Developing a national curriculum
A statement of official policy relating to
teaching & learning in English-medium New Zealand schools

Chris Arcus, Lead Advisor: Curriculum,
Teaching & Learning
• what should be in a curriculum/what should I teach/should we learn (next)?

• who decides?

• what helps you decide?

• your thoughts/experiences?
The New Zealand Curriculum (2007)
Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (2008)

• setting direction for teaching & learning
• providing guidance for school curriculum development
balancing either/or - and/and - continua - context specific...

tensions/compromises/tao/balance/integration

direction | guidance
prescription | permission
knowledge /using knowledge/making knowledge | competencies
NZC /TMoA | local school curriculum
20th (19th!) century | 21st century
assessment for learning | assessment for qualifications
means | ends
careers/employment | citizenship
vision | values
learning areas, subjects | disciplines, literacy & numeracy
progression | breadth & depth
engaging communities | engaging students
evidence based teaching | teaching by telling
• What **skills & competencies** are needed for individuals to lead a *successful & responsible* life & for society to *face the challenges* of the present & future?

(DeSeCo)
What skills & competencies are needed for individuals to lead a successful & responsible life & for society to face the challenges of the present and future? (DeSeCo)

All skills will become obsolete except one, the skill of being able to make the right response to situations that are outside the scope of what you were taught in school.

We need to produce people who know how to act when they are faced with situations for which they were not specifically prepared.’

(Seymour Papert, 1998)
why did New Zealand design a new curriculum?

• wider consultation with Māori about Māori aspirations for learning
• research linking particular pedagogies to improved student outcomes
• continued diversification of NZ society
• developments in digital media & interconnectivity
• increased globalisation (impacts on social connectedness & value of diversity, indigeneity)
• desire to balance academic & social outcomes (eg citizenship, values education)
• disparity in education outcomes

Curriculum Stocktake Report 2002
how did New Zealand design a new curriculum?

parallel English medium, Māori medium

What is a curriculum? What should it include? What/who should it be for? What is [science...]?, what should be taught & learned? How?

4000 teachers, experts, reference groups

Parents, families, whānau, students

Curriculum Project Map

2003 curriculum stocktake report

2004/05 Co-construction

- Curriculum principles
- Key competencies
- Values
- Essential learning area essence statements

2006

Draft curriculum
Consultation
Feedback and Trialling

Revised curriculum

Project background
Project goals
Parameters

The national curriculum 2007, 2008

10,000+ submissions
families, that’s important to learn about
..we need to learn how to live
a happy life
..we need to know how to
aim high & reach our goals

..I am greatly encouraged by the amazing innovation that exists in many of this country's schools

... who exactly should decide? Whose voices/opinions/knowledge gets included in curriculum design, & whose maybe get excluded?
what is (‘in’) the curriculum?

What is intended, taught & learnt, through formal learning programmes & all school processes

Incl. timetables, teaching approaches, assessment, expectations, appraisal, playground
NZC, progression, the standards…
teacher actions promoting student learning...

The teaching–learning relationship

Teaching as Inquiry

Teaching Inquiry
What strategies (evidence-based) are most likely to help my students learn this?

Learning Inquiry
What happened as a result of the teaching, and what are the implications for future teaching?

Focusing Inquiry
What is important (and therefore worth spending time on), given where my students are at?

Is there something I need to change?

What are the next steps for learning?

Supportive ...reflective thought & action ...relevance... shared...connections...inquiry......evidence based teaching & learning
implementation

what do schools have to do?

1. develop a school curriculum to best address the particular needs, interests, & circumstances of the school’s students (effectively taught programme of learning) (NZC pp 37, 44)

2. make evidence based decisions on what to teach & how to teach it (NZC p35, 44)
how [do] the world’s best performing school systems come out on top?

• ‘… the national curriculum specifies only general outcome goals, rather than the path by which to attain them, means that teachers in schools have to work together to develop the curriculum & instructional strategies tailored to the needs of their school [students].’

Sir Michael Barber, McKinsey 2007
how are we doing in NZ?

• **NZCER** (2014) – primary schools
  • progress in curriculum development appears to be ‘stalled’
how are we doing in NZ?

ERO 2014 – secondary schools

• some inquiry & improvement
• some effective curriculum initiatives
• some development of teaching as inquiry approaches
• ‘one of the effective schools...[that] made a significant change to its curriculum...also made the most significant achievement gains...’

BUT

• ‘a culture of change is needed...[it] requires school leaders & teachers to...develop the curriculum so that it is engaging for learners...’
how are we doing in NZ?

future focused learning in connected communities

we need to

• **commit** to meeting the needs of 21st century learners
• ensure equitable **access** to devices, invest in people & innovation
• create **future-focused learning environments**

C21 Learning Reference Group 2014 (7 years on)
Vision
What we want for our young people

“confident, connected, actively involved, and lifelong learners”

The New Zealand Curriculum, page 8

‘kia tū tangata te ākonga - students achieving their full potential’

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa