

CPEC

Update on CPEC's Improving Teacher Quality Grant Program

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by Marcia Trott

In September 2009, CPEC awarded \$8 million in new ITQ grants to institutions of higher education for the purpose of assisting K-12 teachers to enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms. In addition to the new grants, the ITQ program has 14 individual grants and two master grants supporting 19 sites at various stages in large and small school districts from San Diego to Eureka. Together, the new and currently operating grants serve several thousand teachers and their students. The grants are funded through Title IIA of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide high-quality professional development to K-12 teachers under the guidance of a university or college.

2009 Grant Awards

CPEC held competitions for two separate initiatives for the 2009 grant cycle: Closing the Achievement Gap in Middle Schools and the Teacher-Based Reform (T-BAR) Pilot Program. The T-BAR initiative recipients were announced at CPEC's September 2009 meeting. The Closing the Achievement Gap in Middle Schools initiative will implement professional development plans aimed at closing racial and ethnic achievement gaps in high-need middle schools. CPEC issued news releases for each grant funded in 2009. A ceremony and check presentation was conducted on the University of Southern California campus in November and presentations for other grantees are being planned. The 2009 Closing the Achievement Gap grantees are:

*University of Southern California in partnership with Paramount USD
Middle School Literacy Achievement in Health, Math, and Science*

Faculty from USC's School of Education and Engineering and School of Earth Sciences will work with 36 teachers who will attend teacher academies and participate in a lesson study approach to professional development. Students will participate in newly designed STEM curriculum with the goal of improving their achievement to proficiency. Grant Award: \$993,735

*CSU Northridge in partnership with Los Angeles USD
Improvement through Teacher Empowerment*

Faculty from the School of Secondary Education and the College of Science and Mathematics will work with 110 teachers participating in summer school math and language arts intervention classes. These classes will also serve as learning environments for teachers to try out new practices developed each day during collaborative planning time and sustained collaboration. Grant Award: \$1,000,000

*University of the Pacific in partnership with Marysville USD
Reading Plus Writing Equals Science Success*

Faculty from the School of Education and the Physics Department will work with 30 teachers participating in more than 80 hours of professional learning through pedagogy and content knowledge. Grant Award: \$999,820

UCLA in partnership with Los Angeles USD

Getting to the Core of the Content: Organizing Learning to Close the Gap

Faculty from the School of Education and Information Studies and the Division of Social Sciences will work with 62 teachers in a variety of professional development structures including site and off-site meetings, lesson study, classroom observations and coaching. An intensive summer institute will provide teachers with the opportunity to learn content and strategies. Grant Award: \$1,000,952

CSU Sacramento in partnership with Sacramento City USD

Science, Math, Assessment, and Learner Development Institute

Faculty from the College of Education and the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics will work with 40 teachers participating in a professional development model involving teacher action research related to the achievement gap in their classroom or at their school. Grant Award: \$986,120

UC Riverside in partnership with San Bernardino City USD

Inland Area TEAMS (Teaching Excellence and Achievement in Mathematics and Science) Project

Through a lesson study intervention, faculty from the UCR School of Education and the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and CSU San Bernardino's College of Natural Sciences will team with 40 teachers who will be provided summer institutes and site-based, grade specific activities during the academic year. Grant Award: \$999,033

Preliminary Research Findings from the 2005 Grants

Seven Academic Literacy in Secondary Schools projects, funded in 2005, are finalizing their data analysis and research reports. The research directors for each project reported their initial findings at CPEC's Scientifically Based Research Conference held at UC Irvine in September 2009. These are the first grants awarded after the Eisenhower program that were required to conduct rigorous, scientifically based evaluation research on the impact of their projects. Some preliminary research findings are shown on the next page.

Ongoing Activities

The ITQ Program is completing the organizational aspects of the after-grant processes and scheduling monitoring visits with the current projects. Staff are concentrating on the following activities this quarter:

- *Annual project directors' meeting in Los Angeles, January 21–22, 2010.* The meeting will bring together university and local education agency directors as well as the research directors for all current ITQ projects.
- *2010 Request for Proposals.* This will include a second T-BAR competition to fund the two regions that did not receive grants: South (Orange, Riverside, San Diego, Imperial counties) and Inland (the remaining 33 counties not covered by the Coast and Los Angeles County regions).

Preliminary Research Findings Reported by Grantees

Content Academic Language Literacy Institute (CALLI) — CSU Bakersfield/Delano JUSD

Findings showed a statistically significant link between the teacher professional development intervention in academic language in math and science. Other data show that many teachers gained greater confidence and focus on what constitutes effective teaching in the context of specific state standards and NCLB expectations and requirements. Teachers learned to more effectively connect standards to classroom teaching practices.

Developing Rigorous Education in the Arts to Motivate Students (DREAMS)

CSU San Bernardino/San Bernardino City USD and other districts

At the end of the professional development, visual and performing arts teachers in all cohorts referred to academic literacy to a much greater degree in terms of using functional communication skills.

60–75% of teachers stated that the professional development was “extremely effective” in helping them learn to consider academic literacy levels when creating lessons, to incorporate more critical thinking and conceptual application in assignments, and to consider academic language use when assessing student mastery of standards.

Redwood Area Academic Literacy Initiative (RAALI) — Humboldt State University/Konocti USD

Over three-quarters of the RAALI teachers indicated that their understanding of academic literacy changed since the beginning of the institute. The project reported that 100% of RAALI participants reported using academic literacy strategies in their content area at least some of the time.

Reading, Thinking and Writing in History and Science — UC Davis/Twin Rivers JUHSD

Both the science and the history programs benefited students, although to different degrees. Grant JUHSD and three other districts merged in July 2008 to form Twin Rivers JUHSD, and shifts in personnel created challenges in maintaining the continuity of knowledge and working relationships among the grant partners.

Accelerating Academic Literacy: A Cognitive Strategies Approach to Reading and Writing Instruction — UC Irvine/Lynwood USD and Paramount USD

In both districts, students' scores increased on the English Language Arts portion of the California High School Exit Exam. The 10th grade combined CAHSEE pass rate for Paramount increased from 70% in 2005–2006 to 72% in 2008–2009. In Lynwood, the pass rate went from 56% in 2005–2006 to 66% in 2008–2009.

Literacy in the History Classroom — UC Irvine/Santa Ana USD and Orange USD

Teachers in the program improved their academic literacy expertise in the content area of History. Teachers have implemented teaching strategies and report that the strategies have had a positive effect on students.

7th grade experimental students did not perform better than comparison-group students in the area of content-based academic literacy. 10th-grade experimental students have performed better than comparison group students in the area of content-based academic literacy.

Access to the Core: Support for Secondary English Language Learners

UC San Diego/LAUSD Local District 6

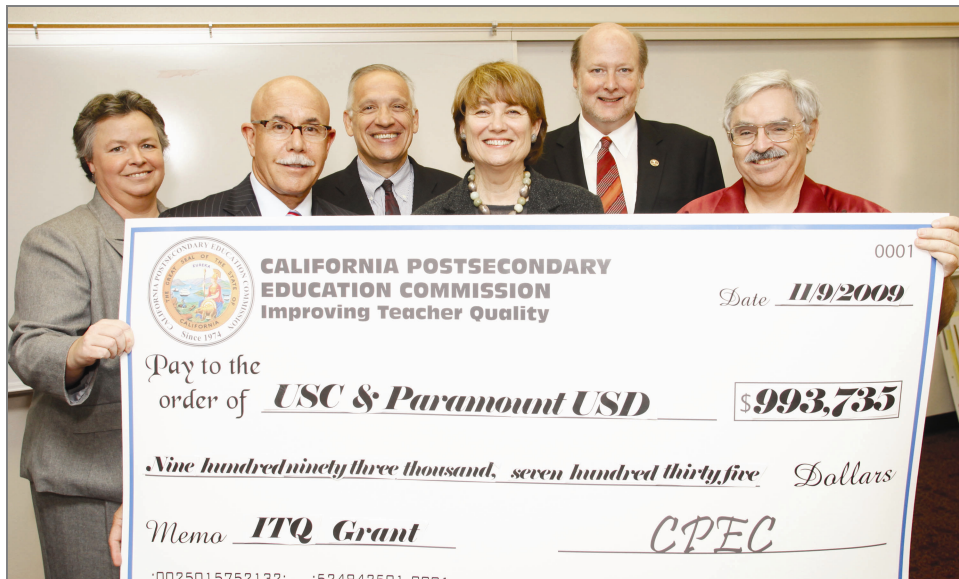
Students made better progress in learning English than similar students across the district. District 6 maintained its high reclassification rate in 2008–2009, continuing to lead LAUSD.

Check Presentation at USC and Recent Media Coverage

ITQ Administrator Marcia Trott and Commission Chair John Perez made an official check presentation on November 9 — with a check for \$993,735 — to educators at the USC Rossier School of Education, the Viterbi School of Engineering, and USC College.

Similar presentations are being arranged at other universities that received awards this year. Ms. Trott and her staff sent out news releases and connected with public information officers and student journalists. Student newspapers at each campus have published items about the ITQ grants. Public information offices at UCLA, UC Riverside, and CSU Northridge sent out media alerts through their websites. Local community newspapers have also covered the story.

At a recent meeting of 200 campus representatives of community outreach organizations, UCLA Chancellor Gene D. Block announced the ITQ Teacher-Based Reform grant opportunity is soon to be available for teachers in Los Angeles County.



From left, ITQ administrator Marcia Trott, USC Rossier Dean Karen Symms Gallagher, USC Viterbi Dean Yannis C. Yortsos, professor Gisele Ragusa, USC College Dean Howard Gillman and CPEC chair John Perez
Photo by Steve Cohn, USC

More details on the ITQ program are available at
www.cpec.ca.gov/federalprograms/teacherquality.asp