

8 • Leading Curriculum Development

If we consider the changes occurring in our everyday lives, it is clear that the future will not be the same as the past or present. Communication technology and the changing nature of work, for example, call for major changes in the way we school children. The curriculum leader must be both visionary and skilled at translating such projected changes into school preparation programs. In this sense, the field of curriculum is like the “brain” of the school body; it is forever monitoring the environment and seeking a better way to serve the students. The curriculum leader is first an engineer (maintenance), but he or she must also be an architect of new school programs. Curriculum work is about programming and enhancing the lives of children.

Any number of tasks can illustrate the dynamic side of curriculum leadership (see Figure 1.4). What is common to each of these more dynamic tasks is the emphasis on planned change. The dynamic curriculum leader continually seeks to move from where we are in the present to an improved condition for our students in the future.

The dynamic view of curriculum work is that it is an active process involving the continual construction and improvement of school programs. Improvement most often means change. For such a view to exist and be accepted in the minds of faculty, parents, and school community members, the curriculum leader must facilitate a process of *visioning*. Advancing perceptions from the present to the future includes assessing common beliefs, tangible goals, and value priorities in school programs.

For almost 20 years, achievement standards set by national and state politicians have defined public and private education in the United States. Such standards are reinforced by serious testing procedures that focus on how the taught curriculum meets expected outcomes. Almost one-half of

-
- Providing a vision
 - Moving beyond minimum standards
 - Tailoring the curriculum to the clients
 - Establishing authentic assessment
 - Building a working curriculum team
 - Engaging teachers, parents, and the school community
 - Planning for change
 - Managing the process of change
 - Using tools to empower curriculum development
-

Figure 1.4 Dynamic curriculum leadership tasks