Reading and Writing for College and Career Success:

Expanding the Reach of the Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum

A.1. Significance—Demonstration of Promising New Strategies

Literacy skills, which can be defined as "*the ability to use reading to gain access to the world of knowledge, to synthesize information from different sources, to evaluate arguments, and to learn totally new subjects*" (Murnane et al., 2012, p. 3) or, similarly, as "*the process of using reading, writing, and oral language to extract, construct, integrate, and critique meaning through interaction and involvement with multimodal texts in the context of socially situated practices*" (Frankel et al., 2016, p. 7), are of the utmost importance for an informed and productive citizenry (see, for example, Ippolito et al., 2008; Murnane et al., 2012; Miller & McKenna, 2016). Today's economy demands more advanced literacy skills than ever; the demand of workers in higher-paid occupations has grown, and these jobs typically require postsecondary education or training with strong literacy skills, leaving workers who have inadequate literacy skills without access to higher-paying jobs. Citizens also need high-functioning literacy skills to engage in a successful democracy. There is no shortage of opinion and written commentary about topics such as global warming, economic inequality, and politics, and an informed society is needed to understand and act on such important issues. In short, literacy empowers and liberates people; as such, it has been described as the "cornerstone of our freedom" (Ippolito et al., 2008, p. 1).

Unfortunately, the data show that students underperform in this critical area. Based on U.S. student data from the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 66 percent of grade 8 students and 63 percent of grade 12 students performed at the NAEP Basic level or below on the reading assessment (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). The NAEP Basic level denotes _partial_ mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade. The NAEP scores in writing tell a similar story: in 2011 (the

most recent year for which data are available), 74 percent of grade 8 students and 73 percent of

grade 12 students performed at the NAEP Basic level or below on the writing assessment (U.S.

Department of Education, 2011). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the

low-performing literacy achievement of students (see, for example, Goldstein, 2022; Hough &

Chavez, 2022; Kuhfeld et al., 2023).

To improve the literacy skills of high school students, particularly high-need students, the

Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) was developed through an important

collaboration between college professors and high school teachers and administrators (**Absolute**

Priority 2—Field Initiated Innovations—General). Over time, this curriculum has spread, first

throughout California and then into many states in the western United States. The spread of the

ERWC has been aided by an Investing in Innovation (i3) Development grant and an i3

Validation grant. Rigorous research over the past decade has found that the ERWC improves

students' English language arts (ELA)/literacy achievement. In 2015, a quasi-experimental study

found that the ERWC improved grade 12 students' performance on the English Placement Test

(EPT), which was the standardized placement exam used by the California State University

(CSU) system to place incoming college freshmen into either a credit-bearing English course or a

remedial English course (Fong et al., 2015). The EPT assesses students' ability to, among other

things, identify important ideas, draw inferences and conclusions, and detect underlying

assumptions (California State University, 2009). More recently, in 2022, a randomized

controlled trial (RCT) found that the ERWC improved grade 11 students' performance as

measured by the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced Non-Performance Task ELA/Literacy Interim

Comprehensive Assessment (Fong et al., 2022). This most recent evaluation met the What

Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Version 4.1 Group Design standards without reservations

(**Absolute Priority 1—Strong Evidence**), thus classifying the ERWC as having Tier 1 Strong Evidence (see: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/90645). These positive impacts of the ERWC were further disseminated through a WWC practice guide (Graham et al., 2016) that stressed the importance of integrating reading and writing to emphasize key writing features. College readiness scholars have also reported on the ERWC, recognizing it as an effective response to college readiness needs (Barnett et al., 2016; Kurlaender, 2014).

The Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum. Developed through a unique collaboration between CSU faculty and California public high school teachers and administrators, the ERWC is designed to prepare secondary-school students for the literacy demands of higher education. To meet this goal, the original curriculum developers created a grade 12 course to support students in developing the critical thinking and rhetorical reading and writing skills needed to succeed in entry-level college composition classes. The first edition of the curriculum was published in 2008, with the second edition following in 2013. The third edition of the ERWC, published in 2019, expanded the curriculum to include a full grade 11 course, and included Integrated and Designated English language development and mini modules for introducing rhetorical concepts and skills that help students communicate across contexts. ERWC teachers access the instructional modules, or units, through the CSU's introductory ERWC professional learning (PL) sessions, available free of charge. Certified ERWC teachers then download the modules and teaching resources from the ERWC Online Community.

The third edition of the curriculum, funded by an i3 Validation grant, comprises full-year college preparatory English courses for grades 11 and 12 students. Teachers and schools build and personalize the yearlong courses by selecting from approximately 30 modules per grade level to meet rigorous, college-preparatory learning goals in reading, writing, listening, and

speaking, while promoting student interest and motivation. The core structure of all of the modules—the Assignment Template (see the "**1. ERWC Assignment Template Overview**" section of Appendix J)—progresses along an "arc" from **reading rhetorically** (preparing to read, reading purposefully, and questioning the text) to **preparing to respond** (discovering what you think) to **writing rhetorically** (composing a draft, revising rhetorically, and editing). The Assignment Template embodies the ERWC's core ideas and practices: reading and writing rhetorically, the transfer of learning, the cultivation of expert learners, and language exploration and awareness. The repeated turns that students take through the Assignment Template over the course of a year afford them frequent opportunities to internalize the rhetorical literacy skills, language resources, and academic habits of mind that are essential to postsecondary success.

Completing an ERWC module means completing this arc; a visual depiction of the arc can be found in the "**2. The ERWC Arc**" section of Appendix J. The arc represents the transfer of learning. As students shift from "**reading like writers" to "writing like readers**," they transfer the rhetorical moves, linguistic knowledge, and literacy strategies that they learned from studying professional models to their own acts of communication. The reciprocity represented through the two sides of the arc illustrates the application of rhetorical reading strategies to rhetorical writing. The ERWC arc thus represents a transferable literacy process for comprehending, critiquing, and composing diverse expository, analytical, argumentative, literary, visual, digital, multimodal, and multigenre texts across disciplinary contexts and social settings (Katz et al., 2019). By the end of each course, students will have read a range of literary and nonfiction text genres and produced five or six culminating projects, including academic essays, creative writing and performances, and multimedia presentations/research reports.

The ERWC has been found to be successful because it integrates proven principles from literacy studies, writing and rhetoric studies, scholarship on transfer of learning to foster college readiness, disciplinary literacy research, and pedagogical research (Katz et al., 2019). These research-based theoretical foundations are evident in the **ERWC's 8 Key Principles**: **(1)** The *integration of interactive reading and writing processes* (Graham et al., 2016): **(2)** A *rhetorical, inquiry-based approach* that fosters critical thinking and engagement through a relentless focus on the text (Yancey et al., 2014; Adler-Kassner & Wardle, 2015); **(3)** Materials and themes that *engage student interest* (Beach et al., 2008; Paris & Alim, 2017); **(4)** A student-centered approach that *emphasizes student agency and metacognition* (Hammond, 2014; Greenleaf et al., 2023); **(5)** Classroom activities designed to model and foster successful practices of *fluent readers and writers* (Fisher et al., 2016); **(6)** *Research-based methodologies* with a consistent relationship between theory and practice; **(7)** Built-in flexibility to allow teachers to support *students' development as expert learners* and respond to instructional contexts (CAST, 2018); and **(8)** *Alignment with California Standards for English Language Arts and English Language Development*.

Moreover, these ERWC Key Principles are designed to improve the achievement of high-need students.[1] As one example, the integration of Integrated and Designated instruction for English learners students supports high-need students. Specific module activities for Integrated and Designated instruction are compiled in a valuable 162-page ERWC reference tool, the High Impact Strategies Toolkit, which can be found in the ERWC Online Community (due to its

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[1] "High-need" students, as defined in the EIR Expansion Notice Inviting Applications (NIA), includes "underserved" students, which, as defined in the NIA, includes, among other groups, students of color and English learner students.
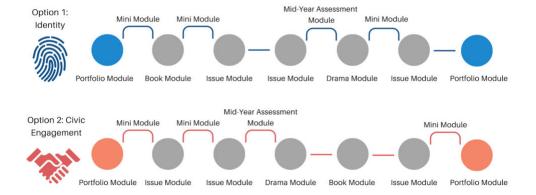
length, this document is not included in Appendix J). This compilation of more than ninety

activities excerpted from grades 9–12 modules permits teachers to analyze the evidence-based

strategies on which the ERWC is built as discrete units, rather than in their actual contexts across

a multiweek curriculum. These strategies include robust linguistic scaffolding for collaborative

discussion protocols, which emerge from the research around oracy as fundamentally tied to

literacy development for English learners (Fisher et al., 2008). The High Impact Strategies

Toolkit provides activities that promote academic discussion, such as "Socratic Seminar" and

"Structured Academic Controversy," which are both used in the module "Age of Responsibility."

Proposed ERWC Expansion. This proposal seeks to close a critical articulation gap in grades

9–12 by developing a full grades 9 and 10 curriculum for students and PL experiences for ELA

teachers, to serve as rigorous, engaging alternatives to traditional literature-based curricula.

Expansion of the ERWC to grades 9 and 10 is proposed to occur in California (CA), Washington

(WA), Hawaii (HI), and New Mexico (NM).[2] Expanding instruction in ERWC core concepts and

strategies to grades 9 and 10 will enable more students, at earlier ages, to internalize and solidify

rhetorical tools and strategies and become proficient readers with rhetorical and critical acuity.

The proposed project will serve as a **model for addressing the nation's critical literacy issues**

and augment student performance.

   Full vertical alignment of the curriculum for secondary education will be achieved

through the development of additional ERWC modules in grades 9 and 10. Four full-length

ERWC modules for grade 9, and five for grade 10, have already been developed, and teachers

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[2] It is important to note that these states already have schools using the ERWC in grades 11 and

12. This proposal would both expand the number of schools using the ERWC and bring the

curriculum to grades 9 and 10.

currently use these modules to supplement their courses in those grades. To create a yearlong ERWC course tailored to students in grades 9 and 10, the proposed project will develop an additional 16 modules for grade 9 and 15 modules for grade 10. The project will add seven or eight full-length modules, two portfolio modules, five mini modules, and a mid-year assessment module for each grade. The modules will comprise two possible pathways centered on themes that are highly interesting and relevant to students in each grade. The grade 9 pathways will be themed "**Identity**" and "**Civic Engagement**," and the grade 10 pathways will be themed "**Community**" and "**Communication**." Teachers will choose the pathway that will best meet their students' needs. The pathways will each include two portfolio modules, three mini modules, five full-length modules (one book module, three issue modules, and one drama module), and one mid-year assessment module, which will be designed to support formative reflection and feedback. See Appendix J for samples of the following full and mini modules: "**Grade 9 Full Module: Good Food Bad Food (Issue Module)**," "**Grade 11 and 12 Mini-Module: Introducing Stasis Theory**," and "**Grade 12 Portfolio Module: Introducing ERWC**." Figure 1 displays a sample of the grade 9 course pathways.

Figure 1. ERWC Grade 9 Course Pathways and Sample Sequences

The proposed project will also include the addition of a new mid-year assessment module focused on students' growth in the use of metacognition. This module will be developed during

the one-year planning phase and will be used to measure students' progress toward goals that they identify in the beginning of the course portfolio module. With this expanded early high school ERWC, the project will provide students with an early foundation in rhetorical reading and writing, to carry into upper grades. Teachers will receive comprehensive PL, including workshops, coaching, and communities of practice (CoP), to support their implementation of the ERWC (see "**3. Culturally Responsive Professional Learning Model**" section of Appendix J).

B.1. Strategies to Address Particular Barriers to Scale

Identified barriers to broader implementation, both across additional high school grades and geographically across the country, for the ERWC include (1) limited PL opportunities; (2) need for additional leadership and human resources to support sustainability and growth beyond the current states; (3) need for a high-quality English curriculum in all grades of high school; and (4) need for educators across the country to understand the benefits of the ERWC.

Barrier 1: Limited professional learning opportunities. The availability and quality of ERWC PL are constrained by limited funding. While the CSU provides almost $850,000 annually to support the development and implementation of the ERWC, that amount is insufficient to keep up with the demands required of ERWC expansion. *Strategies to address Barrier 1:* The project will implement a comprehensive PL experience across new states, and in new grades, which will include one-on-one coaching, CoPs, and workshops to support teachers in their implementation of the curriculum (see the "**3. Culturally Responsive Professional Learning Model**" section of Appendix J for an overview of the ERWC PL model). The support provided through one-on-one in-person and virtual coaching sessions supported by Swivl will be designed to respond to the specific needs of each teacher. The proposed PL model will enable the ERWC to develop new relationships with leaders in **four project states,** and with **70**

schools, more than 100 coaches, more than 300 teachers, and 70 site leads, thereby building

capacity while increasing ERWC access to approximately **24,500 students**. The proposed

project will use Canvas and Zoom to reach educators in the four project states each month.

 Barrier 2: Leadership and human resources to support sustainability. There is a need

for **leadership and additional human resources** to fulfill administrative and legal functions

and support **sustainability of the curriculum in other states.** *Strategies to address Barrier 2:*

While the four project states have some experience working together to use the ERWC, HI,

NM, and WA leaders will need to further clarify and institutionalize their states' ERWC

systems for sustainability into the future. Leadership teams for each state will be formalized

through this project; this has not yet occurred in HI and NM. These teams will oversee project

implementation within the context of each state's unique systems, opportunities, and

challenges. The project will leverage university professors, community college instructors,

district/site literacy coaches, site administrators, and teacher retirees in all the project states to

serve as ERWC coaches.

 Expanding the ERWC to other states will increase and complicate administrative and

legal work. For example, a system will need to be developed to accurately track how many

students access the curriculum across states, so that copyright costs can be negotiated with

publishers, based on the number of users of the curriculum. The project will identify individuals

with expertise to consult in key administrative and legal areas including negotiating print and

electronic copyright permissions for student reading selections; developing licensing agreements

(including trademarks) for use of materials outside CA; and preparing personnel to conduct PL.

 By the end of the grant, the infrastructure for future scaling and sustainability will include

well-established leadership at the state level and robust systems for PL across the four states; this

will serve as a model for expansion of the ERWC to additional states in the future.

> *__Barrier 3: Need for high-quality English curriculum throughout high school.__* The
ERWC is only currently offered as a yearlong course in grades 11 and 12 (limited modules are
currently available in grades 9 and 10). However, there are widespread gaps in students'
academic achievement in reading and writing in grade 8 (U.S. Department of Education, 2022).
In addition, teachers continue to report that the ERWC needs to begin earlier in a student's
academic career, to fully prepare students for the rigors of college coursework (Fong et al.,
2015, p. 46). *__Strategies to address Barrier 3:__* The proposed project will address this barrier by
expanding the ERWC to grades 9 and 10, which will address the full range of high school
Common Core State Standards (CCSS) ELA/literacy standards and better prepare students for
their grades 11 and 12 English courses. This aligns with the CCSS for ELA, which use two-year
bands for grades 9–10 and 11–12.

> *__Barrier 4. Need for more educators in other states to understand the benefits of the__*
__ERWC.__ The ERWC has been proven to be effective (Fong et al., 2015; Fong et al., 2022), but it
is just beginning to gain traction in other states. There is a need to share information about the
ERWC and its impact with a wider audience. *__Strategies to Address Barrier 4.__* The project
includes a comprehensive dissemination plan to share information about the ERWC more
broadly (see the "**4. Dissemination Plan**" section of Appendix J). The plan is intended to reach
a national audience through conferences, social media posts, and publications. The grant will
help build out the infrastructure to plan and sustain this dissemination work.

B.2. Adequacy of the Management Plan

> The project will take place over five years, from January 2024 through December 2028,
and will achieve the proposed objectives (as specified in Section C.2) on time and within budget.

The full management plan (see the "**5. Management Plan**" section of Appendix J), which will

guide the oversight and implementation of the project, is based on the proposed project's **Logic**

Model (see Appendix G) and goals, objectives, and outcomes. For each project objective, the

management plan specifies the people responsible, the timeline for initiation and completion, and

specific activities and milestones toward achieving the objective. The project budget has been

derived from the activities identified in the management plan, with costs for personnel and other

expenses detailed in the budget narrative. The management plan quantifies the tasks, ensuring

that the budget and time commitment are appropriate to accomplish all objectives.

The project's governance structure includes an ERWC Steering Committee of 16

members, which will provide overall guidance and content leadership for the project. The

project's management structure includes a central project leadership team and four state

leadership teams (each led by a designated state lead), supported by a core module development

team (led by two development editors) and a core PL team. The core module development team

will oversee two module development and revision teams organized by grade level, and the core

PL team will be supported by 103 coaches, who will also serve as PL facilitators. Notably,

partners will include representation from **community colleges, tribal colleges, and minority-**

serving institutions in the four project states (CA, HI, NM, and WA), who will facilitate PL

(**Competitive Preference Priority**). For example, see the "**10. CSU HSI Fact Sheet**" section of

Appendix J for a list of the CSU campuses that are Hispanic-serving institutions (defined as

institutions where at least 25 percent of the undergraduate, full-time enrollment is Hispanic and

at least half of the institution's degree-seeking students are low-income). Professors from CSU

Sacramento, CSU Fresno, CSU Fullerton, CSU Monterey Bay, San Diego State University, and

CSU Bakersfield participate in the ERWC Steering Committee, which meets at least monthly to

determine the direction of the ERWC and carry out the implementation of the curriculum. The

Steering Committee also includes community college faculty. The ERWC Community and

Communications Work Group, a subcommittee of the ERWC Steering Committee, will support

the implementation of the Dissemination Plan, in partnership with the Center for the

Advancement of Reading and Writing (CAR/W) at the CSU Office of the Chancellor and with

the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS) (see Section B.4 for more details). See the

"**5. Management Plan**" section of Appendix J for a description of the infrastructure for ensuring

that qualified staff and management capacity carry out the project at a high level.

B.3. Capacity to Bring the Proposed Project to Scale

The FCSS will act as the lead fiscal agent for the proposed project, with the FCSS

Director providing financial oversight for spending to ensure that expenditures are appropriate.

FCSS has both the expertise and the capacity to deliver the ERWC at scale, as described below.

Qualified Personnel. Project personnel and project partners have been selected on the

basis of their professional experience, formal training, subject-matter expertise, and commitment

to the project's goals. Many have worked together for 15 years on the ERWC and related

initiatives, and proposed project staff have 12 years of experience managing federal grants. Trust

is fundamental for learning organizations to achieve their goals (Senge, 2006). Relationships and

trust built through previous work mitigate some challenges to collaboration and will reduce

delays that can occur in the initial phase of project implementation. Coaches will be recruited

from study school sites/districts and local colleges, including community colleges and minority-

serving institutions, and will have taught and/or led schools/districts and demonstrated a strong

track record of supporting student growth and increasing achievement.

Key Personnel. (See Appendix B for **resumes**, See Appendix J for **Management Plan**:

Job Description - Essential Duties, Other Duties, Knowledge of, Ability to, Education,

Experience, Licensure and Other Requirements). ██████████████████ will serve as the

Project Director and CA state leader for this grant ██████████████ has served as Project

Director for the i3 Validation Grant and the i3 Development Grant at the FCSS. She is an ERWC

module writer and has coached multiple teachers at different high schools in the i3 Validation

grant. She has also built strategic partnerships with leaders across other states to expand the

reach of the ERWC beyond California. With 13 years of federal grant oversight experience, ██

█████████████ will ensure that expenditures are appropriate and come from the appropriate line

items. ██████████████ will oversee module development for the grant. ██████████ has

served as the Co-Director for the CAR/W at the CSU Office of the Chancellor for the past two

years. She has experience as a Project Director for a National Professional Development Grant

and a Teacher Residency Grant. ██████████████ will serve as the Principal Investigator of

the evaluation. ████████ is currently the Director of Data Analytics at WestEd, and is a longtime

ERWC partner, with 12 years of experience conducting large RCTs and quasi-experimental

design evaluations of the ERWC. He led the previous two ERWC evaluations that were funded

by i3, both of which met WWC standards (Fong et al., 2015; Fong et al., 2022). He is a WWC-

certified reviewer in Group Design Standards (Version 5.0).

  Partnership Development. To expand the ERWC to more than 24,500 students in grades

9 and 10 annually by Fiscal Year 2028, the FCSS must increase its capacity to develop new

relationships with school districts. To this end, the CA state leader will collaborate with the HI

state leader (██████████████, Executive Director of Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education at

the University of Hawai'i), the NM state leader (██████████████, English Teacher and Coach, Los

Alamos High School), and the WA state leader (██████████████, Associate Director, Secondary

English Language Arts, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction). The four state leaders

will meet monthly to build collaborative relationships and ensure successful implementation of the proposed project.

ERWC Platform and Content Development. To expand the capability of the ERWC to manage and evolve its virtual platform and content in order to scale, the leadership team will provide PL to all teachers and collaborators participating in the study, using Zoom and the web-based learning management system Canvas. Additionally, the leadership team will build its resource library to include the newly created modules and materials, so that they can be electronically accessed for years to come.

Management Capacity. The FCSS has successfully completed all Annual Performance Report requirements for the United States Department of Education (ED) Office for past grants: $8,400,000 for 2021 California Department of Parks & Recreation Outdoor Equity; $11,999,958 for 2016 ED i3 Validation Grant; $3,000,000 for 2011 ED i3 Development Grant; and $3,807,549 for 2009 and $4,000,000 for 2007 ED Teaching American History Grants.

B.4. Mechanisms to Disseminate Project Information

As described in the "**4. Dissemination Plan**" section of Appendix J, the ERWC leadership team will use a variety of communication strategies and multiple points of access to ensure that information related to the proposed project is widely shared with researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in the four project states and nationwide.

The ERWC benefits from several established communication channels and platforms, including an extensive website (https://writing.csusuccess.org/), liaisons to professional organizations, an annual webinar series (during which regular updates are shared), a blog, an email list, a growing social-media presence, standing agenda items at statewide meetings, access to the PR department at the CSU Office of the Chancellor, and a designated ERWC

communications team: the **ERWC Community and Communication Work Group.** This work

group, which is currently composed of CSU professors, ERWC teachers, and grant partners, will

expand its membership to include WestEd evaluators, liaisons from professional organizations

(e.g., California Association of Teachers of English), CA county office of education

administrators, and representatives from HI, NM, and WA. Lessons learned from ERWC

implementation in the four project states will be disseminated to leaders, educators, families, and

students in new states to support replication. Additionally, the Project Director and state leaders

will leverage existing professional organizations to disseminate information about how the

ERWC can be implemented nationwide.

B.5. Utility of the Products That Will Result from the Project

The value of the ERWC curriculum, pedagogies, PL experiences, and literacy network

has broad applications across contexts and settings. Because rhetorical theory, Universal Design

for Learning (UDL), and the scholarship on transfer of learning are essential aspects of the

ERWC's theoretical foundations, the ERWC is adaptive by design. One of ERWC's Key

Principles is "built-in flexibility to allow teachers to support students' development as expert

learners and respond to instructional contexts." This principle of flexibility applies to the

ERWC's educational partnerships and leader development activities, as well as to its

instructional modules, enhancing the ERWC's portability. The proposed project seeks to amplify

the utility, reach, and impact of ERWC products and processes in the areas of instructional

design, professional learning and coaching, intersegmental collaboration, and literacy leadership:

**Innovation in Instructional Design.** The ERWC offers an adaptive model for curriculum

development and instructional planning, which can be applied in a variety of settings. The

ERWC 3.0 Assignment Template—the centerpiece of the ERWC's innovative design--is

publicly available in the ERWC Online Community and can be used to create place-based and

interest-based modules for students in grades 6–12 in diverse schools and regions. The ERWC's

collection of teaching resources likewise supports module development and modification (See

the ERWC Online Community at: https://writing.csusuccess.org/).

The proposed project expands opportunities for module development through the

inclusion of module writers from HI, NM, and WA in the creation of grades 9 and 10 courses,

and through the documentation and dissemination of the ERWC module development process.

ERWC module development is a flexible, inquiry-based, and transferable process that

leverages the expertise and experiences of members of school communities. Aspects of the

ERWC's curriculum development model that can be replicated in other regions and states

include the recruitment of a diverse pool of authors, shared review of best practices and

theoretical foundations, writers' groups, collaborative peer review, field testing, evaluation, and

rhetorical revision. The utility of the ERWC module development process is enhanced by the

feedback loops among curriculum, PL, and literacy leadership. For example, review and revision

of the draft modules will include efforts to omit prescriptive or didactic language (e.g., words

such as "should" or "must") that are contrary to the ERWC's rhetorical, student-centered, and

inquiry-based pedagogies.

The modules resulting from the proposed project will provide teachers and students with

more curricular choices, greater diversity of authors and text types in grades 9 and 10 ELA

courses, more means of engagement and expression (using UDL), more support for English

language learning, and more opportunities for developing transferable disciplinary literacies.

Innovation in Professional Learning and Instructional Coaching. The ERWC creates

and supports the dissemination of current evidence-based practices in pedagogy by offering free

access to ERWC teaching resources, webinars, and the ERWC blog, as well as by publishing articles that are foundational to expert literacy and language instruction, such as articles on culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy, cultivating expert learners, formative assessment, and transfer of literacy and language skills and strategies to other content areas. Additional products resulting from the proposed project will include the following: Protocols for Communities of Practice (CoP) that can be adapted for local contexts; webinars and materials for literacy coaches, shared via the ERWC blog and website; tools for self-assessment and reflection, shared via the ERWC blog and website; and guest blog posts by literacy leaders within and outside of the ERWC community.

Intersegmental Collaboration. The ERWC's evolution from a small task force in 2003 to a multistate literacy network in 2023 is due to unprecedented educational partnerships among the CSU, the California Department of Education, the California Superintendent of Schools, and the University of California. As the ERWC has grown, these partnerships have expanded to include the Hawai'i Department of Education and Hawai'i P16 at the University of Hawai'i in HI, Los Alamos Public Schools in NM, and the Bridge to College Program and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in WA. Additional partners include California Community College faculty, CSU Early Assessment Program Coordinators, and California county offices of education. Intersegmental collaboration and shared inquiry are key to effective implementation, modification, and replication of the ERWC.

The ERWC has also developed a symbiotic relationship with K–12 education, in which each relies on the other for knowledge, information, and support. Widespread adoption of the ERWC is largely a result of the high degree of trust shared among ERWC partners—a trust justified by positive evaluation results (Fong et al., 2022; Fong et al., 2015).

For educators in other states who would like to establish their own cross-sector collaborations, the ERWC serves as a model of the principles and practices that sustain successful educational partnerships. The potential for lessons to be learned about educational policies that support student success across institutional contexts and learning environments may be a particularly useful takeaway from the proposed expansion to grades 9 and 10. While many barriers to student success can be removed or mitigated at the classroom level, more barriers can be removed at the policy level, making the kind of intersegmental collaboration upon which the ERWC is based critical to maximizing positive educational outcomes for students. Additional products resulting from the proposed project will include sample agreements and structures for intersegmental collaboration and sample protocols for cross-sector policymaking.

__Responsive Literacy Leadership.__ In the area of literacy leadership, the proposed project offers several potential benefits to educators both within and beyond the ERWC community. The ERWC is more than a curriculum. The other components of the ERWC, including its network of more than 16,000 teachers, professional development programs, CoPs, multi-state collaborations, online discussions and resources, and leadership team meetings, remain fluid and responsive throughout and beyond the curriculum development process. These are the virtual and real-world spaces where educators think through the extent to which ERWC 3.0 is helping students become better readers, writers, and thinkers and how instruction can be further improved. A key lesson learned from prior ERWC grants is the importance of flexible literacy initiatives that remain plugged into their feedback loops, including the lived realities of individual students and teachers and the changing dynamics of particular classrooms. Additional products resulting from the proposed project will include a WestEd study of the proposed grades 9 and 10 curriculum;

opportunities for literacy leaders to serve as ERWC conference or webinar presenters; and

opportunities for literacy leaders to publish posts on the ERWC blog

C.1. Conceptual Framework Underlying the Proposed Activities

The proposed project is undergirded by a strong conceptual framework, which is depicted by

the **Logic Model** (Appendix G). The Logic Model, informed by the *Assessing Research Practice*

Partnerships framework (Henrick et al., 2017), will guide the partnership as it evolves. The

conceptual framework described in Table 1 will be operationalized through monthly feedback

cycles, allowing the FCSS and the CSU to continuously improve the PL for teachers and the

curriculum (Management Plan, Activity 1.10). The framework is composed of five dimensions

of effectiveness and outlines specific indicators of progress.

Table 1. ERWC Conceptual Framework

ERWC Dimension	Indicators of Progress
Build trust and cultivate ERWC partnership relationships.	Leadership Team (LT) will establish partnership goals, engage in collaborative decision-making, assess partnership progress, and revise work plans.
Conduct rigorous research to inform ERWC action.	LT will establish systematic processes for collecting, organizing, analyzing, and synthesizing data; specify and address problems of practice; and share lessons learned.
Support partner practice organizations in achieving their goals.	LT will identify strategies for addressing problems of practice, review potential improvement strategies, and share information about implementation and improvement.

ERWC Dimension	Indicators of Progress
Produce knowledge to inform ERWC improvement efforts more broadly.	LT will gather and analyze data, share ERWC findings and recommendations monthly, and share the ERWC dissemination plan, including partnership goals.
Build capacity to engage in partnership work.	LT will implement ongoing cohesive PL; establish Curriculum and Pedagogy Development team and state leadership teams; and create conditions for sustained impact.

The *ERWC Theoretical Foundations for Reading and Writing Rhetorically* (see the "**6. ERWC Theoretical Foundations**" section of Appendix J) will serve as the foundation for the content of the modules and the accompanying PL. This framework grounds the ERWC and teaching methodologies in research and supports the ERWC PL in three ways: (1) guiding teachers' inquiry-based learning and reflection in PL experiences; (2) providing an ongoing resource for individual and collective inquiry into why the ERWC recommends that teachers do what they do in particular ways; and (3) providing resources for diving more deeply into the scholarship that informs the ERWC's pedagogy and design (Katz et al., 2019).

C.2. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes of the Proposed Project

The **clearly specified and measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes** of the proposed project are displayed in depth in the **Logic Model** (Appendix G) and the Management Plan (see the "**5. Management Plan**" section of Appendix J) and summarized in Table 2. The goals, objectives, and outcomes demonstrate the project's alignment with the priority to **implement internationally benchmarked college- and career-ready standards and assessments** for **high-need students**, including students at risk of needing remediation in English upon college

entry, English learner students, and students with disabilities.

Table 2. ERWC Project Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

Goals	Objectives	Outcomes
Goal 1: Equip students in grades 9 and 10, including English learner students and students with disabilities, with critical reading, writing, and language skills based on college- and career-ready standards.	**Objective 1.** Establish leadership teams at the project and state levels to guide revisions to ERWC curriculum, pedagogy, and PL and to scale implementation with 100% fidelity in 70 schools in CA, HI, NM, and WA in grades 9–10. **Objective 2.** Create and implement two portfolio modules, one mid-course formative assessment module, five mini modules, one book module, two drama modules, and five issue modules for grade 9. Create and implement two portfolio modules, one mid-course formative assessment module, five mini modules, one book module, two drama modules, and four issue modules for grade 10.	Students assigned to the ERWC in grades 9 and 10 will score at least 5% higher on the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA) than students enrolled in comparison English courses. The difference will be statistically significant.
Goal 2: Support 12,250	**Objective 3.** Refine 100% of the	Students who participated in

Goals	Objectives	Outcomes
students annually in a successful transition to grades 9 and 10 through the provision of a culturally relevant, rhetorically oriented, research-based curriculum.	module course pedagogy, including strategies for English learner students and students with disabilities. **Objective 4.** Lead PL for teachers, site leaders, administrators, coaches, and PL facilitators, including face-to-face sessions, classroom coaching, and CoPs.	the ERWC in grades 9 and 10 will score at least 10% higher on measures of academic motivation than students enrolled in comparison English courses. Motivation will be measured using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire.
Goal 3: Scale implementation of the ERWC with fidelity and cost effectiveness in new grades (9 and 10) in CA and WA and in two new states (HI and NM).	**Objective 5.** Teach the ERWC in grades 9–10 classrooms in 70 study schools in CA, HI, NM, and WA. **Objective 6.** Validate the success of the ERWC by evaluating student results, using a multi-site student-randomized controlled trial, and by examining the success of project replication. **Objective 7.** Understand cost-effectiveness in order to scale up upon completion of the project.	Capacity to scale is demonstrated by implementation of the ERWC with 90% fidelity, including PL and classroom instruction, in grades 9 and 10 in 70 study schools in CA, HI, NM, and WA with varied settings and students.

C.3. Extent to Which the Project Will Address Identified Needs

The proposed project will address three identified needs: (1) the need for the ERWC in grades 9 and 10 to further increase grades 11 and 12 and postsecondary preparedness and success, especially for high-need students such as English learner students and students with disabilities; (2) the need for more engaging reading and writing pedagogy and content; and (3) the need to be responsive to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and teachers.

All students, particularly English learner students and students with disabilities, face low literacy rates that can negatively impact college success. The ERWC has demonstrated statistically significant growth in both of grades 11 and 12, and expanding curriculum access to grades 9 and 10 would expand the potential to provide more promising outcomes for high school graduates, including those going on to college (Fong et al., 2015; Fong et al., 2022). The module development and revision teams will utilize the most recent research-based evidence to create Integrated and Designated lessons that support English learners. In addition, vertical alignment of the ERWC for grades 9–12 will make the impact of the ERWC even more robust.

The proposed project will expand engaging reading and writing pedagogy and content for high-need grades 9 and 10 students. Instruction in metacognition has been demonstrated to help students learn more effectively, perform better, and become lifelong learners (Stanton et al., 2021). Culturally sustaining pedagogy will help strengthen connections to students' lived experience and improve their literacy skills, especially when learning new skills and strategies. As stated in the ERWC's theoretical foundations (Katz et al., 2016), the goal of a culturally sustaining pedagogy is liberation rather than assimilation.

Existing curricula focus on decontextualized skill development, but the ERWC will be more engaging by connecting to students' lived experiences. Learning loss due to the COVID-19

pandemic has demonstrated a need for addressing lower educational outcomes and life disruption more broadly. Expanding the proven success of the ERWC to earlier high school grades will mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic on high school students.

D.1. Production of Evidence about the Project's Effectiveness

WestEd will conduct an independent evaluation of the impact, fidelity of implementation, and cost effectiveness of the ERWC in grades 9 and 10. A recent evaluation of the ERWC in grades 11 and 12 (Fong et al., 2022) used an evaluation design similar to the proposed design. The WWC reviewed it and determined that it **met the WWC Version 4.1 Group Design standards without reservations** (see: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/90645). As a result, the ERWC is considered to have Tier 1 Strong Evidence.

With regard to the current proposed evaluation of the ERWC, Table 3 presents the overarching research questions for the evaluation. ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ of WestEd, who is a **WWC-certified reviewer in Group Design Standards** (Version 5.0), will lead the evaluation.

Table 3. Overarching Research Questions for the Independent Evaluation

Confirmatory Impact Questions	Research Question #1. Does assignment to the ERWC in grade 9 have a positive impact on ELA/literacy achievement compared to assignment to the traditional English 9 course?
	Research Question #2. Does assignment to the ERWC in grades 9 and 10 have a positive impact on ELA/literacy achievement compared to assignment to the traditional English 9 and English 10 courses?
Exploratory Research Questions	Research Question #3. Are key components of the ERWC being implemented with fidelity?
	Research Question #4. What is the cost-effectiveness of the ERWC compared

	to the traditional English curricula?
Moderating and Mediating Factors	Research Question #5. How do the impacts of being assigned to the ERWC in grades 9 and 10 vary for different subgroups of students (specifically English learners and students with disabilities)?
	Research Question #6. How are ERWC teachers' self-reported pedagogical practices similar to, and how are they different from, those of traditional English teachers?
	Research Question #7. Does the level of student motivation in ERWC classrooms differ from that in traditional English classrooms?

By answering *Research Question #1,* the impact evaluation is intended to **meet WWC standards without reservations** (WWC, 2022). WestEd will implement a student-level RCT that will estimate the intent-to-treat impact estimate of being assigned to enroll in the ERWC. The student sample will be meticulously tracked to allow the evaluation to meet the WWC's cautious boundaries for overall and differential attrition. WestEd has met the cautious overall and differential attrition boundaries in previous work, even during COVID-19 distance learning, when administration of outcome assessments to students was extremely challenging (Fong et al., 2022). To meet overall and differential attrition boundaries, researchers will monitor students' completion of the outcome measure and ensure that teachers in both the treatment group and the control group administer the outcome assessment to as many students in their classes as possible, with makeup exams given to students who are absent on the day(s) of testing. All students with missing outcome data, and those who opt out of the study, will be counted as attrition.

Student-level random assignment will occur during the summer of 2026, when incoming grade 9 students will be randomly assigned to either a teacher teaching the ERWC or a teacher teaching a traditional English 9 curriculum. Study schools may be using a traditional English

curriculum such as those published by McGraw-Hill ("StudySync"), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

("Collections"), the College Board ("SpringBoard"), or Pearson ("myPerspectives"). Further

details about the randomization process are provided in the "Random Assignment Process"

subsection of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J. The standardized

outcome measure used to assess ELA/literacy achievement at the end of grade 9 will be the

Grade 9 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA), which

consists of a Performance Task (PT) section and a Non-Performance Task (Non-PT) section

(Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2022). Each section takes approximately two hours

to complete. WestEd will hire an outside vendor to score the writing portions of the assessment,

as was done in the prior evaluation that used the same assessment (Fong et al., 2022).

The statistical model used to answer Research Question #1 will be of the following form:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \sum_{k=1}^{K} \beta_k * School_{i,k} + \gamma * T_i + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \varphi_j * Student_{i,j} + \theta * preachievement_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where Y_i is the scale score on the Grade 9 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy ICA for student i;

$School_{i,k}$ is a vector of binary variables indicating whether student i was or was not enrolled at

high school k; T_i is a binary treatment status variable indicating whether student i was or was not

assigned to the ERWC; $Student_{i,j}$ is a vector of student-level covariates for student i for

covariate j, including gender, ethnicity, age, English learner status, and special education

status—these covariates will all be measured as of the end of grade 8; *preachievement* is the

scale score on the grade 8 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Summative Assessment for student

i—this represents the baseline achievement measure;[3] and α, β, γ, φ, and θ are parameters to be

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[3] In the unlikely event that the boundaries for overall and differential attrition are not met, the

grade 8 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Summative Assessment scale score will be used to

estimated from the data. **ε** represents the (assumed) independent and identically distributed error term. γ represents the intent-to-treat estimate, with each student's treatment status being determined by the student's random assignment (treatment or control), as opposed to the actual course that the student enrolled in. The vector of school dummy indicator variables (***School**$_{i, k}$*) represents the randomization block that the student participated in; this variable also accounts for the difference in random assignment WWC ratios across schools.

The final analytic sample will consist of randomly assigned students who meet the following two criteria: (1) the student has non-missing outcome data, and (2) the student did not opt out of the study. Students who do not meet these requirements will be excluded from the impact analysis and counted as attrition (WWC, 2022). The "dummy variable adjustment" (Puma et al., 2009) will be used to handle missing data for all independent variables (including the *preachievement* measure) in the statistical model. The power analysis and additional details about the ELA/Literacy ICA are described in the "Power Analysis" and "Grade 9 and 10 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Interim Comprehensive Assessment" subsections of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J.

To answer ***Research Question #2***, the same analytic model that was used for Research Question #1, in which students will be analyzed based on their random assignment to either the

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assess baseline equivalence (and could be used as a key matching variable in a quasi-experimental design). However, it is noted that, based on the WWC Group Design Standards (Version 5.0) (WWC, 2022), high-attrition RCTs do not need to demonstrate baseline equivalence to be rated *Meets WWC Standards With Reservations* when attrition bias is assessed using the optimistic boundary, and the research team expects that attrition bias will be assessed using the optimistic boundary.

ERWC or a traditional English curriculum, will be applied. However, Research Question #2 will look at the impact of being assigned to two years of the ERWC, compared to being assigned to two years of a traditional English curriculum. Students who were randomly assigned to the ERWC in grade 9 for Research Question #1 will continue to be assigned to the ERWC in grade 10 for Research Question #2.[4] Having students be enrolled in the same curriculum for two years will be a prerequisite for a school being allowed to participate in the evaluation,[5] and this requirement will be communicated to the schools during the recruitment phase. The grade 10 evaluation will use the Grade 10 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy ICA (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2022). Because confirmatory Research Questions #1 and #2 both assess ELA achievement through the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy ICA (i.e., the General Literacy Achievement domain from, for example, the WWC *Review Protocol for Adolescent Literacy Intervention* [WWC, 2018], or the Literacy Achievement domain from the WWC *Study Review Protocol* [WWC, 2023]), and because the two samples will consist of the same students (a cohort of students who were in grade 9 during the 2026/27 school year and in grade 10 during the 2027/28 school year), a Benjamini-Hochberg correction (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995) will be applied to account for multiple comparisons.

D.2. Guidance about Effective Strategies Suitable for Replication or Testing

WestEd will document strategies that the FCSS and project partners implement throughout the project and will note how the intervention supported different populations across settings (Hill et al., 2023). This documentation is essential, based on the **Standards for**

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[4] Compliance rates in Fong et al. (2022) were over 90 percent.

[5] Only students who were randomly assigned into treatment or control conditions for grade 9 will be included in the grade 10 analysis.

Excellence in Education Research (SEER) (Institute of Education Sciences, 2022). According to Hoffmann et al. (2014), "Key features [of interventions]—including duration, dose or intensity, mode of delivery, essential processes, and monitoring—can all influence efficacy and replicability but are often missing or poorly described" (p. 2). To ensure that all key features of the intervention are thoroughly documented, WestEd will use the Hoffmann et al. (2014) **Template for Intervention Description and Replication (TIDieR) checklist** as a guide (refer to Table J1 in the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J for the TIDieR checklist for this project). To collect these data, researchers will interview two members of the ERWC leadership team and administer surveys to all participating teachers biannually, to understand how the intervention is being implemented. Researchers will also review all relevant documentation, to determine how much of the intervention was implemented, and analyze school-level data, to report on the population of students being served.

The collection of these data will also highlight successes and challenges and provide guidance on which aspects of the project are **suitable for replication or testing in other settings**. WestEd will determine the extent to which the intervention supported English learners and students with disabilities. In addition, WestEd will **explore the drivers of implementation fidelity and impact**. To do this, WestEd will explore whether fidelity of implementation at the teacher level in grades 9 and 10 is associated with teacher characteristics (years of experience and highest degree) and student characteristics (percent of students who were taught by the teacher who had met or exceeded standards based on the previous year's standardized Smarter Balanced assessment). WestEd will also examine (non-experimentally) whether higher levels of fidelity at the teacher level for grade 9 teachers are correlated with higher student achievement on the Grade 9 Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy ICA. **These are the types of implementation**

research questions recommended by the SEER -- see, for example, Hill et al. (2023).

Thorough documentation of the intervention throughout the life of the project, coupled with analysis and commentary on how the intervention may be suitable in various settings, will allow local decision-makers to determine **whether or not the ERWC can be implemented in their local contexts**. Researchers will report findings to the ERWC Steering Committee annually, to facilitate timely adjustments to the implementation of the ERWC if needed.

D.3. Key Project Components, Mediators, and Outcomes

Research Question #3 pertains to the key components of the ERWC; Research Question #4 is a cost analysis of the ERWC; Research Question #5 analyzes potentially moderating factors; and Research Questions #6 and #7 analyze potentially mediating factors. To better understand the sources of data that will be used to answer each of the research questions of the evaluation, please see Table J2 in the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J.

In accordance with the SEER, the **Logic Model** (Appendix G) describes how components are hypothesized to affect outcomes; see, for example, Blase & Fixsen (2013) and Ferber et al. (2019). As shown in the Logic Model, the key inputs are the curriculum (i.e., the ERWC modules), the pedagogy (e.g., explicitly teaching rhetorical concepts and encouraging students' reflection and self-assessment), and the PL (i.e., ERWC coaching and CoPs). These inputs drive outputs at the student level, which include: (1) students understanding, interpreting, and applying rhetorical analysis to expository and literary texts; (2) students engaging in extended discussions and inquiries; and (3) students exhibiting high engagement and motivation in topics and tasks. Student outputs, in turn, lead to improved measurable student outcomes, including student achievement and motivation.

In order to measure whether the key inputs are implemented with fidelity, *Research*

Question #3 will assess data collected from teachers, coaches, and PL facilitators. This approach was also taken in the previous ERWC evaluations (Fong et al., 2022). To understand whether the ERWC teachers taught enough of the curriculum with fidelity, teachers will be required to complete module surveys, through Qualtrics, after they teach each module. These survey responses will be used to assess the level of ERWC implementation at the teacher level, which can then be aggregated for all participating teachers. As described in Hill et al. (2023), this information allows WestEd to understand the four dimensions of the curriculum: content (what was delivered), quantity (how much was delivered), mode (how it was delivered), and quality (how well it was delivered—that is, whether modifications were made to the curriculum).[6] Following the approach taken by McNaught et al. (2010), the module surveys will display the list of activities for each module and ask teachers to indicate whether each activity was: (1) taught primarily from the curriculum; (2) taught from the curriculum with some modification; (3) taught from alternative sources; or (4) not taught. Teachers will also be asked to provide feedback on which aspects of the module worked well and on how the module could be improved; this feedback will be used to provide formative feedback to the module developers. At the end of the module survey, teachers will be asked to upload one de-identified piece of student work (randomly selected by the WestEd team) for each culminating task in the module. WestEd will review the student work to determine whether the culminating task (1) was taught as prescribed in the curriculum; (2) was taught as prescribed in the curriculum with some modification(s); (3) was taught from alternative sources; or (4) was not taught. For example, if the culminating task prompted students to publish a *poem* based on interviews that students conducted with their

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[6] Each study teacher will receive a stipend for their time participating in the data collection activities of the study.

family members, and the student work collected was an *essay* based on interviews that students

conducted with their family members, the WestEd reviewer would indicate that the student work

was taught as prescribed in the curriculum with some modification(s). Reliability of the reviews

of the student work will be assessed using Cohen's kappa for different coders. To triangulate

data, researchers will then **compare their assessment of student work with what teachers**

reported for the "Preparing Your Draft for Publication" activity (with each having the same

potential four options) and calculate the percentage of survey results that exactly align with

researchers' assessment of student work. This correlation calculation will allow WestEd to

understand the validity of the self-reported teacher module surveys. Collecting student work

will also provide evidence that teachers did, in fact, cover the module. Teachers will also be

asked to submit a survey at the end of the school year, indicating which modules they taught,

which will allow researchers to confirm that teachers submitted surveys for all modules that they

taught. To implement the curriculum with fidelity, ERWC teachers need to teach 11 modules

(two portfolio modules, three mini modules, one book module, one drama module, three issue

modules, and one mid-year assessment module) in each grade and teach at least one activity in

each strand of the ERWC arc in each module (see the "Fidelity of Teaching the Curriculum"

subsection of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J for more details).

WestEd will also analyze CoP and coaching logs submitted through Smartsheet, an online

platform used to securely collect information; teachers must attend at least four of the five yearly

CoP meetings and four of the five yearly coaching sessions in order to have completed the PL

with fidelity. WestEd will tabulate which activities in each module each teacher taught, as well

as how many CoP meetings and coaching sessions each teacher attended, to calculate the fidelity

of implementation at the teacher level. In other words, teachers must teach at least 11 modules

and attend at least four CoP meetings and four coaching sessions each year to have implemented

with fidelity. An acceptable level of implementation at the program level is at least 80 percent of

the teachers having implemented with fidelity. (Information about the assessment of the key

input relating to pedagogy is provided in the following section describing Research Question #6.)

For more information, see the "Fidelity of Teaching the Curriculum" subsection of the "**7.**

Project Evaluation Details" section of Appendix J.

To answer *Research Question #4*, WestEd will conduct a **cost-effectiveness analysis**

that will calculate the costs of the ERWC in comparison to those of a traditional English

curriculum, in relation to the benefits of enrollment in each. The cost-effectiveness analysis will

be conducted similarly to the Fong et al. (2022) evaluation and will follow the SEER. Extensive

details about how the cost-effectiveness analysis will be conducted are provided in the "Cost

Effectiveness" subsection of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J.

To answer *Research Question #5*, WestEd will add interaction terms (see, for example,

Schochet et al., 2014; Hayes, 2013) to the regression equation that was used in Research

Questions #1 and #2. With regard to *Research Question #6*, as noted in the **Logic Model**

(Appendix G), ERWC teachers are guided to explicitly teach rhetorical concepts, encourage

students' reflection and self-assessment, employ an assets-based approach, and foster a

collaborative learning environment, among other things. In order to understand the extent to

which ERWC teachers are using these types of pedagogical practices in the classroom, WestEd

will administer teacher surveys to both ERWC and comparison teachers, asking the teachers

about the extent to which they use various types of pedagogical practices, the extent to which

they agree with various instructional approaches, and their thoughts about their own teaching and

the learning abilities of their students. For examples of the types of questions that will be asked

on the survey, see the "Pedagogical Practices" subsection of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J. Responses of ERWC teachers and comparison English teachers will be compared, and statistical tests (e.g., t-tests and chi-square tests) will be used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences across the two groups.

To answer *Research Question #7*, researchers will use a stratified random sample to select teachers to administer a student survey based on items from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich et al., 1993; Duncan & McKeachie, 2005). WestEd will stratify the sample, for both treatment and control teachers, based on the percentage of students taught who are reading at grade level, the percentage of students taught who are English learner students, and class size. WestEd will send the survey link to the teachers and have the teachers distribute the link to their students. WestEd will survey a sample of at least 250 ERWC students and 250 comparison students in both the grade 9 evaluation year and the grade 10 evaluation year. A calculated average score on the motivation questions (the survey uses a 1–7 Likert scale) will be calculated for each student and then included in an ordinary least squares regression that includes the student's characteristics as well as the indicator for treatment or control condition. Further details can be found in the "Analysis of Fidelity of Implementation Data" subsection of the "**7. Project Evaluation Details**" section of Appendix J.

D.4. Performance Feedback and Assessment of Progress

Key inputs in the ERWC include the curriculum, PL, and pedagogical strategies (see the **Logic Model** in Appendix G). Key outputs include students' high interest and engagement in the curriculum's texts and tasks, students' ability to synthesize multiple sources of information, and students' ability to produce coherent writing appropriate for the intended audience (the last two outputs are assessed through the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy ICA).

Similar to the i3 Validation grant (Fong et al., 2022), **WestEd will collect data throughout the implementation of both the ERWC and the comparison English courses** (Fong et al., 2022). This data collection will include teacher interviews, module surveys completed by teachers, student focus groups, student surveys, CoP logs submitted by site leaders, coaching logs submitted by coaches, and classroom observations. In the i3 Validation grant, WestEd researchers continuously collected and analyzed these data and developed **monthly reports of the findings**, which were delivered to the development and implementation teams at the FCSS and the CSU (see the "**8. i3 Validation Grant Feedback - December 2020 (sample feedback)**" section of Appendix J for an example of a monthly report). These reports provided important performance feedback about which aspects of implementation were going well, struggles that teachers and students were experiencing, teachers' suggestions for improving the PL and curriculum, what additional support/resources the FCSS and the CSU could provide to teachers to improve implementation, and other topics. The reports also noted progress made toward intended outputs, such as increased student engagement and improved student writing.

During the implementation of the curriculum, WestEd will also collect student achievement data, to **assess progress toward the summative outcome measure**. Specifically, WestEd will administer the standardized Language and Vocabulary Use Focused Interim Assessment Block (FIAB) from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2021), at the end of the first term in both grade 9 and grade 10, to both treatment and control teachers. This FIAB consists of 15 questions that assess the following ELA CCSS: Writing-2d, Writing-3d, and Language-6. Data from this standardized assessment will allow WestEd to **understand students' progress toward achieving mastery** on the Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Summative Assessment that they will take at the end of the

school year. Results from the mid-year assessment will be shared with both the FCSS and the

CSU, as well as with the study teachers (treatment and control). As a result, the FCSS and the

CSU will be continuously well informed about the progress of both teachers and students toward

the intended outcomes in the **Logic Model** (Appendix G).

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