



# Center for Education Policy Research

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

February 3, 2017

Dear Curriculum Director and Math Coordinator,

At Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research (CEPR), we think a lot about the challenges that education leaders face. We work hard to give you better evidence to support your decisions. That is why we are partnering with your state to launch Harvard's first annual *National Evaluation of Curriculum Effectiveness* (<http://cepr.harvard.edu/curriculum>), to identify the textbooks and curriculum materials that are most effective in helping students achieve. This year, we are focusing on elementary math.

As you know, over the last few years schools around the country have implemented new textbooks and curriculum materials in response to the new standards adopted by states. As educators, we feel an obligation to learn from those experiences, by comparing the learning gains of students that have been using different textbooks and curriculum materials. Curriculum leaders like you need that evidence to ensure that students and teachers have the highest quality materials in the future. We have provided information about this study to the Superintendent of Woodbridge Township School District. Because of your expertise, we thought it best to also go directly to you: the person who knows the most about this topic.

We need your assistance to collect accurate information that can improve the evidence base for everyone.

## Will you help?

### **What does participation entail?**

- We will email you a link to an online survey. The sender will be Rachel Urso and the subject line will be "Harvard District Survey on Math Textbooks".
- The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. It will ask you to identify the textbooks (or primary curriculum materials) used for math instruction in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in this school year and the two years prior.
- You will receive a \$25 e-gift card upon survey completion.

**Soon we will also invite a small number of schools in your district take an online survey.** These brief surveys will also ask principals to identify which mathematics curriculum are being used in fourth and fifth grade classrooms and describe the types and amount of support teachers are receiving to use those materials. The schools in your district that have been selected to participate in the study are listed on page 2 of this letter.

With participation from leaders like you, we can determine if there are systematic differences in the learning gains of students using particular textbooks and curriculum materials and we will be able to share with you which textbooks seem to be associated with better student outcomes. See <http://cepr.harvard.edu/curriculum> for more information or contact Rachel Hitch, Project Director ([Rachel\\_hitch@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:Rachel_hitch@gse.harvard.edu), 617-496-9837). Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kane

Walter H. Gale Professor of Education and Economics  
Faculty Director, Center for Education Policy Research