



Instructional Knowledge Counts

With the sweeping changes taking place in the nation—from the new education administration in the nation’s capital and the multibillion dollar stimulus for restoring the economy to the state education agencies making drastic cuts—one may wonder if making changes at the classroom level really matters.

The short answer is: It does. In this time of urgency, it is easy to lose sight of small, ongoing changes that educators in our classrooms make to increase students’ learning. Not letting these efforts stall is of critical importance in this age of knowledge and innovation.

In this issue of *News for the Region*, you’ll find multiple resources on topics such as response to intervention and tools to enhance instruction. In his article (p. 6), Gary Money describes the *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum*—research-based data collection tools—and how they can provide data to teachers, schools, and districts as teachers reflect on standards and assessments to plan for instruction. Through the SEC, teachers can increase their understanding and knowledge of what they teach and how they teach. Such analysis of instructional practices can really inform decisions for changing instructional content and linking to student achievement. Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio are already seeing the benefits of using SEC to bring about lasting change. In addition, you can turn to “Focus on States” (p. 11) to read about the ongoing initiatives to make educational progress and change in Great Lakes East states.

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

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This quarterly e-newsletter delivers useful, relevant, and timely information related to the NCLB Act to educators in the three states of the Great Lakes East region: Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.



Highlights of the Quarter

State Superintendents of Public Instruction in the Great Lakes East Region

Great Lakes East is pleased to work with the state superintendents in our three states to help the state education agencies (SEAs) forge long-term efforts in the implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. We express our appreciation for the extensive support from each state superintendent, and we want to welcome the new Indiana and Ohio state superintendents. We look forward to working with all of you and your staff!

Indiana's New Superintendent



Indiana Superintendent
Tony Bennett, Ed.D.

Tony Bennett, Ed.D., was inaugurated as Indiana's superintendent of public instruction on January 12, 2009. In his inaugural address, Dr. Bennett said, "Never in the history of our state have the stakes been higher for Indiana's educational system. We must develop and execute a plan that puts our state in its rightful place at the top of the nation and on par with the rest of the world."

Dr. Bennett also laid out his goals for the Indiana Department of Education: setting high standards and keeping constant score of how Indiana schools are serving their students, recruiting and training the best teachers and administrators, and establishing new flexible structures for schools to meet the needs of Indiana's students, according to a January 12, 2009, [press release](#).

For additional information, please view Dr. Bennett's [biography](#) as well as his full [inaugural address](#) on the [Indiana Department of Education website](#).

Michigan's Continuing Superintendent



Michigan Superintendent
Mike Flanagan

Mike Flanagan has served as Michigan's superintendent of public instruction since May 18, 2005. He directs the Michigan Department of Education (MDE); chairs the State Board of Education; and advises the State Board of Education, the governor, and the state Legislature regarding public education in Michigan. Flanagan previously was a local school superintendent and a regional superintendent, and he served as the executive director of the statewide associations that represent Michigan public school superintendents and intermediate school districts.

"Working together we can all create our future. We can make a difference in our communities and our states," Flanagan said during a December 2008 podcast in which he used past and recent American events to illustrate the need to stop clinging to the old, static ideas of educating Michigan's children and embrace change to increase student achievement. "We can all embrace change with hope for Michigan's future. It starts with education, and it starts with each of you."

For additional information, please view the [podcast](#) on the [Michigan Department of Education website](#).



Ohio's New Superintendent



Ohio
Superintendent
Deborah Delisle

Deborah Delisle was officially sworn in as Ohio's state superintendent of public instruction on December 8, 2008.

"I am honored to be selected as state superintendent of public instruction," said Delisle, according to an October 14, 2008, [press release](#). "I am excited to jump right in and work with the State Board, governor, legislature, our districts, and the many other education stakeholders to ensure our students are prepared for success in today's global economy."

For additional information, please view Delisle's [message](#) and [biography](#) on the [Ohio Department of Education website](#).

Great Lakes East Regional and Collaborative Meetings

Fourth Regional High School Dialogue Builds Knowledge and Skills for Strengthening State Education Agency Collaborative Partnerships

By Victoria Cirks, Consultant, Great Lakes East

The role of the SEA has changed dramatically. Increased demands placed on all-too-often reduced numbers of staff have created a need for SEAs to strengthen external relationships and leverage existing resources to implement their high school improvement initiatives.

The necessity and importance for increased SEA collaborations emerged as a common theme identified by participants at the Regional High School Dialogue series. The series began with an April 2008 kickoff (see the article in the [Spring 2008 News for the Region](#)) and continued through the May 2008 dialogue on 21st century learning (see the [Summer 2008 News for the Region](#)) and the September 2008 dialogue on multiple pathways to graduation (see the [Fall 2008 News for the Region](#)).

The fourth Regional High School Dialogue was held on January 15–16, 2009. Great Lakes East, in collaboration with the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center and the National High School Center, brought staff from all five states in the Great Lakes region—Illinois, Indiana,

Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin—to learn about specific processes, strategies, and structures they could implement to build coalitions and foster partnerships in their states.



IDEA Partnership
Director
Joanne Cashman

Joanne Cashman, director of the IDEA Partnership at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, laid the foundational pieces of successful SEA collaborations by sharing the key strategies and processes outlined in the [Communities of Practice](#) guide—a collaborative structure

developed by the IDEA Partnership to solve complex educational problems.

In addition to the *Communities of Practice* guide, Cashman introduced participants to an online community, [SharedWork.org](#), where SEAs and their partners communicate with each other on various projects.



Building upon the foundational pieces of successful SEA collaborations, state examples of successful partnerships—both within and outside the Midwest region—were shared with participants. Presenters focused on the elements that made their partnerships successful and also shared lessons learned, as follows:

Georgia. Ann Duffy, director of policy development at the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, and Amy Mast, director of implementation at The Alliance of Education Agency Heads, presented on the many Georgia P–16 collaborations and indicated how such collaborations can be sustained through changes in state and SEA leadership.

Iowa. Deb Hansen, professional development consultant at the Iowa Department of Education, and Nancy Bradley, from the Dubuque Community School District, presented on the relationships between the Iowa Department of Education and districts in the development and implementation of the Iowa Professional Development Model.

Maryland. Nancy Grasmick, Ph.D., state superintendent of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and Ted Imes, director of community and education outreach for Northrop-Grumman, presented the unique and innovative partnership between MSDE and Northrop-Grumman to improve the quality of and access to

science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for both students and educators.

Minnesota. Angie Judd, high school specialist from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and Jeff Bertrang, principal of Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop High School, presented the partnership between MDE and the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, which is implementing MDE’s high school redesign initiative.

After the meeting, participants commented that the combination of specific strategies and processes they can use with current SEA examples of those key elements were extremely useful. One participant said, “It pays to find ways around roadblocks and to persist in proposing ways to build coalitions and partnerships.” Another participant said that partnerships can provide key support to SEAs during times of change.

Summary

This dialogue focused on the importance of collaborations and partnerships to support state high school improvement initiatives. The need for increased collaboration is especially apparent when talking about transitions into and out of high school. The next Regional High School Dialogue will continue this conversation on collaboration and apply it to SEA opportunities and challenges related to high school transitions.



Regional RTI Summit Paves the Way to a Regional Network for RTI Implementation in the States

For the last few years, the Office of Special Education Programs and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education have been convening annually to leverage resources and promote collaboration among various regional centers across the country. The December 2007 National Response to Intervention (RTI) Summit in Washington, D.C., is one example of such collaboration to leverage resources and assistance to the states.

As a follow-up to the national summit, the centers in the Midwest determined that a regional meeting to continue the work would be an appropriate next step in providing targeted support to states. On October 29–31, 2008, the North Central RTI Summit took place in Rosemont, Illinois. It was a collaborative effort of the North Central Regional Resource Center, the National Center on Response to Intervention, and five regional comprehensive centers: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-Continent, and North Central.

The North Central Regional Resource Center invited all of its nine states to attend the summit: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. (These states are served by the five respective regional comprehensive centers.) The overall purpose of the summit was to provide training, information, and hands-on planning time for state teams working on the implementation of early intervention services and RTI instructional approaches. Also, the summit was intended to help the regional centers develop a network for further collaboration to assist their states.

States indicated that they benefited from having multiple centers present at the summit. By attending the summit, they better understood the types of supports available to them from the different centers. They meaningfully interacted with each of the centers and with other states. Furthermore, the centers continue to work with states by providing technical assistance and professional development opportunities.

Following the regional summit, Great Lakes East provided RTI technical assistance to two of its states: Indiana and Michigan. Following is a short summary of the accomplishments for each state.

Indiana. In Indiana, Allyson Layland, technical assistance liaison for the National Center on Response to Intervention, and Stacy Rush, task leader for the Technical Assistance Liaison Team at the National Center on Response to Intervention, met with staff from the Indiana Department of Education's Office of Special Education to plan the draft of Indiana's RTI plan.

Michigan. In Michigan, Great Lakes East assisted with the planning and facilitation of the MDE RTI team all-day meeting on January 23, 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to continue to build shared understanding of RTI and move forward with planning for statewide implementation. At the conclusion of the meeting, the team decided to arrange a discussion with Office of School Improvement staff to explore ways to integrate MDE's school improvement framework and RTI.



Special Reports

How States Can Help Improve Instruction in a Data-Driven Culture

By Gary Money, Senior Consultant, Learning Point Associates

Teachers think and talk about classroom instruction every day—what they teach, what students know and need to learn, how students learn, and where students are on their learning journey. Today’s data-driven culture allows educators to have rich conversations but only when they are using quality tools to inform their decisions.

One such tool—the *Surveys of Enacted Curriculum* (SEC)—has been used across the country for the past decade to inform instruction from the classroom level to the state level. The information gathered through this set of data collection tools enables states to examine the alignment of instruction to state standards; analyze teacher data to inform student assessments; build capacity within the state for data discussions and discussions about teaching and learning; and benefit from the SEC community of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

To learn how the SEC can inform decision making at your school or district, contact Jennifer Reed at Learning Point Associates by [e-mail](#).

What Are the SEC?

The SEC are a practical and reliable set of data collection tools that teachers use to collect and analyze consistent data on their instructional practices and content they teach in classrooms. Results from existing studies support the reliability and validity of the SEC instruments and reports. Study results also show that the SEC address educators’ needs for comparable, reliable data and analyses of their instruction (Blank, 2004; Blank et al., 2001; Porter, 2002). More [research results](#) are available online. Currently, the SEC include the subject areas of mathematics, science, English

language arts, and social studies—Grades K–12. The SEC surveys and data analysis services were developed through the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards project. The survey designs were based on research conducted by Andrew Porter and John Smithson at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) on the use of a survey approach to analyze instructional content. CCSSO led a group of educators from 11 states in the initial planning and development of the SEC. Learning Point Associates, which administers Great Lakes East, has been a collaborative member in this development along with other partners including the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, and member states.

The surveys are based on state and national standards for content and teaching as well as previous well-tested survey instruments, including the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and the National Survey of Science and Mathematics Education by Horizon Research, Inc. Through collaboration with SEAs, the surveys were field-tested in 1999 in classrooms in more than 200 schools. Currently, the SEC are being applied for state and local data-based projects in 30 states.

How Can the SEC Help States, Districts, and Schools Address Instruction-Related Questions?

According to CCSSO (2003), the SEC “tools are intended to assist teachers, administrators, and policymakers with planning for instructional improvement in several ways:

- Aligning classroom instruction with state standards and assessments.



- Evaluating effects of initiatives, such as professional development, in changing instructional content and/or practice.
- Analyzing instructional practices and teacher preparation to develop a needs assessment in low performance areas.
- Measuring indicators of instruction and their relationship to student achievement.”

Rolf Blank (personal communication, February 20, 2009), SEC director at CCSSO, states:

The SEC online system is a comprehensive survey approach that is adaptable to a number of educational analysis, planning, and improvement purposes, but the key unique feature of this tool is the capacity to report the content and practices that are being taught in classrooms and to compare the data across schools, districts, and states.

Teachers, the primary users of the SEC, complete the survey questions through an online, Web-based system. Upon completion, the group data (a minimum of three teachers) are reported in user-friendly charts and graphs to facilitate analysis of the results. A [sample display](#) is available online.

This display illustrates the *enacted* curriculum (classroom instruction provided by the teachers) in the left map and the *intended* curriculum (state standards) in the right map. When completing the Instructional Content portion of the survey, teachers indicate which topics (along with subtopics) they cover in their target class. For each subtopic, they report the amount of time spent teaching the content and indicate their cognitive expectations of students for demonstrating knowledge of the content.

Response results are displayed graphically using contour maps, which are similar to topographic maps in geography. The differences in color between the two maps indicate changes in emphasis: the lighter the color, the less time or emphasis; the darker the color, the more time or

emphasis. (*Time* refers to teacher instruction and *emphasis* refers to the state standards or assessments.)

The purpose of these maps is to generate questions and discussion topics, not to place judgment. A well-facilitated discussion will glean reasonable explanations through such follow-up questions for teachers regarding survey results as follows:

- What subtopics in certain areas are not covered in the instruction?
- What topics indicate substantial amount of instructional time?
- What cognitive demand levels (student expectations) are being addressed for this content?
- Does each cognitive demand level match or exceed the state standard?
- Does this content emphasis align with the state standard?
- Is there a reasonable explanation for the findings?

How the SEC Have Informed Instructional Decisions in Great Lakes East States

Indiana

Currently in Indiana, two school districts have been using the SEC as a result of statewide improvement efforts: Hammond and Elkhart. In Hammond, Learning Point Associates is conducting a four-session program to develop expertise and knowledge on using the SEC in building-level school improvement. A group of assistant principals has been meeting to become skilled at using the SEC in addressing student learning issues. They are building capacity and confidence to lead discussions about the SEC data with teachers. Learning Point Associates has facilitated discussions that examine how the SEC data can be compared to state standards and how student expectations compare to fellow teachers' and state standards. Using the SEC language to describe instruction, curriculum, and



cognitive demands of students is developing a data-driven culture within schools.

In Elkhart, as an outcome of a curriculum audit for mathematics by Learning Point Associates, the Elkhart Community Schools decided to engage in an SEC project for mathematics and to develop a common mathematics epistemology between the elementary and the secondary programs. The following are comments of Dr. David R. Benak (personal communication, January 22, 2009), supervisor of curriculum and instruction, Elkhart Community Schools, regarding the use of SEC:

At the elementary level, the Elkhart curriculum is a constructivist approach and at the secondary level, the curriculum was a traditional approach. We have and are providing ongoing professional development on a comprehensive mathematics model for secondary mathematics teachers. The program is the mathematics application of the Making Standards Work model from the Leadership and Learning Center [led by Dr. Douglas Reeves].

Elkhart is in the process of building a district-wide curriculum map based upon conceptual units [conceptual learning packages with identified power standards (indicators) and supporting standards]. The curriculum map contains conceptual units, big ideas and essential questions, standards and indicators, content, skills, effective teaching strategies, assessments, and educational activities and tasks. Included in the academic standards is a heavy emphasis on the process standards.

The SEC survey assists mapping teams to identify both content and cognitive demand targets that appear to be missing in the enacted curriculum. As such, they allow for structured and targeted revisions of the maps.

Michigan

Several Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSP) projects for 2008–09 require using the SEC

for a needs assessment of professional development planning. Learning Point Associates has conducted training sessions on conducting teacher orientations and introduction to data throughout Michigan to build capacity among MSP staff members (mostly consultants). It is expected that teachers participating in the MSP projects will have the opportunity to view and use the SEC data to inform their instructional practice.

In addition to the MSP project, the High School Mathematics and Science Success (HS-MASS) project will utilize the SEC this spring for needs assessment in determining future professional development goals. MDE also plans to develop an SEC database for future use. Presently, more than 700 teachers have registered for the SEC, and, potentially, 2,000 teachers will complete the SEC by summer 2009. Kevin J. Richard (personal communication, January 30, 2009), science education consultant at MDE's Office of School Improvement, speaks to the value added of SEC:

We are pleased there is a common tool, such as SEC, available to collect statewide data about current teacher practices.... With the hard data provided [through SEC], we can better assess gaps in our teacher populations in terms of either missed curriculum or mismatched cognitive demands. We can analyze this data on a district, regional, or statewide level depending upon the professional development target audience.

Ohio

Ohio has been a leader in using the SEC. More than 9,000 teacher surveys have been completed in the past five years. The majority of the SEC data are in the English language arts (a requirement of those participating in Reading First–Ohio), but there are teacher surveys for science, mathematics, and social studies as well. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has been a strong advocate of districts using the SEC in the work of school improvement, professional development, curriculum, and making connections to student achievement data.



Chris Woolard (personal communication, February 20, 2009), the SEC project manager at ODE, finds:

The SEC provide valuable classroom, building, and district level data about instruction and teacher practices that otherwise might not exist in data-driven processes. Understanding this type of teacher data is important in examining factors that may be related to student achievement, such as curriculum alignment, instructional and assessment strategies, instructional influences, and teacher opinions and beliefs. The SEC has provided Ohio and participating schools with a feasible method to collect this data and offer related resources and professional development on a large scale.

During the 2008–09 school year, the SEC survey has been strategically integrated into the Ohio Improvement Process (see the [Fall 2008 News for the Region](#)). This process expects districts to move through the four stages that rely on data to inform the plan and goals for school improvement and to implement and monitor the plan with integrity.

Great Lakes East has been a partner in assisting ODE conduct the pilot for this process. As stated by Mark Mitchell (personal communication, February 9, 2009), Great Lakes East Ohio state manager:

Districts that participate in generating SEC data will have access to a powerful source of evidence-based information about curriculum alignment and instructional and assessment practices; this information will lead to more high-yield strategies for improvement.

Recently, Learning Point Associates, in collaboration with CCSSO consultants, hosted two-day SEC leadership programs in Ohio to build capacity within the state for using the SEC data to inform district initiatives. As a result, a core group of regional service providers has completed the training and is now assisting districts in using the SEC data.

Summary

As illustrated by the ongoing work in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio, the SEC tools provide a highly accessible method of collecting, displaying, and using in-depth data on classroom instruction and alignment. The SEC tools have proven useful for teachers, education leaders, and policymakers. Using the SEC data in a data-driven dialogue process, whether by an SEA or a local education agency (LEA), gives educators relevant shared data for discussion regarding teaching and learning issues. The SEC data can also serve as a common link between SEA and LEA discussions about instruction. Using the SEC data to inform discussion about student assessment data adds insight into action plans to address either gaps in content or depth of understanding. Monitoring progress with follow-up discussions and data allows LEAs to determine if results are successful or need further modification.

The data collection, analysis, and application services are available through CCSSO and the collaborating partner organizations. WCER has content analyzed many state, national, and international documents using the SEC methodology (content includes English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). Visit the following websites to view the available documents and access more information:

- [CCSSO SEC website](#)
- [Learning Point Associates SEC website](#)
- [WCER SEC online survey](#)
- [WCER SEC resources](#)

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Reading First in Ohio: Value Added to Literacy Instruction

By Kelly Hallberg, Senior Research Associate, Learning Point Associates

Reading First–Ohio (RFO), an early literacy initiative in Ohio that provides federal funds to support research-based programs in reading for students in Grades K–3, completed its fifth year of implementation during the 2007–08 school year. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) designed the initiative to include embedded literacy professional development for Grades K–3 teachers, implementation of scientifically based reading programs, a mandatory 90-minute literacy block, and an instructional focus on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

As a subcontractor for Westat, Learning Point Associates (RFO’s external evaluator), conducted site visits in eight RFO schools and seven matched Title I comparison schools. The site visits included interviews with teachers, principals, literacy specialists, data managers, resource coordinators, and district administrators. They also included classroom observations using the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement’s classroom observation protocol. The collected data were used to track program implementation and impact in the RFO schools as compared to the similar Title I schools.

The evaluation found a measurable difference in literacy instruction in RFO schools as compared to

the Title I comparison schools. Classroom observations revealed that instruction in RFO schools was significantly more likely to incorporate a wide variety of instructional best practices associated with the RFO program model. For example, more class time was devoted to covering the five essential components of reading in RFO classrooms. Teachers in RFO schools also were likely to report using a scientifically based reading program more extensively for whole-group and small-group instruction than teachers in Title I comparison schools.

Increased instructional consistency was frequently cited by interview respondents as a benefit of the RFO initiative. For example, one interview respondent said, “Everybody’s on the same page and knows what has been done at the grade level before and the grade level coming up.” This finding was confirmed by the classroom observations, which found significantly higher levels of instructional consistency within RFO schools compared to Title I comparison schools. Interview respondents indicated using data more and using it more effectively.

More information about [Reading First–Ohio](#) is available online.



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 NCLB implementation efforts. The e-mail addresses of the state managers are included.



INDIANA

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School Improvement

Training of Instructional Coaches Continues as a Means to Improve Student Learning

As introduced in the [Fall 2008 News for the Region](#), Great Lakes East is supporting the Indiana Department of Education's Office of Title I Academic Support in the design and implementation of a program for instructional coaches from the 50 elementary schools in greatest academic need. The coaches work in the content area of English language arts or mathematics and help teachers improve their instruction.

In 2008, following the initial training in September, the second training for coaches on November 5 focused on analyzing student formative data and using the data to determine appropriate instructional practices. Trainers from WestEd conducted the day's training with assistance from two local educators: reading coach Holly Mencer from the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township and Dee Higgs, an integrating curriculum and technology specialist at the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation. The two presenters described the use of the Indiana Department of Education's new formative assessment tools, developed by [Acuity](#) and [Wireless Generation](#). According to Mencer, the effective use of data to plan instruction is a process that requires several years to fully develop; this process is well worth the time because it leads to gains in student learning. The coaches gave the presenters high marks for the hands-on work with data and for the photographs of data walls and rooms.

On the following day, November 6, the principals of the 50 schools joined their coaches. They learned about the 10 roles that coaches typically are required to play, and they also considered ways to support coaches in these roles. The principals also received encouragement to avoid using coaches for conducting teacher evaluations because coaches cannot be effective if they are viewed as evaluators of teachers. Together, principals and their coaches discussed issues of time, roles, and ways to support one another in the implementation of the instructional coaching model in their schools. Additional information about the November training can be found in the [Instructional Coaches Training Newsletter for November 2008](#).

With a focus on the role of a "classroom supporter," the third training for instructional coaches occurred on December 11. WestEd trainers Sonia Caus Gleason and Susan Villani introduced a three-step cycle for classroom observations called the "Collaborative Coaching Cycle" (Dunne & Villani, 2007). The coaches observed the trainers modeling the three steps of the cycle: (1) the planning conversation, (2) the observing of the classroom and gathering of data, and (3) the reflecting conversation. The coaches then practiced the planning conversation in pairs.



The coaches noted that a highlight of the day was hearing from one another as they shared their successes and challenges. The lessons learned formulated into “Terrific Tips from Coaches,” on pages 3–4 of the [Instructional Coaches Training Newsletter for November 2008](#). Here are some of the coaches’ practical, experience-based tips:

Getting Teachers to Participate:

- “The longer one waits to get into the classroom, the more difficult it will be.”
- “Gain commitment from all staff to implement the agreed-upon instructional practice. Together outline the steps or the protocol for the practice and ensure that all agree to implement the practice in the same manner.”

Working With Those Who Resist Working With You:

- *Especially for principals:* “Adopt the motto, ‘Everybody needs a coach!’ From Payton Manning to Oprah Winfrey to a fitness coach and to the principal who has a mentor—everyone needs a coach. Emphasize that ‘In this school, all of us will have a coach as all of us can improve on what we are doing.’ ”
- “Work with those teachers who are ‘ready’ to work with you first. With time, they will ‘sell’ your work to teachers who are more resistant.”

The instructional coaches will receive additional training in January, February, and April 2009 as well as support during the 2009–10 school year.

Reference

Dunne, K., & Villani, S. (2007). *Mentoring new teachers through Collaborative Coaching: Facilitation and training guide*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Indiana Institute for School Leadership Teams: The Story of a School in Improvement (Update)

[The Fall 2008 News for the Region](#) highlighted Beardsley Elementary School in Elkhart, Indiana—one of five selected to participate in Indiana’s Institute for School Leadership Teams. In the article, the Beardsley School Leadership Team members spoke of their experience at the Institute’s Summer Academy and the helpfulness of Julie Bakehorn, former principal of George H. Fisher Elementary School, who was designated as a Distinguished Principal. The team developed a two-year Institute goal to improve student learning, with one measure being increased student scores on the Indiana Statewide Testing for Student Progress–Plus (ISTEP+).

At the Summer Academy, Bakehorn led the Beardsley team in disaggregating their student data. The result was the identification of a small group of students who—if they were to pass ISTEP+—would enable the school to make adequate yearly progress. Bakehorn knew from her own experience as a principal in high-poverty schools that “quick wins” are critical for schools in improvement. Focusing on those students most likely to pass ISTEP+ when given extra support is a key strategy to achieve that “quick win” in order to build the confidence and morale of the students, teachers, and community.

At the opening of school in August, the Beardsley School Leadership Team members shared their data analysis with the school staff and received a commitment from them to increase both their focus of the instruction and the amount of instruction. These changes, as described by Beardsley Principal Jenny Sager and reported in *The Elkhart Truth* (Lange, 2008), included the following: (1) students in Grades 3–6 receiving focused instruction



on essential mathematics and English language arts skills for at least one hour a day, (2) certain targeted students receiving another additional hour of instruction to prepare them for the ISTEP+ test, and (3) some of those same students staying after school for yet a third hour of studying.

When Beardsley Elementary received its ISTEP+ results in December, the scores “were up substantially in almost every grade. With the exception of third-grade language arts, Beardsley’s scores surpassed the previous three years’ averages” (Lange, 2008). Although a direct correlation cannot be made between the increased quality and quantity of instruction and the increase in ISTEP+ scores, Indiana’s Distinguished Principals report that they have seen similar effects in their own schools. As the Beardsley School Leadership Teams knows, its next step is to extend the increased time and focus on instruction to *all* students at the school. Principal Sager notes her plans to expand the targeted group of students to receive additional instruction and to institute other changes as well. But, for now, hope continues at Beardsley that student learning will improve. As Principal Sager said, “Bottom line is, we just want to keep on growing” (Lange, 2008).

Reference

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High School

High School Redesign

Great Lakes East continues to facilitate MDE’s high school core team’s monthly meetings to increase collaboration across offices. With key partners, the team is looking further for ways to help schools and districts increase the academic achievement of students in Michigan’s high schools. In November 2008, the team focused on how to prepare English language learners (ELLs) for academic success and raise their achievement. The group explored what MDE can do to help districts and schools ensure that ELLs achieve to high standards. The members generated a list of recommendations and then shared information from the meeting with their respective offices. Such a purposeful and focused way of sharing the information allows the team to continue looking at how their respective offices can assist schools and districts with increasing the academic achievement of ELLs across Michigan.

Two consecutive monthly meetings (December 2008 and January 2009) explored a wider range of options for making secondary education more effective in Michigan. The December meeting focused on how MDE can build systems of support to help alternative education schools and students in these schools meet the rigorous requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and the Michigan Merit Exam. The January meeting focused on successful practices in high-poverty, high-minority, and high-performance secondary schools. During the next two meetings, the core team will focus on this topic and its implication for designing state-level support.



Alternative High Schools

Great Lakes East facilitated the alternative education work group meeting in January 2009. Representatives from MDE's Office of School Improvement, Office of Educational Technology, Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability, the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Superintendent's Office met with representatives from districts and schools that have alternative education programs across the state. The purpose of the meeting was to present the recommendation of a definition for alternative education and to get an update on the status of issues and concerns discussed throughout the past year. The statewide definition of alternative education was presented to Deputy Superintendent Sally Vaughn and will be submitted to Superintendent of Public Instruction Michael Flanagan. If approved, the definition will be presented to the Michigan State Board of Education.

During the meeting, discussions continued on issues, concerns, and barriers that alternative high schools face in meeting the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and the Michigan Merit Exam. As a result of these discussions, MDE clarified that policy will allow districts to determine when students in alternative education are juniors and are required to take the Michigan Merit Exam. Current policy requires students in ungraded alternative education programs to take the exam at age 17 and in their third year of high school.

English Language Learners

Great Lakes East continues its assistance to MDE to create and refine communication tools for ELL educators as part of MDE's five-year strategic ELL plan. Presentations on ELL-related services for local school district leaders and teachers have been finalized for statewide dissemination. In addition, Great Lakes East's collaboration with MDE's Office of School Improvement (OSI) and OEAA continues to support and facilitate the merger of two statewide ELL advisory committees from the two offices. The first joint meeting was held on November 21, 2008, and planning work and facilitation assistance continued through December 2008. The second joint meeting was held on January 29–30. At this meeting, committee groups structured their work around the state's five-year ELL strategic plan. The groups will provide a framework for much of this ongoing joint ELL committee work in the coming months.

In addition, Great Lakes East provided the following extensive research information to OSI staff on two areas relevant to the education of Michigan's large migrant population:

- An update on current research and migrant education practices, including graduation and credit accrual, available Web-based and other resources, and targeted migrant states' status update
- The potential effects of Michigan's increased high school graduation requirements on migrant students

Great Lakes East also is continuing its work with MDE on the supplemental ELL project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education last year. Two major efforts are under way, as follows:

- **Refining OSI and OEAA Assessment Needs.** This effort includes ongoing work with OSI and OEAA and continued facilitation of their combined advisory committees. An ongoing effort is to articulate a balance between state assessments and their impact on instruction. The specific focus is the high school level along with the refinement of the state's current annual measurable achievement objective targets.
- **Cross-Office ELL Dialogue Event.** The first Michigan ELL dialogue took place on February 10–11, 2009, at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. The theme was "Quality Counts 2009: How ELLs Are



Putting Michigan Schools to the Test.” The agenda focused on creating awareness of activities related to ELLs at MDE, building cross-office coordination, establishing a clear cross-office agenda, and sharing examples of state-level practices regarding the preparation of ELLs for academic success and raising their achievement. Great Lakes East and national experts from the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center at WestEd and the Center for Applied Linguistics worked with a group of MDE staff representing multiple offices: Professional Preparation Services, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, Special Education and Early Intervention Services, School Improvement, Educational Assessment and Accountability, Field Services, Career and Technical Education, and the Superintendent’s Office. Several representatives from the joint ELL advisory committees also were among the attendees.

Statewide System of Support

Great Lakes East is assisting MDE and its partners to develop, sustain, and support partnerships critical to creating and delivering a coherent, coordinated statewide system of support for Michigan’s high-priority schools. The goal is to build a common understanding of Michigan’s statewide system of support among all stakeholders, build a consistent communication system for partners about all initiatives and feedback as they make decisions related to their individual projects or services, and create enhancements to the current system. Enhancements include the development of an instructional coaching model and a district audit tool.

MDE began collaborating with the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) and its partners to enhance the current statewide system of support in November 2008. MAISA and MDE are collaborating to develop a coaching model for English language arts, mathematics, and data coaches to assist Title I High-Priority Schools in addressing the needs of their subgroups and target populations that are not making adequate yearly progress. Great Lakes East disseminated information from the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, the Center on Instruction, REL Northwest, the University of Kansas, and the National High School Center to help inform MDE’s work. Great Lakes East also facilitated a meeting between Indiana’s state manager at Great Lakes East and MDE to increase their knowledge of Indiana’s instructional-coaching model.

On the subject of a district audit tool, in January, Great Lakes East facilitated a meeting with MDE and Steve Schenck from the Center on Innovation & Improvement. Schenck shared information about district audit tools in Kentucky and Virginia, including the process for developing the tools and how they are being used. Great Lakes East will continue to facilitate these conversations to help MDE in developing a district audit tool.



OHIO

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Assessment and Accountability

Data Support System and the Ohio Improvement Process

The Data Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement (D3A2) Professional Development Committee met formally for the last time on December 4, 2008. The four modules of the [Ohio Data Primer](#) are now functional



and linked on [Ohio's D3A2 website](#). The Ohio Data Primer is intended to be used by principals and teachers to increase their understanding of data in support of teaching and learning. The [Move Ahead tool](#) has been functional for some time and can be accessed online. It is designed for central office staff to self-assess what supports are in place districtwide to support the rigorous use of data. In addition, through the work of Lynn Ochs at the Hamilton County Educational Service Center, the D3A2 Professional Development Toolkit is now complete and can be accessed on the D3A2 website. The toolkit is designed to help teachers understand state achievement data and use the D3A2 website for the purpose of improving teaching and learning.

Some members from the D3A2 Professional Development Committee will now shift their focus to providing technical assistance and support in the design of statewide, systemic supports for the development and use of common formative assessments by districts and buildings. Staff members from RMC Research Corporation (Karen Sanders and Linda McDonald) will play a significant role in this new work along with the Assessment and Accountability Content Center. The common formative assessment work will become a significant element of Stage 3 of the Ohio Improvement Process: implementation and monitoring of the focused improvement plan. Common formative assessments could be used to monitor both the degree of implementation of defined districtwide strategies as well as changes in adult practice and their impact on student learning.

High School Reform Work

The high school redesign work in Ohio includes the performance-based assessment pilot project and a policy push to increase credit flexibility at the district level, which will support alternative measures of student competency, including performance assessments. The improvement of high schools and the preparation of students for college and the workforce—especially the use of performance assessments—will over time become part of the universal district improvement process, known as the Ohio Improvement Process.

Ohio's Performance-Based Assessment (Pilot Project). Since the initial work in summer 2008 (described in the [Summer 2008 News for the Region](#)), ODE hosted a conference of interested high school teams from across Ohio. Great Lakes East and REL Midwest at Learning Point Associates provided planning and design support to ODE for the conference. The event provided teachers and administrators with a face-to-face opportunity to hear details about the pilot project and how they could become involved. Following the meeting, teams of high school educators applied to become part of the pilot. A total of 15 teams—representing career-technical centers, consortia of schools, and public high schools—were selected to participate. The first planning session was held on February 3–4 at the Franklin County Educational Service Center. Stanford University School Redesign Network staff facilitated the first session and continue to facilitate subsequent sessions designed to support high school teams in the development of course syllabi as well as embedded performance assessment. To support the pilot, an internal group at ODE is currently engaged in international benchmarking of Ohio's secondary mathematics, science, and English language arts standards. Great Lakes East will support the high school performance assessment work and the international benchmarking by providing research on standards and assessment and accountability systems internationally—including Queensland, Australia; Sweden; Finland; Cambridge Assessments (United Kingdom); and Singapore—as models for ODE to consider as they pilot and begin to implement a new secondary assessment system in Ohio.

Credit Flexibility: Shifting Focus from Seat Time to Performance. [Senate Bill 311](#) (2007)—the Ohio Core legislation—required that the State Board of Education adopt a plan by March 31, 2009, to enable “students to earn units of high school credit based on a demonstration of subject area competency, instead of or in combination with completing hours of classroom instruction” (Sec. 3313.603). After the plan is adopted by the



board, school districts will have until the 2009–10 school year to begin phasing in this policy. The State Board of Education asked ODE to develop a plan for enabling earned credit other than seat time. This request was the impetus for the creation of the Carnegie Design Team and involvement of Great Lakes East (Tori Cirks and Frank DeRosa). Great Lakes East is providing assistance to ODE as they design and facilitate stakeholder engagement meetings throughout Ohio. Feedback from stakeholder groups not only will shape what the plan looks like but also will provide guidance to ODE as they design a communications and implementation plan. The proposed credit flexibility plan will be presented before the Ohio State Board of Education on March 10, 2009. The final report, which includes a summary of the feedback from meetings with stakeholders, will be completed at the end of March.

Reference

Senate Bill 311, 128th General Assembly of Ohio (2007). Retrieved February 27, 2009 from http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=126_SB_311

State Systems of Support

District and School Improvement Support System Redesign

Great Lakes East (Sheryl Poggi and Claudette Rasmussen) continue their collaboration with a smaller working group (composed of members from the state-level design team). The group aims to articulate the structures and processes that district and building leadership teams should use to effectively implement and monitor their improvement plan (Stage 3 of the Ohio Improvement Process) as well as to continually improve instructional practice and student performance on a districtwide basis. These structures and processes will become part of the Stage 3 portion of the Ohio Improvement Process facilitator's guide. Many of these essential practices already have been articulated in the Ohio Leadership Development Framework. In addition to the smaller working group, the larger state-level design team will continue to provide guidance to ODE and mentor and support other regional staff. In the coming months, it will build upon the existing training and support system to prepare State Support Teams and Educational Service Center personnel to effectively facilitate and monitor the work of district and building leadership teams in Stage 3 of the Ohio Improvement Process. Finally, work continues on the Ohio Improvement Process website, which will help members of the Ohio educational system understand how data tools and resources align and support each stage of the Ohio Improvement Process.

Ohio Improvement Process Evaluation

This evaluation occurs at Stage 4 of the Ohio Improvement Process: evaluation of the improvement process. Great Lakes East is assisting ODE in the design of an evaluation system that can assess the status of the statewide system of support. Some of the elements will include an ongoing assessment of changes in adult behaviors and practices that support the continuous improvement of instructional practice and student achievement. An ODE working group has developed some indicators for each level of the system: building, district, region, and state. On February 4th, 2009, an external evaluation group composed of Great Lakes East staff, regional staff, and some ODE staff will review the work of the ODE working group and make suggested revisions to the evaluation matrix for the state systems of support. Great Lakes East will then work with ODE staff to help operationalize the collection and analysis of evidence that is focused on defined indicators at each level of the system (Stage 4 of the Ohio Improvement Process): building, district, region, and state.



In the News

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

INDIANA

State Spotlights School Leaders for Improving Student Learning—Indiana Department of Education, February 4, 2009

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/01-January/SchoolLeaders.html>

“Five Indiana principals from high-performing, high-poverty schools [were honored] with the state’s new Spotlight on Learning Award.... The first recipients of the Spotlight on Learning Award were chosen for their efforts as Title I Distinguished Principals, leaders from high-poverty urban schools who have demonstrated success at raising student achievement. The Distinguished Principals are a key component of a school improvement program initiated by the Indiana Department of Education called the Institute for School Leadership Teams.”

Bennett Response to State of the State Address—Indiana Department of Education, January 13, 2009

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/01-January/StateoftheState.html>

“Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett issued... [a] statement in response to Governor Mitch Daniels’ State of the State Address.”

Dr. Tony Bennett Inaugurated as Superintendent of Public Instruction, Announces Senior Staff Appointments—Indiana Department of Education, January 12, 2009

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/01-January/Appointments.html>

“Bennett laid out his goals for the Department of Education which include: setting high standards and keeping constant score of how Indiana schools are serving their students, recruiting and training the best teachers and administrators, and establishing new flexible structures for schools to meet the needs of Indiana’s students.”

Increasing Number of Indiana Families Using New Online ISTEP+ Parent Network—Indiana Department of Education, December 11, 2008

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2008/12-December/Increasing-ISTEP.html>

“The online reports available via the ISTEP+ Parent Network Web site offer a dynamic view of students’ ISTEP+ results along with supporting resources parents can use to help their students succeed in school.”

2008 ISTEP+ Results Indicate Slight Decrease in Scores—Indiana Department of Education, December 4, 2008

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2008/12-December/ISTEP.html>

“Statewide 2008 pass rates across all grades tested were approximately 71 percent in English/language arts, 74 percent in math and 60 percent in science.... The Indiana Department of Education has several complementary efforts underway to help local students, parents and educators identify and address areas of academic need.”

International Education Tied to Indiana’s Future—Indiana Department of Education, November 13, 2008

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2008/11-November/InternationalEd.html>

“Gone are the days when our neighbors were our sole competition. Today’s Hoosier workforce must compete – not just with other cities and states – but in a diverse and rapidly changing global marketplace.... If we are to maintain and increase our position as a global player, Indiana must provide its citizenry with a greater understanding of other languages and cultures through international education.”



MICHIGAN

Not Letting the Re-Imagining Engine Stall (Podcast)—Michigan Department of Education, February 19, 2009

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_45256-209191--,00.html

“In his latest podcast, State Superintendent Mike Flanagan ignites urgency in the effort to Re-Imagine Education in Michigan by comparing it to the current crisis in the auto industry.”

Priorities for Michigan’s Economic Future (State of the State Address 2009)—Office of the Governor, February 3, 2009

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/gov/SOS2009_265915_7.pdf

“Michigan will weather this economic storm because our people are resourceful and resilient and because our battle plan is focused on the three things that matter most: fighting for more good paying jobs in Michigan; educating and training our people to fill those jobs; and protecting our families during the worst economic conditions in more than a quarter of a century.”

Governor Granholm’s education priorities are available at

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/gov/Education_265919_7.pdf.

Bill Proposes Math Course on Finances—*Detroit News*, December 3, 2008

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081203/SCHOOLS/812030415/1026>

“Michigan soon could expand its options for meeting the math requirements needed for high school graduation. The state House...unanimously approved a bill that would allow a financial literacy course to count as an option toward meeting graduation requirements. The bill already has passed the Senate and will be returned to that chamber before being forwarded to Gov. Jennifer Granholm.”

Eliminate the Static Cling (Podcast)—Michigan Department of Education, December 3, 2008

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_45256-204537--,00.html

“State Superintendent Mike Flanagan uses past and recent American events to illustrate the need to stop clinging to the old, static ideas of educating Michigan’s children and embrace change to increase student achievement.”

Michigan Ranks Second in U.S. for Online Learning—Michigan Department of Education, November 18, 2008

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_34785-203895--,00.html

“Two years after Michigan gained national attention as the first state in the nation to require online learning as a requirement for high school graduation, the state now is being recognized as second in the nation for its online learning policy and practice.”

OHIO

State of the State Address 2009—Ohio Channel, January 28, 2009

http://www.ohiochannel.org/multimedia/programs/media.cfm?file_id=118378&program_id=107678&site_display_mode=2

“Governor Ted Strickland delivers his third State of the State address, in which he presents a comprehensive education reform and funding plan for Ohio schools.”

View Governor Strickland’s education reform and funding plan, *Reforming Ohio’s Education System for the 21st Century*:

<http://www.ohiochannel.org/multimedia/programs/Reforming%20Ohio%27s%20Education%20System%20for%20the%2021st%20Century.pdf>



Deborah S. Delisle to Be Sworn In as Superintendent of Public Instruction at State Board of Education Meeting—Ohio Department of Education, December 5, 2008

<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=854248725193223756>

“Deborah S. Delisle will be sworn in as Ohio’s superintendent of public instruction.... Following Delisle’s swearing-in, the State Board will recognize Ohio’s 21 *No Child Left Behind* National Blue Ribbon Schools.”

Schools and Districts Selected for Ohio’s Performance Assessment Pilot Project—Ohio Department of Education, December 3, 2008

<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=489129338729567585>

“The purpose of the project is to begin work on the state’s next generation of assessments.... The Ohio Performance Assessment Project is designed to support the initial research, development and pilot testing of a standards-based, balanced assessment approach. Participants will engage in common professional development sessions where they will work in partnership with the Stanford University School Redesign Network and receive support from regional and state resources.”



ELSEWHERE IN THE NATION

Assessment and Accountability

American Students Show Steady Progress in Math, Rank High in International Education Comparison TIMSS—U.S. Department of Education, December 9, 2008

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/12/12092008.html>

“In the latest report of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the ongoing evaluation of 36 to 48 countries revealed that in 2007 the U.S. consistently rated at least in the top one-third and in some cases the top one-fourth of participating nations.”

No Effect on Comprehension Seen from “Reading First”—*Education Week*, November 19, 2008

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/11/18/14read.h28.html?tmp=240528637>

“The \$6 billion funding for the federal Reading First program has helped more students ‘crack the code’ to identify letters and words, but it has not had an impact on reading comprehension among 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders in participating schools.... While more time is spent on reading instruction and professional development in schools that received Reading First grants than in comparison schools, students in participating schools are no more likely to become proficient readers, even after several years with the extended instruction, the study found.”

Data Quality Campaign Announces 3-Year Progress—Data Quality Campaign, November 15, 2008

http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/files/news-dqc_marks_3_years-111508.pdf

“Six states have all 10 elements of a comprehensive data system that can track student progress from preschool through college, and 48 states have at least half the elements, according to the third annual report released today by the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) during the Council of Chief State School Officers’ (CCSSO) Annual Policy Forum.”

Under “No Child” Law, Even Solid Schools Falter—*The New York Times*, October 12, 2008

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/13/education/13child.html?_r=2&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss

“Across the nation, far more schools failed to meet the federal law’s testing targets than in any previous year, according to new state-by-state data.... Part of the reason for the troubles was that the states gambled the law would have been softened when it came up for reauthorization in 2007, but efforts to change it stalled. This year Congress made no organized attempt to reconsider the law. With the nation facing urgent challenges, including two wars and economic turmoil, it could be a year or more before the new president can work with Congress to rewrite the law.”



High Schools

The Future of High School Reform—*U.S. News & World Report*, December 4, 2008

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/education/high-schools/2008/12/04/the-future-of-high-school-reform.html>

“A panel of experts discussed the future of high school reform at the first *U.S. News* and Intel education summit held at the National Press Club in Washington.... The panelists discussed everything from the impact of charter schools to the future of No Child Left Behind.”

Measures That Matter—Making College and Career Readiness the Mission for America’s High Schools—Achieve, November 20, 2008

<http://www.achieve.org/node/1048>

“State policy makers need a new approach to the system of standards, tests, and accountability in high school – one that makes college and career readiness the central driver and acknowledges where greater state leadership and resources are essential to success. *Measures that Matter* is a joint, ongoing effort by Achieve and The Education Trust to address that challenge, providing strategic and technical guidance to states in creating a coherent set of policies designed to get all students college- and career-ready.”

Executive summary of *Making College and Career Readiness the Mission for High Schools: A Guide for State Policymakers* is available at <http://www.achieve.org/files/MeasurethatMatterExecutiveSummary.pdf>.

New Rules Aimed at Highlighting, Improving Low Graduation Rates—*The Washington Post*, October 29, 2008

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/28/AR2008102803689.html?nav=rss_education

“New federal rules made final yesterday will tighten enforcement of the No Child Left Behind law, including requiring schools nationwide to use a single formula to calculate high school graduation rate.... In the most significant shift, states must begin using a single graduation-rate formula, which counts the percentage of ninth-graders who earn a diploma within four years, by 2011.”

Instruction

Science Evolves in Classrooms—*The Washington Post*, October 27, 2008

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/26/AR2008102601954.html?nav=rss_education

“In the past six years, science has slipped as a priority in public schools while reading and mathematics have grown dominant. But in coming years, experts say, the same federal law that elevated reading and math could spark a resurgence of science in the classroom.”

NCLB

U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings Announces Approval of Three Additional States to Use Differentiated Accountability Under NCLB—U.S. Department of Education, January 8, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/01/01082009b.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today announced the approval of three additional states—Arkansas, Louisiana and New York—to use the Differentiated Accountability Pilot aimed at helping states develop a more nuanced system of accountability to distinguish between underperforming schools in need of dramatic interventions and those that are closer to meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind.”



Department Releases New Policy Document on Charter Schools—U.S. Department of Education, October 21, 2008

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/10/10212008.html>

“The U.S. Department of Education has released a new publication on creating and maintaining successful charter schools, summarizing its vision for the future of the charter school sector in the U.S. and outlining steps to happen to achieve that vision.”

Student Subgroups

Quality Counts 2009—Portrait of a Population: How English Language Learners Are Putting Schools to the Test—*Education Week*, January 8, 2009

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2009/01/08/index.html>

“The nationwide report card on the continual push for K–12 school improvement includes a special focus this year on how English-language learners are putting schools to the test.”

Teacher Quality

Creating a Relationship Between Professional Development and English Language Learners—National Institute for Urban School Improvement *LeadScape* Conversation, February 2009

<http://www.niuisleadscape.org/bl/>

“In this [online] space, over the past several months, educators have discussed how we must attend to the needs of English language learners and to the professional development models we are using to build capacity among teachers for working with ELL students.”

What Happens When States Have Genuine Alternative Certification?—*Education Next*, Winter 2009

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/34564684.html>

“Forty-seven states have adopted a pathway to teaching, alternative to the standard state certification otherwise required. Is this new pathway genuine or merely symbolic? Does it open the classroom door to teachers of minority background? Does it help—or hinder—learning in the classroom? Claims about all of these questions have arisen in public discourse. Recently, data have become available that allow us to check their validity.”

Resources

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

Assisting Students Struggling with Reading: Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-Tier Intervention in the Primary Grades—National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, February 2009

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf

“In the primary grades students with reading difficulties may need intervention to prevent future reading failure. This guide offers specific recommendations to help educators identify students in need of intervention and implement evidence-based interventions to promote their reading achievement. It also describes how to carry out each recommendation, including how to address potential roadblocks in implementing them.”



Course Credit Accrual and Dropping Out of High School, by Student Characteristics—National Center for Education Statistics, February 2009

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009035rev.pdf>

“This Statistics in Brief contributes to the research by using a nationally representative sample of 10th-graders in public and private schools in the spring of 2002 to examine the timing of dropping out and its relationship to the number of credits earned by high school students.”

Scaling Up Evidence-Based Practices in Education—State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center, February 2009

http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/sisepbrief_scalingup.pdf

“The purpose of this *Brief* is to provide a framework that state leadership teams and others can use to develop the capacity to make effective, statewide, and sustained use of evidence-based practices and other innovations.”

TQ Connection Discussion on Response to Intervention: Learning Strategies—National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, January 2009

<http://www.tqsource.org/forum/index.php?board=15.0>

If you missed this week-long online discussion in January 2009, you can read the discussion posts online. Jean Schumaker, Ph.D., former associate director of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning, led the discussion on RTI and the knowledge and skills that teachers must acquire to be effective instructors of learning strategies for all students.

Reading First Impact Study: Final Report (Executive Summary)—National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, November 2008

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pdf/20094039.pdf>

“This report presents findings from the third and final year of the Reading First Impact Study (RFIS), a congressionally mandated evaluation of the federal government’s \$1.0 billion-per-year initiative to help all children read at or above grade level by the end of third grade.”

Closing the Graduation Gap: A Superintendent’s Guide for Planning Multiple Pathways to Graduation—Youth Transition Funders Group, October 2008

<http://www.ytfg.org/documents/ClosingtheGraduationGapFinal13October2008.pdf>

“This guide, built upon the emerging lessons from successful districts nationwide, is designed to help districts plan a comprehensive reform process to increase graduation rates for all students.”

Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Results From the First Year of a Randomized Controlled Study—National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, October 2008

<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/teachinduction1.pdf>

“The study examines whether comprehensive teacher induction programs lead to higher teacher retention rates and other positive teacher and student outcomes as compared to prevailing, generally less comprehensive approaches to supporting new teachers.”



Calendar of Events

For additional listings, check the Great Lakes East website for the [Calendar of Events](#).

JANUARY 2009

Dates:	January 5	Topic:	Stage 3 Ohio Improvement Process Subcommittee
Location:	Columbus, OH	Audience:	State-level design team
Format:	Meeting	Sponsors:	Ohio Department of Education, Great Lakes East
Dates:	January 15	Topic:	Indiana Institute for School Leadership Teams (School-Year Session #2)
Location:	Indianapolis, IN	Audience:	Office of Title I Academic Support, school leadership teams, distinguished principals
Format:	Training	Sponsors:	Indiana Department of Education's Office of Title I Academic Support, Great Lakes East
Dates:	January 15–16	Topic:	4th Regional High School Dialogue: "Building Coalitions and Fostering Partnerships"
Location:	Rosemont, IL	Audience:	SEA representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
Format:	Meeting (Invitation only)	Sponsors:	Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West
Dates:	January 27	Topic:	Indiana Instructional Coaches (Session #4)
Location:	Indianapolis, IN	Audience:	Instructional coaches
Format:	Training	Sponsors:	Indiana Department of Education's Office of Title I Academic Support, Great Lakes East
Dates:	January 29–30	Topic:	Joint ELL Advisory Committee Meeting
Location:	East Lansing, MI	Audience:	Office of School Improvement and Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability advisory committees
Format:	Meeting	Sponsors:	Michigan Department of Education, Great Lakes East

FEBRUARY 2009

Dates:	February 10–11	Topic:	ELL MDE Cross-Office Dialogue
Location:	East Lansing, MI	Audience:	Multiple offices at MDE, joint ELL Advisory Committee
Format:	Meeting	Sponsors:	Michigan Department of Education, Great Lakes East
Dates:	February 23	Topic:	"Promoting Teacher Leaders: Strategies for School and District Leaders"
Location:	Online	Audience:	Educators, teacher leaders, and administrators
Format:	Webinar	Sponsors:	U.S. Department of Education, Great Lakes West



MARCH 2009

Dates:	March 2–6	Topic:	TQ Connection Online Discussion: “Response to Intervention (RTI): Addressing Disproportionality”
Location:	Online	Audience:	Educators
Format:	Forum discussion	Sponsor:	National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality
Dates:	March 4–5	Topic:	Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West Advisory Meeting
Location:	Rosemont, IL	Audience:	Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West staff and advisory members
Format:	Meeting	Sponsors:	Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West
Dates:	March 12–13	Topic:	National Conference on “Using Research to Strengthen Response to Intervention (RtI) Decision Making and Implementation”
Location:	Washington, DC	Audience:	SEA and LEA staff; U.S. Department of Education staff; staff from national organizations, regional educational laboratories, and regional comprehensive centers
Format:	Conference	Sponsor:	REL Southeast
Dates:	March 19	Topic:	Webinar Series on Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education: Together We Can!—“Beyond Compliance”
Location:	Online	Audience:	State and local district leaders, regular and special education teachers, building principals, local special education directors, parent centers, regional parent technical assistance centers, institutions of higher education
Format:	Webinar	Sponsor:	Regional Resource Center Program
Dates:	March 19–22	Topic:	NSTA National Conference on Science Education
Location:	New Orleans, LA	Audience:	Science educators
Format:	Conference	Sponsor:	National Science Teachers Association
Dates:	March 25	Topic:	“RTI and Universal Screening: Establishing District Benchmarks”
Location:	Online	Audience:	Teachers, administrators
Format:	Webinar	Sponsor:	National Center on Response to Intervention
Dates:	March 25–26	Topic:	“Leveraging Resources”: 4th Annual Joint Meeting of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) Comprehensive and Equity Assistance Centers and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Projects
Location:	TBD	Audience:	OSEP TA&D Network, comprehensive centers, equity assistance centers
Format:	Meeting	Sponsors:	OSEP, OESE, Federal Resource Center



Dates: March 26	Topic: “High School Redesign: Emerging Research about Interventions to Support Conversations Around Transitions”
Location: Online	Audience: State education agency staff
Format: Webinar	Sponsors: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West, REL Midwest
Dates: March 30	Topic: Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: The What, How, and Why of Educator Evaluation
Location: Online	Audience: Practitioners, policymakers
Format: Webcast	Sponsors: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality and REL Midwest at Learning Point Associates

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dates: April 13–17	Topic: 2009 AERA Annual Meeting: “Disciplined Inquiry: Education Research in the Circle of Knowledge”
Location: Conference	Audience: Education researchers
Format: San Diego, CA	Sponsor: American Educational Research Association
Dates: April 23	Topic: Webinar Series on Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education: Together We Can!—“Intervention”
Location: Online	Audience: State and local district leaders, regular and special education teachers, building principals, local special education directors, parent centers, regional parent technical assistance centers, institutions of higher education
Format: Webinar	Sponsor: Regional Resource Center Program
Dates: May 14	Topic: Webinar Series on Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education: Together We Can!—“Addressing Systemic Issues”
Location: Online	Audience: State and local district leaders, regular and special education teachers, building principals, local special education directors, parent centers, regional parent technical assistance centers, institutions of higher education
Format: Webinar	Sponsor: Regional Resource Center Program
Dates: May 28	Topic: Webinar Series on Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education: Together We Can!—“Roles and Responsibilities for Moving Forward”
Location: Online	Audience: State and local district leaders, regular and special education teachers, building principals, local special education directors, parent centers, regional parent technical assistance centers, institutions of higher education
Format: Webinar	Sponsor: Regional Resource Center Program

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