

Perceptions of Rural South African Teachers on the National Curriculum Change: “Are We Chanting or Marching?”

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ABSTRACT Several changes with implications for teachers have been effected in the South African National Curriculum in recent years. Though the changes are intended to improve learner achievement from the education system, the frequency at which these changes are made and their inability to make significant improvement, pose challenges for teachers. This study sought to examine rural teachers' perceptions of the latest changes in the national curriculum as presented through the repackaged National Curriculum Statement. In this study, a qualitative approach involving focus group interviews with teachers from four rural schools was followed. Four themes representing major changes introduced in the repackaged National Curriculum Statement called Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, constituted the interview schedule. The study found that teachers in rural schools could not cope with the pace at which the National Curriculum was changing. This was because they were neither adequately prepared for the change nor given sufficient capacity to implement the change.