

Instructional Materials Committee Meeting Agenda and Notes

Date: Friday, February 13th, 2026

Time: 4 pm

Present (via Microsoft Teams):

Darcy Brixey, Chair, IMC

Caleb Perkins, Co-chair, IMC

Andrea Young, Notetaker, Instructional Materials Specialist

Cornetta Mendoza, Principal Representative (West Woodland Elementary)

Patrick Gray, Principal Representative (Catharine Blaine K-8)

Walter Chen, Parent Representative

Jesse Flores, Parent Representative

Kathleen Vasquez, presenter

Agenda:

- Welcome, Darcy Brixey
- Reminder of Instructional Materials Committee milestones in K-5 ELA adoption, Darcy Brixey
- Presentation of K-5 ELA adoption committee selection, Kathleen Vasquez

Action items:

- Vote to approve K-5 ELA selection and certify work of the adoption committee

Minutes:

Darcy Brixey kicked off the meeting by showing a graphic timeline of IMC milestones/action items throughout the K-5 ELA adoption. Notably, the IMC approval of the timeline, communication plan, and adoption committee membership on 5/12/25 and the IMC approval of the selection criteria on 6/16/25. She then turned over the meeting to Kathleen Vasquez to present.

Kathleen reviewed the categories the adoption committee settled on earlier in the process. The categories were Foundational Skills (30%), Comprehension (25%), Knowledge Building (22%), and Writing (23%). There were four cross-cutting criteria:

Culturally Responsive Practices, Oral Language, Assessment, Accessibility/Usability. She showed the ranked priorities and weighting (see percentages above). She mentioned the RFP process and said nine submissions were received. The adoption committee reviewed eight candidates because one was missing major technology components. Opportunities were provided for staff and families to review proposed curricula via websites and online

videos. The adoption committee collected survey data aligned with the criteria and then generated reports based on survey data. During round one of the review processes, they used the OSPI-required anti-bias screening tool and eliminated two submissions, leaving six candidates. The adoption committee conducted content reviews in what they called “expert teams.”

After evaluating the candidates, they ended up with three finalists: Amplify, McGraw Hill Emerge, and Arts and Letters/Really Great Reading. Thirty-two teachers field tested the curricula for 7 weeks. Field testing teachers represented all regions and all grade levels and consisted of 17 K-2 teachers and 15 grade 3-5 teachers. Field testers were required to teach the curricula as intended without supplementation. All field testers were observed at least once, and were required to sit on a panel, present to the adoption committee, and take a survey.

After field testing, round two of the review process began. During this stage they reviewed staff and family feedback by criteria and vendor, synthesized field tester survey and panel data by criteria and vendor, reviewed initial curriculum review data in context of what was learned during field testing, and they used evidence to score each of the criteria. They weighted the scores, calculated, ranked the finalists, and eliminated the third-place finalist. Kathleen shared some statistics on survey data about the candidates. Next, they mixed up their previous expert groups and did some cost/benefit analysis on the remaining candidates and ranked the remaining candidates. Six members voted against Amplify, and after the six members presented to the rest of the committee, two additional members voted against it. McGraw-Hill ended up being the finalist since it was the candidate most members could agree to. A number of the teachers objected to Amplify based on content issues, i.e., “limited uses of authentic texts,” “largely Eurocentric cultural framing”, and “limited teacher confidence due to publisher mistrust”. She indicated that there may have been some bias against Amplify based on teachers’ experience with other products used in the district from that vendor. They ranked McGraw-Hill highest in cost/benefit analysis because of these criteria: “Strong Systematic Foundational Skills Instruction,” “Robust Comprehension and Knowledge Building Structures,” “Consistent Writing Practice and Skill Growth,” and “Authentic and Culturally Inclusive Texts.”

She then took questions from the IMC. Walter Chen had a question about whether outside evaluations from groups like EdReports or other state education agencies were considered, since McGraw-Hill’s candidate was released last year (August 2025) and doesn’t have a lot of user feedback yet. Kathleen said the district policy is for the adoption committee to create the criteria. She said they considered and used criteria based on what was used by

sources like EdReports, but they didn't spend a lot of time looking at the conclusions of other groups. She said, based on her experience, they would have received a lot of parent complaints based on content in the Amplify curriculum. Caleb Perkins also said that EdReports serves a purpose but to echo a few things shared by Kathleen, while we care about and pay attention to the criteria used by sources like EdReports, we also believe EdReports criteria are missing some key components. For example, the criteria deemphasize the importance of cultural responsiveness and inclusiveness of materials in their ratings which is important to the district.

Patrick Gray asked about other ELA adoptions which had texts pulled due to complaints about content, and he asked if that issue was discussed regarding McGraw-Hill. Kathleen said they asked the SPS American Indian education and Ethnic Studies teams to look at the materials and give feedback. Kathleen said yes, while McGraw-Hill doesn't have a lot of feedback yet, the field testing done by teachers at SPS indicated solid growth in the 7-week period using that curriculum. They agreed that at the end of the day, teachers/field testers using the curriculum in the classroom were more important than professional reviewers, who haven't necessarily used the curricula in the classroom. Walter Chen said he agreed that curriculum is only as good as the teachers using it, and their confidence in using it.

Darcy asked if Kathleen could brief the IMC on professional development plans for the curriculum. Kathleen said a team of people have been working on the plan for PD, including Advanced Learning, SPED, and ELL departments. Initial use training starts in June 2026, and all K-2 teachers will have 6 hours of training, and then the initial use training. Grades 3-5 teachers will just have the initial use training because they don't need to have PD on phonics like K-2 teachers do. The ELA department will continue PD throughout the year and focus on planning, implementation, and UDL. They'll work with principals and give them PD throughout the year. There will be coaching for teachers, pending funding, in year zero and year one. Cornetta Mendoza asked about alignment in terms of communication with principals and teachers and asked if PD is mandatory for the new curriculum. Kathleen said Red and Yellow Wednesdays are SEA bargained, so they can't claim those days for PD for this curriculum. They want to incorporate the training hours during the school day, if possible, but some negotiation as to number of hours needs to occur before they begin training.

Jesse Flores asked how the district determines if the curriculum is working after it's adopted. Kathleen said the district has a research and evaluation department to evaluate how well it works and if professional development is adequate.

Darcy asked if the IMC could get a reminder of confidentiality, and Kathleen said there is an information embargo until the Board Action Report is published. Kathleen said the Board Action Report is being finished and will go to the board for the March 11 meeting.

Darcy called for a vote to approve the K-5 ELA selection and certify work of the adoption committee. Caleb Perkins moved to certify, and Patrick Gray seconded. The IMC voted unanimously to approve. Darcy thanked Kathleen and the IMC and adjourned the meeting at 5:01 pm.