Understand the Technology Features of Your Aligned Materials

**As schools and districts plan for the upcoming school year and weigh technology and materials purchases, it is important to understand the features that current aligned materials offer.**

Beginning in summer 2020, EdReports invited publishers of materials that meet alignment criteria to submit additional information about the technology features of their programs. This information helps educators to better understand the digital design and capabilities of instructional materials, including interoperability, compatibility, security, and support. These features have become even more important during the pandemic as districts assess what instructional materials may work best in their communities for in-person, remote, and hybrid settings. Access to high-quality instructional materials by all students is more important than ever, and technology plays an essential role in that access.

As a result of market demands, including those brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, many publishers have developed or are developing new technology features. Additionally, some products may have existing features that districts and schools have not yet utilized to their fullest capacity before now. The enhanced EdReports reviews can help districts learn more about the features that already exist, are in development, or are not under development.

**What is this resource?**

This graphic organizer is designed to support leaders to better understand the technology features of the aligned instructional materials they’ve already adopted. As schools and districts plan and consider new technology and materials purchases, it is important to understand the features that their current aligned materials offer.

**How should this resource be used?** 

This resource is designed to be used by a team of district and/or site leaders who support teachers with curriculum implementation. It is critical that this team include the district or school technology lead, someone with a deep understanding of the technology capabilities of the school or district. We recommend convening a 90-120 minute working session, virtually or in-person as safety allows, to work through the technology information document for your program using this graphic organizer. The team should leave this working session with clear next steps to support strong implementation of curriculum during in-person and distance learning.

Each section of the graphic organizer includes directions, followed by a chart with questions and space to capture your reflection and/or action steps. At the end of the document is a chart to summarize next steps.

Districts analyzing their materials’ technology capabilities have already prioritized quality and standards alignment for their students. Technology features of aligned materials should enhance district ability to facilitate student learning, support teachers’ instruction, and communicate with parents.

**Start with a reflection on your system’s experience with distance learning during spring 2020.**

Consider aspects such as how students accessed materials, how materials supported teacher preparation and collaboration, and feedback from the community. For a comprehensive reflection and planning process, we recommend using [this tool](https://www.edreports.org/resources/article/instructional-materials-during-remote-learning-reflection-and-planning-tool).

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| **How did your curriculum support students, families, and teachers with teaching and learning while school was closed?**  |
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| **What challenges did students, families, and teachers have in using the curriculum as a base for teaching and learning while school was closed?**  |
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**Open the Instructional Materials Technology Information document for your materials.**

**Review Section 1: Usability Snapshot**

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| **What capabilities of your program are you using? Why are you using those capabilities? What is the impact of those capabilities on teaching and learning?**  |
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| **What capabilities does your program have that you are not yet using? Note those that are available with dependencies.**  |
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| **Which of these capabilities support your vision for distance learning\* and may improve instruction within your system?** **Why are you not currently using those capabilities? (Insert more rows as necessary.)**NOTE: If you have not articulated a vision of instruction, check out [this resource for ideas and inspiration](https://edreports.org/resources/article/instructional-vision-statements).  |
| ***Tech capability not currently used*** | ***Reason for not using: unaware of capability, tech capacity not available, have not yet trained teachers on use*** |
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| **What capabilities does your program not have (note whether the capability is in development)? Are these must-haves, nice-to-haves, or not important in your system? (Insert more rows as necessary.)** |
| ***Tech capability not available*** | ***Must-have, nice-to-have, not important*** |
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| **For those capabilities that are must-haves but are not available in your program, is there a way to supplement this with a complementary technology purchase?**  |
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**Review Section 2: Technology Checklist**

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| **Read the information within the *Design* section of the technology tool. What challenges in lesson execution can you anticipate?**  |
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| **How can you address these challenges through professional learning for teachers and site leaders this year?** |
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| **Read the information in the *System Access*, *Compatibility*, and *Accessibility* sections. How will your IT department support educators with the technical features of the program, given the information included here?**  |
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**Make a Plan: Use the table below to capture the next steps for your team. Add more rows as necessary.**

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| **Action Item** | **Owner** | **Timeline** |
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