



Volume 21 Issue 1, 2021

Introduction to papers in this issue

Kerry Earl Rinehart

Editor: *Kerry Earl Rinehart*

To cite this article: Rinehart, K. (2021). Introduction to papers in this issue. *Teachers and Curriculum*, 21(1), 7–8.
<https://doi.org/10.15663/tandc.v21i1.377>

To link to this volume: <https://doi.org/10.15663/tandc.v21i1>

Copyright of articles

Authors retain copyright of their publications.

Articles are subject to the Creative commons license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/legalcode>

Summary of the Creative Commons license.

Author and users are free to

Share—copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt—remix, transform, and build upon the material

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms

Attribution—You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use

Non-Commercial—You may not use the material for commercial purposes

ShareAlike—If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original

No additional restrictions – You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Open Access Policy

This journal provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

INTRODUCTION TO PAPERS IN THIS ISSUE

KERRY EARL RINEHART

The University of Waikato

New Zealand

The opening research article for *Teachers and Curriculum* 2021 General Issue provides an example of using curriculum theory to guide teacher practice. In *Designing a connected curriculum from Te Whāriki to the first years of school: Examples of mathematical practices*, Jane McChesney and Margaret Carr make a case for using mathematical practices as a conceptual curriculum tool for designing school mathematics to provide connections between early childhood and junior years of primary school. Useful background on the curriculum context is included for readers who need information on the New Zealand setting. For readers unfamiliar with early childhood documents, McChesney and Carr describe Te Kākanō (first published in *Kei Tua o te Pae Book 18 Mathematics Pāngarau*, Ministry of Education, 2009), a mathematics framework, in use as part of the Early Childhood curriculum. They use the term *mathematical practices* for “the multiple social practices of learning mathematics” and provide three examples of mathematical practices in some detail, illustrated with stories from Early Childhood and the first year of Primary school. These authors present theory, official curriculum policy and practices together in a useful way for those teaching and researching in the area of curriculum for young children and transitions to school.

Issue 21 continues with a special collection on New Zealand curriculum written by beginning teachers. Originally published as *New teachers respond to curriculum policy in a Master of Teaching and Learning Programme: A collection of working papers in 2017* (<https://www.tandc.ac.nz/tandc/article/view/286>), the five ‘working papers’ were introduced by Phillipa Hunter around “Curriculum thinking as ‘work in progress’”. In the 2017 introduction, Hunter describes how these papers came to be written and published and introduces each one. In 2021 it is timely and relevant for New Zealand teachers and education researchers to reflect on what curriculums—with both a small c and a big C—means to them and how they respond in their pedagogy. It is also important that educators in all contexts and settings critique current policy “intent, implementation, and outcomes”, especially when given the opportunity to participate and contribute (in whatever ways present themselves) to a review process of current curriculum documents. We are delighted to republish contributions from Kelly Davis, Ben Deane, Pascale Prescott, Joshua Martelli, and Shirin White. In addition, specifically for this issue, tertiary scholars were invited to respond to the beginning teachers’ contributions providing two new commentaries to update and recontextualise the original “articulation of thinking and ideas in a professional space” (Hunter et al, 2017).

Pablo Del Monte (<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff-profiles/people/pmonte>) and David Taufui Mikato Fa’avae (<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/staff-profiles/people/dfaavae>), both from University of Waikato, question the concept of curriculum and curriculum reform as an event reminding readers that curriculums become defined by “what knowledges matter and whose knowledges are privileged more”. They present the idea of thinking of the curriculum as a “moana—the vast ocean or space of interconnections”. They “see the curriculum as a formation that brings together a heterogeneity of elements that are mobilised by specific and strategic flows of power. A fluid formation in the moana, that acts on its objects and is acted on, that connects the elements and sets the conditions for their existence” (in this issue). Del Monte and Fa’avae’s response to the five new teacher contributions serves as a provocation for reader reflection and highlights the importance of Curriculum Theory.

Bronwyn E. Wood, Victoria University of Wellington (see <https://people.wgtn.ac.nz/bronwyn.wood>), makes explicit links to the current curriculum review—“Curriculum Refresh”—going on in New Zealand and picks up the point that education curriculums are socially constructed and mediated. Wood

Corresponding author

Kerry Earl Rinehart kerry.earlrinehart@waikato.ac.nz

ISSN: 2382-0349

Pages 7–8

also identifies and expands on the critiques of the current curriculum from the five new teachers. One key issue she notes examines how teaching experience influences confidence as well as knowledge surrounding the interpretation and enactment of an official curriculum for student learning. With any curriculum reform, interested parties hold levels of hopefulness for improvement from positive change and questions about how to retain the strengths and address the weaknesses of current policy. Education curriculums within education systems reflect notions of who we are as people, what we aspire to be as a society, and how we wish to be viewed by others.

After these two commentaries, Issue 21 returns to research articles. Sashi Sharma and Shweta Sharma bring us back to mathematics, a subject *Teachers and Curriculum* publishes on frequently, this time in a secondary context. Their research article discusses learning about probability—experimental probability and theoretical probability—using games. Using games for learning has become an area of research interest in digital and virtual environments but the games given attention in this study are drawn from different cultural contexts. In this case, ‘Lulu’ is a Hawaiian game. These authors share the activity for others teaching secondary school mathematics classrooms particularly to respond appropriately with culturally, and language, diverse student cohorts to develop mathematical literacy in probability. Sharma and Sharma make a clear case that “performing probability experiments using games can encourage students to develop understandings of probability grounded in real events” (in this issue).

With the COVID-19 pandemic, scholars are naturally looking at the specific contexts of online learning in education and lockdown in a variety of countries. Of course, neither ‘online education’ nor ‘lockdown’ is a homogenous practice. Just as in other contexts, Nabaraj Mudwari, Monica Cuskelly, Carol Murphy, Kim Beasy, Nirmal Aryal explain how “the majority of schools across Australia rapidly implemented online education during the first wave of COVID restrictions”. Their concern is that with school closure not only face-to-face education is dropped but other services including English language learning. Mudwari and colleagues argue that more information is urgently needed in order for schools to tailor support for vulnerable student populations, including those with refugee backgrounds.

In our 2020 issue, Julie Meates authored an article titled *Problematic digital technology use of children and adolescents: Psychological impact* (<https://doi.org/10.15663/tandc.v20i1.349>). Meates continues to be very concerned at the development of policy, and the encouragement of school leaders and teachers to use of digital technologies in classrooms every day without an informed understanding of the potential downsides. Such negatives are becoming increasingly visible in research literature and in lived experience. In Issue 21, Meates adds to her contribution with an article entitled *Problematic digital technology use of children and adolescents: Impact on Physical wellbeing* with more articles to come focused on social media and addiction specifically. She makes clear that it would be wise for policy makers, including school principals and boards of trustees, to consider a balanced approach to implementation of digital technologies. Meates provides full reference lists for further readings.

Mark Gould taught for 38 years, initially in primary schools and later in secondary schools as Head of Science and has authored a reflective argument on the basis of his learning from his experiences. In his think piece, *Student motivation is a system wide responsibility*, Gould focuses on critical considerations influencing student motivation and makes the point that not only are some conditions out of teachers’ control but some are making classroom teachers’ jobs more difficult. School reports come in for particular attention. In compulsory education settings, individual school reports appear to have changed little over time even while there have been curriculum changes, the increased use of digital technologies and developments in learning environments.

Teachers and Curriculum welcomes more think pieces and research articles in the area of school reporting in particular, along with student motivation and engagement, aspects of pedagogy, and curriculum review in general.