Note: More information about opting in or declining the district curriculum options for 2016-17 can be found in the 2016-17 Flexibility Decision Handbook.

1. Why is the district adopting new materials for the coming school year?
   We heard you! We heard loudly and clearly from our school leaders and teachers that the existing materials were not as closely aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards, including the Common Core State Standards, as they needed to be. We will be adopting new curricular materials for the kids we serve over the next several years, in a rolling adoption cycle. It would be incredibly difficult – both from a funding and a change management perspective – to adopt all grades and subjects in just a year or two. Through our strategic planning process, we have accelerated the adoption cycle to ensure that we can get quality resources in the hands of teachers as quickly as possible.

2. What curriculum has the district selected for the 2016-17 school year?
   - For literacy, grades K-2: Benchmark Advance/Adelante created by Benchmark
   - For literacy, grades 3: EngageNY Modules created by Expeditionary Learning.
     - 1B: My Librarian Is a Camel: How Books Are Brought to Children around the World
     - 2B: Connecting Literary and Informational Texts to Study Culture “Then and Now”
     - 3B: Wolves: Fact and Fiction
     - 4: The Role of Freshwater around the World
   - For mathematics, grade K-5: Bridges in Mathematics created by the Math Learning Center
   - For literacy, grades 9-12: DC Public Schools, created by DC Public Schools
   - For English language development,
     - Option 1: grades K-2: Benchmark ELD created by Benchmark and grades 3-5: EL Achieve Systematic English Language Development
     - Option 2: grades K-5: EL Achieve Systematic English Language Development

3. What was the process for choosing the curriculum?
   Request for Proposal: On September 14th, Curriculum and Instruction released informal requests for proposals for K-5 mathematics, K-3 literacy and 9-12 language arts. For this review, we used an informal bidding process to ensure we are able to broaden the supplier pool to include charter management organizations, open education resources and traditional publishers for potential adoption in the 2016-2107 academic year.

   On October 15, English Language Acquisition released informal requests for proposals for K-5 ELD. For this review, we used an informal bidding process to ensure we are able to broaden the supplier pool to include charter management organizations, open education resources and traditional publishers for potential adoption in the 2016-2107 academic year.

   Selection Criteria: The materials recommended for adoption are based on quality of materials, as determined by nationally normed, customized rubrics created for each content area. These rubrics are based in the IMET and GIMET rubrics, with slight customization to fit the needs of students in
Denver Public Schools. The English language development adoption committee used a revised version of WIDA’s Protocol for the Evaluation of Instructional Materials, in order to reflect current, research-based, effective instructional practice in ELD. All review of materials is deeply grounded in these rubrics to ensure objectivity in the review process.

Committee Representation: Our priority in forming a review committee was to have exceptional teachers and staff members that are representative of the diverse needs of all schools and aspects of Denver Public Schools. We not only selected exceptional teachers and school leaders to serve on the review committee, but also targeted departments within DPS central office to collaborate on the review process -- Chief of Schools Office, Assessment Research & Evaluation, English Language Acquisition, Curriculum & Instruction, Educational Technology, Early Childhood Education, Gifted & Talented, and Student Services.

Review Timeline: The review process began in September and ended in early November for the Literacy and Mathematics Departments. All committee members spent extensive time grounding in rubrics to ensure objectivity in the selection process. From there, committee members began reviewing curricular submissions in depth. The first round of scoring occurred on 9/29, 10/3, 10/15 and 10/20. From there finalists presented on 10/31 and 11/5. At the end of this process, final recommendations were presented to the Chief Academic and Innovation Office and Superintendent.

The review process for English language development curriculum began in November and ended in early January. After extensive time spent grounding in rubrics to ensure objectivity in the selection process, committee members began reviewing curricular submissions in depth. The first round of scoring occurred on 11/12, 11/17, 11/19, 12/1, and 12/3. The curriculums selected as finalists were presented on 1/5/16. At the end of this process, final recommendations were presented to the Chief Academic and Innovation Office and Acting Superintendent.

4. **Why did the District choose these curriculum options?**
All findings were based on extensive review of materials based on nationally recognized Instructional Materials Evaluation Tools, the Grade Level Instructional Material Evaluation Tool, and the WIDA PRIME Tool (for the English language development curriculum adoption). Committees consisting of teachers, school leaders, and central office staff reviewed multiple potential resources. Below, you will find information of key features of supported materials for the 2016-2017 school year:

- **K-3 Literacy:** Benchmark Advance/Adelante and Expeditionary Learning
- **K-5 Mathematics:** Bridges in Mathematics
- **9-12 Language Arts:** DC Public Schools
- **K-5 English Language Development**

5. **What are we doing with literacy curriculum for English language learners?**
To continue our focus on biliteracy and the strategic use of two languages, we are in the process of developing Spanish paired literacy for grade 3. Spanish paired literacy support is connected to the EngageNY curriculum. It has daily instruction in Spanish that builds reading, writing and listening skills. These materials are currently available for grades 4 and 5 and will be available in the summer of 2016 for grade 3. ELA-S teachers will receive Spanish texts that pair with the English texts for the core curriculum. Beyond this, teachers will also receive resources in Spanish as they implement the
paired literacy block.

6. **When will I receive curriculum at my school? What will be included?**
Delivery of curricular resources will occur between May 1, 2016 and June 3, 2016 for Literacy, Mathematics, Language Arts, and Benchmark ELD. Delivery of EL Achieve curricular materials will be spaced throughout the 2016-2017 school year. As per EL Achieve delivery timelines, units 1 and 2 of will be delivered in August 2016. All remaining kits will arrive in schools by November 2016 as teachers receive training for the materials.

7. **Can a school postpone the adoption of recommended instructional materials for the 2016-2017 school year?**
Yes, schools may opt out of the district supported option during the 2016-2017 school year. Funds will be distributed to the schools budget for the future adoption of materials in the related content area. Schools are responsible for working with their finance partner and strategic sourcing to ensure materials are ordered and delivered during the spring of 2017.

Schools may also opt into the district supported solution for the 2016 -2017 school year. The materials will be ordered and shipped to the school during the spring of 2016, however, schools would have the choice of not implementing until the 2017-2018 school year.

8. **When will we receive a district scope and sequence?**
Literacy, English Language Development, and math in all grades will have a DPS Scope and Sequence to support teachers in planning for the units of study. These will be available by June 5 via the Standards Toolkit.

9. **What if I don’t want to opt in to these DPS selected and supported curricular resources?**
You are not required to opt in to the district option; however, school leaders that decline to opt in to the district option are strongly encouraged to attend a consultation session with experts from the Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Research and Evaluation and English Language Acquisition teams. The [Consultation Guide](#), outlining specific legal requirements, as well as discussion questions will be used at this consultation to guide curriculum decisions for school leaders.

10. **Will you let schools know up front what recurring yearly consumable costs will be?**
For all adopted materials, consumables will be paid for by the district in the 2016-2017 year. In early January, when we finalize financial information, we will also share the annual cost of consumables.

11. **Are there any schools in DPS that have piloted any of these curriculums?**
Yes, schools have piloted Benchmark in the 2015-2016 school year. These schools are listed below. Currently, Expeditionary Learning is the district supported option for 4th and 5th grade. As for Bridges, no DPS schools have piloted materials, but nearby districts such as Cherry Creek are using the Bridges program.

Seventeen schools have piloted EL Achieve in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. A list of those schools are below. Additionally, several schools piloted Benchmark ELD during the 2015-2016 school year. A list of these schools follows as well.
Here is a list of schools currently piloting Benchmark: Barnum, Beach Court, Bradley, Bromwell, CMS, Colfax, Columbian, Cory, Eagleton, Florida Pitt-Waller, Greenlee, Greenwood, Lena Archuleta, Cheltenham, McKinley-Thatcher and Doull.

Here is a list of schools that are in their second year of EL Achieve implementation: Ashley, Cheltenham, Ellis, Farrell B. Howell, John Amesse, and Swansea.

Here is a list of schools that are in their first year of EL Achieve implementation: Colfax (3-5), College View, DCIS at Ford, Florida Pitt Waller, Goldrick, Harrington, Marrama, Oakland, Sandoval, Shoemaker, Trevista at Horace Mann.

Here is a list of schools currently piloting Benchmark ELD: Barnum, Beach Court, Bradley, Bromwell, CMS, Colfax (K-2), Columbian, Cory, Eagleton, Greenlee, Greenwood, Lena Archuleta, and McKinley-Thatcher.

12. If a school is currently piloting Benchmark materials and would like to continue using the curriculum, what should they do?
   If you like the Benchmark materials, you would choose to opt-in to Benchmark materials. The district will then provide you with an updated set of materials for the 2016-2017 school year.

13. If a school is currently piloting EL Achieve ELD and would like to continue using the curriculum, what should they do?
   If you like EL Achieve, you would choose to opt-in to EL Achieve.

14. If you opt into K-2 Benchmark curriculum do you also opt into ELD Benchmark curriculum?
   No. School leaders will chose their literacy and ELD options separately. Schools can choose to use the aligned Benchmark ELD or they may choose to use EL Achieve for K-2 ELD.

15. Can you provide links to the Benchmark curriculum overviews for us to reference?
   Please access the Benchmark materials at this website, using the login information below. The website includes all English, Spanish, and ELD materials.
   
   Website: denver.benchmarkuniverse.com
   Username: denver_educator
   Password: password

16. Can you provide links to the EL Achieve curriculum overviews for us to reference?
   More information about ELA Achieve’s ELD curriculum can be found on their website – syseld.elachieve.org.
   
   A proposed pacing guide for the 2016-2017 school year can be found here.

17. How does the Benchmark Advance curriculum align to Guided Reading Plus?
   There are similarities between the two programs. Both take the "whole reading" approach rather than teaching skills in isolation. Additionally, there are opportunities for encoding and decoding within the lessons, but they are two different programs. Benchmark provides the basics teachers
need to implement systematic foundational skills instruction, but it does not build up teacher knowledge and expertise of teaching reading like Guided Reading Plus does.

18. What is the plan to support Spanish parity with 3rd grade Expeditionary Learning materials?
Curriculum and Instruction has been working with the Bueno Center as well as the ELA department to develop Spanish paired literacy lessons for the Expeditionary Learning materials. These materials will be ready in the summer of 2016 for schools to use.

19. What is the reason Benchmark was not selected as the recommendation for 3rd grade?
Expeditionary Learning made the stronger case to prepare students in 3rd grade as they enter the world of PARCC and depth of understanding with complex texts. Please see question 4 for additional information on the curriculum choices.

20. If a school has purchased Expeditionary Learning in 2015-2016 out of their school-based budget, are they eligible to receive the devolved funds in 2016-2017?
If you have already spent dollars on EL materials, you can decline to opt-in to purchasing the curricular materials and receive the devolved funds.

21. How does Benchmark Advance prepare students for Expeditionary Learning (EL)?
There are several similarities between Benchmark Advance and EL. Both follow a topically-based unit design with a focus on building student vocabulary and knowledge through deep exploration. Both curriculums expose students to multiple close readings of complex texts. Benchmark does a great job teaching students to annotate texts and support with evidence, which aligns to the transition from Benchmark to 3rd grade EL. There are conversation protocols in Benchmark that will also help prepare our K-2 students. Currently, our team is exploring gaps in the transition between Benchmark and EL, and is creating a professional learning plan to address these.

22. How is Bridges a better choice than EngageNY?
The Bridges instructional model blends direct instruction, structured investigation and open exploration in a workshop (centers) model that aligns with indicators in the LEAP framework. This is not true of EngageNY, which employs only direct instruction. Bridges offers a robust support for teachers, students, and families. Bridges is strongly aligned to the CCSS in both content and practice standards.

23. How does Bridges support GT/HGT extensions?
Bridges supports GT/HGT extensions through challenge questions and challenge problems and differentiation opportunities.

24. Can a school do a partial adoption of mathematics, using Bridges for their traditional track and a different option for their HGT track?
This would not be recommended; rather, we recommend that schools use Bridges and make use of the differentiation opportunities to meet HGT needs.

Please send additional questions to flexibility@dpsk12.org.

Additional resources are available on our website at flexibility.dpsk12.org.