



# The Art and Science of Curriculum Adoptions

Omaha Public Schools

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# Presentation Agenda

- Background
- Preparation
- Field Testing Logistics and Execution
  - Instrument Development
    - After Action Surveys
    - End of Field-Testing Surveys
- Decision Making
  - Post Field Testing Data Debrief with Field Testing Teachers

# Curriculum Adoption Overview

- Selection Committee Formed
- Request for Proposals Drafted and Released
- Materials Identified for Field Testing
- **Field Testing**
- Negotiations with Publishers
- Proposal for Adoption by Our Board
- Purchasing and Logistics of Delivery
- Implementation

# Curriculum Adoption Overview

- Utilizing ESSER funds and based on perspectives that our current materials were either out of date or did not reflect our students' demographics to the degree deemed acceptable, Omaha Public Schools has begun replacing curriculum in nearly all classes and at all grades.
  - 14 Separate Adoptions to Date Over Two Years and for Elementary and Secondary
  - From ELA, Science and Math to World Languages and Specialized Curriculum for Students with Disabilities
  - Supported by 617 Field Testing Teachers

# Adoption Overview: Background

- Initial Adoption: Elementary ELA (Fall 2019)
- Pandemic Closure and OPS Achieves One-to-One Status (2019)
  - Some challenges experienced with ELA materials and technology.
  - Technology not a component of our field-testing as we were not one-to-one yet.
- ESSER Funds Begin (Winter 2021)
- First Post-Pandemic Adoption: World Language & Math (Fall 2021)
- 2022- 8 Adoptions
- 2023- 6 Adoptions
- Current Adoption: ACP (Fall 2024)

# Learning #1

- Adjust efforts for the times (e.g., One-to-One; “materials should support asynchronous exploration/learning” for snow days, absence, or other disruptions to learning or need for academic recovery)
- Recount and learn from prior missed opportunities (e.g., significant focus on technology in Field-Testing following going One-to-One)

# Field Testing: Instrument Development

- Background and Preparation for Field Testing: Metacognition and Measurement
  - Initial Meeting with Selection Committee
    - Brainstorming Domains for Inquiry
  - Second Meeting with Selection Committee
    - Initial Item Drafting
  - Third, or Forth, or Fifth... or Tenth Meeting with Selection Committee
    - Cutting and Combining – Identification of redundancy first in under-identified domains that could be merged.

# Learning #2: Collaboration, Communication, and Coordination

- We (Research) have expertise.
- Our Curriculum Colleagues have expertise.
- Metacognition (i.e., thinking about our thinking and discussing it) allows these expertise to be merged and efforts improved.
- Both the Research Team and the Curriculum Team learned from the effort!
- Part of our success was due to coordination with all parties from both offices being able to jump in and support all areas of the adoption.



# Field Testing: Beginning with the End in Mind

- Field Testing Logistics and Execution
  - After Action Surveys
    - Sample: Field Testing Teachers
    - Weekly or Bi-Weekly After Action Survey (“What went well?”, “What was challenging?”)
    - Digest Provided Back to Teachers at End of Field Testing Period to Improve Accurate Recall
  - End of Field Testing Surveys
    - Sample: Field Testing Teachers, Learning Coaches, and Students
    - After a given material from a publisher was field tested, an omnibus survey comprised of questions aligned to our domains was sent to teachers.

# Learning #3: Beginning with the End in Mind

## Live without Regrets

- It is critical to consider any necessary “data splits” you will want and ensure you are collecting this information.
  - Example: “I will want to know what ‘class’ they field tested the materials in as they serve students of different need levels.”
- Consider even before you create a measure how you will display the data.

## How will you display the data at the end?

- It was important for us to use the same response anchors across all items in a domain whenever possible. This was aligned to how we presented the data in our “End of Field Testing” meetings with Field Testing Teachers

# Field Testing: Beginning with the End in Mind

- Post Field Testing Data Debrief with Field Testing Teachers
- Two Parts
  - Data Presentation:
    - Items were summed to the domain level.
    - Data reported relative to the percentage of “favorable” responses.
      - Agree/Strongly Agree Added Together
    - Data reported by publisher and then in comparison.
  - Data Discussion
    - Thereafter, questions were asked to clarify understandings from the data.
      - For example, a sole area where a publisher’s materials were ranked lower than others.



# Aftermath

- A full digest of anonymized individual item responses and any comments were provided to the Adoption Team.
- This data was used to identify any supplement needs and to inform subsequent negotiations with publishers that occur after our Board approves.

# Outcomes: The Story Until Now

- Quantitative
  - 14 Adoptions
  - Total of 72 surveys (Staff & Students)
- Qualitative

“I will tell you, at the end, seeing it at the district level, by the time we get to the where you’re implementing the materials — there really isn’t a question if we have the right materials for our kids.”

- Chris Schaben, ED of  
Professional Development