



# CLASSROOMS in ACTION

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## Webinar 3

# The Instructional Materials Review Process



# Webinar 3 in a Series of 4

Webinar 1: What is Curriculum, Curriculum Alignment and Why Is It So Important?

Webinar 2: An Overview of Alignment Tools

Webinar 3: The Instructional Materials Review Process

Webinar 4: Curriculum and Alignment Implementation Challenges





**An aligned curriculum is the foundation of any educational system.**





**The lack of a clearly articulated aligned curriculum hinders improvement efforts and results in curriculum chaos.**





# Making the Case for Curriculum Alignment

If teachers/teams in the identified content area do not see the need for an aligned curriculum, you can:

- interview teachers so leadership can understand and address their questions and concerns related to curriculum alignment and to pinpoint why the current curriculum may not be successful
- use district and/or school learning outcomes to show teachers how alignment can contribute to continuous improvement
- share student-learning data (especially data that indicates gaps in learning from one grade level to the next in the content area) to provide a data-based rationale for alignment



# Planning Considerations for the Alignment Process

Before embarking on the review process, consider the following questions:

1. Who are the team members that will be involved in the process?
2. What are the existing curriculum policies? Who sets them?
3. How does your district determine alignment to learning standards and learning progression throughout grades/courses?
4. What is the timeline for the process?
5. Do current instructional materials vary from school to school?
6. How often does this process occur?

Do you have a current materials review/evaluation process? If so, what does it look like? If not, have you considered one of the review options from Webinar 2?



# Getting Started: Key Questions for the Team



How do our current materials work together to support students throughout the grades?

How well are our current materials aligned to the standards?

What other factors, beyond alignment, will be important for your community?

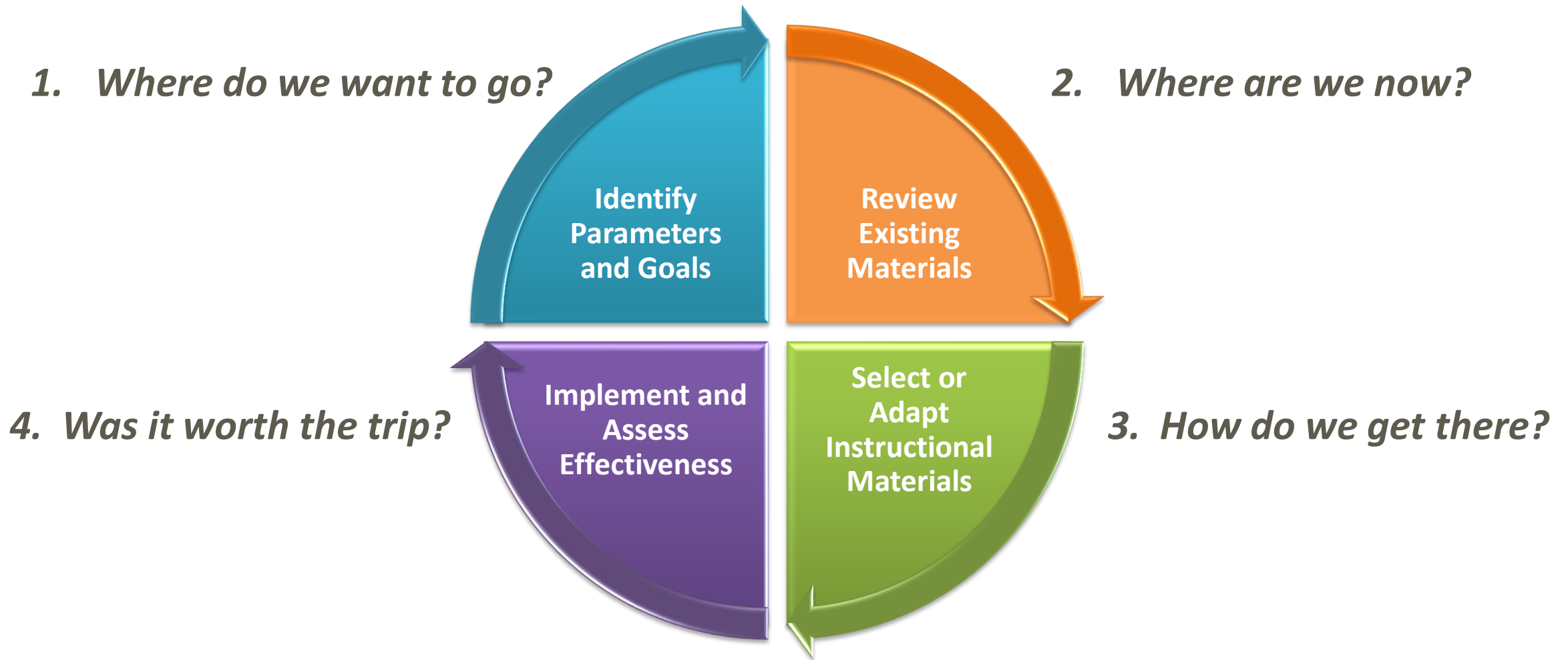
Are all grades and content areas represented at the table? Who do you represent at the table?

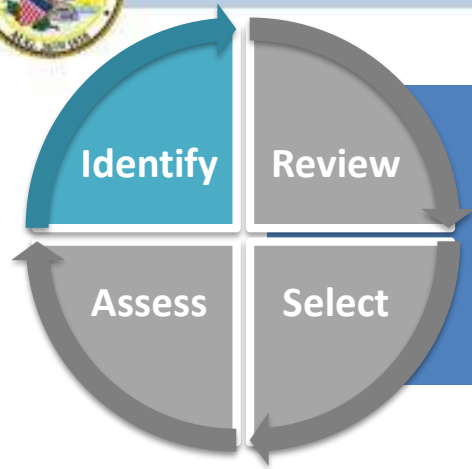
Which materials best support student learning?  
Which materials best support teachers?





# Instructional Materials Selection Cycle

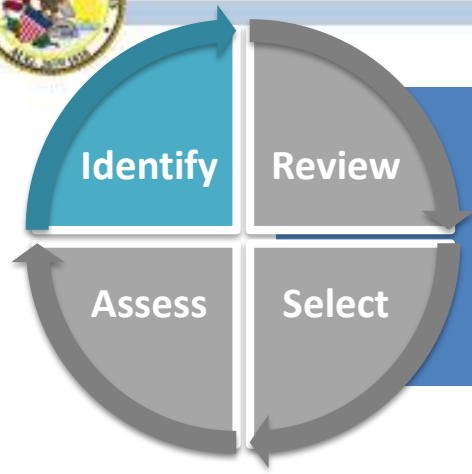




# Where do we want to go? Identify Parameters and Goals

## Required Resources

- [Illinois Learning Standards](#)
- District learning goals
- [Applicable state laws/mandates](#)
- School board policies
- Budget



# Where do we want to go?

## Identify Parameters and Goals

### Questions:

- Do you have other parameters that you need to consider? Other factors, beyond alignment that are important for your community?
- Who needs to be involved in these discussions and what supports need to be in place (release time, face to face or virtual convening, etc.)
- Review your existing policy with regard to instructional materials adoption. Do any areas require additional clarification?



# Where are we now?

## Review Existing Course Materials

### Questions:

- What are the strengths of your curriculum you would hate to lose?
- What are weaknesses we hope to overcome by adopting a new curriculum?



# There are Two Resources That Can Provide Reviews of How Current Materials Align to the Standards

## Louisiana Department of Education

**DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION**  
Louisiana Believes

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**CURRICULAR RESOURCES ANNOTATED REVIEWS**

LOUISIANA YOUTH FOR EXCELLENCE

**CURRICULAR RESOURCES ANNOTATED REVIEWS**

In Louisiana all districts are able to purchase instructional materials that are best for their local communities. To support districts with these decisions, the Louisiana Department of Education led an online review of instructional materials listed on this page to determine the degree of alignment with state content standards. Each local school system should determine if their use is appropriate to meet the educational needs of their students.

**TIER 1 - EXEMPLIFIES QUALITY:**  
Meets all non-negotiable criteria and scored the best possible on all indicators of superior quality.

**TIER 2 - APPROACHING QUALITY:**  
Meets all non-negotiable criteria and some indicators of superior quality.

**TIER 3 - NOT REPRESENTING QUALITY:**  
Does not meet non-negotiable criteria.

[ACCESS THE RUBRICS USED IN OUR REVIEW.](#) <

[TO SEE A WEEKLY REPORT CLICK HERE.](#) <

**TIER 1**

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS

## Ed Reports

**edreports.org**

HOME REPORTS METHODOLOGY ABOUT US DISCUSSIONS CONTACT US

**Independent Reviews of Educational Materials**

EdReports.org is an independent nonprofit designed to improve K-12 education. Our free reviews focus on alignment to the Common Core and other indicators of high quality as recommended by educators.

[OUR MISSION](#) [OUR METHODOLOGY](#)

**FIND REPORTS**

Title:  ISBN:

Enter the title of the materials. Enter an ISBN number here.

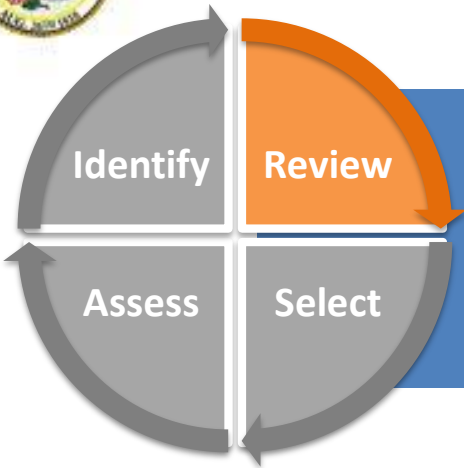
Search Type:  Grade Level:

[ADVANCED SEARCH](#)

**THE LATEST SERIES REPORT**

<b>Eureka Math</b> 3rd-5th Grade Subject: Math Level: Elementary <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>	<b>Agile Mind Middle School Mathematics</b> 6th-8th Grade Subject: Math Level: Middle <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>	<b>Mathworks Middle School Mathematics</b> 6th-8th Grade Subject: Math Level: Middle <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>
<b>Investigation 101</b> 6th-8th Grade Subject: Math Level: Elementary <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>	<b>Math Expressions</b> 4th-8th Grade Subject: Math Level: Elementary <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>	<b>K12openly</b> 6th-8th Grade Subject: Math Level: Middle <a href="#">READ THE REPORT</a>

[LIST ALL SERIES REPORTS](#)



# Where are we now?

## Review Existing Course Materials

### Review or Evaluate Materials

This is a major step in the process, at this point a decision has to be made:

- Can we use one or more of the referenced sites to examine reviews of your current instructional materials?

**OR**

- If no reviews exist, what is the plan for reviewing the current materials? A number of tools to review your current curriculum are described in Webinar 2.
  - Who will be responsible for assessing existing course design and materials?
  - What are the nuts and bolts of convening and facilitating this review group?



# Where are we now?

## Review Existing Course Materials



**Now the team needs to take the time to either:**

- Examine an existing report

***OR***

- Conduct a review






# How do we get there? Select Instructional Materials

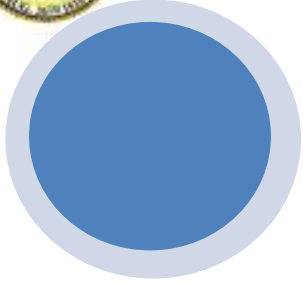
**Once instructional materials have been reviewed:**

What is the gap between where your district is currently and where you would like to be?

Determine the level of instructional materials improvement and other supports and strategies needed:

- Complete Overhaul 
- Fill Gaps 
- Minor Refresh 



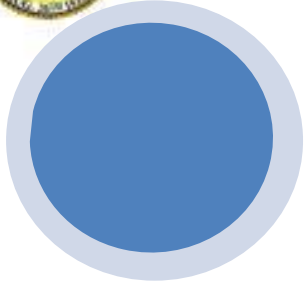


# Levels of Improvement

## Complete Overhaul

Existing instructional materials are out-of-date, not aligned with standards, and include ineffective tools for students and teachers. A new option is required.

1. Examine current school board policies regarding the selection and adoption of instructional materials.
2. Determine district capacity.
3. Establish timelines and a project team communications strategy.
4. Determine if a “textbook” is necessary? Are digital options available and if so does our school have the technology to support it? Does your district feel comfortable pulling together resources to create a complete course curriculum? Are there appropriate materials and time available?



# Levels of Improvement

## Complete Overhaul

5. Determine strategy for identifying options and designate appropriate personnel.
6. Determine if piloting or field testing is advisable. Examine any existing material reviews from trusted sources.
7. Recruit and convene an Instructional Materials Selection Committee to examine options and make recommendation(s).
8. Evaluate committee recommendation(s) and select materials.
9. Create an implementation strategy that includes initial resource training, sustained professional learning, and resources and strategies to help families support students with their learning.



# THE ADOPTION PROCESS



How instructional materials selection fits within an adoption process

## MATERIALS SELECTION (3-12 MONTH PROCESS)

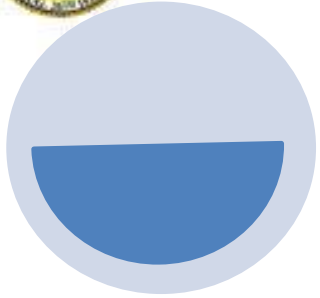
- Identifying curriculum goals
- Developing selection process
- Selecting committee members
- Winnowing choices, **reviewing materials**, planning and conducting pilots
- Making final recommendations

## BEFORE AND AFTER SELECTION DECISION

- Ensuring compliance with local and state guidelines
- School board and community approval
- Purchasing and aligning resources

## IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT (1-6+ YEARS AFTER SELECTION)

- Identifying or creating materials to address gaps
- Conducting PD to support materials use
- Engaging with parent or community groups
- Aligning assessments, interventions and, monitoring progress and determining modifications



# Levels of Improvement

## Fill Gaps

Current instructional materials do not quite meet standards but with some additions they could. This may include adding resources like lessons, units, or formative and summative assessment tasks.

1. Establish district guidelines for identification and usage of supplemental materials.
2. Have the principal designate an individual to approve the selection of supplemental resources and establish selection criteria for these resources.
3. Train teachers and district staff in the effective location of instructional materials and provide them with a firm understanding of resource licenses which will determine their levels of permitted uses for the resources.
4. Review the content for alignment to Illinois Learning Standards.

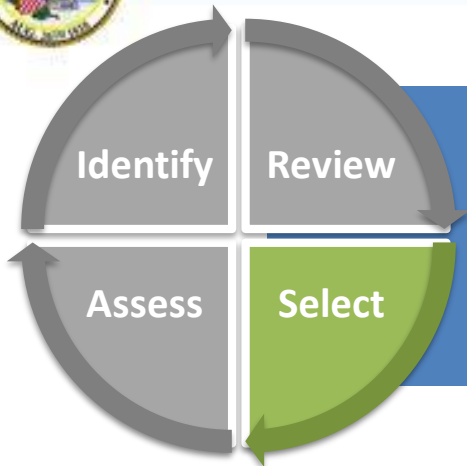


# Levels of Improvement

## Minor Refresh

Instructional materials are in good shape and aligned to standards. District would like to include supplemental resources to increase engagement or to provide intervention or extension materials.

1. Establish district guidelines for identification and usage of supplemental materials.
2. Have the principal designate an individual to approve the selection of supplemental resources and establish selection criteria for these resources.
3. Train teachers and district staff in the effective location of instructional materials and provide them with a firm understanding of resource licenses which will determine their levels of permitted uses for the resources.

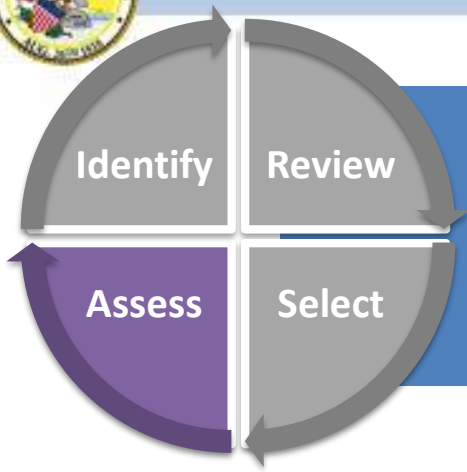


# How do we get there?

## Select or Refine Instructional Materials

### Team Discussion

- Where along the instructional materials improvement spectrum did your district fall? (Complete Overhaul, Fill Gaps, Minor Refresh)
- How will you select, train, and calibrate a team to look critically at instructional materials options?
  - Describe the collaboration between IT and content experts in support of the selection and review process?
- Determine needed professional learning to support a smooth transition.



# Was it Worth the Trip?

## Implement and Assess Effectiveness

**Changes have been made, now it's time for reflection!**

Consider the following things:

- Were the changes you made impactful to teaching and learning in a positive way?
- Did students show growth based on the chosen metrics?
- What educator supports are in place or will be provided to promote successful implementation and continued professional learning?
- What are some opportunities to communicate with parent or community groups about curriculum changes?
- How will progress be monitored based on the chosen metrics?



# Thank You!

- This is the end of Webinar #3, “The Instructional Materials Review Process”
- Webinar #4 will describe “Curriculum and Alignment Implementation Challenges”.





## Questions?

Contact the ISBE Content Specialists for additional information.

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