

Online Curriculum Development

Saskatchewan,
Canada



The Purpose

- Support educational program for all learners
- Improve access to resources
- Provide quality learning experience regardless of location

The Debate

- Should the emphasis be on Distance Learning or on support for all learners regardless of mode of instruction?

The Debate

- Should the emphasis be on developing complete courses or
- Should the emphasis be on developing resources that could be used to support regular instruction as well as distance learning?

Saskatchewan's Choice

- Develop resources and not courses
- Support all grade levels
- Use resources for all mode of instruction not just distance learning

Saskatchewan Context

- Teachers in small schools teach all subjects
- Number of courses being offered in small schools limited
- Provincial Curriculum based on principles of resource based learning
- Growing dissatisfaction with televised instruction and traditional correspondence type distance learning

Saskatchewan Context

- Resource centres in small schools lack sufficient resources
- Need to support all grade levels expressed by schools
- National initiative to cooperatively develop and populate a learning objects repository.

Online Curriculum Development

- Work began in 1995 with 3 individuals doing the development
- IT branch's data model did not work
- By 1996 several curricula had been converted
- Links and resources were added while additional curricula were converted
- At first links were added directly to pages then a database was developed to house links

Online Curriculum Development

- Two needs-
 - Need to add links and resources to make the curriculum more useful
 - Need to encourage use by teachers
- Inservices held that focused on subject areas and provided opportunity for teachers to build the links and resources

Online Curriculum Development

- All inservice and projects like GrassRoots were directly linked to curriculum outcomes and objectives—
- The process of curriculum development, writing and design had to change in this new environment

Online Curriculum Development

- Initial concerns of teaching community
 - Will checks and balances currently in place to insure that a curriculum is appropriately reviewed be short circuited in this new environment?
 - Will teachers have access to databases of questions? And will students have access to databases of questions?
 - What will the criteria be for linking other resources and web sites to the curriculum? Who make the decisions?

Online Curriculum Development

- By 1998 the concerns had be allayed and the online curriculum was positively viewed.
- The provision of the curriculum on CD-ROM to all teachers and libraries was very positively received.
- By 1998 most curricula and supporting documents were online and emphasis shifts to the development of additional resources and online learning

Online Curriculum Development

- The need for a relational database was growing and the department's IT branch was reengaged to support its development.
- How to tag items and who tags them is an important issue.
- This has not been completed due to fiscal restraints.
- It may become part of the national learning objects repository.