



Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation

4545 North Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 275

Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3418

(405) 525-2612 Fax (405) 525-0373 Email octp@octp.org

October 18, 2004

Dr. Bill Blokker, Ed.D.
President, Literacy First
14216 47th Drive SE
Snohomish, Wa. 98296

Dear Dr. Blokker:

Please allow this letter to serve as a letter of recommendation for "Literacy First" which is the reading professional development model used by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to meet the requirements of the *Reading Sufficiency Act* passed in 1997. Your professional development model has impacted the teaching of reading of over 14,000 K-6 elementary teachers since implementation in early 1998.

As this training has evolved, you and your staff have worked closely with the Commission as we developed the model to fit our state. This included the techniques and strategies (Phase I & II), the administrator training module (Phase III), and Phase IV which added a Literacy Reading Specialist to work with individual schools that had their principal and at least 80% of their teachers trained. You have provided trainers to us that have always been well prepared and knowledgeable in quality professional development techniques.

During the five year period 1998-2003, Literacy First schools increased an average of 9% on third grade reading scores compared to a 3% state increase and a 1% increase of comparable schools. Our State Legislature, even during lean budget years, has continued to provide funding for the administration of Literacy First. I believe this speaks well for you and your staff. Teachers have indicated to our external evaluators, *Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL)*, that their knowledge and skills have increased significantly in every area of reading as a result of Literacy First training.

Literacy First is scientifically research based professional development, and I would highly recommend it to any state considering quality professional development in reading to improve learning for their children.

Sincerely,

Ted Gillispie, Executive Director