



CURRICULUM PILLAR : RESEARCH

TIMETABLING FOR CONTENT AND CHARACTER

“...findings of recent research on basic emotion command systems, emotional style, neural resonance and neuroplasticity, [argue] that we can no longer ignore the evidence that our students’ cognition, emotion and bodily health are fundamentally connected.”

Regardless of training, **educational degree** or **experience**, there is one **structure** that underscores the decisions teachers make in an educational institution: the curriculum.¹

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

While there is no agreed definition of what constitutes a curriculum, it can be broadly categorized into 2 functions: the educational curriculum and the **hidden** curriculum. For the most part, people think of curriculum as the set of documents mandating educational criteria such as books and syllabi – which fall under the purview of educational curriculum. This however, fails to take into account the totality of experiences, relationships, values and goals shaped by **school culture** and **student behaviour**². This hidden curriculum, which is implicit in its structure and purpose, is of equal importance as educational requirements.

This opens us to the core objective of this pillar; can we be **intentional** to create a curriculum that addresses both **content and character**?

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We know now through research in neurology and cognition, that behaviour as well as emotional stability plays a crucial role not only in the mental development, but educational development of students.

New fields of interpersonal neurobiology and neuroscience are changing our understanding of the relationship between **thinking** and **feeling**, and challenges the traditional role of the teacher to only satisfy the former.⁴

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DATA DRIVEN PRACTICES

One component of a successful educational curriculum is defined by student's ability to confront problems with **flexibility, meta cognition, questioning and communicating** with clarity. However, a critical aspect of successful students is not only having the background knowledge and the information, but what's more important, is that students need to learn how and when to act on it; it's a skill that is developed with **opportunities and exposure**. This function of character develops with time and repetition. A solution that caters to the values and feelings of individuals with the contextual knowledge to be able to solve an issue is fundamental to the **both/and model**⁵; where it's not content or character, but both.

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