

**THE ROLE OF CURRICULUM COORDINATORS**

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## Dedication

To my husband Ken, for his love, patience and encouragement during the time taken to finish my project and for his support and dedication during the challenges faced in completing this Master's of Education program.

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to clarify the role of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional School Division, discuss the strengths and limitations, determine areas of need for enhancing the effectiveness of the position and make recommendations for potential development or changes. Data sources were four weeks of journal entries of day to day tasks I performed as a curriculum co-ordinator and verbatim transcripts of interviews conducted with three teachers, three principals, one senior administrator and two experienced co-ordinators. Themes evolved from the data and were organized into nine main areas of focus. Three different perspectives of the role of the co-ordinator became apparent: (teacher, principal and district). The study concluded that centralized curriculum and instructional support is a definite asset for ensuring staff development, communication of curriculum changes and effective implementation. However, the form of this support need not be and cannot be strictly defined. Different approaches to providing curriculum and instructional support in school districts exist and terminology used to label the position vary as much as to the responsibilities given in this role from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The study found that the role of curriculum co-ordinator was determined by a number of sources and that it is an evolving and dynamic position, changing with each school year, the needs of the jurisdiction, initiatives of the Department of Education and the person (personality, personal interest, etc.) in the position of curriculum co-ordinator.

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## The Role of Curriculum Co-ordinator

The position of Curriculum Co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division has been one with a nebulous job description and responsibilities. The terms used to describe such positions and role responsibilities depend on the individual school jurisdiction, its size, needs and administrative structure. Some jurisdictions have positions called "curriculum consultants" or "subject area consultants or specialists". Some school divisions have had such positions in the past, but with budget restraints, have eliminated them. Research on positions of curriculum and instruction support in school districts is limited. This could be due to the variety of descriptions of such a role, the different needs of school jurisdictions and the overall individual differences of school jurisdictions.

I have chosen to focus this study on the position of District Curriculum Co-ordinator as it exists at the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division. I am new to the position and commenced this study after four months experience. One of the goals of this study was to better define the responsibilities of a curriculum co-ordinator. A relatively new position to our division, it seemed to hold a great responsibility, but no position of authority. Sold first as a "teacher's" position (since the funds to pay salaries came from an "instructional budget" and not an "administrative budget") to the division teachers, this was seen as a unique opportunity for learning and a change from classroom teaching for applicants. However, the unclear job description had the potential to cause confusion and unnecessary stress to those in the position and others seeking assistance from the curriculum co-ordinators. As Gorton (1987) discusses, role ambiguity is a major problem

in school administration. This is evident in the creation of a new position to be held by teachers carrying out administrative duties, but not seen as, nor see themselves, as “administration”.

What is the role of a curriculum co-ordinator? Who should decide the focus of such a position? Is there something else I should be spending my time doing? Do teachers in the district utilize the services? What are teachers and the administrators' expectations of the duties? What consumes most of the curriculum co-ordinator's time and what should be the main focus of tasks performed? Is this position a necessary one at the district level? What type of candidates should be considered?

This descriptive study will provide insight to the current practice of curriculum co-ordinators and examine the perception and expectations of this role by district staff. It is hoped that by matching the actual practice and the expectations to the goals and needs of the school district, recommendations can be made for maintaining and/or improving the delivery of curriculum and instructional support in the district.

People often ask me: "What do you do?" I was never really sure of the answer when I first began this job. As I continued to be asked this question, I realized that there was a need to define this role if teachers were to utilize the services effectively. The answer to the question: "What do you do?" depends upon many different variables, such as: what project is current? What time of year it is? Who is the co-ordinator? What is Alberta Education changing or mandating? What is being assigned by supervisors? In this study I hope to help to define what the role of curriculum co-ordinator is and what it should be.

With the changes in education today and the increased responsibilities in the business of running a school, the principal's role as curriculum leader is becoming more and more difficult. Having a position for curriculum and instructional support at the district level can facilitate this responsibility. However, some may feel that it is just one more person to go through, instead of getting information directly. Since the position is paid for through the instructional budget, some people would rather their portion of those funds be controlled within each school. In this study, I hope to provide some insight into the differing reasons for having this position at the district level and provide some guidelines for the future.

#### Limitations

The focus upon one school district for this study and the lack of research previously done on the subject affects the limitations of the study. More time would have permitted a greater number of interviews with people representing a variety of experience and grade levels taught. An analysis of opinions or comments, based upon the school each participant was from, would have proved to be interesting. Also, this study could become much more extensive if other districts in the province were also surveyed on the role of curriculum leadership positions. It is hoped that this project will contribute to the research process by initiating further study into the role of district curriculum and instructional support services. The limitations noted, along with the small size of this school district and small size of population interviewed, should be borne in mind when considering the findings reported.

This project is limited to the role of curriculum co-ordinators in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division. Recommendations made may be applicable to other jurisdictions, but they will be made with the goals and needs specific to this Division. The main objective in this project is to examine the current realities and explore ways to better serve the teachers and students of the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division.

## Literature Review

### Educational Consultants

Consultants are professionals who help other professionals achieve job-related objectives. The task of defining the role of educational consultants is characterized by confusion and ambiguity (Regan and Winter, 1982). Educational consultants help teachers and other staff to perform their responsibilities more effectively (Ross and Regan, 1990), to implement school change and to improve practice (Regan and Ross, 1992). The term “consultant” was considered relatively new in 1982 when Regan and Winter reported it to be one of a number of titles given to those who provided support for school programs and assistance to teachers.

Curriculum consultants can have a positive effect on improving educational practice but there are criticisms of such positions. Ross and Regan (1990) reviewed research that both supported and contradicted the view that consultants have an impact on teacher practice and student learning. The consistent differences found in this study offered suggestions for professional development programs to enhance the skills of the consultants by learning effective strategies utilized by experienced consultants. There was lack of information about specific behaviors that would distinguish effective from

ineffective consultant practice. The information available to them on the effective practice of consultants was based on the presence of consultation and the amount of consultation. They conducted an extensive study comparing the strategies used by experienced and inexperienced consultants in order to determine some of the behaviors that characterize effective consultants. Overt strategies (how consultant's time was used), rather than the amount of time given to a particular situation, was considered to make significant differences.

Many similarities as well as differences of experienced and inexperienced consultants were found. Experienced consultants were considered to be experts, knowing more and having more strategies for the organizational nature of the job. They would arrange for a series of interactions and held a more long term and district-wide perspective to individual situations but were also able to individualize assistance more than inexperienced consultants. Experienced consultants were able to handle more information and used strategies specifically to help bring about change.

There was no evidence of the importance of personal attributes to the effectiveness of consultants, but Ross and Regan (1990) suggested that perhaps the importance of interpersonal skills in such a role is so well known that it may have played an important factor for initial selection processes. Even though the work setting was seen to affect the performance of a consultant (constraints or support provided by the individual school system), the differences between experienced and inexperienced consultants were found to be within the control of individual as well as the context in which they work.

A major source of criticism of consultants comes from the uncertainty about their role expectations (Dow and Whitehead, 1981). The role of consultants is rooted in traditional supervision models and such a perception can cause some difficulty for the person coming directly from a classroom teaching assignment. Supervision and teacher evaluation is not the responsibility of curriculum co-ordinators in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division. However, when superintendents or principals are evaluating teachers they may recommend co-ordinator support to assist someone. Teachers may perceive the co-ordinators to be in an evaluative role when in fact they are being utilized within the evaluation process as a resource. This contributes to the grey area in the role of curriculum co-ordinator. Overcoming the caution or fear that central office seems to create for other teachers is part of the reality that comes with working out of that office.

#### Perceptions and Expectations

Differences in perception are heightened about a consultant role as some see consultants as experts (source of knowledge, skills and understanding) and others see them as facilitators (assisting teachers in developing self awareness and in achieving professional growth) (Regan and Winter, 1982). Expectations become unrealistic due to the different perceptions of what the role is. One of the most difficult obstacles to overcome in such a role is the perceptions of peers. When I moved into the role of curriculum co-ordinator, my audience changed from a classroom of students to the district of teachers, yet I remain in the helping profession. As a trained classroom teacher, I did not feel any different as a person or professional, except for the fact I no longer had a class of thirty kids to see every day. However, other people perceived me differently.

Rogers (as cited in Holdaway and Millikan, 1980) suggests that the perception of others on a consultant's attitude made a significant difference to the effectiveness of the relationship. Trust is an important factor and must be present before any help will be effective. A key point made by Holdaway and Millikan is that the teacher's problem is that his or her needs for help conflict with those needs to be seen as competent. Working on the trust factor is a way to overcome this.

The role of co-ordinator is defined by the fact you are a teacher first and can relate to classroom teachers. However, they see you as a member of the administrative group and a close contact with Central Office senior administration. Barriers develop with the role itself and building trust with teachers or school by school one step at a time is an essential part of the position.

#### Consultant Behavior

Regan and Ross (1992) studied the effects of an inservice for consultants focusing on orientation, effective consulting strategies, and reflective practice. They found that it is possible to improve the quality of strategies used by consultants by providing a structured opportunity for collaboration, reflection and action. Their study reinforced the idea that reading about the experiences of other professionals can have a positive effect on professional growth. I have to agree with this idea since I have learned a great deal by reading the situations in other districts in my research.

In a further study (Ross and Regan, 1995) consultants found it more helpful to talk to someone with similar experience and it was concluded that feedback from those with similar assumptions and beliefs enhanced professional growth. Consultants participated

in an inservice activity that was designed to increase the variety and use of feedback. Two things were learned from this study about the way consultants planned: they seemed to have a bias for immediate action (spending little time on the initial stage of consultation) and consideration was given by consultants to the personalities and past experiences of different school staffs. Characteristics of teacher culture were offered as contributing factors to the above-mentioned consultant behaviors. The equality of teachers may encourage the equality of access to the consultant services and cause consultants to accept requests on a first-come, first-serve basis. Consultants were found to give restricted feedback to one another, but this feedback was considered important. It seemed to have more of an impact because it was recognized as valid. The feedback from principals in this case was not considered helpful. This feedback was negative (a suggested reason for this was principals feeling threatened) and in some cases they made strategy decisions that inhibited the effectiveness of consultants. Such experiences often left consultants feeling isolated.

Principals in my division are much more receptive to the assistance of curriculum co-ordinators. Perhaps due to the extra burdens placed upon principals with site-based decision making, they welcome any support they can get. Also, being a small jurisdiction with just ten schools may play a role in the level of acceptance by administration. We work hard to maintain an atmosphere of “family” in our jurisdiction. Haughey, Holdaway and Small (1977) suggest that principals don’t have enough expertise to provide the kind of specialist help required by teachers and principals are key figures in the provision of a supportive climate.

### Comparing to Other Jurisdictions

The role of co-ordinator can be compared to that of consultant in other organizations. In fact, the Department of Education and some school divisions have such positions and many of the responsibilities are similar, though the name of the position may be different. In some cases, however, consultants may also hold supervisory “line” positions whereas, in our district, the position of curriculum co-ordinator is considered a “staff” position. This leaves us caught in the middle, never quite able to be included with teachers and never quite in the power position that they sometimes see you in.

Allison (1989) describes the study of chief administrators as a “time-honored way of making insights into the mysteries of organizations and their administration” (pp.292). His main objective in the study was to discuss the work of Ontario directors of education in order to better understand school system administration and work to improving it. Directors in Ontario and curriculum co-ordinators hold many similarities. In fact, what we do as co-ordinators is often in response to a request made initially to the Superintendent. Even though the current role of curriculum co-ordinator is not a line position, I feel that it is vital in helping those in the positions carry out their mandates. In many ways we act as assistants to the Superintendent and Deputy-Superintendent.

Directors in the Ontario study seemed to organize their work environment and their responsibilities into three areas: Board, system and community. As curriculum co-ordinators, we also answer to these three areas. However, our focus is on the system, trying to find ways to help as many people as we can and find ways to assist in improving learning in every school.

Allison's (1989) re-analysis of the Fullan interview data from a 1987 study found similarities to that presented in a 1973 study by Mintzberg. Of the ten interrelated managerial work roles referred to in Mintzberg's study, those of liaison, disseminator, and resource allocator also hold relevance in the work of curriculum co-ordinators. We act as a liaison between schools and Central Office and between schools and the community. A large portion of our time is spent disseminating information they need to have.

Curriculum co-ordinators have opportunities to assist teachers in making changes in the delivery of their programs. Though we have a district-wide focus, we must also pay close attention to those individual teachers who may seek our assistance. We must be careful not to have activities or information become spread out over large numbers and then have no effect or impact on individual program. Dinkmeyer and Carlson (as cited in Hodaway and Millikan, 1980) suggest that the consultant's role is characterized as the architect of change. In the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division a more accurate analogy would be that of contractor. We have a part in the planning, but do not necessarily write the plan. We work to include people to assist us to carry projects through to the end, sometimes getting into the "hands-on" process of planning and evaluating.

#### Skills for Change

Miles, Saxl and Lieberman (1988) did a study to identify skills that educational change agents need. The role of curriculum co-ordinator can be paralleled to those discussed in their study. Curriculum co-ordinators may not necessarily be the agent of change, but the messenger of this change who needs to possess many of the skills

outlined by Miles et al. (1988). The eighteen skills identified were: interpersonal ease, group functioning, training/doing workshops, master teacher, knowledge of school subject matter, administrative/organizational, initiative-taking, trust/rapport-building, support, confrontation without generating negative effect, conflict mediation, collaboration, confidence-building, diagnosing individuals, diagnosing organizations, managing/controlling, resource-bringing and modeling.

Some of the skills listed above come with experience gained while on the job. As they apply to my role as curriculum co-ordinator, the importance of each one of the skills varies within the context of my work. The role of educational change agents in Ontario is comparable to our Superintendent's position in Alberta. However, I found this article quite helpful in defining the skills required in a position of curriculum co-ordinator. Each school and individual will have different needs and require different skills be utilized. The authors suggest that central office administrators could use the identification of these eighteen skills to assist in the identification of the entry characteristics for the position and to facilitate training of those change agents once hired. This list could assist us in the future in defining desirable characteristics for curriculum and instructional support positions.

#### Pedagogy and Andragogy

One of the main reasons for the position of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division is to improve student learning and since co-ordinators are teachers first, they must possess an understanding of pedagogy. What is not so obvious is the fact that a knowledge of andragogy is just as essential. Co-ordinators share

with teachers new ideas from the field of education and new initiatives from Alberta Education. Learning involves change in the individual and we are often the agents or messenger of change in the schools. Part of our responsibility is to provide service and support for this learning. Therefore, co-ordinators need to be experienced in the phenomenon of adult education.

Lindeman (as cited in Knowles, 1978) states that the curriculum in adult education should be build around the adult's needs and interests and that the resource of highest value is the experience already possessed by the adult learner. Understanding the complexity of the adult learner is essential for anyone helping teachers learn and improve. Efforts to educate educators in the past may not have been successful, due in part to the approach taken in teaching them about new approaches or curriculum in education. For example, one of the key assumptions about adult learners as explained by Knowles is that adults have a deep need to be self-directing. Individual differences increase among people with age and we need to respect these differences when assisting our staff.

Consultants in Ontario schools are likely to move from classroom teaching to consulting without special training for consulting (Regan and Winter, 1982). In the Red Deer Catholic School Division the situation is similar, although applicants had to be finished or enrolled in a Master's program to apply for the position of curriculum co-ordinator. No systematic form of training exists after being hired to the position. There is autonomy to seek out training in areas of our need or interest. Training that exists for Ontario consultants has been on materials, curriculum development and interpersonal relations.

Kidd (1973) recommends that in choosing curriculum for adult learners, the needs, interests, and situation in which they live need be carefully understood. We must expect their fullest participation and feedback. Objectives should be clearly stated, indicating desired changes as well as subject matter. Considering the needs of the adult learner is essential when co-ordinators present new information. Being an effective communicator will enhance such a process.

### Communication

District Curriculum Co-ordinators are teachers first. They know what it is like to be swamped with the routines of students, parents and the school in general. I feel that one of the important roles of a curriculum co-ordinator is that of communicator; sharer of ideas. We are able to see a more global, district-wide view of opportunities, new initiatives from the field of education and in particular, directives from Alberta Education. We can help teachers find resources to enhance their learning. In fact, in the area of leadership there is no talent more essential. Gorton (1972) discusses four facets of communication roles: The giver, receiver, seeker and monitor. As curriculum co-ordinators we wear all of these hats and must wear them well. It is just as important to be the receiver of information as it is to be the giver of it. My experience has been that the best administrators are good listeners and excellent communicators.

As a representative for an entire school district one could easily get wrapped up into the role of giver of information. For a co-ordinator's position, excellent organizational skills as well as effective communication skills are essential. In this age of information, knowing how to effectively share, distribute and respond to communications

is essential. It is sometimes easy to forget how to be the seeker as well as the monitor of communication.

Barriers to communication have been highlighted by Gorton (1972) to include: lack of interest, lack of knowledge, the bias of the recipient, social barriers and the situation itself. Under the category of “the situation itself” I would place the element of time as a barrier to communication. In education we all seem to have so much on our plates and not enough time to attend to them all in a given day. We need to be sensitive to as many barriers to communication as possible to be most effective in our sharing of information to staff.

The major task of the consultant, according to Haughey, Holdaway and Small (1977), should be to help teachers solve problems which the teacher has identified. To be practical, it is difficult to find out what every teacher identifies as a problem and to help each of them. Teachers’ needs and potential will vary from year to year and school to school. Each year the staff needs to be assessed. In our consultant role, what we have decided upon as a manageable way to deal with satisfying the needs of a district staff, is to ask each school to provide us with an area of focus. (See survey in Appendix C.) We also work with the professional development committee to survey each staff as to their professional development goals for the year. In this way, we have the information so as to better provide assistance. Assessing the needs and interests of the Division School Staffs is one way to help determine a focus for curriculum co-ordinators.

Kidd (1973) raises some objections to the use of surveys or questionnaires in search of the interests and needs of adult learners. He suggests that there is a possibility

that people are unaware of all that will interest them and that the survey would not be adequate without a thorough investigation. Follow-up visits to the schools and meeting with principals and teachers on both a formal and informal basis about what their needs are increases the effectiveness of our survey.

My experience has been that teachers are so busy with the day-to-day happenings in their classrooms and schools, they may indeed be unaware of their needs or interests due to lack of time more than a lack of experience, as Kidd (1973) would suggest. Some people, given the chance to examine and direct their own learning may feel uncomfortable. They may never have had the opportunity to do so before. We see this now with the implementation of professional development plans for Alberta teachers. Some teachers seem to require considerable direction for such plans. They may have been previously dependent upon others to direct their professional development.

#### Collaboration

Effective principals, as examined by Townsend (1996) enable, support, facilitate, and appreciate staff initiative and colleagues' work. Curriculum co-ordinators, to be effective educational leaders must also possess such capabilities. Townsend explained that effecting school improvement initiatives is more likely to occur in staffs who practice collaboration and promote informal leadership. Effective communication is essential for this and the role of curriculum co-ordinator can be as facilitator of such processes. In many ways the role of curriculum co-ordinator is similar to that of the principal. In providing curriculum and instructional support, co-ordinators assist principals and also need help from them. They are dealing with not just one staff but every school.

Planning time is essential for the success of this position. However, the time to do this is not always provided nor considered. For most classroom teachers, planning time is never adequate to deliver a program and much of the time for planning comes from personal time. The same occurs in administrative positions such as curriculum co-ordinator. The actual time it takes to organize and plan with the curriculum team is vital, though not always given priority. Blocher's study (as cited in Holdaway and Millikan, 1980) suggests that consultants need to plan carefully before suggesting strategies and making decisions. Knowledge about group and organizational change is essential, as is the awareness of or sensitivity to how change affects the individual. Blocher adds that there is also a need to be aware of how people solve problems, manage stress and make effective decisions.

Holdaway and Millikan (1980) summarized four Alberta studies about educational consultation. They synthesized the recommendations of the researchers. One recommendation was that the consultant's role be redefined to include less administrative responsibility. This would allow more time for getting out into schools and being of greater help to classroom teachers. They also recommend greater and more effective use of in-school experts by providing them with some release time for consultation. In the Red Deer Catholic School Division, we are hoping that the curriculum teams and focus groups will provide some of this opportunity. Teacher-leaders in curriculum areas will be provided with release time to collaborate with and plan to assist all teachers in their schools with new initiatives.

Consultation occurs informally in schools, just as there are informal leaders in every building. Although peer consultation is considered to be an effective way for teachers to receive assistance, there is even less written about peer consultation than there is on the role of educational consultants or co-ordinators. Co-ordinators act as facilitators to encourage such peer consultation through the formation of curriculum teams and focus groups.

Haughey, Holdaway and Small (1977) recommended that school systems should probably emphasize specialist consultation services on the system level instead of the general consultation which can usually be provided within the schools. They point out that there has been an assumption made in the past that has influenced teacher supervision practices. That assumption is that teachers, as a group, don't always recognize their own needs and lack the motivation to initiate consultation. The authors of this study argue against this assumption saying that more and more teachers are perceived to be the best judges of what they need to know. This study provided a further test of that argument by examining the dynamics of consultative encounters with teachers.

By setting up and being part of curriculum teams, school staffs will have greater opportunity for input and information. Haughey, Holdaway and Small (1977) made reference to a study done by Parsons (1971) that would support opportunities, such as curriculum teams, which provide teachers more freedom within the education system to share new ideas and techniques with their colleagues.

Collaboration has always been a very effective instructional practice for educators. Now, more and more, we see ourselves using collaboration outside the classroom as we are faced with economic restraints and a fast changing world of education. Teachers have traditionally been isolated in their classrooms, and although this does still occur to a degree, one of the strategies to assist teachers deal with the mountains of information coming their way has been through collaborative teams. This is a relatively new initiative in our school division. Collaborative teams have occurred informally in the past, mostly during after-school meetings. However, we are hoping to provide teachers with the time they need to work together on important issues. Every two to three years a plan will be put in place to give focus to the teams. For example, with a new curriculum coming in, teachers may be given the opportunity to form a team in that subject area.

If such collaboration is to be successful, support from administration, by providing the release time and training is necessary (Coben, Thomas, Sattler and Voelker 1977). In a small district, finding the people to sign-up for committee or “team” work is not always easy. For example, preparing to have a substitute teacher come in is added work. As well, tasks and responsibilities must be clearly defined, in order to have greater success. Effective collaboration includes participants who have mutual goals, who volunteer for their position, who have equally-valued contributions to make and who can share resources, decision-making ability and accountability (Coben et al.).

### Curriculum and Staff Development

According to Young (1990) the study of curriculum can be categorized from at least two different perspectives: philosophical (the nature of educational experience and

its place in the societal and political arenas) and managerial (the administrative aspects including the selection, organization and supervision of those involved in decisions about curriculum). Young compared responses from teachers participating in curriculum committees from both perspectives. He examined the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of teachers participating in committees and the differences found in their motivation to join such committees. Three recommendations were made. First, as curriculum development moves up the educational hierarchy, an effort must be made to explain to participants on committees the context in which their committee will be working. As the curriculum development moves down the educational hierarchy, more support must be given. Teachers need to be given time and assistance for their work. Interaction with other educators was listed as the third important factor to consider. The collaboration within committees is a valued asset to doing such work and should be considered an important element of such work.

In the past Red Deer Catholic Regional Division has tried to form teams of teachers to work on new curriculum, technology and other new initiatives from Alberta Education. Meetings were held after school and informally at other times. There has been no consistency in approach and volunteers for committee work seems to be diminishing. The key, as Young (1990) points out, is the support offered such teachers. Support in the form of resources and release time helps to bring the work done by teacher volunteers to an appreciated and respected level. Lead-teacher teams should have a more continuous effect on the learning of others in the district and at the same time provide a positive leadership experience for those involved.

In a study on strategies for curriculum change by Loadman and Mahan (1972) the effectiveness of external consultants visiting schools was examined. Twenty-one different consultant activities were identified. Some of these include: demonstration, observation, co-op teaching, driving between schools, faculty meetings, dissemination of resources, articulation from grade to grade, and completing reports. These were single-subject district consultants. They did not have the range of subject areas we do in our smaller district, but many of the tasks remained the same. One major problem area found in the study was that no formal attention was given to defining the roles of the consultants. Without roles being clearly defined, expectations will be different. Confusion and more than likely dissatisfaction will result. This was one of the reasons I chose this topic. It seems the nature of this job is that it is potentially vast and can take many different directions depending on the person who does it and goals of the district.

The data in this study, raised more questions than it seemed to answer. However, Loadman and Mahan (1972) did come to a conclusion that I agree with. They say that just being in the schools is not important, but what the consultant (or co-ordinator) does with the time in the building is. They suggest that external consultants can be key components of curriculum implementation strategies. They recommended formalizing expectations for school visits that would be developed and accepted by teachers, administrators and the consultants. It seems we are still working on this today. Shifts are occurring in staff development practices. Sparks and Hirsh (1997) suggest that results-driven education, systems thinking and constructivism are currently altering schools and staff development within them. They suggest that systems theory points to student

outcomes as being the result of a complex interaction of the parts of a system. To be effective in staff development, we would have to examine the parts of the system.

This role is also one of staff developer. The suggestion made by Sparks and Hirsh (1997) is that staff developers who function as trainers move to providing consultation, planning and facilitating of services. I can see this happening in our role with curriculum teams and other initiatives involving grade meetings and lead-teachers. Sparks and Hirsh insist that all teachers and administrators must become responsible for staff development. They must see themselves as teachers of adults, viewing the learning of others as an important part of their responsibility. This I feel describes what is happening in the role of curriculum co-ordinator of the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division.

The research shows that there are varying roles and responsibilities to educational consultant positions: curriculum consultants are teachers themselves. They provide help to teachers, they implement school change, they may have a supervisory or evaluative role, they are viewed as experts, facilitators, administrators, liaisons, communicators, change agents, problem solvers, collaborators and staff developers. The job description changes according to many variables within school divisions and within the educational system. This lack of clarity and the varying job descriptions or definitions for the role of curriculum consultant led me to do this study. My initial feeling was that it was a condition unique to the relatively young Red Deer Catholic School Division. However, it has become obvious through my reading that this not unique to my current situation.

## Methodology

For a period of four weeks, I kept a journal of my daily activities performed in the role of District Curriculum Co-ordinator. This description was analyzed for patterns, regular routines, and interesting happenings. The "actual" tasks or duties performed were compared to the formal job description. Categories were listed and prepared in a multi-media presentation format to demonstrate what the role of curriculum co-ordinator was, based on these lived experiences. (See Appendix B)

In order to provide a more objective view of the role of curriculum co-ordinator, I chose to interview people who have been with the division prior to and since the creation of the position. Three groups were interviewed: classroom teachers, experienced curriculum co-ordinators, and administrators.

Data were collected from three teacher interviews:

A teacher who has actively sought assistance with curriculum and instruction.

A teacher who was involved in one workshop planned and delivered by a co-ordinator.

A teacher who has not made any contact with curriculum co-ordinators at all.

Data were collected from two curriculum co-ordinators

A teacher who held the position of curriculum co-ordinator at one time.

A current curriculum co-ordinator.

Data were collected from administrative interviews:

Three elementary or junior high principals

The Deputy-Superintendent, immediate supervisor for this position.

The following questions were asked:

1. What services are you aware of that the curriculum co-ordinator provides?

2. What do you see as the main purpose or role of the curriculum co-ordinator position?
3. Who and or what should determine the focus or priorities of the curriculum co-ordinator each year?
4. Do you feel the present form of service, inservice and information sharing is effective?
5. What do you feel is the most effective use of co-ordinators' time during school visits?
6. What, in your opinion, are some of the shortcomings of the position of curriculum co-ordinator?
7. Would you propose any changes to improve the effectiveness of this role?
8. Other comments?
9. After viewing the presentation that attempts to portray what is done in this role, do you have any more comments to add?

In total, the number of people interviewed was nine. It was felt that these people would represent a varied amount of experience both in teaching and in the history of the district and therefore could provide a good sample of the different points of view. This population is not considered to be a sample for inferential purposes of all teachers or administrators in the district, or of other districts.

Participants selected for the interviews were first contacted by an individual email or phone request and this was followed up with a letter of consent (Appendix A). Dates and times for the interviews were established once the letters were received and interviews were conducted when convenient for the participant, taking place over a two-week period. Interview questions were designed based upon my personal reflections after

I had been recording activities for a number of weeks and the multi-media presentation was shown to participants at the conclusion of the interview (Appendix B)

### Journaling Analysis and Discussion

The analysis of transcripts from four weeks of journal writing about tasks performed sought to highlight commonalities, contrasts and conceptual themes for the role of curriculum co-ordinator. Through careful examination of the journal writing, nine different themes became apparent:

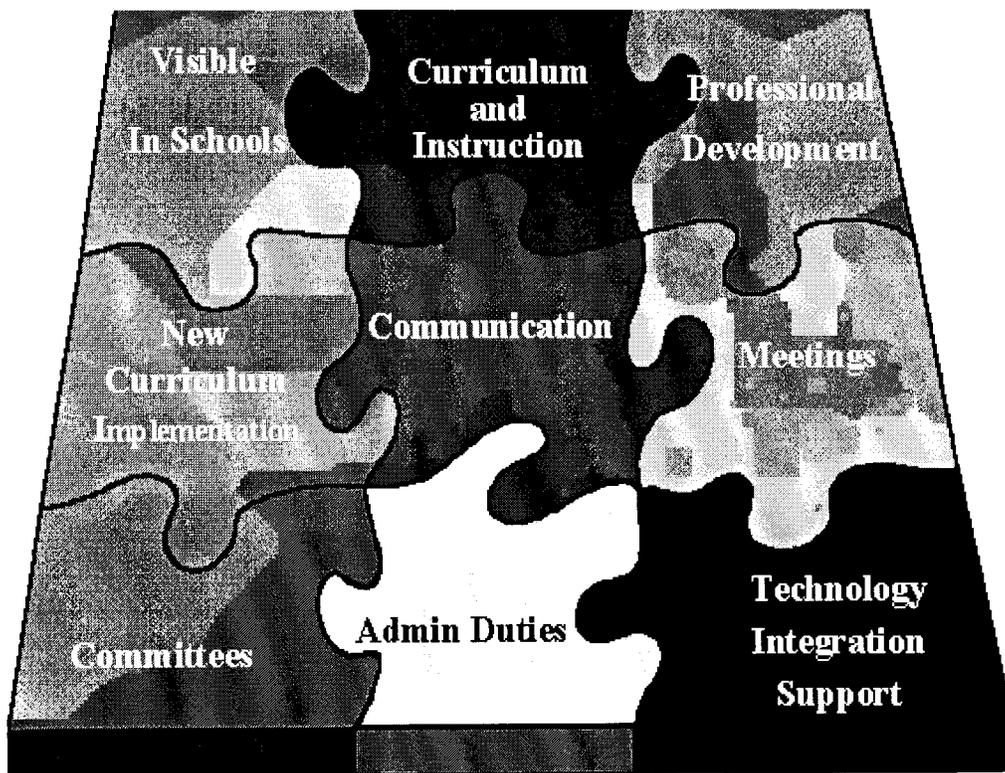


Figure 1. Main areas of responsibility for curriculum co-ordinator.

According to my experiences, the nine areas outlined in Figure 1, describe where the majority of the responsibilities lie in the position of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division. In the following pages I will include figures from

the synthesis of my journal writing. This was put into the form of a presentation that was shown to interviewees. To me, the nine areas fit together like the pieces of a puzzle. These responsibilities and the role the co-ordinator plays in them are interconnected. Communication is set at the heart of Figure 1. My feeling is that this is the key to the rest, connected and important to them all.

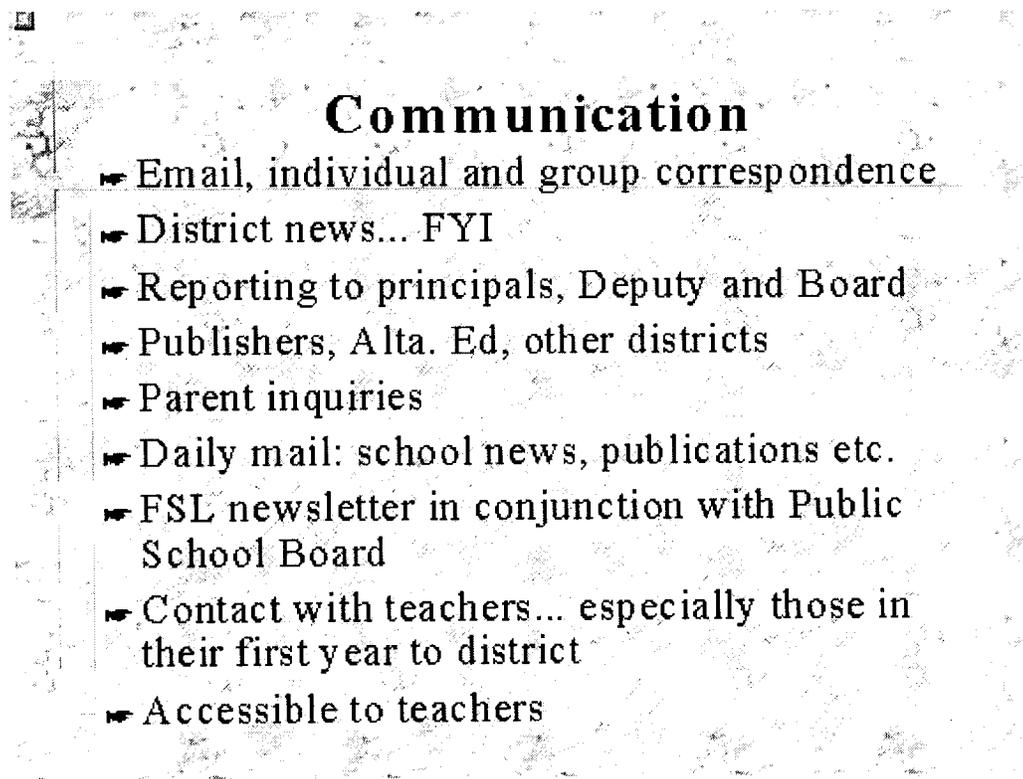


Figure 2. Communication responsibilities for co-ordinators

Communication is central to the role and responsibilities of curriculum co-ordinators. We tend to be the source of information from the Department of Education to Central Office, to the schools and vice versa. The examples outlined in Figure 2 seem to take a large portion of time. The ability to prioritize by order of importance is an important skill to possess as curriculum co-ordinator. For example, though I feel it is

important to meet with publishers and keep abreast to new resources, I no longer spend much time meeting with them. I ensure I am aware of the financial situation of the Division or a school and I am better able to find out information that we need without spending time in areas that are not important to us at the time.

Curriculum and Instruction is placed at the centre and top of the puzzle image. This highlights its importance as the overall goal of the co-ordinator position is to improve student learning through attention to curriculum and instruction.

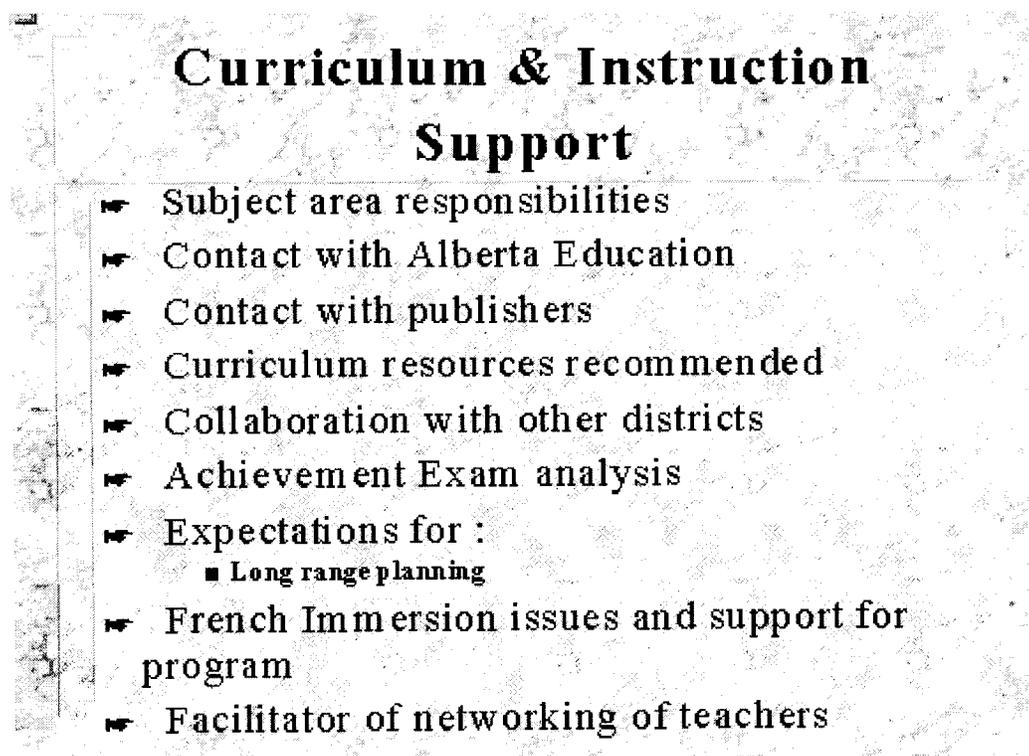


Figure 3. Responsibilities related to curriculum and instruction support.

The areas of curriculum (Kindergarten to Grade 12) have been divided by subject area (humanities and math/sciences) between the two co-ordinators. We each are responsible for assisting teachers, reviewing resources and keeping informed about our

curriculum areas. This includes regular contact with Alberta Education, training and information sessions. Of the tasks listed in Figure 3, “Achievement and Diploma Exam analysis” is one that receives a great amount of attention at the beginning of the school year. We do an analysis of every school’s provincial exams and provide them with a template for developing action plans for improvement. Though it takes up the better part of the first few weeks at the beginning of the school year, the information is useful to all schools. It also gives co-ordinator some direction for areas to work on during the year

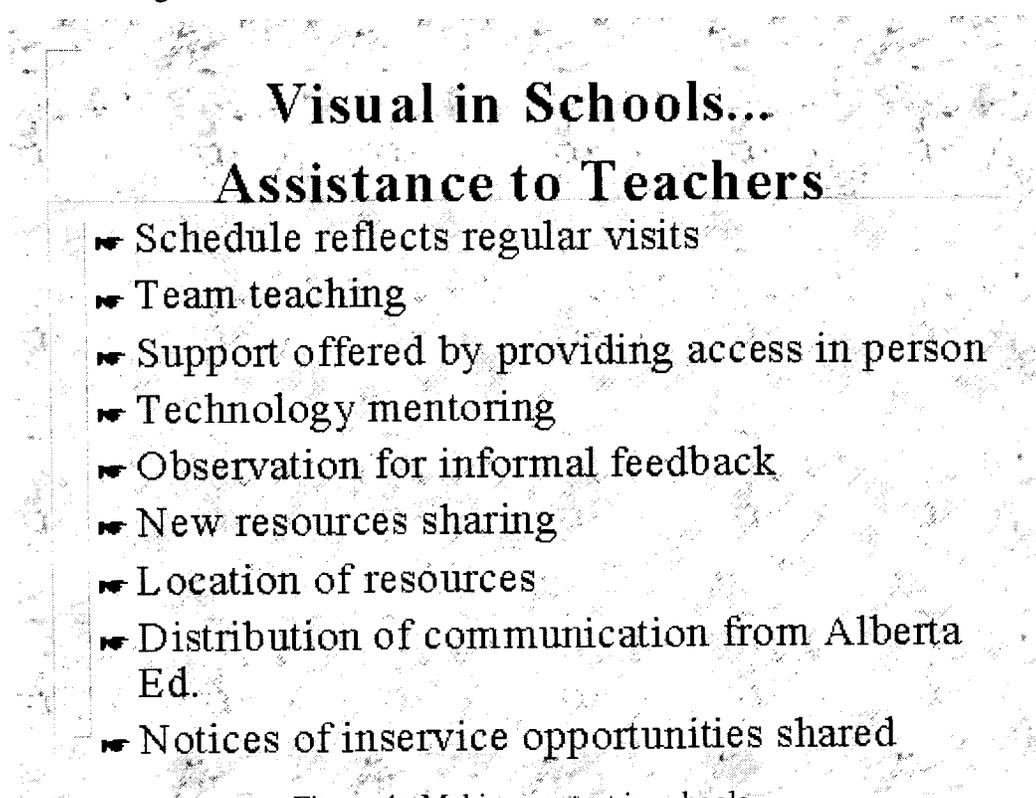


Figure 4. Making contact in schools.

Since the creation of this position, the “unwritten” rule has been that the co-ordinators shall be visual in the schools, providing teachers access to their services. In the first years it was thought that the co-ordinators would be housed in a school. However, their location at Central Office has been deemed more logical. Though I

cannot stress enough the importance of being in the schools, this is also the one responsibility that causes the most frustration (and reflective practice) for co-ordinators. Yes, it is important to be visible and available for teachers. However, time and organization are needed to make the best use of co-ordinators in the schools. Whose role is it to provide us with “specific” tasks while in the building? The teachers? They are often too busy to plan for the visit. Or they may, as mentioned earlier by Kidd (1973), not be aware of their areas of need.

Every day it seems that I re-evaluate this issue. Some days I feel as though my services as curriculum co-ordinator have been utilized effectively. Other days, I may feel that I would have been better off in the office getting caught up on work there. This will be a continuing challenge.

## **Professional Development Support**

- Member of District P.D. committee
- Assists with school P.D. plans
- Delivers sessions on P.D. Wednesdays
- Hosts inservices after school for staff
- Hosts grade and subject area meetings
- Implementation of curriculum teams
- One to one assistance during school visits
- Providing information about P.D. opportunities

Figure 5. Co-ordinator’s role in professional development support.

Co-ordinators have traditionally been members of the Division's Professional Development Committee. We are also a source for schools in providing sessions and in finding speakers for their professional development days. This is one of the areas of responsibility for co-ordinators that Division staff seem to understand the most. It is also one of the more gratifying parts of the job, since being involved in professional development provides a formal process whereby you know you are helping people. We may miss out on our own opportunities for professional development since we are often offering sessions. However, I feel that this job in itself is an exercise in professional development and opportunities are available to attend conferences and sessions at different times during the year.

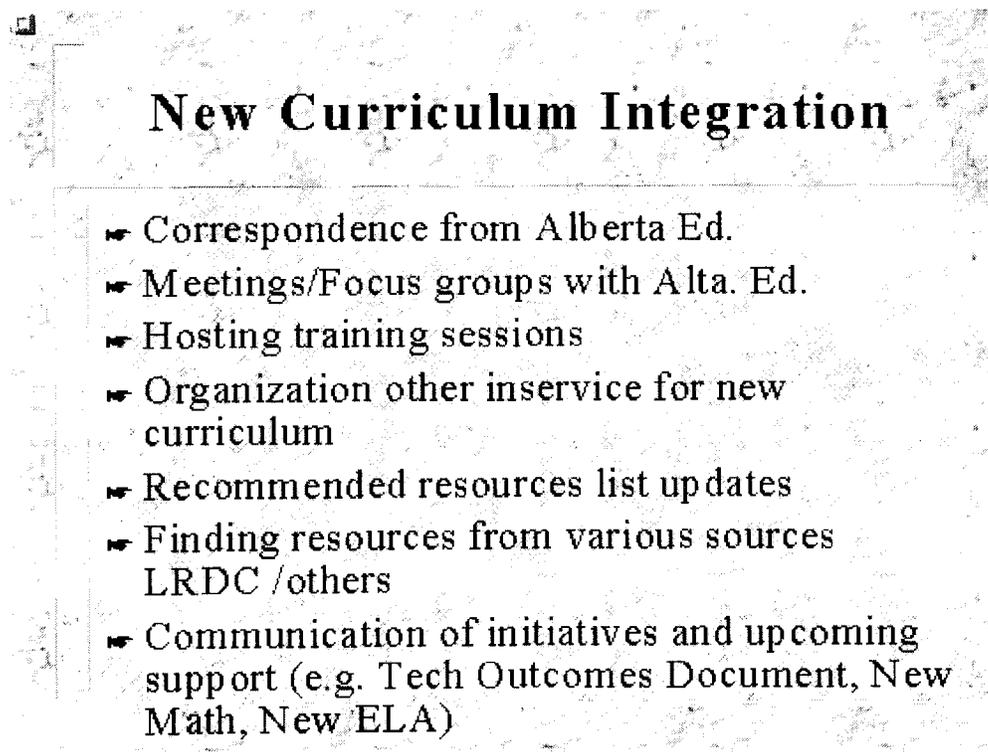


Figure 6. New Curriculum

One key service that co-ordinators are able to provide to principals and teachers is in the area of curriculum implementation schedules. There has been a considerable amount of change in curriculum in recent years. We are able to keep informed and keep principals and staffs informed about issues that may arise with new programs (resource, training and financial issues, for example. Even though there is site-based management in our Division, we like to be able to provide all stakeholders with the same opportunities. Often we will recommend a particular series or resource to support new curriculum for the Division or we will arrange inservice training for teachers. Understanding the latest curriculum schedule and implications for the district is an important chore that needs frequent attention as there are publications and notices coming from Alberta Education on a regular basis.

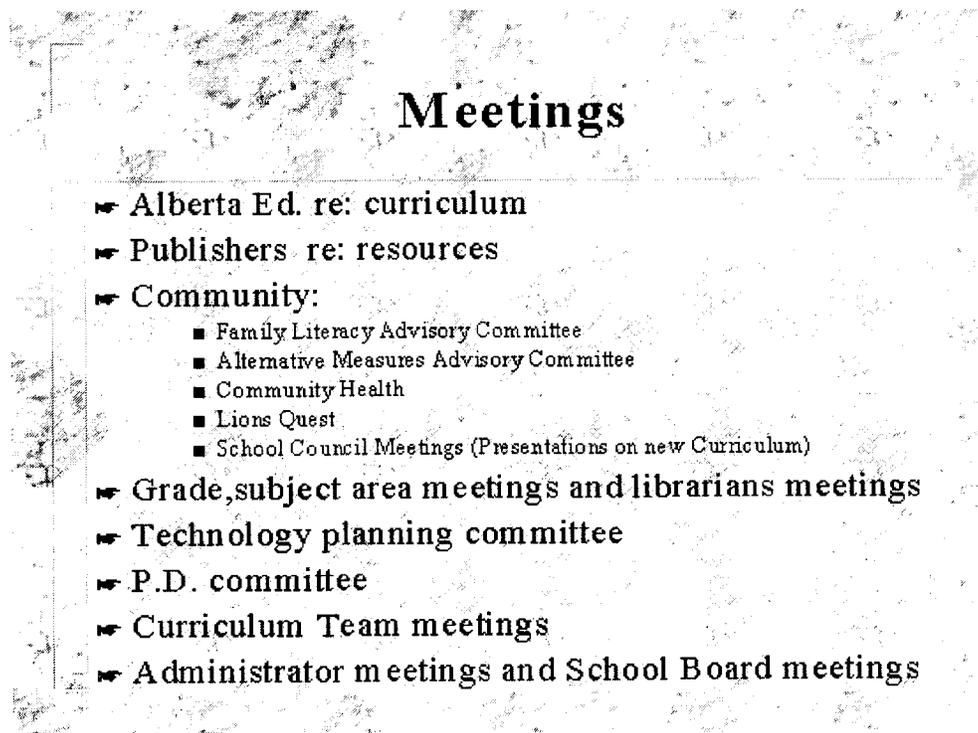


Figure 7. Meeting responsibilities for co-ordinators.

Along with email, the telephone and regular mail, meetings are also opportunities for communication and planning. The committee responsibilities outlined in Figure 8 overlap with the content of Figure 7, as they also demand further meeting times and the skill of prioritizing.

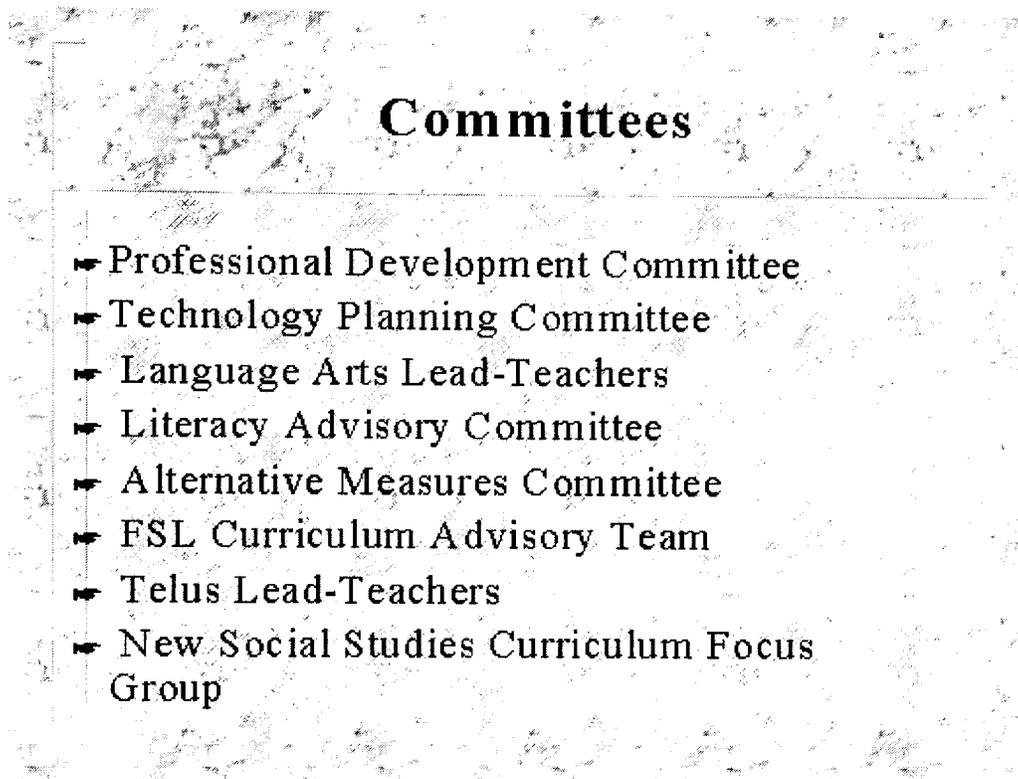


Figure 8. Committee responsibilities of one co-ordinator

The area outlined in Figure 9 is linked to many of the other responsibilities of co-ordinators. First of all, communication and information technology will become a mandated curriculum area in the year 2000. The outcomes in the program of study are unique in that they require teachers to satisfy the use of technology and an ability to also integrate this knowledge into other curriculum areas.

This new curriculum is on the list of those things for which co-ordinators must be able to help schools prepare by providing such things as resources, training and expectations. This is a delicate area as teachers need to have a certain degree of skill to satisfy the technology outcomes in their teaching. Since our Division does not have an educational technology co-ordinator, we as curriculum co-ordinators take on this role. It is essential that co-ordinators be “technology- savvy”

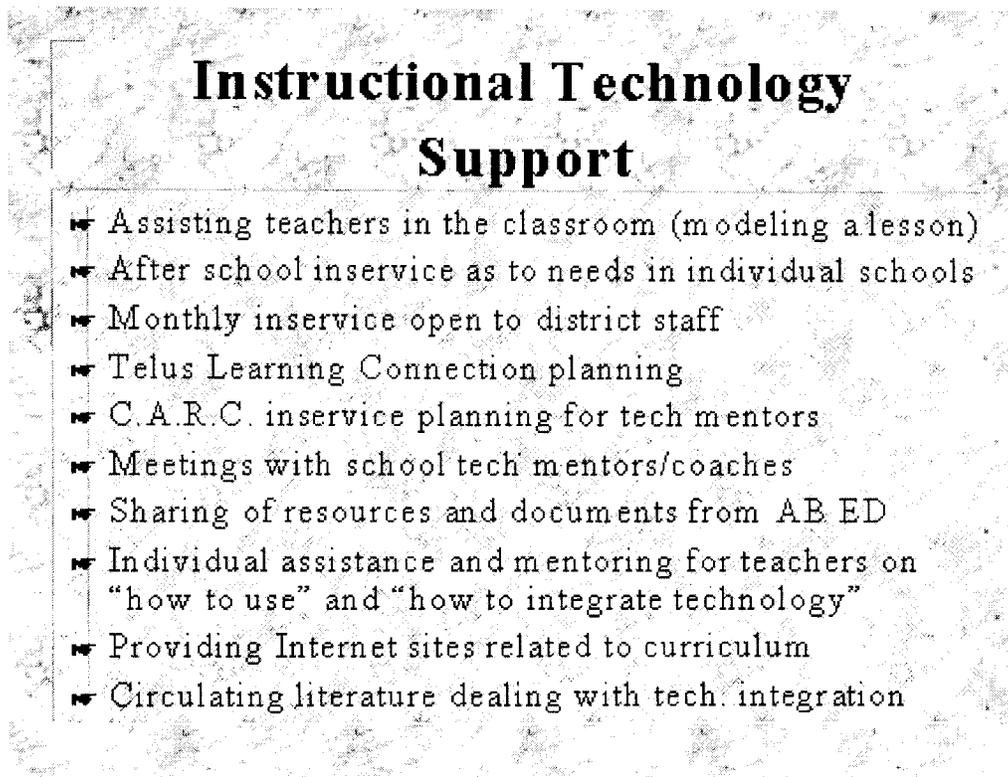


Figure 9. Technology Integration Support

Along with the tasks of communication shown in Figure 2, the administrative duties listed in Figure 10, (including special requests made by senior administration), take up a great deal of time. These responsibilities are not always known or made apparent to

others in the Division and the time taken away from where people actually see you (in schools), to accomplish such assignments, is not always understood.

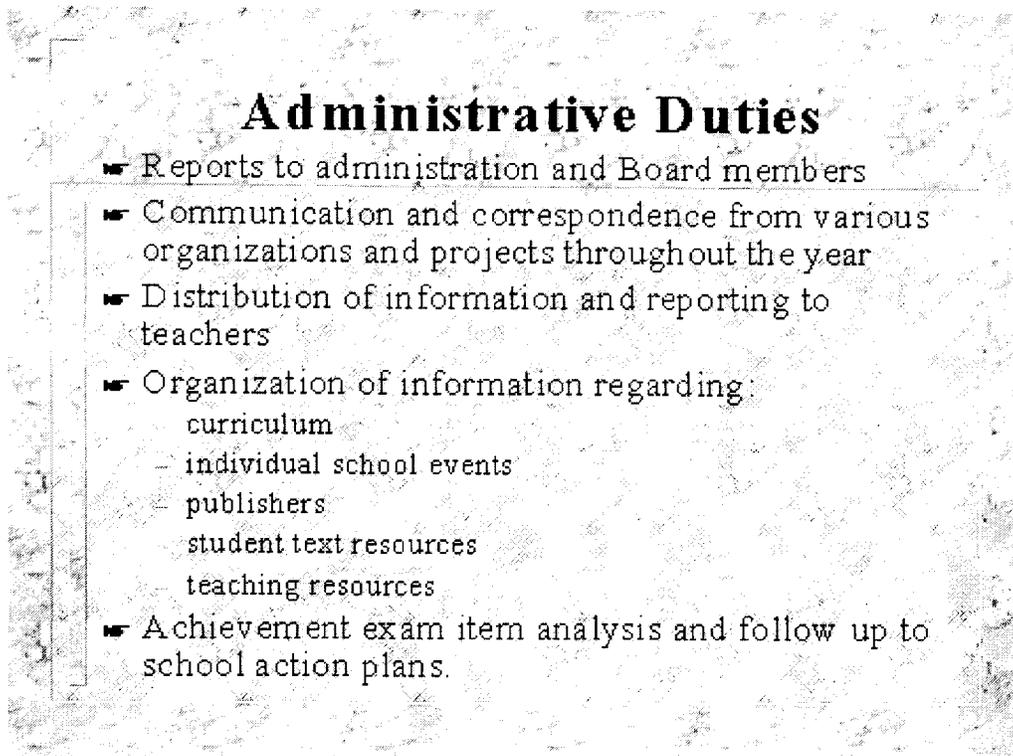


Figure 10. Administrative Duties

Figure 11 is a synthesis of the role of curriculum co-ordinator. In the presentation shown to interviewees, the items of this figure appear in an animated fashion in an attempt to visually represent the complexity of the position. The circles are used to represent continuity. All three circles are interrelated and the items listed around the circles represent both personal qualities necessary in the role of curriculum co-ordinator and the needs of the School District. Three elements come into the presentation that are

not listed on either of the circles. These are “Conflict or Change”, “Desire to help” and “Servant Leader”. When conflict or change arises, the qualities listed under the title: “To survive be:” are necessary to assist in dealing with the conflict. The desire to help has to be the underlying goal of a person in the role of curriculum co-ordinator. We do what we do because we are in a helping profession and wish to assist others hence the term, “servant leader”. We are at the service of everyone in the Division, yet we are also in a leadership role. The more people realize that we are here to serve them, the more service we will be able to provide.

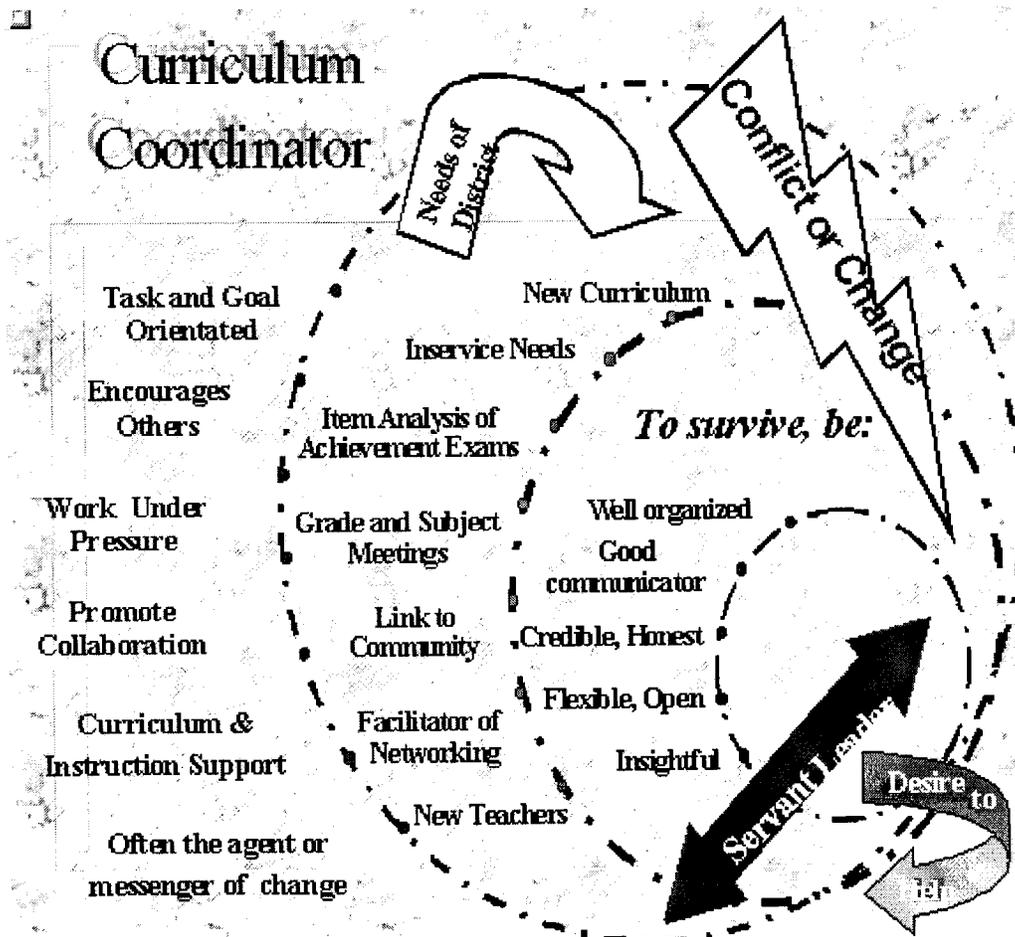


Figure 11. Synthesis of the role of curriculum co-ordinator.

## Interview Analysis and Discussion

Interview questions dealt with what the participants felt the main tasks of co-ordinators should be and their reactions to the analysis of the journal process. The questions addressed the perceptions of the participants, what they felt was important in the role of curriculum co-ordinator, if they felt there were any shortcomings to the position and any suggestions they may have had for improvement. Table 1 shows that nine interviews were conducted with three groups.

Table 1

<b>Number of Individuals Interviewed per Group</b>	
Teachers (2 Elementary, 1 Junior High)	3
Administrators (1 Senior Administrator and 3 Elementary/Junior High Principals.)	4
Experienced Curriculum Co-ordinators	2

Question 1:

What services are you aware of that the curriculum co-ordinator provides?

Response:

All three groups mentioned professional development, inservices and providing assistance to teachers and administration. This highlights our responsibility as staff developers. The role we play on the professional development committee and in providing opportunities for individual and entire school staff inservice is important. Particularly, in recent years, with the push to integrate technology, co-ordinators have been a welcomed and needed support to the Division. For this reason, the technological

skills held by those in the position have evolved to be as important as curriculum knowledge.

Responses from the teacher group about services provided also included assistance with resources (sharing of, researching and finding materials), grade meetings and providing curriculum updates. This feedback was essential to me. Though I realized they were important, grade meetings were a real challenge to organize. I had sent out surveys to see what time of year was best, and if teachers themselves needed to call the meetings on an as-need basis. I learned from those inquiries and especially in talking through the interviews, that it is necessary to have a co-ordinator call such meetings. This has also reinforced the importance of our role as educational leaders in the Division. Teachers felt that we have information that they do not always have and though teachers can bring forth a great amount of sharing, they need some direction in other areas that the co-ordinator can provide.

Resources identification was another area I could easily have ignored, rationalizing that it was too great a task and feeling as though publishers were somehow expecting me to promote their resources in each building for them. With site-based management, schools make their own decisions and, as I had no control over their budgets, it became a frustrating experience. Now, in retrospect, I believe that lacking the confidence to recommend resources was an inhibitor for me. I have learned that in this position people do rely on co-ordinators' recommendations. We need to invest the time necessary to review resources in order to be able to provide the Division with current information. Even with site-based decision making, it is important for consistency and

sharing of resources where necessary, to make Division-wide resource recommendations. Co-ordinators should play a key role in organizing resource-review teams and facilitating selection processes.

Administrators included the above-mentioned services mentioned by teachers and added contact with the Department of Education, support for staff, support for parents, technology liaison, liaison between Central Office and schools, leadership and achievement and diploma exam analysis. These responses demonstrate the important role co-ordinators play in providing support for school principals. They are able to turn to our support when parents have questions about curriculum. We have spoken at parent meetings to provide insight on issues and have included parents in computer training sessions. We provide an opportunity for principals to seek feedback in an atmosphere of trust on school education plans and other initiatives. They rely on us to provide them with crucial information that they may not have time or resources to seek on their own. We act as their liaison with the Department of Education as well as senior administration.

Likewise, our role for the senior administration is as important. Most correspondence dealing with curriculum issues that comes to the superintendent is forwarded to co-ordinators to respond to or follow-up. As mentioned earlier, in this role, we are often utilized as assistants to the deputy and superintendent. We are able to get into the classrooms and provide direct assistance to teachers, which they do not have time to do. We attend meetings on their behalf and put into place the process for sharing information gathered and building on ideas learned for opportunities for professional development. The unique role co-ordinators have is one where we can focus upon staff

development and student learning, without having to concentrate on running the business side of education. We can provide for senior administration that link, that they do not always have, to the classrooms and to the children who are our most important stakeholder.

The curriculum co-ordinators indicated the role of liaison and communicator to different groups was an important service provided in this role. Co-ordinators noted that they have to attend provincial meetings and provide assistance to first year teachers. In order for co-ordinators to be informed, they have to attend meetings that will take them out of the schools. This can be an issue for some who feel their time is being taken by the “away” meetings. Yet, it is an important aspect of our role. We are representing the entire Division while at such meetings and in fact, are working for each school on that day. The benefits are not always tangible. However, the contacts made and the information shared is valuable to all in the long run.

The assistance we provide to first-year teachers is an important focus of the beginning of the school year. We organize a workshop to provide new teachers with a sense of team and to give them support for the expectations that their administration as well as senior administration will have. In providing support for first year teachers our important role as mentor is highlighted.

During school visits they are a priority and the service and support we provide for them provides a model for other teachers. More experienced teachers are encouraged and motivated to seek our assistance when they see what we do for new staff.

Question 2:

What do you see as the main purpose or role of the curriculum co-ordinator position?

Response:

All participants responded that the main purpose of this position was to provide help and information about new curriculum. Teachers focused answers on new information about curriculum, highlighting the responsibility of co-ordinating resources and providing workshops and support for teachers. Administrators indicated “curriculum support” as the main purpose of the co-ordinator position, adding that co-ordinators provide support at the school level and are educational leaders. Co-ordinators underlined the liaison with Alberta Education, inservicing of staff, dispersing of curriculum and being an accessible resource for schools to find out about new curriculum.

What is interesting in these responses is that the knowledge about each curriculum necessary to provide “curriculum support” is something that I believed I would have time to acquire. In fact, I do not feel well versed at each level of the K-12 curriculum outcomes in my areas. This is something that I would appreciate having the time to learn and master. Given the other responsibilities I have, there doesn’t seem to be enough time to master each curriculum. However, as more “new” curriculum is introduced, I have the opportunity for training and can provide information important to teachers about what is new and details for implementation. I feel our role is different than in other districts where they may have a curriculum specialist or consultant for one curriculum area. In such cases the curriculum is central to their role. I feel that as co-ordinators our role is more one of facilitator of curriculum, than one of expert. I may not know the answer to every curriculum question, but I certainly know people who do and have resources at my

fingertips to find answers. This can be compared to the changing role of the classroom teacher. The myth once perpetuated was that the teacher was all-knowing. Now, more and more teachers are seen to act as facilitators in the classroom. Similarly, we guide teachers in their life-long learning, just as they guide their students.

Question 3:

Who and or what should determine the focus or priorities of the co-ordinator each year?

Response:

Teachers indicated that the school and district educational plans, Alberta Education initiatives and input from teachers about what they needed assistance with, should determine the focus each year. Administrators' responses also indicated a variety of sources: that co-ordinators should play a key role in determining the focus for the year, principals and staffs should have a say, but also, direction based upon current initiatives needed to be provided by senior administration. Co-ordinators felt it was that the co-ordinator, and others with the broadest overview of the curriculum changes, who should determine the focus for the year along with feedback from administration, parents and teachers.

Teacher responses indicated that following initiatives from Alberta Education was important, but also that their input was necessary for determining the focus for the year. This tells me that although teachers recognize the governing power of the Department of Education, they still want the opportunity to provide input based upon their needs. Administrator responses also indicated their need to provide input, along with their school staffs. Their responses pointed also to co-ordinators and senior administration

providing direction based upon current initiatives. It seems that administration looked for a shared responsibility in determining the focus for the co-ordinators each year for the Division. Perhaps within their own buildings, they would have a more definite direction to provide. Co-ordinators expressed the need to focus on issues that reflected the curriculum changes along with feedback from teachers and administration.

Even though direction is necessary from Alberta Education in the form of new curriculum initiatives, all participants felt it important to have some say in the direction decided upon for the year. This reinforces the importance of our beginning of the year surveys (see Appendix C) of ensuring that opportunities are created for people to provide input. The salaries for co-ordinators come from the instructional budgets. For this reason, I feel that schools should provide some direction for the focus of the year. It should be a collaborative process considering, of course, curriculum changes being introduced. There appeared to be an assumption that someone else has made or makes such decisions (whether Alberta Education, senior administration or co-ordinators themselves). I don't think teachers and even principals understand the importance of their input and the power they have in determining the focus for co-ordinators.

Question 4:

Do you feel the present form of service, inservice and information sharing is effective?

Response:

Teachers responses ranged from "yes", to "most of the time". However one of the three had not attended an inservice or used the services of the co-ordinators.

Administrators responses were positive in reference to inservicing. Providing centralized

inservices as well as help responding to individual school needs was mentioned.

Traveling elsewhere (away from the District) was expressed as a concern, suggesting that main priorities for the system be a focus. Co-ordinators noted that the service is effective only in part because it does not always develop from where the co-ordinator leaves off. The initial inservicing is good, but there needs to be more effort in having information shared with others once it is delivered to a school.

When compared to what they have been in the past, the current services provided and sharing of information are seen as highly effective. However there remains room for improvement. Communication continues to be an issue. It is difficult to ensure the information co-ordinators are providing is being passed on to all those who need it. This year I have decided to not only provide a report (in the form of a newsletter) at each administration meeting, but to address this report called: "The Curriculum and Instruction Update" to all teachers. A binder has been put into each school allowing for schedules of co-ordinators and the "Updates" to be accessible to all staff. I feel that it is important for the leaders in each school to utilize our services according to their needs. It is essential that they too are good communicators and can share information we provide to them with their staff.

We also must provide a clear description of what it is we can do while in a school and what it is we do indirectly for teachers when not in their building. When we attend meetings for the Division we need to share the information gathered. Those that do not feel this is important need to be guided to look at a broader perspective. When staff members are chosen to attend an inservice, they should be expected to share what they

have learned to the rest of the staff. We do this for the entire Division.

Question 5:

What do you feel is the most effective use of co-ordinators' time during school visits?

Response:

Working with teachers, one on one, mentoring, doing team teaching, providing a sample lesson, collaborating and getting into classrooms were the overwhelming responses to this question by all groups. Also, administrators added providing information to teachers and administrators and making connections with teachers about curriculum and resources. This highlights the importance in our role as mentors and servant-leaders. We are there to serve and to help teachers. We can mentor and provide instant feedback and assistance. We need to encourage teachers to utilize our services and continue to remind them what those services are. Being invited into the classrooms may not always occur. Co-ordinators have to take the initiative and participate in classroom activities, building trust and allowing for further opportunities.

Question 6:

What, in your opinion are some of the pitfalls to the position of curriculum co-ordinator?

Response:

Comments such as; “Spread too thin”, “Too broad an area”, “ Hands in everything”, “So vast”, “Only two people” came from all three groups and pointed to the magnitude of responsibilities in this role. The most obvious pitfall was that co-ordinators could be “Jacks of all trades, masters of none”. Time (not enough of it) was a related pitfall mentioned by all groups. As well, issues were raised from all three groups

interviewed about the lack of awareness of the job by district staff. One pitfall mentioned by the teacher group was that they did not always have a full realization of the roles, or they were unaware of what co-ordinators were able to do to help. Administrator comments included the shortcoming that co-ordinators sometimes add to their workload. In further discussion about this comment it surfaced that, sometimes, by giving our monthly reports or conducting surveys or other projects, we are causing more work for them. Being housed in Central Office was seen as a downfall as it creates the impression (and physical reality) that co-ordinators are part of Central Office. One pitfall to the position mentioned by co-ordinators was motivation for teachers to understand the importance of curriculum and professional development.

It was suggested by two of the teachers interviewed that providing a presentation to school staffs at the beginning of the year about the role of curriculum co-ordinator would be beneficial. This would also provide an opportunity for teachers to ask questions about the position and would help alleviate any ambiguity. With experience, learning how to prioritize will assist in the areas described where co-ordinators are “spread too thin”. Also, the utilization of secretarial assistance to become more efficient is part of a solution.

Question 7:

Would you propose any changes to this role?

Responses:

Teacher respondents suggested that there should be more co-ordinator positions or that release time should be provided within schools for other teachers to meet and organize

curriculum support within each building. For example, teams of teachers in some schools meet once every two weeks (during school hours) to plan and focus on their grade or curriculum area planning. Division co-ordinators could assist in this process. Providing service to remedial educational services and providing a list of all of the services and inservices available were also suggested by teachers. Administrators' responses included having more contact with teachers in classrooms, continuing with grade-level meetings, releasing time of others in the district as well, being more school-centered and the establishment of curriculum teams. Co-ordinators suggested ideally that having fewer curriculum area responsibilities per person could greatly enhance attention given to those areas. A better comfort level needs to be established with teachers to facilitate helping without them feeling threatened. More networking with people in similar positions of other districts was also mentioned as something to change or enhance the role.

These answers reinforce the importance of being in classrooms, that curriculum teams on a Divisional level are important and that such teams on the school level are also necessary. Time is needed to provide opportunities for good reflective practice. Teachers are enthusiastic about learning and becoming even better at what they do. I feel their resistance to new initiatives is not so much a reflection on their not being willing to change, but on their past experiences of being expected to do much of this learning isolated and on their own, usually after school. The more we can provide opportunities for their sharing and growth by providing them the time to do so, the more effective and authentic it will be. When an atmosphere of life-long learning is promoted in a school division, all stakeholders - parents, students, teachers and administrators - benefit.

Question 8:

Other comments?

Responses:

One further comment made at this time was the importance of this position in providing assistance to principals as well as teachers. Being visual and accessible in the schools through scheduled school visits was reiterated as being important for meeting and sometimes if necessary, seeking out, teachers who may need assistance. Sending an email message to an entire staff a few days before a school visit has been effective. Also, providing a list of priorities for the month or week to school staffs (giving a focus where there is not one provided) would assist in effective use of time spent in schools. If our school visit was organized as other guest-speakers on a sign-up schedule that one person (school secretary) organized for us, we would know who needed to see us that day.

Question 9:

After viewing the presentation that attempts to portray what is done in this role, do you have any more comments to add? (See Appendix B for the entire presentation)

Responses

All respondents indicated learning a great deal about the scope of responsibilities performed by the co-ordinators after viewing the presentation. In particular, teachers indicated they did not realize the amount of administrative work involved in the job. Some comments made were: "I have a better awareness of what you do", "First year teacher inservices are important", "It's exhausting!", "Obviously a big job", "Big picture view of education".

The opportunity to interview three different groups within the Division has provided me with some interesting insight into the effectiveness and the perceptions of the role of curriculum co-ordinator. It was particularly interesting to see that responses seemed to be focused on areas of need of the interviewee. I had expected that responses would reflect a more global perspective. It was also interesting to see the similarities in responses from people in the same groups. All of the teachers focused on new curriculum and resources as well as training that could assist them. Most administrators tended to focus on school-level issues, but had a more district-wide awareness of the role of co-ordinator than those teachers interviewed. It was intriguing to note that the co-ordinators along with two of the administrators who have had Central Office experience themselves were the only people interviewed who mention the importance of the role of communicator and liaison in the role of curriculum co-ordinator. Even though this was a small sample of participants, it is obvious from the interviews and my own experience that the role communication plays (including the time involved to perform communication tasks as outlined in figure 2) is misunderstood or not even considered by some people as part of the responsibilities entailed. Extending this process to include more people would then provide much more information to assist in analyzing the position. However, that is beyond the scope of this study.

Six specific and related points emerged from the analysis reported above. These points represent areas where I learned from the interviewees.

- *Teachers desire to be more involved in curriculum issues at the school level.*

It was encouraging and exciting to see this notion expressed during the interviews as we

hope to provide the opportunity for more teacher-leader involvement through the formation of Division curriculum teams. Empowering others will lead to their own learning and will be better for the Division as a whole. Having more teachers involved in curriculum initiatives may also relieve some of the separateness that sometimes divides the teacher in the role of co-ordinator from his or her peers.

► *The importance of resources selection for new curriculum to teachers and administrators.* Because this is such a difficult task (especially considering site-based budgeting), and one that can be frustrating as we listen to the sales pitches of publisher representatives knowing we have no real decision-making ability, it may not always make the top of the priority lists. Learning about the immediate need and desire of teachers to obtain this type of current information has been helpful for me in reconsidering the importance of the time spent in that area.

► *Meeting one on one with teachers and spending time in their classes is desired by administrators and seen as important by teachers interviewed.* This can be a difficult task given that teachers may not be aware of what we can do in their classes to provide assistance. However, being reminded of its importance encourages us to continue efforts of trust building and communicating services we can provide. I have learned that as co-ordinators we need to take the initiative and invite ourselves into classes. We need to offer to do a lesson and we need to do the calling ahead of time. I used to feel that the principal or teachers should “book” a time with us. Now I see they are too busy with the day-to-day schedules and, since teachers are not all aware of what we are willing to do, I am certain this factor adds to their inhibition.

- *School-driven focus to responsibilities of co-ordinator is desired.* Schools need to make us aware of their goals and education plans. Having a committee on each staff that dealt with curriculum development could assist in making the best use of co-ordinators' services. They may have better success in representing the needs of all staff in this area, rather than having only the principal make such decisions. This would also provide more opportunity for teachers to have input into decisions. Schools provide us with certain areas of need in the survey done in the beginning of the year, based on their education plans and professional development needs. We need to ensure a process is developed based on this information to provide the assistance where they require it. Also, perhaps the survey needs to be reviewed with the co-ordinator and school committee, after a few months have passed, in case needs have changed.

- *There seems to be an understanding that curriculum co-ordinators may be stretched too thin. Time spent away from the District at meetings and conferences may be seen as too much time away by some people.* This is a difficult issue to resolve to everyone's satisfaction.. It is important to attend certain meetings that take us away from the schools. Sometimes we are requested to do so as representatives of senior administration who also have many meetings to attend. I feel that learning to prioritize and consider what is best for the entire Division assists in such decisions. If the time away is at a conference, I find that I am always actively seeking things for the Division as I see myself there as a representative for our schools. Ensuring a way to share information obtained with teachers and administration will also assist in shaping more accurate perceptions about the time away.

- *The appreciation for the job done by co-ordinators and the need for curriculum and instructional support services for schools.* I found this interview process to be reassuring in that what we do is seen as effective and, not only that, appreciated. The interviewees were also helpful in providing learning experiences and in helping me recognize what is important to each group. I have learned ways to improve the effectiveness of the position through the examination of the role of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division.

### Job Description

The findings of this study will be of interest to those concerned with the improvement of curriculum and instruction in our Division and for those concerned with the improvement of the role of curriculum co-ordinator.

One of the questions I had commencing this process was: “Should I be spending time in the schools when there is so much to do back at the office?” Intuitively I felt the answer was yes, but I wanted it to be no. I believe now that my desire in the beginning was due to my own insecurities and lack of understanding about the role. In some way, too, it was related to the frustration of not feeling useful while in schools. I often thought it would be much easier to “get work done” if we did not have to be in the schools so much. However, I have been reminded that one of the most important aspects of this job is being in the schools. If the problem is that people are unaware of what we can be doing to assist them, it is up to us to keep them informed. One way to do so would be to show presentations such as was shown to interview participants (Appendix B) to school staffs. Co-ordinators may need to take the initiative in organizing their time spent in

schools where no guidance is provided. However, school staffs, led by their principal and perhaps a curriculum development committee, should assume the responsibility for determining curriculum needs and type of assistance required.

The commitment of the principal is essential in assisting co-ordinators in providing the best possible service for teachers. Principals can direct our attention to areas of need and can encourage teachers by reminding them of what we can do. The partnership between principals (or vice-principals) and curriculum co-ordinator is one that the co-ordinator has to initiate and help maintain by communicating this necessity to them. The first administrator meeting of the school year would be a good place to provide a presentation about the role of curriculum co-ordinator. As educational leaders of the building, principals need to access curriculum co-ordinators as one of their many resources in providing leadership in the areas of curriculum and instruction.

Through the journaling process and the analysis that followed about where time was spent and which projects required the most attention and importance I was able to take an objective view of the roles and responsibilities required to do provide effective curriculum and instructional support to the Division. The interviews provided further insight into the needs of individual teachers and individual schools. I feel I have a better understanding of the educational system and of our jurisdiction. Though they may not always be favorable or easy tasks, I feel better able to prioritize those tasks that are most important to the role of curriculum co-ordinator.

With the assistance of my partner, Greg Hall, new to the role of curriculum co-ordinator in August 1998, we modified the original job description of this position. We

worked through a process trying to clearly identify what was important in this position, based upon my experiences during my first year, Greg's questions after his first few months and my shared learning as a result of this project. It was very interesting to see how Greg was asking the same questions I had asked during my first few months in the job. Although it is next-to-impossible to include everything that is encompassed in the role of curriculum co-ordinator, I feel what we have developed provides more details about this role than have previous descriptions. Together, we created the revised job description below.

### Revised Job Description

#### Curriculum Co-ordinator

Curriculum Co-ordination is an area of responsibility directly associated with the provision of leadership and support for classroom teachers, students, and school-based administrators. The goal of this activity is the delivery of high quality and significantly meaningful learning experiences for students.

The Curriculum Co-ordinator is an officer of the School Board, concerned chiefly with the instructional programs being delivered to students, with specific responsibilities for program development, program implementation, program support, program evaluation, and student evaluation. The Curriculum Co-ordinator is responsible to the Deputy Superintendent and, through him, accountable to the Superintendent and the Board of Trustees.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **I. Student Learning**

1. Facilitate appropriate in-service activities regarding program development and implementation.
2. Support school-based activities regarding student learning.
3. Continue the Division's efforts to use the results of the Diploma Examinations and Achievement Tests, by providing item analysis to assist schools in preparing their educational action plans that will guide schools into appropriate and meaningful ways to improve instruction.
4. Visit schools to monitor and provide assistance regarding student learning, planning and programs.

## **II. Staff Development**

1. Through school visits link with teachers to provide direct curricular/program support.
2. To assist in formative evaluation of staff members with emphasis on teachers new to the curriculum or new to the district.
3. Facilitate and support division lead teacher teams, grade level and subject area meetings.
4. To maintain effectiveness as a leader within the District, the Curriculum Co-ordinator is expected to engage in personal and professional development by:
  - a. Connecting with Alberta Education Curriculum Branch to remain current in curricula development provincially.
  - b. Reading current educational literature.
  - c. Attending educational conferences.

- d. Attending educational courses and seminars.
- e. Being an active member of the Division's Professional Development Committee.
- f. Assisting with planning and/or delivery of school inservices.

### **III. Communication**

1. Provide information to teachers, support staff, administrators, trustees, parents and students regarding educational programs, professional development opportunities, curricula, resources, pertinent meetings, Alberta Education correspondence and other divisional issues.
2. Prepare and deliver reports and/or presentations to administrative team, school staffs, executive parent council and board of trustees.
3. Maintain liaison with local agencies, groups, other school jurisdictions, universities and consortia involved with education.

### **IV. Curriculum and Instruction**

1. Assist the schools to identify curriculum needs for individual schools and the district.
2. Support and arrange for curriculum development activities at the District, Zone and Provincial levels.
3. Facilitate the review and identification of appropriate learning resources.
4. To assist and assume such other duties assigned by the Deputy Superintendent.

We felt that although each section was important, enhancing student learning is our prime goal. The questions: "Is this beneficial for students?" and "What is the best for the students?" are important for what we do day-to-day. We felt that keeping such

questions in focus guide us in making good decisions.

Staff development seems to be where we have the greatest impact. By helping teachers, we are satisfying our first goal of helping students. This includes enhancing our own skills by keeping current with educational literature and attending meetings and seminars along with assisting in the planning of school professional development sessions.

In my analysis of the role of curriculum co-ordinator through my journal activity I considered communication to be the key to everything we do. It is important; however, to properly prioritize the tasks included under this title. The information we provide to teachers and administrators should facilitate how they can better provide for the students.

Finally, the responsibility of providing curriculum and instructional support at the divisional level provides an overview of what we do. It is beneficial for the schools in our jurisdiction to have some coordination from a divisional perspective. In providing assistance to individual schools in identifying curriculum needs, we have the experiences of other schools and districts to share. Such activities as calling grade or subject area meetings and reviewing resources are necessary to encourage team building and sharing within the jurisdiction. In these ways we can provide the best opportunities for all of our students. Having someone with the divisional perspective coordinate such meetings is beneficial to all.

### Conclusion

At the beginning of this process I was looking for a precise, detailed job description for the role of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional

School Division. Feeling overwhelmed with the magnitude of responsibilities, and influenced by the perceptions of others, I was in search of a simple description to a very complex job. The qualities listed in Figure 11 are necessary to survive in this position. To that list I would like to add confidence. From outside the position, or being new to the position, people may not feel they have the knowledge for making the prioritizing decisions necessary to stay organized, focused and effective in this job. I no longer believe that there can be one set definition or job description for the role of curriculum co-ordinator. However, there are recommendations I will make that will provide guidance for those directly related to this position. This is a multifaceted position and depends upon not only the initiatives from Alberta Education, the school jurisdiction and individual schools, but also upon the person in the position.

Recommendations about the position of curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional Division, based upon findings in this study follow:

1. That curriculum and instruction support continue at the division level through positions of curriculum co-ordinator.

Rationale: The added responsibilities principals have due to site-based decision making make it difficult for them to be knowledgeable about all curriculum areas. Ever- changing curriculums demand attention at the district level. Leadership is necessary at the division level to facilitate equal opportunity and access to information to all members.

2. That a thorough interview process occur in selection of curriculum co-ordinators and that the job description be updated to reflect current realities of the position.

Rationale: With a job so complex and sometimes so autonomous, the character of the people who hold the position is an essential element to consider. Openness, collaboration and approachability are important qualities for them to possess, along with curricular and technology knowledge. During the interview process candidates should be presented with an accurate view of the challenges and responsibilities of the job.

3. That a formula be fairly derived to provide for some of the cost for the positions of curriculum co-ordinators to come from the administrative budget, instead of entirely from instructional budgets.

Rationale: Since a considerable amount of work done by co-ordinators is administrative, whether for the Division as a whole, the School Board, senior administration or principals I feel that it is only logical that some of the costs be covered by the administration budgets.

4. That an orientation process be put in place for teachers new to the position of curriculum co-ordinator.

Rationale: The beginning of a new school year is one of the busiest and most difficult times to be commencing such a position. A period of orientation is necessary for the person leaving a classroom position and starting the curriculum job. A formalized procedures list for the beginning of the school year or a period of time dedicated to orientation of the new person would be an asset. Having the person commence the position during an appropriate month in the spring may make this an easier process. The orientation would include meetings with

secretarial support staff to become more aware of the assistance they can provide.

5. That the Division support the development of curriculum teams of teachers by providing funding for release time during school hours to develop implementation strategies.

Rationale: Since certain curriculums are going to be the focus each year, and if the Division is to list improved results in certain curriculum areas within the educational plan, they need to allocate funding to assist such action plans to be materialized.

6. That a procedure be developed to create a curriculum library of resources that could eventually be loaned out within the district.

Rationale: The area of resource review has been highlighted in this study as an important service that the co-ordinators can provide to schools. In order for them to do so effectively there would need to be a specific budget attached to such a task, and an organizational structure much like a library, with assistance provided within the office. Co-ordinators, as staff developers, have the unique opportunity to review professional literature in the form of periodicals and texts. A system needs to be put in place to enable the sharing of this information with teachers.

7. That principals continue to utilize the curriculum co-ordinators to enhance instruction and staff development in their schools and that they continue to assist with information- sharing by reporting back to their staffs on a regular basis and providing release time when appropriate.

Rationale: Principals have the most important role in a school for setting tone and

school climate. They have to determine the needs of their staffs for a particular school year and the staffs needs to be kept informed about and given the opportunities to utilize the services of the co-ordinators. This may involve a principal taking over a class so that the a teacher has time to meet with a co-ordinator, or providing substitute teachers for special inservice occasions.

8. That a needs survey be performed at the beginning of each school year to help guide teachers with professional growth plans and assess where the curriculum co-ordinators can be of service. (See Appendix C)

Rationale: If teachers assist in the completion of a needs assessment for the school, they will have more ownership when a project arises or assistance is provided. The process will also provide for leadership opportunities within the school as the survey could include curriculum area contacts and other useful information to facilitate the communication from co-ordinators to the rest of the staff.

9. That regularly scheduled visits to schools continue to be organized and posted ahead of time and that school staffs be encouraged to plan ahead for the day co-ordinators may be in their building. Also, that school staffs be encouraged to request the assistance of the co-ordinators on a particular day or for a certain amount of time for special projects.

Rationale: School visits are necessary to have the one-on-one contact that is most effective in assisting teachers. A calendar is posted to assist in planning.

However, school staffs should recognize their ability to request more than a one

day visit every week or two weeks. The schedule is a flexible one that should reflect the needs of the schools.

10. That the position of curriculum co-ordinator be evaluated by Division staff and that the supervisor provide a written evaluation to the co-ordinator at the end of each school year.

Rationale: Feedback is necessary for growth and improvement. Teachers in the position of curriculum co-ordinator will be able to gauge their performance through an evaluation survey procedure where all Division staff teachers have an opportunity to give their input. An evaluation at the end of the school year can assist co-ordinators in directing their own professional development and this will encourage further dialogue about how they can improve as a team.

11. That curriculum co-ordinators and their immediate supervisors meet on a regular basis to review issues and plans within the Division.

Rationale: This position provides great opportunity for professional development and growth for the person involved. Feedback and direction from immediate supervisors will assist co-ordinators in fulfilling the requirements of the position.

### Summary

This study begins by questioning the role of the curriculum co-ordinator in the Red Deer Catholic Regional School Division. Despite the limitations of the data considered, the findings suggest that the role of curriculum co-ordinator is an important and useful one. Further and more detailed examination of the responsibilities and role of

similar position in other jurisdictions would be worth while to obtain conclusions that would be more generally applicable to other jurisdictions.

The answers to the questions I posed in the introduction to this study now seem clear. I have experienced a tremendous amount of learning throughout the process of doing this project and through the experience gained on the job. I believe that every person starting out in this position will experience similar questioning in the beginning. It is hoped that by incorporating some of my recommendations, an understanding of the role and responsibilities of curriculum co-ordinators will become easier, not only for those new to the position, but for teachers and administrators as well.

In the beginning, I felt as if the problems of this position were unique to our Division. I learned through the research that the issues we face in such roles are subject to the nature of the position. I was concerned with where I should be spending my time, what people's expectations of the position were and whether or not the position was a necessary one at the Division level. I have learned that my frustration with the position may indeed have come from a lack of understanding about it. My initial assumption was that people generally understood what we did; I have learned that this is part of our responsibility, to keep people informed. This is a continuous task as staffs are changing every year. Interviews provided me with some insight into the needs of teachers and administrators and echoed a sense of purpose that being a servant leader brings to the role of curriculum co-ordinator.

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Appendix A

Consent Form:  
Culminating Master's Project "The Role of Curriculum Co-ordinator"  
Deneen Gallant-Norrington, University of Lethbridge

Dear Participant:

I am conducting a study of the role of District Curriculum Co-ordinator. The purpose of this project is to determine to what extent the position of curriculum co-ordinator is necessary at the district level. I also seek to find out what responsibilities and tasks that role should entail, based upon my research, personal reflections, and interviews with teachers and administrators.

As part of this project I am asking that you read a culminating report of a journal I have kept of tasks performed in my role as curriculum co-ordinator. Following this I would like to interview you, posing questions based upon the report and the role of curriculum co-ordinator. Responses to my queries will be released in summary form within my project and actual names of participants will not be included. Individual opinions will remain confidential. If you decide to take part and then for some reason must change your mind, it is your right to withdraw.

If you are willing, please indicate your ability to participate in my study by signing this letter in the space provided below. Please return this form to me at your earliest convenience.

I appreciate your participation and assistance with this project. If you have any questions please call me at 343-1055. Also, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr. Cathy Campbell at the University of Lethbridge at 329-2459 or Dr. Craig Loewen, chair of the Faculty of Education Human Subject Research Committee at the University of Lethbridge at 329-2455.

Yours truly,

Deneen Gallant-Norrington

(Please detach and forward the signed portion)

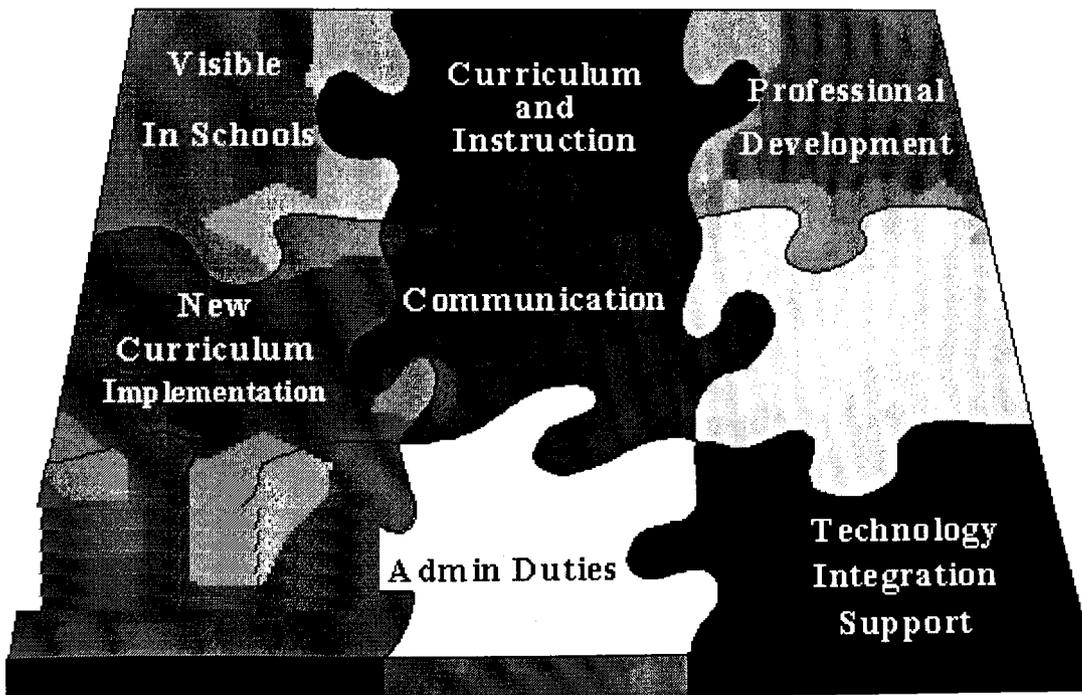
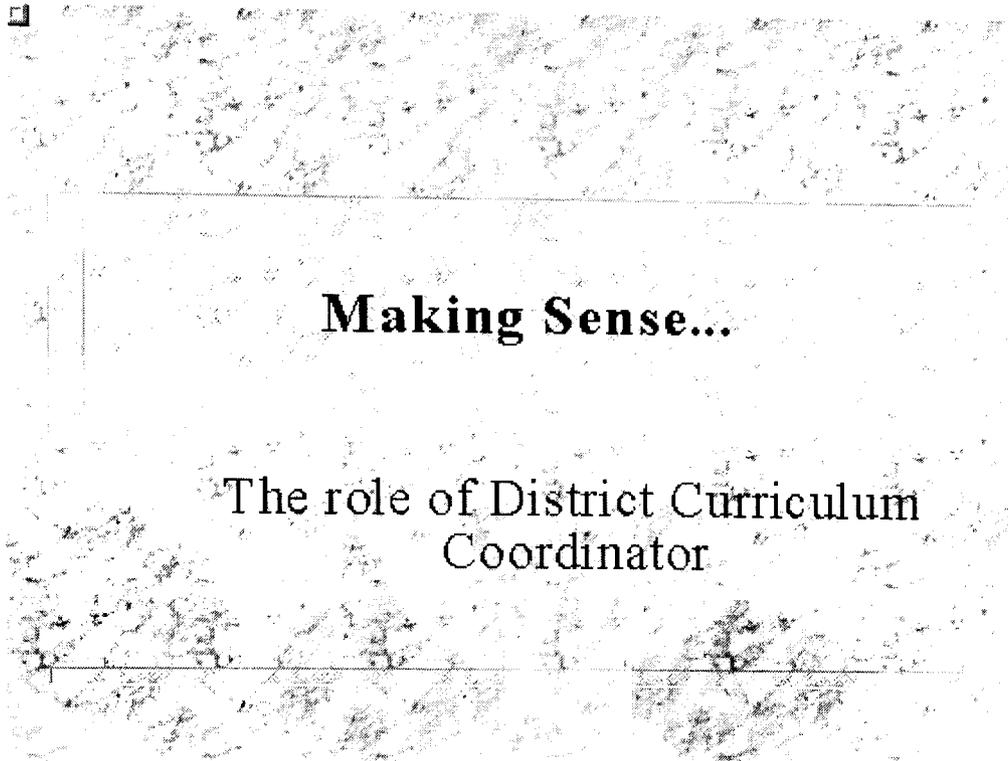
-----  
THE ROLE OF CURRICULUM Co-ordinator

I am willing to participate in the interviews required for this project.

Name

Signature

Date



## **Curriculum & Instructional Support**

- Subject area responsibilities
- Contact with Alberta Education
- Contact with publishers
- Curriculum resources recommended
- Collaboration with other districts
- Achievement Exam analysis
- Expectations for :
  - Long range planning
- French Immersion issues and support for program
- Facilitator of networking of teachers

## **Visual in Schools...**

### **Assistance to Teachers**

- Schedule reflects regular visits
- Team teaching
- Support offered by providing access in person
- Technology mentoring
- Observation for informal feedback
- New resources sharing
- Location of resources
- Distribution of communication from Alberta Ed.
- Notices of inservice opportunities shared

## **Professional Development Support**

- Member of District P.D. committee
- Assists with school P.D. plans
- Delivers sessions on P.D. Wednesdays
- Hosts inservices after school for staff
- Hosts grade and subject area meetings
- Implementation of curriculum teams
- One to one assistance during school visits
- Providing information about P.D. opportunities

## **New Curriculum Integration**

- Correspondence from Alberta Ed.
- Meetings/Focus groups with Alta. Ed.
- Hosting training sessions
- Organization other inservice for new curriculum
- Recommended resources list updates
- Finding resources from various sources LRDC /others
- Communication of initiatives and upcoming support (e.g. Tech Outcomes Document, New Math, New ELA)

## **Communication**

- Email, individual and group correspondence
- District news... FYI
- Reporting to principals, Deputy and Board
- Publishers, Alta. Ed, other districts
- Parent inquiries
- Daily mail: school news, publications etc.
- FSL newsletter in conjunction with Public School Board
- Contact with teachers... especially those in their first year to district
- Accessible to teachers

## **Meetings**

- Alberta Ed. re: curriculum
- Publishers re: resources
- Community:
  - Family Literacy Advisory Committee
  - Alternative Measures Advisory Committee
  - Community Health
  - Lions Quest
  - School Council Meetings (Presentations on new Curriculum)
- Grade, subject area meetings and librarians meetings
- Technology planning committee
- P.D. committee
- Curriculum Team meetings
- Administrator meetings and School Board meetings

## **Committees**

- Professional Development Committee
- Technology Planning Committee
- Language Arts Lead-Teachers
- Literacy Advisory Committee
- Alternative Measures Committee
- FSL Curriculum Advisory Team
- Telus Lead-Teachers
- New Social Studies Curriculum Focus Group

## **Instructional Technology Support**

- Assisting teachers in the classroom (modeling a lesson)
- After school inservice as to needs in individual schools
- Monthly inservice open to district staff
- Telus Learning Connection planning
- C.A.R.C. inservice planning for tech mentors
- Meetings with school tech mentors/coaches
- Sharing of resources and documents from AB ED
- Individual assistance and mentoring for teachers on “how to use” and “how to integrate technology”
- Providing Internet sites related to curriculum
- Circulating literature dealing with tech. integration

## **Administrative Duties**

- Reports to administration and Board members
- Communication and correspondence from various organizations and projects throughout the year
- Distribution of information and reporting to teachers
- Organization of information regarding:
  - curriculum
  - individual school events
  - publishers
  - student text resources
  - teaching resources
- Achievement exam item analysis and follow up to school action plans.

## **Other Projects**

- Surveys on different issues that come to Central Office
  - smoking and health
  - curriculum implementation schedule
  - gymnastics
  - religious education
- Questions of the Board that require research
  - p.d. Wednesdays
  - sex education
- Correspondence from different agencies
- Telus and other initiatives for teacher training
- Lions Quest
- Counseling
- Collaboration with immersion teachers from Public School District.

## **Personal Interest Influence**

- ☛ French immersion and French as a Second Language support.
- ☛ Technology training , and support with integration of technology to the curriculum
- ☛ Counseling issues... Collaboration within the division.
- ☛ Sharing... Creating ways to facilitate that in the district through email folders, meetings, collaboration.
- ☛ Mentorship and support for first year teachers.
- ☛ Assistance for teachers of combined classes.
- ☛ Research and professional educational reading.

## **Other Districts**

- ☛ Collaboration with various committees within the Red Deer Public District
- ☛ Collaboration with Lead Teachers from various districts for the implementation of the new English L.A. curriculum
- ☛ Sharing with Chinook's Edge curriculum coordinator
- ☛ Work with the Wild Rose School Division with French Immersion teachers
- ☛ Networking and sharing with St.Albert consultant
- ☛ Networking and sharing with other administrators at provincial meetings and conferences.

## What a day could bring...

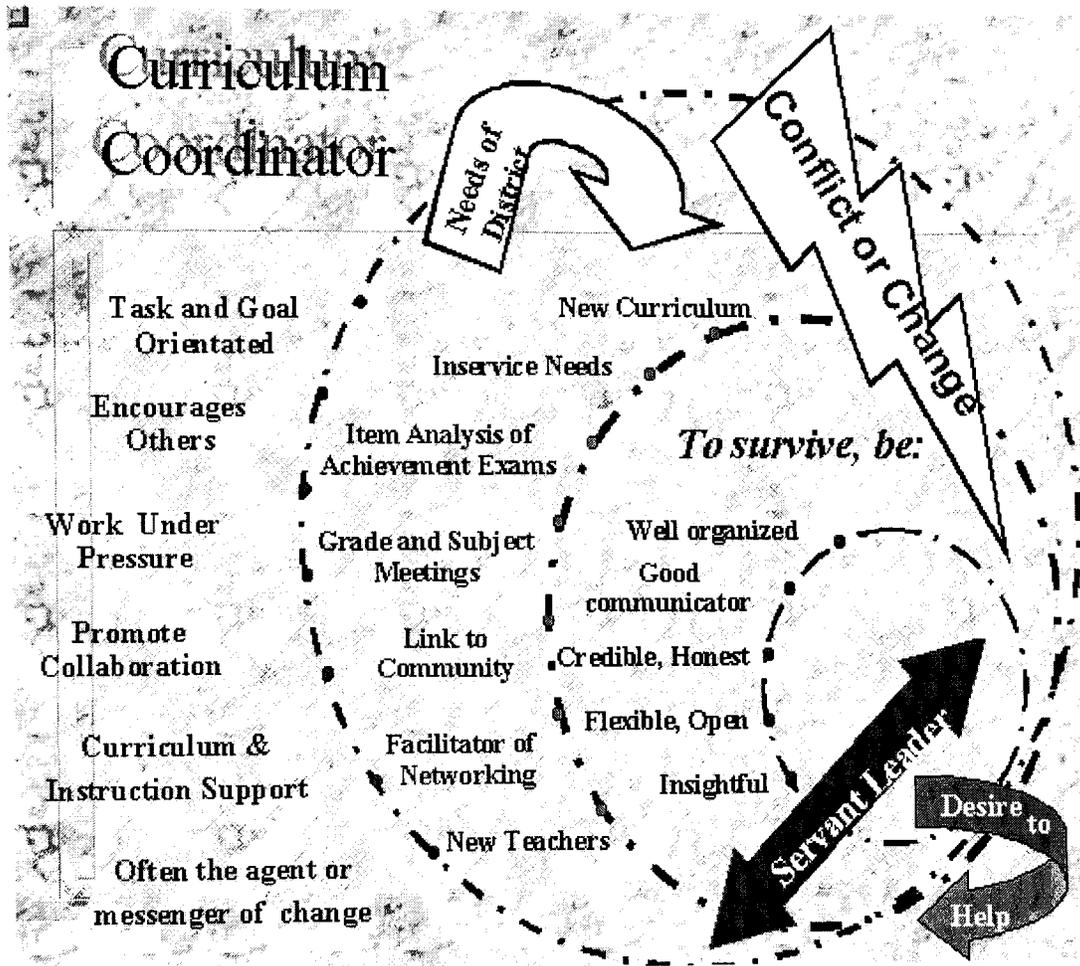


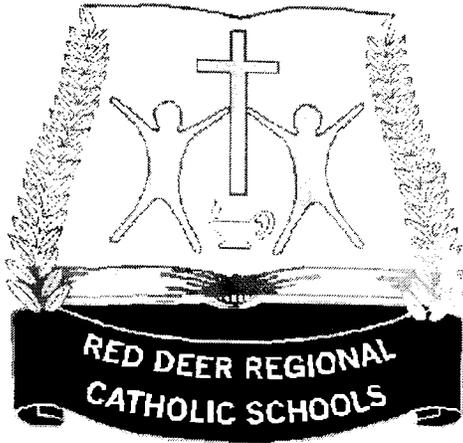
- Getting to the schools and helping teachers
- Quickly checking the mail... and putting it into a pile that may or may not get looked at again in the week.
- Respond to the deadlines from correspondence
- Filing and organization of information
- Answering and asking questions about curriculum
- Responding to at least 5 calls a day; projects, questions
- Checking email (replies must occur within the day)
- Handling complaints... trying to assist those in need
- Being at the office late, due to meetings or not having had the chance to do "paper work etc." while on site.
- Special requests of senior administration
- Planning with other curriculum coordinator

## Helping Student Achievement?

This begins with helping teachers:

- Resources
- Support in the classroom
- Communication with admin.
- New strategies and methods
- Opportunities for professional development
- Achievement exam analysis
  - Action plans
- Long range and unit planning
- Occasions to meet and collaborate with colleagues





**CURRICULUM AND  
INSTRUCTION SUPPORT IN  
EVERY SCHOOL**  
Red Deer Catholic Regional Division #39  
Curriculum Coordinator Survey of Schools

**Rationale:**

*Why this survey*

**Process for Priorities**

*District Curriculum Coordinators*

The goal of this survey is to assist in the process of providing individual schools with efficient and effective service and support in curriculum and instruction. Please consider the district-wide initiatives that coordinators will be focusing on this school year and the three-year Education Plan of the District when discussing and completing this survey.

This survey is to be completed as a staff. There is another survey for individuals that will seek ideas/needs for professional development, grade and subject meetings etc. However, this "staff" survey is to be a collaborative effort of an entire school. Each school has different needs and during regularly scheduled school visits coordinators wish to be helping each school reach such needs as they relate to curriculum and instruction. Teachers and support staff may be working on different projects at different schools that reflect the needs of those particular students and staff.

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

VP/AP: \_\_\_\_\_

School P.D. Rep: \_\_\_\_\_

Tech Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact People for the following:**

*Social Studies* \_\_\_\_\_

*Science* \_\_\_\_\_

*Math* \_\_\_\_\_

*Language Arts* \_\_\_\_\_

### DIRECTIONS

#### Curriculum Co-ordinator Survey of Schools

- 1 Discuss survey as a staff and come up with a focus/ project/ area for co-ordinators.
- 2 Refer to the District initiatives and three year education plan
- 3 Return survey to either co-ordinator via inter-district mail.

Please answer the questions below as a staff. Consider what you would like co-ordinators to spend time on while in your building. Point form is sufficient but feel free to elaborate with examples for any of the questions.

- 1] How do you BEST see co-ordinators meeting the needs of your current school?
- 2] Do you have a particular day or time that would be most convenient for you to have the assistance of curriculum co-ordinators available?
- 3] What suggestions do you have for the allotment of time in schools, considering district-wide responsibilities, community committees and administrative tasks?
- 4] What are some of the initiatives or programs in your school this year that may require the assistance of curriculum co-ordinators?
- 5] Other suggestions you have that will assist us in helping you in the ways that you have indicated: