

Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Project Proposal

Performance Assessments and Competency-based Teacher Preparation in Content Area Literacy and English Language Arts Instruction for 7-12 Educators in Connecticut

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Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Project Proposal

Project Focus:

The goal of this project is to develop a competency-based curriculum model in the area of English language arts for pre-service teacher candidates seeking grade 7-12 certification in Connecticut. This model will aim to utilize performance-based instruction and assessment of pre-service teachers in the area of content literacy and English language arts. This competency-based model will address the 2003 Connecticut certification regulations, specifically for 7-12 English language arts teachers, for secondary level teachers in content areas who need to demonstrate competency in the English language arts, and for middle grade teachers who need to demonstrate competency in the English language arts. This project does not focus on the performance-based competencies of teachers in elementary level classrooms because a complementary Title II proposal addresses the competencies for that level.

The 2003 Connecticut regulations¹ for licensure specifically note that all middle level and secondary level teacher candidates will need to demonstrate competence in “teaching and reinforcing language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and visually representing) skills and concepts throughout the curriculum” (p. 30 and p. 32). In line with current national standards for teacher certification, the Connecticut regulations do not specify completion of courses or credits as a stipulation for certification; instead the 2003 regulations require completion of competencies. Institutions in Connecticut recommending candidates for licensure will need to ensure that their pre-service teachers will have met all the required competencies. Although there are several competencies that will be required for each endorsement, this project focuses only on those competencies in the area of the English language arts. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to describe performance-based competencies and assessments for the English language arts candidates in order to guide Connecticut teacher preparation programs so that their graduates may demonstrate the requisite competencies.

In addition to the competencies noted above for secondary level teachers, candidates who wish to be certified as 7-12 English teachers will need to meet subject-specific competencies in the discipline of English. This includes “study in the evaluation and instruction of students in the area of language arts” (CSDE 2003, p. 35). Therefore, in addition to the goal of describing competencies for content area language arts instruction for middle level and secondary level teachers, this project will aim to provide descriptors of performance for candidates seeking the 7-12 English endorsement. As a result, any of the English language arts competency requirements for any secondary level or middle level endorsement will be addressed in this project.

¹State of Connecticut State Board of Education. (n. d.). Regulations concerning state educator certificates, permits and authorizations, Effective July 1, 2003. Hartford, CT: Author.

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As described below in the deliverables, the project will include a research-based curriculum model that has two components: a description of the competencies for teacher preparation in content literacy and English language arts and a set of rubrics for evaluating the performance of pre-service teachers in these areas. This curriculum model will be descriptive in nature, indicating the depth and breadth for the preparation of teachers. A goal of this project is to describe competencies in alignment with the current competencies delineated by the learned societies in literacy and the English language arts, specifically the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)² and the International Reading Association (IRA)³, and with the standards delineated by national accrediting agencies, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). Other notable standards, such as those from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), the National Middle School Association (NMSA), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), will be reviewed. In addition, this project aims to develop a model in alignment with the Connecticut BEST program so that the preparation of Connecticut teachers may be viewed on a continuum, indicating the competencies of teachers new to the profession but successful in their completion of their university-level preparation.

Rationale for Project:

Reconceptualizations of Teacher Preparation Programs that utilize competency-based measures of performance to determine what pre-service candidates know and are able to do now require fresh perspectives for program evaluation and student assessment. The 2003 CSDE certification standards, which are in alignment with national perspectives for teacher licensure, no longer identify specific courses as the primary mode for meeting certification requirements. Instead, the 2003 CSDE regulations require that Teacher Preparation Programs ensure that candidates for licensure complete an approved planned program of study and experience that is competency-based.

The new focus on competencies reflects a national perspective about new standards for teacher preparation programs. A performance-based licensing system requires, according to Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996)⁴, several key components for its success, such as:

the adoption of clear standards for performance that are thoroughly evaluated through *performance-based assessments for licensing*. These assessments must be good representations of the actual tasks, knowledge, and skills needed for teaching;

²National Council of Teachers of English's Standing Committee on Teacher Preparation and Certification. (1996). Guidelines for the preparation of teachers of English language arts. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

³International Reading Association's Professional Standards and Ethics Committee. (1998). Standards for reading professionals, revised. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

⁴Darling-Hammond, L. & Cobb, V. L. (1996). The changing context of teacher education. In F. B. Murray, ed., The teacher educator's handbook. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

the replacement of course-counting strategies for licensing and program approval with two kinds of standards: (1) licensing based on successful completion of performance-based assessments and completion of an approved/accredited program and (2) program review and accountability based on a demonstration that the school's program provides learning opportunities that lead to the successful attainment of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to teach. (p. 51)

While the term "performance assessment" is not new to the educational arena, the application of this type of assessment to teacher licensing is a recent movement. McDaniel (1994)⁵ notes that "a major argument for performance assessment is that the behaviors tested are much more closely aligned to the behaviors desired at the conclusion of instruction than are paper and pencil tests" (p. 184). Noted for its authenticity, its richness for complex problem solving tasks, and its descriptive evaluation of student performance, this type of assessment allows for a variety of simulations and realistic situations so that the student can demonstrate what he/she knows and can do.

As of July 1, 2003, Connecticut students completing their planned programs of study for certification in a secondary-level school will need to show competency in the English language arts. These pre-service teachers seeking certification in the sciences, history and social science, mathematics, business, or driver education will need to demonstrate competency in teaching and reinforcing the language arts (which are now defined as reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing) skills and concepts throughout the curriculum. Traditional means for satisfactory completion of this certification requirement meant that students would have completed a course in Content Area Reading. However, in accord with these new regulations what is appropriate evidence for pre-service teachers to demonstrate competency in teaching and reinforcing the language arts? What are the performance-based competencies in the English language arts for teacher licensure for middle grade and secondary levels? Those questions will shape the work of this project.

Too often literacy processes are not understood by many middle school teachers and high school teachers. Frequently, content area teachers do not help their students learn from their texts because they do not understand literacy processes and do not possess the essential strategies to help their students learn from texts. Current perspectives of teaching the language arts, which include reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing, focus on the process of making and utilizing meaning (NCTE/IRA, 1996)⁶. However, making meaning is a very complex process requiring interactions among the text (written, visual, or oral), the reader, and the context. The meaning-making and meaning-using processes depend on a variety of factors.

Proficiency in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and visually representing allows students to learn and use knowledge to make meaningful connections between their lives and academic content that they are studying. Students use speaking and listening as they read,

⁵McDaniel, E. (1994). Understanding educational measurement. Madison, WI: WCB Brown & Benchmark.

⁶National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association (1996). Standards for the English language arts. Urbana, IL: Author.

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write, view, and create visual representations. Students use reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing information as they conduct research in history, world languages, and social science, write summaries of science experiments, and explain mathematical problem-solving strategies. It is this newer perspective of the English language arts that connects literacy learning to content area classrooms in deeper more meaningful ways.

As of July 1, 2003, secondary-level students seeking certification as English language arts teachers will need to demonstrate additional competencies, including the completion of a major and study in the evaluation and instruction of students in the area of language arts. The National Council of Teachers of English (1996)⁷ has made a strong case for the use of performance-based evidence and now requires programs seeking accreditation to utilize a variety of data sources that include a variety of experiences. New definitions and standards in the English language arts require performance-based evidence that may include portfolios, videotaped lessons, and other samples of student work.

The purpose of this proposal is to develop a performance and competency-based model of instruction and assessment to address the two areas in the 2003 CSDE certification regulations regarding the preparation of teachers in the areas of secondary-level English language arts. It is the aim of this work that Teacher Preparation Programs in Connecticut will use this model for their own programs as they prepare for the competency-based requirements and for determining performance-based instruction and assessment.

Defined Deliverables:

This project will include the following deliverables:

- A Literature Review about Performance-based Competencies and Assessments of Grade 7-12 Pre-service Teachers in Content Area Literacy and English Language Arts Instruction: This literature review will be a comprehensive survey of the published research in three key areas:
 - 1) Performance-based assessment of secondary level pre-service teachers;
 - 2) Competencies for instruction of content area literacy, including descriptors of critical competencies that cross content areas, such as science, social sciences, math, and the humanities;
 - 3) Competencies and performance-based assessment of pre-service candidates in English language arts.
- A Competency-based Curriculum Model for the Preparation of Middle Grade and Secondary Level Teachers in the Area of Content Area Reading and in English Language Arts: Based on the review of the literature, a review of the CSDE 2003 regulations, NCATE standards, and the INTASC standards, the workgroups will develop a curriculum model that could be adapted to different institutions, based on their conceptual frameworks.

⁷National Council of Teachers of English (1996). Guidelines for the preparation of teachers of English language arts. Urbana, IL: Author.

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- Performance-based Assessment in the area of Content Area Literacy and Language Arts for 7-12 Teachers: Based on the review of the literature, specific assessments will be developed to ensure that the competencies are met. The competencies, rubrics, and assessments will be piloted during the Spring 2002 semester at selected teacher preparation programs throughout Connecticut and revised in time for the completion of the project in August 2002.
- A Plan for the Dissemination of the above
It should be noted that preliminary discussion relative to the dissemination plan pointed to the following:
 - Presentation of Deliverables to Connecticut professional associations in Reading and Language Arts, including the Connecticut Association for Reading Research (Spring, 2002), Connecticut Reading Association (Fall, 2002), Connecticut Council of the Teachers of English (Fall, 2002), the Connecticut Literacy Think Tank (Fall, 2001 and Spring, 2002), and selected conferences in Connecticut in the content areas.
 - Presentation of research at notable national conferences, such as the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), International Reading Association (IRA), and the National Reading Conference (NRC) during the 2002-2003 academic years.
 - Presentation and discussion of Deliverables with Connecticut university teacher preparation program faculty at three sites throughout Connecticut (Eastern, Central, and Western areas).
 - Presentation and discussion of Title II Deliverables during a one-day conference, to be developed in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education.
 - Publishing and mailing of Deliverables to teacher preparation programs in Connecticut.
 - Development of a Website for this Title II Project to link Resources for teacher preparation programs (depending on funding)

Means to Assess Deliverables

This Title II project has established a collaborative network of Connecticut Reading and Language Arts university-level professors and K-12 educators that will serve to assess the deliverables. As a result the protocol for the review of the deliverables will occur in several stages, including the following:

- Review by this Title II Workgroup; the composition of the membership for this Title II Project ensures a review by university-level professors and by practitioners in K-12 settings. In addition, the members in this workgroup serve in several key professional organizations in Reading and Language Arts, including the

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Connecticut Association for Reading Research, the Connecticut Reading Association, and the College Reading and Learning Association.

- Peer review by the Connecticut Literacy Think Tank; this Think Tank is comprised of university-level professors from Reading and Language Arts Teacher Preparation Programs throughout Connecticut. Both this Title II project and the Title II project for elementary-level pre-service teachers in reading and language arts have been discussed during the Spring 2001 meetings. Both Title II projects have been planned and coordinated by members of the Literacy Think Tank. To ensure a continuity between the two projects, specific tasks and personnel have been identified. The Principal Investigators, Assistant Principal Investigators, and many of the Team Consultants - Level I are members of this Think Tank. During the meetings for the 2001-02 year the Literacy Think Tank will be discussing the Title II projects.
- Review by Connecticut professional associations in Reading and Language Arts; during the June 18, 2001 Executive Board Meeting of the Connecticut Association of Reading Research (CARR) it was unanimously approved that CARR will review the deliverables from this Title II project. It should be noted that the membership of this Title II Workgroup includes the current CARR President, President-elect, Delegate-at-Large, Research Chair, Secondary Committee Chair, and Publications Chair.

Work Plan

Primary Activities & Time Frame

As noted above, the primary activities with the accompanying time frame include the following:

Activity	Time Frame
• Review of the Literature	July 1, 2001 - September 30, 2001
• Initial Development of a Website for Resources in Secondary-level Performance-based Assessments in Content Area Literacy and English Language Arts (Pending Budget Approval)	July 1, 2001 - January 15, 2002
• A Competency-based Curriculum Model for the Preparation of 7-12 Teachers in the Area of Content Area Reading and in English Language Arts	September 1, 2001 - January 15, 2002
• Review of the Curriculum Model	January 1, 2002 - March 15, 2002

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- Performance-based Assessment in the area of Content Area Literacy and Language Arts for 7-12 Teachers January 1, 2002 - May 15, 2002
- Pilot Testing of the Rubrics and Model of Performance-based Assessment March 1, 2002 - July 15, 2002
- Revision of the Model & Assessments May 1, 2002 - August 15, 2002
- Final Reports Due August 31, 2002
- Dissemination of the Deliverables (According to the Dissemination Schedule) July 1, 2002 - January 15, 2003

Budget

Please see Attachment A.

Budget Notes

The following items are listed for the funding consideration for this project:

Assistant Principal Investigators

This project addresses two different sets of competencies in the English language arts, as noted by the 2003 regulations for certification. As a result, each of the assistant principal investigators will coordinate the review of the literature, the development of the competency model, and the performance-based assessments for one of the areas, as noted by the following:

Content Area Literacy Instruction	-	William Farr
English Language Arts	-	Regina Chatel, Ph. D.

Team Consultants - Level I

A strength of this proposal is the collaborative university and K-12 educator team work; this will help increase the content validity of the performance-based assessments, particularly in describing the preparation of teacher candidates from both a pedagogical perspective and a field-based perspective.

Website

To facilitate the dissemination of the materials that are developed for this Title II project and for the Title II - Elementary Reading and Language Arts project, Dr. Regina Chatel plans to develop a website for resources for both workgroups. Funding for support of this website, though not included in this proposal, is addressed in the Title II -Elementary Language Arts proposal.

Addendum to the Budget

Please see Attachment B.

Addendum Budget Notes

The following items are requested to support the research of this workgroup.

General Operating Expenses

Since many of the members of the workgroup are conducting this research, preparing for the meetings, and preparing materials from their home offices, reimbursement is requested for the following items. Items for phone and postage are necessary since workgroup members live throughout the state, need to contact each other via phone, and need to mail materials between meetings. Materials for pilot testing the rubrics, for videotaping students, and for preparing materials for meetings are included in the supplies budget.

In addition, there are a number of major publications (such as those mentioned in this proposal) that need to be available to the group; purchase of these texts are prohibitively expensive for individual members; however, a set of workgroup texts available to all members would facilitate the research.

The Workgroup usually meets one day a month. A refreshment budget of \$100 per meeting is requested.

- Duplicating \$1,500
(13 workgroup members x \$100, PI x \$200)
- Phone (Long Distance Charges) \$1,000
- Postage \$ 500
- Supplies \$ 500
(Videotapes, Computer Supplies, Other)
- Workgroup Texts \$1,000
- Refreshments \$1,300
(13 months x \$100 = \$1300)

Dissemination Budget

This proposal does not include a budget request for the dissemination of the Deliverables. Budgetary support for these items will be needed during the Dissemination Phase of the project. It is projected that monies will be needed for printing and mailing, for presenting a series of workshops throughout the state, and for planning and presenting a one-day conference.

This proposal does not include a budget for travel to present at a national conference. An

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additional \$6,000 would be needed to support 4 workgroup members (\$1,500 per person) to attend the following conferences: National Council of Teachers of English, International Reading Association, and the National Reading Conference. These monies would include paying for registration, airfare, hotel, and food.

- Dissemination at Conferences \$6,000
(\$1,500 per person X 4)

Project Release Time For Piloting Competencies & Rubrics

For those who are assigned the task of piloting the competencies and rubrics with students in the schools, release time/overload time is requested.

- Piloting Competencies & Rubrics \$8,000

(January 2002 - July 2002
4 sites x \$2,000 per instructor = \$8,000)

**Connecticut State Department of Education
Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Project**

Attachment B to Faculty Workgroup Project Proposal Form

Addendum to the Budget

Category	Amount
Duplicating	\$1,500
Phone (Long Distance Charges)	\$1,000
Postage	\$ 500
Supplies	\$ 500
Workgroup Texts	\$1,000
Refreshments	\$1,300
Subtotal A	\$5,800
Dissemination	\$6,000
Piloting Competencies & Rubrics	\$8,000
Subtotal B	\$14,000
Total	\$ 19,800

Budget Totals

Honoraria	\$26,100
Budget Subtotal A	5,800
Budget Subtotal B	14,000
Total	\$ 45,900

**Performance Assessments and Competency-based Teacher Preparation
in Content Area Literacy and English Language Arts Instruction
for 7-12 Educators in Connecticut**

**Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Project
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Title II Workgroup - Content Reading
& English Language Arts
6/28/01

Subject: Revised Title II Proposal

Date: Thu, 07 Feb 2002 21:42:39 -0800

From: Patricia Mulcahy-Ernt <mulcahyp@bridgeport.edu>

To: Patricia Mulcahy-Ernt <mulcahyp@bridgeport.edu>,

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Hello,

I'm forwarding to you the draft of the revised proposal for our Title II workgroup. Georgette Nemr and I met last week to discuss the deliverables of our group and our plans for the next phases. At this point she would like us to narrow the scope of our work since the original topic is quite comprehensive; I agree with her perspective given the time constraints of the project.

The overall goal of the Title II project is to develop competency-based performance assessments with rubrics. This revision gives a more focused goal for our workgroup since we would develop the performance assessment for only one of the competencies (not all of the competencies) for secondary English Language Arts teacher candidates. In addition, the performance assessment would be specific to teacher candidates at one transition point in their program. A critical feature of the new NCATE standards is that programs will need to assess teacher candidates at specific points in their programs, such as at entry, after completion of their coursework prior to student teaching, and during student teaching. Under the new proposal our workgroup will need to focus on only one of these transition points.

Please review this, and if you have any specific concerns, please contact me by February 10 so that I can give our prompt response to Georgette. As always, thank you for your participation and assistance.

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 **Part 1.2**

Name: Title II LA Revisions.doc
Type: Microsoft Word Document (application/msword)
Encoding: base64

Suggested Revision
Georgette Nemr
2/7/02

**Secondary Language Arts Title II
Revised Proposal Timelines and Deliverables
Spring 2002 Semester**

Focus your workgroup development initiatives on Secondary English/Language Arts teacher candidates. Although it would be beneficial to develop parallel products for content area teachers teaching reading, it is not feasible given the timelines of this grant project and the remaining scope of work.

Develop DRAFT competencies or outcomes for secondary language arts teacher candidates.

Develop one (rough draft) performance assessment for one key "transition point" in the program that can be used as a programmatic assessment. As you know, at the NCATE workshop on 1/29 and 1/30, Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation and the transition points for assessments was discussed. [The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.] This standard will be a major focus of the NCATE accreditation process which Connecticut will implement accreditation on 7/1/03. The intent of the Title II TQE grants is to help Connecticut institutions begin to develop performance assessments that are part of a comprehensive assessment system and unit evaluation. Therefore, we want to focus your workgroup's efforts on developing a performance assessment that not only allows the teacher preparation program faculty to evaluate student performance, but also allows the data produced to inform your program evaluation.

Pilot the performance assessment with at least one cohort of secondary language arts teacher candidates at one (or more) institution represented by the faculty in the workgroup.

Summer 2002

Review performances from the pilot assessment and develop the rubrics (or matrices as you referred to them in your proposal).

Fall 2002 Semester

Refine the performance assessment based on results of review and analysis of performance results and the development of the rubric.

Pilot the performance assessment with three cohorts of secondary language arts teacher candidates at three institutions represented by the faculty in the workgroup.

Review performances from the pilot assessment and refine the rubric.

Document the development process (successes, challenges, new learnings) and the analysis of performance results comparing pilot one in spring 2002 with pilot two in Fall 2002.