Materials Selection Process Update

Dr. Torrey Palmer
Deputy Superintendent of Teaching & Learning
November 4, 2026

NEVADA
Department of Education

Agenda

Overview & Context

- Relevant Statute
- Interim Review Process
- Our Data & Priorities

Theory of Action

- Alignment Drives Instructional Coherence
- Emerging Vision of Instructional Excellence
- Theory of Action for Advancing Student Learning

Updating Nevada’s Materials Selection Process

- Ensuring a Strong Foundation
- Tools to Support Best-in-Class Materials
- Responsiveness to Ensure Agility

Materials Selection: NRS 389.850

NRS 389.850: The State Board shall:

1. The State Board shall make the final selection of all textbooks to be used in the public schools in this State, except for charter schools.

2. A textbook must not be selected by the State Board pursuant to subsection 1 for use in the public schools in classes in literature, history or social sciences unless it accurately portrays the cultural and racial diversity of our society, including lessons on the contributions made to our society by men and women from various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

3. Instructional materials, including, without limitation, a textbook, must not be selected by the State Board pursuant to subsection 1 for use in the public schools unless the State Board determines that the instructional materials accurately portray the history and contributions to science, the arts and humanities of the groups of persons described in NRS 389.061.

Materials Selection: NAC 389.854 & 389.856

Selection and Use of Textbooks

NAC 389.854 Committees to evaluate and recommend textbooks and electronic media: Appointment; membership. (NRS 385.080, 389.850) The superintendent of a school district must appoint a committee to evaluate and recommend textbooks and electronic media to be used in public schools before the district may forward any such recommendations to the State Board of Education for adoption.

Committee evaluation of textbooks. A committee established pursuant to NAC 389.854 shall review textbooks and submit to the Department of Education in the form prescribed by the Department an evaluation of any textbooks being recommended for adoption.

Interim Instructional Materials Adoption Process

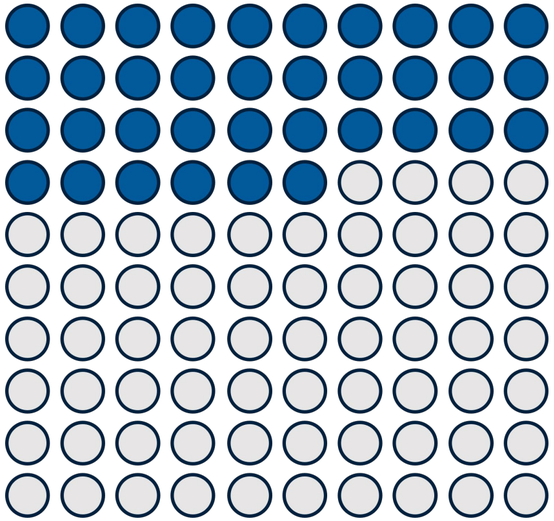
As outlined in Guidance Memorandum 26-05 and issued 02/06/2026**,** NDE and the State Board of Education implemented an **interim process to restart Nevada's instructional materials adoption process.**

The interim approach outlined a process to support timely access to instructional materials while a permanent statewide framework is finalized. In this process, LEA's would:

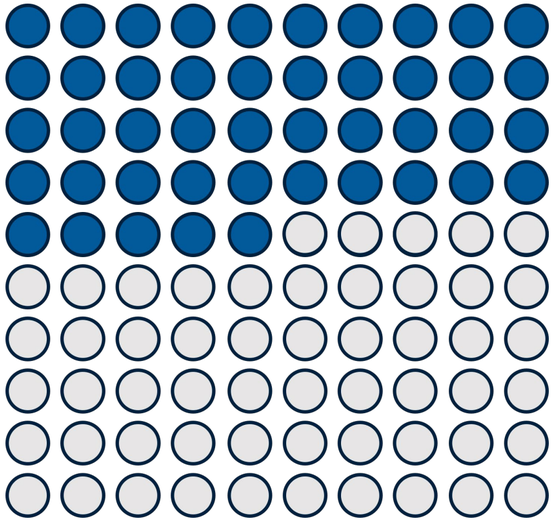
- Establish a Textbook Review Committee
- Conduct Review Using State Rubrics
- Mandatory Thresholds
- Community Review
- Submit Recommendation to the Superintendent
- Submission to NDE
- NDE Validation and Final Adoption
- SBE Approval

Review: 2025-2026 Proficiency Data

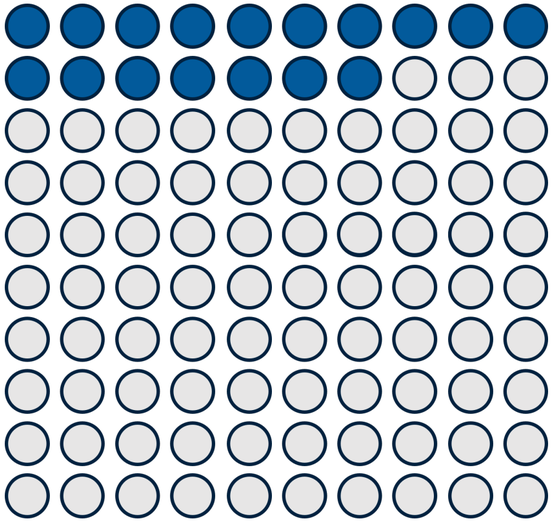
36 out of 100
3rd – 8th graders are
proficient in math



45 out of 100
3rd – 8th graders are
proficient in literacy



17 out of 100
5th graders are
proficient in science



We need a **statewide academic strategy** that will ensure we are growing proficiency so that more students are set up to be future-ready.

NEVADA Department of Education

STIP Priority 1: Strong Foundations



Build a coherent instructional system so every student experiences strong, grade-level instruction.

What does success look like?

Long-term success means NDE has increased:

- Pre-K access
- Grade 3 ELA proficiency
- Grade 8 Math proficiency

What does that mean for this year?

This year, NDE will commit to:

- Develop Nevada's instructional vision
- Design the statewide HQIM implementation strategy

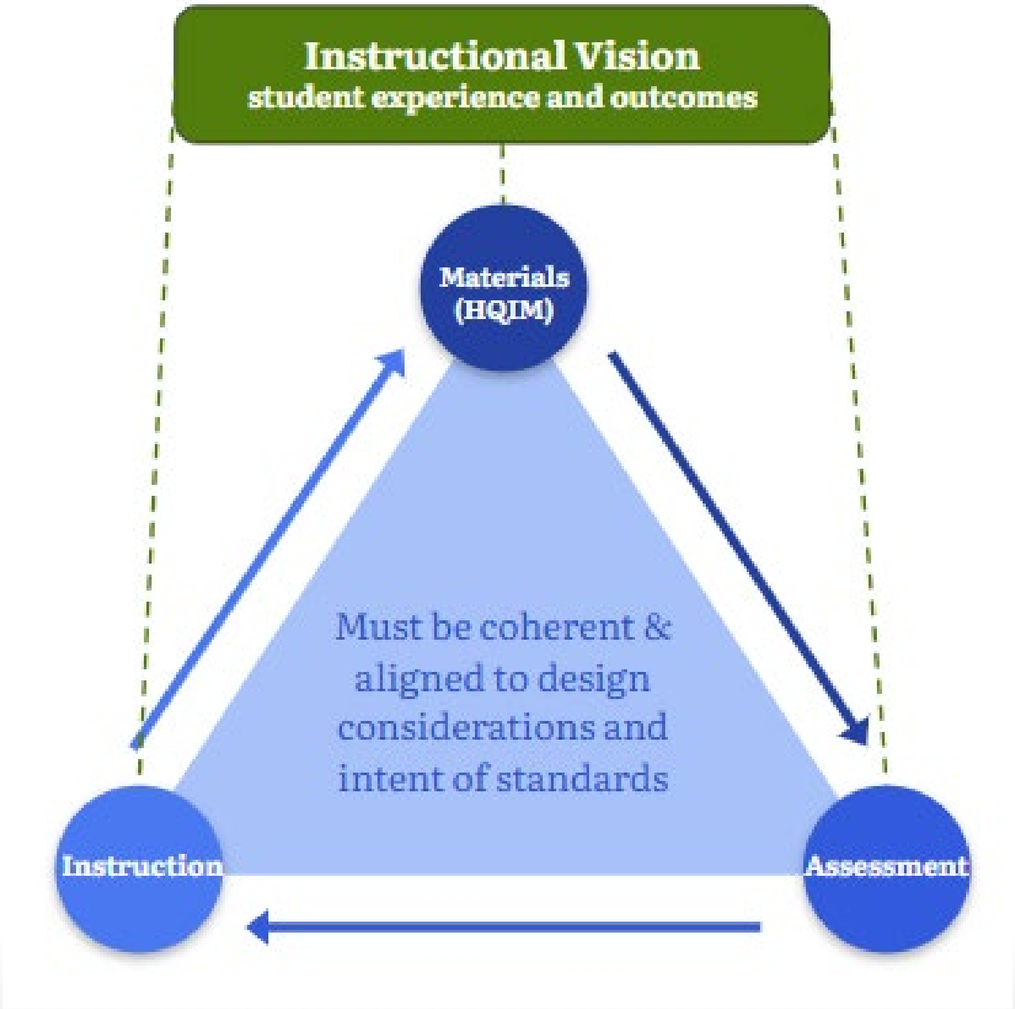
Ensure **students start strong** and **build the academic foundations** that deeper learning depends on.

NEVADA Department of Education

NEVADA
Department of
Education

Nevada's Theory of Action for Advancing Student Learning

Nevada's vision for instruction should drive alignment of resources and support.



"When systems are aligned, instructional coherence becomes sustainable, student experiences become more unified, and learning accelerates, especially for students who need the most support."

- Coherence by Design: Building Instructional Systems That Help Students Catch Up
- TNTP, 2026

NEVADA Department of Education

Nevada's emerging vision of excellent instruction

Literacy

In **literacy**, our students achieve grade-level proficiency and build confidence as readers, writers, and communicators in ELA and across content areas by:

Word Recognition

- Developing foundational literacy skills through systematic and explicit instruction in the early grades and targeted skills with adolescent readers.

Language Comprehension

- Actively reading grade-level, high-quality, complex text across genres (read aloud in early grades).
- Expanding their knowledge and vocabulary through content-rich texts.
- Building and demonstrating understanding of text through discourse and writing.

Mathematics

In **math**, our students achieve grade-level proficiency and build a positive identity and disposition toward mathematics by:

- Building grade-level conceptual understanding and numeracy, alongside procedural fluency and automaticity.
- Engaging in hands-on, complex, real-world problem solving.
- Justifying and evaluating their reasoning through mathematical discourse.

Theory of Action: Strong Instruction with HQIM

If *we build a shared vision of instructional excellence that reflects:*

- The major priorities of the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS)
- How students grow as readers, writers, problem-solvers, and learners across content areas
- What makes instructional materials and college- and career-ready (CCR) assessments aligned

and *create the conditions and practices that bring that vision to life in classrooms:*

- Consistent instruction with HQIM in every classroom
- Intentional time for teachers and leaders to engage in collaborative planning and coaching
- Preparation of units and lessons from the HQIM that ensures all learners are consistently engaged in grade-level instruction
- Regular observation, feedback, and coaching, grounded in HQIM, to strengthen instructional practice and reinforce high expectations
- Targeted supports to teachers and leaders through curriculum-based professional learning (CBPL) that strengthens knowledge, skills, and actions to improve their practice
- Intervention and extension support aligned to core instruction

Theory of Action: Strong Instruction with HQIM Cont..

and *use evidence of student learning to continuously improve by:*

- Reviewing student work to see how well students understand grade-level content and are meeting the analytical and conceptual demands of the standards
- Identifying student learning gaps and misconceptions, and planning to accelerate learning
- Determining whether interventions are working, and adjusting our approach when needed
- For students who are ready, providing opportunities to extend learning or demonstrate deeper understanding

Then *more students will demonstrate proficiency with grade-level content by:*

- Reading, writing, problem solving, and discussing grade-level content to build understanding
- Displaying precision to explain and justify their thinking both orally and in writing
- Doing the majority of the work of the lesson and persevering through challenge

Educator Feedback: Vision & Theory of Action

In October, NDE held literacy convenings with district teams in **Las Vegas**, **Reno** and **Elko**. Teams oriented to the emerging vision and Theory of Action (TOA) and then applied the vision and TOA to planning and observation of HQIM.

- I think it's good to have alignment and a common vision that supports it. The implementation to practice is a vital next step. What supports could be provided? – District Superintendent
- What I especially appreciate is the recognition that strong instructional materials alone aren't enough. Building teacher efficacy and agency through collaboration, intentional planning, coaching, feedback, and professional learning is equally important. I believe this framework does a wonderful job of connecting those pieces while keeping student learning at the center. – Principal
- We are doing this work. Having the affirmation helps us continue to promote literacy, good pedagogical practices and teacher autonomy with strategies on how to engage students with our HQIM. – Classroom Teacher
- We're doing lots well, but there are ample ways we can be more intentional about educator and student support related to instructional practice. It would be helpful to have additional convenings, including one specifically for administrators to support internalization practices and educator support. – District Leader
- The vision and TOA should be shared wide and far—not to just those who were fortunate enough to attend this convening. – Instructional Coach
- How can we best support the vision to help educators best support students by intentional planning around HQIM, high leverage practices, NVACS, using evidence of student learning, etc? - RPDP

Proposed Updates: Materials Selection

HQIM: Materials Matter

The research is increasingly clear that quality curriculum matters to student achievement. What's more, there is emerging evidence to suggest that quality curriculum has a larger cumulative impact on student achievement than many common school improvement interventions – and at a lower cost. – (Steiner, Magee & Jensen, 2018)

Teachers spend 7-12 hours per week searching for and creating instructional resources (free and paid), drawing from a variety of sources, many of them unvetted. (TNTP, 2018)

Teachers using aligned materials engaged students in mathematical practices at a significantly higher rate than teachers who did not have access to aligned curriculum. (Opfer, Kaufman, Bongard & Pane 2018)

When students who started the year off behind grade level were given more grade-appropriate assignments, stronger instruction, deeper engagement, and higher expectations, the gap between those students and their higher achieving peers began to narrow substantially. (TNTP, 2018)

Defining HQIM

High-quality instructional materials advance Nevada's vision for excellent instruction. To do so, they must be:

- Grounded in content-specific research and aligned to grade-level standards
- Coherent across grades and units of study
- Accurate and representative in their portrayal of diversity
- Inclusive of embedded, aligned assessments
- Responsive to the needs of diverse learners
- Supportive of teacher knowledge and practice

What are we solving for

We need a predictable and responsive instructional materials selection process that ensures districts have the tools and support to select and implement best-in-class materials to drive strong instruction.

This means:

1. Ensuring a strong foundation that guarantees quality
2. Tools to support the selection of and instruction with best-in-class materials aligned to a shared vision
3. Responsive to ensure agility with shifts in standards and materials to support future-ready learners

Ensure a strong foundation that guarantees quality

Nevada's **ELA/Literacy standards** mirror CCR standards of other states.

Nevada's **Mathematics standards** mirror CCR standards of other states.

Nevada's **Science standards** mirror CCR standards of other states.

Because Nevada's Academic Content Standards in ELA/Literacy, Mathematics and Science are aligned to nationally vetted college & career ready standards, we can leverage nationally-vetted tools & resources to strengthen materials' selection & implementation.

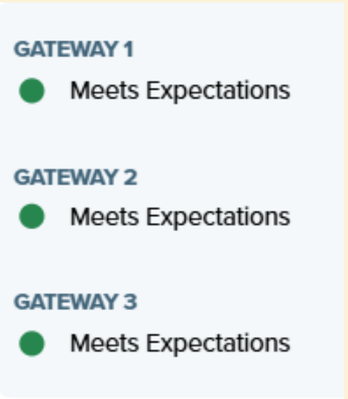
Ensure a strong foundation that guarantees quality

EdReports is an independent nonprofit organization that provides "by educator, for educator" reviews of K-12 instructional materials, functioning similarly to a "Consumer Reports" for school curriculum. Their review tools and process are aligned to Nevada's ELA/literacy, mathematics and science standards.

edreports

Recommendation #1:

Materials rated "All Green" on EdReports make up the floor of Nevada's Review Process*.



**Per NAC 389.854, districts would not be constrained to this state list, but would need to conduct a more thorough review if they select off-list.*

NEVADA Department of Education

Tools to support the selection & use of best-in-class materials



Recommendation #2:

NDE updates instructional materials review tools in ELA/Literacy, Mathematics & Science so they are content-specific* and draw from HQIM evidence and Nevada's emerging instructional vision.

**See Appendix for example of content-specific criteria that reflect Nevada's Academic Content Standards.*

NDE curates resources to support districts with rigorous review processes that support selection of HQIM and lay the foundation for effective implementation. Understanding the design principles of HQIM helps drive strong instruction.

NEVADA Department of Education

Consistent but responsive to shifts in the field

Growing proficiency requires a 3-5+ year investment in HQIM that drive strong instruction.

At the same time, standards and materials need to stay current to support future-ready learners.

Recommendation #3:

Develop a standards and materials review cycle that:

a. Supports the multiyear investment needed to grow student proficiency
b. Allows for for agility and responsiveness as new materials come out or standards need small adjustments to meet future-ready goals

Proposed Process Overview

Adopt a statewide process for selecting HQIM* in ELA, math, and science:

1. **Build a list.** NDE starts with materials rated all green on EdReports and confirms they meet Nevada's statutory requirements (i.e. NRS 389.850). *(Recommendation 1)*
2. **Districts select.** Districts choose from the list using supportive tools and implement with NDE support.
3. **Review off-list materials:** Districts that consider materials not on the list review them with NDE's content-specific tools. NDE validates the review, and the State Board approves. *(Recommendation 2)*
4. **Keep the list current:** NDE updates the list each year as new reviews come out, and revisits the process each time state content standards are reviewed. *(Recommendation 3)*

**For content areas outside of ELA, math and science: NDE will maintain an approved list aligned to the subject area's content standards; districts may select from the list or engage in deeper review.*

Timeline

2026-2027: Build the process (STIP Year 1)

- Finalize Nevada's instructional vision and HQIM definition
- Curate content-specific review tools for ELA, math, and science
- Set up the Nevada review for statutory requirements

2027-2028: Launch (STIP Year 2)

- Release ELA, math, and science lists
- Support districts with selection and implementation
- Districts use the list, or NDE's tools for off-list materials, at their next adoption

2028-2029 and beyond: Sustain (STIP Years 3+)

- Continue supporting selection and implementation
- Update the list each year as new reviews come out
- Begin the standards review cycle [first subject TBD]

NEVADA
Department of
Education

Questions & Discussion

NEVADA
Department of
Education

Appendix

Content Agnostic vs Content Specific Review Tools

Nevada's Current Content Agnostic Tools ask…	EdReports & Nationally Vetted Tools ask…
"Materials are accurate, well written, and appropriate for the grade level or span."	Do texts meet the complexity expected for the grade, and do they grow more complex over the year? (EdReports, IMET)
"Materials help students think more critically about a topic."	Do questions and tasks require students to use evidence from the text? (EdReports, IMET)
"Materials target the most critical and impactful content in all grade level standards."	Do students spend most of the year on major grade-level work, with a balance of understanding, fluency, and application? (EdReports math)
"Materials offer students opportunities to engage in meaningful, authentic learning activities that support course content."	Do real phenomena or problems drive learning, with students using practices, core ideas, and crosscutting concepts together? (NextGen TIME)