

**DISTRICT ADD-ON READING ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SESSION
SEPTEMBER 28, 2003**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Who will be responsible for developing the training component?

The Add-On Certification program is an opportunity provided in Florida Statutes, Section 1012.575, which provides school districts with the authority to develop teacher education programs that meet specific needs of the district and, at the same time, provides a mechanism whereby a teacher may prepare to add a certification area to his/her teaching certificate without having to take college courses. Therefore, districts are empowered to collaborate with public postsecondary educational institutions, public school districts, public schools, and educational consortia statewide in order to design a high-quality add-on reading endorsement that specifically meets the needs of the district.

2. Will districts receive assistance in locating quality trainers?

The Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Preparation and Professional Development, the Just Read, Florida! Office and the Florida Center for Reading Research will provide technical assistance to districts by preparing cadres of trainers for state sponsored training initiatives and establishing statewide networks of these trainers. We will be posting contact information for these state established trainer cadres on the Florida Department of Education website.

3. When is the Plan due and is it to become part of the Master Inservice Plan?

While there is no official submission deadline for the Add-On Program, program designers are reminded of the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*; specifically, the provision of high quality teachers in preparation for the July 2006 deadline.

An approved K-12 Reading Add-On Certification Program is included in the Master Plan in accordance with Rule 6A-5.071; therefore, when districts develop add-on programs the district Master Inservice Plan must also be amended to include the new add-on program. *"Master Inservice Plan Requirements. 6A-5.071(5).states:*

A component developed after the annual approval of the plan shall be approved as an amendment to the plan by the school board, director of the developmental

research school, or governing authority of an education agency or a nonpublic school organization and shall meet the criteria in Subsection (4) of this rule.

4. Will the programs that are offered statewide such as FOR-PD and Reading First be required to align their content to the endorsement competencies and made available to districts?

Yes. Please see the attached chart that lists state-sponsored programs and provides the competencies addressed in each program.

5. Will teachers be able to use previously earned inservice points for professional development activities that are aligned with the competencies and count them towards the endorsement if a district plan indicates a list of the activities that can be used?

Yes, as long as the professional development activities are within the 5-year period, retroactively.

6. Will there be a state-developed add-on program that district may choose to adopt, as is the case with alternative certification?

Yes, the Just Read, Florida! Office in collaboration with BERPD has customized a Model that districts may utilize in designing their plan which identifies "best practices" for the Reading Add-On Certification.

7. What, if any, additional financial resources will be available to support this requirement?

There are a number of federal- and state-funded opportunities available to districts, see the attached chart. Also, as referenced in the September 5, 2003 memorandum from Chancellor Jim Warford on Professional Development State Categorical Funds, *"50% of the categorical for teacher training is to be spent on scientifically based researched reading methods instruction."*

8. Are there any alternative methods of demonstrating the competencies other than workshops or college courses, i.e., action research or clusters of workshops offered in the district that fit the objects for a single competency?

The district's creativity in add-on program development is strongly encouraged and supported. Several commonly cited best practices can be found in literature, such as action research, learning communities. "Investigation of Practice" can also be used for demonstration of competencies.

9. Are there listings of colleges with courses (preferably online) that meet the competencies (especially for smaller districts)?

While the Bureau of Educator Certification does not provide specific lists of approved courses, it does offer general guidelines for the Reading Endorsement course requirements as outlined in Florida State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0292. These general guidelines are based upon consultations with the Just Read, Florida Office and are used by specialists in the review of transcripts under consideration for the reading endorsement. The guidelines are annotated in *italics* after each section of the Rule.

Reading Endorsement - Rule 6A-4.0292

Fifteen (15) semester hours in reading coursework based upon scientifically based reading research with a focus on both the prevention and remediation of reading difficulties to include the areas specified below:

- (a) Six (6) semester hours in understanding reading as a process of student engagement in both fluent decoding of words and construction of meaning;

Guideline: The 6 semester hours in area (a) include courses dealing with the underlying foundations and fundamental methods of teaching reading.

- (b) Three (3) semester hours in the administration and interpretation of instructional assessments to include screening, diagnosis, and progress monitoring with purposes of prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties;

Guideline: While areas (b) and (c) of the Reading Endorsement both address identification and remediation of reading difficulties, area (b) courses focus on the role of assessment in that process, while area (c) courses focus on the role of instruction and materials in that process.

- (c) Three (3) semester hours in understanding how to prescribe, differentiate instruction, and utilize appropriate strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research in order to address the prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties in order to increase reading performance;

Guideline: While areas (b) and (c) of the Reading Endorsement both address identification and remediation of reading difficulties, area (b) courses focus on the role of assessment in that process, while area (c) courses focus on the role of instruction and materials in that process.

- (d) Three (3) semester hours in a supervised practicum to obtain practical experience in increasing the reading performance of a student(s) with the prescription and utilization of appropriate strategies and materials based upon scientifically based reading research to address the prevention, identification, and remediation of reading difficulties;

Guideline: The practicum should be identified on the official college transcript as a three (3) semester hour practicum in reading.

10. What needs to be included in the district's reading endorsement to comply with the state?

Districts are encouraged to follow the guidelines outlined in the:

- Manual For Development of District Add-On Certification Programs
- Technical assistance document "Planning with the End In Mind"
- Evaluation Criteria for Approval of Add-On Programs.

These documents will be available on the DOE web site under <http://www.firn.edu/doe/profdev/inserv.htm>

12. Are districts permitted to charge for the courses we offer.

Districts are encouraged to utilize state and federal funding appropriated for Professional Development efforts.

13. How will teachers who are teaching full-time be able to meet the practicum requirement? Will one of our reading specialists/coaches be able to supervise these teachers during their regular teaching assignments, or will this require some kind of additional field experience?

The practicum or clinical experience required for demonstration of competency 6 is intended to provide teachers with student contact time. In addition to student contact time this clinical experience can include:

- preparation time for working with students
- time for planning with and feedback from the supervisor
- self-reflection on practice and clinical cohort activities.

The categorical professional development funds can assist districts with costs for substitutes for coverage while the teacher is completing the practicum for the add-on endorsement. Some districts have used the "Summer Reading Camp" experiences as a means to support the clinical practicum and field experience.

Reading specialists as well as highly qualified reading coaches are able to supervise practicum experiences.

14. What is the expected timeline and turn around for approval of plans (would like the name and number of the person(s) responsible for this process so that we can easily check the status of our application.

Add-On Certification Programs are submitted to the Bureau of Educator Recruitment and Professional Development. See Page 24 of the Manual. The contact is Patricia Cheavers at (850) 245-0563 or patricia.cheavers@fldoe.org.

We are planning for a six-week turnaround time from the date of receipt of the add-on reading program for notification of approval status.

15. Is there a rubric/set of standards upon which our plan will be evaluated?

Yes, we have criteria for approval of add-on programs which is used by the reviewers during the review process. The Department encourages the design of district add-on programs to adhere to the National Staff Development Council Standards, Florida's Professional Development Standards, the K-12 Reading competencies and any other research-based content that successfully leads to an approved program.

16. Are there plans for the state to develop any additional on-line courses, and if so, what competency would be covered?

At present the DOE has no plans for the development of additional on-line courses in the area of reading. However, districts are encouraged to collaborate with educational consortia, colleges and universities, and community colleges for the development of courses and, programs delivered through a variety of systems to meet the needs of teachers seeking this endorsement.

17. What kind of feedback can we expect once we have submitted a program?

Teams of reviewers will be convened to read and rate the plans. The reviewers use the Criteria for Approval of Add-On Programs and the Reading Competencies to guide their review of the add-on reading programs submitted. The district will receive a compilation of the reviewers' comments and ratings with the notification of approval.