PARTNERSHIP
FOR LOS ANGELES SCHOOLS

FROM ADOPTION TO IMPACT

Leading Equitable Implementation of High-Quality Math Instructional Materials in LAUSD

Introduction

For decades, math outcomes in California have reflected deep and persistent inequities, with the COVID pandemic reversing years of progress for Black, Latino, and multilingual learners (MLL).[1] [2] Schools, particularly in high-need communities, continue to face increasing barriers to student success. Key among them is that instructional materials– textbooks, workbooks, and assessment materials– often perpetuate outdated instructional practices. Many instructional materials were not designed to meet the needs of California's students, who are some of the most ethnically, socioeconomically, and linguistically diverse students in the country. As school district leaders prepare for the first statewide math adoption in ten years, we have the opportunity to redefine what effective, equity-centered curriculum and instruction look like, and to maximize the impact on math achievement for all students. This once-in-a-decade adoption is more than a curriculum decision; it is a chance to rewrite the story of math learning in California and close opportunity gaps that have persisted for generations.

At the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, we see the adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) as crucial to advancing our mission to transform schools to revolutionize school systems, empowering all students with a high-quality education. The Partnership is one of a few nonprofits in the country that co-manages schools with a public education system, in this case, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). We serve approximately 12,200 students across 20 schools in Boyle Heights, South Los Angeles, and Watts, leveraging this unique role to improve student outcomes while influencing change across LAUSD and beyond.

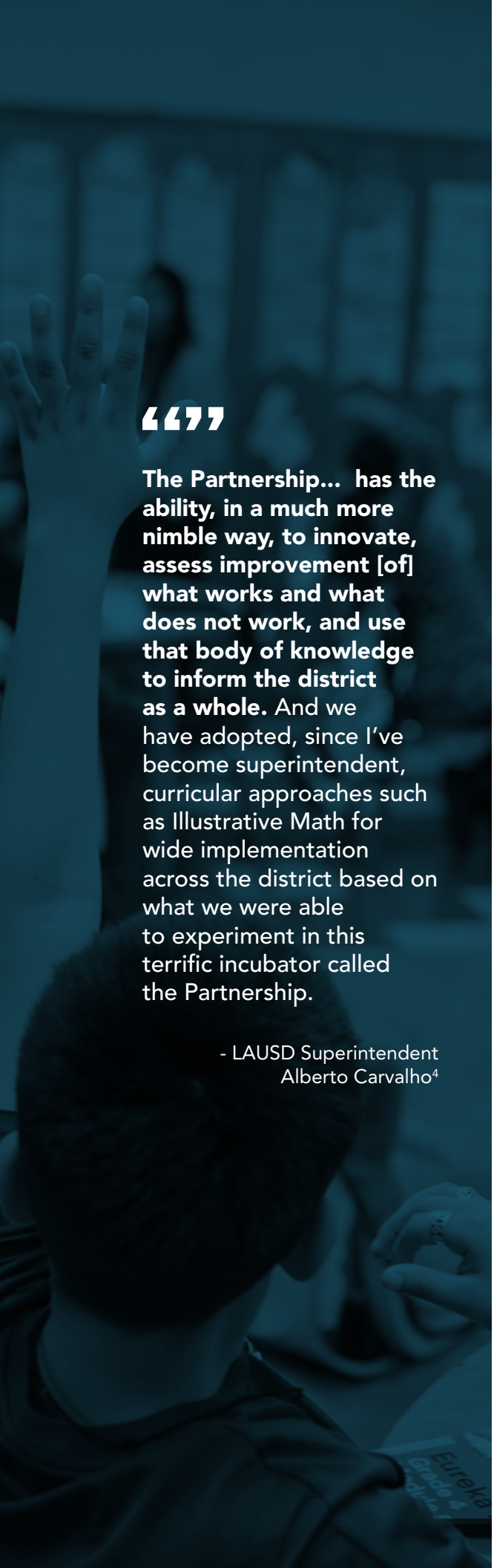
Since 2015, the Partnership has been demonstrating how sustained investment in high-quality curriculum and implementation systems can accelerate math achievement. With institutional and financial support from LAUSD, the Partnership pioneered the implementation of high-quality math materials in our network schools, pairing curriculum adoption with a comprehensive set of supports such as coaching, professional learning, and collaborative implementation structures. According to data from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), math proficiency across schools in the Partnership network has nearly doubled over the last ten years. Within one to four years of implementation, most campuses saw double-digit gains in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in math, demonstrating the transformative impact of adopting HQIM supported by strong implementation systems. At one elementary school in the Partnership network, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards in math rose from 17% to 36% during the first year of HQIM implementation.[3]

Over time, and with an investment from the Gates Foundation, the Partnership and LAUSD have taken promising curriculum implementation practices across the district. LAUSD led the districtwide expansion through an opt-in strategy, establishing infrastructure to provide guidance, funding, contracting, and leadership expectations. The Partnership supported implementation in our network of schools and contributed tools, lessons, and coaching capacity to the district at large.

[1]Iwunze, U., & Prunty, E. (2023). Student Achievement on California's K–12 Assessments [Fact sheet]. Public Policy Institute of California. https://www.ppic.org/publication/student-achievement-on-californias-k-12-assessments/

[2]The California Department of Education (CDE) defines the term "multilingual learners" (MLL) as students who "have developed or are developing proficiency in both English and one or more other languages, which may be their home language" (https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/documents/mleleducation.pdf). The term encompasses a spectrum of English Learner typologies: English Learner (EL), Limited English Proficient (LEP), International Newcomer, Long-term English Learner (LTEL), Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), and Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP). Within this inclusive definition is English Learner (EL), a federally protected class of students who have the right to programs and services to support the development of English proficiency. https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/civil-rights-laws/race-color-and-national-origin-discrimination/race-color-and-national-origin-discrimination-key-issues/equal-education-opportunities-english

[3]California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics: Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/DashViewReportSB/



> **The Partnership… has the ability, in a much more nimble way, to innovate, assess improvement [of] what works and what does not work, and use that body of knowledge to inform the district as a whole.** And we have adopted, since I've become superintendent, curricular approaches such as Illustrative Math for wide implementation across the district based on what we were able to experiment in this terrific incubator called the Partnership.
>
> - LAUSD Superintendent Alberto Carvalho[4]

LAUSD prioritized developing leadership from regional directors (formerly called local districts) and school principals, and developed comprehensive guidance for schools to foster schoolwide agreement to opt into the new, high-quality math curriculum. In addition to leadership support, LAUSD provided one-time funding for new materials and professional development.

In addition to the Partnership's 20 network schools, our Curriculum Systems Advising team currently supports 46 LAUSD schools with HQIM implementation. We provide direct services, including coaching and professional development, to 26 secondary schools, and coordinate support for an additional 20 secondary schools through Leading Educators, a contracted partner organization. We also support LAUSD in collecting implementation data and convene regional and district implementation teams to assess implementation progress and results. Today, LAUSD is a statewide leader in HQIM implementation in math, and boasts the highest academic achievement in district history, most recently exceeding the district's annual growth target in pursuit of its goal of reducing the Smarter Balanced math distance from standard by 40 points.[5]

In this report, we share lessons and guidance for district and school leaders seeking to adopt and implement HQIM with purpose and equity. Drawing from the Partnership's experience in LAUSD, **we illustrate how thoughtful adoption and sustained implementation can transform math teaching and learning**– not only improving outcomes, but reshaping how students see themselves as mathematicians and problem-solvers.

Adopting and implementing HQIM is a pivotal opportunity to accelerate achievement in high-need schools and close persistent opportunity gaps, especially for Black students and multilingual learners. The choices made now by system leaders, educators, and policymakers can transform this adoption process into a catalyst for lasting change.

[4] Jacobson, L. (2026, January 28). As L.A. Reading Scores Rise, Former Chief Roy Romer's Tenure Offers Déjà Vu– And a Warning. The 74. https://www.the74million.org/article/as-l-a-reading-scores-rise-former-chief-roy-romers-tenure-offers-deja-vu-and-a-warning/

[5] Los Angeles Unified School District. (2025). "News Release - Los Angeles Unified Achieves Breakthrough Academic Performance." https://www.lausd.org/apps/news/article/2088452?categoryId=23516

Curriculum Adoption: An Ongoing Process of Learning and Alignment

November 2025 marked a pivotal time in California, as the State Board of Education (SBE) released the first list of approved instructional materials since the 2023 adoption of the California Mathematics Curriculum Framework (Math Framework), which serves as guidance for educators to help students meet California's rigorous math learning standards.[6] From this list of 64 instructional materials, school districts across California are tasked with selecting a curriculum that best meets the needs of their students.

LAUSD's current process for curriculum adoption is guided by the Math Framework, a strong equity lens, district-created rubrics, engagement of various interested parties, and training for the selection committee. As LAUSD and other districts across the state continue in the adoption process, we offer lessons from the Partnership's experience that may be useful to district and school leaders as they design equity-centered adoption and implementation processes.

At the Partnership, we learned early that effective adoption begins not with materials, but with a **student-centered vision**. Leaders must ask:

- What do we want students to experience in math classrooms?
- Who has historically been left behind in terms of math opportunities and learning?
- How should math instruction challenge, affirm, and empower all students?

Once that vision is clear, the question becomes: **Which materials will help us move toward that vision, given our current context and capacity?**

[6] California Department of Education. (2025) 2025 Mathematics Instructional Materials Adoption: Programs Adopted by the State Board of Education on November 6, 2025. https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ma/im/2025mathpublishers.asp

The Partnership's Vision for Math Instruction

Guiding Questions:

How might we design a student experience in mathematics that…

1. amplifies the genius of all students?
2. makes mathematics a problem-solving journey rather than a binary sorting mechanism of "math people" or "non-math people"?
3. guides all students toward discovering the beauty, power, and joy of mathematics?

Vision Statement:

Together, we will create a network of classrooms with a culture of teaching and learning that engages all students with relevant, grade-level work and empowers students as confident, independent learners, critical thinkers, and problem solvers.

Building a Student-Centered Vision and Theory of Change

The first step is to establish school-based cross-functional adoption teams composed of school leaders, teachers, coaches, and families, who work together to examine student data, assess system readiness, and define evaluation criteria. This builds ownership from the start and ensures that the voices closest to classroom instruction shape the non-negotiables when deciding which curriculum to adopt.

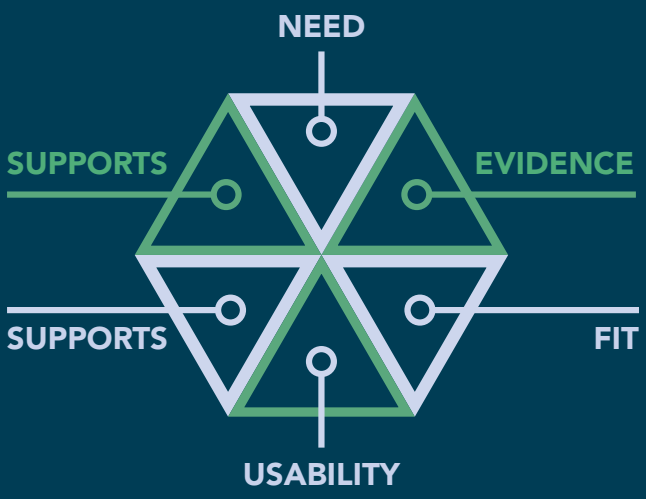
For the Partnership team, developing a clear, locally-grounded vision meant reimagining math as a language of critical thinking and creativity, rather than a gatekeeper subject that sorts students into "math people" and "non-math people." We worked to develop a vision for math instruction to guide priorities and decision-making.

Determining these priorities required deep reflection on our community's unique strengths and needs in areas such as teacher readiness, available resources, and district-level systems. With this clarity, the Partnership created a theory of change that positioned **adoption as the first step in a multi-year transformation process to build coherence, develop teacher capacity, and strengthen implementation supports over time.**

Knowing What to Look For

The new Math Framework promotes a deeper, conceptual understanding of math instruction where teachers center student thinking, ideas, and reasoning. The right HQIM can play an important role in making progress in this direction and advancing practices that lead to a transformative impact on student engagement and achievement. **However, no curriculum will be perfect, so district leaders must be strategic with their selection, taking into account the assets and needs of their students, families, and educators.** District leaders should start by identifying their non-negotiable priorities when selecting materials. The following tools are available to help determine top priorities:

1. **Defining High Quality Instructional Materials for Mathematics: Centering the Assets and Needs of Multilingual Learner and English Learner Students** from the **HQIM Learning Partners Coalition (HQIM-LPC)** provides criteria that prioritize instructional supports for historically and presently underserved student groups, including Black, Latino, and multilingual learner students.
2. **The Hexagon Tool: An Adaptation to Support Instructional Materials Adoption and Implementation** from the **California Curriculum Collaborative** combines instructional material indicators (evidence, usability, and supports) and system indicators (needs, fit, and capacity) to evaluate how instructional materials fit within the local context.



[Figure 1: California Curriculum Collaborative's Hexagon Tool

3. Step One of the **Math Adoption Toolkit** from the **English Learner Success Forum (ELSF)** provides a guided analysis of existing policies and practices in place to support students, and how to determine priority areas, non-negotiables, and "nice to haves."
4. **Five Phases of Successful Materials Adoptions** from **UnboundEd** guides district instructional leaders through establishing a vision, determining local priorities, narrowing down options, selecting best fit, and preparing for implementation.

Prioritizing Aspects of HQIM: The Partnership's Must-Haves

With a clear vision, inclusive process, and shared understanding of what high-quality materials should accomplish, the Partnership moved from exploration to decision-making. The team identified the following essential features that would most directly advance our instructional vision and support teachers and students in achieving it:

1. Intentional Instructional Shifts Toward Deeper Mathematics Learning

The previous curriculum the Partnership used before starting our HQIM journey was based on math standards from 1997 and focused primarily on procedural fluency.[7] In contrast, the California Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, and more recently, the California Math Framework, call for a more balanced approach, one that develops students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and real-world application. To support teachers in making these instructional shifts, the Partnership prioritized curriculum materials that actively engage students in thinking, discussing, and deeply understanding math. This led to a focus on materials that include **structured lesson plans**, rather than traditional textbooks, because they promote student ownership of learning and maintain consistency across classrooms.

2. Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

In addition to prioritizing student agency and understanding, the Partnership team sought materials that would empower students to apply their learning in meaningful ways to their own lives. To align with our instructional vision, the team focused on selecting a curriculum that reflects students' lived experiences and fosters active engagement with the world beyond the math classroom. This shift required resources that support productive struggle and collaborative problem solving, leading the team to narrow our search to **problem-based** math curricula.

3. Language Supports for All Students

While language supports are essential for multilingual learners, they benefit all students by building the academic vocabulary needed for deep, conceptual understanding. Although several curricula include built-in math language routines,[8] the Partnership team prioritized those with additional scaffolds to ensure all students could engage meaningfully with the content and with their peers. This focus allowed the team to further narrow our search to curricula that provide **strong language supports** and equip teachers with the tools to make math accessible for every student.

4. Alignment with Professional Learning

Throughout the adoption process, the team remained mindful that materials alone could not deliver their goals for math achievement. Effective implementation supports, such as coaching and professional learning opportunities, are essential. With this in mind, the team prioritized materials that not only aligned with our vision but also offered **clear implementation guidance and opportunities for ongoing teacher development**.

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[7] National Research Council. (2001). The Strands of Mathematical Proficiency. Adding It Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics (Chapter 4). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://www.nap.edu/read/9822/chapter/6#117

[8] Zwiers, J., Dieckmann, J., Rutherford-Quach, S., Daro, V., Skarin, R., Weiss, S., & Malamut, J. (2017). Principles for the Design of Mathematics Curricula: Promoting Language and Content Development (Version 2.0). Understanding Language / SCALE, Stanford Graduate School of Education. https://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-11/Principles%20for%20the%20Design%20of%20Mathematics%20Curricula_1.pdf

After reviewing materials through this lens, the Partnership selected Illustrative Mathematics (IM), a rigorous, student-centered curriculum that emphasizes exploration and discovery. While no single curriculum could meet every need, IM aligned most closely with the team's top priorities at the time and the unique strengths and needs of the students we served.

Assessing a Curriculum's Strengths in Our Priority Areas

EdReports publishes two complementary reports, based on two distinct sets of criteria that align with the HQIM indicators in this report: **Core Content Review** and **Multilingual Learner (MLL) Review.** IM is highly rated on EdReports, meeting expectations of all three of the Core Content Review Criteria: Focus and Coherence, Rigor and Mathematics Practices, and Teacher & Student Supports.[9] [10]

In addition to Core Content, it is imperative to evaluate HQIM for how well they meet the needs of multilingual learners. EdReports has recently introduced the MLL Review tool, which is still in the early stages of implementation. As of the publication of this report, IM is one of the few curricula that have been reviewed so far.

IM's MLL Review report highlights areas where the curriculum lacks explicit guidance on instructional strategies and assessment practices for supporting MLL students.[11] As more curricula are reviewed, the field will gain deeper insight into where materials can be improved and how different programs compare in the quality of supports and assessments of both content and language. Even an exceptional curriculum like IM does not yet fully meet every indicator in the MLL report, which highlights the importance of targeted planning, coaching, and professional learning for teachers as they work to bring any set of HQIM to life for their students.

Investing in Implementation

Thoughtful adoption is only the first step. The real work– and the real opportunity– lies in implementation, where the pursuit of equity is ultimately realized or undermined. HQIM are only as powerful as the systems, people, and practices that bring them to life. The question for school and district leaders is not simply what to adopt, but how to implement with depth, coherence, and fidelity so that all students, especially those historically underserved, experience math as meaningful, rigorous, and empowering.

Implementation as the Equity Work

Implementation is not a mechanical process but a cultural shift. It requires district and school leaders to invest in teachers' growth, build systems for collaboration, and create conditions where students' voices and thinking drive instruction. While we did not begin our work using this specific framework, TNTP's 2025 report, *"The Opportunity Makers: How a Diverse Group of Public Schools Helps Students Catch Up– and How Far More Can,"* has given us clear language and categories that help articulate the conditions we have long observed as essential.

[9]EdReports. (2025) "Imagine IM: 6th to 8th Grade Report Overview." https://edreports.org/reports/detail/imagine-im/sixth-to-eighth

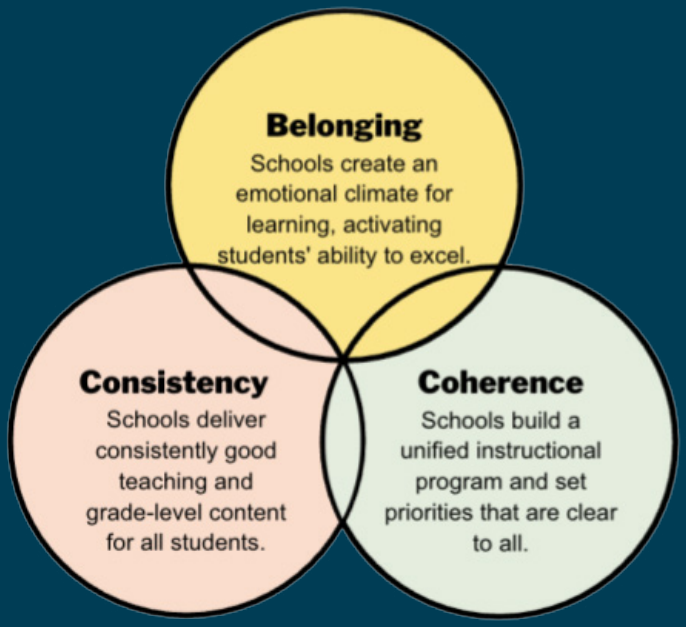
[10] Please note that at the time of publishing, no California-specific products on the state-approved list have been reviewed by EdReports.

[11]EdReports. (2025) "Imagine IM: 6th to 8th Grade - Multilingual Learner Supports Report" https://edreports.org/reports/detail/imagine-im/sixth-to-eighth/multilingual-learner-supports

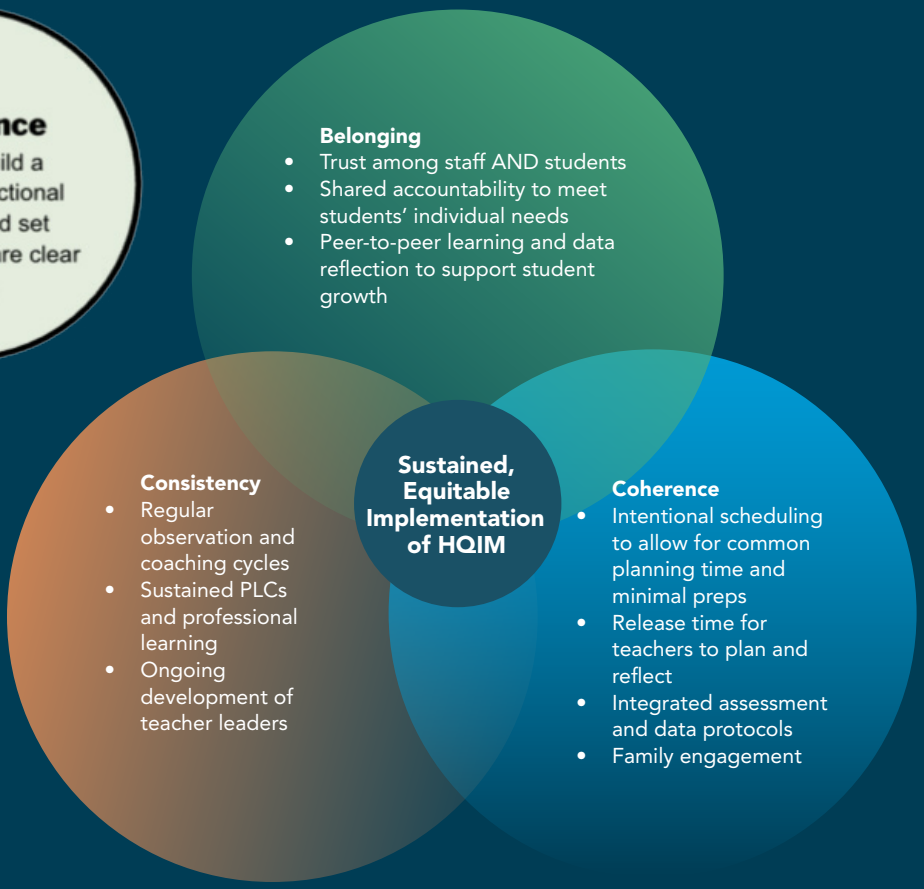
In this section, we leverage the Action Guides in TNTP's Opportunity Makers Toolkit, which offer school leaders concrete steps in establishing structures and routines to support intentional, equitable, and sustained implementation. The framework helped us organize these conditions into three categories: **belonging, consistency, and coherence**. These pillars reinforce one another: belonging builds trust, consistency builds skill, and coherence builds sustainability. Together, they transform classrooms and, ultimately, outcomes. TNTP advises that adopting HQIM is one way to drive consistency and coherence in math instruction, two of the three key characteristics of trajectory-changing schools.[12] Here is how we have organized the Partnership's existing work using this framework:

Figure 2: TNTP Framework in Partnership Context

TNTP's elements of trajectory-changing schools:



Partnership Adaptation (based on success in Partnership schools) :



[12] TNTP. (2024) "The Opportunity Makers Toolkit." https://tntp.org/toolkit/the-opportunity-makers-toolkit/

We are spotlighting two LAUSD schools, listed here under pseudonyms, that have created environments aligned with the framework above. These schools have seen significant improvements in math outcomes with the implementation of HQIM.

School Profile #1: **Kennedy Middle School**[13]	School Profile #2: **Doyle Middle School**
Region: South Los Angeles **Enrollment:** 630 **Low Income:** 98% **English Learners:** 28% **What makes Kennedy special:** Distance from Standard (DFS) on Smarter Balanced assessment for math improved by 38.8 points since 2018.	**Region:** East Los Angeles **Enrollment:** 800 **Low Income:** 96% **English Learners:** 21% **What makes Doyle special:** In the Partnership network; has a full-time, in-house math coach to support teams with IM implementation.

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The leadership of the school invests the time, and of course, the money, to create the space and time for teachers to participate and get to know each other.

- Kennedy Administrator

BELONGING: Building Cultures of Trust and Collaboration

Action Guide Focus Areas:

- Focus on Individual Knowledge
- Focus on Individual Needs
- Focus on Individual Growth

Belonging is the foundation on which teams can develop the coherent systems and consistent practices needed to sustain effective implementation. Kennedy Middle School leaders have invested time and resources to cultivate a climate of trust and peer-to-peer learning among teachers. When teachers experience this culture first, they are better equipped to implement it intentionally and seamlessly within their classrooms.

The culture of belonging is reinforced by collective curriculum-based goals. At the start of implementation, the school's leadership team set goals and clarified that teachers are expected to implement IM with integrity. An open-door observation culture strengthens this spirit, as teachers regularly invite colleagues into their classrooms to exchange feedback and enhance their practice. Trust is key, enabling teachers to embrace vulnerability and grow.

[13] Both school names in this section are pseudonyms, and demographic figures have been rounded to protect anonymity.

When new teachers join the team, teacher leaders focus on fostering trust by creating a welcoming, supportive atmosphere and serving as mentors. They partner one-on-one with new staff to help them navigate school systems and structures, collaboratively explore the curriculum, and co-develop lesson plans. Challenges are met with curiosity, and accomplishments are celebrated collectively. Every educator is seen as an essential part of the shared vision for student success.

Belonging among teachers directly shapes classroom culture. The instructional shifts for rigor outlined in the Math Framework require teachers to rethink outdated practices–such as rote memorization and teacher-centered instruction–in order to support students in their productive struggle toward conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency, and application. A teacher at Doyle Middle School discussed the additional patience required to facilitate lessons that teach students to learn from their mistakes, which takes longer than with their previous curriculum. By modeling and encouraging productive struggle, teachers inspire students to embrace feedback, take academic risks, and actively engage in their own learning journeys.

"Students have become more confident in their thinking, more confident in sharing answers and being vulnerable with sharing their thinking with the class."

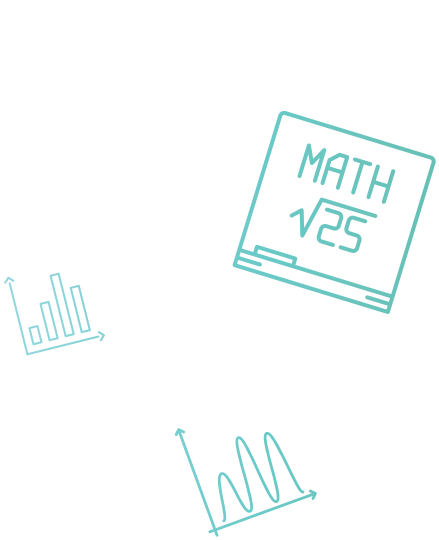
- Doyle Principal

Because open dialogue and student collaboration are encouraged in the curriculum, students see their peers as a resource in the classroom, fostering a supportive and interactive learning environment.

Implementation requires time, space, and relational trust. Investing in teacher collaboration and psychological safety is as important as investing in materials themselves.

"We have to be open and trust our colleagues, that whatever feedback we get [is] being given to us professionally, and we trust that it will actually work. But we also have to be open-minded enough to include that feedback in our pratice.

- Kennedy Math Teacher



CONSISTENCY: Creating Systems for Continuous Growth

Action Guide Focus Areas:

- Consistent Content
- Consistent Collaboration
- Consistent Reinforcement

Consistency ensures that the promise of high-quality instruction reaches every classroom, not just those led by exceptional teachers. Schools that have improved most significantly in math outcomes have established deliberate systems for collaboration, feedback, and shared accountability.

Effective implementation at Kennedy is made possible through systems designed to achieve consistency in content, collaboration, and reinforcement. The site budget secures funding to support all the necessary components of implementation, including professional development opportunities, paid collaboration time (release days), and staffing capacity for ongoing feedback and coaching cycles.

Consistent collaboration at Kennedy allows teacher leaders and coaches to guide grade-level teams in data chats and reflection sessions to track progress toward individual, team, and department goals. Through this consistent use of instructional data, teachers reinforce the belief that their shared efforts to progress on IM indicators directly impact student success. Teachers rely on a consistent cadence of release time, observation, and feedback, and meet with professional learning communities (PLC) to consistently analyze data and cultivate relationships.

Department chairs and grade-level leads provide peer support by leading collaborative planning time for teachers and serving as a liaison between the teaching staff and school's administration. The school IM Champion oversees the operations of implementation, liaises with district leaders to improve central supports, and attends IM Leadership sessions along with the administrative team.

"Our teacher leaders have been crucial in both helping us build credibility with the teachers... and then also having them serve as advocates for teachers has been really important... My role has been to meet with them as often as possible to help guide the direction of how the curriculum is implemented.

- Kennedy Administrator

A Note About Family Engagement

The Partnership network includes two schools that are piloting the California Family Math Initiative (CFMI). The pilot program prioritizes coherence at home– one of the TNTP Action Guide Focus Areas– by promoting math talk and everyday math at home, engaging families in classroom-aligned math activities, and fostering school-level support for Family Math.[14] This includes a math-focused "Raising a Reader" program, which provides families with math-themed books, games, and guides in a "Family Math Home Library Kit," as well as multilingual guides for parents to incorporate math into everyday activities.

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Every student can be good at math and achieve more in school and life when every family can practice Family Math every day. We're the center of making that happen.

- Center for Family Math[15]

A Partnership math coach provides observation protocols, collaborative planning structures, reflection and progress monitoring tools, professional development, and side-by-side coaching to Doyle's math team in order to ensure consistency. The coach leads monthly unit launches and provides teachers with department-created training focused on teaching practices in the classroom.

"My role is to make sure that they feel very confident with that curriculum. . . sitting with teachers, observing them. . . helping them identify blind spots [in] their practice, and giving them opportunities for re-engaging how they teach students."

- Partnership Math Coach

Together, the cohesive team of teachers, teacher leaders, coaches, administrators, and support staff advance their mission to implement IM with integrity. With the right investments and structures in place, the **trifecta of consistent professional development, PLCs, and coaching** allows for sustainable educator growth and opportunities for students to thrive.

COHERENCE: Aligning Leadership, Professional Learning & Vision

Action Guide Focus Areas:

- Coherence in Class
- Coherence at School
- Coherence at Home

Coherence aligns vision, curriculum, and daily instruction. It ensures that everyone on the instructional team understands what great math instruction looks like and how their role supports it. Teachers are grounded in a clear, collective understanding of the department's vision, with strong buy-in at both the grade level and department level. Coherence is cultivated through leadership's commitment to framing the curriculum as the foundation, not the ceiling, and embracing a culture of continuous growth to strengthen HQIM implementation.

[14] "Family Math" is defined by the Center for Family Math as an approach that integrates mathematical exploration into everyday family activities like cooking, play, and shopping, which enables children and caregivers to engage in culturally relevant, confidence-building math learning experiences.
[15] Center for Family Math. (2022) https://familymath.org

Kennedy's school leaders prioritize common planning time when building the master schedule, as well as limiting the number of IM preps a teacher has, so more time can be given to reflection and improvement of each course they teach. These logistical considerations support real-time collaboration, allowing teachers to address learning gaps and implement interventions quickly. This shared approach not only uplifts students but also builds teacher capacity and resilience.

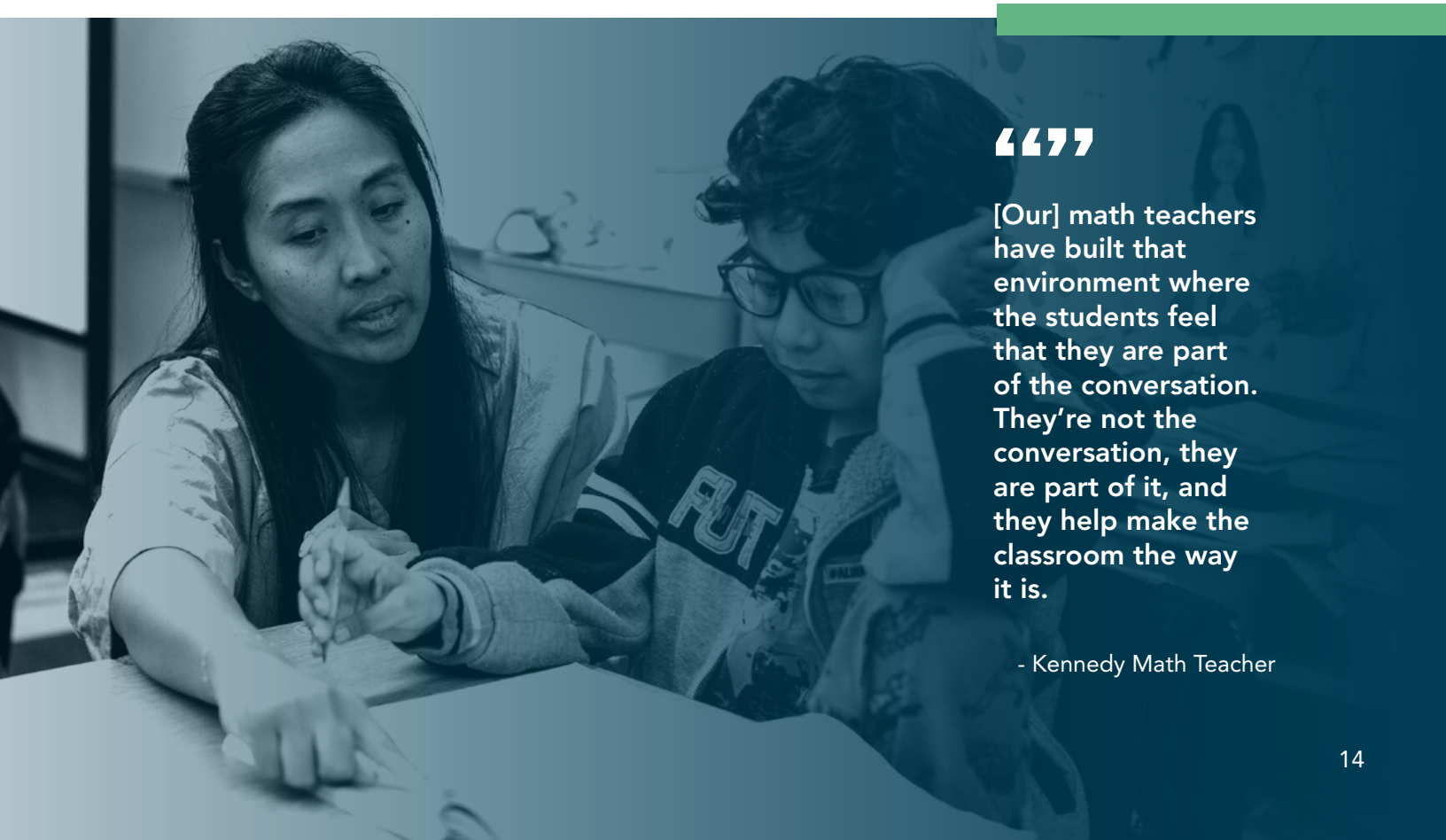
"I can see that it would not have been possible for me to do on my own, so I'm just grateful to benefit from the systems that were already established."

- Kennedy Math Teacher

To ensure the team is aligned, school leadership has established a structured data protocol to analyze a broad range of assessment and instructional data, including Smarter Balanced summative assessments and Interim Assessment Blocks, i-Ready assessments, and curriculum-embedded unit assessments. During data chats, grade-level teams begin by examining the successes of exceptional learners, collaborating to understand what contributed to their growth and how those strategies can be expanded to benefit all students. With a shared sense of purpose, teams work together to translate these insights into effective, responsive instruction.

Students and families are active partners in the learning process. Teachers maintain open, transparent communication about student progress, helping students set goals and take ownership of their learning, and empowering families to support learning at home. Students clearly understand how their current performance aligns with grade-level standards on the year-end Smarter Balanced assessments. This level of data transparency fosters accountability and motivates students to stay engaged in their learning.

Coherence in class, at school, and at home enables both educators and students to feel aligned and confident in their roles, supported in their growth, and empowered to pursue meaningful, goal-driven learning together.



"[Our] math teachers have built that environment where the students feel that they are part of the conversation. They're not the conversation, they are part of it, and they help make the classroom the way it is.

- Kennedy Math Teacher

Equitable Implementation Leads to More Equitable Results

HQIM only delivers on equity when implementation is intentionally designed for students who have been furthest from opportunity. Across both our network schools and the additional 26 LAUSD schools where we support implementation of HQIM, we pair HQIM coaching and professional learning with focused supports for priority student groups: Black students, MLL students, and students with disabilities.

Across the 26 LAUSD schools directly supported by the Partnership's Curriculum Systems Advising team, 6th-8th grade students in all three priority groups are narrowing the achievement gap in math and seeing gains in Distance from Standard (DFS), a measure of student growth on SBAC assessments in relation to grade-level standards. Black students grew **21.87 points,** multilingual learner students grew **10.40 points,**[16] and students with disabilities grew **9.96 points** closer to grade-level standard in math.[17]

Recommendations

Equity-centered adoption and sustained implementation of HQIM must be a priority in order to revolutionize how students learn math across California, and it requires action from decisionmakers and educators at every level, including publishers. We offer a series of recommendations based on our experience directly supporting implementation of HQIM in math across our network of 20 schools and 46 additional LAUSD schools outside of our network.

Recommendations for State and System Leaders

1. Codify Equity-Centered Standards for HQIM

Adopt a statewide definition and quality criteria for HQIM that emphasize rigor, language supports, and access for historically underserved students, including Black and MLL students. Ensure that HQIM guidance and rubrics focus not only on alignment to standards but also on alignment to student experience and teacher support.

2. Fund Implementation, Not Just Adoption

Provide multi-year funding for districts to sustain coaching, professional learning, and teacher collaboration, rather than one-time adoption grants. State investments should incentivize districts to treat adoption as the first step in long-term implementation planning.

3. Create a Statewide HQIM Learning Network

Establish a cross-district network to share tools, data, and lessons on adoption and implementation. This would accelerate statewide learning and reduce inequities between well-resourced and under-resourced districts.

[16] 10.40 point growth in CAASPP Distance from Standard refers to the "English Learner" subgroup.

[17] California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics: Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/DashViewReportSB/

Recommendations for District and School Leaders

1. Adopt Materials with Equity and Collaboration at the Center

Establish inclusive adoption teams that bring together teachers, coaches, administrators, and families to identify local priorities and non-negotiables. Use research-based tools, such as the Hexagon Tool and Math Adoption Toolkit to identify suitable materials based on context, capacity, and community needs.

2. Align Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Leadership Systems

Develop an instructional vision using tools like UnboundEd's Five Phases of Successful Materials Adoptions. The vision should connect curriculum to coaching, data systems, and leadership development. This coherence ensures that HQIM is not experienced as "another initiative" but as the foundation for instructional excellence for as long as the selected curriculum is in use.

3. Invest in Teacher Leadership and Learning Structures

Protect time for collaboration, planning, and data reflection. Create or strengthen math leadership roles and site-based coaching positions to ensure ongoing support for implementation. Use the Research Partnership for Professional Learning (RPPL) resource, "Defining Curriculum-Based Professional Learning: Building a Common Language" as a guide for high-quality professional learning centered on HQIM.

4. Foster Cultures of Belonging and Shared Ownership

Build conditions for psychological safety and collective accountability so that teachers see themselves, and their students, as capable of continuous improvement. Use the Partnership's "Enabling Conditions for Initial Curriculum Implementation" to create and sustain system-level conditions that must be in place for HQIM implementation to succeed.

Recommendations for Publishers and Content Developers

1. Center Language and Access in Curriculum Design

Publishers and content developers must embed robust language supports and culturally responsive examples into all HQIM products. EdReports' MLL Review Criteria and the California Curriculum Collaborative's Criteria for Review of Instructional Materials' Success in Addressing MLL Linguistic and Instructional Needs both include specific indicators to bolster supports to ensure that all students can access math success in both content learning and academic language goals.

2. Partner for Continuous Improvement

Publishers, districts, educators, and families should co-create feedback cycles that use data and classroom insights to refine both materials and professional learning supports over time.

3. Expand Equity-Focused Curriculum Review Criteria

EdReports, and other curriculum review organizations, should expand their evaluation frameworks to more explicitly address the needs of diverse student populations in California, including Black and MLL students. This includes accelerating MLL Review evaluations to provide timely insight during the current adoption process and adding criteria that assess cultural and linguistic relevance, diverse representation, and research-based supports for historically marginalized student groups.

Conclusion

As district leaders across the state prepare to adopt math instructional materials, we reflect on the schools that the Partnership has supported across LAUSD, and the powerful shift that is happening in those classrooms. At the time of publication, LAUSD has expanded HQIM use through the opt-in process, and almost 180 secondary schools are implementing Illustrative Mathematics, amounting to more than 90% of secondary schools across the district. Since implementing HQIM, student achievement has reached unprecedented levels, and opportunity gaps at high-need schools are beginning to close. LAUSD student outcomes have shown meaningful gains in the past decade. According to the Nation's Report Card (National Assessment of Educational Progress), the "percentage of Hispanic fourth grade students scoring at or above proficiency rose from 14% to 18%, while national figures for this group remained largely unchanged. Among English learners, the percentage scoring at or above the Basic level increased from 30% to 36%."[18]

Adopting and implementing high-quality instructional materials, aligned with a clear vision of teaching and learning, is a critical investment that can drive transformative change for students. When paired with strong instructional practices, collaborative structures, and a culture of continuous improvement, curriculum becomes a powerful lever for creating a new vision of math learning and success across the state.

California is at a turning point in how we support and empower students in mathematics. As districts embark on this rare opportunity to select new instructional materials, the choices made will influence not just what students learn, but how they see themselves as capable, curious, and confident learners throughout their educational trajectories. Now is the moment to move beyond outdated approaches and embrace materials that reflect the cultural, linguistic, and academic strengths our students bring to the classroom. This is not just about updating textbooks. It is time to reimagine the math experience and build a future where every student has the tools and support to thrive.

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[18] Center for Public Education (2025). "Defining High-Quality Instructional Materials for Math: A School Board Priority." National School Boards Association. https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NSBA/dfc2722c-752e-43ee-b165-99ed3a3c9d30/UploadedImages/Defining_High-Quality_Instructional_Materials_for_Math.pdf

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