

## Which Curriculum is Most Effective in Producing Gains in Students' Learning?

Charged with examining the “state of the evidence” with respect to standards-based versus conventional curricula, the National Research Council concluded that it is not possible with any degree of certainty to determine the effectiveness of individual programs. Nevertheless, two interesting patterns emerge from several large-scale studies that compared achievement in classrooms using a variety of standards-based curricula to achievement in classrooms using conventional curricula.

- Students taught using a standards-based curriculum, compared with those taught using more conventional curricula, generally exhibited greater conceptual understanding and performed at higher levels with respect to problem solving.
- These gains did not appear to come at the expense of those aspects of mathematics measured on more traditional standardized tests. Compared with students taught using conventional curricula, students who were taught using standards-based curricula generally performed at approximately the same level on standardized tests that assess mathematical skills and procedures.

To read more about this topic, download the “Selecting the Right Curriculum” brief.

Based on *Selecting the Right Curriculum*.

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