

## School Metaphors: The Hidden Curriculum

In 1968, Robert Dreeban wrote *On What Is Learned in School*. Simply put, Dreeban called attention to the “normative patterns of behavior” that students learn from the way school is organized and conducted. Other writers refer to these learnings as the indirect curriculum or hidden curriculum of the school. Merks talks about the hidden curriculum for teachers and refers to it as the “schooling iceberg,” the part that controls much of what teachers do but is not seen or talked about.

If the theory of practice for a school can be captured in a metaphor, then that metaphor needs to express the values and beliefs embedded in this indirect or hidden curriculum. Morgan’s discussion of metaphors for organization tends to focus on the formal organization and does not focus much on the hidden or informal organization. Also, he did not focus explicitly on schools; thus, his metaphors may not work as an explanation of the hidden curriculum of a school.

This topic reverses the theory as metaphor notion of the previous topics. Instead of taking a metaphor and applying it to a school, we will now visit a school and use our observations to present their embedded metaphor or their theory of schooling.

The cohort will visit North East High School by means of a film by Frederic Wiseman. Wiseman neither writes a script nor stages scenes. He does, however, select scenes that he thinks reveal “the truth” of the school; namely, its hidden curriculum. Your task is to capture the hidden curriculum of the school and to express this hidden curriculum as a metaphor that makes that hidden curriculum evident. That metaphor summarizes the theory of schooling expressed in the life of NE as a school.

Prior to our visit to NE High, and prior to beginning your reading, please, go to the first forum “The Good and The Bad of the Hidden Curriculum ” in order to have a sense of why you are reading these sources. When you have read “The Good and the Bad”, please, individually read the other resources provided below. They discuss the nature of the indirect/ hidden curriculum.