



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


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GOVERNOR

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 16, 2023

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Delsa D. Chapman, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports 

SUBJECT: Guidance on Reviewing, Selecting, and Implementing High-Quality Instructional Literacy Materials

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) supports student access to high-quality instructional literacy materials, which aligns with [Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#) Goal 2 to improve early literacy achievement. MDE recognizes that selecting high-quality instructional materials can be time-consuming and is providing guidance to help narrow the selection process.

When teachers have high-quality instructional materials aligned with the [Science of Reading](#), they can focus their time and energy on addressing the individual needs of each student. In the work of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, it is important that students see themselves (mirrors) and others (windows) portrayed accurately in their reading. Every student deserves the opportunity to learn from high-quality instructional materials to become effective readers with access to life-long learning.

MDE recommends that districts review a recent policy brief by Michigan State University's Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC), [What Resources do Elementary Teachers Use for English Language Arts Instruction? The K-5 Curriculum Landscape in Michigan](#). This policy brief identifies the most frequently used instructional materials across the state. The policy brief speaks to the need for more guidance in curriculum selection, with the recognition that curricula most frequently used are not always aligned with evidence-based best practices.

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The following resources can help local school districts develop a process to evaluate, select, supplement, and implement high-quality instructional materials:

- [EdReports](#) – This resource offers free reviews of grades K-12 instructional materials offering information about a program's alignment to the standards and other indicators of quality. This could be used to winnow choices before a formal review. Curriculum materials can be entered into the search provided.
- [IES Rubric for Evaluating Reading/Language Arts Instructional Materials for Kindergarten to Grade 5](#) – This is a tool for evaluating reading/language arts instruction and intervention materials in grades K-5. This tool can be used to review existing instructional materials or for previewing new resources.
- [Curriculum Evaluation Tool from the Reading League](#) – This curriculum evaluation tool features components that align with the *Simple View of Reading* (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) and *Scarborough's Rope* (Scarborough, 2001). It indicates instructional practices that are aligned and not aligned with the science of reading.
- [Rudine Sims' Bishop: Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors \(video link\)](#) This video can be used as a resource to help educators better understand, discuss, and support access to diverse literature within and outside of curricula material.
- [Evaluating Materials for Culturally Responsive Practices: A Landscape Analysis](#) This tool will help educational leaders prioritize cultural responsiveness by assembling a review team with the understanding and perspectives to meet diverse student needs and by providing the necessary time, tools, and training.

Please forward any questions regarding this communication or guidance to MDE-EarlyLiteracy@michigan.gov.

You are also invited to join the MDE ELA listserv to receive literacy news, updates, and information. You can sign up at www.michigan.gov/mde; the sign-up is in the bottom right corner.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments