EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM BASELINE REFLECTION

Instructions:

The Framework for Integrating the Science of Reading (SoR) In Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) ("framework") is structured to provide EPPs with a systemic approach to reviewing and enhancing their literacy coursework and clinical teaching experiences (field work, student teaching, practica, and/or residencies), reflecting the New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) commitment to ensuring all students can read and write to meet the demands of the 21st century and beyond. By designing coursework and clinical experiences that prepare teacher candidates ("candidates") to support all students' acquisition of literacy skills, EPPs are developing candidates' essential competencies in effective reading and writing instruction practices that are grounded in current research and culturally responsive-sustaining education, and aligned with evidence-based practices.

The framework is applicable to teacher preparation programs in the following five certification areas:
- Early Childhood Education (Birth–Grade 2)
- Childhood Education (Grades 1–6)
- Literacy
- Students with Disabilities
- English to Speakers of Other Languages

This Baseline Reflection ("reflection") is designed to gather information about how EPPs currently integrate evidence-based practices for teaching literacy that are grounded in SoR into their programs. The responses to the reflection will inform NYSED's future policy development and technical assistance efforts. While the framework examines many aspects of EPP program design, the reflection is intentionally focused on several key areas of the framework. The focus areas were chosen based on the following priorities:

- **Clarity and Usability** – The reflection is designed to be succinct and easy to complete.
- **Targeted Focus** – The goal is to assess the integration of SoR principles, rather than literacy more broadly.[1]
- **Field-Based Patterns** – The reflection highlights common challenges EPPs face in integrating SoR into their programs based on feedback from the field. This tool is tailored to help address those areas.

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[1] Adapted from the International Dyslexia Association Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading Second Edition: 2018 Retrieved from https://app.box.com/s/21gdk2k1p3bnagdfz1xy0v98j5ytl1wk

Completing the Form. EPPs should complete a separate reflection for each applicable program in the five certification areas listed above. If your institution offers multiple programs in the same certification area (e.g., undergraduate vs. graduate, traditional vs. alternative), please submit separate reflections for the different programs in the same certification area—unless the coursework and clinical experiences in the different programs are the same or very similar.

Deadline. The Baseline Reflection should be completed by the Dean or their designee(s) and is **due no later than May 15, 2025**. There would only be one reflection submitted per program.

Data Use and Confidentiality. NYSED will work with the [NYS Path Forward facilitators](#) to collect and analyze the reflection responses. Your responses will be very valuable in helping the Department learn what is currently happening in programs–creating a baseline–and how to move forward with its literacy initiative, including providing support for EPPs.

- Individual program responses will **not** be posted publicly.
- Aggregate data may be presented to stakeholders and other interested groups for informational purposes, including the New York State Path Forward Steering Committee. NYSED will take all necessary steps to ensure responses cannot be linked to specific programs.
- SUNY and CUNY Institutions: Your responses will be shared with your system administration.
- Independent Colleges and Universities: Your responses will only be shared with the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) if you **opt in** by checking the release assurance box in the reflection.

Ratings. Using the definitions provided below, please assess and rate the degree to which your program area is implementing the following aspects of the framework. For each item, use the Likert scale described below with the specific indicators for each level to reflect your program's current implementation of SoR principles. Your responses will provide an overview of your program's strengths and areas for growth.

We recommend reviewing [the framework](#) before completing the form to ensure responses are aligned.

If you have questions about these instructions or the reflection, please direct them to OTLD@nysed.gov.

Definitions:

Science of Reading: What is it?

The Big 6 Skills and Competencies
The Science of Reading highlights the "Big 6," which are key skills and competencies that support the development of effective reading and writing. These six components form the foundation of effective literacy instruction and are outlined in the [NYSED Literacy Briefs](#). Programs should incorporate specific instructional strategies for each of the Big 6 skills and competencies. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in planning, delivering, and assessing instruction tied to these components.

Structured Literacy

Structured literacy is a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to reading and writing instruction that integrates six key components (phonology, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax, and semantics) for literacy development. This approach is designed to meet the needs and strengths of all students by emphasizing systematic, cumulative, explicit, and diagnostic instruction.

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

Culturally responsive, inclusive classrooms that are also rooted in SoR practices support all students in developing literacy skills for life. These educational environments are:

- **Student-centered**: Students feel welcomed, affirmed, represented, reflected, understood, and valued.
- **Inclusive**: Curriculum, assessments, unit themes, and topics reflect multiple identities, cultures, linguistic diversity, and assets.
- **Rigorous**: Experiences are intellectually challenging and adaptive to language and ability needs and strengths.

Scale:

The questions below ask you to reflect on the core practices described in the framework. As you answer, please consider the focus of your program: To what extent does your program place emphasis on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the concepts and tasks in each question? The scale is not evaluative. For example, in some cases, Level 1 is appropriate, and in other cases, it's important to extend all the way to Level 4. We are interested in understanding where your program currently focuses.

Rating Scale:

- **Level 0:** The program does not cover this topic.
- **Level 1 (Recall/Recognize)**: The program introduces basic concepts, but there is limited application or reinforcement. This may involve basic knowledge such as terms, definitions, or facts.
- **Level 2 (Integrate)**: The program includes assignments that require candidates to demonstrate understanding of a concept or skill. This includes activities such as explaining a concept, interpreting data to support a claim, or summarizing key ideas from a text.
- **Level 3 (Strategize)**: The program provides opportunities for candidates to strategically use their knowledge and apply it in varied contexts (e.g., essays, scenarios, role plays) with consistent support and feedback.
- **Level 4 (Apply)**: The program offers comprehensive opportunities for candidates to address, explain, or respond to a real-world scenario or situation, strategically pulling from different areas of knowledge and applying them to meet student needs and strengths. They engage in advanced analysis, with consistent support and feedback, across varied contexts.

I. Pedagogical Content

THE "BIG 6" + Writing

Oral Language

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The connection between oral language and reading skills.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The understanding of and ability to use oral language to support comprehension and vocabulary development.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The importance of including oral language interventions in helping striving students with listening comprehension.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. Identify, pronounce, classify, and compare all the consonant phonemes and all the vowel phonemes of English.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The levels of phonological sensitivity and phoneme awareness difficulties.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The progression of phonemic-awareness skill development across age and grade.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. The general and specific goals and principles of phonemic-awareness instruction: brief, multisensory, conceptual, articulatory, auditory-verbal.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

5. The utility of print and online resources for obtaining information about languages other than English.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Phonics and Word Recognition

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The structure of English orthography and the patterns and rules that inform the teaching of single-syllable and multisyllabic regular word reading.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The systematic, cumulative, and explicit teaching of basic decoding and spelling skills.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. Organizing word-recognition and spelling lessons by following a structured phonics lesson plan.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. Using multisensory routines to enhance student engagement and memory.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

5. Adapting instruction for students with weaknesses in working memory, attention, executive function, or processing speed.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

6. Teaching irregular words in small increments using special techniques.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

7. Systematically teaching the decoding of multisyllabic words.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

8. Different types and purposes of texts, with emphasis on the role of decodable texts in teaching beginning readers.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Vocabulary

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The role of vocabulary development and vocabulary knowledge in oral and written language comprehension.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The sources of wide differences in students' vocabularies.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The role and characteristics of indirect (contextual) methods of vocabulary instruction.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. The role and characteristics of direct, explicit methods of vocabulary instruction.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Fluency

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The role of fluent word-level skills in automatic word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and motivation to read.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Varied techniques and methods for building reading fluency.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. Text reading fluency as an achievement of normal reading development that can be advanced through informed instruction and progress-monitoring practices.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. Appropriate uses of assistive technology for students with serious limitations in reading fluency.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Reading Comprehension

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The factors that contribute to deep reading comprehension.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Instructional routines appropriate for promoting reading comprehension of each major text type: informational text, narrative text, and argumentative text.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The role of syntax in listening and reading comprehension.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. The use of explicit comprehension strategy instruction, as supported by current research.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

5. The teacher's role as an active mediator of text comprehension processes.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Written Expression

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The major skill domains that contribute to written expression and evidence-based practices for teaching letter formation, both manuscript and cursive.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Evidence-based practices for teaching written spelling and punctuation and the developmental phases of the writing process.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The appropriate use of assistive technology in written expression.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Structured Literacy

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The general principles and practices of structured language and literacy teaching, including explicit, systematic, cumulative, direct instruction.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The rationale for multisensory language-learning techniques.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. Knowledge of and ability to identify (and explain how) environmental, cultural, and social factors contribute to literacy development.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Knowledge of and ability to explain major research findings regarding the contribution of linguistic and cognitive factors to the prediction of literacy outcomes.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. The most common intrinsic differences between good and striving readers (i.e., linguistic, cognitive, and neurobiological).
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

II. Instructional Planning

According to the Framework, coursework and clinical experiences should show evidence of addressing the following knowledge (k) and skills (s):

- To enable candidates to design explicit, systematic, and scaffolded literacy lessons that integrate formative assessments, differentiated instruction, and culturally responsive teaching strategies (k). Candidates should demonstrate the ability to develop cohesive instructional units and lesson plans that align with literacy goals and standards (s), build upon prior knowledge (s), and address the unique needs and strengths of multilingual learners (MLLs), students with disabilities, and other diverse populations (s).
- Candidates must have a strong understanding of the role of assessment in literacy instruction and the different types of assessments used to measure student progress (k). They must also understand how to interpret assessment data (k) to inform instruction that is responsive to student needs (s).
- Candidates must have a strong understanding of the importance of instructional flexibility and the strategies needed to address diverse learning needs and strengths (k). This includes knowledge of how to create inclusive learning environments that foster engagement and literacy success for all students (k). Candidates must also be able to apply these strategies by designing and delivering instruction that promotes proficiency in literacy skills (s). They should include texts that reflect students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds(s), promoting a sense of belonging and engagement.

Instructional Design

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. Prepare and deliver lessons with a cumulative progression of skills that build on one another.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Differentiate instruction based on students' progress in each language and literacy domain. For example, group accordingly for lessons in each area of reading (e.g., phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension).
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Assessment

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. Ongoing progress monitoring using normed assessments and interpretation of assessment data, including diagnostic assessments, to inform and adjust literacy instruction.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Use of universal screening assessments to identify striving readers.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Instructional Strategies

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The importance of instructional flexibility and the strategies needed to address diverse learning needs and strengths. This includes knowledge of how to create inclusive learning environments that foster engagement and literacy success for all students.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. Meeting the needs and strengths of diverse learners through the adaptation of instruction to accommodate individual differences in cognitive, linguistic, sociocultural, and behavioral aspects of learning.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

III. Teaching Practice

Objective: To ensure teacher candidates can deliver effective reading and writing instruction using SoR principles (k). Candidates should engage in cycles of modeling, observation, practice, feedback, and refinement (s) to demonstrate proficiency in explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent application of literacy skills (s). Emphasis should be placed on purposeful feedback loops and continuous improvement to enhance teaching effectiveness (k) and promote student learning outcomes (s).

Teaching Practice

To what extent does your program focus on supporting candidate knowledge, understanding, and ability to put into practice the following critical tasks:

1. The creation of classroom environments that foster a sense of belonging for all students, with a focus on literacy development through high-impact instructional practices, culturally responsive teaching, collaborative learning opportunities, and differentiated instruction (as outlined in the NYSED Literacy Briefs 4 and 5).
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

2. The delivery of explicit instruction in reading and writing across a variety of genres and formats, ensuring regular opportunities for students to develop literacy skills.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

3. Interactive and engaging literacy tools (e.g., word walls, morphological activities, educational games) to support foundational skills such as phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, and word study.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

4. The adaptation of classroom management and instructional strategies to meet the diverse literacy needs and strengths of all students, including MLLs and students with disabilities.
    0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

IV. Program Integration

Please note that at this point, the rating scale is different from above and is described at the beginning of each section or within each question, as relevant.

Integration of SoR into Curriculum

EPPs should review their courses for SoR principles regularly (e.g., annually) and ensure alignment with state and national standards that are informed by current research and evidence-based practices.

1. How regularly do program faculty review syllabi, assessments, and evaluations for courses taught by multiple faculty members to ensure alignment with SoR principles and consistency across instruction (no reviews [0], every 3–5 years [1], every 1–2 years [2], or annually [3])?
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3
2. To what extent do faculty members teaching the same course collaborate regularly to align SoR instruction and ensure consistency across sections (no collaboration [0], occasional collaboration every 2–3 years [1], annual meetings [2], or multiple structured meetings per year [3])?
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3
3. How regularly does your program conduct audits of clinical experiences to ensure alignment with SoR practices (no audits [0], sporadic audits every 3–5 years [1], audits every 1–2 years [2], or comprehensive annual audits with actionable follow-ups [3])?
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) Integration

Each TPA at the EPP should provide evidence of foundational pedagogical knowledge and instructional planning specific to SoR for candidates pursuing certification.

The questions below ask you to reflect on how your program fosters collaboration among faculty, staff, school-based teacher educators, and partner local education agencies (LEAs), to embed SoR-aligned instruction in program structures, professional learning, and continuous improvement efforts.

Please use the following scale:
   0 - The TPA does not include this component.
   1 - Evidence related to this component could be used to assess candidate readiness for one or more elements of our TPA, but it is not required.
   2 - Evidence related to this component is expected to be used to assess candidate readiness, but there is not a TPA element dedicated to this component.
   3 - This is a required element of our TPA.

To what extent does your TPA assess candidate readiness related to the following SoR principles:

1. <u>Oral Language:</u> Includes speaking and listening, providing the foundation for written language.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3
2. <u>Phonological Awareness:</u> An awareness of speech sounds, whereas phonemic awareness is the ability to identify and manipulate sounds.

        0 | 1 | 2 | 3
3. <u>Phonics:</u> An instructional method that involves systematically matching the sounds with the letters that represent the sounds.
        0 | 1 | 2 | 3
4. <u>Comprehension:</u> The complex process and ultimate goal of reading that involves constructing meaning from and interpreting texts.
        0 | 1 | 2 | 3
5. <u>Fluency:</u> The ability to read connected text with accuracy, expression, and at an appropriate rate.
        0 | 1 | 2 | 3
6. <u>Vocabulary:</u> A student's internal dictionary, comprised of words and their meanings.
        0 | 1 | 2 | 3
7. <u>Structured literacy:</u> Emphasizing systematic, cumulative, explicit, and diagnostic instruction
        0 | 1 | 2 | 3

Professional Learning for Faculty, Staff, and School-Based Teacher Educators

Faculty, staff, and school-based teacher educators should receive ongoing professional learning in SoR, informed by program needs, candidate performance data, and faculty and staff requests, to effectively support candidates.

  Please use the following scale:
        0 - Strongly Disagree
        1 - Disagree
        2 - Agree
        3 - Strongly Agree

1. Faculty, staff, and school-based teacher educators engage in ongoing and evidence-based professional learning in SoR, informed by program needs, candidate performance data, and faculty and staff requests.
0 | 1 | 2 | 3

2. Our program schedules regular collaborative meetings for faculty, staff, and school-based teacher educators to discuss SoR implementation at least annually.
0 | 1 | 2 | 3

Collaboration and Support

Establish formalized partnerships with LEAs to provide authentic clinical experiences aligned with SoR principles and facilitate a supportive learning environment for candidates. These partnerships should include structured feedback, co-planning opportunities, and collaborative support for candidates.

  Please use the following scale:
        0 - Strongly Disagree
        1 - Disagree
        2 - Agree
        3 - Strongly Agree

1. We are satisfied with our formalized partnerships with LEAs that provide candidates with consistent, high-quality clinical experiences aligned with SoR principles. These partnerships include structured feedback, co-planning opportunities, and collaborative support for candidates.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3

2. Program faculty are familiar with the curriculum and assessment choices in partner LEAs to prepare candidates for their clinical experiences, those choices align with SoR, and there is effective collaboration to align practices.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3

3. School-based teacher educators receive structured, evidence-based training focused on supporting candidates in implementing SoR practices. This training includes clear expectations, instructional modeling, feedback techniques, and opportunities for collaboration with EPP faculty.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3

Continuous Improvement

EPPs should conduct annual reviews of their literacy coursework to incorporate new research, analyze disaggregated candidate performance data, and address gaps identified through stakeholder feedback.

Please use the following scale:
    0 - Strongly Disagree
    1 - Disagree
    2 - Agree
    3 - Strongly Agree

1. Our EPP has a systematic process for regularly reviewing and updating literacy coursework based on new research findings.
   0 | 1 | 2 | 3

2. Based on your improvement processes and data review, describe any recent changes made to your literacy coursework, teaching practices, or assessments. Please include a summary of the changes, the specific data that guided these adjustments, and the individuals involved in both the decision-making and planned follow-up actions. [TEXT BOX]

V. Artifacts

Please send the following artifacts to SoRReflection@nysed.gov:

1. If available, up to two examples of de-identified student work or assessments that illustrate candidate proficiency in delivering and evaluating explicit literacy instruction.

2. Up to two samples of assignments where candidates create lesson plans or classroom activities that illustrate how they incorporate these literacy tools into their instruction and how their impact on student learning is assessed by the course instructor.

3. One professional learning plan or training agenda related to SoR for faculty, staff, and/or school-based teacher educators.

4. One syllabus and corresponding review tool (e.g., rubric) demonstrating how your program ensures alignment with SoR principles across multiple faculty members.

VI. Final Reflection

1. **Evidence of Success:**

What are three specific aspects of your program that you believe are effectively integrating or implementing SoR principles? Please provide examples of practices, courses, or initiatives that you feel are working well and would be beneficial in other programs.

[TEXT BOX]

2. **Areas for Growth:**

Reflecting on your program's approach to integrating SoR, what are two or three areas where you feel further learning or support is needed? Please describe any challenges, gaps in implementation, or topics on which you would like to focus future professional learning.

[TEXT BOX]