

## **Have You Ever Wondered How Instructional Materials Are Selected for State Adoption?**

*by the CMC Executive Board*

The choice of instructional materials is important for the more than 5 million students attending over 8000 public schools throughout our state, and to their parents and teachers. The California Education Code mandates that the State Board of Education approve new mathematics materials for adoption by March 2001. This is a *primary adoption* for mathematics, that is, it is the first adoption of K-8 materials following approval of a new state Mathematics Curriculum Framework, with a *follow-up* adoption to be scheduled in several years. (There is no state adoption for high school textbooks).

It is vital that educators be involved in decisions about mathematics textbooks and that objective and professional deliberation occur during the state adoption process. Moreover, it is important for districts and teachers to become knowledgeable of the adoption process, and to be aware that there are several options for selecting and purchasing mathematics programs.

California's Education Code specifies a 3-step process for adopting instructional materials for its students: legal compliance review, public review and comment, and education content review. This process has as its goal the alignment of standards with curriculum, materials, and assessment. Following approval of the state Framework, textbook publishers are customarily allowed a 30-month period to develop and submit their programs for consideration. The state Curriculum Commission is in charge of the Education Content review, according to evaluation criteria they develop.

Two panels are appointed by the State Board of Education to examine the submitted materials—the Instructional Materials Advisory Panel (IMAP) and the Content Review Panel (CRP). Both panels receive training regarding the review process, so that ultimately only instructional materials that support state standards are selected. This process, as defined in the Department of Education Fact Book 2000, is straight forward and has clear expectations for the IMAP and CRP members:

'The CRP provides a report and recommendation on each submission pertaining to content only. The IMAP prepares a response and

recommendations on whether programs should be adopted, based on considerations of all the elements of the criteria. The IMAPs' and CRPs' recommendations are forwarded to the Curriculum Commission. The Commission then develops a written report containing its recommendation on each submission.'

The State Board receives the Curriculum Commission's report and makes the final decisions about materials adoption. A vote is scheduled for the February 2001 meeting to determine which instructional materials will comprise the 2001 Mathematics Adoption list.

The state Education Code established an Instructional Materials Fund (IMF) to allot funds to districts for purchasing materials on the state adoption list. According to the California Department of Education's Fact Book:

At least 70% of IMF funds must be spent on state-adopted instructional materials.

Up to 30% of IMF funds may be spent on non-adopted instructional materials that have passed the state legal compliance review.

Of the 30%, up to 5% of the total IMF funds may be spent on any instructional material which has passed a state-level or local-level legal compliance review; instructional television and distance learning; tests; inservice training; and/or binding basic textbooks.

The Department Fact Book also cites provisions for flexibility in adoption. The 2001 adoption list will not review or identify all of the mathematics programs available that have the potential to meet the state mathematics standards.

'Local agencies are encouraged to use this flexibility to purchase materials that best assist students to meet or exceed the content standards. Education Code Section 60200(h) permits local educational agencies to petition the State Board for approval to spend up to 100% of their K-8 IMF allocations on non-adopted instructional materials that have passed state-level legal compliance review. The petition process may NOT be used for instructional materials in a subject area that is under current consideration for a primary adoption.'

Districts may be aware of other outstanding instructional programs for students that are not on the state adoption lists. In that instance, the District can purchase programs with monies from

Categorical programs (i.e., Title 1), its general fund, or any grants it has received for that purpose.

When the 2001 Mathematics Adoption List is published, it will be one of four lists that districts can refer to when purchasing programs with state funds, the others being the 1994 Adoption List, the 1997 Interim Adoption List (until the year 2003), and the AB 2519 adoption list approved by the State Board in 1999. Schiff-Bustamante funds for purchase of new, standards-aligned instructional materials can only be used for mathematics textbooks listed under the AB 2519 adoption list and the upcoming 2001 Mathematics adoption list. Each year, for four years beginning in 1998-99, school districts will be entitled to funds allocated from a \$250 million fund for materials in reading/language arts, mathematics, history-social science and science.

### **Mathematics Adoption Observations**

Observers of recent Curriculum Commission proceedings are concerned that fairness and impartiality be preserved throughout the 2001 mathematics adoption process.

The 30-month period for publishers to submit materials has been reduced to 24 months. This accelerated deadline for program development may yield materials that have not been thoroughly piloted by the publishers.

The IMAP and CRP review committees do not represent a balance of K-12 educators. As a result, feedback from educators in the field to the Commission will be limited. The adoption process, which theoretically is designed to include input from all stakeholders, is potentially compromised.

While the responsibilities for those on the IMAPs and CRPs is clearly delineated by the Commission, arbitrary changes, which were not publicly noted, have been made regarding the qualifications for Content Review Panel applicants. Excluding applicants holding a PhD degree in Mathematics Education in favor of university mathematicians with limited or no experience in K-12 education is a matter of great concern to those who spent considerable time and effort compiling their applications to serve, with expectations that their professional credentials would be reviewed in good faith.

According to the Education Code, the IMAPs, CRPs, and the Curriculum Commission all serve in an advisory capacity to the State Board of Education. Since 1995, input from advisory groups has been dismissed by the State Board. This unfortunate practice further limits the input of the education community and reflects a loss in terms of volunteer service hours and taxpayer expense. Perhaps the current mathematics adoption process will alter this precedent.

### **Recommendations by the California Mathematics Council**

The leadership of the California Mathematics Council (CMC) is hopeful that all mathematics programs submitted to the Curriculum Commission will undergo an objective and professional review process. The decision to adopt materials ultimately influences the quality of mathematics instructional materials selected by school districts. A responsibility such as this must be undertaken seriously and ethically.

Therefore, the CMC leadership recommends:

The documentation of a clear, detailed process for Instructional Materials Adoptions. This policy should be made available to all interested in the activities of the Curriculum Commission. Once developed, the process should be followed by all, with any changes publicly debated and publicly noted.

Formal procedures should be established for changing the materials review process. Any change should be subject to public discussion, with input from all stakeholders. The consistent use of an evaluation process for IMAP and CRP members would provide additional suggestions for improvements.

More K–12 educators (teachers and administrators) need to be recruited for IMAPs and CRPs. Their expertise in working with the children in our state must be acknowledged. Professional organizations serve a unique role in publicizing the need for educators in these advisory roles.

If you have any questions, please contact CMC through our [Home](http://www.cmc-math.org) page: <http://www.cmc-math.org>; or consult the California Department of Education's web site <http://www.cde.ca.gov> or the Curriculum Framework and Instructional Resources Division at 916-657-3023.