



# WHY MATERIALS MATTER

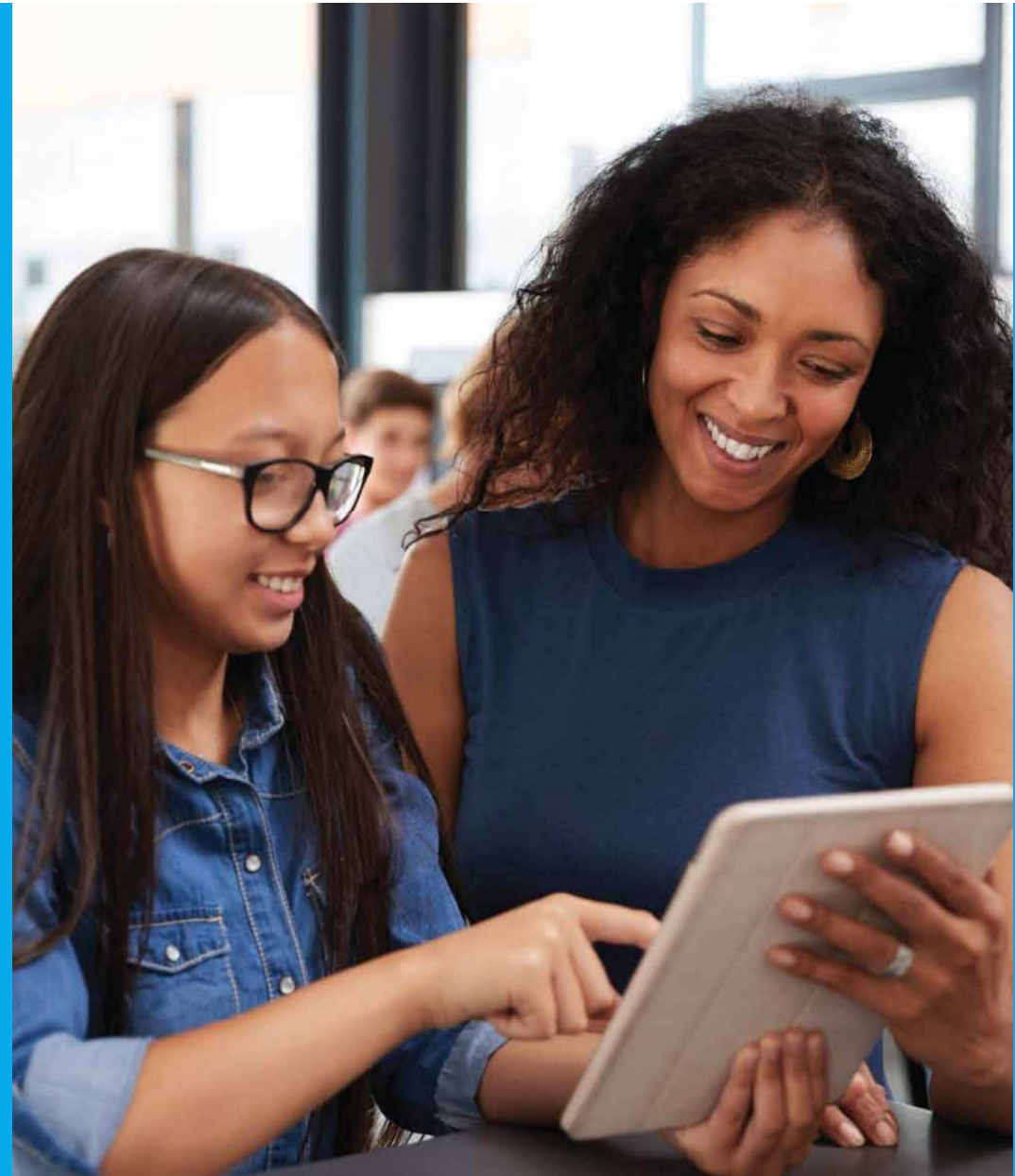
Through our work we know that

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR KIDS.  
WHAT IS CHOSEN MATTERS.**

Research shows that students learn primarily through their interactions with teachers and content.

**THIS INSTRUCTIONAL CORE IS  
THE FOUNDATION**

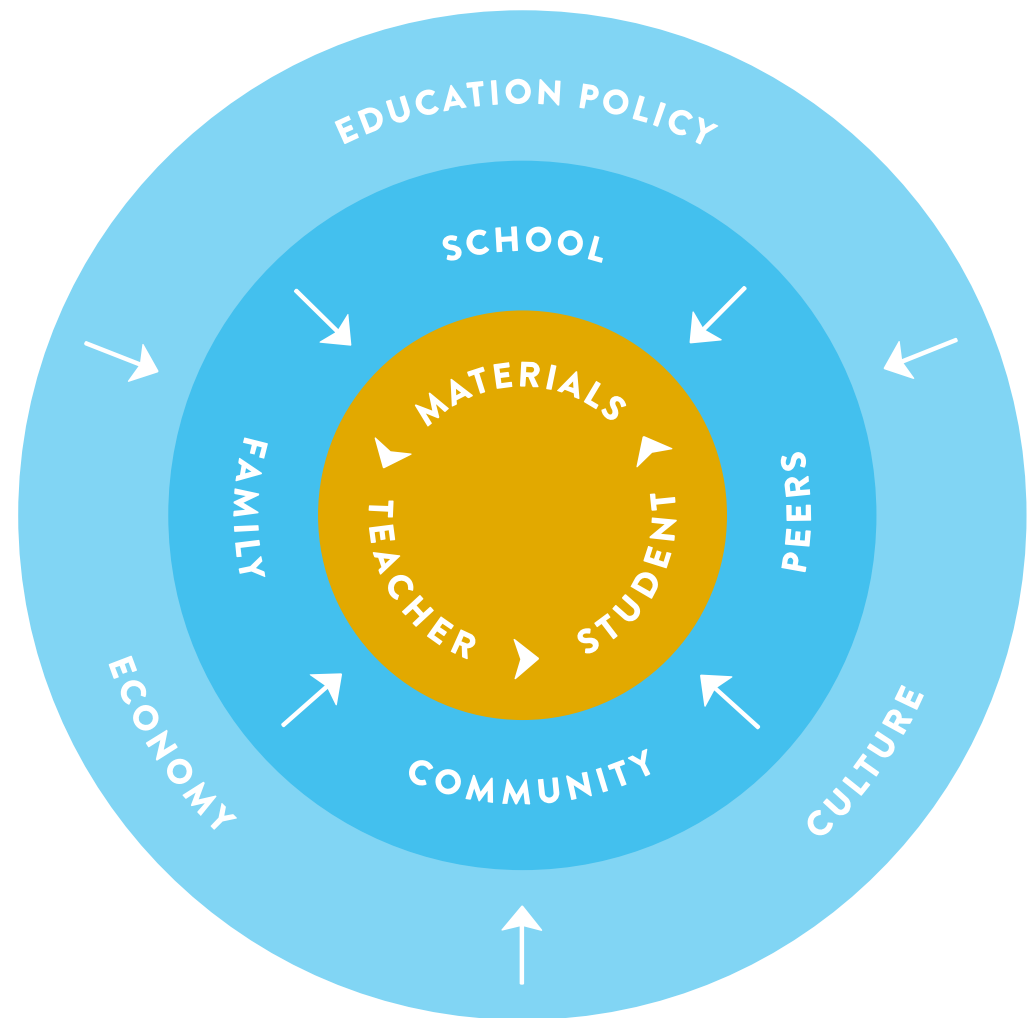
for ensuring all kids are college and career-ready and have the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in school and beyond.



**“THAT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS EXERCISE THEIR INFLUENCE ON LEARNING DIRECTLY AS WELL AS BY INFLUENCING TEACHERS’ INSTRUCTIONAL CHOICES AND BEHAVIOR, MAKES INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT.”**

- Chingos and Whitehurst, 2012<sup>1</sup>

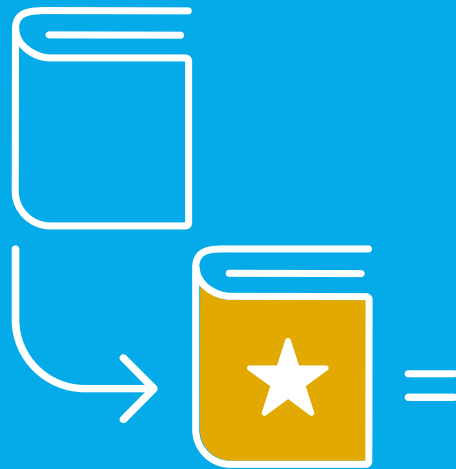
<sup>1</sup>Chingos, M., Whitehurst, G. (2012). Choosing Blindly: Instructional Materials, Teacher Effectiveness, and the Common Core. Retrieved from Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0410\\_curriculum\\_chingos\\_whitehurst.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0410_curriculum_chingos_whitehurst.pdf)





**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS  
HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT ON STUDENT  
LEARNING OUTCOMES.**

**ONE STUDY SHOWED  
USING A TOP RANKED  
PROGRAM IN 4TH OR 5TH  
GRADE MATH CAN  
LEAD TO**



**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT  
GAINS OF 3.6 PERCENTILE  
POINTS**

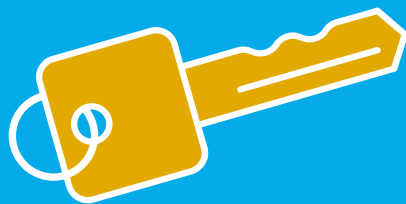
larger than the improvement of a typical teacher's effectiveness in their first three years on the job when they are learning to teach.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Kane, T., Owens, A., Marinell, W. Thal, D., Staiger, D. (2016). Teaching Higher: Educators' Perspectives on Common Core Implementation. Boston, MA: Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research. Retrieved from: <https://cepr.harvard.edu/files/cepr/files/teaching-higher-report.pdf>



**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS  
HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT ON STUDENT  
LEARNING OUTCOMES.**

**WHEN MIDDLE  
SCHOOL TEACHERS  
USE HIGH-QUALITY  
INSTRUCTIONAL  
MATERIALS**



**IT CAN SIGNIFICANTLY  
IMPROVES STUDENT  
LEARNING OUTCOMES.**

A 2017 study shows that the effect on learning is the same as moving an average performing teacher to one at the 80th percentile.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Jackson, K., Makarin, A. (2016-2017). Can Online Off-the-Shelf Lessons Improve Student Outcomes? Evidence from a Field Experiment. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, Vol 10 (3), pages 226-254. Retrieved from: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w22398>

**HIGH-QUALITY MATERIALS  
DON'T NECESSARILY COST  
MORE, BUT OFTEN HAVE  
BIGGER PAY OFFS.**

**“TEXTBOOKS ARE RELATIVELY  
INEXPENSIVE AND TEND TO  
BE SIMILARLY PRICED.**

The implication is that the marginal cost of choosing a more effective textbook over a less effective alternative is essentially zero.”<sup>4</sup>

(Polikoff and Koedel, 2017)

<sup>4</sup>Koedel, C., Polikoff, M. (2017). Big Bang for Just a Few Bucks: the Impact of Math Textbooks in California. Economic Studies at Brookings, Evidence Speaks Reports, Vol 2 (5). Retrieved from: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/es\\_20170105\\_polikoff\\_evidence\\_speaks.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/es_20170105_polikoff_evidence_speaks.pdf)





IMPROVING  
THE QUALITY OF  
CURRICULUM IS

**40x MORE  
COST-EFFECTIVE**

THAN CLASS-SIZE  
REDUCTION.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Boser, U., Chingos, M., Straus, C. (2015). The Hidden Value of Curriculum Reform: Do States and Districts Receive the Most Bang for Their Curriculum Buck? Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Retrieved from: <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/06111518/CurriculumMatters-report.pdf>

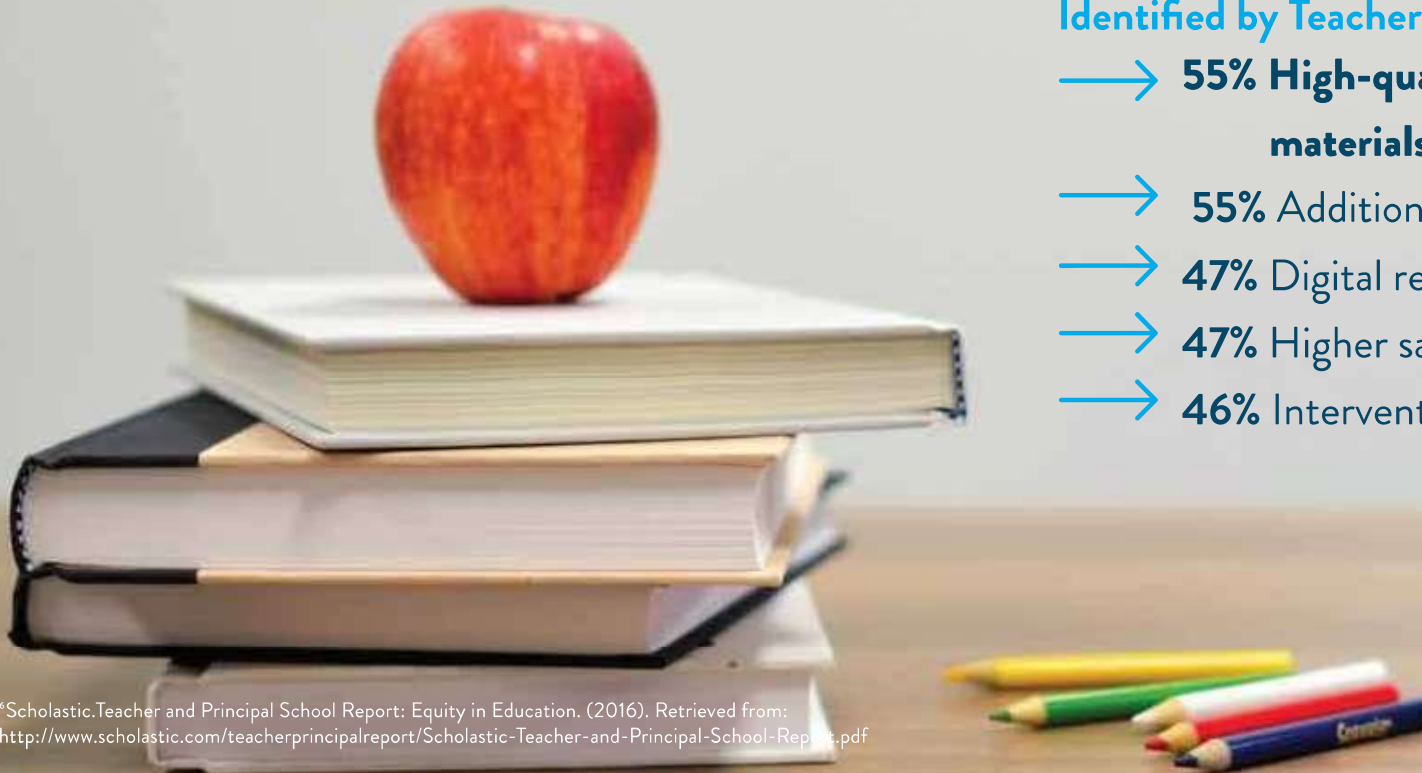
TEACHERS KNOW THAT MATERIALS MATTER, BUT DON'T ALWAYS HAVE ACCESS TO THE QUALITY CONTENT THAT THEIR STUDENTS DESERVE.

## HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

are cited as a top funding priority for teachers.

### Top Five Funding Priorities Identified by Teachers

- **55% High-quality instructional materials and textbooks**
- 55% Additional staff
- 47% Digital resources
- 47% Higher salaries
- 46% Intervention programs





**WHEN TEACHERS DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO GREAT MATERIALS THEY HUNT FOR THEM ONLINE—OFTEN LEADING TO INCONSISTENT QUALITY THAT IMPACTS LOW-INCOME STUDENTS OF COLOR THE MOST.**



**TEACHERS SPEND  
7-12 HOURS PER WEEK**

searching for and creating instructional resources (free and paid),<sup>8</sup>  
drawing from a variety of sources, many of them unvetted.

<sup>8</sup>Goldberg, M. (2016). Classroom Trends: Teachers as Buyers of Instructional Materials and Users of Technology. K-12 Market Advisors. Retrieved from: <https://mdreducation.com/reports/classroom-trends-teachers-buyers-instructional-materials-users-technology/>

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A 2017 RAND analysis found that



**96%**  
**OF TEACHERS**  
use Google to find  
lessons and materials.



Nearly **75%**  
**OF TEACHERS**  
use Pinterest to find  
lessons and materials.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Opfer, V., Kaufman, J., Thompson, L. (2016). Implementation of K-12 State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1529-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1529-1.html)

## WHEN TEACHERS DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO GREAT MATERIALS THEY HUNT FOR THEM ONLINE—OFTEN LEADING TO INCONSISTENT QUALITY THAT IMPACTS LOW-INCOME, STUDENTS OF COLOR THE MOST.

Teachers working in schools that have a high proportion of students who receive free and reduced lunch are searching for materials online at higher rates.<sup>10</sup>

The assignments teachers select or create tend to be lower quality than what the district or state provided.<sup>11</sup>

Percentage of assignments on grade-level:

**34% ASSIGNMENTS PROVIDED BY DISTRICT OR STATE**

**20% TEACHER CREATED/SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS**

<sup>10</sup>Opfer, V., Kaufman, J., Thompson, L. (2016). Implementation of K-12 State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1529-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1529-1.html)

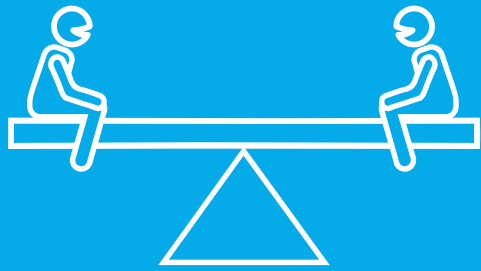
<sup>11</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>

INCONSISTENT ACCESS TO  
HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT  
IMPACTS STUDENT LEARNING  
IN SCHOOLS ACROSS  
THE COUNTRY.

IN A SINGLE SCHOOL YEAR,  
THE AVERAGE STUDENT SPENDS  
**581 OF 720** AVAILABLE HOURS ON  
ASSIGNMENTS  
THAT ARE NOT HIGH-QUALITY.<sup>12</sup>

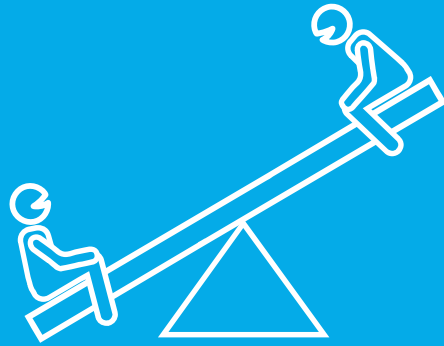
<sup>12</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>





**THIS IS PARTICULARLY  
SIGNIFICANT FOR STUDENTS  
OF COLOR AND STUDENTS  
LIVING IN POVERTY WHO  
HAVE LESS ACCESS TO  
HIGH-QUALITY  
STANDARDS-ALIGNED  
MATERIALS THAN  
THEIR PEERS.**

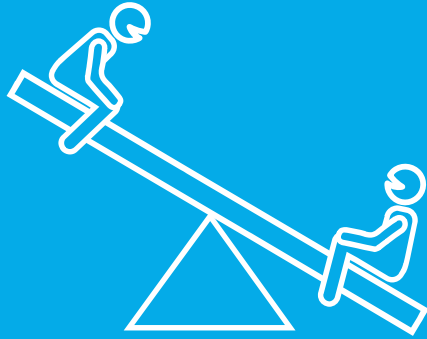




**THIS IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR AND STUDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY WHO HAVE LESS ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY STANDARDS-ALIGNED MATERIALS THAN THEIR PEERS.**

**A 2015 STUDY FOUND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ARE LESS LIKELY THAN HIGH-INCOME STUDENTS TO HAVE QUALITY CONTENT AND CURRICULUM IN THE CLASSROOM.**





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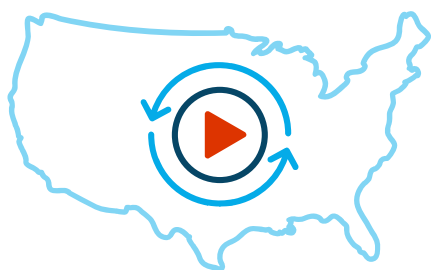
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<sup>13</sup>Schmidt, W., Burroughs, N., Zoido, P., Houang, R. (2015). The Role of Schooling in Perpetuating Educational Inequality: An International Perspective. *Educational Researcher*, Vol 44 (7), page 371-386. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.3102/0013189X15603982>

**AND STUDENTS OF COLOR AND THOSE FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS WERE LESS LIKELY THAN WHITE AND HIGHER-INCOME STUDENTS TO BE IN CLASSROOMS WITH GRADE-APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS.<sup>14</sup>**

<sup>14</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>

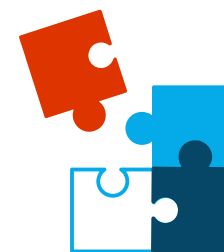
## AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING HIGH-QUALITY MATERIALS DOESN'T END AT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.



Nationwide, **40%** of **COLLEGE STUDENTS** (including 66 percent of Black college students and 53 percent of Latinx<sup>15</sup> college students) take at least one remedial course<sup>16</sup> learning skills they were told they'd already mastered in high school.



A recent study found that college remediation costs students and their families **\$1.5 BILLION ANNUALLY.**<sup>17</sup>



Graduates who opt for a career straight out of high school aren't faring much better, with many employers reporting high school graduates are **MISSING SKILLS** needed to do their jobs well.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/endnotes#3> <sup>16</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/endnotes#4>  
<sup>17</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/endnotes#5> <sup>18</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/endnotes#3>



**BUT WHEN TEACHERS HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, ALIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND THE INSTRUCTION STUDENTS RECEIVE.**

A 2018 study illustrated that teachers using aligned materials engaged students in mathematical practices at a **SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER RATE** than teachers who did not have access to aligned curriculum.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Opfer, V., Kaufman, J., Bongard, M., Pane, J. (2018). Changes in What Teachers Know and Do in the Common Core Era, American Teacher Panel Findings from 2015 to 2017. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2658.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2658.html)



**...WHEN TEACHERS HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, ALIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND THE INSTRUCTION STUDENTS RECEIVE.**

“When students who started the year off behind grade level were given more grade-appropriate assignments, stronger instruction, deeper engagement, and higher expectations, the gap between these students and their higher achieving peers began to narrow substantially.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup>TNTP. (2018). The Opportunity Myth. Retrieved from: <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>





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