

Issues in Curriculum Development and Harmonization in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

A paper by Andrew Watts
Grenada, 10th May 2011



History

- Foundations for the Future: OECS Education Reform Strategy, 1991
- Pillars for Partnership and Progress, 2001
- Report on the Evaluation of the OECS Eastern Caribbean Education Reform Project (ECERP) in 2007

Currents

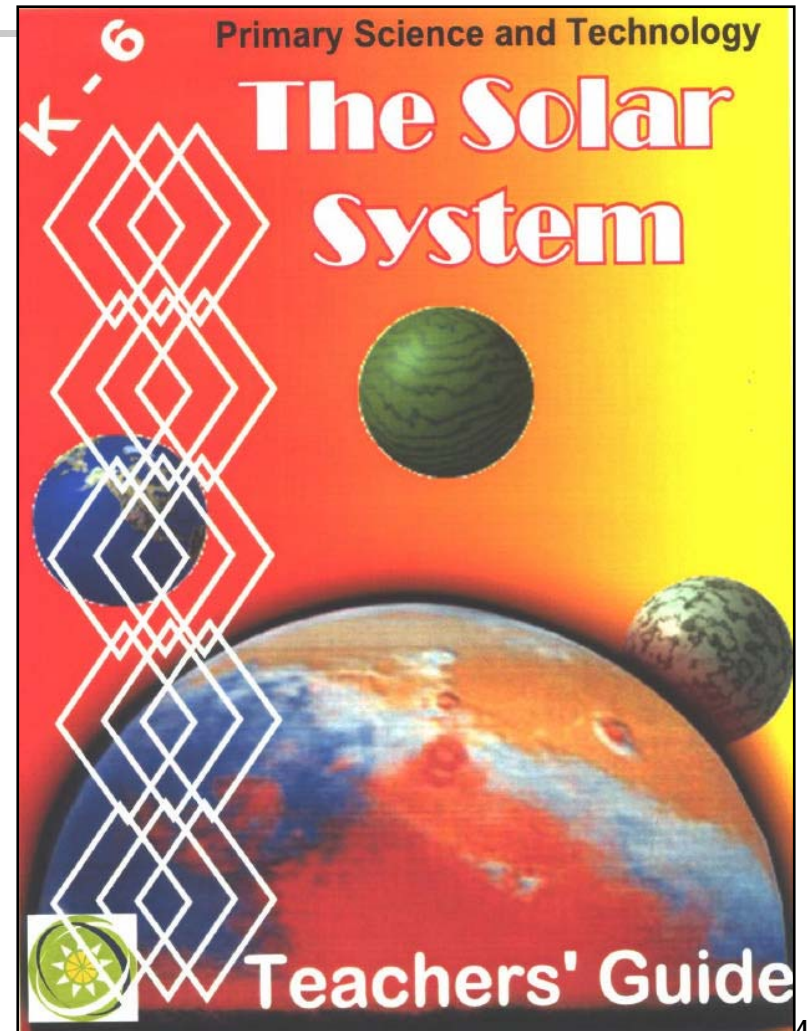
Curriculum change

Universal secondary education

OECS harmonization

Review

- Strengths
- An international view





Disappointments?

- Length of time to create materials
- Teachers' guides not completed
- Usefulness of materials for teachers
- Uninvolvement of teachers
- Little use of materials
- Impact on curriculum harmonization?



Learning from experience

- The Registrar's blog



Recommendations

- No more reforms!



Timescale?

- Taking the long view



Curriculum as a process

- Dynamic model of curriculum
- Changes in knowledge
- Current issues





Which curriculum?

- The ideal curriculum – what scholars believe should be taught;
- The formal curriculum – what is written down in ministry documents;
- The perceived curriculum – what teachers say they are teaching;
- The operational curriculum – what observers see being taught in classrooms;
- The experiential curriculum – what the students experience in their learning.

Goodlad J., Klein F., Tye K. "The Domains of Curriculum and Their Study."
In *Curriculum Inquiry*, ed. J. Goodlad. McGraw-Hill. 1979. p.43-76.



Teachers and the curriculum

- "...teachers are not only the most direct agents in the learning enterprise but also the designers of knowledge. They select and improvise. Their capacity to do this is critical to the success of learning. Curriculum models are only as effective as the teachers who design, plan, and implement the programs and evaluate their students' progress."
- Montero-Sieburth M., "Models and Practice of Curriculum Change in Developing Countries" in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 36. No. 2. May 1992. University of Chicago Press. P. 179.



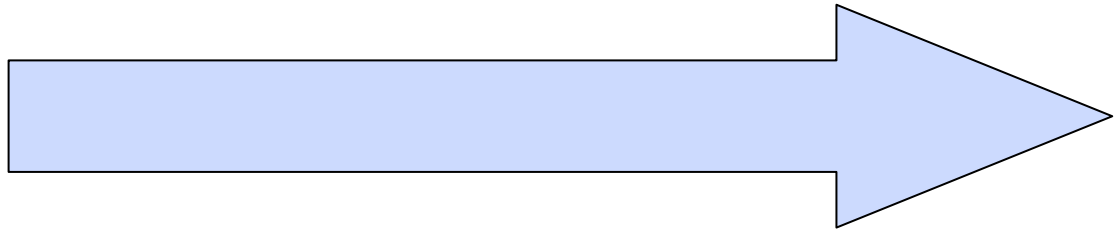
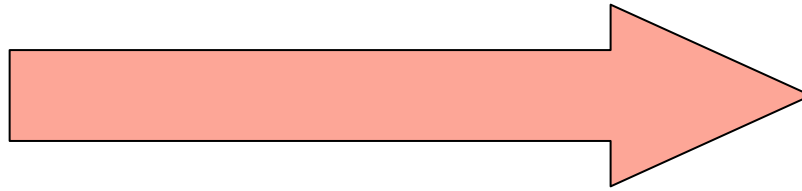
Embedding

- “There is no evidence that [teachers’ autonomy] may be circumvented by increased control of teachers or by attempts to construct teacher-proof curricula... Without active teacher involvement, curriculum development may turn out to be futile and ineffective.”
- Miriam Ben-Peretz, Haifa University



Framework and process

- Ministry-based phase



- Classroom-based phase



Framework?

- Model Education Bill 2005
- Attainment targets
- Programmes of study
- Assessment arrangements



Attainment Targets

Language Arts

- The learner will be able to listen attentively and critically, speak confidently and effectively using appropriate structures and speech conventions for multiple purposes and different audiences through a variety of media
- The learner will be able to read for understanding and enjoyment using a wide range of texts both print and visual, interpreting and constructing meaning and responding critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in the texts
- The learner will be able to create/produce texts, both print and visual, competently and effectively in different kinds of factual and imaginative forms for a wide range of purposes, using grammatical structures and appropriate writing conventions.



Programmes of Study

Learning objectives (writing)

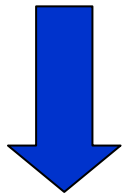
- Producing personal texts
- Producing texts for different purpose and audiences
- Transferring data
- Developing a positive attitude to writing
- Using texts across the curriculum.

Success criteria >>> assessment

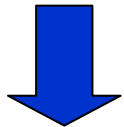


The extent of collaboration?

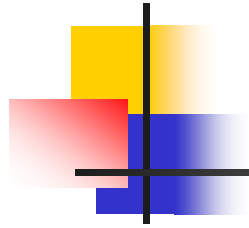
- Common Attainment Targets?



- Common Programmes of Study?

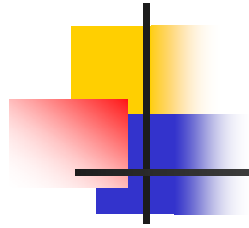


- Common assessment regimes?

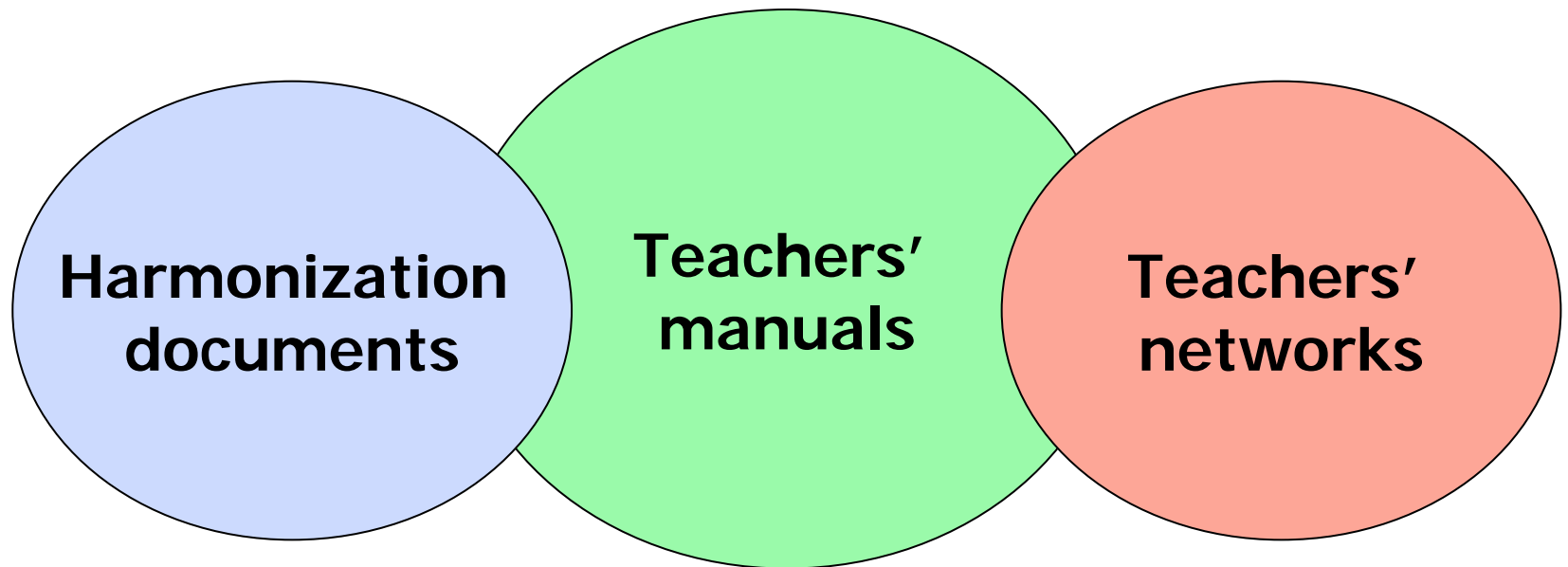


Curriculum harmonization 1

**Teachers'
manuals**



Curriculum harmonization 2





Two proposals

- That shorter, more generalised documents should be used to create a framework for harmonisation.
- That any curriculum materials produced to help teachers should be published online and made available for use by Curriculum Officers and teachers in other territories.

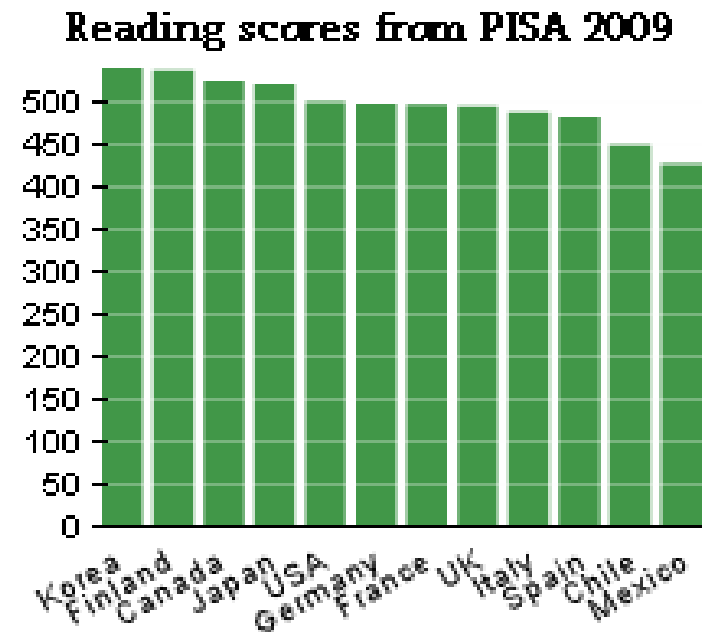
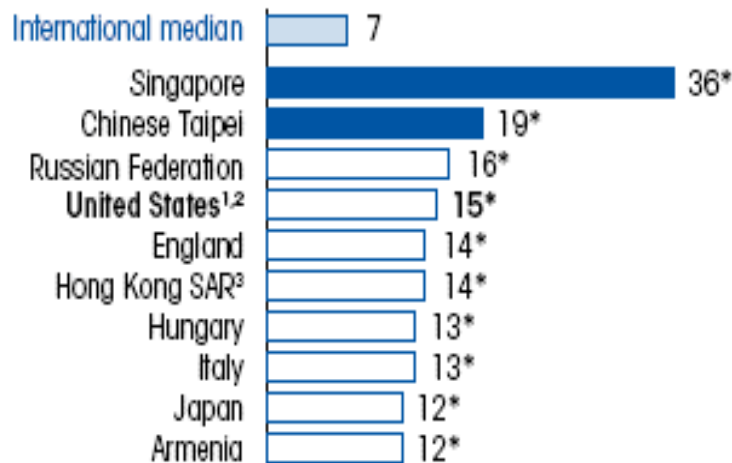


Roles

- Ministries of Education
- OECS Education Reform Unit
- National, Curriculum Development Units
- Subject panels (as required by the Education Acts. The panels should involve employers and other community representatives.)
- School Principals and senior managers
- Heads of department / subject co-ordinators
- Subject associations and other teachers' groups
- Teachers

Improving education systems

- School improvement
- Improving teachers





Support for teachers

- In-school, inc. subject co-ordinators
- Out of school, inc. curriculum officers
- Two South African examples



The big picture

- Where the reforms “fit in”
- The teacher’s own professional development
- A checklist for collaboration?



Modernising the curriculum

- Online networks
- Publishing
- Exchanging
- Teachers' groups



The role of OERU?

- 1. Collaborative entity/mechanisms for OECS
- 2. Technical and advisory role
- 3. Resource centre/clearinghouse
- 4. Database – information management
- 5. Dissemination of information
- 6. Facilitate development in information management and accreditation
- 7. Consultancy services – Ministries of Education
- 8. Provision of training/training agency
- 9. Repository of educational materials
- 10. Monitoring and evaluation agency
- 11. Agency for mobilizing and leveraging resources
- 12. Agency to promote/drive the use of technology
- 13. Agency for conducting research
- 14. Advocacy group for OECS
- 15. Agency for sustainability of reform efforts



An additional role for the OERU?

- Teacher improvement
- OERU Network
- Links to Curriculum officers
- Online publishing – archive
- Teachers' materials
- 'Classifying' curriculum ideas



Purposes of assessment

- Assessment for learning
 - Key Stage 1: diagnostic assessment
 - Key Stage 2: end of primary
 - Key Stage 3: lower secondary: CCSLC
 - Key Stage 4: CSEC



Working with CXC

- Strategies
- Expansion of activities
- Issues

- Role for OECS?