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# Technology and Instructional Materials Survey Review of the River Valley School District

*Completed by:*     Cooperative Educational Service Agency 5 (Portage, Wisconsin)

*Project Manager:*     Dr. Heather Fish, CESA 5 Director of School Improvement

*Review Period:*     October 2024 through November 2024

*Report Submitted:*     December 2024

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# Introduction

## Scope of the Project

In the fall of 2024, the River Valley School District requested that CESA 5 conduct a technology and instructional material survey for the River Valley School District. Specifically, the project focused on surveying and compiling results for district technology support, infrastructure, equipment, and instructional resources in grades PK-12 and providing feedback and recommendations based on the survey results. This report specifically focuses on the printed and online instructional materials aspect of the survey results. A report on the district's technology support, infrastructure, and equipment will be separate and forthcoming.

## Description of CESA 5

CESA 5 (Portage, WI) is one of Wisconsin's 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies. CESA 5 employs approximately 250 staff who provide educational staffing, training, and other services to its 35-member school districts throughout the state.

## Notice

This report and subsequent recommendations made by CESA 5 are based on survey results and the professional opinion of CESA 5 staff. Upon the completion of this review by CESA 5, further evaluation and action by your school district is required. Otherwise, the original intent of this project, which is to understand the technology structures and instructional materials used within the district, will not be realized.

Thank you for choosing CESA 5 to assist your school district.

## Overview

CESA 5 distributed a short survey to staff in November 2024. Staff were asked to submit data for each question. Data for each school, grade level, and subject area were compiled and analyzed.

# River Valley Technology Instructional Materials

River Valley School District staff were surveyed about the courses they teach and any printed and online materials they utilize in their classrooms. This section analyzes the staff responses by content area and grade level and offers recommendations based on those responses.

## English Language Arts

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| 4K | Decodable readers, workbooks, worksheets, teacher-created materials. | Jolly Phonics, My Big World, Heggerty, YouTube videos, Teach Your Monster to Read, Clifford My Big World Magazine. |
| K | Coloring sheets, decodable books, worksheets. | Epic, Jolly Phonics, Heggerty, Starfall, Teach Your Monster to Read. |
| 1st Grade | Phonics readers, decodable books, worksheets, Scholastic resources. | Reading A-Z, Epic, Seesaw, Khan Academy Kids, Splash Learn, Starfall. |
| 2nd Grade | Decodable readers, workbooks, additional printables for writing. | IXL, Reading A-Z, Epic. |
| 3rd Grade | Literacy workbooks, decodable texts, vocabulary sheets, practice assignments. | Epic, Splash Learn, IXL. |
| 4th Grade | Textbooks, reading materials, workbooks. | Google Classroom, Scholastic. |
| 5th & 6th Grade | Various worksheets, spelling sheets, vocabulary sheets, short stories. | Flocabulary, IXL, NewsELA, Google Classroom. |
| Elementary Reading Intervention | SPIRE, REWARDS, Connect to Comprehension, Sound Partners, Road to Reading, 6 Minute Solutions. | REWARDS and SPIRE online platforms. Google Translate with ELL students and AimsWeb Plus for progress monitoring. |
| 7th & 8th Grade | Spelling lists, grammar packets, short stories. | Scholastic Storyworks, Quizlet, IXL, Google Suite. |
| 9th -12th Grade | Novels, study guides, rubrics, AP textbooks. | NoRedInk, AP Classroom, Google Classroom, ProQuest, Quizlet. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 English Language Arts Instructional Materials

While the school district should review the survey and notes provided regarding instructional materials in their entirety, we recommend that the following item(s) be acted upon or further examined.

1. Develop a district-approved core resource list for English/reading/ELA by grade level, with room for supplemental tools.
2. Online materials vary in quality and alignment, potentially creating gaps in instruction. Consider analyzing if these frequently used resources are aligned with state ELA standards.
3. Multiple login systems appear, and teacher-created accounts increase vulnerability. Consider implementing Single Sign-On (SSO) across the district for all digital tools, reducing security risks and streamlining access.

# Math

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| 4K | Math workbooks, hands-on learning materials, worksheets. | Origo Stepping Stones-Math, Clifford My Big World Magazine. |
| K | Worksheets, coloring sheets, math workbooks. | Origo, Mystery Science, Splash Learn. |
| 1st Grade | Math check-ins, worksheets, Scholastic resources. | DreamBox, Origo Math, Splash Learn, XtraMath. |
| 2nd Grade | Minimal worksheets, additional printables for specific lessons. | Origo Math, XtraMath, IXL, Mystery Science, Prodigy. |
| 3rd Grade | Math lesson notes, worksheets, practice problems. | Splash Learn, Epic, IXL, Origo Math, XtraMath. |
| 4th Grade | Workbook worksheets for detailed math practices. | Prodigy, Google Classroom. |
| 5th & 6th Grade | Worksheets, curriculum-aligned materials for core lessons. | IXL, Google Classroom, Khan Academy, Prodigy. |
| 7th & 8th Grade | Daily homework, printed unit handouts, quizzes, manipulatives. | IXL, Illustrative Mathematics, Google Slides, Desmos, Khan Academy. |
| 9th -12th Grade | Textbooks, note outlines, and various worksheets. | IXL, Desmos, Khan Academy, Geogebra, Kahoot!, Brisk AI tool, Kuta. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 Math Instructional Materials

4. Various tools (e.g., IXL, Origo, Khan Academy, Desmos) are used inconsistently across grade levels, leading to gaps or redundancies. Consider developing a district-wide core curriculum for math that includes a standardized set of printed and online resources aligned to state standards. Supplement these core materials with approved optional tools for teacher flexibility.
5. Teachers use similar tools across grades (e.g., IXL, Splash Learn) without apparent coordination. Map out tools by grade level to create a scaffolded resource framework, ensuring tools complement each other without unnecessary repetition.
6. Many tools' effectiveness may need to be systematically measured. Develop a framework to evaluate tools based on student outcomes, engagement, and alignment with standards.

# Science

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| 4K | Clifford My Big World Magazine, worksheets, hands-on activity pages. | Mystery Science. |
| K | Decodable books, picture books, coloring sheets. | Mystery Science, Mystery Doug, Scholastic Let's Find Out. |
| 1st Grade | Worksheets, Scholastic News materials. | Mystery Science, Epic, Starfall, Khan Academy Kids. |
| 2nd Grade | Weekly science pages, Scholastic News materials. | Mystery Science, Epic, YouTube (e.g., SciShow Kids, Wild Kratts). |
| 3rd Grade | Science materials integrated with literacy and math. | Splash Learn, Mystery Science, Epic. |
| 4th Grade | Texts supporting science concepts, workbooks, handouts. | Mystery Science, Google Classroom for supplemental materials. |
| 5th & 6th Grade | Lab sheets, worksheets, science notes. | Generation Genius, Kesler Science, Mystery Science, Google Suite. |
| 7th & 8th Grade | Teacher-generated worksheets, Kesler Science materials. | Kesler Science (aligned with NGSS), IXL, Mystery Science, YouTube. |
| Biology | Note outlines, lab activities, CER/Scientific Methods practice materials. | ScienceWorld (Scholastic), OpenStax, AP Classroom, Khan Academy. |
| Physics and Chemistry | Textbooks, lab sheets, notes. | pHet Interactive Simulations, Physics Aviary, AP Classroom, Google Classroom. |
| Environmental Science | "Environmental Science for the AP Course" (3rd Edition by Friedland and Relyea). | Edpuzzle, Kahoot, Quizizz, PBS Learning Media, Switch Energy Classroom. |

| Earth Space Science | None. | Nearpod, Quizizz, Blooket, Google Classroom. |
|---|---|---|

**Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 Science Instructional Materials**

7. Similar tools (e.g., Mystery Science, Generation Genius, Kesler Science) are used in overlapping grade levels. The district should consider mapping a vertical alignment plan to define the appropriate tools for each grade level, ensuring complexity and skill development progression.
8. Teachers reported choosing resources based on word-of-mouth, recommendations, or personal familiarity, which may not reflect best practices. Provide targeted professional development on integrating tools like Kesler Science, AP Classroom, and pHet Simulations effectively. Include training on blending online and printed resources to maximize impact.
9. Some high school teachers report outdated printed textbooks (e.g., Biology and Anatomy) or lack of access to current resources (e.g., Earth Space Science). This limits the ability to deliver relevant, engaging, and up-to-date content. It is recommended that the district consider investing in updated science textbooks and printed resources that align with current standards and integrate seamlessly with digital tools.

# Social Studies

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| 4K | Clifford My Big World Magazine, decodable readers, and worksheets. | Scholastic Let's Find Out. |
| K | Picture books, paper-pencil materials, coloring sheets. | Mystery Science (integrated topics), Scholastic Let's Find Out. |
| 1st Grade | Scholastic News materials, graphic organizers, worksheets. | Mystery Science (integrated topics), Epic. |
| 2nd Grade | Scholastic News materials, paper-based student pages. | Mystery Science, YouTube (e.g., educational videos for social studies topics). |
| 3rd Grade | Worksheets and practice pages for integrated social studies and literacy topics. | Epic, Splash Learn (integrated topics), Mystery Science. |
| 4th Grade | Handouts, workbooks, supplemental materials related to social studies topics. | Mystery Science, Google Classroom for accessing additional resources. |
| 5th & 6th Grade | Worksheets, teacher-generated materials, older textbook resources. | Generation Genius (integrated topics), Mystery Science, Google Classroom. |

| 7th & 8th Grade | Worksheets, note packets, teacher-created materials. | Civics: iCivics, iSideWith, YourVote.gov.<br><br>History/Geography: YouTube (videos for supplementary content), Wikipedia, News Outlets (current events). |
| Social Studies/History | Various textbooks (not specified), note packets, worksheets. | News sources, YouTube, and Quizlet for supplementary learning. Google Classroom for resource distribution. |
| Civics | Classroom-created materials, historical documents. | iCivics (interactive civics activities). Quizlet, Kahoot, other interactive platforms for reinforcement. |
| AP and Specialized Courses | AP materials and textbooks specific to course content. | AP Classroom for curriculum-specific resources and practice. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 Social Studies Instructional Materials

10. Consider developing a district-wide social studies framework aligned with state standards.
11. Create a vertical alignment guide to ensure the progression of skills and content across grades (e.g., local history in elementary school, U.S. history in middle school, global perspectives in high school).
12. Develop a centralized, easily accessible repository of district-approved materials. The district could host resources on a shared platform (e.g., Google Drive or Classlink) categorized by grade level and topic, including lesson plans, digital tools, and guidelines for using supplemental resources.

## Physical Education and Health

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary Physical Education | Class handouts with terminology on them. | Fitnessgram. |
| High School Physical Education & Health | Note Sheets, PE Logs, Tests, Quizzes. | Curipod, Slides, Quizlet, Kahoot. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 Physical Education Instructional Materials

13. It is recommended that the district review the state standards for Physical Education and Health to determine whether the standards are being addressed with these printed and online materials.

## World Languages

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Middle School | Worksheets, articles, puzzles. | Quizlet, Blooket, YouTube, SWANK, Google, Seterra. |
| High School | The entire Spanish curriculum is printed instead of using a textbook. | Señor Wooly. |

### Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 6-12 World Languages Instructional Materials

14. It is recommended that the district review the state standards for World Languages to determine whether the standards are being addressed with these printed and online materials.

## Music

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary Music | Sheet music. | Chrome Music Lab. |
| Middle School Music | Sheet music, worksheets. | Quaver Music, Edpuzzle, Kahoot, various online music games/apps, Screencastify. |
| High School Vocal Music | Sheet music. | Noteflight, internet, Google. |
| High School Band | Sheet music. | None. |

### Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades K-12 Music Instructional Materials

15. It is recommended that the district review the state standards for Music to determine whether these printed and online materials address the standards.

## Art

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary Art | Printed drawing guides, examples of artworks by artists, pictures of featured artists, and worksheets about the topic we are learning/practicing, such as color wheels, texture practice, etc. | Google Slides, YouTube. |

| Middle School Art | Reflection guides, practice worksheets, and rubrics. Reference photos and visual resources for students to create art. | Loom (I found out the district did not support it). Would like to use Pinterest, but use Google Slides instead to collect inspiration. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Elementary and Middle School Art Instructional Materials

16. It is recommended that the district review the state standards for Art to determine whether the standards are being addressed with these printed and online materials.

# Special Education

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| 4K/K | Minimal worksheets. | None. |
| Elementary Special Education | All About Reading, grade level curriculum. | Support what grade-level teachers provide. |
| Middle School Special Education | Variety of printed materials for math and English. | iReady, IXL, and XtraMath. |
| High School Special Education | Paper copies of notes, assignments, and tests to read to students and allow for easier access to the curriculum. | Online textbook help for Algebra, Google Classroom assignments posted by teachers, Google Forms, Google Slides, PDF texts, Quizlet, Kahoot, etc. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 4K-12 Special Education Instructional Materials

17. Develop hands-on, sensory-focused printed materials, such as interactive books or tactile learning tools, to support the early developmental needs of the youngest students.
18. The district should consider incorporating tools like speech-to-text, text-to-speech, and other assistive devices to enhance accessibility and ensure equitable access to materials.
19. Provide training for teachers on selecting and adapting high-quality instructional materials. Focus on accessibility and ensuring alignment with IEP goals.
20. Ensure tools like Google Classroom and Quizlet are set up with accessibility features, such as audio instructions or simplified interfaces for students who need them.
21. Use scaffolded resources like guided notes or graphic organizers to enhance comprehension and retention.

# Speech and Language

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| PK-12th Grades | Photocopies are used for teaching resources or for downloading materials from the web. | Pink cat games, YouTube, Story Online, and iPad apps. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades PK-12 Speech and Language Instructional Materials
22. There are no particular recommendations for Speech and Language materials at this time.

# Occupational Therapy

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| PK-12 Grades | Handwriting Without Tears curriculum. | TypingClub, keyboarding activities. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades PK-12 Occupational Therapy Instructional Materials
23. There are no specific recommendations for Occupational Therapy materials at this time.

# Agriculture and Technology Education

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Early Learning Technology | Teacher-created materials. | Seesaw app, Geoboard app, Scratch Jr. app, Multiple Internet sites, multiple other apps are used occasionally. |
| High School Agriculture | Worksheets, texts. | Google Classrooms, CASE4Learning, MyCAERT, National Geographic, Netflix, YouTube. |
| High School Technology Education | SolidWorks drawings are handed in with projects, course syllabi, course outlines, safety tests, and classroom rules that require a signature. | YouTube videos for welding classes. Students enrolling in Dual Credit Courses must create a student account at Madison College. |

## Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades PK-12 Agriculture and Technology Education Instructional Materials
24. There are no recommendations for Grades 9-12 Agriculture and Technology Education materials.

## Business Education

| Grade | Printed Materials | Online Materials |
|---|---|---|
| High School Business Education | None. | BusinessU, Cengage, TestOut. |

### Specific Recommendations for the River Valley School District Grades 9-12 Business Education Instructional Materials

25. There are no recommendations for Grades 9-12 Business Education materials.

## Overall Summary of Subject-Area Recommendations

To enhance instructional consistency and quality across the district, it is recommended that core resource lists for English and math by grade level be developed and supplemented with optional tools for teacher flexibility. This will address concerns about gaps and redundancies caused by varied and uncoordinated use of resources like Teachers Pay Teachers, YouTube, IXL, and Desmos. Vertical alignment plans for science, social studies, and math should map appropriate tools by grade level, ensuring a progressive skill and complexity framework. To ensure alignment with state standards, the district should invest in updated printed and digital resources, particularly in science and social studies, where outdated materials may limit effective instruction.

District-wide systems, such as Single Sign-On (SSO), should be implemented to streamline access and improve security, while a centralized repository of approved materials, categorized by grade level and subject, will support teacher access to vetted tools. Evaluation frameworks should be established to assess instructional tools for effectiveness, engagement, and standards alignment. Targeted professional development should focus on integrating core and supplemental resources, accessibility features and aligning instructional materials with IEP goals. Teachers should also be trained to optimize their impact by blending online and printed materials.

For early learners, hands-on, sensory-focused materials should be incorporated to meet developmental needs, and assistive tools like speech-to-text and text-to-speech devices should be available to enhance accessibility for all students. Resources like Google Classroom and Quizlet should be adapted with accessibility features, and scaffolded tools like graphic organizers and guided notes should be employed to support comprehension and retention. Additionally, the district should review state standards for Physical Education, Health, World Languages, Music, and Art to ensure compliance and adequate resource allocation. No specific recommendations are needed for Speech and Language, Agriculture, or Business Education materials.

## Selecting Online Materials

In addition to listing printed and online instructional materials, River Valley School District staff were also asked the following questions related to the selection of online instructional materials:
- How do you choose online materials that support your curriculum?
- How do your students access these online materials?
- Is a login required for online materials?
- Who created the login for the students?

This section will analyze staff responses to these questions and offer recommendations based on those responses.

## Review of the Survey Questions

Based on the survey results, teachers select online materials for their curriculum primarily based on recommendations from colleagues, the materials' relevance to standards, ease of use, and reviews. Many staff engage in independent research, attend professional development sessions, or utilize district-provided resources to make choices. A common consideration in the selection process is ensuring the materials align with curricular standards and provide engaging, interactive student experiences.

Students generally access online materials through Chromebooks or platforms like Google Classroom and Classlink. Teachers may provide direct access during lessons using interactive boards or TVs, while others share links or print materials for offline use. Many online resources require individual logins, typically created by teachers, IT departments, or external providers such as curriculum companies or organizations like the College Board. While Google accounts and other integrated systems are commonly used for logins, there is notable variability in how these accounts are set up and managed.

Several concerns emerged from the survey. Regarding safety and quality, some teachers use free public resources such as YouTube, which may only sometimes adhere to safety and quality standards. The lack of a consistent district-wide vetting process creates challenges in ensuring all materials are safe, age-appropriate, and aligned with educational goals. Additionally, there are equity concerns, as students' access to online materials varies; some benefit from streamlined tools like Classlink, while others depend on shared teacher logins, potentially limiting their independence and full use of the resources.

## Identified Issues

The survey revealed several issues related to the use of online instructional materials. Materials are often selected based on personal judgment or colleague recommendations without a uniform district approval process, which could result in the adoption of low-quality or unsafe resources. Login systems also vary widely, with some students creating their own accounts. This inconsistency poses potential privacy risks, particularly if the platforms do not comply with data protection standards like COPPA. Additionally, while some teachers thoroughly research and vet tools, others need more training or resources to critically evaluate online materials, highlighting a need for more professional development. Equity in access is another concern, as some students rely on shared teacher logins, which may limit functionality and engagement with the resources. Finally, using unmonitored free tools, such as YouTube, raises issues related to advertising, inappropriate content, and copyright compliance, underscoring the need for district oversight.

## Recommendations for the District

To address the identified issues, the district should establish a centralized vetting framework for online resources (e.g., K-12CVAT, EdTech Index), ensuring all tools meet standards for safety, age-appropriateness, and quality standards. This process should include developing a recommended resource list aligned with curricular goals. To improve data privacy practices, the district should mandate compliance with student data privacy laws, such as COPPA and FERPA, for all classroom tools and standardize login creation processes by

implementing single sign-on (SSO) solutions like Google or Classlink. Additionally, professional development opportunities should focus on effectively training teachers to evaluate online resources, ensure data security, and adopt best practices for integrating technology into instruction. To enhance equity, the district should ensure all students have individualized logins to promote independence and encourage the use of district-wide platforms like Google Classroom to streamline access. Finally, the district should discourage using unvetted free tools such as YouTube unless videos are pre-screened and provide teachers access to district-approved platforms for videos and interactive lessons. These measures will ensure the use of high-quality, safe, and equitable online materials across classrooms.

# Next Steps for the School District

After the school district has reviewed this report and determined necessary actions, it should create a task list to establish completion timelines and to track progress.  A spreadsheet may contain headings, as shown in the sample below.

While many people may be responsible for tasks on this list, it is recommended that one person is in charge of monitoring this list and verifying that tasks are scheduled and are being completed.  Share this list with all involved staff as an online document for easy accessibility.

*Sample Task Chart:*

| Recommendation# & Description | Task | Task Assigned To | Details | Scheduled to be completed? | Completed On | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| #9. Consider investing in updated science textbooks and printed resources that align with current standards and integrate seamlessly with digital tools. | Begin the textbook selection process. | *(List the person responsible for completing the task)* | *(Include details regarding this item)* | Yes/ Not Yet/ Completed | *(Enter the date of completion)* | *(Add notes as necessary)* |