

Video Transcript

Focusing on Curricular Competencies

Clare Hay (Teacher): Focusing on curricular competencies as opposed to content has really made me think about the lessons that I'm doing and why we're doing it because we have to start thinking about, is this showing, are we highlighting connecting and reflecting or do we want to be working on problem-solving or do we want to be focusing on our communicating skills?

Max Sterelyukhin (Teacher): Just thinking outside the box a little bit more and trying to think about, "Okay, so it's not just the math we're trying to teach here, but what else is it? What else is important?" And, curricular competencies do guide us in that.

Rebecca Sulek (Teacher): So, the way that I've introduced the curricular competencies with my students is by breaking it down and simplifying it. I've used the graduation numeracy assessment as a starting point, and I've given them five keywords. So we talk about interpreting, applying, solving, reflecting, and communicating. And so everything that we talk about, I try and use one of those words. And then we talk about what each one of those look like.

Grant Gasser (Teacher): Asking the students to say out loud what it is. How was I thinking? What was the process I took it through? Did I go through a graph to get to the answer? Did I go through algebra to get the answer? Did I ask my neighbour for the answer? What did I do? There's that piece where it's thinking about my thinking, what I am doing?

Heather McIntosh (Teacher): I have posters up in my room with the curricular competencies, and I have the core competencies right by my desk so that I can notice, name, and nurture. I really liked bringing the curricular competencies to my classroom. I've liked it in general a lot because it gets rid of the question "why are we doing this?" We're doing this because we want you to be good communicators.

Jubilee Hu (Teacher): If they can develop these curricular competencies, they are setting themselves up for success for the future, which is where math will actually come in, and they will remember and recall all these times that we worked together on these competencies and hopefully that's what is going to make them more numerate when they're out in the real world.

Clare: I would say, take it slow and try to sort of pick one competency per unit to focus on and that way I think it's a manageable way to start.

Michelle Burton (Teacher): Find a colleague or two that you can kind of bounce ideas off of and share thoughts and, and be able to kind of collaborate that way, it really makes it much more exciting as you're trying out new things and you're not having to reinvent the wheel.

Laura Epp (Teacher): It's not about replacing the content. We still need to responsibly teach and make sure students have the vocabulary and skills that they need. One week, try one new activity with one class, see how it goes, make some adjustments. Try it with another class next week, see how it goes. Give yourself time to process what you liked about it, what you didn't like, what you would do differently. It's not about radically changing your teaching, it's about just over time, making tiny tweaks and improvements that will have a positive effect on your students and ideally be enjoyable for you too.