

# **CHOOSING COMMON CORE CURRICULUM: New York City's process to evaluate strong curriculum**

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# CORE CURRICULUM: CONTEXT & STRATEGY

*“There is strong evidence that the choice of instructional materials has large effects on student learning—effects that rival in size those that are associated with differences in teacher effectiveness.”*

*–Choosing Blindly: Instructional Materials, Teacher Effectiveness, and the Common Core  
(Chingos/Whitehurst; Brookings, April 2012)*

- Introduced in 2003 in order to provide a common set of rigorous, high-quality curricula and instructional materials beginning with mathematics, grades K-3 literacy, and classroom libraries
- Approximately 60% of schools participated in Core Curriculum each year prior to 2013-14
- In Fall 2012, released criteria to publishers around NYC’s expectations for curriculum materials and examined quality of publisher submissions and state and city materials in order to:
  - Ground the city in what quality curriculum looks like
  - Lead a national conversation around high-quality curriculum for new standards
  - Update Core Curriculum with highest-quality & most robust set of curriculum materials as choice for principals in 2013-14
  - Share analysis of all widely-used curriculum materials to support schools in making informed curricular decisions

# BUILDING EXPERTISE

Curriculum committees were made up of key internal experts, with national experts advising us around key big questions and most current research:

## Math

- How can a curriculum support a range of teachers at different levels of experience and skill?
- What do you think about adopting curriculum before seeing the PARCC assessments?
- What role do content cluster emphases play in curriculum?
- What is the thinking on spiraling and other curriculum approaches? What are the different philosophies about teaching math that we want to consider?
- What type of explicit connections should we look for beyond the progressions when we are looking for coherence?

## ELA

- How do you envision content knowledge being built over time? What should a scope and sequence look like?
- What do we look for in a curriculum that builds content knowledge while building foundational reading skills?
- How do you envision building foundational writing skills alongside critical writing skills?
- How do you envision building fluency after grade three?
- What place does speaking and listening have and how should it be represented effectively in a curriculum?