feedback & pushback

We faxed our 2008 3rd grade Math rating sheet and summary comparison chart to over 1000 Texas school districts and received 196 replies – a great response rate! – mostly thankful requests for more info plus a few acerbic barbs.

"Wow. What great information!"
– Texas elementary school principal

"My textbook committee is very interested in looking at your results."
– Texas elementary school principal

"We appreciate the work of your organization and value the input."
– Texas elementary school principal

MYTH	TRUTH
"… I am embarrassed by your efforts to deny placing the Everyday Mathematics 3rd grade edition 3 textbook on the state approved list of math textbooks. … I don't think you understand how EM is taught. … Addition with regrouping you have indicated as 'not taught'. It is actually taught in second grade. Therefore it is not necessary to spend valuable instructional time in 3rd grade reteaching it. It is used frequently …." *– Texas elementary school teacher*	"Does 2nd grade *Everyday Math* teach addition with regrouping? In fact, *Everyday Math* neglects addition with regrouping. Pages 101-105 of *Everyday Math's Teacher's Reference Manual* for grades 1-3 treat 'partial sums' as the program's preferred 'focus algorithm,' with a mere perfunctory nod to the shorter, simpler traditional algorithm that the 3rd grade Teacher's Edition for sure never stresses. Cabining students within the indefensibly more cumbersome, unnecessarily more time-consuming, inexcusably less efficient, indubitably more laborious 'partial sums' method confirms 3rd grade *Everyday Math's* disturbing commitment to slowed computation." *– Educational Research Analysts*

Q	A
Why did you not review the texts at other grade levels?	We tried to do a little well rather than a lot poorly. Our 3rd grade reviews took us about 600 hours, all we could handle. We did 3rd grade because it is the first year state-tested in Math in Texas. Only our detailed comparisons gave teachers the documentation to see past the glitz of publishers' sales pitches.

Q	A
Why did you not consider other important skills such as problem-solving?	We did address problem-solving. *A pedagogy weak on computation skills cannot be strong on problem-solving.* Our focus on computation skills clearly differentiated the programs, revealing a broad spread of disparities among them. Not all avoided equally well setting students to problem-solving before mastering necessary computation skills, which *reverses Bloom's taxonomy*.

PRETENSE	REALITY
"For years teachers in 4th grade dreaded coming back after Christmas knowing that students would be doing multiple digit multiplication and 'long division'. After the first year of E[veryday] M[athematics], students come to fourth grade already experiencing both operations and they are ready to move to mastery." *– Texas elementary school teacher*	"Do 3rd grade *Everyday Math*-taught students indeed enter 4th grade 'already experiencing' long division and 'ready to move to mastery'? The *Teacher's Reference Manual* (p. 112) says no: '[A] formal introduction to division algorithms is not included in *Kindergarten* through *Third Grade Everyday Mathematics* ….' " *– Educational Research Analysts*

"The 3rd grade file is a HUGE help. It's such an overwhelming job selecting a textbook for an entire district that fits all grades K-5! You did a remarkable job on the 3rd grade information."
– Texas elementary school teacher

"Thank you so much for the plethora of information concerning textbook adoption! Your research will be invaluable to us as we make our decisions!"
– Texas elementary school teacher

"Thank you so much for the comparison. It is really incredible. I copied it and got it to our teachers and they were thrilled."
– Texas elementary school teacher