

To: Reading First Districts Administrators, Coaches, and Stakeholders
From: Gladys L. Frantz, Executive Director
Regional Technical Assistance Center (R-TAC)
California Reading First Regions IV and V
Re: R-TAC May Communications & Reminders

- 1. Role of the Regional Technical Assistance Center**
- 2. RTAC Third Round of District/Schools Visits**
- 3. Regional Meetings (Regions IV and V):**
- 4. Budget Inquiries**
- 5. Professional Development Year 2 and 3**
- 6. Website**
- 7. Assurances**
- 8. Reading Implementation Center (RIC) AB 466 Professional Development**
- 9. End of the Year Surveys**
- 10. School Visitation Dates for 2005-2006**

1. Role of the Regional Technical Assistance Center.

Our RTAC facilitates the compliance with the assurances by serving as a center for providing information and communication, responding to inquiries, providing or connecting with professional development on the reading materials for coaches in coordination with the California Technical Assistance Center (C-TAC), making school monitoring visits and/or additional visits for feedback, and establishing networking opportunities. Please call us or email if you have questions or need something we might be able to help you with.

2. RTAC Third Round of District/School Visits

We have concluded our third round of Reading First Visits to all districts. The Reading First Initiative continues to move forward. In general, the observations indicated good instruction and an increased knowledge of the instructional materials. The needs identified continued to be more information on the Sound Spelling system used by the instructional materials, training on the management and content of the Universal Access components, and deeper knowledge and practice on the Direct Instruction approach. Another important piece of teaching is student engagement with learning. Next year we will include these areas as topics for discussion and sharing in our meetings. Thank you all for your participation in the school walkthroughs and debriefing meetings. Special thanks to the teachers, coaches, and principals of the schools selected; they made us feel welcomed and they honestly discussed their strengths and needs of the program.

3. Regional Meeting Reminder:

Our last Regional District Network Meeting will be held at the Alameda County Office of Education on Wednesday, June 1st, 2005, in Room 142. We have about 24 RF administrators and/or representatives already registered. We will be sharing good ideas

and also each district's Special Education Referral Reduction Program. We will also be reviewing the external and internal evaluation information.

4. Budget Inquiries

Whenever you are requesting a change (permission for carryover) in your grant award terms and conditions, you need to send an e-mail and a hard-copy letter to CDE, Craig Heimbichner, Manager, Reading/Language Arts Leadership Office, requesting the changes and explaining why you need the changes to happen.

Round 3 LEAs

Round 3 Districts which need to request a carryover for the **Special Education Referral Reduction** fund have to write a formal letter (on letterhead stationary) to Craig Heimbichner with a cc to Pamela Routhier (no email-only requests accepted). The carryover will be extended to the next fiscal year and counted within that year's budget.

Round 3 Districts which need to request a carryover of their 2004-2005 **RF Grant** (same process as above) also need to submit a request. The request must be sent before the end of your grant, which is July 30, 2005. You have until Sept 30, 2006, to spend the funds.

Round 2 LEAs

Round 2 Districts do not need to request a carryover from the **Special Education Referral Reduction**; the carryover will be automatically transferred to next year fiscal year budget.

Round 2 Districts which need to request a carry over for their **Reading First Grant**, have to write a formal letter (on letter head stationary) to Craig Heimbichner with a cc to Jonathan Mortimer stating the reason for your request – you may be given an extension time to spend the funds until August 31, 2005 (no email-only requests for carryover are accepted)

For further questions about budget please call Pam Routhier, CDE Analyst at (916) 327-4408 (Round 3 Districts); and Jonathan Mortimer CDE Analyst at (916) 323-4805 (Round 2 Districts).

5. Professional Development Years 2 and 3 (from May 18 Memo from CTAC/CDE) Advanced Training: Years 2 and 3 Professional Development for Reading First Teachers

As stated in the Reading First application, teachers are to be given “advanced training that builds upon the first year's AB 466 professional development.” In the LEA Level Assurances, it states “. . .required in Years 2 and 3, all teachers participate in a comparable AB 466 professional development program for advancement of skills in use of the adopted program and instructional strategies.”

Under AB 65 (2003) and AB 1485, (2004), provisions are made for the development of these advanced courses (Advanced I and Advanced II). These

courses are now available through the Regional Implementation Centers (RICs) – see www.calread.net/trainings .

Based on results of the 2003-04 *LEA Assurances Survey*, it appears that some LEAs are not in compliance with the structure and/or content for the required training as specified above.

Face-to-face training needs to be 40 hours focused on the adopted instructional materials, including emphasis on instructional strategies; 80 hours are to be on follow-up/Passport which may include additional training hours and activities the LEA deems worthwhile (e.g., grade level meetings, analyzing *6-8 Week Skill Assessment* data, projects with coach, special events).

Second and third year teachers may be served directly by the LEA given that the training is specific to the adopted program and follows the 40 hours of training with 80 hours of follow-up. New teachers are required to attend the AB 46 program offered by a qualified provider.

Important: If you are developing your own Advanced 2 or 3 curriculum, the RTAC will review your curriculum to help ensure compliance with the structure and content.

6. Website

RTAC has a new webpage that you might find useful. We will be adding information and communications as well as resources. We also have a RF Forum where we can begin conversations and post replies. Please visit by going to: www.acoe.org

- click on Regional Programs under the Educational Services (left side)
- click on California Reading First Regional Technical Assistance Center
- choose your selection from the areas on the left site.

The Booklet for parents: *We Learn Together/Aprendemos a Leer* which contains the high frequency words is available online; please email Gladys for permission to copy.

7. Assurances

- Implementation of the explicit program components and instructional strategies;
- Development and adherence to a pacing schedule;
- Protected time for uninterrupted instructional minutes (60 minutes for kindergarten, 150 minutes for grades 1-3) and extended time for at-risk students (30-40 minutes):
- Use of curriculum-embedded assessments every 6 to 8 weeks;
- Provision of professional development for teachers annually (120 hours);
- Provision of professional development for principals (80 hours initially with follow-up support annually);
- Utilization of instructional support systems (e.g., a coach per 30 teachers and content experts for support to coaches).

8. Reading Implementation Center (RIC) AB 466 Professional Development

To view the schedule and registration process for AB 466, and other trainings such as Advanced 1 and 2 you may go to the website: <http://www.gbaric.org/calendar.asp>

9. End of the Year Surveys

For questions about the end of the year surveys please call Mark Paxton, from Educational Data Systems at 408-776-7646

10. School Visitation Dates for 2005-2006

Kim Sow, my assistant (temporary for Araceli who is on maternity leave), is contacting everyone to determine the visit dates for next year. I hope that most of you are able to provide dates in order to plan for next year and minimize the changes. Let me know if this is not possible to do at this point in the year. I'd appreciate your help.