Leveraging Curriculum for Student Success: Do’s and Don’ts from the Field
“IT’S TIME WE ALL COMMIT TO THE FACT THAT ALL STUDENTS AND ALL TEACHERS DESERVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT.”

High-Quality Materials Can Change a Student’s Life
with teacher Tammy Schales

"If students have access to high-quality materials and passionate educators, I think the sky is going to be the limit."

AUDRA MCPHILLIPS
EDREPORTS BOARD MEMBER

#MaterialsMatter
EdReports increases the capacity of teachers, administrators and leaders to seek, identify and demand the highest-quality instructional materials. Drawing upon expert educators, EdReports’ evidence-based reviews of instructional materials and support for smart demand will equip teachers with excellent materials nationwide.

All students and teachers will have access to the highest-quality instructional materials that will help improve student learning outcomes.
EdReports in 2015

We found...

- a market flooded with materials that were hastily adapted and repackaged with “CCSS-aligned” stickers.
- new materials that claimed to understand the standards but had very little alignment to the true meaning and intent.
- schools desperate for materials to teach the new standards, experienced enough to know that what they had, or what was out there, wasn’t cutting it.
- teachers, frustrated by the lack of good materials, using any and every avenue to cobble together materials.
EdReports’ Theory of Action

IDENTIFY EXCELLENCE

INCREASE DEMAND FOR EXCELLENCE

IMPROVE MATERIALS

BETTER OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS
2018 Market Data

Materials Reviewed

**ELA**
- 24% do not meet
- 27% partially meets
- 49% meets

**Math**
- 44% do not meet
- 25% partially meets
- 31% meets

Materials in Use

- 15% of the ELA materials in use are aligned.
- 23% of the math materials in use are aligned.
Why Materials Matter
Materials in the Instructional Core

“That instructional materials exercise their influence on learning directly as well as by influencing teachers’ instructional choices and behavior, makes them all the more important.”

Source: Choosing Blindly, Chingos & Whitehurst (2012)
Direct Impact on Learning Outcomes

One study showed **USING A TOP RANKED PROGRAM IN 4TH OR 5TH GRADE MATH** can lead to

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAINS OF 3.6 PERCENTILE POINTS**, larger than the improvement of a typical teacher's effectiveness in their first three years on the job when they are learning to teach.
Cost Effective

HIGH-QUALITY MATERIALS DON’T NECESSARILY COST MORE, BUT OFTEN HAVE BIGGER PAYOFFS.

TEXTBOOKS ARE RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE AND TEND TO BE SIMILARLY PRICED.

The implication is that the marginal cost of choosing a more effective textbook over a less effective alternative is essentially zero.” (Polikoff and Koedel, 2017)
Teachers’ Top Priorities

Teachers know that materials matter, but don’t always have access to the quality content that students deserve.

High-Quality instructional materials are cited as a top funding priority for teachers.

Top Five Funding Priorities Identified by Teachers

- 55% High-quality instructional materials and textbooks
- 55% Additional staff
- 47% Digital resources
- 47% Higher salaries
- 46% Intervention programs
When teachers don’t have access to great materials, they hunt for them online - often leading to inconsistent quality that **impacts low-income students of color the most.**

**Teachers spend 7-12 hours per week** searching for and creating instructional resources (free and paid), drawing from a variety of sources, many of them unvetted.
A 2017 RAND analysis found that

96% of teachers use Google to find lessons and materials.

Nearly 75% of teachers use Pinterest to find lessons and materials.
The Supplemental Curriculum Bazaar: Is What’s Online Any Good?

Figure ES-4. The majority of materials are rated as weakly aligned with the standards to which they claim alignment.

- Not aligned: 8%
- Weakly aligned: 56%
- Mostly aligned: 30%
- Fully aligned: 7%

Note: Full scale is as follows. 0 = not aligned to the target standards; 1 = weakly aligned to the target standards; 2 = mostly aligned to the target standards; and 3 = fully aligned to the target standards. Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Figure ES-9. The majority of materials offer no supports for teaching diverse learners.

- No supports offered: 86%
- Limited supports offered: 10%
- Some supports offered, not comprehensive: 4%
- Extensive supports offered, comprehensive of most or all likely student groups: 0%
In “The Opportunity Myth,” TNTP found of the 180 classroom hours in each core subject during the school year, students spent...

133 hours on assignments that were not grade appropriate.

47 hours on assignments that were grade appropriate.

This equals approximately 3/4 of instructional time in each content area spent OFF GRADE LEVEL.

1TNTP. (2018).
A 2015 study found low-income students are less likely than high-income students to have quality content and curriculum in the classroom.

And students of color and those from low-income backgrounds were less likely than white and higher-income students to be in classrooms with grade-appropriate assignments.
The **CONSEQUENCES** of not having high-quality materials **DOESN’T END AT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.**

Nationwide, **40% of COLLEGE STUDENTS** (including 66 percent of Black college students and 53 percent of Latino college students) take at least one remedial course, learning skills they were told they’d already mastered in high school.

A recent study found that college remediation costs students and their families **$1.5 BILLION ANNUALLY.**

Graduates who opt for a career straight out of high school aren’t faring much better, with many employers reporting high school graduates are **MISSING SKILLS** needed to do their jobs well.
Where We Stand

What you select and HOW you select matters. Schools and districts have more options than ever from which to find high-quality materials that meet their local priorities. The selection process is a critical lever for ensuring that quality materials are adopted and then used well in classrooms. Current adoption practices are simply not good enough.

We believe that:

- What we teach matters: students deserve quality, aligned materials
- Selecting materials is a decision worthy of study and prioritization
- Local context and instructional vision should drive decision-making
- Educator voice and expertise must be at the center of the decision
- Professional learning and implementation needs to be considered from the beginning of selection processes.
Current State of Materials Adoption

“In the end, [our] formalized evaluation procedure has not reliably worked to select the highest quality materials. [Our] procedure does try to find the program that will appeal to the largest number of teachers with the least amount of disruption.” (Polikoff, 2019)
Turn and Talk

Which of these data points resonates with you? Why?
Panelists

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From a Louisiana classroom

“What these kids are reading does matter.”