

Preparing Teachers to



Teach Reading Effectively

2007 Revision





Reading is essential in the complex world of today and tomorrow. The ability to read is crucial for success in college and careers and important for personal, social, and economic well-being. Furthermore, a literate populace is fundamental to preserving our democratic, pluralistic society. Knowledgeable teachers who provide quality instruction are crucial to helping children and adolescents become successful readers, and these teachers must be available to all students in California.

At the California State University (CSU), the largest university system in the world, teacher preparation is a primary mission. Teacher education faculty at 22 campuses, most of whom are former elementary or secondary school teachers and hold advanced degrees, annually prepare the majority of California's new teachers. In addition, the California State University provides advanced graduate preparation in the teaching of reading for experienced teachers; many campuses offer state-approved Reading Certificate and/or Reading/Language Arts Specialist Credential programs, in addition to master's degrees in reading and language arts. In these graduate programs, teachers develop expertise in teaching reading while they develop the skills to assume leadership positions in literacy in their schools and districts.

The purpose of this publication is to share information about how the CSU prepares teachers to provide reading instruction to California's children and adolescents. Becoming an expert teacher of reading is a career-long endeavor. During the initial preparation period at the university, teacher candidates become knowledgeable about research and theory regarding how individuals learn to read and develop as readers; lesson planning and delivery; curriculum and instructional materials; how to assess students' reading development and proficiency, including recognizing the signs of difficulties, disabilities, and giftedness; how to provide appropriate literacy instruction based on assessed needs; and how to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching.

The CSU reading faculty play a vital role in initial and advanced teacher preparation. Our partners in this process include practicing teachers, district administrators, curriculum specialists, county offices of education, the California State Board of Education, the California Department of Education, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and professional organizations. All help to initiate new teachers into the profession and work to further their development. For example, the CSU provides the theoretical, research-based, and practical foundations for teaching reading and collaborates with district partners to prepare teachers to use state-adopted materials and programs, effectively organize and manage classrooms, and thoughtfully and skillfully employ instructional strategies that meet the needs of diverse students. Further, because learning to teach is a career-long endeavor, communities' priorities and understandings change, and new knowledge is generated by research, the CSU works with its partners to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities for practitioners.

This publication is organized into three parts. First, the principles that guide reading instruction in the CSU are addressed. Second, the elements of comprehensive reading instruction are identified, and finally the CSU reading faculty are portrayed.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE READING INSTRUCTION IN THE CSU

The following principles are embraced by the CSU reading faculty, and they serve as underpinnings for our teacher preparation courses and advanced studies in reading. These principles are grounded in reading research, theory, and practice. These same principles serve as a foundation for the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools*, the *English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools*, Standards 7a and 7b from the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Teacher Preparation Programs for Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credentials*, and the Reading Certificate and Reading/Language Arts Specialist Credential programs offered at many campuses of the California State University.

The Teaching of Reading Is Knowledge-Based

Teaching is both an art and a science. Within the last several decades, great strides have been made in understanding how individuals learn

to read. For example, we know that students need ample opportunities to practice the skills and strategies they are learning with a variety of texts and genres. We know that comprehension instruction should include attention to vocabulary development, background knowledge, text structures, and thinking strategies. We know that what happens during the preschool years sets the stage for success in reading, and we know that attending closely to instruction provided during years following initial reading acquisition is crucial in developing critical readers. CSU teacher candidates acquire this knowledge base during their preparation program and they are given frequent opportunities to apply this knowledge in classrooms under the supervision of practicing teachers and university faculty.

Reading Is a Complex Process

Reading is a complex cognitive and linguistic process. It involves decoding alphabetic symbols, drawing upon experiences and language, and using strategies effectively to make meaning. Successful reading depends upon having available a repertoire of skills and strategies. It depends upon the richness of a learner's experiences and language, both in the world and with print. It also depends upon a reader's view of reading as a purposeful, informative, and enjoyable activity. CSU teacher candidates learn that reading is a multi-dimensional act; to teach only phonemic awareness, for instance, would be to ignore other critical components of the decoding process that contribute to successful reading. Likewise, to teach students only to locate the main idea in a passage would be to disregard other critical aspects of comprehension.

Learners Are Different

Students have diverse talents, strengths, interests, experiences, and opportunities. Further, they have different language and cultural backgrounds. These variations influence the instructional needs learners have and the decisions teachers make to meet those needs. To ensure access, equity, and opportunities for all learners to become readers and achieve their full potential, CSU teacher candidates learn to respect and respond to individual differences while understanding commonalities and maintaining high standards for all. CSU credential candidates develop strategies for learning from their students and for using this information to design instruction. They learn to observe and assess students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening development and to recognize signs of difficulty. They learn to plan and teach lessons—based on thoughtful assessment and reflection—that build on the strengths of each student while addressing student needs. They plan quality reading instruction by drawing on the knowledge base about how children and adolescents learn to read and develop as readers, the fundamentals of effective reading instruction, and grade-level expectations.



Teachers Are Informed Decision-Makers

Teachers make hundreds of instructional decisions every day. In order to make informed decisions that positively affect students' reading achievement, teachers must be knowledgeable about the reading process, effective instruction, the diverse communities they serve, and the expectations of teaching reading as outlined in state curriculum documents including the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools*, the *English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools*, and the *English-Language Development Standards for California Public Schools*. Teachers must use this knowledge to plan effective reading lessons and experiences and to select and use instructional materials purposefully, thoughtfully, and reflectively. Teachers must use this knowledge to monitor the progress of each student, to take advantage of opportune moments to reinforce concepts or introduce new concepts, and to make decisions about appropriate interventions needed. Preparing teachers involves more than training teacher candidates to use particular strategies and materials; it involves educating thoughtful and informed individuals who understand their legal and ethical responsibilities and can draw on their knowledge base and experience to make critical decisions that positively influence the lives of children and adolescents.

ELEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE READING INSTRUCTION

CSU reading professors ensure that teacher candidates become effective teachers for all students, including English learners and students with special needs, by providing instruction and public school classroom experiences that address the following broad categories: research and theory, learners, assessment, and curriculum and instruction.

Research and Theory

- **The Reading Process:** Candidates study and demonstrate understanding of historical perspectives, current and classic research studies, and theories that address the nature and processes of reading acquisition and development; the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, transactional, and psychological bases of the reading process; and the interrelatedness of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Candidates learn that literacy development begins at birth and is a lifelong process.
- **Effective Teaching Practices:** Candidates study and demonstrate understanding of historical and current research that addresses effective teaching practices in reading and language arts. Candidates understand that teaching is more than a collection of isolated instructional strategies. They understand the rationale, selection, and appropriate application of teaching practices.
- **Language:** Candidates study and demonstrate understanding of the relationship of linguistics (phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics) to the reading process; first and second language acquisition, and oral language development; and how to teach reading and language arts to linguistically diverse students, many of whom have a home language other than English. They learn the powerful role of first language proficiency on second language development.
- **Classroom Applications of Theory and Research:** Candidates apply what they have learned from theory and research by working with children and adolescents in public school settings under the supervision of cooperating teachers and university faculty, and they reflect on their own teaching practices as well as those they observe.

Learners

- **The Role of Family, Culture, and Community:** Candidates learn that family, culture, and community greatly influence students' literacy development and use this knowledge to plan and teach effective lessons that honor and capitalize on students' diverse backgrounds.
- **Personal Factors that Impact Reading Development:** Candidates learn about the physical, emotional, social, linguistic, and intellectual factors that influence children's and adolescents' literacy development and use this information to plan and teach effective lessons that take into consideration the individual needs of learners.
- **The Role of Motivation and Effort:** Candidates learn about the significant roles that motivation and effort play in achievement. They study and demonstrate understanding of ways to stimulate and nurture a lifelong interest in reading and to create classrooms in which teachers and students have high expectations.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Practice:** Candidates learn that curriculum, instructional practices, and classroom organizational patterns appropriate for students at one stage of development often are not appropriate for students at another stage of development. For example, some strategies that are suitable for engaging learners in the middle childhood years are not suitable for engaging preschoolers, nor are they likely to be appropriate for adolescents. Candidates learn to recognize and use developmentally appropriate teaching practices for different age groups of learners.

Assessment

- **Purposes of Assessment:** Candidates learn that assessments are used for a variety of purposes, including to determine learners' existing knowledge and skills (entry-level assessments), to monitor



students' progress toward learning goals (progress monitoring assessments), and to determine mastery of goals (summative assessments). They learn that assessment is inextricably linked with instruction and that assessments must guide their instructional decisions.

- **Multiple Measures:** Candidates learn how to use and interpret multiple measures to assess students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Measures include, but are not limited to, family input, diagnostic instruments, standardized tests, classroom observations, and student input.
- **Statewide Assessment System:** Candidates learn about California's statewide assessment system, including the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, the Early Assessment Program (EAP), the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). They learn the strengths and limitations of these assessment tools and how to interpret scores.
- **Identification of Special Learners:** Candidates learn formal and informal means to identify students who may have reading difficulties or disabilities and students who may be advanced learners in order to plan and provide appropriate instruction and to seek support from education specialists.

Curriculum and Instruction

- **Word Recognition Instruction:** Candidates study and demonstrate understanding of the critical role of word recognition in reading and how to assess and explicitly teach its various

components including phonemic awareness, phonics, the alphabetic principle, word identification strategies, spelling, orthographic knowledge, and structural analysis. Candidates also learn how to support readers as they apply these skills in a variety of reading situations.

- **Fluency:** Candidates learn about the importance of fluent reading, the relationship of fluency to comprehension, how to assess fluency, and ways to develop readers' fluency (such as rereading familiar books and choral reading).
- **Comprehension Instruction:** Candidates learn that comprehension is the goal of reading. They study and demonstrate understanding of how to assess, explicitly teach, and model its various components including the flexible use of reading strategies (such as predicting, inferring, summarizing, and questioning), comprehension skills (such as comparing and contrasting, drawing conclusions, and identifying key ideas), comprehension monitoring, and analysis of text structures and genres. Candidates also learn how to support readers' application of these strategies and skills with a variety of reading materials in a variety of reading situations.
- **Vocabulary and Academic Language Instruction:** Candidates learn about the importance of well-developed vocabulary, its role in comprehension, how to assess vocabulary, and how to teach vocabulary both explicitly through word study (including examination of morphology and etymology) and indirectly through the use of wide reading, rich oral language interactions, and context. Candidates learn that vocabulary is one aspect of academic language

(the rich, complex, abstract, and specialized language of books), and they learn how to facilitate student learning of academic language through reading, discussion, and writing.

- **Literature and Other Texts:** Candidates learn to select and appropriately use different texts (including narrative text, expository text, poetic text, predictable text, and decodable text) for different purposes based upon students' needs and lesson objectives. They learn to encourage and assess readers' responses to literature, engage readers in literary analysis, and use instructional approaches such as literature circles, readers' workshops, and Socratic seminars. In addition, candidates learn to assist students to analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate text and to read rhetorically.
- **Content Area Reading:** Candidates learn how to prepare children and adolescents to learn from content area texts. Candidates learn strategies for developing students' background knowledge and language of the particular discipline, ability to navigate complex text of a variety of forms and organizational patterns, and ability to strategically and critically read across the curriculum.
- **Independent Reading:** Candidates learn the importance of providing opportunities for students to engage in daily reading of extended text for authentic purposes and how to promote and model reading as a pleasurable and beneficial activity.
- **Documents That Guide the Teaching of Reading and State-Adopted Materials:** Candidates become familiar with state and federal policies and curriculum documents, and they learn to use these to guide their short- and long-range planning. They learn about and work with state-adopted instructional materials.
- **Organizing and Managing Literacy Instruction:** Candidates learn how to organize and manage their classrooms for effective literacy instruction, including small and large group instruction, flexible grouping patterns, and individualized lessons.
- **Differentiation and Intervention:** Candidates learn how to differentiate instruction to ensure that all students are provided access to the curriculum. They learn strategies for modification of curriculum and instruction to challenge and stimulate advanced learners and meet the learning needs of students whose primary language is not English. They learn intervention strategies to assist students who are experiencing difficulty.
- **Partnerships and Resources:** Candidates learn how to establish partnerships with other school personnel, families, and the community to optimally and collaboratively serve students. They learn how to make use of technological resources and other media to enhance teaching and learning, and they become familiar with a variety of instructional materials and approaches for diverse student needs.



CSU reading professors are a diverse group of educators who come from a wide range of backgrounds. However, we have the following in common:

We are teachers. Prior to becoming professors we taught in preschool, elementary, or secondary school classrooms and worked with a range of students including English learners, bilingual students, special education students, and gifted students. In addition, many of us have held other public school positions such as reading specialist, reading resource teacher, education specialist, curriculum coordinator, and school principal. We continue to work in public school classrooms with teachers and administrators in a variety of ways including volunteer classroom assistant, supervisor, co-researcher, and curriculum advisor and developer.

We are authors. We have written hundreds of books and articles. Many of these have been influential publications that have impacted literacy instruction throughout the nation.

We are researchers. Many of us are actively engaged in research projects with our university and school district colleagues. We have been involved in numerous research studies that contribute to greater understandings of the reading process, effective teaching, and teacher preparation. Further, we view as a significant responsibility the dissemination of research.

We are leaders. CSU reading faculty have served in leadership positions for local, state, national, and international professional organizations, and on CSU campuses.

We are contributors to policy making. CSU reading faculty have been represented on influential panels and committees, including the panel that wrote the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* and the *English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools*, the task force that wrote the Reading Standard for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Teacher Preparation Programs for Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credentials*, the panel that wrote the standards for the California Reading Certificate and Reading/Language Arts Specialist Credential, the task force that wrote *Strategic Teaching and Learning: Standards-based Instruction to Promote Literacy in Grades Four Through Twelve*, and committees responsible for drafting and reviewing the tasks, knowledge, and skills assessed by the RICA (Reading Instruction Competency Assessment).

We are partners with school districts. We work with district personnel to further educate teachers, provide parent education workshops, collaborate on curriculum development and problem-solving, and devise more effective ways to work with the students they serve. Nearly all of CSU reading faculty have provided professional development for California schools.

Teachers have the tremendous responsibility for teaching all students to read. CSU reading faculty members are proud to play a major role in preparing preservice and inservice teachers for this challenge. The CSU Chancellor's Office is engaged in an ongoing evaluation of the effect of teacher preparation programs. Survey data indicate that the vast majority of principals who supervise new teachers educated by the CSU find that the teachers are adequately or well prepared to teach reading to California content standards. In comparison to surveys of new teachers educated nationwide, more CSU graduates than their national counterparts report feeling adequately or well prepared to teach reading-language arts. Although we are pleased with these survey findings and appreciate that learning to be an expert reading teacher is a career-long process, until all new teachers are well prepared to teach reading-language arts, we still have work to do.

We are well aware that challenges will continue to face California educators in the decades to come. We take very seriously our role in preparing teachers to meet these challenges. Collectively, we are committed to ensuring that California's children and adolescents will be readers; as readers, they will have the greatest chance of becoming successful and productive citizens in today's changing world.

GLOSSARY

*The definitions provided here are included to assist the reader in gaining a rudimentary understanding of the literacy terms and concepts as they are used in this report. For more comprehensive definitions, please see *The Literacy Dictionary* by T.L. Harris and R.E. Hodges, available through the International Reading Association.*

academic language – the rich and sophisticated language that is found in text and other formal written materials

alphabetic principle – the understanding that spoken sounds can be represented by letters or combinations of letters

comprehension – the process of thoughtfully making meaning of a written communication through the interaction of the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, and expectations and the information available in the text; includes literal understanding, evaluation, analysis, and interpretation

decodable text – written material that can be selected for beginning readers that has a high percentage of words that can be identified through phonic analysis

decoding – using phonics and other word recognition strategies (such as syllabication or looking for roots or base words) to pronounce words

differentiation – tailoring instruction to meet the needs of individual students

expository text – nonfiction text that argues, explains, persuades, or describes (such as the writing commonly found in textbooks)

fluency – the ability to recognize most words automatically in order to read expressively and at an appropriate rate for making meaning

intervention – individualized instruction provided to students experiencing reading difficulty

language arts – the school curriculum areas concerned with the development and improvement of reading, writing, spelling, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing

literacy – the ability to make use of written language to communicate effectively

narrative text – a written story, either actual or fictional

orthographic knowledge – an understanding and ability to use the writing and spelling system of a language

phonemic awareness – the understanding that speech consists of small units of sound (i.e., phonemes) and the ability to reflect on and manipulate those small units

phonics – a component of teaching reading and spelling that emphasizes letter-sound relationships and patterns

predictable text – reading material that is written in such a way that students can readily anticipate the language and/or events in the text; may include rhythmical, repetitive, or patterned text

professional development – the ongoing education of teachers after the initial certification

reading strategies – problem-solving behaviors that readers use to comprehend text; for example, summarizing, predicting, self-questioning

structural analysis – identification of word parts such as prefixes, roots, suffixes, compounds, and contractions

teacher candidates – individuals working toward the completion of a teaching credential

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The California State University would like to acknowledge the leadership provided by each of these reading/literacy faculty members in the creation of the original document in 2002 and in the revision of the document in 2007.

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CSU PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE TEACHING OF READING

Center for the Advancement of Reading

The CSU Center for the Advancement of Reading, dedicated to excellence in literacy instruction, promotes the preparation of effective teachers and reading specialists in the California State University by:

- Facilitating faculty communication and research;
- Disseminating research and policy information;
- Fostering connections among the CSU literacy faculty, PreK-12 partners, and public education stakeholders; and
- Serving as a forum for the interchange of public and academic interests.

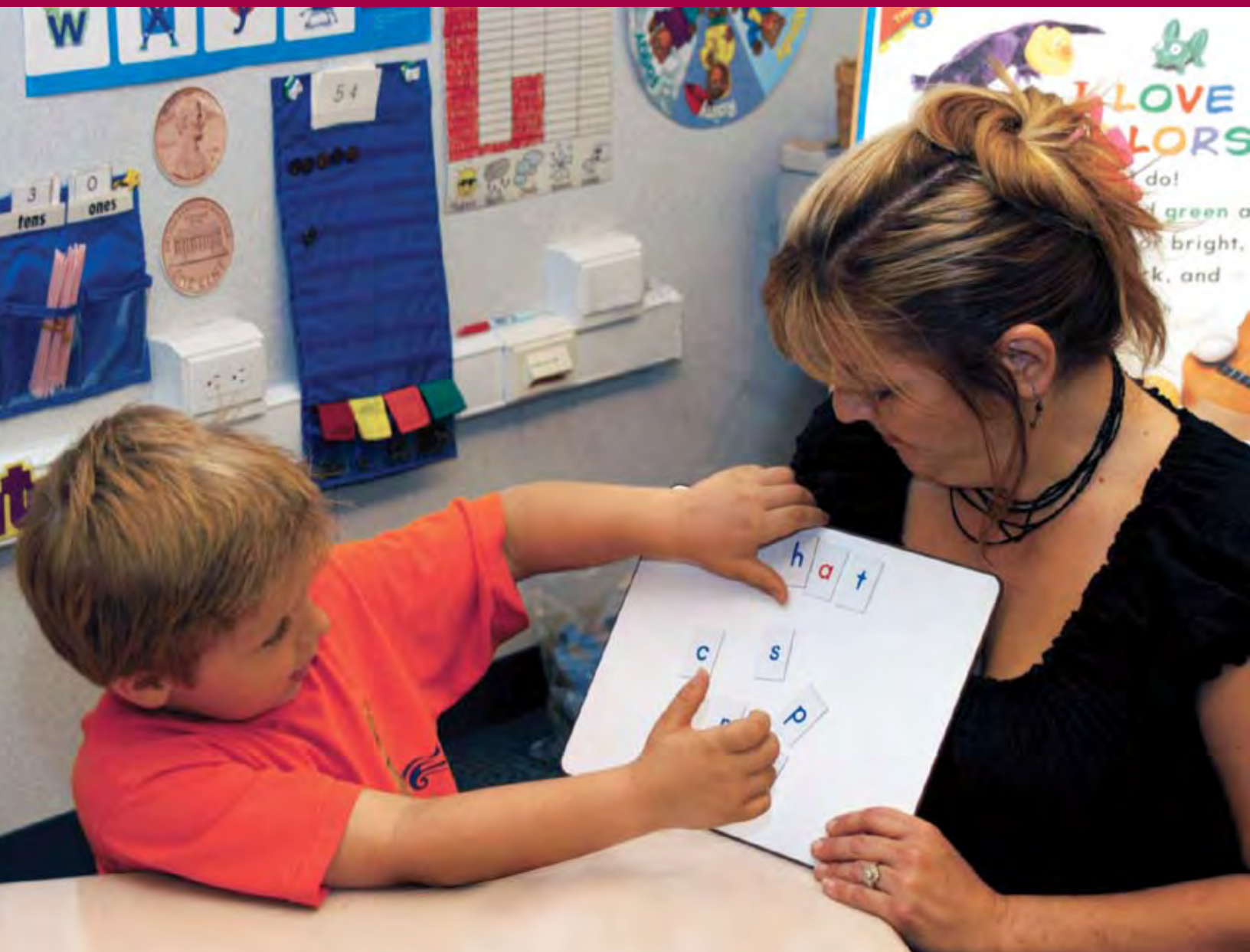
The Center is committed to ensuring that California's children and adolescents will be capable readers and writers; as such, they will

have the greatest chance of becoming successful and productive citizens in today's changing world. In addition to other activities, CAR sponsors an annual reading conference for university faculty and PreK-12 partners and collaborates with the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing and the California Department of Education to facilitate an Intersegmental Literacy Faculty Forum each year.

For more information: www.calstate.edu/car

Single Subject Reading Course Resources

The CSU convened a Single Subject Reading Task Force in order to address the issue of teacher preparation in reading within Single Subject programs. CSU literacy faculty with expertise in secondary reading were



charged with identifying issues related to secondary reading and content preparation; the Task Force made recommendations to CSU reading faculty related to the Single Subject Reading course and disseminated information to Single Subject reading and content faculty. Outcomes of the Task Force include the development of a resource binder and professional workshops for university faculty.

For more information, call (916) 278-4176.

Early Assessment Program

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a collaborative effort among the CSU, the California Department of Education, and the California State Board of Education. The goal of the partnership is to ensure that

college-bound high-school graduates have the English and mathematics skills expected by the state university. The EAP allows students, teachers, parents, and the CSU to know how well prepared 11th graders are for university-level work and provides high school students a chance to polish their skills before enrolling in college. The EAP includes early testing, opportunities for additional preparation in 12th grade, and professional development activities for high school English and mathematics teachers. A hallmark of EAP, the 11th and 12th grade Expository Reading and Writing Course, emphasizes the in-depth study of expository, analytical, and argumentative reading and writing.

For more information: www.calstate.edu/EAP

CAMPUS INFORMATION

For further information about CSU programs of teacher education, please contact any of our campuses.

CSU Bakersfield

School of Education
www.csub.edu

CSU Channel Islands

Education Programs
www.csuci.edu

CSU Chico

College of Communication & Education
www.csuchico.edu

CSU Dominguez Hills

School of Education
www.csudh.edu

CSU East Bay

College of Education & Allied Studies
www.csueastbay.edu

CSU Fresno

Kremen School of Education
& Human Development
www.csufresno.edu

CSU Fullerton

College of Education
www.fullerton.edu

Humboldt State University

School of Education
www.humboldt.edu

CSU Long Beach

College of Education
www.csulb.edu

CSU Los Angeles

Charter College of Education
www.calstatela.edu

CSU Monterey Bay

College of Professional Studies
www.csUMB.edu

CSU Northridge

College of Education
www.csun.edu

Cal Poly Pomona

College of Education & Integrative Studies
www.csupomona.edu

CSU Sacramento

College of Education
www.csus.edu

CSU San Bernardino

College of Education
www.csusb.edu

San Diego State University

College of Education
www.sdsu.edu

San Francisco State University

College of Education
www.sfsu.edu

San José State University

College of Education
www.sjsu.edu

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

College of Education
www.calpoly.edu

CSU San Marcos

College of Education
www.csusm.edu

Sonoma State University

School of Education
www.sonoma.edu

CSU Stanislaus

College of Education
www.csustan.edu

CalStateTEACH

CSU Office of the Chancellor
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