



COLORADO DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

cde

# TOUCHING BASE

FEBRUARY 2010

PUTTING PROVEN METHODS OF READING RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM  
TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ACROSS COLORADO

## Special Education Conference March 5, 2010



### Colorado Reading First Adds an Additional Conference to the 2009-10 Professional Development Schedule!

CRF will be presenting Frank Smith. His program topic is titled **Active Engagement and Effective Teaching Practices: A Bridge from Teaching to Learning.**

As you may remember, Frank Smith has presented for Colorado Reading First and Read To Achieve in the past.

Mr. Smith is known for being a dynamic and entertaining presenter.

Registration for the Special Education Conference will open sometime in late February. The conference will be open to local education agency contacts, principals, coaches, and special education teachers.

CRF will notify you by e-mail when registration is open.

**SEE YOU  
THERE!**

#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- *SPED Conference*
- *Distinguished Title I Teachers*
- *Spring Conference*
- *NRTAC Professional Development Opportunities*
- *USDOE National Reading Institute 2010*

**New Special  
Education  
Conference**

## TWO DISTINGUISHED TITLE I TEACHERS NAMED IN LAS ANIMAS

Colorado Reading First (CRF) is proud to recognize two teachers from Las Animas Elementary School for winning the Title I Distinguished Teacher Award.

The following is an excerpt from the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Communications Office News Release, December 17, 2009: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/20091217title1distinguished.pdf>

### Title I Distinguished Teachers

The Colorado Distinguished Title I Teacher Award annually recognizes teachers from Title I schools who demonstrate outstanding commitment and excellence in teaching.

Susan and Bernadette Medina were nominated for this award by Principal Libby Hiza.

"The Medina sisters... believe that there is no excuse for any student's failure to achieve," said Ms. Hiza. "This is reflected in their daily interactions with students, parents and colleagues. They tell their students, 'We are good teachers of reading. If you do what we tell you, you will learn to read.' And they are correct!"

Bernadette and Susan Medina have been teachers for more than 20 years, all at Las Animas Elementary School. Las Animas Elementary serves a diverse population of students, with over 50 percent qualifying for free/reduced lunch.

"Las Animas Elementary School is fortunate to have teachers of the caliber and quality of Bernadette and Susan Medina," said Patrick Chapman, Executive Director of the Office of Federal Program Administration at CDE. "These teachers not only promote the academic growth of their students, but are school and community leaders. They are outstanding representatives of dedicated teachers across the state."

The Medina sisters were selected for this award because of their students' achievement in reading and their strong leadership in the school and community. Over the past two years, 100 percent of the students in their classrooms have achieved benchmark on the DIBELS reading assessment. In addition, 68 of the 79 students doubled the DIBELS benchmark score of 40 by registering year-end results of 80 or above.

Reading First has proven to be a positive solution. Ms. Hiza stated that she, "is a firm believer that kids in poverty need structure and consistency. Taking away the variables so the students can focus on the content." Ms. Hiza stated further that Reading First provided this entrenched consistency in addition to a common language, curriculum, and a format for instruction. Consistency and an I Do, We Do, You Do approach is guiding instruction in Las Animas. This approach was introduced by Reading First and is being adapted to everything from music to math.

**"If better is possible, good is not enough!"** Ms. Hiza's mantra has been adopted by the Medina sisters and it must be working since their classes consistently outscore state averages in DIBELS and CSAP. The instruction in Las Animas Elementary is driven by data. Ms. Hiza has fostered an environment where teachers set their own goals, based on numerical outcomes, and are held accountable for the data produced by their students.

Las Animas Elementary and the Medina sisters have embraced the Reading First model. When asked what impact Reading First might have had on the Medina sisters' instruction, Ms. Hiza stated that they were two wonderful teachers before Reading First. Reading First just gave them the answers for what they could do better and the explanations for the things they already did so well.

**When asked by Colorado Reading First** why she nominated Susan and Bernadette Medina, Libby Hiza stated simply that she nominated the sisters because they produce students who can and love to read, and they have the data to backup that statement. Ms. Hiza went on to explain that the Medina sisters, "place the responsibilities on themselves, never seeking an excuse for why a child might not be reading well but figuring out a solution."



**Brenda and Susan Medina**

## COLORADO READING FIRST SPRING CONFERENCE

The Colorado Reading First (CRF) Spring Conference is scheduled for April 9, 2010.

Dr. Vicky Gibson will be presenting on Differentiated Instruction in this final Reading First conference.

Registration

opens in early March 2010. So-  
pris West will notify you when registration is open.

We are looking forward to a celebration of all things Reading First!

**Save the date  
and we'll see  
you there.**



## **NRTAC** UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

The National Reading Technical Assistance Center (NRTAC) is under contract from the U.S. Department of Education to provide professional development on scientifically-based reading research.

NRTAC is providing the following professional development opportunities. These trainings are slated to take place in the spring and summer of 2010. The dates for these trainings have not been finalized at this time. As more information is made available you will be notified.

### **Stoking the Vocabulary Fire**

This session is intended to provide state leaders and technical assistance providers with insight into current research and practice related to vocabulary and oral language development. Presentations will be organized around what is known, what is being learned, and what still needs to be studied to foster effective oral language and vocabulary instruction.

**Keynote Speakers:** James F.

Bauman, Shari Butler

### **Fostering K-3 Comprehension Through Text Discussion and Use of Informational Text**

This session is focused to provide state and local professional development providers, including coaches and teacher leaders, with research findings on the effectiveness of content area reading strategies and nonfiction read alouds. In addition, instructional approaches for generating questions to facilitate high level thinking skills and text discussion will be featured.

**Keynote Speakers:** Nell K. Duke, Janice F. Almasi

### **Disciplined and Resourceful School Leadership for Literacy**

This session is designed for state leaders, technical assistants, and

state and local professional developers working with principals to expand their knowledge of the research and practice for disciplined and resourceful leadership.

**Keynote Speakers:** Marjorie P. Kaplan, Elizabeth A. City

### **Coaching in a Climate of Change**

This session is structured to provide state, regional, and local leaders and professional development providers with both theoretical and practical information related to the value of coaching. In addition, it is intended to examine the evolving role of the literacy coach with attention to distributive leadership to sustain coaching functions.

**Keynote Speakers:** James Morris, Stephen G. Barkley





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COLORADO READING FIRST

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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

[HTTP://WWW.CDE.STATE.CO.US/  
COLORADOLITERACY/CRF/  
INDEX.HTM](http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/crf/index.htm)

**PUT READING 1ST!**

## CRF Announcements

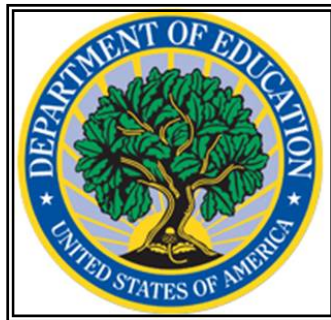
Save the Date:

# 2010 U.S. Department of Education Reading Institute

Registration for this event will  
open early February 2010.

Please refer to the following Web site for  
further information:

[http://  
www.mikogroup.com/2010readinginstitute/](http://www.mikogroup.com/2010readinginstitute/)



### CRF March 2010 Events

March 5: CRF Special Education Conference w/  
Frank Smith  
Englewood: Inverness Hotel, 800.832.9053

March 10, @ 10:00 am:  
CRF Web Conference w/ Tina Pelletier

## February 2010 - CRF Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	S/SU
1	2	3 1:00 pm CRF Web Confer- ence- Tina Pelletier	4	5	6/7
8	9	10	11	12 Colorado Department of Education Furlough Day	13/14
15 President's Day	16	17	18	19	20/21
	23	24	25	26	27/28
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12