



# Designing Instruction Around “Big Ideas”

---

Jane F. Schielack

Professor, Department of Mathematics  
Texas A&M University

RME Annual Conference  
February 2014

# A Little Math Curriculum History

---

1979: All curriculum requirements removed from the Texas Education Code

1980: *NCTM's An Agenda for Action*

1980s: Essential Elements and TABS/TEAMS

1989: *NCTM's Curriculum and Evaluation Standards*

1990s: TEKS (and revisions) and TAAS

2000: *NCTM's Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*

2000s: TEKS revisions and TAKS

# Benefits of Teaching a Focused Mathematics Curriculum

---

Teach a focused curriculum in order to:

- Logically address the content
- Manage time efficiently
- Build depth and complexity of students' mathematical understanding

# More Math Curriculum History

---

## 2006: NCTM's *Curriculum Focal Points*

- *Identify 3 to 4 big ideas at each grade level*
- *Develop big ideas across grade levels*
- *Identify connecting ideas within grade levels*

# Activity

---

One way to create  
a focused curriculum  
from  
an existing curriculum

# More Math Curriculum History

---

2006: *NCTM's Curriculum Focal Points*

2008: *Texas Response to Curriculum Focal Points (TXRCFP) and STAAR*

2012: TEKS Revision

2013: Revised *TXRCFP*



TEXAS RESPONSE TO CURRICULUM FOCAL POINTS  
FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8 MATHEMATICS  
REVISED 2013

# *TXRCFP (Revised 2013)*

---

Needs addressed:

- Identifies areas of emphasis at each grade level
- Guides pacing of instruction
- Supports curriculum development
- Provides professional development

# *TXRCFP (Revised 2013)*

---

Created by:

- Sorting TEKS from each grade level into 3 or 4 categories, each based on an important mathematical idea (focal point)
- Emphasizing connections within a focal point
- Emphasizing connections across focal points

## ***TXRCFP (Revised 2013)***

---

Composed of an arrangement of the complete revised TEKS for K – Grade 8 Mathematics into:

- 3 or 4 focal points per grade, with the Mathematical Process Standards included in each one
- Connections section at each grade
- Financial Literacy TEKS section for each grade