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Summary: The purpose of this paper is to compare curriculum documents for K-12 education from the state of North Carolina from two time periods, 1920s and 2003. The historical development of the mathematics curriculum in North Carolina provides a snapshot of the shifts in mathematics teaching and learning. North Carolina, a state in the southeast of the United States, has had a statewide standard course over a period spanning more than eighty years. A document analysis of printed curriculum standards from allows a description of the mathematics concepts and tasks that were expected of students in those years. The analysis revealed stark contrasts in the focus of mathematics from a very computational emphasis to one of problem solving. The analysis also highlighted the understanding of algebraic concepts and ideas as an essential outcome of current mathematics programs.

Classification: D30 A30

Keywords: curriculum development; history of mathematics education; United States