

## Textbooks

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### Getting Help with Textbook Selection

Recent national meetings on improving the quality of textbooks have encouraged educators to learn more about how to evaluate and select textbooks. This includes state adoption committee members, district selectors, even teachers within a school if selection decisions are made there. What has not been provided, however, is advice on how to obtain the needed training. Where can you go for help? The following organizations may help you in your information search.

**Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).** 225 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; (703) 549-9110.

This column will appear in almost every issue of *Educational Leadership*. ASCD also is producing a videotape workshop (available later this year) to help districts establish better textbook selection policies and procedures.

**Center for the Study of Reading (CSR).** University of Illinois, Room 174, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, Illinois 61820; (217) 333-2853.

CSR publishes reports of the results of research on reading. One recent publication, *Becoming A Nation of Readers* (\$4.50), summarizes much of the latest thoughts about reading, including how students read, understand, or misunderstand writing in content textbooks. This book is well organized, and anyone who skims its contents will benefit.

CSR should have available 12 booklets on evaluating basal readers by the time this column is printed; topics include vocabulary, beginning read-

ing, and comprehension. Booklets on evaluating social studies textbooks are planned for 1986. Districts should write CSR to be placed on its mailing list.

**Curriculum Product Review.** Learning Periodicals Group, 19 Davis Drive, Belmont, California 94002; (415) 592-7810.

This publication is provided free to every school district and lists 100 to 150 new products monthly. Someone in your district is or should be receiving it. Although the reviews are promotional, they provide readers an excellent way to keep up-to-date with new materials available for each subject area.

**Curriculum Review.** 517 S. Jefferson Street, Chicago, Illinois 60607; (312) 939-3010.

This monthly journal includes reviews of current textbook and computer programs, as well as interesting articles about major K-12 subject areas. Reviewers are identified and rebuttal encouraged. This is a good starting point for any selection committee, well worth its \$35 subscription fee.

**Educational Products Information Exchange (EPIE).** P.O. Box 839, Water Mill, New York 11976; (516) 283-4922.

EPIE publishes *PROfiles*, or descriptive summaries, of textbook materials. Evaluative profiles for current science textbooks may be available this fall; plans are under way for developing profiles for other subjects. EPIE also has a text-test matching service that correlates K-8 math objectives to tests and textbook series; work has also begun on K-9 science.

The EPIEGRAM is a monthly publication that provides excellent information about current thoughts on text-

books as well as EPIE's progress; it is available for a \$40 membership fee. Be sure to keep in contact with this growing organization.

### National Subject Area Associations.

These associations usually offer guidelines for effective programs. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' *Recommendations for the 80's* is especially beneficial because the recommendations are few (eight) and specific. One member of each selection committee should join a subject area association to obtain summaries of the latest research and thoughts about that subject. These associations are usually willing to offer telephone assistance and may be able to direct your committee to a local source of information.

**Textbook Adoption Advisory Services (TAAS).** 25 B Esquire Drive, Manchester, Connecticut 06040; (203) 649-9517.

TAAS conducts workshops on how to obtain the best textbook programs to meet individual student and teacher needs. Workshops include sessions for administrators on organizing and directing selection committees, determining what is wanted and needed, forcing consensus, negotiating with publishers, and guaranteeing that the best materials are ultimately obtained. □

Please send questions, ideas, responses, or suggestions for this column to **Connie Muther**, Director, Textbook Adoption Advisory Services, 25 B Esquire Drive, Manchester, Connecticut 06040, or call (203) 649-9517.

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