World trends in educational policies privilege standardized testing. Countries like Costa Rica combine this standardized testing with policies oriented towards democratic education. The present qualitative exploratory study, consisting of interviews of participants from different educational settings, analyses the extent to which these various elements interrelate; it also offers evidence that this interrelation is not satisfactory because of the veremphasis on national testing. While the Ministry of Education discusses how to give emphasis to civic aspects of the curriculum, this study offers some basic premises to be considered and expanded in the future.

Keywords
Educational policies, costa rican curriculum, high stakes testing, democratic education.