



A Note From Our Executive Director

February 13, 2026

Hi everyone,

Last month, I was at an event where a woman said something that kind of stopped me in my tracks. Confidently, assertively, she told me: you know how all curriculum selection and adoption really works? Those decisions are made by school boards, and big publishers have deep, longstanding relationships with board members—that's how things really get done.

I found myself thinking: *do I believe this? What evidence does she have that this is true? What lived experience makes someone feel so certain this is how curriculum selection works in 2026?*

I don't doubt that there have been moments in the past where this was true. And perhaps there are even places where it still happens today. But the data doesn't suggest that this is the case at scale. In fact, as my organization has [tracked instructional material selection and adoption](#) over the past five years, we've seen—and [spoken at length about](#)—an extreme diversification of this market. There are [more players, and new players](#) are gaining share faster than we historically saw.

And as I've worked with leaders from Florida to California and in between these past years, decision-making is increasingly shaped by instructional priorities and districts are building processes that surface quality and coherence. (Over the coming months, we'll be sharing more data that digs into what this looks like in practice—stay tuned.)

The notion that curriculum adoption really happens only in a back room between a sales rep and a school board member dismisses the thoughtful and intentional work I've seen curriculum and instruction leaders put into designing strong adoption processes.

When I talk to curriculum leaders about their adoption processes, I never hear frustration about decisions being taken out of their hands or overridden by school boards. Instead, I hear thoughtful conversations about how to structure the best possible process—one that ensures teacher buy-in to support implementation of what's being selected. In some cases, I've even talked with district leaders who are intentionally separating publisher brands and sales techniques from the process by skipping curriculum fairs or delaying sales presentations until rigorous analysis of materials has supported effective winnowing.

We have big problems to solve in education. From my corner of the work, I choose to focus on supporting leaders by elevating high-quality instructional materials, the instructional practices that must accompany them to truly see impact, and greater clarity in the data landscape so we can understand, monitor, and measure change.

Focusing on myths or practices that may have been present 25 years ago, but are no longer central to today's dynamics, pulls attention away from the work in front of us. When we perpetuate myths, we fragment our focus. Both data and observation can help dispel them.

From my point of view, that's one myth busted. What other myths are you hearing? I'd love to hear from you.

All the best,
Lora

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