The Colorado Literacy Framework

Promoting Effective Practice in Literacy for All Learners

cde Improving Academic Achievement

Table of Contents

Letter From Commissioner Jones

To the Education Community of Colorado:

From early childhood to higher education, the preparation, progress and success of each student is at the center of the Colorado Department of Education's work. The work is defined by our responsibilities to help close achievement gaps and to support all P-12 students in meeting and exceeding academic standards. We approach these responsibilities with a sense of urgency.

In 2007, the Colorado Department of Education released **Forward Thinking,** the state's plan for increasing high school graduation rates and closing achievement gaps. Since then, the department has reiterated its commitment to provide guidance and support to districts and schools; to enhance professional development; and to develop tools to eliminate gaps and increase learning achievement throughout Colorado.

In 2008-2009 CDE launched the **Colorado Growth Model** to enable parents, schools, districts and the state to understand annual individual student progress and how much growth is needed for each student to achieve proficiency on the state standards. As well, through the **Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4Kids)**, academic standards were revised and high expectations set for P-12 learners.

It is clear that literacy is key to academic achievement across all disciplines. As a focus for the 2009-2010 academic year, the department sought to create a coherent system of support from preschool through postsecondary literacy initiatives. Thus, the Colorado Department of Education leaders and staff collaborated to develop the **Colorado Literacy Framework** to inform the department's work in literacy and provide foundational support for literacy achievement. Its purpose is to assist CDE in providing leadership, consultation and professional development to Colorado's 178 local school districts and to support and assist all Colorado students in reaching proficiency in the academic standards.

With aligned policies and focused priorities, the Colorado Department of Education is committed to providing guidance and research-based support to parents and school professionals in their concerted efforts to increase literacy achievement for *every* learner.

Most sincerely,

Dwight D. Jones

Colorado Commissioner of Education

Acknowledgements

Introduction to the Colorado Literacy Framework

Colorado's Call to Action

The Colorado Literacy Framework issues from the mission of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to "provide all Colorado children equal access to quality, thorough, uniform, well-rounded educational opportunities in a safe, civil environment," and the vision that "all children in Colorado will become educated and productive citizens."

In 2007, Commissioner Jones released "Forward Thinking," the plan for closing achievement gaps and increasing high school graduation rates in all Colorado schools. The plan outlines CDE's commitment to:

- provide guidance and support to districts and schools.
- enhance professional development.
- develop tools to eliminate achievement gaps and increase learning across the curriculum for all students in Colorado.

One of the Commissioner's priorities is the "development of a consistent voice around literacy with which to address literacy challenges in the state and provide a foundation for focused support from CDE." This is a necessary step toward launching "a statewide literacy achievement plan that creates a coherent system for preschool through postsecondary initiatives" (Colorado Department of Education, "Forward Thinking," 2009, p. 7).

As McCardle and Chhabra (2004, p. 40) state:

> … we stand at a crossroads in education … In a nation with as much promise as America … we must no longer allow nearly half of our children to suffer from educational malnutrition. We have a marvelous opportunity before us. Let us seize the moment.

Colorado recognizes literacy as a statewide priority through a sustained collaborative focus on this gateway to opportunity.

Purpose of the Colorado Literacy Framework

In the anticipated re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the United States Department of Education published the Blueprint for Reform (March 2010) calling for states to "develop comprehensive, evidence-based, preK-12 literacy plans and to align federal, state and local funds to provide high-quality literacy instruction" (p. 26).

The Colorado Literacy Framework document captures the collaborative work of CDE leadership and staff during 2009-2010 to develop a consistent voice around literacy. The framework guides all literacy initiatives and literacy-related grants administered by the Colorado Department of Education. Going forward, the framework also establishes the foundation for developing a P-12 literacy plan to inform high-quality literacy instruction in Colorado.

Colorado Department of Education's Literacy Vision

Literacy is the backbone of a democratic society and is the gateway to opportunity. Anchored in the most rigorous, evidence-based research available, CDE collaboratively leads, supports and extends effective practice in literacy for all learners. As stewards of the public trust, CDE embraces responsibility for providing leadership and support for educational excellence in partnership with our constituents, the residents of Colorado.

Audience for the Colorado Literacy Framework

The Colorado Literacy Framework provides a context for the literacy work of the Colorado Department of Education and guides the organization's support to its constituents, primarily educators, community members and administrators involved in literacy instruction. The framework supports the charge of CDE "to create a purpose-driven and dynamic system of educational leadership, service and support that relentlessly focuses on the learning of *all* students."

The document also serves as a foundation in literacy for CDE's work which is to provide:

- guidance and support to meet district and school needs.
- professional development in best practices.
- tools to eliminate gaps and increase achievement for all students.
- a seamless, collaborative leadership system with intentional intensity, urgency and impatience.
- efficient and effective use of federal, state and private funds.
- a reliable source for research, data and analysis envied by all professionals.
- a model for building expanded leadership capacity.

Colorado's Definition of Literacy

Colorado's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing and Communicating (December 2009, p. 9) provide the context for defining literacy:

A strong command of the language arts (reading, writing, speaking and listening) is vital for being a successful student and ultimately a productive member of the 21st century workforce.

Language skills have always been fundamental for academic and professional success. However, students in the 21st century are now facing more complex challenges in an ever-changing global society. These challenges have created the need for rigorous state standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Literacy – meaning the ability to construe a written, linguistic, alphabetic symbol system – is arguably the most important skill students acquire in preschool through 12th grade education because it makes all other forms of higher-order learning, critical thinking and communication possible.

The study of reading, writing and communicating is therefore essential to all other study in early childhood education, primary school and secondary school. Such study comprises not only the fundamental knowledge and skills of language arts (reading, writing, speaking and listening), but also the knowledge and skills of discourse (dialogue and discussion) and rhetoric (the ability to make arguments and to think critically about arguments made by others) and the knowledge and skills involved in responding to imaginative literature.

Language skills are necessary for academic success in all disciplines. The ability to integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening effectively builds understanding across all academic subjects as well as allowing for the development of 21st century skills within the context of these subjects. Critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, collaboration, self-direction and innovation are vital 21st century skills.
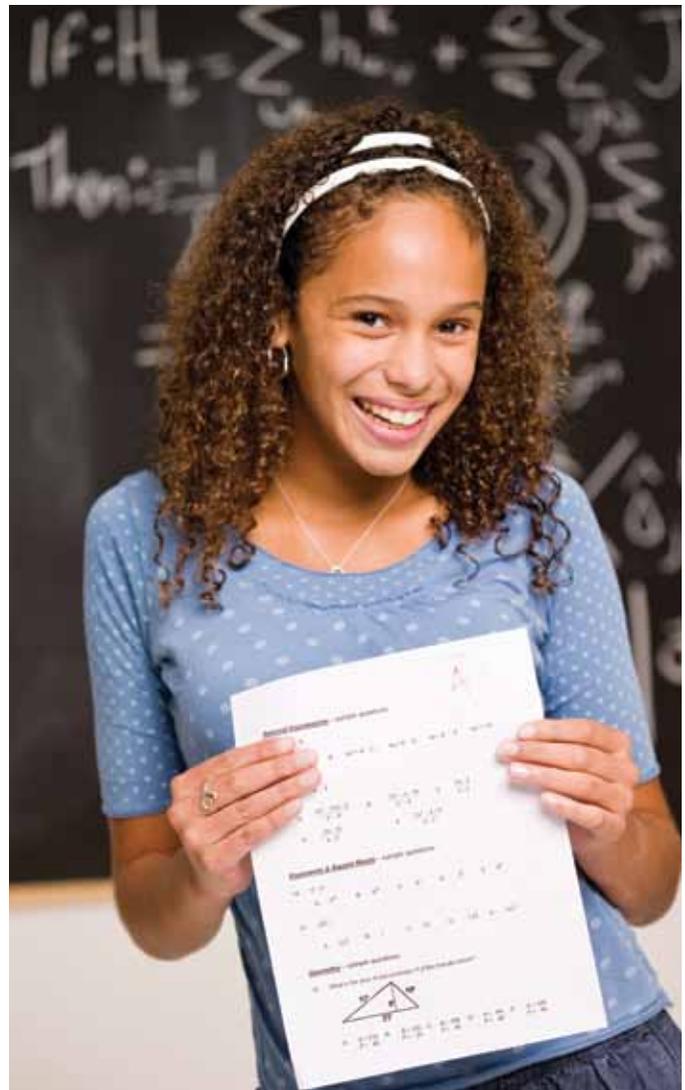
Guiding Principles for the Colorado Literacy Framework

The guiding principles for the Colorado Literacy Framework represent beliefs of the Colorado Department of Education's leadership and staff reflecting a collective agreement around three assertions related to literacy.

## The Colorado Department of Education believes that literacy is the gateway to opportunity.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, 2000) considers reading failure a national public health epidemic.

The Voice of Evidence in Reading Research (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004, p. 39) states:

> It is estimated that of the 10-15 percent of children who will eventually drop out of school, over 75 percent report difficulty reading; only 2 percent of students receiving special or compensatory education for difficulty learning to read will complete a four-year college program; surveys of adolescents and young adults with criminal records indicate that at least half have reading difficulties … approximately half of the children and adolescents with a history of substance abuse have reading problems.

Conversely, the benefits of improved literacy skills extend into other academic disciplines, and contribute to learners' critical-thinking skills. The immeasurable payoffs of literacy include improved life skills for day-to-day living, broadened employment opportunities, enhanced self-confidence, increased ability to participate in civic affairs and expanded access to knowledge.

The Colorado Department of Education embraces the importance of literacy, the gateway skill that opens the door to information and opportunity throughout life.

> "The aim of phonics instruction is to help children acquire alphabetic knowledge and use it to read and spell words."
>
> (Ehri, 2001)
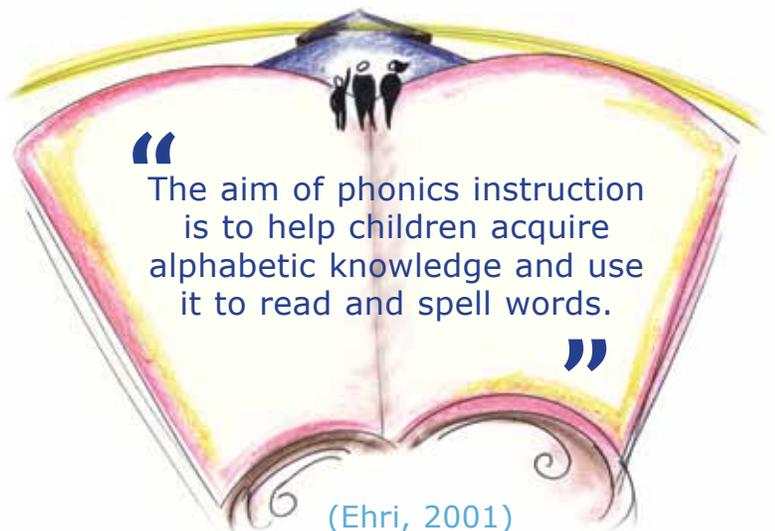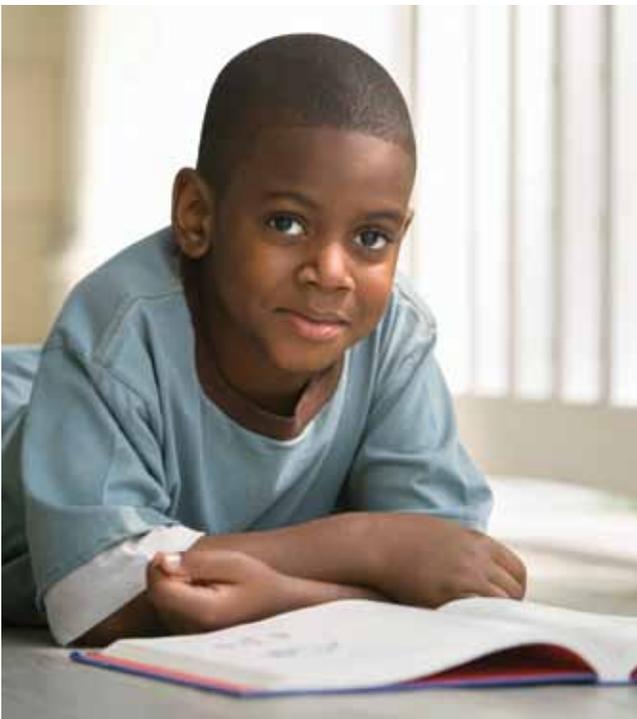
The Colorado Department of Education believes that all students can significantly benefit from scientifically based literacy practices.

In some cases science has not yet provided the answers that educators need to make fully informed decisions about adopting or discontinuing particular educational practices (RMC Research Corporation, 2006). However, if a body of research exists pointing to the effectiveness of a specific approach, it is incumbent upon the educational community to use the information to support effective instruction for all students.

In the early 2000s, the *No Child Left Behind Act* required schools to implement "scientifically based" research practices in classroom instruction and in the selection of reading programs and interventions. Defining the term "scientifically based reading research" presented some challenges and led to debate.

McCardle and Chhabra (2004) define scientifically based reading research (SBRR) as:

> research that applies systematic and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction and reading difficulties. Fundamentally, SBRR means using reliable evidence to make decisions about how to best deliver reading instruction … the criteria for SBRR is that the research must: (1) use rigorous, systematic and empirical methods, (2) involve rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify drawn conclusions, (3) rely on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations and, (4) be accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparable rigorous, objective and scientific review.

The Colorado Department of Education embraces the belief that all students can experience academic growth when supported by scientifically based effective practices. As Commissioner Jones noted in the Forward Thinking Progress Report (2009), increasing academic achievement for all students is CDE's driving force.

Toward this end, Colorado's student achievement indicators emphasize and assess growth and continuous improvement. Through the Colorado Growth Model each student's progress on state assessments is calculated and compared to data from other points in time to provide a picture of learner progress, rather than merely a snapshot of student performance at a given time.

CDE's adoption of a Response to Intervention (RtI) model to inform the level of support districts receive from the department is consistent with these goals. The RtI framework promotes an integrated system for providing high-quality, standards-based instruction and intervention matched to students' academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs.

RtI practices are grounded in a data-based decision-making model (Deno, 1985) and behavioral consultation model (Bergen, 1977), development of precise, direct measures of growth-sensitive academic skills and the observation that the results of these appropriate and frequently administered assessments could be used effectively to modify instruction or raise learner goals (Batsche et al. 2006, p. 7).

RtI is recognized as a model for determining appropriate support and interventions to meet the needs of all learners. It is based on using benchmark and progress-monitoring data to inform instructional decision-making and improve achievement.
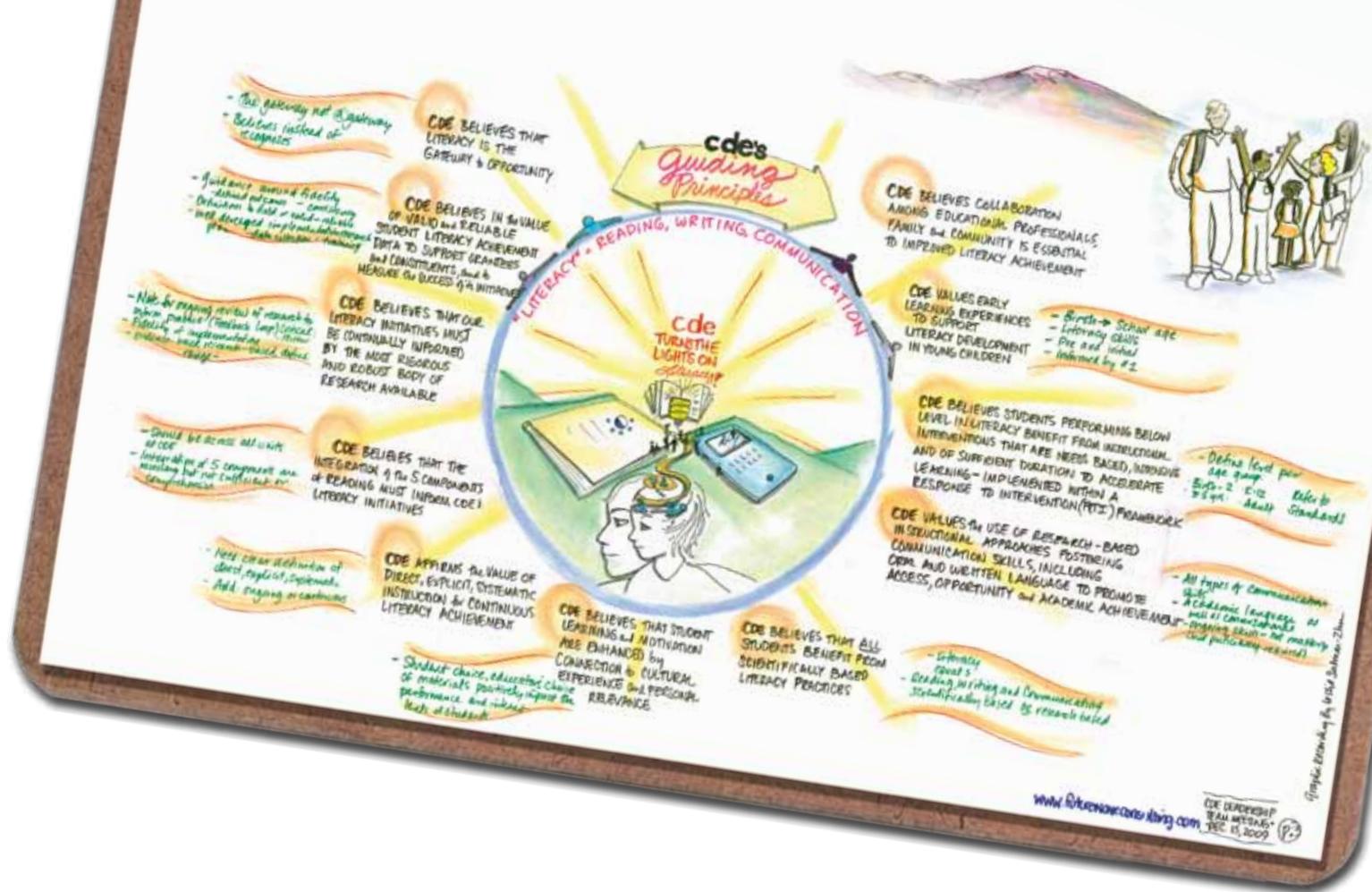
The Colorado Department of Education believes that literacy initiatives must be continuously informed by the most rigorous and robust body of research available.

The quest to identify the most rigorous and robust body of research is a continuous process. It is found not in a methodology, but in a chain of reasoning.

The Voice of Evidence in Reading Research (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004, p. 74) identifies studies as scientific when:

1. there is a clear set of answerable questions that motivates the research design.
2. the methods are appropriate to answer the question.
3. competing hypotheses can be refuted on the basis of evidence.
4. the studies are explicitly linked to theory and previous research.
5. the data are systematically analyzed with appropriate tools.
6. the results are made available for review and criticism.

In the words of Stanovich and Stanovich, "Scientific thinking in practice is what characterizes reflective teachers – those who inquire into their own practice and who examine their own classrooms to find out what works best for them and their students." (2003, p. 4).

Stanovich and Stanovich (2003) also note that evidence of effective practice in education can come from a range of sources, including: in-class assessment results, standardized test results, published findings of research-based evidence of effective instructional practice, or, in the absence of a source of direct evidence, reason-based practice that converges with current research-supported practice.

To be effective, educators must be adept in scientific reasoning and possess an understanding of various research methods that serve distinct and specific purposes.

Elements Comprising the Colorado Literacy Framework

The elements of the Colorado Literacy Framework define the parameters for a consistent voice around literacy with which to address literacy challenges and provide a foundation for focused support from CDE.

ELEMENTS OF THE COLORADO LITERACY FRAMEWORK
• The integration of the **five components of reading** informs CDE's literacy initiatives.
• **Early learning experiences** support literacy development in young children.
• Research-based instructional approaches fostering **communication skills, including oral and written language,** promote access, opportunity and academic achievement.
• **Purposeful, direct, explicit and systematic instruction** is valuable for continuous literacy achievement.
• Student learning and motivation are enhanced by a connection to **cultural experience and personal relevance**.
• Valid and reliable **student literacy achievement data** support grantees and constituents in measuring success of initiatives.
• Collaboration among **education professionals, family and community** is essential to improved student literacy achievement.
• All students benefit from literacy instruction provided within a **multi-tiered system of support** that provides students instruction that is needs-based, intensive and of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

- ## The integration of the **five components of reading** informs CDE's literacy initiatives.

  At the request of the U.S. Congress, the National Reading Panel was convened in 1997 to assess the effectiveness of different instructional approaches for teaching reading in the early grades. The panel's findings, described in the panel's report "Teaching Children to Read," were released in 2000. The report identified five essential (though not exhaustive) components of reading instruction – the importance of which has been validated by subsequent research (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004; August & Shanahan, 2008; Honig, Diamond, & Gutlohn, 2008). The components are: phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. For adolescent learners, these same five components are equally relevant (Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, Decker, Roberts, Vaugn, Wexler, Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, 2007).

- ## **Early learning experiences** support literacy development in young children.

  The National Early Literacy Panel was convened in 2002 to synthesize scientific research on the development of early literacy skills in children from birth to age five identifying interventions, parenting activities and instructional practices that promote the development of early literacy in children. In the 2008 report of the panel's findings, "Developing Early Literacy," the panel concluded that, "conventional reading and writing skills that are developed in the years from birth to age five have a clear and consistently strong relationship with later conventional literacy skills."

- Research-based instructional approaches fostering **communication skills, including oral and written language,** promote access, opportunity and academic achievement.

Since the late 1990s, a growing body of evidence supports the conviction that while oral language is a naturally occurring phenomenon and an important precursor to written language, the latter is acquired through explicit instruction. The abilities to communicate in both oral and written form greatly impact academic achievement and future success. Children typically experience language at the oral level first, by listening and speaking, and then move to the text level, by reading and writing. Some populations of learners with low incidence disabilities communicate with symbol systems that are analogous to traditional oral and written language.

Research consistently supports the notion that oral language, while not sufficient on its own, provides an essential foundation for the development of reading and writing skills in children (National Institute for Literacy, 2008), adults and English-language learners (August & Shanahan, 2008). "Using words expressively requires a deeper level of word knowledge… and the ability to use a word in speaking or writing demonstrates true ownership of the word" (Moats, 2009, p. 7). The transfer of vocabulary knowledge from oral language to written language allows the ability to communicate without face-to-face interactions.

Neuro-cognitive and reading research further demonstrate that the intentional promotion of oral abilities (through storytelling, modeling vocabulary usage, engaging in rich conversation, etc.) contributes to learners' later success in reading, writing and general academics (Moats, 2009, p.7; Sousa, 2005, p.11).

- **Purposeful, direct, explicit and systematic instruction** is valuable for continuous literacy achievement.

In contrast to listening and speaking the intricacies of written language must be explicitly taught. Direct, explicit and systematic instruction has been recognized as an important strategy for this purpose.

Direct Instruction: In direct instruction, the teacher defines and teaches a concept, models the learning process, guides students through its application and arranges for extended guided practice until mastery is achieved (Florida Center for Reading Research).

Systematic Instruction: A carefully planned sequence, similar to a builder's blueprint for a house, is characteristic of systematic instruction. Systematic instruction is carefully thought out, strategic and designed before activities and lessons are planned. Instruction is clearly linked within and across the five components (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension). For systematic instruction, lessons build on previously taught information, from the simple to the complex (Florida Center for Reading Research).

Explicit Instruction: Explicit instruction involves direct explanation. Concepts are clearly explained and skills are clearly modeled, without ambiguity (Carnine, 2006). The teacher's language is concise, specific and related to the objective.
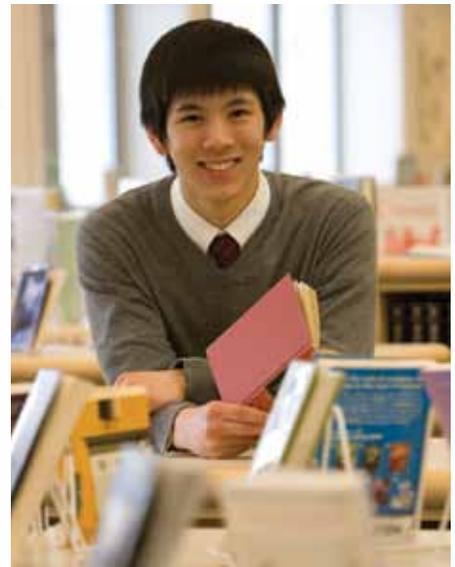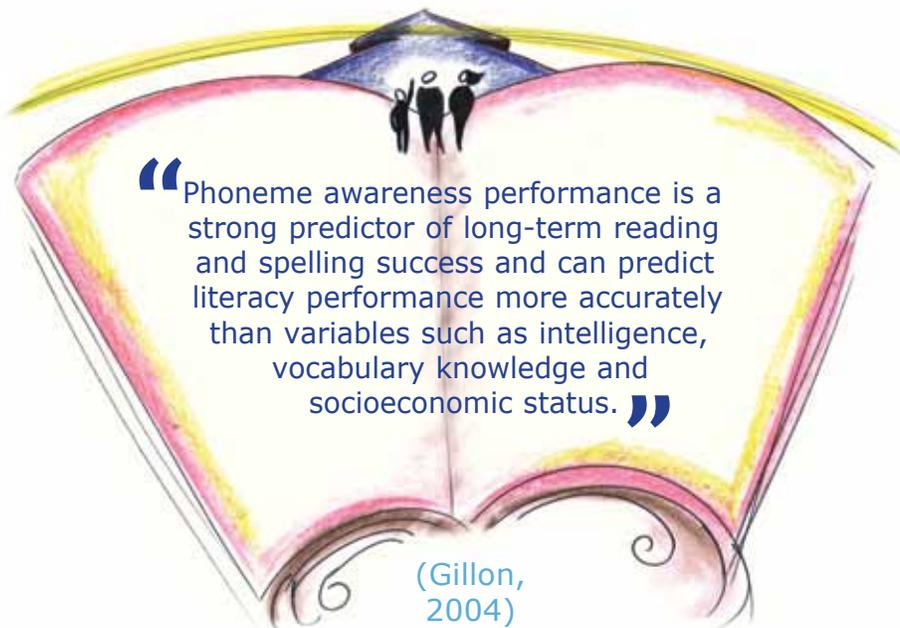
> "Phoneme awareness performance is a strong predictor of long-term reading and spelling success and can predict literacy performance more accurately than variables such as intelligence, vocabulary knowledge and socioeconomic status."
>
> (Gillon, 2004)

- ## Student learning and motivation are enhanced by a connection to **cultural experience and personal relevance**.

Connection to cultural experience and personal relevance is known to enhance student motivation and learning. Acknowledgment and valuing of learners' cultural experience are considered an important aspect of creating relationships that lead to learning.

In addition, evidence supports the notion that a learner's background and beliefs influence the learning process and that effective teaching involves activating and building upon students' prior knowledge and strengths (Bransford, 1999). What students already know about the content is one of the strongest indicators of how well they will learn new information related to the content (Marzano, 2004). Research has confirmed the strong connection between background knowledge and student achievement (Nagy, Anderson & Human, 1987).

While it has been established that "the same societal, familial and individual factors that predict good literacy outcomes for monolingual readers do so for second-language readers," (August & Shanahan, 2008, p. 279), educators benefit from knowing "how to inquire into the backgrounds of their students so that they can connect what they learn to their instructional decision making ..." (Banks et al., 2005, p. 243). Better understanding of unique learner characteristics and backgrounds will assist educators in making instructional decisions to create optimal learning environments for their students (Goldenberg, Rueda & August, 2006).

- ## **Valid and reliable student literacy achievement data** support grantees and constituents in measuring success of initiatives.

CDE's Office of Standards and Assessment defines assessment validity and reliability as follows:

Validity: The extent to which a test measures what it was designed to measure. Validity is not inherent to the test, but applies to the purpose(s) for which the test is used. Multiple types of validity exist.

Reliability: The degree to which test scores for an individual or group of test takers are consistent over repeated administrations, and therefore can be inferred to be dependable, replicable and relatively free of errors of measurement.

Valid and reliable assessment data are essential to a comprehensive assessment system which includes screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring and outcomes measures.

- Collaboration among **education professionals, family and community** is essential to improved student literacy achievement.

CDE supports school- and district-level collaboration in its development of learning environments conducive to the advancement of students' reading, writing and communication skills. These activities may include professional development, information/resources regarding best practices in leadership and instruction in literacy, and data collection to guide and support decision making.

CDE utilizes Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to facilitate collaboration between the state and Colorado school districts, providing a structure for communication and focus on student data and achievement. A PLC is defined as "a collective of educators who always strive to perform at their ultimate potential, working together to learn, grow and improve the professional practice of teaching in order to maximize student learning" (Hall & Simeral, 2008, p. 17). PLCs have been demonstrated to improve teacher learning, confidence and commitment.

CDE partners with parents, caregivers and family members in valuing, fostering and developing skills in reading, writing and communication. When families, schools and communities work together, children are more successful in school and schools improve. Parents have important information and expertise to contribute to the partnership. It is important for school personnel to provide parents with information to empower them as equal partners in supporting their children's learning. Central to effective partnership is the recognition of shared responsibility and shared ownership of student challenges and successes. The desired outcome is that teachers, families and communities share responsibility for education as equal partners in every school.

Public libraries also serve a critical function in fostering learning communities to support and promote literacy. Public library activities and initiatives increasingly include library-facilitated adult literacy classes, preschool story times and English classes for English-language learners, as well as school-library partnerships that effectively support and extend literacy initiatives within schools (Lance, Rodney & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000). As public libraries' roles in literacy change and as patronage grows, the Colorado State Library's leadership, training, consultation and information delivery services are essential to improve public libraries' ability to effectively promote literacy within communities and schools.

- All students benefit from literacy instruction provided within a **multi-tiered system of support** that provides students instruction that is needs-based, intensive and of sufficient duration to accelerate learning.

Colorado's *Response to Intervention Guidebook* defines intervention as "a framework that promotes a well integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted and special education in providing high-quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social–emotional and behavioral needs." CDE's Response to Intervention unit promotes these core principles:

- All children can learn and achieve high standards as a result of effective teaching.
- All students must have access to a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and research-based instruction.
- Intervening at the earliest indication of need is necessary for student success (P-12).
- A comprehensive system of tiered interventions is essential for addressing the full range of student needs.
- Student results improve when ongoing academic and behavioral performance data inform instructional decisions.
- Collaboration among educators, families and community members is the foundation for effective problem solving and instructional decision making.
- On-going and meaningful involvement of families increases student success.
- All members of the school community must continue to gain knowledge and develop expertise in order to build capacity and sustainability of RtI.
- Effective leadership at all levels is crucial for the implementation of RtI.

National and State Prioritization of Literacy

The education landscape of the early 21st century is shaped by standards-based education reform, which encompasses the articulation, alignment and revision of standards for learners and educators, and the enactment of national and state legislation aimed at increasing student academic achievement.

Articulation and Alignment of Standards for Learners

The stated goal of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* was for all K-12 students to achieve 100 percent proficiency in language arts and math by 2014. This ambitious goal required every state to define and implement standards for what students should know and be able to do. In 2009, Colorado revised all its state standards – including those for reading, writing and communicating – to ensure a coherent and aligned educational system from early childhood through higher education.
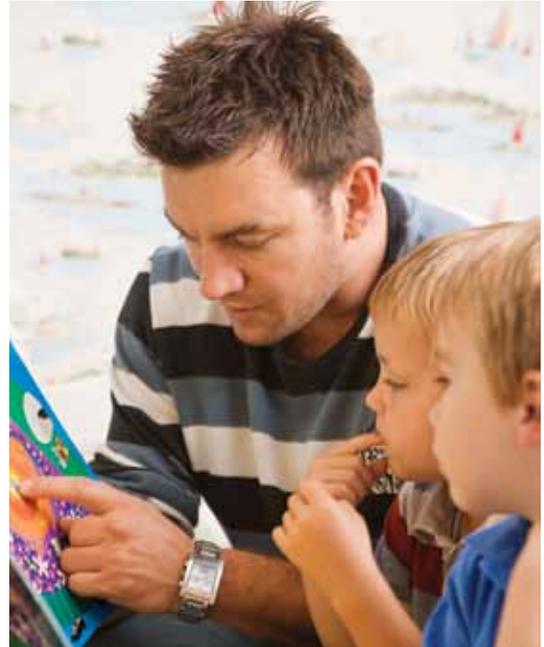
Revision of Standards and Expectations for Educators

National standards for educators are also currently undergoing reform. Critics disparage educator preparation programs for routinely failing to adequately prepare educators for their roles as teachers and leaders, and for failing to equip future teachers with the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to drive student achievement. In his October 2009 speech at Columbia University's Teachers College, Education Secretary Arne Duncan called for revolutionary change in educator preparation programs, specifically noting the need to improve practicum experiences for pre-service teachers and to train teachers to use data to inform their teaching.

In keeping with this call for change, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which accredits educator preparation programs, is preparing to release revised standards for teacher education by 2011. The new standards will reflect teaching as a research- and practice-based profession analogous to medicine or nursing – professions that require a solid academic foundation, clinical training, mentorship and ongoing professional development. Colleges and universities are already taking steps to align their programs to the spirit of the anticipated standards.

Recent and proposed legislation in Colorado promises to address the effectiveness of the state's educators.

- House Bill 08-1223 requires that teachers be trained to effectively support children with literacy challenges including dyslexia.
- Senate Bill 10-191, passed by the state legislature in January 2010, requires CDE to conduct research on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs' training as evidenced by P-12 student achievement. It also makes student achievement a substantial part of the evaluation system for Colorado teachers and principals and creates an incentive-based "career ladder" system to recognize high-performing teachers.
- The Colorado Council for Educator Effectiveness, established in 2010, serves as a vehicle for developing recommendations for teacher and principal evaluation and tenure.

National Legislative Reform for Literacy

The national literacy-related legislation that shapes the development of the Colorado Literacy Framework includes:

- the *Reading First Initiative* (2002-2010), which implemented findings of the National Reading Panel's review of K-3 literacy instruction research (NICHD, 2000).
- the *Reading Excellence Act* (2001-2004), which targeted the improvement of K-3 literacy.
- the *Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) (2004), which included a three-tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning/behavioral needs.

Recent data-driven, outcome-oriented legislation has further defined the national context for education reform:

- The *American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009* (ARRA) provides funding to improve student achievement through school reform and improvement related to the following areas:
    1. Making progress toward rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities.
    2. Establishing P-20 college and career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement.
    3. Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need.
    4. Providing intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest-performing schools.

- The U.S. Department of Education's *Race to the Top* (R2T) initiative, an incentive-based education reform program, brought the mission of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) to the states. Designed to promote progressive education reform in K-12 education, the program awards competitive grants to states that:
    1. Create the conditions for education innovation and reform.
    2. Implement ambitious plans in the four areas targeted in the ARRA.
    3. Significantly improve student outcomes.

- The blueprint for the re-authorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), released in March 2010, specifies that each state must develop a comprehensive, evidence-based P-12 literacy plan as a step toward high-quality education for every U.S. citizen.

- The *Consolidated Appropriations Act* (H.R. 3288) was signed into law in 2010. This omnibus appropriations act will fund the U.S. Department of Education, among other agencies, and will transform the Striving Readers program into a comprehensive literacy initiative. The initiative will help struggling students from birth through grade 12 to build their literacy skills and will improve the integration of reading initiatives. The appropriation also provides formula funding to every state educational agency (SEA) to support the creation and maintenance of state literacy teams.
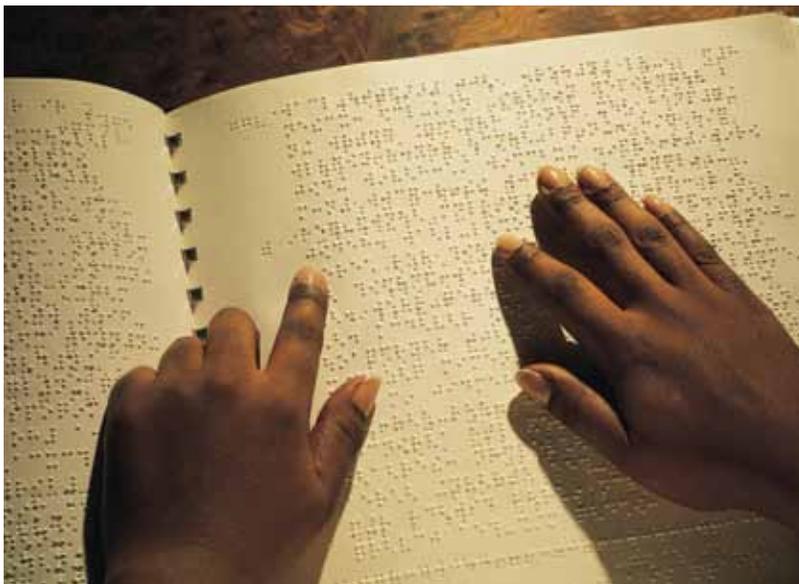
Colorado's Literacy Legacy

As evidenced in the timeline of literacy initiatives below, Colorado has a history of valuing and supporting literacy.

COLORADO'S LITERACY LEGACY (1997-2012)

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012

Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) 1997 ──────►

Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA) 1997 ──────►

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) 1998 ──────►

Read to Achieve (R2A) 2000 ──────►

Reading Excellence Act 2001-2004

Colorado Family Literacy Act 2002 ──────►

(NCLB) Reading First Initiative 2002-2010

Reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) RtI 2004 ──────►

Colorado Reading Technical Advisory Committee Convened 2005 ──

Colorado Reading Directorate (CRD) 2005-2007

Colorado Literacy Council (CLC) 2008 ──────►

CSBOE Year of Reading & Writing 2006-2007

Rural Secondary Literacy Project (RSLP) 2007-2010

Forward Thinking 2007 ──────►

SB-08-212 achievement plan for kids (CAP4Kids) ──────►

HB-08-1223 technical assistance to support children with literacy challenges ──────►

Adoption of Colorado P-12 Academic Standards 2009 ──────►

Colorado Literacy Alignment Project (CLAP) 2009-2010

Colorado Educator Effectiveness Center funded 2010 ──────►

Reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) anticipated ──────►

LEGEND:
Federal Initiatives
State Initiatives

The Colorado Literacy Alignment Project

This document is an abbreviated reference version of the Colorado Literacy Framework. A continuously updated, elaborated version is available online at http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/CLF.

In 2007, Commissioner Jones released "Forward Thinking" which laid out the Colorado Department of Education's vision to develop a "consistent voice around literacy with which to address literacy challenges in Colorado and provide a foundation for focused support from CDE." In support of that goal, the Colorado Literacy Alignment Project was established, under the guidance of Debora Scheffel, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, to create a statewide literacy framework.

In fall 2009, a comprehensive review of the literacy-related initiatives that CDE administers and supports was undertaken. That review resulted in identification of a group of phrases that represent beliefs, values and practices tied to the varied literacy work of CDE units.

CDE leadership and staff provided essential feedback through informal discussion, surveys, focus groups and interdepartmental meetings. Ultimately, the leadership developed a common core of statements that encapsulate shared values and beliefs about effective practices. A common voice emerged and CDE adopted this mission statement for literacy initiatives:

> *Literacy is the backbone of a democratic society and is the gateway to opportunity. Anchored in the most rigorous research available, CDE collaboratively leads, supports and extends effective practice in literacy for all learners. As stewards of the public trust, CDE embraces responsibility for educational excellence in partnership with our constituents, the residents of Colorado.*

Ten days of on-site observations of P-12 schools, adult/family education centers and public libraries were conducted, during which interviews with administrators, teachers and staff provided helpful feedback. Their feedback contextualized how the effective practices translate to the field and provided additional insight into how a statewide literacy framework could support their work.

The guidance of literacy experts and practitioners also helped to inform the development of the literacy framework, ensuring that research-based best practices remained at the project's core and that the framework was well-grounded in state and national contexts.

The confluence of these activities led to the development of the Colorado Literacy Framework. In keeping with CDE's vision that "all children in Colorado will become educated and productive citizens," the framework supports a multi-tiered instructional approach to closing achievement gaps among learning groups. The framework will be continuously informed by current research in the context of Colorado's literacy goals.

The Colorado Department of Education is committed to aligning its voice in literacy across units and departments, knowing that improved student literacy achievement is predicated on sound, unified, professional support for Colorado districts and schools.

References

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2008). *Developing reading and writing in second-language learners: Lessons from the report of the National Literacy Panel on language-minority children and youth.* Newark, DE: Co-published by Routledge, the Center for Applied Linguistics and the International Reading Association.

Banks, J., Cochran-Smith, M., Moll, L., Richert, A., Zeichner, K., LePage, P., Darling-Hammond, L., Duffy, H., with McDonald, M. (2005). Teaching diverse learners. In L. Darling-Hammond, J. Bransford, P. LePage, K. Hammerness, & H. Duffy (Eds.). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 232-274). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Batsche, G., Elliott, J., Graden, J.L., Grimes, J., Kovaleski, J.F., Prasse, D. (2006). *Response to Intervention: Policy considerations and implementation.* Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

Bergan, J. R. (1977). Behavioral consultation. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Bransford. J., Brown, A.L. & Cocking R.R. (Eds.). (1999). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press for National Research Council.

Carnine, D. W., Silbert, J., Kame'enui, E. J.,Tarver, S. G. & Jungjohann, K. (2006). *Teaching struggling and at-risk readers.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Colorado Department of Education. (2009). *Academic standards: Reading, writing & communicating.* Retrieved August 2010 from http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Reading_Writing_Comm_Adopted_12.10.09.pdf

Colorado Department of Education. (2009). *Forward thinking progress report.* Retrieved May 2010 from http://www.cde.state. co.us/Communications/download/PDF/FTR2009.pdf.

Deno, S. L. (1985). Curriculum-based measurement: The emerging alternative. *Exceptional Children*, 52, 219-232.

Ehri, L. C., Nunes, S. R., Stahl, S. A., Willows, D. M. (2001). Systematic phonics instruction: Findings of the National Reading Panel. *Review of Educational Research*, 71(3), 393-447.

Florida Center for Reading Research. Empowering teachers: Glossary. Retrieved August 2010 from http://www.fcrr. org/assessment/ET/resources/glossary1.html.

Gillon, G.T., (2004). *Phonological awareness: From research to practice.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Goldenberg, C., Rueda, R. S., & August, D. (2006). Social and cultural influences on the literacy attainment of language-minority children and youth. In D. August & T. Shanahan (Eds.), *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the national literacy panel on language minority children and youth* (pp. 269–318). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hall, P., & Simeral, A. (2008). *Building teachers' capacity for success: A collaborative approach for coaches and school leaders.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Honig, B., Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2008). *Teaching reading sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Novato, CA: Arena Press.

Lance, K. C., Rodney, M. J., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (April 2000). *How school librarians help kids achieve standards: The second Colorado study.* Retrieved May 2010 from http://www.lrs.org/documents/lmcstudies/CO/execsumm.pdf.

Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

McCardle, P., & Chhabra, V. (Eds.) (2004). *The voice of evidence in reading research.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

Moats, L. C. (2009). *LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) Module 7: Teaching phonics, word study and the alphabetic principle.* Longmont, CO: Sopris West Educational Services.

Nagy, W. E., Anderson, R. C., & Herman, P. A. (1987). Learning word meanings from context during normal reading. *American educational Research Journal*, 24, 237-270.

National Institute for Literacy. (2008). *Developing early literacy.* Report of the National Early Literacy Panel. Retrieved May 2010 from http://www.nifl.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). *Report of the National Reading Panel.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

RMC Research Corporation, (2006). What is scientifically based research? Retrieved May 2010 from http://www.nifl.gov/ publications/pdf/science_research.pdf.

Sousa, D. A. (2005). *How the brain learns to read.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Stanovich, P. J., & Stanovich, K. E. (2003). *Using research and reason in education: How teachers can use scientifically based research to make curricular & instructional decisions.* Washington, DC: US Department of Education. Available at http:// eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED482973.pdf.

Torgesen, J.K., Houston, D.D., Rissman, L.M., Decker, S.M., Roberts, G., Vaugn, S., Wexler, J., Francis, D.J., Rivera, M.O., Lesaux, N. (2007). *Academic literacy instruction for adolescents: A guidance document from the Center on Instruction.* NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

U.S. Department of Education, March 2010. *Blueprint for reform: The re-authorization of the elementary and secondary education act (ESEA)*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf.

For a current and comprehensive bibliography that informs the framework, please consult the Colorado Literacy Framework online at http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/CLF.

cde

Improving
Academic
Achievement