ANALYZING HOW GRADE FOUR TEACHERS PLAN TO TEACH INQUIRY-BASED CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND THE INFLUENCES ON THEIR PREPARATION OF MATHEMATICS LESSONS

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ABSTRACT

This study documented how Grade 4 teachers plan to teach from an inquiry-based mathematics curriculum, and identified specific influences on planning. Previous studies of instructional decision-making yielded a framework for researching lesson planning and informed the design of this investigation. Participants in this study were 18 teachers from four schools in three districts that adopted the *Investigations in Number, Data, & Space* curriculum. Qualitative analysis of interview transcripts, surveys, and lesson plans was conducted using a framework to identify primary codes for processes and influences on teachers' planning.

Results indicate that collaboration influenced the content teachers planned to teach as they discussed *Investigations*-related issues, determined Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) to be taught, and/or exchanged activities for teaching. Whether they collaborated, teachers ultimately created lesson plans individually. Although many teachers were misinformed about the requirements of *No Child Left Behind*, GLEs and mandatory testing programs influenced the content and sequencing of lessons and, for some, determined their curriculum. Teachers who considered *Investigations* to be an effective curriculum supplemented sparingly, while those who perceived "holes" in the curriculum supplemented extensively.

This study yielded a refined framework for researching teacher planning but additional studies are needed to validate the framework. Finally, implications are offered for Accountability, Educational Policy, and both Teacher and Professional Development.