

Designing Adoption Review Committees as Professional Learning Experiences



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PURPOSE

Adoption review committees are often positioned as decision-making bodies. High-impact districts design these committees as both decision-making structures and professional learning opportunities that build shared understanding of high-quality instruction and high-quality materials.

This shift ensures that the materials selected are not just compliant, but deeply aligned to the district's instructional vision and priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Ground the Work in Vision and Instructional Direction
- 2 Build Shared Ownership of Values and Priorities
- 3 Develop a Common Understanding of Standards and Benchmarks
- 4 Train for the Review Process and Roles
- 5 Calibrate Use of the Evaluation Tool
- 6 Build Structures for Consensus and Decision-Making
- 7 Prepare for Final Recommendation

1. GROUND THE WORK IN VISION AND INSTRUCTIONAL DIRECTION

Before engaging in materials review, ensure the committee has a deep, shared understanding of the district's instructional vision.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Engage the committee in exploring the district's vision for mathematics teaching and learning
- ▶ Surface what needs to change in order to fulfill the vision
- ▶ Connect vision to observable classroom look-fors

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ What must be true about instruction in our classrooms moving forward?
- ▶ What will students and teachers be doing differently?
- ▶ How should materials support this vision?

2. BUILD SHARED OWNERSHIP OF VALUES AND PRIORITIES

Committees must internalize the values that will drive decision-making, not just be aware of them.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Revisit stakeholder input, student data, and district priorities
- ▶ Identify criteria for high-quality materials
- ▶ Clarify trade-offs the district is willing or unwilling to make

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ What matters most for our stakeholders?
- ▶ Where are we unwilling to compromise?
- ▶ How will we prioritize when no program is perfect?

3. DEVELOP A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS

Effective evaluation requires a shared and accurate understanding of the standards, especially critical benchmarks.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Study priority standards and major work of each grade/course
- ▶ Identify historically challenging or high-leverage benchmarks
- ▶ Align understanding of rigor, coherence, and expectations

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ Which standards are most critical for student success?
- ▶ Where have students struggled historically?
- ▶ What does strong alignment to these benchmarks look like?

4. TRAIN FOR THE REVIEW PROCESS AND ROLES

Clarity on process builds efficiency, trust, and rigor in decision-making.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Define stages of the review process (screening > deep evaluation > consensus)
- ▶ Clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations within the committee
- ▶ Establish norms for collaboration and evidence-based discussion

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ What are our review stages, and what outcomes are expected in each?
- ▶ How will diverse roles strengthen our review process?
- ▶ How will we ensure decisions are grounded in evidence, not preference?

5. CALIBRATE USE OF THE EVALUATION TOOL

Consistency in how materials are evaluated is critical.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Study the evaluation tool together
- ▶ Engage in calibration using sample materials
- ▶ Discuss what constitutes strong, partial, and weak evidence

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ What does “meets expectations” actually look like?
- ▶ How will we ensure consistent scoring across reviewers?
- ▶ What evidence will we prioritize?

6. BUILD STRUCTURES FOR CONSENSUS AND DECISION-MAKING

Strong committees are intentional about how decisions are made, not just what decisions are made.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Define how consensus will be built
- ▶ Establish protocols for discussion and disagreement
- ▶ Clarify decision rules (e.g., consensus, majority, recommendation process)

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ How will we navigate differing perspectives?
- ▶ What does consensus mean for this group?
- ▶ How will we move from individual ratings to group recommendations?

7. PREPARE FOR FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The goal is not just evaluation, but a clear, well-supported, and defensible recommendation.

Key Moves:

- ▶ Synthesize findings across tools and reviewers
- ▶ Reconnect decisions to vision, values, and priorities
- ▶ Document rationale for transparency and communication

Guiding Questions:

- ▶ How does this recommendation reflect our vision and priorities?
- ▶ What strengths and limitations should we name?
- ▶ How will we communicate this to stakeholders?

FINAL THOUGHT

When designed intentionally, adoption review committees do more than select materials. They build district-wide capacity to recognize and support high-quality instruction, creating coherence between vision, materials, and classroom practice.

Adoption Review Committee Planning Worksheet

From Formation to Final Recommendation

PURPOSE

Use this tool to plan for the formation and facilitation of your adoption review committee. This worksheet is designed to support intentional decision-making and a coherent review process.

DESIGNING YOUR COMMITTEE

Representation and Perspective

Strong committees reflect a range of perspectives, experiences, and contexts across the district.

Plan for intentional representation across categories such as:

- ▶ Grade levels and courses
- ▶ Years of experience (new, mid-career, veteran)
- ▶ School sites or geographic regions
- ▶ Roles (teacher, coach, leader, specialist)
- ▶ Content expertise and certifications
- ▶ Student populations served (SWD, ELL, etc...)
- ▶ Demographics (race, gender, etc.)
- ▶ Instructional perspectives or approaches
- ▶ Any additional categories relevant to your district

For each category, consider:

- ▶ What representation is important?
- ▶ How will you ensure that representation?

Reflection:

Where might our default approach lead to underrepresentation, and how will we address that?

Formation Approach

Districts may form committees through application, recruitment, or a combination of both.

- ▶ How will you identify and select committee members?
- ▶ How will your approach support the representation priorities you identified above?
- ▶ How will expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments be communicated?

Key Milestones

Identify the major steps required to form your committee. These may include:

- ▶ Outreach or recruitment
- ▶ Application development or interest collection
- ▶ Application or candidate review
- ▶ Selection decisions
- ▶ Member notification
- ▶ Final confirmation of the committee

For each milestone, determine:

- ▶ When it will occur
- ▶ Who is responsible
- ▶ What needs to be completed

Review Committee Formation

Approximate Date	Goal / Key Event	Who is Responsible?

TRAINING AND MEETING SEQUENCE

Planning Your Sequence

Plan the sequence of meetings and trainings that will prepare your committee for strong decision-making.

Topics you may want to include:

- ▶ Vision setting
- ▶ Standards and benchmarks
- ▶ Process training
- ▶ Screening of materials
- ▶ Evaluation and calibration
- ▶ Consensus building
- ▶ Decision-making and final recommendation

For each session, clarify:

- ▶ What is the purpose of this meeting?
- ▶ What should participants know or be able to do by the end?
- ▶ How does this session prepare them for the next phase of the work?

Key Design Decisions

- ▶ Where will participants build shared understanding before evaluating materials?
- ▶ When will evaluation begin?
- ▶ How will you move from individual review to group decisions?
- ▶ Where will participants need more time or support?

Decision Points and Compliance

- ▶ At what points will the committee eliminate, rank, or select materials?
- ▶ How will decisions be made at each point?

Important:

If a meeting includes ranking, eliminating, or selecting materials, it must be publicly noticed and include a parent with reasonable access to the materials, in accordance with statute (1006.28).

- ▶ Which meetings will require public notice?
- ▶ How will you ensure compliance?

Timeline of Review Committee Meetings

Approx. Date	Topic / Purpose	Run Time	Additional Notes (audience, location, public notice, material needs, etc...)

READINESS CHECK

Before launching the review process, confirm:

- ☐ The committee is intentionally designed and representative
- ☐ The sequence of meetings and trainings is clear
- ☐ Decision points are defined
- ☐ Participants are prepared for their roles
- ☐ Compliance requirements have been planned for