K–8 Math Instructional Materials Adoption & Implementation

California School District Perspectives

JUNE 2026

Glen Price Group

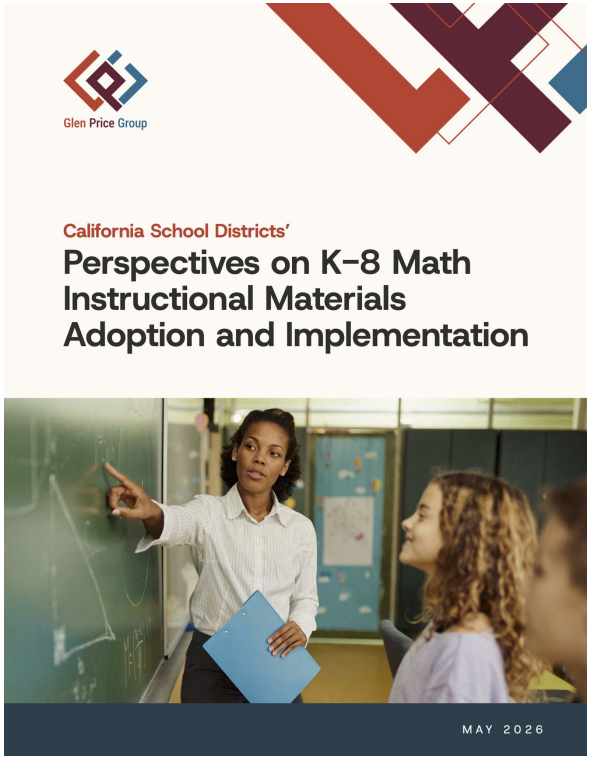
About the Glen Price Group (GPG)

The Glen Price Group (GPG) is a results-oriented consulting firm serving public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic foundations. We specialize in project management, strategic planning, research and data synthesis, community assessments, and executive-level facilitation. Our work is grounded in a commitment to improving outcomes through effective, efficient public systems, and we bring a practical, results focused approach that emphasizes clarity, transparency, and interest holder participation.

Our Mission: We inspire and support local, statewide, and national public and nonprofit organizations to maximize their results through effective collaboration, analysis, planning, and resource development. Through this work, we contribute to a more just and equitable world and improved outcomes for all people, beginning at birth.

Access the Full Report and Related Materials

To access the full report, along with an Executive Summary, this slide deck, a discussion guide, and other materials, visit: https://glenpricegroup.com/K8MathCA/



Context & Methodology

Key Terms

Math Framework: The 2023 California Math Framework provides guidance for implementing the content standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) (i.e., the California Common Core State Standards). Frameworks are developed by the Instructional Quality Commission (composed of 18 members who advise the SBE on matters related to curriculum and instruction) and adopted by the SBE.

Instructional Materials: Instructional materials, including curriculum, are broadly defined to include textbooks; technology-based materials; other educational materials; and tests designed for use by students and their teachers as a learning resource to help students acquire facts, skills, or opinions; or to develop cognitive processes. Instructional materials may be printed or non-printed.

California Context

California statewide math scores fall below the national average and persistent gaps exist in student proficiency and across racial and ethnic groups. Adopting and implementing high quality instructional materials can help contribute to improved student outcomes.

The California State Board of Education (SBE):

- Is responsible for supporting district selection and implementation of high-quality math instructional materials
- Revised the state's Math Framework and published a new framework in 2023
- Released a new list of 64 state-approved math instructional materials in 2025

Research Goals

- Answer key questions about how large California school districts approach adoption and implementation of K-8 math instructional materials
- Understand trends related to K-8 math instructional materials adoption and implementation at the district level and elevate pertinent outliers
- Provide recommendations based on these analyses to inform California's state level policy makers, philanthropic organizations, County Offices of Education (COEs), school districts, professional learning, providers, and publishers/developers

Research Design

Three phases of research:

- Landscape analysis (literature and artifact review)
- Discovery interviews with educational leaders
- Survey and interview responses from school districts serving K-8 students with the high total enrollment and high (~50+%) enrollment of Black, Latinx, and/or Free and Reduced Price Meal (FRPM) eligible (i.e., low-income) students

Survey Sample

GPG identified a list of 92 target districts, by including:

- All districts in the top 125 by total enrollment with 40+% Black or Latinx AND 40+% FRPM eligible
- All districts in the top 125 by total enrollment with 50+% Black or Latinx OR 50+% FRPM eligible
- Districts in the top 175 by total enrollment with 50+% Black or Latinx AND 50+% FRPM in the northern part of the state (north of Sacramento) (+2 districts)

GPG conducted an 18-week effort to engage representatives from the 92 districts (August 12 through December 6, 2025)

Participants

45 school districts participated (36 survey responses and nine interviews), representing 49% of our target school districts.

Participating districts represented **over one million California students** (1,080,079 student enrollment in 2024-2025) in large districts with high percentages of Black students, Latinx students, and students who are eligible for FRPM.

Districts represented 19 counties from across the state.

Key Findings – Adoption

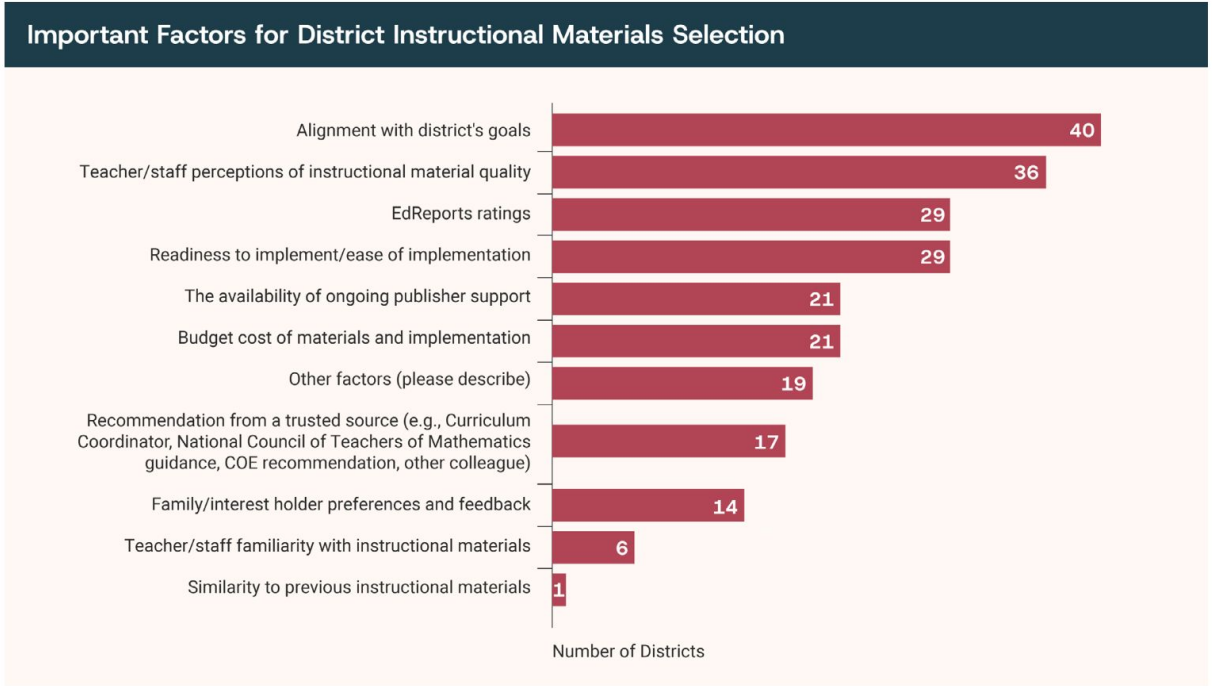
Findings: Adoption Processes – Timeline

- The majority of districts (71%) reported their math instructional materials had been in use for at least six years.
- The majority of districts (81%) were in the midst of an adoption process or anticipating starting an adoption process prior to the 2027-2028 school year.
- Among these districts, most (64%) are in the early phases of the adoption process.

Findings: Adoption Processes – Instructional Materials Selection

Most districts ranked the following factors as important to their selection of math instructional materials:

- Alignment with district goals,
- Teacher/staff perceptions of math instructional materials quality,
- EdReports ratings, and
- Readiness of materials to implement.



Findings: Adoption Processes – Interest Holder Engagement

- The most common mechanisms for teacher and administrator engagement were **committee participation** and the **piloting** of math instructional materials.
- Most districts reported an intention to utilize **more than one method** to solicit teacher and administrator input.
- Districts also noted the value of **soliciting input from the students, families, and communities** they serve through **surveys, meetings or events for community members** to learn about materials and offer feedback.

Findings: Adoption Assistance

- Districts noted the importance of several resources, including the **Math Framework, County Office of Education (COE) support, and EdReports**. Collaborative networks and peer learning opportunities as well as meetings with vendors were reported as additional sources of support by some.
- Approximately one third of districts requested access to **more resources to help them vet math instructional materials**.
- Despite no dedicated funding from the state for adoption, **only 6 districts indicated funding as an area of need** - specifically funding to compensate advisory board members, hire substitutes so that teachers can engage in professional learning, and to support math instructional materials piloting.
- A few districts mentioned that **greater access to training opportunities and partnerships or networks** focused on math instructional materials adoption would be helpful to them.

Key Findings – Implementation

Findings: Implementation

- The majority of districts provided some professional learning or coaching opportunities to support math instructional materials implementation.
    - Among districts that provided professional learning **only 28% explicitly referenced ongoing professional learning**.
- The majority of districts reported **relying on publishers and in-house district staff to provide curriculum-based professional learning**. Most of these districts utilized both, rather than keeping all professional learning in-house or relying solely on publishers.
- A smaller number of districts also relied on their COE or other external providers to meet their professional learning needs.

Findings: Implementation Challenges

- Common implementation challenges included:
  - **Lack of time** (either because of limited professional learning days or because of the inability to remove teachers from the classroom)
  - **Lack of substitute teachers** to create time for teachers to engage in professional learning
  - **Difficulty shifting teacher mindsets**
- A few districts elevated costs as a primary limitation or challenge, though other limitations such as the substitute teacher pool could be linked to budget constraints and potentially alleviated by additional funding.
- A quarter of districts (28%) reported no limitations or challenges, or were uncertain of what their challenges might be.

Findings: Implementation Assistance Requests

- Support to address **funding challenges** (26%), usually in reference to another specific need such as coaching or release time for teachers.
- Support to ensure the participation of all teachers in professional learning, including **release time and substitute coverage** (26%); and, support for **ongoing professional learning**, rather than one-off or short-term (e.g., first year only) training (19%) were also trends.
- Support to implement **coaching or train-the-trainer models** (19%).
- **Implementation monitoring tools** (e.g., rubrics, walkthrough models, reflection tools, or administrator feedback systems) (19%) and **implementation support tools** (e.g., pacing guides or model lessons) (23%)
- Support for **collection and analysis of student assessment data** (16%) and expanded access to **publisher support** (10%), including for ongoing professional learning.

Opportunities for Impact

Opportunities: Instructional Networks

1. **Build on the success of the math instructional networks** focused on adoption support by extending existing networks and creating new networks (to expand reach) to support piloting and implementation.
    - Implementation networks could **provide opportunities for districts to learn from experts and each other** about high-impact professional learning strategies and innovative approaches to navigating resource constraints.
2. Support math instructional network leaders or external consultants to design and provide a large scale webinar or video series to **ensure wider dissemination of the tools and strategies these networks can provide**.

Opportunities: Statewide, Regional, and Local Leader Roles

3. **Build the capacity of COEs**, individually, or as part of the Statewide System of Support to support district selection, piloting, and implementation.
4. Equip COEs to develop resources (e.g., tools and templates) that **address their local context and facilitate peer learning opportunities** for their districts by:
    - Convening a COE learning community to share best practices and build capacity,
    - Supporting COEs to convene communities of practice, composed of district teams, to learn from and support each other, and
    - Establishing a Networked Instructional Community (NIC) of COEs to work with implementation science experts and implement continuous improvement (i.e., plan-do-study-act) cycles to improve their support at the district level.

Opportunities: Working With Publishers

5. Work directly with publishers to build their capacity to provide ongoing professional learning and to **refine professional learning opportunities to reflect the context of California**, and to the extent possible, the context of individual districts
6. Work with a select group of publishers of high-quality K-8 math instructional materials to **develop curriculum-aligned professional development plans, modules, and other resources** that districts can implement within their own internal professional learning infrastructure.

Opportunities: Assessment Resources & Financial Advocacy

7. Support the CDE to **create and disseminate a toolkit** and corresponding visual that supports deeper understanding of the five criteria of the Math Framework.
8. Support a statewide agency to **conduct and share deeper evaluations of math instructional materials**.
9. Create a tool, to supplement EdReports, that **assists districts in narrowing the list of options** based on specific district priorities.
10. **Establish statewide or regional learning communities** with affinity groups for districts in different stages of instructional material selection and the implementation process.
11. Support an advocacy campaign to **educate the legislature about the need for and potential impact of additional funding** for districts to adopt and implement high-quality math instructional materials.

Opportunities: Communications for Awareness Building

12. **Build awareness of existing tools, templates, resources, and opportunities**, through effective communications with teachers, administrators, professional development providers, and other intermediaries.
    - Communicate through trusted sources, including op-eds in education publications; presence at education conferences; and listserv announcements in collaboration with state agencies and intermediaries, COEs, and other partners.
13. **Develop an annotated resource inventory** to describe and link to existing resources, networks, and technical assistance providers.
    - **Disseminate the inventory through an online resource hub**, such as California Educators Together, which can be used to facilitate discussion groups, channels, and message boards to support greater connection and cross sharing among districts.

Future Research Opportunities

1. Identify and map the math instructional networks, initiatives, and other structures to identify redundancies, **ensure districts know what resources are available**, and provide more guidance and support.
2. Conduct case studies of district adoption processes to **highlight "bright spots,"** elevate how districts address specific priorities and put forward models.
3. **Study innovative practices to embed professional learning into instructional time**, including the use of technology; inquiry cycles; and cross-grade collaboration.
4. **Identify low- and no-cost strategies** to help districts select high-quality instructional materials, test the identified strategies, and promote lessons learned at scale.
5. Fund a research project that **targets smaller districts and/or charter schools across different regions of the state to understand how their experience differs** from larger districts and identify any common needs and opportunities.

Discussion Questions

- Which findings or opportunities do you resonate most with?
- How can you incorporate the results of this report into your work related to K-8 math instructional materials adoption and implementation?
- What opportunities identified in the report seem most ripe for action?

Thank You!

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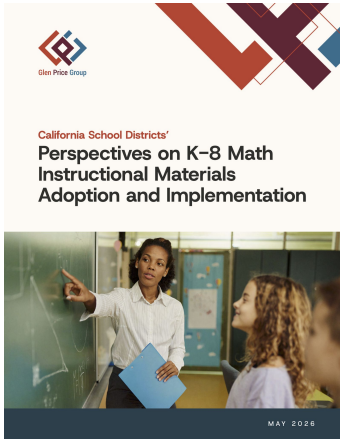

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