

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ADOPTION PROGRAM

(State Board of Education Regulation 43-70)

OVERVIEW

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ADOPTION PROCESS

According to the Instructional Materials Adoption regulation (43-70), the State Board of Education (SBE) has the responsibility and duty to adopt the instructional materials used for instruction in the public schools of South Carolina. To advise the SBE, the Instructional Materials Advisory Committee meets annually to formulate recommendations, which include the subject areas that will have new materials adopted by the SBE in the upcoming year, the funding priority order of new materials for the new school year, one-year contract extensions, and the new adoption calendar of events. The Advisory Committee consists of public school teachers, district administrators, and laypersons with one person representing each of the academic areas with state standards, Career and Technical Education (CTE), special education, and general instruction/curriculum.

Instructional materials are adopted and funded by subject area on a staggered six-year cycle. The materials for a subject area are adopted to coincide with the review of the appropriate South Carolina College and Career-Ready (SCCCR) standards or the revision on the CTE course standards. The adoption areas are expanded to include appropriate instructional materials for students of varied ability levels.

The SC Department of Education (SCDE) facilitates the review and adoption process using the guidelines and procedures outlined in the SBE Regulation 43-70. The process begins each year with publishers/vendors submitting instructional materials in the identified subject areas to the Instructional Materials Review Panels. The membership of the SBE-appointed Review Panels consists of nominees obtained from the SBE, district instructional leaders, and SCDE education specialists in the content areas. The Panel nominees represent a balance of large and small, rural and urban schools and districts with the majority of those appointed being classroom teachers and up to 25 percent lay member. The Panel members use appropriate the SCCCR and CTE course standards as the criteria for evaluating the materials. The instructional materials are evaluated during the summer. The Panels meet in September to deliberate and determine the recommendations to be submitted to the SBE. A thirty-day public review is held beginning in mid-October or November for citizens to comment on the materials. In December, the Panel recommendations with the public comments are presented to the SBE for approval.

Upon SBE adoption of the new instructional materials, districts and schools are provided the list of areas and materials with anticipated funding. To assist districts with the local selection process, the SCDE conducts the Instructional Materials Caravan that gives school and district staff the opportunity to learn about the new materials through presentations by publishers. District selections for the funded areas are reported to the Office of Instructional Materials (OIM) by the first of April. In May, schools begin placing orders using the SCDE's web-based instructional materials ordering system. Upon verification of funding, instructional materials (print and digital) are provided for the start of the new school year.

DISTRICT-REQUESTED MATERIALS

Through the OIM, Regulation 43-70 provides the option for districts to request instructional materials to be reviewed for possible adoption. The requested materials are reviewed following the state adoption procedures with an adjusted timeline. Requests for previously reviewed programs cannot be considered. The SCDE contacts the publisher to determine their willingness to submit their program for the district request process. Since instructional materials are adopted and funded by subject area on a staggered six-year cycle, most district requests occur in the year of funding. If schools currently have adopted materials for the subject area, then additional funding is not available to allow schools to order new materials or exchange used materials for new. Under no circumstances can the district request process be used to circumvent the state instructional materials adoption process.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FUNDING

Section 59-31-360 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, requires that instructional materials, adopted by the SBE for use in public schools, must be supplied to school children in grades K–12 of the state without charge. Each year, the SCDE requests funds from the State Legislature to purchase newly adopted materials by subject area and to maintain existing adoptions. Providing students with new instructional materials is dependent upon the level of funding allocated from the State Legislature each year. Materials chosen from the state list are provided to schools using state funds with the exception of those materials adopted as supplemental. Materials adopted as supplemental include items that support an adopted program or are not considered as a core program. Districts and schools must use local funds for the purchase of supplemental materials.