

State Instructional Materials Commission

Sunset Review



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Utah State Office of Education

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Instructional Materials in Utah

In 1907 the Utah State Legislature enacted a law creating the Utah State Textbook Commission thereby giving the jurisdiction for the choice of textbooks neither to the Utah State Board of Education nor the Utah State Legislature, but to a separate group of appointed educators and lay citizens. However, when the constitutional revision took place in 1987, the Utah State Textbook Commission was placed under the Utah State Board of Education to more properly align all of those working with education under one governing body. From the outset, making the choice of which instructional materials to use helped to guarantee quality instructional materials for Utah's students. In 2001, the name was changed to the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission.

Instructional Materials Adoption Procedures

The purpose of state adoption procedures for instructional materials is to provide a listing of the best available instructional materials and to eliminate those that are undesirable or of inferior quality. All educational patrons are encouraged to use this list to make preliminary decisions about curriculum to be used in the schools.

Instructional materials mean textbooks or materials used as, or in place of, textbooks and which may be used within the state curriculum framework for courses of study by students in public schools to include: textbooks, workbooks, computer software, online or Internet courses, CD's and DVD's, and multiple forms of communication media. These materials shall be designed for student use, may be accompanied by or contain teaching guides and study helps, and shall appear on the online, searchable database (RIMS) of state-recommended instructional materials.

Instructional materials are considered for all curriculum content areas once a year. Official announcement of upcoming instructional materials reviews are sent to publishers in June and December. An intent to submit materials is made by the publisher and samples of each title are received by the Instructional Materials Center. These materials are evaluated by the Instructional Materials Advisory Committees and recommendations are then sent to the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission for their perusal during their semiannual adoption meetings. The recommendations are then sent to the State Board of Education for final approval.

The following advisory committees are currently functioning:

ACADEMIC COURSES	APPLIED TECHNOLOGY COURSES
Bilingual Education/ESL	Business
Character Education	Agricultural Science
Driver Education & Safety	Business Education

Early Childhood Education	Family & Consumer Science
Educational Technology	General Financial Literacy
Fine Arts	Health Science & Technology
Foreign Language	Horticulture
General Financial Literacy - 12th grade	Marketing Education
Health Education & Fitness	Natural Resources
Language Arts	Plant & Animal Science
Mathematics	Technology Education
Physical Education	Trade & Technical Education
Science	
Social Studies	
Special Education/Resource Materials	

Instructional materials are adopted for a five-year period. School districts are requested to discontinue, at the earliest possible date, the use of instructional materials which have expired from the recommended instructional materials list (RIMs).

Districts are encouraged to use funds designated for state instructional materials for materials on the recommended instructional materials list, or for advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, concurrent enrollment, and college-level course materials. Use of these materials may require parental permission consistent with R277-474.

Responsibilities and Functions

With the statute change in 1987, the responsibility for the adoption of instructional materials at the state level changed to accommodate the law. The following responsibilities rest with the Utah State Board of Education (refer to Utah Code, Chapter 53A-14-101-106):

1. Recommend instructional materials for public schools after receiving adoption recommendations from the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission.
2. Award contracts for instructional materials to instructional materials publishers.
3. Set policies for instructional materials adoption procedures after receiving recommendations from the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission.
4. Appoint members of the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission and set the term of office of each member.

The Utah State Instructional Materials Commission has these responsibilities:

1. Review instructional materials and make recommendations to the Utah State Board of Education.
2. Accept proposals (bids) from publishers for instructional materials to be state adopted.

3. Appoint Instructional Materials Advisory Committees to evaluate instructional materials.
4. Recommend policies for instructional materials adoption procedures to the State Board of Education.
5. Review requests for renegotiation of instructional materials contracts and requests for instructional materials to be removed from contract.

Membership and Terms of Office of the Utah State Instructional Materials Commission

Members of the Instructional Materials Commission are appointed by the Utah State Board of Education to serve one four-year term. The membership of the Instructional Materials Commission shall be as follows:

1. The state superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee
2. The dean of the college of education of one of the state owned schools on a rotating basis
3. One school district superintendent
4. One secondary school principal
5. One secondary school teacher
6. One elementary school principal
7. One elementary school teacher
8. Five persons not employed in public education

Instructional Materials Adoption Categories

The adoption categories were revised in July of 2002 and include the following designations.

RECOMMENDED PRIMARY: Instructional Materials that are in alignment with content, philosophy and instructional strategies of the Core, may be used by students as principle sources of study, provide comprehensive coverage of course content, and support testing requirements.

RECOMMENDED LIMITED: Instructional materials that may be used or purchased and are in limited alignment with the Core or U-PASS requirements or are narrow or restricted in their scope and sequence. *If school districts or schools select and purchase materials recommended under this category, it is recommended that they have a plan for using appropriate supplemental materials assuring coverage of Core requirements.*

RECOMMENDED TEACHER RESOURCE: Instructional materials that may be used or purchased for or by teachers for use as resource material.

RECOMMENDED STUDENT RESOURCE: Instructional materials aligned to the Core that are developmentally appropriate, but not intended to be the primary instructional resource. These materials may provide valuable content information for students.

REVIEWED, BUT NOT RECOMMENDED: Instructional materials that may not be aligned with the Core, may be inaccurate in content, include misleading connotations, contain undesirable presentation, are in conflict with existing law and rules, or are unsuitable for use by students.

School districts are strongly cautioned against using these materials.

NOT SAMPLED: Instructional materials that were included in the publisher bid but were not sampled to the USOE or the commission.

NOT REVIEWED: The following materials are not reviewed, but may be purchased consistent with the law and Rule 277-469-6: Advanced Placement materials, International Baccalaureate materials, concurrent enrollment materials, library or trade books, reference materials, teachers' professional teachers' materials which are not components of an integrated instructional program. Galley proofs or unfinished copies are not reviewed.

SIMRA Membership

In recent years, Utah has held membership in the State Instructional Materials Review Association (SIMRA), a collaborative group of representatives from 21 states that all evaluate published printed and digital curriculum. Participation in this organization has allowed us to significantly upgrade our review process as we have learned about and compared our processes with those of other states. Utah's Curriculum Content Specialist has served as president of this organization for the past 3 years.

Conclusion

The Instructional Materials Adoption Process in Utah maintains local autonomy in the choice of instructional materials by providing a general list of approved materials. The adoption process also establishes, by contracting with each publisher, a price for instructional materials to be maintained throughout the adoption period, thus providing equality in cost for each school district. This system provides valuable information to all education agencies about the best instructional materials at the lowest price for Utah's students. While schools and districts are not required to select materials from this list, most, if not all, find it a great aid in finding worthwhile resources for instruction and learning. The Utah State Board of Education affirmed its support of the process in a resolution establishing its official position regarding local control of curriculum that was passed in July of 2014.

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USOE Instructional Materials Commission - www.schools.utah.gov/curr/IMC
State Instructional Materials Review Association – simra.us

17 Reasons for Reviewing Instructional Materials

1. It helps educators by providing lists of vetted materials for specific subject areas.
2. It assists publishers in providing a conduit to potential adoptees of instructional materials.
3. It secures economical pricing through the Favored Nation Clause, which guarantees the lowest price as contracted by any state.
4. It provides accurate information about the alignment of content to core standards and objectives.
5. It provides information about the structural quality of the book or resource.
6. It enhances awareness and expertise of those who participate in the review as well as those who are considering materials for adoption.
7. It provides tools and resources that can be used at the community or state level, thus supporting local control of the curriculum.
8. It provides sharable data about instructional resources that can be compared and shared with other agencies or organizations involved in the review process.
9. It provides recommendations to help educators select the very best materials for instruction.
10. It assists in protecting educators and students from encountering materials that may be of poor quality or which may violate community standards and law.
11. It provides publishers with valuable information about the quality of their products, and allows them to compare their materials with others available in the industry.
12. It encourages authors and publishers to keep materials current and relevant to the needs of students.
13. It provides an organized process for evaluating curriculum materials that saves time and money for local education institutions.
14. It provides information freely available to the public about instructional resources used in education.
15. It helps categorize resources and target them to meet specific objectives in instruction.
16. It encourages participation from credentialed reviewers to produce high quality reviews.
17. It provides unbiased reviews from educators that are not influenced by political, special or commercial interests.

Quick Facts about the 2014-2015 Instructional Materials Review

1. In fiscal year 2014-2015, 1922 reviews were entered into the RIMS database, representing 35 bids submitted by publishers
2. 101 highly qualified teachers and curriculum specialists participated in the reviews, each spending an average of 5 hours examining materials, for a total of 505 hours
3. 132 reviews were categorized as “Recommended Primary”; 384 were “Recommended Limited”; 108 were “Recommended Student Resource”; 295 as “Recommended Teacher Resource”; 192 were “Not Sampled”; 357 were “Reviewed, Not Recommended”
4. The total budget for the review sessions for fiscal year 2015 did not exceed \$8000
5. The fall review included 4 Open Education Resource (OER) titles for elementary science that are available to schools and district for less than \$5.00 per copy.
6. General subject areas for this year’s reviews included
 - a. Financial Literacy
 - b. Fine Arts
 - c. Health, Movement, Fitness
 - d. Information Technology
 - e. Language Arts
 - f. Mathematics
 - g. Science
 - h. Social Studies
 - i. Elementary/Early Childhood (all subjects)
 - j. CTE Agricultural Education
 - k. CTE Business Education
 - l. CTE Family and Consumer Sciences
 - m. CTE Information Technology
 - n. CTE Health Science
 - o. CTE Marketing Education
 - p. CTE Technology & Engineering
 - q. CTE Skilled & Technical Services

There are currently 9911 total reviews for 4109 titles from 227 publishers in the RIMS database.