

Instructional Materials Purchase Guidance & Checklist-Using ESSA Section 1003 (SIG) Funds

This document provides guidance to schools receiving ESSA Section 1003 (SIG) funds to select and purchase evidence-based instructional materials (i.e. curriculum) that are instructionally aligned and proven to increase student achievement in the improvement areas identified in school comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) plans.

When observing a classroom, what does an observer look for to determine whether the instruction is high-quality? The image that comes to mind when thinking about this question represents an **instructional vision**. Instructional vision is the teaching and learning the observer expects to see in every classroom. Knowing and sharing this vision for instruction is critical to improving student engagement and achievement.

Yet, an **instructional vision** is not a collection of individual beliefs or teaching philosophies. It is what every classroom should be like in a school. It is a **clear, shared view** of what it means to teach and learn for understanding, and how this understanding becomes more layered and sophisticated over time. School principals must work with all stakeholders to bring a **common instructional vision** to the forefront and ensure their vision informs curriculum adoption, professional learning, and instructional practices. Often this type of vertical alignment is referred to as **coherence**.

An external third-person curriculum review analysis conducted by independent organizations such as [Ed Reports](#), [What Works Clearinghouse](#), and [Evidence for ESSA](#) provides an objective, unbiased evaluation of a school or district's curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment systems. The review determines the effectiveness, rigor, alignment, and overall quality of curriculum materials in relation to state standards, district priorities, and school improvement goals (i.e. [How to select a high-quality K-5 curriculum .](#))

As part of this process, reviewers analyze curriculum documents, instructional frameworks, assessment practices, classroom implementation, and student performance data to evaluate how well the curriculum supports teaching and learning for all students, including diverse learners requiring interventions or enrichment opportunities. The process also includes stakeholder feedback, classroom observations, and evidence of professional learning practices to assess consistency and fidelity of implementation.

The findings provide schools and districts with data-informed recommendations to strengthen instructional coherence, improve alignment across grade levels, increase academic rigor, and enhance equitable access to high-quality instruction. (Note, in some cases, states have adopted a specific process or offer specific guidance, [Colorado](#) is one such example.) Overall, the external review process supports continuous improvement efforts focused on improving instructional effectiveness and student achievement (i.e. [Selecting for Quality: 6 Key Adoption Steps.](#))

When using ESSA Section 1003 (SIG) funds, approval of the completed checklist (see next page) is required prior to and for purchase. The purpose of the checklist is to guide schools through the process of selecting and purchasing evidence-based instructional materials.

Instructional Materials Purchase Checklist-Using ESSA Section 1003 (SIG) Funds

SAU Name	School Name	Funding Year

Criteria	Select <i>Yes or No</i>	Evidence or Description
SAU Procurement Policy 2 CFR 200.318 to 200.327 DOE Followed SAU Procurement Policy related to purchasing curriculum and listed policy		
Selection Process <i>Aligned to Maine DOE Priorities</i> <u>Literacy Action Plan</u> <u>Numeracy Action Plan</u> <u>Coherence By Design</u> <i>Questions to consider:</i> <i>Did school conduct an educator-led selection process and were all stakeholders' voices honored?</i> <i>Did school analyze school/district/state level data to compare current practices and instructional strategies?</i> <i>Does chosen resource help deliver on the instructional vision and is it vertically aligned with other grade levels?</i> <i>How did school ensure that the vetting process was evidence based and aligned with the DOE priorities?</i>		
Professional Development/Training Is job-embedded PD included in the purchase and implementation plan?		

Implementation Plan Has school defined what a successful implementation looks like with action steps to ensure sustainability?		
Costs/Budget Does the budget include structures that provide ongoing training and resources for the duration of the implementation plan?		
SLT, School, & SAU Approval Has the selection and review process been approved by all stakeholders?		
Evaluation Plan Does school have a plan to evaluate the outcomes of this purchase?		

Required Signatures	
Superintendent's Name	Principal's Name
Superintendent's Signature	Principal's Signature
Date:	Date: