

NCTM/NCSM Calls for Changes to EdReports Reviews of Common Core Instructional Materials

RESTON, Va., May 20, 2015—An open letter to the education community from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (NCSM) calls for changes to recently published EdReports reviews of instructional materials for their alignment with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM).

According to the statement, “The EdReports methodology, including its evaluation tool and process, has produced reviews that fall short of providing useful and accurate information about many critical features of materials reviewed, such as how the materials address the Standards for Mathematical Practice and the quality of the instructional activities. As a result, the current ratings and reviews do not provide the types and quality of information needed to make informed choices about the extent to which particular materials support students’ learning, or teachers’ teaching, of CCSSM.”

NCTM President Diane Briars said, “We support the goal of EdReports to provide useful information for those who are selecting instructional materials that support implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Teachers and decision makers need good information to make choices about instructional materials. However, the EdReports primary analysis focuses on only a subset of CCSSM standards at each grade, omitting standards in CCSSM Critical Areas, such as probability and statistics in middle school. It also focuses on the amount of time devoted to this subset of standards instead of on the quality of treatment of all the standards. Furthermore, its gateway system of reviewing materials in many cases neglects the importance of the Mathematical Practices in the Common Core, and excludes many materials from the kind of thorough reviews that are needed in the field.”

Valerie Mills, past president of the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, said, “The current reports with mathematical errors and faulty rubrics and process are doing damage to districts, teachers, and most of all, students, by misrepresenting the potential of currently available curriculum materials to support implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.”

The letter calls for correcting errors in current reviews and suggests including a mechanism in the EdReports process to avoid errors in the future. It also calls for EdReports to revise its current methodology, evaluation tool, and process and to withdraw the existing reviews while improvements are being made to them. Finally, it suggests that materials be reviewed again under new criteria so that comprehensive and error-free reviews are available before any work is begun on additional materials. According to the statement, “making these changes will

increase the likelihood that EdReports reviews will be valuable for educators attempting to make informed choices about the purchase or use of instructional materials to support student learning.” The letter is online on the NCSM and NCTM websites.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is the world’s largest professional organization dedicated to improving mathematics education for all students. NCTM’s *Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All* describes the principles and actions, including specific research-informed teaching practices, that are essential for a high-quality mathematics education for all students. The Council is committed to a constructive public dialogue to ensure a mathematics education of the highest quality for all students. The National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (NCSM) is a mathematics leadership organization for educational leaders that provides professional learning opportunities necessary to support and sustain improved student achievement.

Media interested in arranging an interview with NCTM President Diane Briars or NCSM Immediate Past President Valerie Mills should contact Tracy Cullen, NCTM Communications Manager, (703) 620-9840, ext. 2189 or (571) 423-6315 (cell).