COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Colorado Literacy Council
Meeting Minutes
June 30, 2008

Members of the Colorado Literacy Council (CLC):

Co-Chairs:
1) Deputy Commissioner, Learning and Results
   Kenneth R. Turner, Ed.D.

2) Director, Literacy Grants and Initiatives
   Debora L. Scheffel, Ph.D.

Staff from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE):
3) Assistant Commissioner, Office of Teaching and Learning
   Jeanette Cornier, Ph.D.

4) Assistant Commissioner, Innovation and Transformation
   Barbara Medina, Ph.D.

5) Director, Office of Professional Services
   Jami M. Goetz, Ph.D.

Membership from the Field:
6) Representative from the Colorado Council of the International Reading Association (CCIRA)
   Patricia J. Hagerty, Ed.D., Immediate Past President, Colorado Council of the International Reading
   Association

7) Chair of the Colorado Council of Deans of Education
   Eugene P. Sheehan, Ph.D., Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, University of Northern
   Colorado

8) Nationally recognized faculty member with literacy expertise
   Timothy Shanahan, Ph.D. Professor of Urban Education, University of Illinois at Chicago

9) Dean of a four-year western slope college of education
   Nella B. Anderson, Ph.D., Director of Teacher Education, Western State College

10) Elementary reading coach, rural district literacy representative
   Jill L. Ritter M.A., Elementary Reading Coach, Rocky Ford School District R2

11) Community college representative
   Kathleen DeVries, M.A., Early Childhood Education Coordinator, Red Rocks Community College

Proceedings:

The first meeting of the Colorado Literacy Council (CLC) was held on June 30, 2008 at 1560 Broadway, Suite 1250, Denver, Colorado, 10:30 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.

I.   Welcome and introductions

 CDE / CLC member welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

II.   Norms for interaction

CDE / CLC member led a discussion concerning the "norms for interaction" that would be met for the meetings of the CLC. It was agreed that the minutes would reflect summary statements of what is discussed, both agreed and not agreed upon by the group, including individual opinions. Consensus would be defined as the "will of the group."

There will be an official agenda and minutes for each CLC meeting.

It was agreed that CLC meetings are meetings held in public but do not include public participation.

The group agreed upon a consensus process versus a voting process when making decisions.

III.   Charge for the Colorado Literacy Council (CLC)

CDE / CLC member reviewed the charge of the CLC and asked for comments from the group. No comments were offered.

The charge of the Colorado Literacy Council is to advise the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) on literacy initiatives including:

1. Systems for the review of literacy content in educator preparation programs;
2. Revision of the Program for Licensing Assessment for Colorado Educators (PLACE test);
3. Topics for research forums and professional development with higher education;
4. Innovative literacy preparation programs (both pre-service and in-service)

IV.   Systems for reviewing literacy content in educator preparation programs

CDE / CLC member summarized the current review process for educator preparation programs implemented by the Office of Professional Services, both for re-authorization and for new programs. Additionally, the CDE / CLC member spoke of CDE formalizing the review process for all content area reviews.

Discussion / Questions Raised:

CDE / CLC member raised the issue of how implementation should be incorporated in higher education site visits.

CLC Member: Is the *Colorado Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric and Review Checklist for Literacy Courses* still being used for literacy reviews of educator preparation programs related to literacy?

CDE / CLC Member: Yes.

CLC Member: Are there new rubrics for other content areas?

CDE / CLC Member: CDE is in the process of developing new rubrics / checklists for content areas, such as science and math, in order to insure a consistent process for all content reviews.

CLC Member: Is the current *Colorado Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric and Review Checklist for Literacy Courses* (also known as the "Rubric & Checklist") the same as the original one?

CDE / CLC Member: Yes.

CLC Member: There is criticism in the field that the developers of the "Rubric & Checklist" were heavily represented by backgrounds in Special Education.

CDE / CLC members referenced the list of contributors to the development of the "Rubric & Checklist" which includes individuals from diverse backgrounds depending on perspective.

CDE / CLC member provided commentary in regards to the context for CDE's compliance role in reviewing higher education programs for content.

CDE / CLC Members discussed the need for revisions to the "Rubric & Checklist." They also discussed the importance of the CLC's role in the revision of the document in addition to the importance of soliciting suggestions from public focus groups.

CDE / CLC member posed questions related to how the review process using the "Rubric and Checklist" is supported by the language contained in the statute (i.e. 1991 Licensing Act and the Performance Based Standards for Colorado Teachers) and how the review process affects accreditation.

CDE / CLC Members: Discussion ensued around how CDE is tasked by statute to review content of higher education programs. Based on a request from the CSBOE, CDE developed the "Rubric and Checklist"

which represents an attempt to concretize "Standard 1: Knowledge of Literacy." Some IHE's have valued the review process.

CLC Member: Members from the field have questioned the research that supports some of the elements contained in the "Rubric and Checklist."

CLC Member: Will CDE consider the development of a secondary level literacy checklist with "field" input from educators who specialize in working with adolescents?

CDE / CLC Member: Yes

CLC Member: If a program within an institution of higher education's (IHE) re-authorization doesn't meet the content criteria, is the whole educator preparation program (i.e., all the endorsement programs within the IHE program as a whole) put on probation?

CDE / CLC member explained that detailed feedback would be given to the IHE in regards to the components that should be changed or added in order to meet the review criteria. Only new programs would not be approved to commence if the content in the program did not meet the review criteria.

CDE / CLC members summarized the recommendations made in a report completed on the literacy review process by Dr. Stephen White of the Leadership and Learning Center. Copies of the report were distributed to all CLC members.

CDE / CLC members summarized the current process utilized by the Literacy Grants and Initiatives Unit in regards to recruiting literacy reviewers.

CDE / CLC member summarized the inter-rater reliability process conducted with Dr. White and the literacy reviewers in 2007.

CLC Member: Did the Colorado Reading Directorate create and distribute a list of required textbooks that were to be used by IHE's?

CDE / CLC Member: No. This impression likely came from the May, 2006, National Council on Teacher Quality report, "What Education Schools Aren't Teaching About Reading and What Elementary Teachers Aren't Learning," which referenced names of textbooks.

CLC Member: Would CDE create different rubrics and checklists for initial licensure programs versus endorsement stand-alone programs?

CDE / CLC Member: This can be explored.

CDE / CLC member asked, "How does the content review process conform to performance evaluations/assessments required by CDHE?"

CDE / CLC member shared that universities are interested in working with us on outcomes-based performance evaluations/assessments.

CDE / CLC member explained that the Office of Professional Services will create a document that highlights programs that are in the review process and the schedule for reviews.

CDE / CLC member posed the question, "Could we create fewer criteria and maintain quality?"

Discussion ensued around this issue.

CLC Member: How many literacy programs have been reviewed/approved using the *Colorado Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric and Review Checklist for Literacy Course?*

CDE / CLC Member: 23 out of 46 proposals submitted have met the criteria of the LGI literacy content review and have been approved by the Colorado State Board of Education (CSBOE).
(Note of Clarification: Since the inception of content reviews of literacy using the "Rubric and Checklist," 16 institutions of higher education and designated agencies have submitted 46 proposals; of these proposals all but 3 were eventually approved through the resubmission process)

V.   Assessment of teacher candidate knowledge

Discussion regarding the review process for the PLACE exam for teacher candidates ensued.

CDE / CLC member discussed typical timeframes needed for revisions of the PLACE being 18-24 months. Some PLACE tests are reviewed more frequently than others due to larger numbers of individuals who take the test (i.e., Chinese is low frequency, Elementary Education is high frequency). CDE / CLC member indicated CDE can prioritize which tests should be revised, when. CDE / CLC member said CDE wants the revision of the PLACE to be discussed by this group.

CLC Member: A question was posed around the pass rate for PLACE.

CDE / CLC member indicated universities typically report very high pass rates since students are unable to student teach without passage of PLACE; students thus take the PLACE numerous times until they pass it. The CSBOE approves the cut scores for passage of the PLACE.

CDE / CLC member commented about the importance of teacher candidates being assessed not only for knowledge, but also application.

CDE / CLC member indicated higher education institutions have a concern over the lack of objective measures that are valid and reliable in terms of assessing teacher knowledge.

CDE / CLC member indicated that some higher education institutions would prefer a test to a checklist, for reviewing syllabi/programs.

VI.   Standards review process

CDE / CLC member explained that CDE is currently in the process of Standards revision; information regarding the process and timelines are posted at:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev.html

CDE / CLC member mentioned that WestEd is conducting a national review of state standards which will be communicated to CDE and content sub-committees to inform revision of CDE standards.

CLC Member: A member asked how continuous public input into the revision of the Colorado standards will be ensured.

CDE / CLC member delineated a number of public events that will provide a forum for public input. Applications for participation on the review committees will be available in August, 2008. Further, the following website contains more information about public meetings related to standards review: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev.html.

VII.   Research Forums

CDE / CLC Members discussed past research forums, including the researchers who presented (i.e., Drs. Olson, Brady, and Moats). The purpose of the forums is to discuss how research finds its way into practice in higher education and teacher preparation programs. The question was posed around what the field would want to hear in terms of topics.

CLC Member: It is important to invite researchers who represent all points of view regarding literacy instruction. A member noted that one of the forum presenters is not viewed by the professional community as representing a moderate point of view.

CDE / CLC member noted that perhaps we can think of speakers not as representing a place on a continuum of extreme views, but rather as representing different paradigms (i.e., linguistics, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, genetics, teacher preparation). As such, the nature of the research establishes the legitimacy of the speakers, not the paradigm, or the perceived location of potential speakers on a continuum of perspectives on issues related to teacher preparation.

CLC Group: Consensus was reached in regards to the importance of the research forums becoming a place where the K-12 and higher education communities can discuss common issues of importance.

CLC Member: Would CDE utilize technology (e.g., video conferencing) to allow for remote sites to participate?

CDE / CLC Member: Yes.

CLC Member: A member asked if CDE would consider inviting two research forum speakers, who may have differing opinions / ideologies to discuss the same topic.

CDE / CLC Member requested recommendations from CLC members for guest speakers to present at research forums and asked that CLC members email their suggestions to her.

CLC Member Discussion: Teaching reading to English Language Learners and vocabulary acquisition were submitted as suggestions for future forum topics.

CLC Member: A member asked if the CLC should include a member from the Colorado Department of Higher Education?

CDE / CLC Member: Possibly.

VIII.   Innovative literacy preparation programs
(Tabled until next meeting)

IX.   Meeting dates for 2008-2009

Wednesday, September 24, 2008 (10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; changed from 9:00-12:00) - Lunch will be provided.

Thursday, January 22, 2009 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.) - Lunch will be provided.
Wednesday, April 22, 2009 (10 a.m. -1 p.m.) - Lunch will be provided.

X.   Other

CDE / CLC member explained that the CLC Meeting Minutes will be distributed to all CLC members and then posted on the CDE web-site.
(Web-site is currently disabled due to updating)

XI.   Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.