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To: Erasmus+ Agency Poland

I confirm that faculty at the University of California San Diego actively participated in the implementation of the “ALPHABETTER - learning tools for preventing functional and secondary illiteracy” project (2021-1-PL01-KA220-ADU-000026547). We engaged in the following activities:

- Participated in online project meetings;
- Visited WSB University in March 2022 to meet with project partners and learn about their organizations;
- Coordinated ALPHABETTER project partner visit to the University of California San Diego to learn about evidence-based, community-oriented interventions for preventing functional and secondary illiteracy;
- Provided guidance to project partners as they developed ALPHABETTER intellectual outputs and consulted on their implementation.

The University of California San Diego is one of the leading research centers in this field globally and offers many resources and tools to support literacy in migrant communities. Over the last decade, I have personally engaged in numerous applied research projects in the field of non-vocational adult education that examine bilingual education program implementation and the preparation of teachers of multilingual learners.

The purpose of the ALPHABETTER project was to develop and test a set of tools to support the inclusion of adults who are functionally illiterate. An adult who is functionally illiterate has difficulty engaging in activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in their community and/or is necessary for their own development. Although the project team originally envisioned creating a common tool, any tool addressing functional illiteracy must be adapted to the demands of the context and the needs of the community. Thus, the ALPHABETTER project team adopted an expansive, multi-dimensional view of literacy to include diverse forms of basic literacies, including civic, financial, professional, and legal.

Just as literacy demands vary by context, so do a community's demographic makeup and literacy needs overall. Given these variations, ALPHABETTER partners opted to design and implement a set of tools and then adapt them around the specific needs of their communities. Based on my guidance, which was grounded in empirical research on literacy development in migrant communities, each partner identified needs through a community engagement process involving focus groups with members of the target populations identified; then, they developed a unique set of adaptations of universal tools to support the specific functional literacy needs identified.

The project team's visit to the University of California San Diego afforded an opportunity to learn about our innovative Community-Based Literacy Equity Design Framework and see specific examples of how the framework is enacted in different communities and for different purposes (i.e., forms of literacy). The team then used this framework and examples to develop tools to support individuals in their specific contexts who are affected by functional illiteracy. Thus, while the tools developed looked different for each partner, they were grounded in a common evidence-based framework designed at the University of California San Diego.

Based on my expertise and experience, the educational materials developed by the project team meet the objectives and goals outlined in the application both in terms of content and expected format. We are confident that the results of the ALPHABETTER project both Project Result 1 and Project Result 2 can be adapted for similar contexts and applied broadly by community members and educators alike.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Hopkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'H'.

Megan Hopkins, PhD
Professor and Chair, Department of Education Studies