

Launching Your Math Adoption: *Two New Tools To Support Winnowing & Investigation*

April 21, 2026

What is CalCurriculum?

CalCurriculum is a joint project of **UnboundEd** and **EdReports** and developed and tailored to support California educators. Our goal is to **help districts adopt and implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM)** by providing independent reviews, actionable resources, and guidance tailored to California educators.



Our Beliefs

CalCurriculum believes that strong curriculum adoption begins with a shared vision of instruction and a transparent decision-making process. Through free tools and learning opportunities, we help districts understand the landscape of high-quality instructional materials and the best practices for adopting new materials.

Meet the Team



Shannah Estep
CalCurriculum



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In this session, we will...

- Overview the challenges navigating the CA math materials adoption list.
- Share two new tools meant to support LEAs in making easier decisions.
- Give participants an opportunity to provide feedback on the tools in a “live build” format.
- Answer questions you have about the tools.

Throughout the session, please use the Q&A feature in your Zoom toolbar to ask any questions that come up. We'll answer questions during the “Questions” section toward the end of the webinar.



“We had months of work, several publisher presentations, and a group full of smart people but when it came time to do the deep review we knew we needed to do with our full committee, we were still looking 12 programs to choose from and no way to quickly narrow those options.”

Math Coordinator, Administrator
Large California Unified School District

70,000 students

20% Multilingual
Learners

WHAT THEIR PROCESS LOOKED LIKE

Six months of work. No clear way to get through the list.

1

Leadership team formed



District leaders carving out time alongside their regular responsibilities to build a process from the ground up.

2

Publishers contacted



Outreach to multiple publishers, requesting sample materials & pricing while the team waited weeks for responses to trickle in.

3

Months passed



First pass review stretched across the school year. Momentum faded. Fatigue and worry set in.

4

Review & pilot approaching



Twelve programs still on the table. The committee is about to begin formal review and the process ahead feels as uncertain as the one behind them.

Adopting math materials in California is uniquely complex

- California operates under a local control model, meaning districts bear full responsibility for curriculum review, selection, and implementation without a state mandate directing their choices.
- The 2023 Mathematics Framework provides detailed guidance on what high-quality instruction should look like, but it is not a selection tool and does not advise districts on how to choose among approved options.
- The state adoption process establishes eligibility and compliance with state criteria but does not offer comparative evidence to help districts distinguish among programs or determine local fit.
- California's size and diversity means that county office support, educator expertise, and review capacity vary widely across the state.

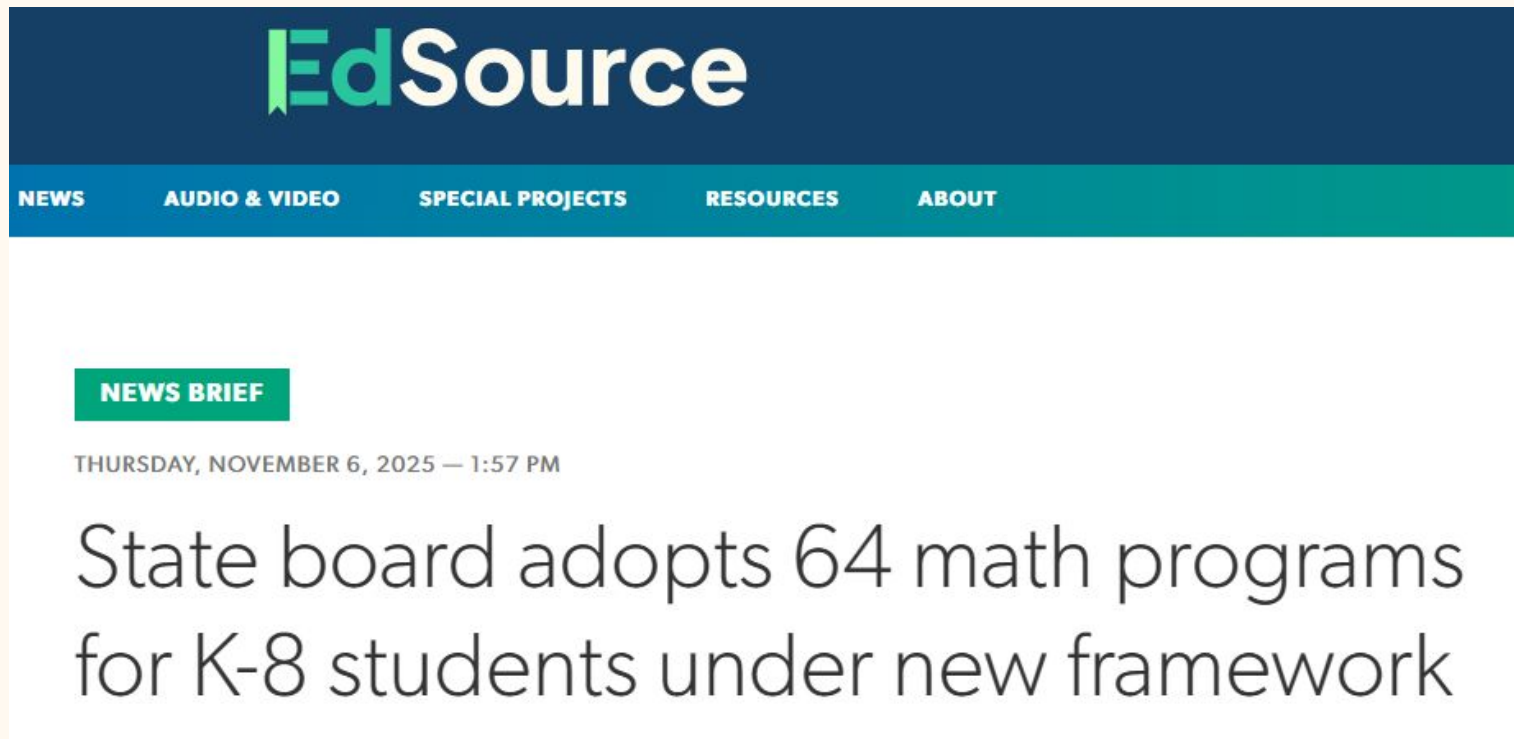
Where California districts lose confidence in their own process

Breakdown Point	What it sounds like
Too many programs, no clear way to compare	"We have 22 programs K-8 to look at. We do not have the time or the bandwidth to assess that many, and we have no way to quickly see how any of them measure up to our basic needs."
California-specific gaps get missed	"We have EdReports ratings, publisher presentations, and our own rubric scores but no single place where we can actually see these programs side by side against the framework and our criteria."
No way to see what could be best for an individual district's needs	"Our students and teachers have specific needs. We built our review process to look for them but we need some direction on where to start looking and how to compare what we are finding."

The conditions aren't making this easier

- 64 programs approved, all K-8 submissions accepted and the comparative work falls entirely on districts.
- Many programs in use today predate the 2023 Framework and a decade of market improvement which means there might be a big shift in practice for many CA teachers.
- District curriculum teams are small, managing multiple content areas, and expected to lead rigorous review without dedicated time or staffing.
- Most district leaders feel confident selecting materials but far fewer have a clear process for narrowing options or building a recommendation for their committees without seeming biased.

So what does this mean?

A screenshot of the EdSource website. The top navigation bar is dark blue with the EdSource logo in white and green. Below it is a teal bar with navigation links: NEWS, AUDIO & VIDEO, SPECIAL PROJECTS, RESOURCES, and ABOUT. The main content area is white and features a green box labeled 'NEWS BRIEF'. Below this is the date and time 'THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025 — 1:57 PM' and a large headline: 'State board adopts 64 math programs for K-8 students under new framework'.

EdSource

NEWS **AUDIO & VIDEO** **SPECIAL PROJECTS** **RESOURCES** **ABOUT**

NEWS BRIEF

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025 — 1:57 PM

State board adopts 64 math programs for K-8 students under new framework

What if your committee had the right tools from the start?

Math Listhub

To eliminate the time-consuming process of researching scattered curriculum information, enabling districts to efficiently narrow down from overwhelming options to a focused shortlist.

Between the Greens

To solve the challenge districts face when choosing between multiple highly-rated programs that appear similar on the surface, providing the nuanced comparative analysis needed to make confident final decisions based on what matters most to their unique context and priorities.

UnboundEd HQIM Adoption Phases

Phase I: Lead with a Vision and a Plan

Phase II: Know Your Needs

Phase III: Identify and Evaluate Your Options

Phase IV: Select Your Best Fit

Phase V: Plan for Launch and Implementation

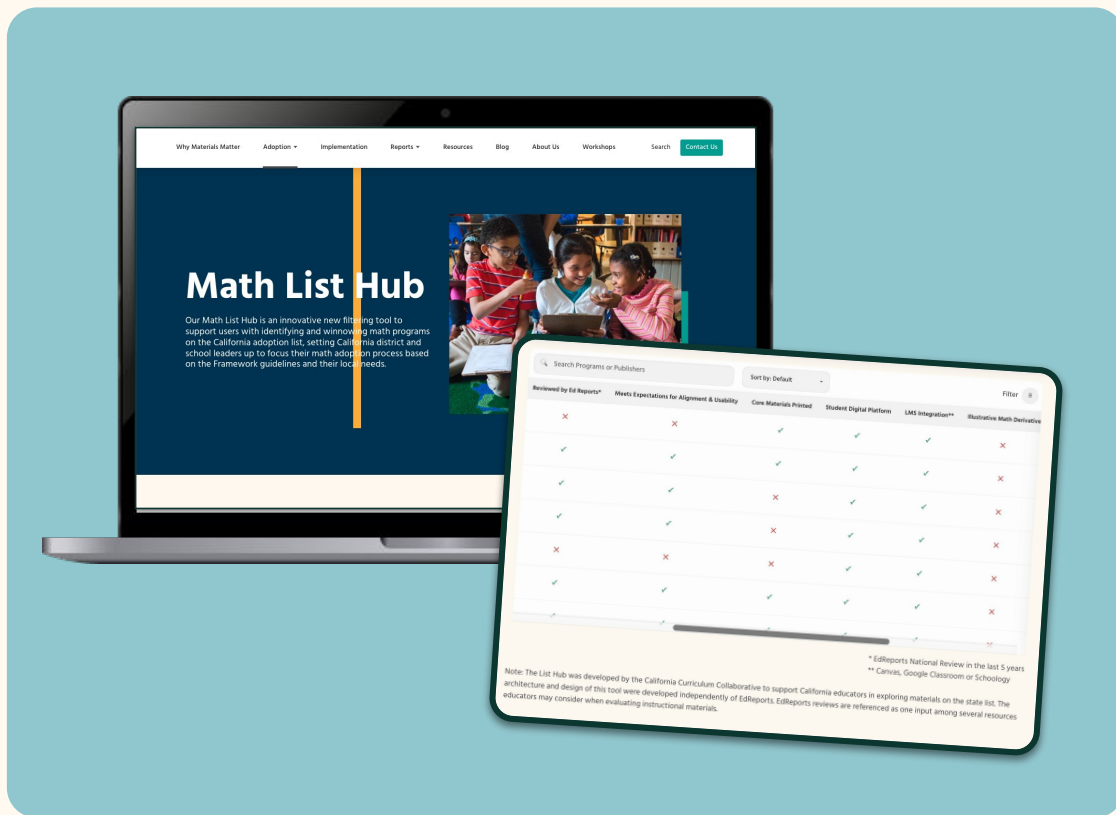
**Math
ListHub**

Math ListHub

A fast, binary winnowing engine that helps districts decide which programs meet/don't meet their non-negotiables.

Key Features

- Centralizes basic program information in one place, saving districts time they'd otherwise spend chasing publishers for baseline details
- Anchors districts in non-negotiables (yes/no criteria) so they can quickly rule out options that don't meet minimum requirements
- Turns an overwhelming list into a manageable shortlist, faster, and with clearer justification



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Between the Greens

Between the Greens

A deeper dive in those “high-quality” programs that help districts learn which strong option is the best fit.

Key Features

- Goes beyond “green” by examining how well materials support the California Math Framework vision (not only standards alignment, but instructional approach and quality signals that matter in California)
- Helps districts differentiate between strong options by surfacing meaningful tradeoffs and nuanced differences tied to district priorities

Downloadable Version

Comparison Focus
How Illustrative Mathematics and Classroom Mathematics in California Differ

To discuss the need...	Illustrative Mathematics	Classroom Mathematics
Align to operational skills for practice, assessment, and student discourse	Aligns to operational skills for practice, assessment, and student discourse	Operational skills are not explicitly aligned to the standards
A curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge and skills	Builds on students' prior knowledge and skills	Builds on students' prior knowledge and skills
Materials that provide students with opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning	Provides opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning	Provides opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning
Materials that provide students with opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning	Provides opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning	Provides opportunities for problem-solving and reasoning
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Project Overview
IM 360 California (Kendall Hunt) has earned "green" ratings from EdReports, indicating strong alignment to standards and evidence of high-quality instructional design. This project builds on those ratings by examining how "green" rated programs enact the vision of the California Mathematics Framework in practice.

The analysis centers on four categories essential to effective implementation: (1) scaffolds and language development for multilingual learners, (2) open and engaging tasks aligned to the Framework's vision for teaching and learning, (3) assessment structures that promote reasoning and mathematical identity, and (4) teacher planning, preparation, and professional knowledge supports. Across these categories, the review draws directly from sample materials to clarify how each program organizes instruction, supports access, and sustains cognitive demand.

The goal of this report is to support district teams in their own review process and decision-making. Rather than ranking programs, it highlights key features, considerations, and evidence from the materials so leaders can examine alignment to local priorities, instructional vision, and implementation capacity.

Curriculum Organization
Illustrative Mathematics | Kendall Hunt (IM360) is organized into units, each built around a coherent mathematical storyline. Units contain a sequence of lessons, and each lesson includes multiple instructional activities that develop the unit's big ideas. A Course Guide, unit & lesson overviews, and pacing tools support long-range planning. Lessons follow a consistent four-part structure: Warm-Up, Instructional Activities, Lesson Synthesis, and Cool-Down. Activities center on problem-based learning with embedded Mathematical Language Routines and teacher guidance to support discussion and build on student thinking.

District Scenario

- Large California district, 50,000+ students, currently one year into a K-12 math adoption
- Middle school identified as the greatest need: inconsistent materials, student performance data, and teacher feedback all point to grades 6-8 as the place to start
- But this is not a standalone middle school adoption — whatever they select must be compatible with either a K-8 or 6-12 progression depending on where the broader review lands
- 24 state-approved programs are in play for grades 6-8 alone, and the team needs to get to 4 or 5 options their committee can meaningfully review and pilot
- A spreadsheet and publisher presentations are not enough — they need a principled way to filter by instructional fit, Framework alignment, and long-term pathway compatibility
- Once they have a short list, the committee needs evidence and structure to go deeper than first impressions and build a recommendation that holds up with stakeholders

Questions?



“Live Build” Survey

Your feedback is critical in our learning for the next iteration of the tools. Please take a few minutes to explore the tools and provide your thoughts and questions.



<https://bit.ly/4tdEUPQ>



Timeline for Tools Full Launch

**Research
with districts**

Fall of 2025

**Development
of v1 Tools**

Winter of 2026

**Launch v1 of
Tools**

March 2026

**Feedback and
Testing**

Spring of 2026

**Second
Iteration**

Summer of 2026

Coming Up Soon

Today!

April 21

10:00-11:00

Launching Your Math Adoption: New Tools To Support Winnowing & Investigation

April 22

1:00-2:00

Planning Ahead for the Cost of Your Pilot: Guest Session with **Project Evident**

June 4

10:00-12:00

We Just Selected, Now What? Adoption Leadership Community of Practice

**Thank you for joining
today's session!**

If you have additional questions, please
email us at info@calcurriculum.org