



Teaching Beyond the Limits of Curriculum

Summary of Schultz et al. (2013)

Excellent Educator, 3(6), 7, 2026

Academic Insights

Teachers often feel trapped between strict curriculum requirements and meaningful learning experiences. This study introduces the idea of “teaching in the cracks.” Instead of abandoning the curriculum, teachers find opportunities within it to connect lessons to real-world social issues.

Through projects focused on community problems, students engage in democratic thinking, discussion, and collaborative problem solving. These social action curriculum projects transform classrooms into spaces where students investigate issues that matter to them. The result is learning that is both academically rigorous and personally meaningful.

Apply This Now

Design projects where students investigate real problems in their school or community.

Add This in Your Lesson

Encourage students to identify issues they care about and research solutions.

Avoid This Mistake

Do not limit learning to textbook exercises disconnected from real life.

Keywords

critical pedagogy, social action projects, student engagement, curriculum innovation, democratic learning

Reference

Schultz, B. D., McSurley, J., & Salguero, M. (2013). Teaching in the cracks: Student engagement through social action curriculum projects. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 4(2), 53–68.

Suggested Citation

Excellent Educator. (2026). *Teaching Beyond the Limits of Curriculum*. Excellent Educator, 3(6), p. 7.