

# SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

April 2025

Hello, ELA Colleagues!

Welcome to National Poetry Month! I'm enjoying the poem-a-day that I'm receiving in my inbox from the Academy of American Poets. Learn more about current Utah's Poet Laureate, Lisa Bickmore or explore the "Mapping Literary Utah" project from former Utah Poet Laureate, Paisley Rekdal, and learn about writers from your region of the state. Happy reading!

Naomi Watkins  
USBE Secondary ELA Specialist  
naomi.watkins@schools.utah.gov

## I'M CURRENTLY ENJOYING:

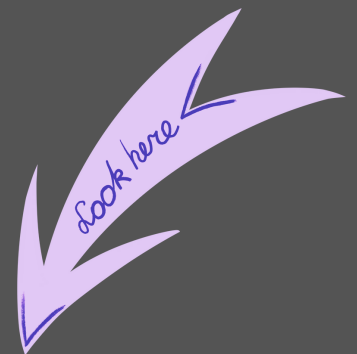
- 1984 by George Orwell



## P-12 ELA STANDARDS RESOURCES

Link to resource folder which includes:

- Secondary ELA Webinars from 2023-24 – **you can still view them!**
- **NEW!!!** 2024-25 Secondary ELA Webinars recordings & resources
- Best Practices in Secondary ELA – **UPDATED**
- FAQs
- Reading Strand Standards Breakdown
- Speech Progression Chart
- Slides from summer 2023 professional learning
- Resources shared by other districts (e.g., vertical alignment)
- ACT Crosswalk
- Grades 6 - 12 Core Guides
- Formative Assessment Process Toolkit
- Bringing Grammar and Language to Life Through Evidence-Based Practices (USBE guidance document written by Dr. Deborah Dean)
- **NEW!!!** Disciplinary Literacy in Utah Schools – USBE Guidance
- **NEW!!!** USBE Dyslexia Handbook – updated and revised



\*\*Please note: LEAs have the duty to select instructional materials that best correlate to the core standards for Utah public schools and graduation requirements. (UCA 53G-4-402(1(a))). Posting of these resources by USBE staff curriculum content specialists does not imply the resources have received official endorsement of the State Board. Educators are responsible to ensure use of these materials complies with LEA policies and directives.

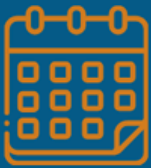


Utah State Board of Education

# SECONDARY ELA WEBINAR



## Playful Poetry



APRIL 24, 2025

04.00 PM – 05.00 PM MDT

Discover how to make poetry engaging and accessible all year long. In this interactive webinar, explore creative strategies like ekphrastic responses, Venn diagram structures, and a recitation contest. Through playful reading and writing activities, you'll gain practical tools to inspire students and bring poetry to life in your classroom.



**JASON STEPHENSON, CO-DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, RED DIRT POETRY**

[REGISTER NOW](#)



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## 2024–25 SECONDARY ELA PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINAR SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Presenter
Thurs, Oct. 10	Writer's Craft	Dr. Deborah Dean
Wed, Nov. 13	Effective Writing Assignments	Dr. Amber Jensen & ELA educator
Mon, Dec. 16	AI in Secondary ELA	Matt Winters
Wed, Jan. 15	Explicit Writing Instruction	Dr. Naomi Watkins
Mon, Feb. 10	Effective Writing Assessments	Dr. Amber Jensen & Megan Wight
Thurs, March 13	Morphology	Katie Wilburn, Univ. of Virginia
Thurs, April 24	Playful Poetry	Jason Stephenson, Red Dirt Poetry
Tues, May 6	Reflection Writing	Dr. Amber Jensen & ELA educator

If you are interested in receiving 0.5 USBE credits for your participation in the 2024–25 Secondary ELA Professional Learning Webinars, you will need to enroll in the Canvas course to complete the following tasks:

- Attend or view 7 webinars
- Complete reflections for the 7 webinars you attend or view
- Provide evidence of implementation of at least one instructional practice with students or working with educators

There will be a total of 8 webinars. You select the 7 webinars that are most of interest or applicable to you. More information about what these tasks entail and how to submit this work will be provided within the Canvas course. You will have until December 31, 2025 to complete all of the required work to receive credit.



**REGISTER NOW**

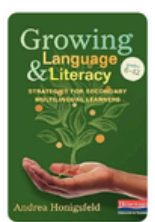
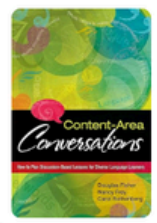


# Transforming Instruction for Multilingual Learners IN SECONDARY ELA

Select one of five books to enhance your secondary ELA instruction, focusing on evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for MLLs. Learn alongside your PLC, department, or a chosen colleague in an asynchronous book study!  
**Earn 0.5 USBE credit | Free digital book copy**



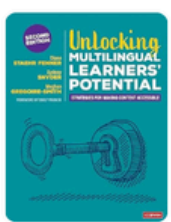
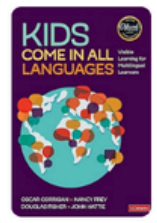
**CONTENT-AREA CONVERSATIONS:** How to Plan Discussion-Based Lessons for Diverse Language Learners by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, Carol Rothenberg



**GROWING LANGUAGE & LITERACY:** Strategies for Secondary Multilingual Learners by Andrea Hongisfeld



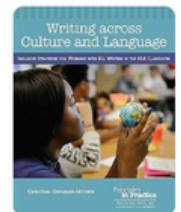
**KIDS COME IN ALL LANGUAGES:** Visible Learning for Multilingual Learners by Oscar Corrigan, Nancy Frey, Douglas Fisher, John Hattie



**UNLOCKING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS' POTENTIAL:** Strategies for Making Content Accessible by Diane Staehr Fenner, Sydney Snyder, Meghan Gregoire-Smith



**WRITING ACROSS CULTURE & LANGUAGE:** Inclusive Strategies for Working with ELL Writers in the ELA Classroom by Christina Ortmeier-Hooper



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## Student Reporting Labs Opportunities

This June and July PBS News Student Reporting Labs will host hands-on training for high school students and teachers. The PBS News SRL Summer Academy is a free, all-expenses paid week of journalism training and hands-on reporting experience with the PBS News Student Reporting Labs staff. This year's program will be held just outside of Washington D.C. from June 22-28. All expenses are covered for students, including travel, lodging, and more. [Learn more and apply here](#) by April 27.

Educators are invited July 25-27 for an immersive weekend at WETA/PBS News headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, where they will explore video and audio journalism tactics, tools, and resources. Space is limited for this free professional development opportunity. [Learn more and register here](#).



## Teaching Foundational Skills to Adolescent Readers

Presented by [Douglas Fisher](#), [Nancy Frey](#), [Kierstan Barbee](#), [Sarah Ortega](#) and [Aida Allen-Rotell](#)

Date: Monday, April 14, 2025 - 3:30PM PT

Duration: 60 minutes

[REGISTER NOW](#)

It's never too late to build the skills necessary to find joy in reading and learning. Armed with equity, empathy, evidence-based research and practical application, literacy experts Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey along with Kierstan Barbee, Sarah Ortega, and Aida Rotell will address this critical need head on, and provide classroom practices teachers can use with the whole class or with small groups to integrate reading support seamlessly with grade-level content learning.

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## AMERICA'S *Field Trip*

### AMERICA 250 CELEBRATION

In 2026, the United States will mark our Semiquincentennial: the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Today's young people are the leaders, innovators, and thinkers who will shape the next 250 years — and it's important their voices are heard as we commemorate this historic milestone.

America's Field Trip is a contest that invites students across the country in grades 3–12 to be part of America's 250th anniversary by sharing their perspectives on what America means to them — with the opportunity to earn an unforgettable field trip experience at some of the nation's most iconic historic and cultural landmarks. Students are asked to submit writing or original artwork in response to the contest's prompt: "What does America mean to you?"

**Submissions will be accepted until Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. ET.**



LEARN MORE

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**BETTER DAYS**  
*utahwomenshistory.org*

[utahwomenshistory.org](http://utahwomenshistory.org) has a variety of tools for educators about Utah's suffrage story and trailblazing women throughout Utah history. Check out the lesson plans, primary source sets, bios, activities, or book recommendations, for great ways to bring Utah women's perspectives and experiences into your classroom.

## *Dear Poet 2025*

Engage directly with award-winning poets as part of National Poetry Month.

Every National Poetry Month Academy of American Poets present Dear Poet, a multimedia education project that invites young people in grades five through twelve to write letters in response to poems written and read by award-winning poets.

The submission period for Dear Poet 2025 is now **open until April 24, 2025**.

Every letter will be read by a team of volunteers, and all students can expect a general response from the poet to whom they wrote, as well as a certificate honoring their work. Five letters to each of our nine participating poets will be selected at the end of National Poetry Month, and the poets will write a personalized response to the selected student letters. The letters will be published in a shareable, PDF booklet during the summer.

LEARN MORE >

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## WASATCH READING SUMMIT SPRING SEMINAR

APRIL 30TH  
10AM-2:30PM

VIRTUAL  
EVENT  
JUST \$49



REGISTER



Molly Ness,  
PhD

[Dirigo  
Literacy](#)



Nicole Rizzo  
M.ED

[Lumina  
Learning](#)

Decoding Dyslexia Utah is hosting this professional development conference that focuses on the best practices based on the Science of Reading. We will be hearing from Molly Ness & Nicole Rizzo.



[decodingdyslexiautah.org](http://decodingdyslexiautah.org)

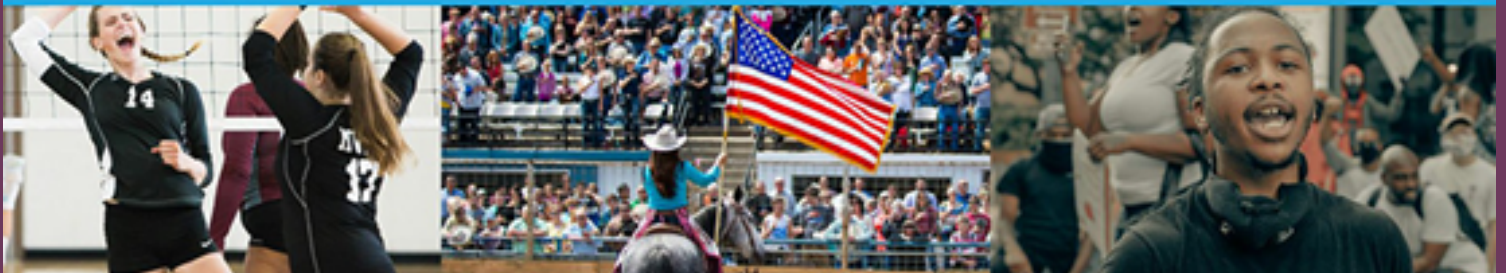


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## Our Towns, Our Stories



With thanks to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Writing Project (NWP) makes public [Our Towns, Our Stories](#), a COPPA-compliant publication website for teachers who want to provide their students an opportunity to try their hand at journalistic writing about the place they call home. [Teachers can register](#) their classrooms or other groups of students who can then share stories that matter to them and their communities using journalistic tools like investigation, documenting, publishing, and circulating content and media. The website also contains learning modules to help teachers (or independently working students) learn such forms as the profile essay, the op-ed, the open letter, and more.

## American Library Association announces 2025 Youth Media Award winners



Check out the most recent winners of the Newbery, Belpré, Printz awards...and more!

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## **2025 BELFER NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION**

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
Free, Virtual Conference for Educators in June

Registration is open for the [2025 Belfer National Conference for Holocaust Education](#), taking place June 23-25. At this free, virtual professional learning conference, educators will explore the latest practices in accurate, meaningful teaching about the Holocaust with Museum historians and educators. Find new sessions that demonstrate how to integrate Holocaust history into both ELA and social studies instruction.



**REGISTER NOW**

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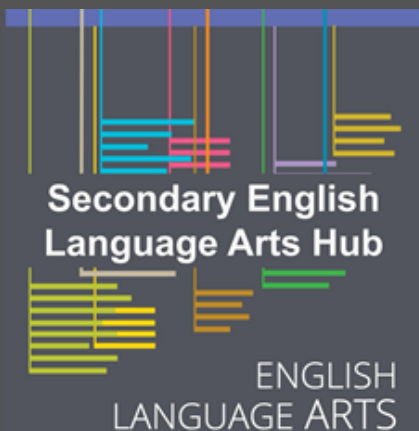
## UTAH FILM FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS

Calling all content creators and future filmmakers! Tumbleweeds workshops give kids the tools to tell great stories and up their filmmaking game! Our workshops will feature filmmaking and camera use, editing, green screen, stop motion animation, and MORE! These hands-on workshops will have your kids making awesome content they can share with their friends, family and beyond.

[LEARN MORE](#)



## UEN SECONDARY ELA MEDIA HUB



UEN has curated a hub for secondary ELA resources. Phase 1 is now live, and we will be continuing to evaluate and add resources. If you have quality online resources that you frequently use, feel free to send them my way so we can get them on the hub.



[LEARN MORE](#)



# BOOK LOVE

F O U N D A T I O N

The Book Love Foundation seeks teachers who demonstrate a passion for promoting a hunger for books. These teachers recognize the diversity of every class of readers, and they challenge each student to build an independent reading life of increasing depth and joy. Teachers who apply for a Book Love Foundation grant must demonstrate that they are already committed to the support of readers through current classroom practices such as maintaining access to a range of books, conferring regularly and purposefully to understand and support students' changing needs, and sharing their own contagious passion for reading inside and outside of their classroom. Read about the requirements for a grant, and then apply for either a classroom library or book clubs.



# The Grand Theatre

## School Outreach

### Jesus Christ Superstar

February 22 - March 22, 2025  
Musical | Thursday – Saturday

This rock opera tells the story of the last seven days of Jesus' life, detailing friendship, loyalty, and ultimate betrayal.



### Dreamgirls

May 21 - June 14, 2025  
Musical | Thursday – Saturday

Three talented young Black women go from seedy shows to stardom, where they face love, betrayal, and the dangers of ambition.



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The Grand Theatre is eager to bring theatre to each new generation, so we offer free tickets to 7-12th grade students, in addition to up to 3 half-price tickets to each student per show. Don't miss the (free!) opportunity to see local theatre by local artists! Contact Ellie Otis at [eotis2@slcc.edu](mailto:eotis2@slcc.edu) to set up a free showing for students!

## TeachingBooks is...

a dynamic, PreK–12 a dynamic collection of resources that strives to deepen understanding, engagement and joy of the books they are reading.. With hundreds of thousands of engaging video, audio, and online resources, TeachingBooks brings to life the books that are enjoyed in your community.

### Access Directions

1. Go to [www.TeachingBooks.net/Utah](http://www.TeachingBooks.net/Utah)
2. Sign in with your school email address
3. Start exploring and enjoy!

To explore without logging in, visit <https://onlinelibrary.uen.org/>



For assistance, please email [accounts@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:accounts@TeachingBooks.net) or call 216-573-6886 (press 2).



Image courtesy of Bryan Collier

## Exploration Suggestions



**Search** for resources about a book, author/illustrator, or subject, using the search box on the top of the screen.



**Explore** the resources, including Meet-the-Author interviews, Read-along Book Recordings, Leveled Lesson Plans, Video Book Trailers, Literature-based Vocabulary Lists, and more.



**Browse** the books, authors, lists, series, awards, and collections. Highlights include...

- Grade Level, Genre, and Cultural Area exploration.
- Diverse Books Collection
- Meet-the-Author and Illustrator Original Resource Collection



**Share** tools provide immediate access to the book and author resources of your choice. No sign-in required.

Distribute via...

- QR Code Printables
- Any Digital Platform



## Technological Highlights



### Any Device

including phones, tablets, and computers, deliver literacy connections to everyone in your community.



### Home Screen Button

for Apple and Android devices includes scanning a barcode to immediately have resources for the book in your hand!



### Integration

into Clever, Canvas, Classlink, Google Classroom, and more.



### Sharing tools

so that teachers, students, administrators, and families can seamlessly learn about and access materials via email, text, QR code flyers, and more.

## Utah TeachingBooks Webinars

**Visit** <https://www.uen.org/uosl/webinar-archive.shtml> to access current webinars and trainings.

Activities & Lessons



Book Readings



Book Trailers



Games



TeachingBooks®  
Where books come to life

Author Interviews



Want to learn more?

[TeachingBooks.net/QuickStart](https://TeachingBooks.net/QuickStart)



Questions?

800-596-0710

[accounts@TeachingBooks.net](mailto:accounts@TeachingBooks.net)

[TeachingBooks.net/Help](https://TeachingBooks.net/Help)

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## TEACHING SHAKESPEARE WITH UTAH SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Have you ever felt completely lost trying to understand Shakespeare? Maybe you've sat through a performance feeling bewildered, or stumbled over the language while reading one of his plays. You're not alone! Many people find Shakespeare's works challenging, but the problem isn't Shakespeare himself – it's how he's often taught. The Utah Shakespeare Festival believes everyone can enjoy and appreciate the Bard, and their "Teaching Shakespeare" course can help you unlock the magic for yourself and your students. This immersive, four-day course, offered in beautiful Cedar City, Utah, provides practical and engaging strategies to make Shakespeare accessible and exciting.

What can you expect?

- Earn college credit: This course offers three university credits, enhancing your professional development.
- Interactive learning: Engage in hands-on activities and exercises that demystify Shakespeare's language and bring his works to life.
- Behind-the-scenes access: Go beyond the stage with tours and interactions with Festival company members, gaining unique insights into the world of Shakespearean theater.
- Ready-to-use resources: Receive lesson plans, handouts, and assessments designed for immediate classroom application.
- Experience the magic: Your course fee includes tickets to four Utah Shakespeare Festival plays, allowing you to experience Shakespeare's genius firsthand.

If you're looking to deepen your understanding of Shakespeare and discover innovative ways to share his brilliance with your students, this course is for you. Summer in Cedar City is truly enchanting, offering a perfect escape to learn, grow, and be inspired.

Interested in other professional development opportunities at the Utah Shakespeare Festival? Visit the [USF Education webpage](#), email [educationprograms@bard.org](mailto:educationprograms@bard.org) for general information, or contact "Teaching Shakespeare" instructor Shawnda Moss directly at [bsmossfam@gmail.com](mailto:bsmossfam@gmail.com) with specific questions.

LEARN MORE



# READY TO ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

## Master's of Education (M.Ed) in Literacy Education AND Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

Literacy Education at the University of Utah develops literacy professionals and leaders in a variety of educational settings

Contact Us:  
Program Director, Dr. Claire Son  
[literacy@utah.edu](mailto:literacy@utah.edu)

### Program Overview

Our program provides research-based professional education, dedicated to develop exemplary practitioners and leaders in the field of literacy. We are committed to support research-informed teaching practices to ensure literacy learning for all students.

Students can take individual endorsement courses, which can count toward a master's degree in literacy education (33 credits).



### Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

We offer USBE approved courses to fulfill all ten competency areas for Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement.

- (Area 1) EDPS 6711-030 Foundations of Literacy
- (Area 2) EDPS 6631-030 Assessment and Intervention
- (Area 3) EDPS 6126-030 Content Area Literacy Instruction
- (Areas 4,5,6) EDPS 6713-030 Literacy Acquisition
- (Area 7) EDPS 6840-030 Vocabulary
- (Area 8) EDPS 6714-030 Comprehension
- (Area 9) EDPS 6130-030 Writing
- (Area 10) EDPS 6124-030 Children & Adolescent Literature in the School

### A Different Kind of Program

Our courses are fully online with summer and evening classes to accommodate a working schedule of professionals, including:

- PreK-12 educators
- Literacy specialists
- Reading coaches
- School media/library specialists
- Special education teachers
- School administrators

Our core courses are offered at a significantly reduced rate for educators. Merit-based scholarships are available for master's students.

With rolling admission, you can start your study during any semester.





# University of Utah Reading Clinic AND Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

The UURC was established in 1999 by the Utah Legislature to serve K-12 educators, students and families.

Contact:  
Director, Dr. Kelly C. Patrick  
[uurc@utah.edu](mailto:uurc@utah.edu)

## Overview

The UURC provides evidence-based professional learning experiences for Utah educators seeking to develop best practices in literacy instruction.

Educators can participate in a **school-based clinical practica** or **enroll in select individual endorsement courses** (applicable toward a Master's degree in Literacy Education)

## Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

We offer USBE approved **certificates** and **courses** to fulfill 9 of 10 competency areas for the Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement.

Requirement Area 2: Assessment Informed Instruction

Tier I Word Study, Higher Steps<sup>SM</sup>, WRS<sup>®</sup> Lvl 1

Requirement Area 3: Planning & Differentiated Instruction

Tier I Fluency/Comp., Higher Steps<sup>SM</sup>, WRS<sup>®</sup> Lvl 1

Requirement Area 4-5: PA and Phonics Tier I

Word Rec/Fluency, Higher Steps<sup>SM</sup>, WRS<sup>®</sup> Lvl 1

Requirement Area 6-8: Fluency/Vocab./Comp.

Tier I Fluency/Comp., Higher Steps<sup>SM</sup>, WRS<sup>®</sup> Lvl 1

Requirement Area 9: Writing

Tier I Writing about Challenging Text

Requirement Area 10: Motivation & Engagement

Tier I Text, Writing about Challenging Text

## Supported hands-on learning

**Certificate Practica** can be scheduled at Utah schools, during school hours and include:

- clinical trainings with modeling and lesson planning support
- 1:1 feedback sessions with UURC Intervention Specialist
- fulfill 9 of 10 competencies
- graduate credit included for successful completion

### Online Courses:

- available in summer and evenings
- significantly reduced rate



**UNIVERSITY OF UTAH READING CLINIC**  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



## Earn your Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement

The School of Teacher Education and Leadership is now offering 5 courses that will count towards a Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement through the Utah State Board of Education. Join us and finish your endorsement in just 3 semesters! This sequence of endorsement courses can be started during any semester and will be offered yearly. For more information on literacy courses at USU, contact Dr. Marla Robertson: [marla.robertson@usu.edu](mailto:marla.robertson@usu.edu).

All courses will be offered either online or through synchronous broadcast over Zoom. Students are not required to attend through a USU campus.

### Courses (3 credits each):

- TEAL 5380 Effective Writing Instruction
- TEAL 5320 Foundations of Literacy\*
- TEAL 6350 Literacy Assessment and Intervention
- TEAL 6340 Adolescent Literacy Development and Engagement
- TEAL 6310 Multi-Component Literacy Instruction and Interventions

*\*If you have completed LETRS training, you can be exempt from taking TEAL 5320.*

These courses can also count towards a Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction at USU. To learn more about graduate programs visit [cehs.usu.edu/teal/graduate/master-of-ed](https://cehs.usu.edu/teal/graduate/master-of-ed) or contact Dr. Max Longhurst: [max.longhurst@usu.edu](mailto:max.longhurst@usu.edu).

To view the Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement application scan the QR code or visit [bit.ly/SIL-endorsementapplication](https://bit.ly/SIL-endorsementapplication)



Emma Eccles Jones  
College of Education & Human Services  
UtahStateUniversity

