a Catholic School within the vicinity of the Diocese of Imus, it was agreed upon that the school where the writer is connected will implement the RCC or the Religion as the Core of the Curriculum using the WBLS (Whole Brain Learning System) as strategy.

Thus, it is very evident that the new curriculum that will be implemented the next academic year will be somehow different for it allocates a more time on subjects like Christian Living Education (CLE) and Values Education using the Transformative Values as initiated by the CEAP (Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines). RCC or the Religion as Core of the Curriculum is shared mandate that distinguishes Catholic schools from private and public schools.