RIVET EDUCATION



HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

FOR LEADERS

Introduction

One of the most common curriculum implementation challenges actually has nothing to do with the materials themselves—it's missing communications. When it comes to implementing high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), building buy-in, addressing misconceptions, and clarifying role-specific responsibilities are as important as putting the materials in classrooms.

This checklist is designed to help you understand and take stock of how you're currently talking about instructional materials, what you already have in your communications toolkit, and what you still need to develop to make communications easy and effective.

Messaging and Narrative

- [ ] **Do you have clear guidance on how to talk about HQIM?**
  - [ ] Do you have clear, written guidance on how to talk about HQIM?
  - [ ] Do you know which words to use—and which to avoid—to keep messaging clear and consistent? Have these been documented?
  - [ ] Have you shared the guidance with everyone who communicates about HQIM regularly? (Consider state, system, and school leaders as well as advocacy partners.)
- [ ] **Have you tested your messages with different groups to make sure they resonate?**
  - [ ] Do you know which messages make the most sense to people?
  - [ ] Have you checked how messages land with teachers, school leaders, families, and others?
  - [ ] Have you developed and tested messages that reflect local interests and concerns (e.g., support for multilingual learners)?
- [ ] **Do you have good stories to tell? What evidence do you have that HQIM are working?**
  - [ ] Are you collecting and reviewing data that shows how instructional materials are improving student learning?
  - [ ] Can you point to clear examples of student impact in your schools?
  - [ ] Have you gathered stories or examples from schools where implementation is going well?

Audience Strategy

- [ ] **Do you know who you need to communicate with most?**
  - [ ] Have you identified your key audiences (e.g., teachers, principals, school system leaders, families, policymakers)?
  - [ ] Have you prioritized who needs the most attention in order for implementation to go smoothly?
  - [ ] Do you know who may be skeptical or opposed? Do you understand their main concerns (e.g., about flexibility or support for specific student groups)?
- [ ] **Do you have established channels (e.g., comments sections, email inboxes, surveys) that allow for two-way communication with your audience?**
  - [ ] Do you have a process in place for collecting feedback on your HQIM from educators and families?
  - [ ] Do you have a strategy for monitoring incoming feedback and using it to develop future communications?
- [ ] **Do you have a plan to address your audience's primary concerns, misconceptions, and FAQs?**
  - [ ] Have you identified the most common misunderstandings, concerns, and questions about HQIM?
  - [ ] Do you have talking points, presentation slides, or other communications materials that directly address these topics?

Capacity and Ownership

- [ ] **Is it clear who is responsible for communications?**
  - [ ] Who/which team is leading the overall communications efforts related to HQIM implementation?
  - [ ] Who needs to approve messages and materials?
  - [ ] Who is responsible for actually sending or sharing communications (e.g., emails, newsletters, websites, social media)?

- [ ] **Do you know who can help spread your message?**
  - [ ] Have you identified trusted voices and partners who can support your efforts (e.g., state leaders, principals, teacher leaders, advocacy groups)?
  - [ ] Have you matched influential voices to your target audiences? Whose voice/opinion matters to them most?
  - [ ] Do your messengers feel prepared to communicate effectively? Have you shared guidance, training, or talking points with them?
  - [ ] Do you have consistent, lightweight ways to showcase these voices (e.g., social media spotlights, video interviews, templates for presentation spotlights)?

- [ ] **What existing communications channels and opportunities do you have?**
  - [ ] What existing social media channels can you use?
  - [ ] What existing email communications can you use?
  - [ ] What existing meetings/convenings can you use (e.g., trainings, workshops, webinars, standing meetings)?
  - [ ] What websites or internal platforms/portals/systems do you have that allow for communications?

- [ ] **Do you have the ability to create clear, engaging communications materials?**
  - [ ] Do you have access to graphic design support? If not, can your team create simple visuals using tools like Canva?

- [ ] **Do you have a plan to learn and improve over time?**
  - [ ] Who is tracking how people respond to your communications?
  - [ ] Who is in charge of spotlighting trends and making decisions about future communications efforts based on feedback?