



# Why Materials Matter

**South Carolina**  
**October 16th, 2024** <sup>1</sup>

# Connector: Imagine If...



Imagine if all students had access to high-quality materials and classroom instruction. In what ways...

- Would schools be more effective?
- Could we be more efficient?
- Could it be more ethical?

# Introductions



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# Objectives



Participants will...

- Gain an understanding on why materials matter.
- Understand the work that EdReports does to identify and increase the demand for high-quality instructional materials

# Overview of EdReports



**EdReports is a non-profit organization that increases the capacity of teachers, administrators, and leaders to seek, identify, and demand the highest quality instructional materials. Drawing upon expert educators, our reviews of instructional materials and support of smart adoption processes equip teachers with excellent materials nationwide.**

# At EdReports we...

- Prioritize high-quality instructional materials as a lever for equity for students and an important support for teachers.
- Engage and prioritize diverse stakeholders, including educators, in instructional materials work.
- Evaluate comprehensive, year-long curriculum materials for their alignment to high-quality instructional expectations
- Share tools and rubrics for evaluating materials
- Provide resources to aid in the selection of instructional materials

# EdReports' Theory of Action



**IDENTIFY  
EXCELLENCE**



**INCREASE  
DEMAND FOR  
EXCELLENCE**



**IMPROVE  
MATERIALS**



**BETTER  
OUTCOMES  
FOR STUDENTS**

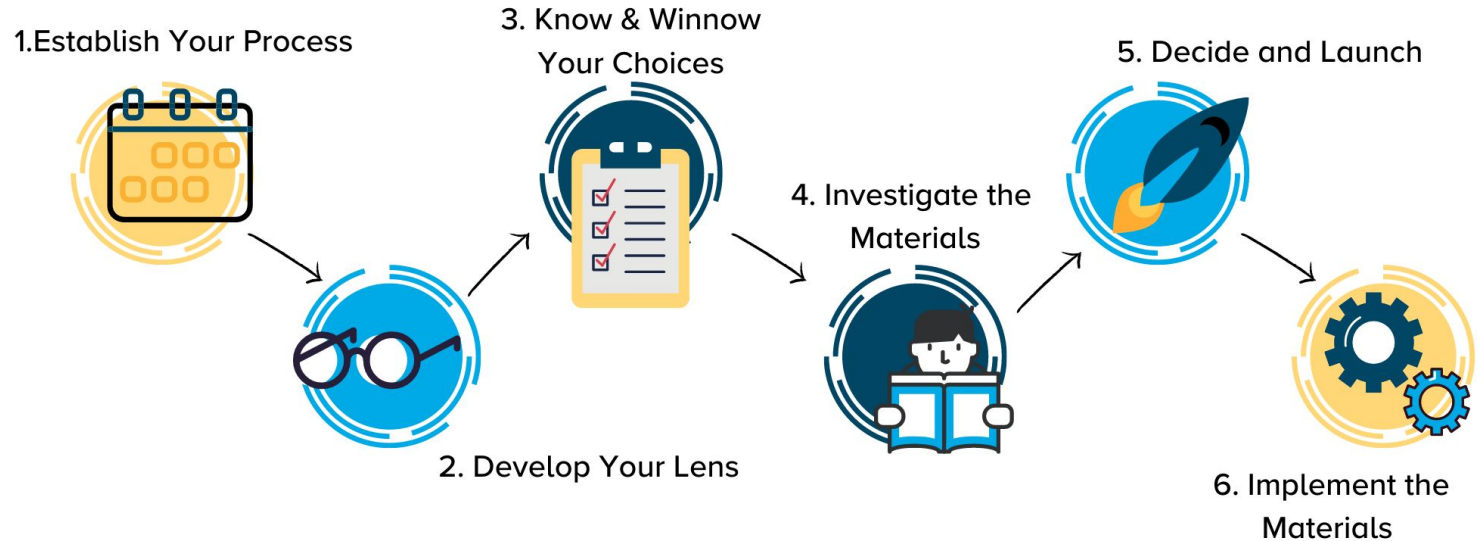
# At EdReports, we believe that HOW you select is as important as what you select.

- All students deserve high-quality materials and supportive teachers.
- Material selection requires study and prioritization.
- Decisions should reflect local context, instructional vision, and student/family needs.
- Educator voice and expertise are central.
- Materials must align with high standards, instructional shifts, and research.
- Coherent systems include curriculum-based professional learning from the start.

# Students deserve the best we can give them. What we choose matters.

The content students have access to influence whether they feel included and affirmed. Curriculum that highlights multiple representations - including in texts, literature, media, and image - serve to engage all students through materials that are relevant and relatable

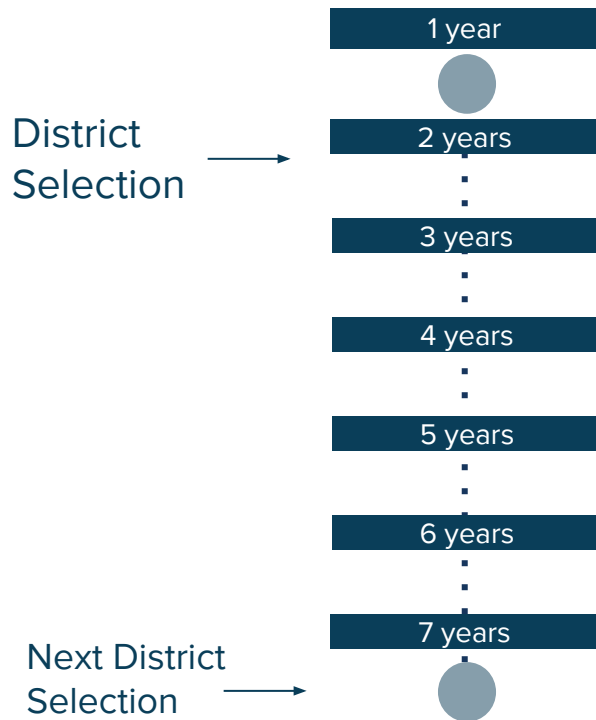
# EdReports has developed 6 steps to a successful curriculum adoption and has provided comprehensive resources to support adoptions.



# Why Materials Matter

# Materials selection is a high-stakes, legacy decision.

Nationally, on average, states and/or districts adopt materials once every five to seven years. A district can miss the opportunity to serve a generation of students by selecting the wrong material



Imagine a student who experiences at least seven years of education with materials that do no support deeper learning.

Aligned materials are more readily available.

97% of the Known K-12 ELA and Math Market Reviewed

Of the ELA materials EdReports has reviewed:



52% of ELA materials meet expectations for alignment,

only 32% of ELA materials used by teachers in classrooms are aligned.

Of the math materials EdReports has reviewed:



48% of math materials meet expectations for alignment,

only 48% of math materials used by teachers in classrooms are aligned.

# Research shows that traditional processes aren't always yielding high-quality choices.

“

In some districts, teachers wanted the program that was most familiar to them, even though it wasn't the highest-quality option. 'Thus [our] evaluation process **did not necessarily lead to the best choice.**'”

Morgan S. Polikoff et al. *The formalized processes districts use to evaluate mathematics textbooks*. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 52:4, 451-477. (2020)

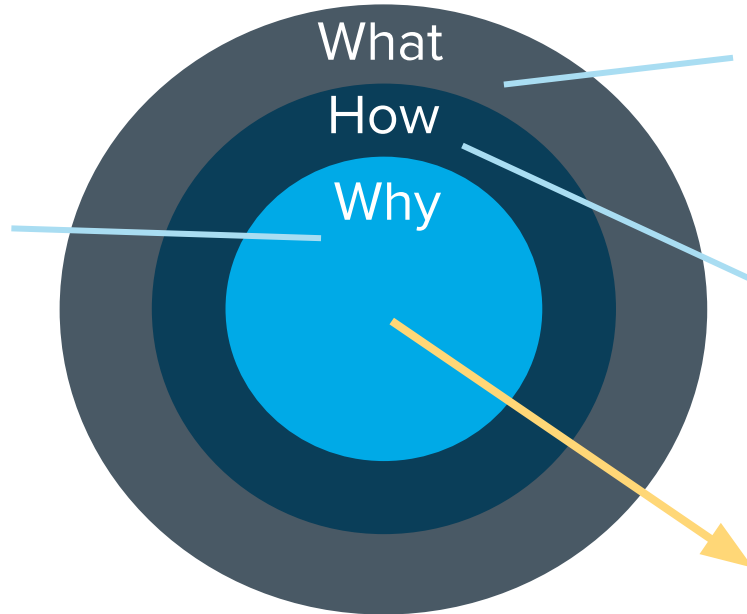
# Teachers who are part of the selection process are more invested in the materials selected.

According to a study done by WestEd, **teachers involved in an adoption process** agree that they were **more likely to implement those materials**, and when paired with curriculum-embedded professional learning, they **felt more empowered to make appropriate adjustments** based on their students' needs.

# Investing in the “Why”

When stakeholders understand the “why”, they are more apt to take risks and ownership of the process. This is a key indicator of adaptive change.

What’s your purpose? What drives you?

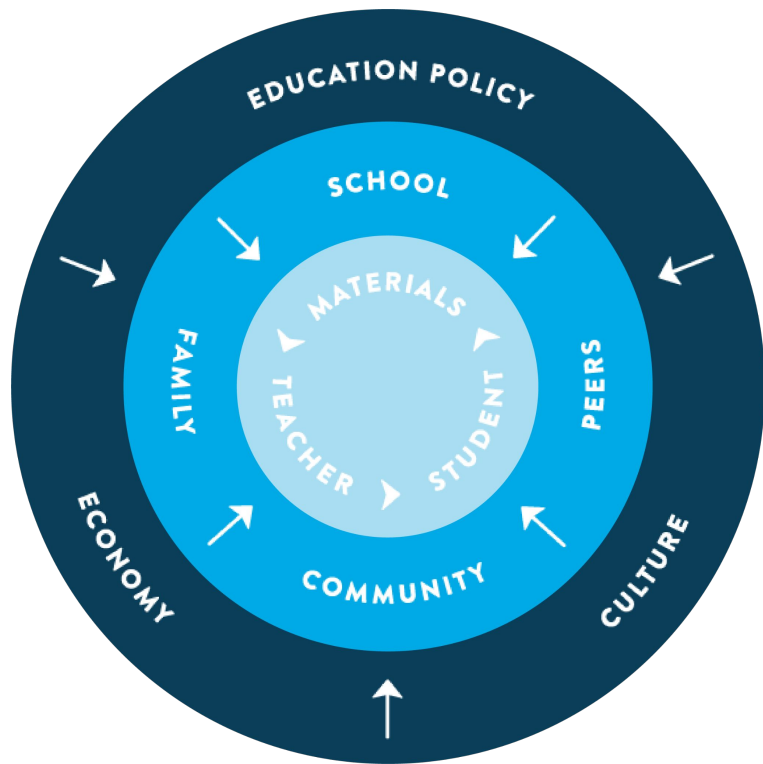


What do you actually do?

How do you do what you do?

Simon Sinek, Start with Why

# Teachers and the materials they use are foundational elements to the instructional core.



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

# We know that materials are central to teachers' decisions about what and how they teach.

“In general, **teachers are much more likely to cover topics presented in the materials** selected by their school or district than to cover topics not included; **they are likely to follow the sequence of topics in the selected materials**; and **their pedagogical approach is influenced by the instructional design of the materials**. The evidence is clear that instructional interactions between students and teachers are framed by the instructional materials that are provided by their schools and districts.”

# For many reasons, teachers and students still lack access to high-quality materials.

*“As it stands now, students’ chances to learn challenging content depend on whether they are lucky enough to attend a school that provides it. In effect, a **defense of localism in questions about content, amounts to a defense of inequality in opportunity to learn.**”*

-Schmidt et al., 2015

**More than 1/3** of the disadvantages in math performance for students was due to inequalities in math coverage.

# Teachers have been trying to solve the problem themselves...

Teachers spend **7+ hours** a week searching for and creating instructional **resources**, drawing from a variety of sources, **many of them not vetted**, and worse, **misaligned**.



**95%** of elementary teachers &  
**97%** of secondary teachers  
use Google to find lessons and materials.



**86%** of elementary teachers &  
**63%** of secondary teachers use  
Pinterest to find lessons and materials.

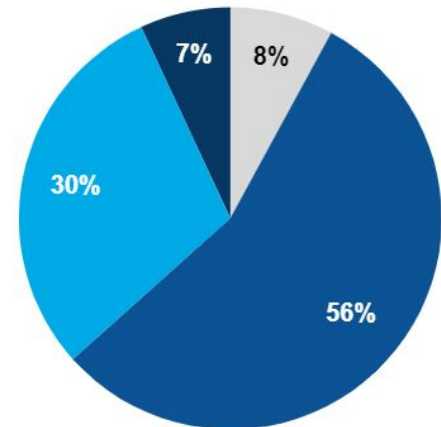
...which has lead to inconsistent quality that impacts students experiencing poverty and students of color the most.

“In a single school year, the average student spent approximately 70% of available instructional minutes on assignments that were **NOT** aligned to **grade-level expectations**.\*

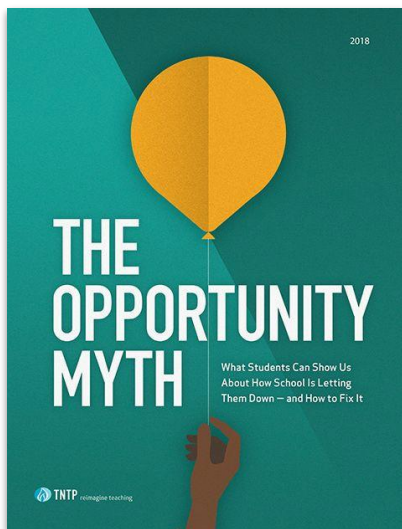
The Opportunity Myth, TNTP

Alignment of 300 of the most downloaded lessons from *Teachers Pay Teachers, Share My Lesson and Read, Write, Think*

- Not Aligned
- Weakly Aligned
- Mostly Aligned
- Fully Aligned



When teachers have access to high-quality, aligned instructional lessons and materials, it makes a difference in their classroom practice and the instruction students receive.



“ *When students who started the year behind had greater access to grade-appropriate assignments, they closed the outcomes gap with their peers by more than seven months.* ”

## Students expect that schools will set them up to meet their goals if they do what is asked of them - and generally they do just that.

**88%**

The amount of time students are working on activities related to class

**71%**

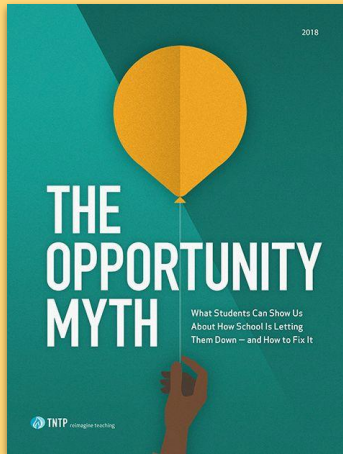
The amount of time students met the expectations of the assignment given

**83%**

Percentage of students who earned As, Bs, and Cs in ELA

**83%**

Percentage of students who earned As, Bs, and Cs in Math



The “opportunity myth” is the false premise that if students do what is asked, they’ll be set up for success, and that if they *don’t* succeed, they must’ve done something to blow their chance.

# Reflection: Wows and Wonders



Think about the ideas we have explored today. Reflect on the following:

**Wows:** What concept surprised you or interested you the most?

**Wonders:** What concepts are lingering in your mind or have you puzzled?

# Statewide Webinar Series



|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>Why Materials Matter</i>                           | October 16, 3:30 - 4:30 pm  |
| <i>The SC Review Tool &amp; List Development</i>      | November 13, 3:30 - 4:30 pm |
| <i>Preparing for a Smart Adoption</i>                 | December 4, 3:30 - 4:30 pm  |
| Applying the Smart Adoption Process to the State List | January 22, 3:30 - 4:30 pm  |

THANK  
YOU!

Do you have questions or want to learn more?

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