



## **Instructional Software Evaluation Process**

**Introduction:** Instructional software is an important resource for both teachers and students. Instructional software should be selected to help students increase their understanding of the curriculum and to improve student achievement.

- All instructional software used in the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) must go through an evaluation process to determine the appropriateness of using the software to meet curricular goals. The Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) will facilitate the process of software evaluation and will maintain a listing of “Approved Instructional Software” and a list of “Not Approved Instructional Software.”
- Software should not be installed on BCPS computers for instructional use until it has been approved.
- The first step in the evaluation process is to submit a “Request for Evaluation of Instructional Software Form” to OIT. A description of the evaluation process and copies of all forms can be obtained from the school’s technology liaison or at the OIT website: <http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm>
- Next, it will be determined if the software is compatible with the hardware and operating systems available in schools. The Department of Technology (DoT) will complete a “Technical Report for the Evaluation of Instructional Software Form” to determine compatibility.
- If the software is compatible, one of the two procedures described below must be completed.

### **I. School-System Evaluation Process: (SSEP)**

This procedure is a request for approval of instructional software to be used system-wide to meet the BCPS curriculum. It can be initiated through a request by a teacher or through a request by a curriculum office and must follow the SSEP steps listed below.

### **II. Local School Evaluation Process: (LSEP)**

This procedure is a request for approval of instructional software to be used at the local school level and is designed to meet the needs of an individual school improvement plan. It can be initiated through a request by a teacher or through a request by a curriculum office and must follow the LSEP steps listed below.

## Instructional Software Evaluation Process

One of the following procedures must be completed before an instructional software program can be used for instruction in the Baltimore County Public Schools.

<b>School-System Evaluation Process (SSEP)</b>	<b>Local School Evaluation Process (LSEP)</b>
1. Check current lists of “Approved Instructional Software” and “Not Approved Instructional Software.” (Available at <a href="http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm">http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm</a> )	1. Check current lists of “Approved Instructional Software” and “Not Approved Instructional Software.” (Available at <a href="http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm">http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm</a> )
2. Complete and submit “Request for Evaluation of Instructional Software Form” to the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) at the Timonium Office.	2. Complete and submit “Request for Evaluation of Instructional Software Form” to the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) at the Timonium Office.
3. Program will be tested for compatibility with BCPS hardware and results will be sent to the curriculum office and/or person requesting the evaluation.	3. Program will be tested for compatibility with BCPS hardware and results will be sent to the curriculum office and/or person requesting the evaluation.
4. If program is compatible with BCPS hardware, it must be evaluated by members of a software committee using the “Instructional Software Evaluation Form.”	4. If the program is compatible with BCPS hardware, it must be evaluated within the school by at least two teachers in the grade level or subject area in which the program will be used. Each evaluator must complete the “Instructional Software Evaluation Form.”
5. Committee results will be forwarded to the appropriate curriculum office.	5. The principal of the school must “sign-off” on the “Instructional Software Evaluation Form.”
6. Appropriate curriculum office determines if the program should be listed on the “Approved Instructional Software List” or the “Not Approved Instructional Software List.”	6. The software may be “conditionally” installed on school computers pending final review by the appropriate curriculum office.
7. The program will be placed on the appropriate list as determined by the curriculum office and lists will be available at the OIT website: <a href="http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm">http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm</a>	7. Copies of the completed evaluation forms must be submitted to OIT.
	8. The appropriate curriculum office will determine if (a) the software should only be used by the local school that submitted the evaluation forms; (b) the software should not be used by any school; or (c) if the software should be evaluated for system-wide use.
	9. If the program is evaluated for system-wide use and is not approved, the program may not be used in any school.
	10. If the program is evaluated for system-wide use, the program will be placed on either the “Approved Instructional Software List” or the “Not Approved Instructional Software List.”

## Instructional Software Evaluation Process

### General Guidelines:

- Any staff member may request that a software program be evaluated.
- A “Request for Evaluation of Instructional Software Form” must be completed and forwarded to the Office of Instructional Technology, Timonium Office. (OIT, Timonium Office) to begin the evaluation process. Forms are available both in hardcopy and on the OIT website at <http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm>
- Only software that has been approved following either the system-wide or local school evaluation procedures may be installed on instructional computers used in the Baltimore County Public Schools.
- Software evaluation committees will be formed in the Fall of 2001 and committees will be convened in a timely manner following a request for evaluation.
- Curriculum offices, working with school personnel and OIT technology liaisons, will distribute instructional software.
- Software installation is the responsibility of the technology liaison under the direction of the OIT. All procedures will be verified with the DOT. Liaisons will be furnished with tested procedures for installing software.
- Training in the use of instructional software and curriculum integration is the responsibility of curriculum offices and OIT in collaboration with the Office of Professional Development.
- Technology liaisons will work with the school’s library media specialist to ensure accurate inventory of school software.
- OIT will maintain a current database of software that is approved by BCPS. A list of software that is not approved will also be maintained by OIT. Software may be approved for specific grade levels. See the technology liaison in your building for current licensing agreements and approval of titles specific to your grade level.
- A description of the evaluation process, all forms, and the current “ Approved Instructional Software List” and the current “Not Approved Instructional Software List” will be available from each school’s technology liaison and/or at the following website:  
<http://www.bcps.org/offices/oit/software.htm>