



Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center

VOL. 6, NO. 4
FALL
2011

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The No Child Left Behind Waiver Season

Welcome to our last issue of the e-newsletter in 2011! As always, we're pleased to bring you the most recent updates from our collaborative work with the states and timely information on current education issues.

This issue also includes a [video welcome message](#) for our readers! (View [video transcript](#).)



At the center of this issue is an insightful feature article on No Child Left Behind waivers (page 5). A few states, including Indiana, have submitted their applications with the November deadline, and many others (including Michigan and Ohio) are gearing up to apply in February. We hope that this issue will help you make informed decisions regarding your application process.

Happy Holidays!

Barbara Youngren, Director
Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center
and Great Lakes East staff members

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News for the Region
A quarterly e-newsletter for educators in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio

Highlights of the Quarter

Five States Working Together on Common Core State Standards Implementation

By Beth Ratway, Senior Consultant,
Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center



Many states are currently addressing the adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards. State education agencies from different states are often responsible for conducting similar work related to common issues. However, each state often accomplishes this work on its own, without the benefit of shared knowledge and experience from its neighbors. In the past, many organizations have hosted and facilitated meetings and conferences to help states share knowledge and ideas, but these efforts have not been sustained beyond a single event or brief series of events.

In January 2011, state staff from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin decided it would be beneficial to continue regular, ongoing work on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. These states have formed the Midwest Common Core Consortium, with support from Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West. The consortium creates an avenue for the five states to work together to share resources, knowledge, and promising practices to improve implementation of the standards across the region. The work of the consortium is focused on the areas of leadership, communication, alignment, and teaching and learning. Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West staff facilitate workgroups on each of these areas to discuss progress toward implementation, issues, and possible solutions and to share resources.

The consortium has seen early impact with the development of the [College and Career Readiness bridge visual](#), describing the components and essential participants in creating a continuous and comprehensive system that leads to college and career readiness. The consortium has also modified a document created by the states to “frame the conversation” and developed a planning and communication tool ([A Communication and Timeline Map](#)) that will facilitate state implementation of the new standards.

Great Lakes East, in collaboration with Great Lakes West, plans to create five opportunities to bring the consortium together over the course of 2012. State teams will get together face to face once every other month from January through September. Each meeting will focus on helping states collaborate to create specific deliverables and foster continued partnerships that will help build their capacity and provide systemic support for state and district implementation of the Common Core State Standards. The following topics will be covered: partnering with postsecondary institutions; creating professional development plans; integrating the work of the Common Core State Standards with other initiatives like response to intervention; describing research-based instructional strategies to help teachers envision what high-quality, standards-based instruction looks like in practice; and designing flexible, ongoing, and innovative assessment systems that use data to inform and improve teaching and learning.

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REL Midwest Update

By Marianne Kroeger, Senior Communications Specialist, REL Midwest

Upcoming Events Focus on School Improvement, Adolescent Literacy, Assessment, and Charter Schools

REL Midwest's Connecting Research to Practice events provide opportunities for educators to engage with researchers and each other on improving practice and closing achievement gaps. There are no registration fees, and participants must make their own travel arrangements. Event announcements, updates, and registration details are posted on the [REL Midwest website](#). Plan now to attend.

December 2, 2011, and December 9, 2011—Webinars, 2:00–3:15 p.m. (Central Time)

Findings From Recent Rigorous Adolescent Literacy Studies. REL Midwest, in collaboration with REL Northwest, will offer a two-part webinar series for practitioners involved in the field of adolescent literacy. The goals of the series are to promote awareness of the key findings from recent IES-sponsored randomized controlled trial studies of adolescent literacy programs and to discuss the implications of these studies with practitioners who are responsible for the planning, implementation, or support of adolescent literacy initiatives. Featured are William Corrin, Ph.D., deputy director, K–12 Education Policy Area at MDRC; Kathryn Drummond, Ph.D., director, Education Policy Improvement Center; Jim Lindsay, Ph.D., senior researcher, REL Midwest; Vicki Nishioka, Ph.D., senior research associate, Education Northwest; and Richard Smiley, Ph.D., senior research advisor, Education Northwest.

December 6, 2011—Rosemont, Illinois

Supporting Research-Based Formative Assessment in Schools and Classrooms. This event will provide district teams from across the region with the opportunity to examine the practice of research-based formative assessment. Featured are Margaret Heritage, assistant director for professional development, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing, and W. James Popham, Ed.D., professor emeritus, UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies.

December 12, 2011—Webinar, 1:00–2:15 p.m. (Central Time)

Findings From Recent Rigorous Benchmark Assessment Studies. The overall goals of this event are to promote awareness of the key findings from recent studies sponsored by IES on the use of standardized benchmark assessments and to discuss the implications of these studies with school and district leaders who are responsible for the planning, implementation, or support of benchmark assessments and the training of teachers. Featured are "A Multistate District-Level Cluster Randomized Trial of the Impact of Data-Driven Reform on Reading and Mathematics Achievement," presented by Geoffrey Borman, Ph.D., professor of education and sociology, University of Wisconsin–Madison; "Measuring How Benchmark Assessments Affect Student Achievement," presented by Susan Henderson, Ph.D., senior research associate, WestEd; and, pending approval from IES, "Impact of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)," a REL Midwest study presented by David Cordray, Ph.D., professor of psychology and human development, Vanderbilt University; Ayrin Molefe, Ph.D., senior statistician, REL Midwest; and Chris Brandt, Ph.D., senior researcher, REL Midwest.

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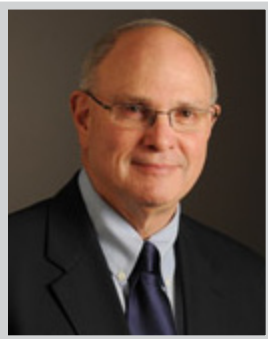
December 14, 2011—Webinar, 1:30–3:30 p.m. (Central Time)

A Forum on Charter School Research, Practice, and Accountability. Mark Berends, Ph.D., director, National Center on School Choice, will discuss his research on the impact of charter schools on student achievement outcomes and provide an overview of the literature on the same topic nationally. In addition, Dr. Berends will discuss practices and strategies that are associated with high-performing charter schools. Julie Kowal, senior consultant, Public Impact, will present findings from the REL Midwest report *Examining Policy and Guidance in Midwestern States for Converting Low-Achieving Schools to Charter Schools*, which currently is in review. Her presentation will increase participants' awareness of the variety of authorizing policies in place across REL Midwest states.

REL Events on Data Use and Preschool Literacy Archived Online

On September 13, the Regional Educational Laboratory Rural Working Group presented *Achievement Data and Instructional Decision Making in Rural Schools and Districts*, a 90-minute webinar featuring Ellen Mandinach, Ph.D., co-author of the IES Practice Guide *Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making*. REL Northeast & Islands hosted the webinar, which is archived at <http://www.relnei.org/events.webinararchives.php>.

Developing Preschool Language and Literacy, an October 25 webinar cohosted by REL Midwest and REL Northeast & Islands, featured Timothy Shanahan, Ph.D., director of the University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Literacy. Dr. Shanahan provided an overview of the research findings from the National Early Literacy Panel's 2008 report *Developing Early Literacy* and shared practical recommendations for education leaders and early childhood education practitioners. The 90-minute webinar is archived at <http://www.relnei.org/events.webinararchives.php>.



Paul Kimmelman

A Cautionary View of No Child Left Behind Flexibility and Waivers

By Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D., Senior Advisor; Education, Human Development and the Workforce, American Institutes for Research

It has been nearly a decade since the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was enacted and schools across the United States were subjected to the most rigorous federal requirements since the first Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed. Under NCLB, the title given to

ESEA during the Bush administration, states and local school districts are required to adhere to a multitude of challenging requirements (e.g., ensuring that schools are accountable for the achievement of subgroups of students; teachers are highly qualified; data systems are developed to report substantial information to the public in clear, understandable formats; or programs have evidence that they work). Since NCLB became law, education in the United States has undergone a transformation that has involved considerable effort by educators to improve in many facets of the system. Looking back on the last decade, it is clear that states have taken on the challenges contained in NCLB and implemented many reform initiatives to comply with its requirements. Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio have been leaders in those change initiatives and have maintained momentum on those changes despite the serious downturn in the economy.

Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio have been leaders in those change initiatives and have maintained momentum on those changes despite the serious downturn in the economy.

Despite herculean state efforts, it has always been understood that some of the requirements of NCLB, such as the provision requiring 100 percent proficiency for all students, were goals that would not be achieved. Within this context, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced recently that states and territories could seek a waiver from some of the requirements of NCLB in return for assurances that they would comply with different rigorous reforms being promoted by the U.S. Department of Education. But what does the waiver mean for the states and what caution may they want to exercise as they consider applying for the new flexibility? The requirements for the flexibility are not a “free parking” provision, and states could be held to very high expectations. What will the consequences be for not fulfilling those expectations?

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What Does the New Guidance Mean for State and Local Education Agencies?

Although NCLB was a “game changer” for education reform efforts to improve accountability and student achievement, teacher quality, and the use of research evidence to support implementing new programs, it is clear that some of the intended outcomes are not going to be reached. The delayed reauthorization of ESEA has not been completed by Congress, and Secretary Duncan has determined that he has the legal authority to offer flexibility from some of the law’s provisions in a quid pro quo for different accountability reforms. Although there are those in Congress who believe he has exceeded his authority in offering this flexibility, more than 40 states have indicated intent to seek the provision.

There are two deadlines for the waiver request. The first deadline is November 2011, and the second is February 2012. To get approval, states will have to:

- Demonstrate their willingness to lead rigorous reform efforts in adopting college- and career-ready standards and assure they are aligned to state tests.
- Develop a differentiated accountability system that focuses on 15 percent of the state's most troubled schools and ensure that the system is based on student growth goals.
- Develop statewide guidelines for teacher and principal evaluations that are based at least partially on student growth and used for making personnel decisions.

In return for states agreeing to those reform initiatives, the following NCLB requirements will be waived:

- The 2013–14 NCLB deadline for schools to have 100 percent of their students proficient, sanctions that can lead to restructuring a school.
- 20 percent of Title I funds that must be set aside to allow students in some identified schools the options of school choice or tutoring.

The applications for flexibility will be peer reviewed. The use of peer review panels indicates a serious intent by the Education Department to ensure that states being given relief from some of the daunting challenges of NCLB are being held to a high standard for the new reforms. (More information about the NCLB flexibility process can be found on the Education Department [website](#).)

How Will This New Flexibility Support the Reforms Already Under Way in States?

As illustrated in the following examples, Great Lakes East states have been actively engaged in education reform for many years and have been working to improve their academic content standards, accountability systems, and teacher/principal evaluation systems.

Adoption of College- and Career-Ready Standards

- **Indiana.** Indiana is among the 44 states that have adopted the Common Core State Standards and is a governing state in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, one of the two assessment consortia that will create assessment systems and supporting tools aligned with the standards.
- **Indiana.** Indiana has completed extensive academic standards work in career and technology education (CTE). In spring 2011, the Indiana Department of Education announced:
 - Reorganization of its 16 career pathways
 - Revision of more than 100 CTE courses
 - Alignment of Indiana and national industry standards within those courses
 - Introduction of the integration of the Common Core State Standards for literacy in technology education
 - Introduction of the Common Core State Standards mathematics-reasoning courses in CTE
- **Michigan.** The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is working to establish an internal cross-divisional team and a strategic plan that merge and align the standards work with current MDE initiatives and engage key stakeholders from within and outside of MDE. The cross-divisional team will lead the design of a comprehensive strategic plan through

the development of workgroups on effective instruction and intervention for all learners, balanced assessment, supports for quality educators, accountability and transparency, infrastructure, and P–20 transitions. The workgroups will include external stakeholders.

- **Ohio.** The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) initiated the rollout of the Common Core State Standards through a series of regional meetings for ODE and district staff. Feedback from these meetings was captured in a summary, which informed standards implementation planning by ODE.

A Differentiated Accountability System That Focuses on 15 Percent of the State’s Most Troubled Schools

- **Indiana.** In Indiana, [new legislation](#) gives the State Board of Education the responsibility of placing schools and districts in performance and improvement categories based on the results of mandatory assessments and other criteria. Beginning with the 2011–12 school year, performance and improvement categories are designated by the letter grades A, B, C, D, F.
- **Indiana.** As reported by the state superintendent in the [2011 State of Education Address](#), Indiana is “enforcing the measures mandated under the state’s accountability law to turn around chronically low performing schools. This year, seven schools hit their sixth consecutive year of Academic Probation. And the State Board of Education acted to intervene with carefully placed turnaround operators at five schools and lead partners to offer support in two others” (p. 2).
- **Michigan.** MDE is creating a State School Reform/Redesign Office to supervise the persistently lowest achieving schools in the state. The office will collaborate with the schools to develop and approve reform plans and support them as they work to improve student achievement and return to stability. Districts that do not succeed face the possibility of falling under the Education Achievement Authority, established by Governor Snyder to help underachieving schools, where schools are essentially removed from their school districts.
- **Ohio.** Ohio has had an approved differentiated accountability system for several years (one of the original pilot states). It includes schools and districts labeled high support in Ohio that are required to implement the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) with the support of educational service centers and state support teams. Many of the schools are also School Improvement Grant schools and are part of Race to the Top districts. Battelle for Kids developed a data-focused model called Ohio Focus, which supports analysis and use of student growth measures and OIP.

Teacher and Principal Evaluations Based at Least Partially on Student Growth and Used for Making Personnel Decisions

- **Indiana.** Indiana’s [Putting Students First](#) education reform includes new law creating “locally developed, annual evaluations based on multiple measures including student performance. . . [to] be used to provide meaningful feedback, targeted professional development, and recognition for excellent instruction.”

Thoughts and Caveats on the Waiver Process

Very High Expectations

The NCLB waiver process presents an interesting scenario for states, schools, Congress, and the Education Department. As noted previously, some members of Congress believe that Secretary Duncan has exceeded his authority by offering this flexibility from the current law. That issue will ultimately have to be resolved between them as it is determined whether the executive branch of government can modify a federal law that must be reauthorized by the legislative branch

of government. Although more than 40 states have indicated an intent to seek the flexibility, the old saying “be careful what you ask for; you may get it” might just be applicable here. It was the extremely rigorous provisions of NCLB and its sanctions that led to so much acrimony about the law, and the flexibility requirements could mirror that scenario.

A Gamble of Presidential Reelection

Applying for the waiver in some respects is also a gamble that the President will be reelected in 2012. If President Obama is not reelected, a new secretary of education will be appointed in January 2013, and it is almost assured that the new secretary will not support the flexibility provisions. Where will that leave the states that were given the waiver and invested considerable time and money in complying with it?

Timing of ESEA Reauthorization

What if Congress reauthorizes a new ESEA before it adjourns late next year? Recently, the Senate Health, Education and Pensions Committee voted out a new ESEA bill, which likely will get to the Senate floor next year. The House of Representatives Education and the Workforce Committee has been working on ESEA in sections but is making steady progress. If Congress is to reauthorize ESEA next year, a possible scenario is as follows: the bills clear their respective chambers by spring, conferencing on the bills occurs during the summer, and final passage is enacted by fall just before the elections. A preliminary review of the Senate version of a new ESEA indicates that there are some differences between what is required for the waiver and what could become the new law. Those distinctions could be important to states that have been working on waiver reforms for approximately one year if they are then required to make more changes.

Alignment of State Efforts Under Way

Finally, are the waiver requests being made by the states consistent with what they are already doing, or are they going to result in efforts to make dramatic changes for the purpose of getting relief from NCLB requirements? That is an important question to consider, particularly if it means directing limited resources to new initiatives that might be temporary. There appears to be a direction in Congress to allow states to regain more control over their education programs. Undertaking these initiatives should align with what the states believe are important for their education success.

Sustainability as Key

The flexibility being proposed by Secretary Duncan is sensible and can help states work on substantive changes. Like NCLB, the fundamental underpinnings are difficult to challenge. Who doesn't want schools that emphasize college and career readiness, focused efforts on the lowest performing schools, and evaluations that are more than subjective judgments? The issue is really whether the waiver provisions will be sustained by Congress when it reauthorizes ESEA.

The Politics of Education

Finally, the politics of education also play a critical role in the ESEA reauthorization and flexibility issue. A new president or change in the majority party in either chamber of Congress could result in dramatically different positions on education reform. Even though education has not been a high priority in the presidential debates or very high on the public's list of concerns, it is getting a lot of publicity and is important to the future success of America. State education leaders and all educators are engaged in education reform at a time when the changes are more transformational than ever before. It is likely that the next five years of education reform will bring about more change than the previous decade, and those changes will be driven by both technology and policy. Specifically which technologies or whose policies will prevail remains to be seen.

Focus on States

In this section, Great Lakes East state managers provide regular updates on current state plans undertaken by each state in the region, with a specific focus on implementation efforts of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and key federal reform priorities.



INDIANA

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In July 2011, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) announced a new department structure. According to an [IDOE press release](#):

IDOE has realigned to reflect new priorities and a revised role for the department—one that sets high expectations for schools and holds them accountable while providing the flexibility and support they need to succeed.

The passage of Indiana’s “Putting Students First” education reform package, along with the state’s responsibility to intervene in persistently underperforming schools, required the IDOE to reorganize its staff and resources to support implementation and school turnaround.

The realignment included major changes in staffing and thus in the personnel with whom Great Lakes East had established relationships over the years. In addition, the offices are no longer distinct (e.g., Title I, Title II, Title III) but rather reflect an attempt by IDOE to align by the services provided to schools and school districts. In Year 7, Great Lakes East will pursue technical assistance goals in coordination with the new Office of School Improvement and Turnaround and the Office of Student Achievement and Growth and will focus on school improvement, supports for persistently low-achieving schools, academic standards, response to instruction, and graduation rates.

Statewide System of Support

School Improvement. Indiana was one of 17 states in 2007 to receive approval from the U.S. Department of Education to provide varied requirements and supports for its schools not meeting improvement requisites under the No Child Left Behind Act. IDOE termed its program the Differentiated Accountability Model. Under the model, the required actions of the schools are dependent on the number of years in improvement and the number of student groups not making adequate yearly progress (AYP).

After four years of implementing the Differentiated Accountability Model, IDOE seeks to evaluate some of the requirements. Laura Cope, assistant director of School Improvement and Turnaround, and Sarah Pies, school improvement specialist, requested Great Lakes East’s assistance in the endeavor. Two initiatives are being considered at this time: (1) training for instructional coaches and (2) online modules addressing whole-school curriculum and meeting specific needs of targeted subgroups not making AYP, with changes being made as needed and implementation scheduled to occur in fall 2011.

An all-day training for the mathematics and English language arts coaches will occur on December 9, 2011, in Indianapolis with whole-group and break-out sessions on topics selected by the coaches.

At the end of November 2011, a set of online modules will be introduced with new support materials on the research base of the modules, how to select an appropriate module, and the skills and role of the facilitator. Great Lakes East will assist IDOE in the review and development of the new materials.

Instruction

Improving Graduation Rates. Since 2009, Great Lakes East has provided technical assistance to the state education agencies in Indiana and Michigan toward their goal of improving graduation rates across the states. This fall, Great Lakes East facilitated the joining of forces, forming a new collaboration of IDOE and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to share ideas and resources to better serve school and district efforts to achieve higher high school graduation rates and college and career readiness. MDE and IDOE demonstrated the effects of their collaboration at the Indiana Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit: “The Path to Success for Your Community” in Indianapolis on September 28, 2011. A Michigan team presented a highly interactive and impactful breakout session titled, “Dropout Prevention Strategies: Tapping the Power of School-Community Partnerships.” The team consisted of Bersheril Bailey, senior consultant, Great Lakes East; Michele Corey, director of Community Advocacy, Michigan’s Children; and Gregg Dionne, consultant, Alternative Education, Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, MDE. All three presenters are members of Michigan’s Dropout Challenge Team. Their presentation recounted the development of the challenge team; coming together to identify and implement proven practices; and mobilization of community advocacy groups to support and assist the 1,100 elementary, middle, and high schools that accepted the Michigan superintendent’s Dropout Challenge.

The summit was cosponsored by Indiana State University and State Farm Insurance, with strong support and direction from IDOE. Chelsie Mann, college and career pathways dual credit specialist, represents IDOE on the summit steering committee. Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Bennett opened the event with expressions of congratulations and appreciation for the participants’ contribution to recent increases in Indiana’s graduation rate, then appealed to participants to continue their efforts until all Indiana students reach graduation and college and career readiness.



MICHIGAN

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Teacher Quality

System of Support for Educator Learning. Great Lakes East continues to support the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in the development of a more comprehensive system of highly effective professional learning. MDE plans to present its draft of *Professional Learning Policy* and accompanying guidelines to the State Board of Education in November 2011. Following the presentation, a period of public comment will be opened, through which the education community will provide comments and suggestions on the draft. MDE delayed its presentation of the *Professional Learning Policy* to allow time to include the Standards for Professional Learning developed by Learning Forward as part of the approval request to the State Board of Education. Following the close of the public comment period, MDE will work with American Institutes for

Research to make revisions and prepare the final version of the *Professional Learning Policy* along with resources to support the rollout of the policy. The final version, including the *Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning*, will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval in January 2012.

High School

High School Redesign. After State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan reissued a Dropout Challenge to all Michigan schools in August 2011, more than 1,100 schools and 142 districts signed up for the challenge. To support Dropout Challenge schools and districts, MDE promoted the use of the National High School Center’s Early Warning System as well as the implementation of the recommendations in the IES Practice Guide *Dropout Prevention*. In collaboration with Great Lakes East and REL Midwest, MDE has distributed thousands of copies of the Practice Guide across the state. Earlier this year, Great Lakes East subcontractor RMC Research Corporation reviewed data and reported that Dropout Challenge schools performed consistently better than nonparticipating schools on two outcomes: graduation and dropout rates. MDE’s Dropout Challenge team will be working with the National Dropout Prevention Center Network to explore more deeply the impact of the Dropout Challenge on the 300 participating high schools.

Great Lakes East has been cofacilitating biweekly Dropout Challenge team meetings led by Leisa Gallagher, MDE Office of Special Education-Early Intervention Services. It also provides support to conduct quarterly cross-office meetings to align and coordinate dropout prevention efforts across the department. The first meeting was held on August 24, 2011. Great Lakes East administered a survey after the meeting to gather information on the grants and initiatives that support dropout prevention. The results of the survey were shared with the Dropout Challenge team in October 2011 and will be used to build coherence and leverage resources.

Michigan’s Dropout Challenge was featured in breakout sessions at Indiana’s Dropout Prevention Summit on September 28, 2011, and at the National Dropout Prevention Center Network Conference October 9–11, 2011. Bersheril Bailey, senior consultant, Great Lakes East, joined Gregg Dionne, MDE Office of Education Improvement and Innovation; Nancy Rotarius, MDE Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services; and Michele Corey, vice president for programs, Michigan’s Children, to present how the collaborative effort of the organizations supports the Dropout Challenge schools and districts across the state. Prior to their presentation, Frank De Rosa, Indiana state manager, Great Lakes East, facilitated a meeting between the Michigan Dropout Challenge team presenters; Chelsie Mann, college and career pathways dual credit specialist, Indiana Department of Education; and a member of the Indiana Dropout Prevention collaborative to discuss MDE’s dropout prevention work.

In addition, to build the capacity of MDE and key stakeholders to support all students in order to meet the state’s rigorous high school graduation standards (Michigan Merit Curriculum), with particular attention to the academic achievement of student subgroups, Great Lakes East facilitated many collaborative meetings to develop a High School Roadmap to Success (formerly Reimagining High Schools) website. The website will be presented at MDE’s Fall School Improvement Conference on November 29, 2011. The principles detailed on the website are aligned with the National High School Center’s *Eight Elements of High School Improvement: A Mapping Framework* and the Vermont Department of Education’s *High Schools on the Move* report.

Statewide System of Support

Michigan’s Statewide System of Support—MI Excel. Great Lakes East sent a team from Michigan to Philadelphia October 19–20, 2011, to join six other states learning how to deliver the Center on Innovation & Improvement’s Academy of Pacesetting Districts. On October 18, 2011, prior to the arrival of their state teams, comprehensive center liaisons received a full day of training to prepare for providing the state education agencies with technical assistance to conduct the academy. After the training, MDE selected districts to participate in the year-long opportunity for MDE staff to explore their current policies, programs, and practices that support school improvement. MDE will guide the districts as they develop a system of support for schools in need of improvement. The Michigan team consists of Mark Coscarella and Anne Hansen, Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, MDE; Ben Boerkoel, Kent Intermediate School District consultant; and Bersheril Bailey, Great Lakes East. Additional MDE team members include Diane Fleming, Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, and Fred Williams, Office of Field Services.

Districts that agree to participate in the academy will select a team to represent the local education agencies (LEAs) in this experience. The team will have the opportunity to engage in the following:

- Attend a two-day kickoff meeting.
- Participate in three full-day learning and working sessions and related homework.
- Receive ongoing mentoring related to the academy by assigned MDE staff.
- Interact with other LEA teams participating in the academy to share experiences and responses to a variety of real-world challenges in the area of school improvement.
- Explore aspects of district and school operations deemed key to effecting positive change.
- Develop a district Operations Manual and Implementation Action Plan.
- Attend a district team summative meeting.

Michigan’s team met on November 2, 2011, to prepare for the Academy of Pacesetting Districts kickoff meeting December 5–6, 2011. On December 5, participants will hear from Roger Quarles, Ph.D., a professor of educational leadership at Boise State University in the College of Education. Prior to this position, Dr. Quarles served as the superintendent of schools for Caldwell School District in Caldwell, Idaho, a district where 76 percent of students live below the poverty line and the majority of students are Hispanic with a large limited English proficient population. Under the leadership of Dr. Quarles, the Caldwell School District became the most rapidly improving district in Idaho, with student scores on national and state standardized tests increasing by more than 20 percent and graduation rates increasing by 30 percent.

Emerging Work: State School Reform Office. Recently enacted Michigan legislation requires MDE to provide assistance to the persistently lowest achieving schools in the state. Deb Clemmons has been named as the director of MDE’s new School Reform Office (SRO). She asked Great Lakes East to join a team that will create the new office to help ensure that the work of the office is coherently integrated with MDE’s existing statewide system of support (SSOS). The team will:

- Study and apply the research on school turnaround to the development of the SRO.
- Review and explore the implications for MDE’s SRO of turnaround efforts in leading-edge states.
- Build the SRO’s organizational structure and processes within the context of MDE’s overall SSOS and achievement gap initiatives.

- Design and implement a strategic plan to guide the state's SRO implementation.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive professional development plan to build the capacity of teacher leaders to support persistently lowest achieving teachers' instructional effectiveness.
- Create and implement a system to support persistently lowest achieving schools' efficient coordination and alignment of the services that they have access to or already receive.

Marilyn Troyer, former deputy superintendent at the Ohio Department of Education, is serving as a Great Lakes East consultant in support of this work. Great Lakes East staff member Claudette Rasmussen and consultant Amy Colton will assist with the design of the professional development plan. A number of meetings were held in October 2011 to kick off the work.

Response to Intervention. Through a mailing from the deputy superintendent, MDE shared its response to intervention (RTI) vision, definition, and essential elements with all district regional superintendents and school principals this fall.

Michigan continues to emphasize collaborative planning in order to allow educators to utilize their resources most effectively and have the greatest impact on student achievement and school culture. The Michigan RTI Guidance Team, which includes MDE staff from multiple offices and external stakeholders from intermediate service districts, LEAs, and institutions of higher education, has reviewed and finalized helpful tools and resources for the state's RTI website including the following:

- A PowerPoint presentation titled *One Common Voice – One Plan: How Do Continuous School Improvement and Response to Intervention Work Together?*
- RTI Essential Elements and Explicit Practices Chart (classroom, building, district, ISD, state)
- RTI Inquiry Chart
- Research-based resources

The team's most recent work includes a collection of success stories from the field. With assistance from Great Lakes East and the National Center on Response to Intervention, the stories are being compiled through interviews and written application from school staff. The stories will be organized under the questions developed by the team. The questions probe for information regarding the use of data by staff, leadership, collaboration between school improvement and RTI, the impact of RTI implementation on student achievement and school culture, and lessons learned. Many schools find it helpful to hear the processes that other schools have gone through. The intent of the school stories is to share lessons learned.

The RTI Guidance Team envisions its work to continue through sharing of the MDE RTI guidance tools at various statewide conferences in collaboration with other initiatives. The team also plans to continue to review and update the Michigan RTI guidance tools and website.

English Language Learners. On September 27, 2011, Dennis Terdy, Great Lakes East consultant from the Center for Applied Linguistics, along with Shereen Tabrizi, Ph.D., Special Populations Unit manager, MDE Office of Field Services, presented a session at MDE's fall Special Populations Conference. The session topic, "Statewide Professional Development Initiatives," outlined current and future professional development plans addressing the needs of ELLs. In particular, this session highlighted the statewide Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) capacity-building professional development initiative, which began three years ago. The session also provided an update of other MDE initiatives including the addition of Blueprints for Effective Writing to the SIOP train-the-trainer component and family initiatives.

Ongoing support plans have begun for a late fall follow-up meeting of the three train-the-trainer SIOP cohorts. Since its inception, this capacity-building initiative has engaged and trained a cadre of more than 60 individuals representing ELL leadership from around the state.

A fourth train-the-trainer cohort training will be initiated in late spring 2012. In addition, a fourth rollout of regional summer SIOP training supported by intermediate school districts will begin in early summer. As in the past, these three regional trainings will be provided in strategic locations throughout the state.

The bimonthly ELL Core Team meetings continue. In particular, the most recent meetings have addressed improved cross-office collaboration focusing on early identification of ELLs across multiple funding sources and eligibility streams. Using the newly revised ELL Strategic Plan, the ELL Core Team meetings will expand internal MDE ELL coordination through three additional meetings this year.

Common Core State Standards. The MDE Core Team is in the process of planning for the fall workgroup meetings. MDE created the following workgroups to develop a systemic plan for connecting the work:

- Effective instruction and intervention for all learners
- Balanced assessment
- Supports for quality educators
- Accountability and transparency
- Infrastructure
- P-20 transitions

These workgroups will be led by MDE and include external stakeholders. Great Lakes East worked with MDE to help identify external stakeholders that should be involved in the work and facilitated a train-the-trainer session with the internal team in October 2011.

The workgroups' first meetings will occur in December 2011. They will focus on analyzing the current state of the work, determining future outcomes, and developing action plans for moving the work forward. Great Lakes East worked with MDE to create a planning tool based on work of the Midwest Common Core Consortium. MDE is going to use the tool to collect the action plans from these meetings and communicate plans and progress throughout the state as well as potentially engage LEAs through similar planning processes for systemic implementation.



OHIO

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Statewide System of Support

Statewide Systems of Support Leadership Team and Improvement and Accountability System.

Under Ohio's Differentiated Accountability Model, high- and medium-support districts are expected to implement the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP), which is also recommended for low-support

districts. It was reported by an informal Ohio Department of Education (ODE) survey of regional leaders working with districts that across Ohio, more than 43 percent of districts that are not charged with implementing OIP are, in fact, doing so at some level. This number supports the belief that OIP is being widely implemented. To sustain this level of OIP implementation, ODE must ensure the following: implementation with fidelity and consistency statewide; monitoring statewide implementation and delivery of services by the statewide system of support; and guidance, tools, and resources that are aligned to and embedded in other ODE initiatives like Race to the Top (RttT) and the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. This focus on sustainability will be the work of a newly formed state-level leadership team, which will convene for the first time at the end of November 2011. This team will be facilitated by Great Lakes East and includes 25–30 people representing internal ODE staff across centers as well as statewide system of support staff and organizations.

One of the responsibilities of this leadership team will be to validate state-level review monitoring results. ODE, in collaboration with Great Lakes East, has developed an OIP Implementation Review. The centerpiece of this review is an OIP implementation survey, designed by ODE and supported by Great Lakes East. ODE sent an assurance letter to every district in Ohio this fall, which included a link to the survey giving districts an opportunity to attach evidence for their responses. Depending upon the responses received, ODE staff may follow up with a telephone interview to districts and, if warranted, a site visit. The purpose of this review is to determine the needs for district support of OIP and to hold districts more accountable for implementation of OIP stages.

On September 12–13, 2011, Great Lakes East supported a fall retreat at Hueston Woods State Park near Oxford, Ohio. The retreat was attended by SIG principals (Cohorts 1 and 2), single points of contact, special education contacts, and ODE staff. System updates were shared regarding OIP and SIG as well as the Executive Principal Leadership Academy. A special session was facilitated by Gillian Williams, founder and chief academic officer, School Turnaround. On the second day, only single points of contact and special education contacts were present; they learned more about the OIP review and the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council website. A significant amount of time was spent in collaborative work to consider how to provide support to districts given fewer resources and the need to coordinate support with RttT coordinators and specialists as well as SIG transformation specialists. Great Lakes East will continue to work with the quad leads, Office of Exceptional Children staff, and Ohio Network for Innovation and Improvement staff to align the content of the online learning modules with special education, early childhood, and school improvement efforts.

On September 25 and 26, 2011, Great Lakes East, in collaboration with ODE, supported a meeting for quad leads and ODE staff to review existing online modules for implementation of OIP. Most modules were developed some time ago and needed a review to align with special education, early childhood, and school improvement process changes. On September 26, an ODE team met with Great Lakes East representatives Sheryl Poggi and Mark Mitchell to discuss operationalizing the SSOS Performance Indicators. Next steps include inviting prospective state-level leadership team members and planning for the first meeting to be held at the end of November 2011.

Standards and Assessment

Common Core State Standards and Assessment Transition. This area represents a new strand of work for Great Lakes East in Year 7 and includes support for college and career readiness. One of the most prominent supports is the Ohio High School and Higher Education Alignment Initiative, one of the RttT initiatives. The goal of this work is to coordinate efforts between high school and college and to build a seamless transition to the first year of college. ODE asked that Great Lakes East assist with regional information sessions, which were held in October 2011. Great Lakes East staff attended several of the regional sessions and recorded feedback in the form of questions that were asked by representatives from districts and institutions of higher education. Great Lakes East also developed a survey of the participants with the leadership of its subcontractor RMC Research Corporation, Karen Sanders and Laura Taylor. A summary report including survey responses will be compiled for ODE. ODE has established an advisory work team to guide this work, and Sanders attends these meetings.

Another key component of the transitions work is implementation of the new standards and model curriculum. A six-person ODE team guides this work. Currently, the team is focused on the development of comprehensive crosswalk documents comparing old and new standards; science and social studies comparison is done, and others will be coming soon. A comparative analysis will be posted on the ODE website, including a Stages of Change Guide for districts and schools. Great Lakes East is serving as a thought partner and helping ODE monitor effectiveness of the resource documents; this process includes determining whether these tools address the needs of the districts and schools in their current stages of change. Further work may include survey design and administration as well as collection of feedback from focus groups across Ohio during the roll-out of next generation science standards.

In addition, Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West continue to support cross-state regional efforts. A series of face-to-face meetings in 2012 has been proposed to five states to collaborate regarding the following key topics of interest: policy, instruction, professional learning, assessment, and curriculum. ODE has expressed interest in sending its teams to the meetings with staff from other states.

District and School Improvement

Race to the Top Communication Plan Support. Following the July 2011 meeting, Great Lakes East collaborated with RttT staff, regional coordinators and specialists, and selected RttT district staff to design an annual RttT survey. The purpose of the survey was to help ODE measure the extent to which it serves as a partner in RttT initiatives as it strives to communicate and disseminate information concerning RttT and help local education agencies understand and implement RttT commitments. This survey went through extensive external and internal review before being sent to the 442 RttT districts (3,987 RttT transformation team members) with a 39 percent response rate. The close-ended responses were analyzed and compiled for a joint presentation by ODE RttT office staff and Great Lakes East at the RttT Annual Statewide Conference on November 1, 2011, in Columbus, Ohio.

In addition, Great Lakes East collaborated with ODE to develop a Web Conferencing Guide and provide a training event held on September 15, 2011, for RttT regional coordinators, RttT specialists, and internal ODE staff. The purpose of this training was to build the capacity of RttT regional specialists and coordinators to plan and facilitate Web conferences for stakeholders.

Credit Flexibility Implementation: Community of Practice. The credit flexibility implementation work of ODE and Great Lakes East has shifted from collaborating on the design and delivery of Web conferences to building a viable community of practice and the organization, content, and collaborative features of the Ohio Credit Flexibility Community of Practice wiki, which is intended to promote dialogue among Ohio schools and districts regarding credit flexibility implementation.

On August 26, 2011, ODE's Community of Practice State Team met and discussed content needs for the wiki (blogs, topics, discussion boards, documents, and frequently asked questions). The team also discussed strategies for outreach and communication for each content/expert area. A blog schedule has been established and Judy Maver, school counselor at Akron Public Schools and Ohio School Counselors Association representative, entered the first blog on the wiki site in October.

Aside from the wiki pages and their continued development, another aspect of the work is the Promising Practices Networking Directory, which is an online searchable database organized by topic. The directory was codeveloped by ODE and Great Lakes East as one of the outcomes of the statewide online survey of credit flexibility implementers conducted in spring 2011 by ODE. The topics include testing-out, third party providers, teachers of record, student credit flexibility plans, communicating credit flexibility opportunities, district-level appeals, and other promising practices. Each topic includes a list of those districts and career and technology centers that reported the use of promising practices to support that topic; these listings provide contact information and a brief summary of work under that particular topic. The purposes of the directory include networking, dissemination, and communication to advance credit flexibility implementation across Ohio and foster collaboration statewide.

On October 4, 2011, ODE and Great Lakes East offered the first of a two-part fall series Web conference for school counselors, which was attended by more than 90 registered participants online across Ohio. This event was led by Tom Rutan, ODE associate director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Judy Maver. The second Web conference *Credit Flexibility 101: Developing Quality Student Credit Flexibility Plans* was held on October 26, 2011, and attended by more than 80 participants. The event was hosted by Tom Rutan and Robert (Mike) Hubbard, education consultant, Operating Standards for Ohio Schools, ODE.

Next steps include continued promotion and improvement of the wiki site and a Community of Practice State Team meeting in November 2011.

Ohio Safe and Supportive Learning Environments. In fall of 2011, the ODE Office of Safe and Supportive Learning Environments, in collaboration with Great Lakes East, hosted a regional series to support schools in creating positive climates for their students, families, and communities. The meeting, titled "Understanding the Role of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports and School Climate in School Improvement," was held in each of the 16 regions of Ohio from August 25, 2011, to October 7, 2011. The goals of the meetings were as follows:

- Increase general awareness about ODE initiatives, and model policy on a comprehensive system of learning support and school climate guidelines.
- Provide information and resources to parents, school-based staff, and community-based staff to support local needs.
- Facilitate cross-stakeholder group conversations to identify key leverage points and foster collaboration.

Because the meetings were held across the state, ODE needed to find a way to reach all of the sites and turned to Great Lakes East for assistance. The meetings were designed to consist of a real-time Web conference presentation by ODE on Ohio's School Climate Guidelines and the Comprehensive System of Learning Supports policy and their relationships to overall school improvement; a video presentation from outside experts, Howard Adelman, Ph.D., and Linda Taylor, Ph.D., University of California Los Angeles; and an introduction to community-based supports in the local region. The meetings also provided on-site facilitated break-out discussions by ODE staff focused on regional needs, allowing participants to concentrate on specific topics and network with each other. There were a total of 516 participants among the 16 regions, including representatives from education (majority), drug and alcohol professionals, mental health professionals, community organizations, health, parent/family, juvenile justice, and local law enforcement. In a survey, the respondents rated the following aspects of the regional meetings as the most helpful: opportunity to collaborate with different stakeholders; learning about available resources, high-quality information provided; and facilitation that helped move the meetings along productively. ODE is planning another series of Web conferences with the dates and topics yet to be determined.

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In the News

The following articles were selected to provide easy access to news and publications addressing the key education topics within each Great Lakes East state and across the nation during the past quarter.



INDIANA

11 States Meet Early-Bird Deadline for NCLB Waivers—*Education Week*, November 15, 2011

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2011/11/11_states_meet_early-bird_dead.html

“Eleven states will have the first opportunity to secure waivers from the U.S. Department of Education under the No Child Left Behind Act after meeting Monday’s deadline for the first round. They are: Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.”

Hoosier Students Outpace National Peers on NAEP Test—Indiana Department of Education, November 3, 2011

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2011/11-November/naep.html>

“Indiana students continue to score above the national average, according to data released today by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Year-to-year scores remained relatively flat—increasing or decreasing slightly—depending on the subject and grade level tested.”

New State Fund Will Support Innovation in Schools—Indiana Department of Education, October 5, 2011

http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2011/10-October/innovation_fund.html

“Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett today announced Indiana’s first-ever Innovation Fund competition. Schools, districts, charters, non-profits and other entities are invited to apply for a portion of \$5 million (\$2.5 million for each year of the current state budget biennium) to help improve students’ academic performance through creative, effective and sustainable programs. The state legislature created the fund in the 2011–2013 biennial state budget.”

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10 Things to Think About as Michigan and Other States Overhaul Teacher Evaluations—

Michigan Live, November 13, 2011

http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2011/11/10_things_to_think_about_as_mi.html

“33 states—including Michigan—are overhauling their teacher evaluation systems, one of the most significant shakeups in U.S. education in recent years. What does this mean for teachers? Parents? Students?”

MDE’s Draft Request for ESEA Flexibility—Michigan Department of Education, 2011

<http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-265161-,00.html>

“While the MDE initially intended to apply for these waivers by the November 14, 2011, deadline, it has decided to defer application until mid-February 2012 in order to more fully develop the application with the assistance of shareholder involvement and feedback.”

Public Comment Period for Revised Professional Learning Policy, Standards, and Guidance [MDE Memo]—Michigan Department of Education, November 10, 2011

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Prof_Learning_Comment_Period_368240_7.pdf

“The revised policy statement, guidance document, and standards have been presented to the [State Board of Education] and are available for review at www.michigan.gov/mde and public comment via survey at <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22CGTSR6BC4/> from November 10, 2011 through December 8, 2011.”

State Announces 2010–11 Schools “Beating the Odds”—Michigan Department of Education, November 8, 2011

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_34785-265277-,00.html

“[MDE] ... released a list of 123 ‘Beating the Odds’ schools ... [that] are outperforming schools with similar risk factors and demographic composition. These schools were identified by the Department through two separate studies using considerably different methodologies.”

State Provides Retrospective Impact of New Cut Scores to Prepare Districts and Schools for Implementation This School Year—Michigan Department of Education, November 3, 2011

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_34785-265019-,00.html

“The new cut scores better reflect how well schools are preparing their students to be on-track for career- and college-readiness in high school, and on-track to proficiency in the next grade for grades 3–9.... Applying the new cut scores to historical MEAP and MME data shows a dramatic decline in student test scores across the state.”

Getting a Stronger Grip [Superintendent's Podcast]—Michigan Department of Education, October 28, 2011

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_45256-264795-,00.html

“State Superintendent Mike Flanagan attempted to pole vault over the metaphor bar, and delivers a Gold Medal message on setting and meeting higher standards to reflect the promise and opportunity in this, the greatest nation on Earth.”

Appointments Made to Governor's Council on Educator Effectiveness—Governor Snyder, September 22, 2011

http://www.michigan.gov/snyder/0,4668,7-277-57577_57657-262871-,00.html

“The council was created by Public Act 102 of 2011 to provide tools that improve teacher effectiveness. The council consists of three appointees by the governor, one from the speaker of the House, one from the Senate majority leader and one from the state superintendent of public instruction. The council will report to the Legislature, State Board of Education and governor its recommendations for student growth and assessment programs for evaluations of teachers and administrators as well as requirements for professional teacher certificates.”



OHIO

Transparency in Public Reporting Continues as State Superintendent Heffner Releases Preview of School and District Rankings—Ohio Department of Education, November 10, 2011

<http://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=629363726349942634>

“Parents and communities will have new information to better understand how effectively Ohio’s public schools are helping students learn with a new ranking of Ohio public school buildings’ performance released today by Superintendent of Public Instruction Stan W. Heffner. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will release a final list by September 2012 as required by state law.”

TPS Adapts to Distance Classes: Teachers, Students Make Progress With High-Tech Experiment—toledoBlade.com, November 10, 2011

<http://www.toledoblade.com/Education/2011/11/10/TPS-adapts-to-distance-classes.html>

“Six high schools in Toledo Public Schools now are equipped with high-tech rooms called distance learning labs. Projectors and TVs line the walls, and intercoms are in front of each student. A teacher from one site transmits to up to five others.”

Advanced Placement Network Launched With Grants to Ohio Schools—Ohio Department of Education, October 25, 2011

<http://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=278281235553351354>

“The Ohio Department of Education announced that more than \$400,000 in Race to the Top (RttT) funds will be used to create the Advanced Placement (AP) Network. Ohio Schools were awarded a grant to participate in the network, committed to building, enhancing and expanding AP classes to prepare 21st century leaders.”

Urban and Rural Students Excel in 122 Ohio Schools of Promise —Ohio Department of Education, October 18, 2011

<http://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=791348239281482233>

“Stan W. Heffner, superintendent of public instruction, named 122 Ohio schools as Schools of Promise. Based on results from the 2010–2011 Local Report Cards, these schools prove that rigorous coursework and a strong system of learning supports help students succeed in urban and rural schools.”

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Resources

This section provides current resources and research available from regional comprehensive centers, national content centers, regional educational laboratories, and other technical assistance providers.

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Federal Efforts to Improve the Lowest-Performing Schools: District Views on School Improvement Grants—Center on Education Policy, November 3, 2011

http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=KoberRentner%5FReport%5FDistrictSIG%5F110311%2Epdf

This report, based on a nationally representative sample of school districts, examines school districts' perceptions of key requirements and early school district implementation of the Title I School Improvement Grant programs funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Common Core State Standards for Mathematics – Appendix A: Designing High School Mathematics Courses Based on the Common Core State Standards—Center on Instruction, November 2011

http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_Mathematics_Appendix_A.pdf

Appendix A of this Common Core State Standards document helps states think about how the high school standards might be organized into four Model Course Pathways in Mathematics that provide college and career readiness.

Challenges in the Implementation of the Race to the Top School Turnaround Models— Hanover Research, October 2011

https://na3.salesforce.com/sfc/p/500000006pJ5QEuWUo1yx0U_rcGIITUXfMsMHU

“Hanover Research explores the obstacles that local school districts have anticipated and realized as they have embarked on school turnaround efforts under the Race to the Top program. This report further explores strategies for successful school turnaround and potential ways that educational service centers can be of assistance.”

Webinar: Connecting RTI to New Priorities: Aligning Educational Initiatives—Center on Instruction, October 2011

<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/webinar-connecting-rti-to-new-priorities-aligning-educational-initiatives>

“The Center on Instruction hosted a webinar October 3, 2011, in which COI’s Saro Mohammed discussed states’ implementation of new priorities such as SIG, Common Core State Standards, and meeting the needs of diverse student populations, and how these initiatives align with RTI.”

Frequently Asked Questions About State Accountability Plans and Their Relationship to Waivers—Center on Education Policy, September 16, 2011

http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=Riddle%5FFAQ%5FSAP%5F091911%2Epdf

This document answers some frequently asked questions about accountability plans that states are required to develop under the No Child Left Behind Act. These plans outline each

state's policies for implementing NCLB's accountability provisions and timelines for meeting student achievement goals, including the goal of all students reaching proficiency by school year 2013–14. U.S. Department of Education approval of state amendments to these accountability plans is another way for the federal government to give states some flexibility in implementing certain NCLB provisions.

Common Core State Standards: Progress and Challenges in School Districts' Implementation—Center on Education Policy, September 14, 2011

http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=KoberRentner%5FCommonCoreDistrict%5FReport%5F091411%2Epdf

This report, based on a nationally representative sample of school districts, examines school districts' perceptions and early implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Guidance for Developing and Selecting Assessments of Student Growth for Use in Teacher Evaluation Systems (Extended Version)—Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, 2011

http://www.aacompcenter.org/cs/aacc/download/rs/27187/DSA_long_v6.pdf?x-r=pcfile_d

In this new publication, AACC partners Joan Herman, Margaret Heritage, and Pete Goldschmidt provide comprehensive advice for including test scores in teacher evaluations.

Lining Up: The Relationship Between the Common Core State Standards and Five Sets of Comparison Standards—Educational Policy Improvement Center, 2011

<https://www.epiconline.org/files/pdf/LiningUp-FullReport.pdf>

“The Educational Policy Improvement Center designed and conducted this study to determine the extent of correspondence (alignment) between the exit level Common Core State Standards and each of five sets of existing standards...The purpose was to see if the Common Core standards cover similar content, how broadly they cover the comparison standards, and how the cognitive challenge level of aligned content matches up.”

This work was originally produced in whole or in part by the Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under cooperative agreement number S283B050012. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the federal government.

Great Lakes East is one of the 16 regional comprehensive assistance centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education, and its work is administered by Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research.

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