



Connecting Our Region to Resources for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

This special edition of our quarterly *News for the Region* e-newsletter brings you thoughtfully selected resources to help you understand what the new American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) means for Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. With the billions of dollars being dispersed into education, the states have many opportunities to make a difference for all learners. We are here to help.

We have been listening to state education agency (SEA) representatives talk about their needs, questions, and plans regarding ARRA and gathering information to help states move their education goals forward. In this issue, you'll find ARRA-specific resources to get you the information you need most (see the "Special Reports" beginning on pages 6 and 12). Also, in collaboration with the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center, we're bringing state leaders together this summer through a Web Dialogue Series to share information, strategies, and processes that can help SEAs in streamlining their communication and reporting responsibilities related to ARRA (see "Spotlight" on page 5).

With new ARRA information released every day, it is easy to lose track and difficult to find a focused place where the information can be found. We're currently reworking our [Great Lakes East website](#) to provide access to state-specific information. Please visit the website soon. In the meantime, visit the [U.S. Department of Education stimulus website](#) and the comprehensive [Education Recovery and Reinvestment Center website](#), developed and maintained by Learning Point Associates. State-specific information can be found on the individual recovery websites for [Indiana](#), [Michigan](#), and [Ohio](#). With great enthusiasm, Great Lakes East is looking forward to helping SEAs move their stimulus agendas ahead in effective and innovative ways.

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

Announcing Our ARRA Web Dialogue Summer Series!

May 28 || June 16 || July 14 || August 11

See page 5 for more information. Please contact us at greatlakeeastinfo@learningpt.org if you wish to participate.

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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

New State Manager for Indiana: Frank De Rosa

By Jennifer Reed, Program Specialist, Learning Point Associates

In March 2009, Frank De Rosa was selected as the new state manager for Indiana. De Rosa is a senior consultant at Great Lakes East at Learning Point Associates. His colleague Jayne Sowers, Ed.D., has been the Indiana state manager for the past four years and will continue to work with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) as a school and district improvement lead.

In his new role, De Rosa will provide technical assistance and consultation to IDOE. Recently, he has been providing technical assistance and consultation to the Ohio Department of Education concerning their new credit flexibility policy and to several state and regional offices and school districts involved in the school improvement process. Since 2007, he has served as a Learning Point Associates team lead for audits of English language arts curricula for districts in corrective action under contract with the New York State Education Department. De Rosa has 36 years of experience in public education as a teacher and school administrator. He served as a principal of a large high school in a diverse suburban district. He also has a strong background in school improvement, high school reform, special education, and leadership team building. De Rosa earned a master of arts in teaching from National-Louis University in Evanston, Illinois.



Indiana State Manager
Frank De Rosa

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan Visits Detroit

By Bersheril Bailey, Senior Consultant, Learning Point Associates

On May 13, 2009, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan was the keynote speaker at a national United Way luncheon focused on education in Detroit, Michigan. He spent the morning meeting with Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm, Detroit officials, and selected students and staff members from Detroit Public Schools. Other attendees at the luncheon included State Board of Education President Kathleen Straus and Governor Granholm's Education Policy Advisor Chuck Wilbur. Secretary Duncan emphasized that unprecedented reform is necessary and that the "political will" must be there for true reform. He emphasized that state standards must prepare students to be college-ready upon graduation. He encouraged schools and districts to work with nonprofit organizations and other community partners to provide the additional support needed by struggling students and families. He also recommended that cities and districts look for ways to use schools as community centers during afterschool hours. He said that we must "educate our way to a better economy."



Education Secretary
Arne Duncan

This trip was a part of Secretary Duncan's "Listening and Learning: A Conversation About Education Reform" tour around the country. Michigan was his second stop after West Virginia. Fifteen additional states—including Ohio and Indiana—are scheduled to host meetings with the secretary.



Great Lakes East Annual Advisory Board Meeting Focuses on Policy

By Asta Svedkauskaite, Consultant, Learning Point Associates

For the third year in a row, Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West held a joint Advisory Meeting for Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin education representatives. This year's meeting was held March 4–5 in Rosemont, Illinois. The annual face-to-face interaction with Advisory Board members gives Great Lakes East a unique opportunity to sense needs in education from multiple perspectives: state education agencies (SEAs), educational service agencies, districts, schools, businesses, institutions of higher education, and community members, including parents. As in previous years, these multiple perspectives stimulated in-depth discussions at the meeting and informed Great Lakes East technical assistance work.



Left to right: Stephen Barr, Associate Superintendent, Ohio Department of Education; Karen Sanders, RMC Research Corporation; Diane Rutledge, Executive Director, Large Unit District Association, and Great Lakes West Advisory Council member; and Doug Walker, RMC Research Corporation

One of the discussions focused on state policymaking and how Great Lakes East can support SEAs in implementing and scaling up state policies. SEAs are facing many questions: What instruments and strategies can SEAs consider and use to roll out their policy initiatives? What and where are the gaps? How do SEAs give practitioners basic information about policies and help educators develop more knowledge and skills to implement changes? The discussion deepened the common understanding of policymaking, ranging from policy definitions and types to levels of policy work. A panel discussion highlighted various aspects of policy from research, practice, and state-level perspectives. The panelists included Jane Best, Ph.D., REL Midwest senior policy associate; John Graves, Ph.D., superintendent of Jackson County Intermediate School District in Michigan; and Ted Stilwill, chief program officer at Learning Point Associates and former Iowa superintendent of education.

The Great Lakes East team extends a special welcome to new Advisory Board members Stephen D. Dackin, Charlotte Koger, Joseph Nocera, Melanie Wightman, and Sue Zake. In addition, Great Lakes East wishes to thank all of the board members for their ongoing commitment and contributions to support, inform, and advise the Great Lakes East team in its technical assistance activities. Board members are listed on the next page.



Indiana	Michigan	Ohio
<p>Peggy Hinckley Superintendent of Schools Metropolitan School District of Warren Township</p> <p>Cheryl Orr Associate Commissioner for Communications and P-16 Programs and Planning Indiana Commission for Higher Education</p> <p>Betty Poindexter, Ed.D. Associate Professor Indiana University</p>	<p>Cindy Carver, Ph.D. Assistant Professor Michigan State University</p> <p>John Graves, Ph.D. Superintendent Jackson County Intermediate School District</p> <p>Charlotte Koger Grant Administrator Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators</p> <p>Al Mihajlovits Principal Southridge Middle School</p> <p>Karen Nelson District Support Specialist Traverse City Area Public Schools</p> <p>Malverne Winborne, Ph.D. Associate Director of Charter Schools Eastern Michigan University</p>	<p>Bill Bogdan, Ed.D. Superintendent Hamilton County Educational Service Center</p> <p>Stephen D. Dackin Superintendent Reynoldsburg City Schools</p> <p>Joseph Nocera Principal Steubenville West Elementary, Pugliese School</p> <p>Melanie Wightman Teacher Lakewood High School</p> <p>Sue Zake, Ph.D. Executive Director State Support Team Region I</p>

Regional High School Dialogue Series: Connecting Research to Practice

By Victoria Cirks, Consultant, Learning Point Associates

Research provides educators with the data to inform decision making; however, all too often, the scope and format of research findings prohibit wide-scale use by educators. People without a research background may have difficulty interpreting data reports, or overworked staff may not have the time to wade through 100-page research reports.

During the past year, Great Lakes East, in collaboration with the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center, has hosted a series of four regional high school dialogues to assist the state education agencies (SEAs) in the Great Lakes region build their internal capacity to address high school improvement issues. At each meeting, participants asked for assistance in making the connections between the research and the applications of that research to their work.

Recently, Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West partnered with REL Midwest to host a March webinar, *High School Redesign: Emerging Research about Interventions to Support Transition Conversations*. One of the previous dialogues focused on the importance of collaborations and partnerships to support state high school improvement initiatives. This need for increased collaborations is apparent especially when talking about transitions into and out of high school. Equally important is having the available research to inform those conversations and collaborations.



During the webinar, two prominent researchers, Robert Balfanz, Ph.D., principal investigator on the study *High School Preparation for College Completion*, and Nettie Legters, Ph.D., principal investigator on the study *A Curriculum Engagement: Micro-Process Interventions in Middle and High School to Improve Attendance, Behavior, Achievement and Grade Promotion for At-Risk Ninth Graders*, presented their work and answered questions about how their findings could be translated into policy and practice.

The response from participants (SEA representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) was positive. One SEA representative said, “You are very correct in emphasizing the importance of data in this discussion. How you analyze the results and then how you use the results to promote change are key parts of any improvement effort.”

Participants also indicated that they would like Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West to host more events like the March webinar. The [archived webcast](#) is available for viewing online. In response, the regional high school dialogue series began its transition into a community of practice with a May event that included both a webinar component and an on-site facilitated discussion. Additional information about *Regional High School Dialogue Series 2.0: A Community of Practice* is forthcoming in the Great Lakes East summer e-newsletter.

Spotlight

Great Lakes East Announces ARRA Web Dialogue Summer Series!

Description: Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West at Learning Point Associates are hosting a series of four Web Dialogues designed to support state education agencies (SEAs) in the management of ARRA responsibilities. Through this series, Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West will provide assistance targeted toward building the capacity of the SEAs in the Great Lakes region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) to support schools and districts in the successful implementation of ARRA.

Purposes: To bring together SEAs in the region to share information and strategies, to discuss potential processes and tools, and to aid in streamlining their communication and reporting responsibilities related to ARRA.

Format: Web conferences

Dates: May 28, June 16, July 14, August 11

Time: 1–2:15 p.m. (Central Time)

Topics:

Thursday, May 28: Communications strategies for SEAs

Tuesday, June 16: SEA and local education agency reporting strategies related to Title I and IDEA funding

Tuesday, July 14: Strategies to build effective reporting and monitoring structures

Tuesday, August 11: Use of communications, reporting, and monitoring strategies to prepare for the competitive grant application process and disbursement

Audience: Invited SEA representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin

Sponsors: Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West

Please send us an e-mail if you would like to participate or find out more about the series at greatlakeeastinfo@learningpt.org



Special Report

Stimulus Status and Connections in the Region

By Trish Brennan-Gac, Counsel and Policy Advisor, Learning Point Associates

On February 17, 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This law provides a significant investment of federal education dollars through two funding streams: (1) additional funds allocated through existing federal programs, such as Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and (2) creation of a new funding stream through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) program. The [initial release of funds](#) for five federal programs—including those under Title I and IDEA—to the states was announced on April 1, 2009.

Initial allocations of SFSF funds will be released to states after their applications have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. As of May 27, 2009, 19 state applications have been approved. A list of the current [State Fiscal Stabilization Fund applications and approvals](#) appears on the [Education Recovery and Reinvestment Center \(ERRC\) website](#), developed and maintained by Learning Point Associates; this list is updated on an ongoing basis. (See “Navigating the Education Recovery and Reinvestment Center Website” on page 11.) Now that states are receiving these funds, the conversation is shifting to how states will use these funds to achieve the goals set forth under the ARRA. A [tutorial](#) is available on the ERRC website to help states better understand the requirements and responsibilities of this law.

In April 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its first report to Congress on the states’ use of recovery funds. In this report, titled [Recovery Act: As Initial Implementation Unfolds in States and Localities, Continued Attention to Accountability Issues Is Essential](#), the GAO identified that it will track the three biggest stimulus investments, one of which is education. The GAO also will track the progress of 16 states and the District of Columbia, which together comprise 65 percent of the U.S. population. (See “Tracking the Progress of 16 States and the District of Columbia” below.)

Tracking the Progress of 16 States and the District of Columbia

The GAO report titled [Recovery Act: As Initial Implementation Unfolds in States and Localities, Continued Attention to Accountability Issues Is Essential](#) has a profile indicating the progress of each of the 16 states with the Title I, IDEA, and SFSF resources. The focus is on accountability and data systems rather than on the particular uses of these funds.

The 16 states are as follows: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Also included is the District of Columbia.

To view each profile, download the report and within the report click on the “bookmarks” tab at the left side of the screen; then choose the appropriate appendix for each state.

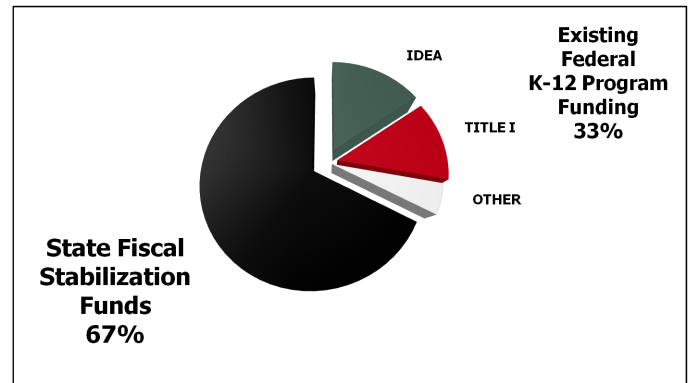
Distribution of Funds in the Great Lakes East States

Overall, the three largest investments of federal stimulus dollars are being funneled through Title I, IDEA, and the new SFSF funds. Figure 1 shows distribution of these major funds.



Upon the release by the U.S. Department of Education of Title I and IDEA funds on April 1, 2009, the federal government mandated these funds to be disbursed immediately. (No application is required of school districts for these funds.) However, governance laws for the receipt and use of federal funds are different in each state. Some states, such as Indiana, are able to use these funds immediately because the funds were allocated under existing applications; other states, such as Michigan and Ohio, are not able to use these funds unless specific authorization is provided by the state legislature or until the start of a new fiscal year. The National Conference of State Legislatures offers a summary explaining [legislative oversight of federal funds](#).

Figure 1. Distribution of Funds



As the new GAO study indicates, states are managing their responsibilities in different ways. Just as they are developing different strategies for accountability and reporting, they also are managing their use and distribution of funds in different and innovative ways. Following are highlights of how the three Great Lakes East states are addressing the disbursement of these funds.

Indiana. In Indiana, the state superintendent convened a [conference call](#) on April 6, 2009, to provide school districts with guidance on the rollout of the Title I and IDEA funds. A [summary of that call](#) was posted to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) website to serve as an ongoing reference for school districts. The superintendent indicated that the goal was to distribute funds as soon as possible to address reductions in force planned in May. To help IDOE ensure its compliance, each district is required to submit an assurance for both [Title I](#) and [IDEA](#) funds, an application, and a proposed budget. After these materials are approved, the transmittal of the funds to the district should occur within three days. The Indiana local education agency (LEA) application process for these funds and the associated materials are posted on [IDOE's stimulus page](#).

Michigan. When the Michigan Legislature passed a bill approving the use and distribution of all stimulus funds for the state at the end of April, the governor announced the availability of these funds through a [press release](#). Similar to Indiana, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is requiring school districts to submit applications for these funds through a consolidated application for both [Title I](#) and [IDEA](#) using the Michigan Electronic Grants System. The applications were made available in May 2009 and are due in July 2009. When approved, the funds are available for disbursement in July. MDE posted a listing of [ARRA target application dates](#) with specific information on the timing for each component of Title I and IDEA funds. To communicate with education stakeholders, MDE has its [ARRA webpage](#), which contains a variety of information, including podcasts by the superintendent. Of special interest is a [slide presentation titled Michigan and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009](#), made at the Governor's Education Summit held on April 28, 2009.

Recently, Governor Jennifer Granholm announced the establishment of a state Economic Recovery Office. The [role of the Michigan Recovery Office](#) includes responsibility for maintaining the state's recovery website. This office is headed by Leslee Fritz, detailed from the governor's communications office, and supported by eight staff members. An [interview with Director Fritz](#) indicated that one of the functions of this office is communications to stakeholders and compliance. To accomplish these tasks, the new office is charged with



collecting and sharing the stories of individuals, organizations, and communities benefiting from ARRA funds via an interactive website, traditional and social media outlets, weblogs, and other sites (such as [Facebook: Building MI Future](#)).

Ohio. At the beginning of April 2009, the governor and superintendent issued a [joint statement](#) to update stakeholders on the status of education funding. At the beginning of May, [stimulus talking points](#) were issued that provide more detail on the timing and release of these funds. As with Michigan, Title I and IDEA funds for Ohio are scheduled to become available to districts beginning in July. The Ohio Department of Education (DOE) created an [implementation grid](#) that provides detailed information on the timing and process for awarding stimulus funds. To help stakeholders identify appropriate points of contact, ODE also published a [Federal Stimulus Management Team structure chart](#) that includes e-mail addresses for key staff.

Connecting to the Core Values Under SFSF Funds

The single largest education investment from the stimulus bill is through the creation of new SFSF funds. As of May 27, 2009, 19 states have secured approval of their SFSF applications. These applications require governors to provide assurances that they will make advancements in four priority reform areas:

- College- and career-ready standards and high-quality, valid, and reliable assessments
- Prekindergarten to higher education data systems
- Teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution of effective teachers
- Intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest performing schools

Standards and Assessments. The ERRC website has a section dedicated to helping SEAs and school districts understand the core areas of focus for each assurance. On the [Standards and Assessments](#) page, four core areas are identified. Each area contains references to free resources and organizations working in these areas:

- [Enhancing assessment quality](#)
- [Aligning approaches to standards, assessment, and accountability](#)
- [Increasing rigor and relevance in academic content standards](#)
- [Developing state consortia to leverage resources](#)

Data Systems. Data systems was another area of concentration for all three states in the Great Lakes East network. The [Data Collection](#) page on the ERRC website focuses on three core areas that are essential in the development of effective data systems:

- [Making the case for comprehensive data systems](#)
- [Building data systems](#)
- [Collecting and using data](#)

This section also highlights the work of the [Data Quality Campaign](#), a national network designed to encourage and support state policymakers as they work to improve education data systems.

Teacher Effectiveness. Michigan and Ohio also referenced their work in the area of teacher quality. The [Teacher Effectiveness and Equitable Distribution](#) page provides information and resources to help SEAs



understand the dual challenges of defining teacher effectiveness and developing effective strategies to help with teacher distribution.

- [Defining and evaluating teacher effectiveness](#)
- [Increasing the pool of teachers and streamlining ways to hire them](#)
- [Improving retention by creating a culture that encourages teachers to stay](#)

Topics addressed include summative and formative assessments; alternative routes to teaching; revising transfer and hiring practices; and improving retention through induction, professional development, increased career options, and the creation of learning communities. In addition to the free resources available on this page, the [National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality](#) recently hosted two webinars on these topics, and the archives are accessible through this page. The TQ Center recently has released its new [mapping tool](#) to guide conversations between regional comprehensive centers and SEA staff on the strategic use of funds to improve teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution.

Support for Struggling Schools. Indiana and Michigan also specified their work to support struggling schools. The [Support for Struggling Schools](#) page identifies core areas of focus for states and districts engaged in efforts to improve their lowest performing schools.

- [Understanding the challenges](#)
- [Identifying resources and tools](#)
- [Developing a school plan](#) (which includes [Turning around low-performing schools](#) and [Restructuring](#))

Also highlighted on this page are the six quality indicators of successful school improvement developed by [The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement](#): an aligned and rigorous curriculum, effective instructional practices, use of student performance data, positive school climate that fosters student achievement, effective school leadership, and parent and community engagement

Representatives from the Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio education departments all acknowledged the work that is being done in their states, particularly in the areas of standards and assessments, data systems, teacher effectiveness, and support for struggling schools. Their thoughts appear in “Addressing SFSF Assurances and Holding Districts Accountable” (page 10).

Looking Ahead

The work in these four areas has a renewed emphasis under ARRA, and these resources are intended to help support states as they strive for improvements. These important reform areas will shape the education agenda for years to come. As states begin receiving their allocations under the SFSF funds, Great Lakes East will continue to provide support, guidance, and opportunities for the Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio SEAs to learn from experts as well as their peers, both within the region and throughout the country.

Under ARRA, states have roughly two years to obligate the money they are receiving. In upcoming newsletter issues, we will provide useful information and updates on ARRA-related topics that are most pressing for our states. Please send us an [e-mail](#) and let us know if there are particular topics that you would like us to cover.



Addressing SFSF Assurances and Holding Districts Accountable

State liaisons from Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio were asked the following question: *What are your SEA's current plans to address the assurances within the SFSF funds, and how will the SEA hold districts accountable?* Following are their responses:



MaryAlice Galloway

“The assurances required for the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds are continuations of work well under way in Michigan. MDE is engaged in a study that is examining teacher supply that will supply data to focus attention on areas of inequity. MDE, in partnership with our state’s Center for Educational Performance and Information, has received grant funds to improve and expand our longitudinal data system. We have well-established content expectations for elementary and secondary schools and are refining our assessment and achievement standards. We are hopeful that adequate funding will be provided to state agencies to ensure continuation of these efforts and to ensure support for any new data collection requirements.”

—*MaryAlice Galloway, Interim Director, Office of School Improvement, Michigan Department of Education*

“In addressing the assurances requested by the federal government, the state regularly collects and updates data on quality of academic assessments, which includes children with disabilities and limited English proficiencies. The state is regularly reviewing and improving standards while ensuring compliance with respect to struggling schools. [To hold districts accountable], the state is requiring a Letter of Assurance to be signed by each superintendent that acknowledges the representative of the school corporation understands the parameters of each ARRA grant and the appropriate usage of those grant dollars. We have not received the final guidance from the U.S. Department of Education concerning reporting obligations, but we anticipate that each school will have extensive reporting requirements of their expenditures and their successes.”—*Maureen Weber, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the State Superintendent, Indiana Department of Education*



Marilyn Troyer

“The assurances required within the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds are very consistent with work the Ohio Department of Education has focused on for the past several years. Rigorous college- and career-ready standards are called for in state legislation, so work is already under way. We are currently working with the Ohio Board of Regents to develop mechanisms for linking our data systems in a way that is consistent with federal privacy statutes. A number of Ohio initiatives focus on strengthening teacher effectiveness, and the Ohio Improvement Process provides support and intervention for low-performing schools. With new federal funds available to schools and states, our goal is to intensify our efforts in these areas in order to increase the achievement levels of Ohio students.”—*Marilyn Troyer, Senior Associate Superintendent for Educational Programs, Ohio Department of Education*



Navigating the Education Recovery and Reinvestment Center Website

The [Education Recovery and Reinvestment Center \(ERRC\) website](#), developed by Learning Point Associates, provides states, school districts, and other education stakeholders with current information on the opportunities and requirements created through ARRA. The website is updated on a weekly basis and is organized into seven major categories with useful tools and free resources that provide users with immediate assistance. Explanations of the categories are as follows:

- **[Federal Resources](#)**. One of the most important sections on this page is the information provided by the U.S. Department of Education. On a rolling basis, the Department has been releasing guidance that provides direction to states and district leaders on the appropriate use of these funds and the reporting requirements. This section is updated on a weekly basis as new information is released. Other resources include links to the federal government's Recovery website, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, Congress, and other federal agencies that provide guidance and resources on education-related issues.
- **[State Resources](#)**. Now that states are receiving ARRA funds from the U.S. Department of Education, they are balancing the requirement to spend funds quickly while ensuring progress on the priorities (detailed in the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds Assurances section). This section contains links to each state's Recovery website, state departments of education, practical materials, and press articles. Current state activities in the Great Lakes East region are listed under each state: [Indiana](#), [Michigan](#), and [Ohio](#).
- **[District and Local Resources](#)**. The information in this section is organized by the three main questions raised by district and local stakeholders: *What is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009? What are the appropriate uses for stimulus funding? What resources are available to help leverage stimulus funds for lasting change?* Each section contains detailed answers to commonly asked questions as well as free resources to help districts start planning.
- **[State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Assurances](#)**. This section provides a detailed overview of the assurances that states are required to provide in their applications for SFSF funds. Education leaders will find tools and resources to help them make progress in addressing teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution, collection and use of data, standards and assessments, and support for struggling schools.
- **[Calendar of Events](#)**. Many organizations offer free seminars, conferences, and webinars. These events are posted to help users navigate the distribution and use of ARRA funds.
- **[Learning Point Associates Resources](#)**. Learning Point Associates offers free resources, such as a Fund Finder that details the various funds distributed to states, a tutorial on the ARRA, archived webinars, and a helpful side-by-side comparison chart that organizes much of the information published by the U.S. Department of Education in one easy-to-read document.
- **[Other Organizations](#)**. Many other organizations provide helpful Web-based tools and resources that can easily be found on this page.

The ERRC home page also contains a search tool that allows users to conduct keyword searches throughout the website. In addition, the "Ask Learning Point Associates" option, which appears in a menu on the left side of the ERRC home page, allows user to easily, and privately, submit questions to staff.



Special Report

Federal Resources to Stimulate Change: Are We Ready?

By Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D., Senior Advisor, Learning Point Associates

It is an exciting time for education. There is considerable federal activity with an emphasis on helping underperforming schools and districts and stimulating innovative ideas to improve teaching and learning. Although federal activities change quickly, following is a summary of the key issues, especially those related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.



Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D.

The Landscape for Federal Funding in 2009

As Charles Dickens wrote in *A Tale of Two Cities*, “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” Such is the case for many states and local school districts this year. Just when there is an unprecedented infusion of federal funds to support school and district improvement initiatives, the economy is in its worst decline in decades, thereby reducing state and local revenues. Unfortunately, the reduction of state and local revenues to some extent decreases the potential for gains that may be possible with the increased federal funding for taking on new initiatives. Instead of new opportunities, however, some of the funding is being used to maintain what was already in place.

To complicate matters further, this infusion of ARRA funds gives members of the U.S. Congress the expectation that the stimulus dollars will lead to higher student achievement under the current provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. It is difficult to argue with this belief because Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) also received substantial increases. However, keep in mind that schools get the stimulus funds only one time; there is no assurance that additional money will be available in future federal appropriations. Even though it is difficult to imagine taking money away from Title I and IDEA in the future, states and districts should use caution when planning how to spend the funds to avoid making long-term commitments that depend on them.

Looking Ahead: Will NCLB Be Revised This Year?

The fiscal year 2010 appropriations process is now under way in Congress. It is unlikely that there will be significant increases for education programs above the fiscal year 2009 levels. The Obama administration indicated that it will carefully review all federal programs to determine whether they are meeting their intended objectives. Therefore, there is some likelihood that certain programs could be eliminated—especially smaller ones and those that show little evidence of positive results based on the benchmarks that the administration is using to make these determinations.

Legislatively, those who thought that the NCLB Act was not going to be reauthorized this year may be surprised to learn that there may be some activity on it after all. For a while, it seemed as though the legislative agenda was full with other initiatives, but U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan mentioned in a recent hearing that reauthorizing NCLB may get started toward the end of 2009. Getting started this year would not be



difficult because the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor held hearings and learned about proposed revisions to NCLB last year. In addition, during summer 2008, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions devoted time to planning for the reauthorization. Changing some of the provisions of NCLB that are known to be serious problems for states and school districts should be a strong incentive for Congress to make reauthorization a high priority, and there is a possibility that the law may be renamed during the reauthorization process. Although it is unlikely that the NCLB Act will be reauthorized in 2009 (because of the daunting process of getting legislation through Congress and then signed by the president), getting the process started will go a long way toward the hope of getting it finalized in 2010.

Assistance for Educators Is Within Reach

Coupled with the unprecedented increase in federal funding for education through the ARRA funds and the possibility of beginning the reauthorization of NCLB this year, educators need to begin thinking about how to comply with daunting accountability challenges in an era of compliance and innovation. There is simply too much momentum to turn back the accountability clock for education now, so it is time to sort through the complex process of how best to ensure that all students are meeting learning goals and that they have qualified and effective teachers. Designing and developing longitudinal data systems is one area of recommended use for stimulus funding, and working with the Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center takes on critical importance. Leveraging valuable dollars and knowledge about 21st century education through these collaborative efforts is part of an agenda that is critical to future success for states and their federally funded centers.

The diligent work of Great Lakes East with the state education agencies (SEAs) during the past four years has been a valuable support in SEA improvement initiatives and in providing research-based information to ensure a better chance of success in complying with federal laws. This year, with the substantial federal funding increases and the possibility of NCLB being reauthorized, states and districts have an unprecedented opportunity to forge ahead with these current efforts so that all students succeed in notable ways within two years. There are expectations that innovation will be a big part of school improvement and will lead to improved results. There has never been a better opportunity to seriously undertake this mission of leveraging federal resources and encouraging collaboration among federally funded programs with SEAs—all with sufficient funding behind it. Are we ready for this challenge?

References

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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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In April 2009, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) leadership team and the Great Lakes East management staff convened to discuss recent changes in both IDOE (new administration and staff) and Great Lakes East (new state manager for Indiana). IDOE has requested support and assistance from Great Lakes East on the following five topics:

- IDOE's reading summit and the development of a K–12 reading framework
- IDOE's mathematics summit and the development of a K–12 mathematics framework
- Identification of best practices in teacher-generated formative assessments
- Research and development of “what works” with English language learners
- School districts as they design and implement response to intervention programs

These topics will be discussed further throughout May and June 2009 and will be built into the new Indiana technical assistance for Year 5, which begins on July 1, 2009. The following section is an update regarding the two ongoing areas of Great Lakes East's collaborative work with IDOE: district improvement and school improvement.

District Improvement

For the third year, the IDOE Office of Title I Academic Support and Great Lakes East provided technical assistance to a new group of districts designated as “in improvement.” On March 18, 2009, three districts entering Year 1 of improvement attended an all-day workshop in Carmel, Indiana. The following day, March 19, six districts participated in the workshop for districts in Year 3 of improvement, corrective action.

Both workshops were fully aligned to the Office of Title I Theory of Action, which is derived from research on high-performing, high-poverty schools and districts. IDOE Title I Specialist Liz Harmon worked closely with Great Lakes East to plan, refine, and implement the materials for the two-day event. During the first day, Year 1 district teams thoroughly reviewed the eight components from the Theory of Action and completed a self-assessment indicating how they support their schools in implementing the components. The districts also began to disaggregate student data to recognize achievement patterns and areas of needs. The teams will use these findings to examine the appropriateness and rigor of their curriculum and instruction, especially for student groups not making adequate yearly progress (AYP). The results will be used to develop a district improvement plan that centers on curriculum, instruction, and formative assessments.



The audience for the second day was the six districts entering Year 3 of improvement. The day began with a discussion of the Office of Title I Theory of Action and a brief analysis of student data. The teams spent the majority of the day considering curriculum, instruction, and formative assessments as the means for improving student learning. Prior to the workshop, many districts had concluded that they did not have a strongly aligned English language arts curriculum and were ready to make extensive changes to the curriculum. Through a curriculum self-assessment checklist, all district teams determined their curricula were not sufficient. A process of developing a new curriculum, called “mapping and aligning the curriculum,” was introduced by Schauna Findley, Ph.D., curriculum director at Fort Wayne Community Schools. Having led her district in mapping the curriculum throughout the past two years, Dr. Findley brought experiential examples as well as essential information to the teams. With the assistance of the table facilitators (provided by IDOE and Great Lakes East), the districts began to edit their district improvement plans with the goal of creating a newly aligned English language arts curriculum. These districts will receive additional training in curriculum mapping in June.

School Improvement

In July 2008, IDOE received acceptance of its differentiated accountability model from the U.S. Department of Education. Under the model, the requirements of and supports for schools in improvement vary depending on an index rating. The rating is a calculation of (1) the number of student cells not making AYP and (2) the distance of the scores from a predetermined target. Depending on the resulting number, schools are then designated as focused, comprehensive, or comprehensive-intensive. The higher the score, the more needs the school has in improving student learning.

Instructional Coaches Training for the 50 Comprehensive Schools. Under Indiana’s differentiated accountability model, the comprehensive schools are the 50 schools that have the highest index rating, which means that they are the schools that are struggling the most. Comprehensive schools are required to hire a mathematics or English language arts coach who is then trained by IDOE. With Great Lakes East’s support, the fifth session of instructional coaches’ training was held on February 24, 2009. At the previous session in January 2009, the coaches requested to hear from experienced coaches. IDOE Title I Specialist Amy Bush took on this challenge, inviting and preparing several experienced coaches from Indiana Title I schools to present at the February training. The coaches included Peggy Beltrame, Darlene Duvall, and Susan Hall from Indianapolis Public Schools; Betsy Snapp from Metropolitan School District of Warren Township; and Alicia Stevens from Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township.

The five coaches shared their experiences through a panel and question-and-answer session. A common theme emerged from the coaches—relationship building with teachers—as foundational to the concept of coaching. Hall said, “It is so important to build relationships with the teachers. Some are resistant to having a coach, but by developing the relationships, you build a foundation. This was the turning point for me at my school.”

In the afternoon, the coaches in training selected from several small-group sessions to attend. Two of the experienced coaches presented instructional strategies for teaching vocabulary in English language arts and problem solving in mathematics. Staff from the IDOE Office of Student Assessment discussed changes in the new spring Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress–Plus (ISTEP+) testing, the best ways to prepare students for testing, and the use of scoring rubrics. Other participants attended the session “The Role of the Curriculum Coach,” presented by Jayne Sowers, Ed.D., (Great Lakes East). Additional training will be provided for the instructional coaches during the next school year, and a new cohort of coaches will be added.



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Institute for School Leadership. Eighteen months ago, IDOE Office of Title I requested Great Lakes East's assistance in developing supports for its schools in improvement in the area of leadership. The research and best practices provided by Great Lakes East clearly pointed to the concept of school leadership teams as a means to improving schools. The subsequently developed Indiana Institute for School Leadership Teams has completed its first year of the two-year program. A significant component of the institute is the utilization of successful Title I principals assigned to each school leadership team. Identified as "distinguished principals," this group meets with the teams throughout the year and provides them with ongoing support.

Originally, Cohort I consisted of five schools. However, during 2008–09, one school closed and one school was removed from participation by its district office, resulting in three schools in the cohort. The remaining three school leadership teams met again on April 16, 2009, for their third school-year session. Led by their distinguished principals (supported and trained by IDOE and Great Lakes East), the teams reviewed their successes and challenges in meeting the goals in their action plan. In addition, each team proudly reported the percentage change in their index score (a computation related to AYP scores). The three schools realized significant change in lowering their index score from last year to this year by 39 percent, 73 percent, and 99 percent. This model of computation allows schools to show growth whether or not they make AYP, which one of the three schools did accomplish this year. While many variables affect student scores and participation rates, the teams described the singular focus on student learning that was created by the institute's processes and the experience and knowledge of the distinguished principals as key factors in the changes occurring in their schools.

This initial Cohort I of school leadership teams will enter its second year of support beginning with its summer academy in July 2009. Meanwhile, Cohort II teams are forming, and distinguished principals are being trained and assigned to their schools. On April 15, 2009, and May 16, 2009, training for six new and four returning distinguished principals was held. The day-long sessions were led by Cheryl Williams, director of outreach services at Learning Innovations at WestEd, with support from Great Lakes East and the Office of Title I (Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, director of differentiated learning; Teresa Neely, coordinator of Title I; and Laura Cope and Sarah Pies, Title I specialists). The distinguished principals and the Institute planning team are preparing for the three-day summer academy for Cohort II (in June) followed by Cohort I (in July). During the academy, the school leadership teams will create action plans based on research and best practices regarding school improvement with a focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessments and will be led by the distinguished principals.



MICHIGAN

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Teacher Quality

Revisions to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) individual professional development plan and supporting tools are nearing completion and are expected to be available in June 2009. The changes reflect feedback from stakeholder meetings and focus groups held earlier this year by Great Lakes East with new and experienced teachers, principals, MDE staff, and university professors. Concurrently, staff from the Office of Professional Preparation Services are seeking support to create an electronic version of the current individual



professional development plan template. Great Lakes East will assist MDE staff in designing professional learning opportunities to support the teachers and administrators who will participate in the field test of the plan later in the year. The field test will be conducted during the 2009–10 school year with support from the American Institutes of Research.

High School

High School Redesign. Great Lakes East continues to cofacilitate MDE’s cross-office, collaborative high school core team as MDE seeks ways to support increasing student achievement in Michigan’s high schools. Core team meetings in February and March focused on reviewing high school proficiency data. MDE has identified all schools that have not made AYP for two or more years. Identified Title I schools receive statewide system of support services; however, many Michigan high schools are not Title I schools. Currently, the core team is striving to identify high-poverty high schools that are “beating the odds” that can be studied to identify promising practices. What is learned from their examples will help guide the design of state-level support.

Great Lakes East conducted a survey in March 2009 of the high school core team members. The purpose of the survey was to identify core team members’ recommendations for the potential future direction of the team; their experience on the team; and their perception of the support, information, and guidance provided by Great Lakes East. Among the multiple responses, 100 percent of the members indicated that their participation on the team has positively informed their work, and 94 percent believe that the team can effectively support MDE in aligning high school initiatives across the department. The survey results were shared with Deputy Superintendent Sally Vaughn and Office of School Improvement Interim Director MaryAlice Galloway. The high school core team will continue its work to support MDE as it supports increasing student achievement in high schools.

Alternative High Schools. In the past year, Great Lakes East formed and has been facilitating an alternative education work group at the request of MDE’s Deputy Superintendent Sally Vaughn. Consisting of representatives from MDE’s offices, the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals, and districts and schools, the group works to identify issues, concerns, and barriers that alternative high schools face in meeting the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and the Michigan Merit Examination. One of the major issues identified by the group involves AYP. The group reported that students typically enroll in alternative high schools after they have had difficulty finding success in traditional high schools and are often several years behind their peers academically. In the current system, the alternative school providing instruction receives the student proficiency scores and is held accountable for AYP.

These discussions helped to inform the superintendent’s office about the impact of the current policy for reporting AYP for alternative high schools. On April 9, 2009, Superintendent Mike Flanagan sent a letter to Michigan schools and districts indicating that a new system will be implemented in the 2010–11 school year that will shift the achievement data and AYP status of certain alternative education schools back to the sending schools. A newly formed MDE work group will develop the Michigan Student Data System to track and report the data.

Statewide System of Support

Great Lakes East is working closely with MDE, the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), and its partners to expand and enhance the current statewide system of support.



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MAISA and MDE are collaborating to develop additional support for high-priority schools in Phase 1 and Phase 2. Proposed enhancements for high-priority schools include data-driven decision-making training, selection of evidence-based interventions, and instructional coaches to ensure fidelity of the implementation of interventions. Great Lakes East continues to work with MDE and MAISA to ensure coherence of the system, including the new enhancements. The new [*Coherence in Statewide Systems of Support*](#) guide from the Center on Innovation & Improvement was shared with MDE's statewide system of support core team members at the core team meeting on April 23, 2009. Representatives from the Ohio Department of Education attended the meeting to leverage their statewide systems of support efforts with MDE. Great Lakes East will work with the core team during a retreat in May to reimagine the system delivery, including expansions, in order to customize support to schools and districts.

English Language Learners. At the request of MDE, Great Lakes East, along with the subcontractor the Center for Applied Linguistics, initiated a cross-department dialogue related to English language learners (ELLs). On February 10–11, Great Lakes East convened this event with multidepartment participation to help MDE focus on Michigan results from the recent release of *Education Week's Quality Counts 2009*. Conversations were led by Edynn Sato, Ph.D., of the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center at WestEd and Joy Peyton of the Center for Applied Linguistics. At the core of the conversations were the topics of ELL assessment and factors related to the teaching profession.

As a result of the February event, an MDE cross-office ELL core team was created. On March 25, 2009, the first follow-up meeting took place, facilitated by Great Lakes East, in which the core team members identified realistic strategies to address specific ELL needs at the department and in the state. Another scheduled meeting in May set the stage for the core team's mission and action plans in implementing ELL goals.

Great Lakes East also assisted MDE with the planning of its annual ELL director's conference on May 7, 2009. The conference theme focused on *Education Week's Quality Counts 2009* results for Michigan. Joy Peyton of the Center for Applied Linguistics provided the opening plenary address.

Also in May, Great Lakes East cofacilitated the quarterly meeting of the combined Office of School Improvement and Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability statewide ELL Advisory Committee. Work continued on the implementation of MDE's ELL strategic plan, with specific attention to engaging higher education. Work also moved forward on helping the field look at the instructional implications of test results and ways to provide effective professional development to ELL teachers.

Response to Intervention. Great Lakes East will support MDE and its partners in the design and implementation of a newly emerged initiative, a statewide response to intervention (RTI). Great Lakes East will assist MDE's RTI core team as they work to develop a statewide framework for RTI. The team is composed of staff members from MDE's Office of Special Education & Early Intervention Services and Office of School Improvement. At the team's initial meeting in April 2009, information was shared on the state's School Improvement Framework (SIF). The team explored connections and interrelationships between SIF and the emerging RTI Framework. Darren Woodruff, Ph.D., of the National Center on Response to Intervention joined the meeting and shared a national perspective. As a result of the meeting, SIF staff members and RTI core team members will discuss the alignment of SIF and RTI tools, as well as the development of new tools, in the upcoming months to support school improvement.



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 continues to meet with a focus on a new set of opportunities. The D3A2 system is at a crossroads in its development: The data warehouse is functional and able to store student demographic and achievement data; the data tool enables registered users to access item analysis data; the resource exchange provides teachers access to high-quality educational content, including lesson plans and assessments items; the professional development toolkit is available to districts and schools; and the data scrubber is available as an online utility to help districts upload their achievement data onto the data warehouse. Some emerging initiatives include the completion of classroom assessment modules, piloting of these modules by districts, and design of training materials. Also planned is an expansion of capacity to store and retrieve other kinds of assessments within the data warehouse, especially data that can be pulled into the Decision Framework.

The design and dissemination of a formative assessment tool is another major element of the work of the D3A2 Professional Development Committee. On March 10, 2009, Karen Sanders and Linda McDonald (RMC Research Corporation); Mark Mitchell (Great Lakes East state manager for Ohio); and Stephen Barr, Deb Telfer, Debbie Roshto, and Jim Wright (Ohio Department of Education [ODE]) participated in a phone conference with the New York State Education Department, New York Comprehensive Center, and WestEd, focusing on New York's work on common formative assessments with the Syracuse City Schools. At the March 19, 2009, D3A2 meeting, Sanders and Mitchell described the common formative assessment work that was piloted in the Syracuse City Schools and the role of the state of New York and the New York Comprehensive Center in this work. The Syracuse City Schools and the state of New York use an assessment system model developed by the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). The committee is considering using this model with modification in Ohio. One of the common outcomes from this meeting was an agreement to adopt in Ohio the definition of formative assessments developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The next steps include fitting the CRESST assessment model to an Ohio context. Great Lakes East will help ODE establish a working group to guide the formative assessment work including ODE staff from the Office of School Improvement and Office of Curriculum and Assessment. Additional partners will include Great Lakes East, RMC Research Corporation, and the National Center on Educational Outcomes based in Minnesota.

Credit Flexibility: Shifting Focus From Seat Time to Performance. Ohio is engaged in multiple initiatives to redesign the high school experience. One of these initiatives 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 [Winter 2009 News for the Region](#) (pp. 16–17) provides some background on the credit flexibility work. The Ohio State Board of Education asked ODE to develop a plan for enabling earned credit other than seat time. The proposed credit flexibility plan,



codeveloped by ODE and Great Lakes East, was presented by Sarah Luchs (ODE), Tori Cirks (Great Lakes East), and Mark Mitchell (Great Lakes East) before the Ohio State Board of Education on March 10, 2009. The final credit flexibility report, which includes a summary of the feedback from meetings with stakeholders, was completed in May 2009.

ODE expects that beginning in September 2009, some early-adopter districts will use the credit flexibility plan to begin offering opportunities for students to earn credits flexibly through online courses, internships, portfolios, and other means. Great Lakes East is working with ODE staff to determine how best to support implementation both at the early-adopter stage and on a larger scale. From the stakeholder engagement meetings, much of the feedback focused on assuring a consistent level of quality of alternative assessments across Ohio. Some stakeholders mentioned the need for an open source repository for sharing resources that might include the following: model rubrics and alternative assessments; best practices of states and districts that have used credit flexibility; and a resource map that might assist in connecting schools, external partners, and community resources.

Ohio Performance Assessments and International Assessment and Accountability Systems. Emerging work of ODE and Great Lakes East to gather information about international assessment and accountability systems is currently in progress and will be used to inform the performance assessment work and ongoing discussions to redesign the accountability system. Great Lakes East will support the high school performance assessment work by gathering and synthesizing information from assessment and accountability systems internationally—including Australia (Queensland), Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom, and Singapore. Technical aspects of these systems—such as the processes and structures for assuring validity, reliability, and comparability—of performance assessments will be a key focus of this information gathering by Great Lakes East. This information—along with descriptions of course syllabi, professional development and teacher preparation, and artifacts of performance assessments—will provide ODE with models to consider as they pilot and begin to implement a new secondary assessment system in Ohio.

State Systems of Support

Ohio Improvement Process—Stages 3 and 4. From February through April, Great Lakes East continued its collaboration with the Stage 3 subcommittee (composed of members from the state-level design team) to articulate the structures and processes for Stage 3 of the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP). These structures and processes will be used by district and building leadership teams to effectively implement and monitor their improvement plans. These structures and processes have formed the backbone of the Stage 3 section of the *Ohio Improvement Process Facilitator Guide*.

In the United States, very few districts seem to have effective systems in place for implementation and monitoring of their improvement plans. One such district is in Norfolk, Virginia. A team from Ohio composed of some state-level design team members as well as Sheryl Poggi (Great Lakes East consultant) conducted a site visit to Norfolk in April to observe district and building leadership teams and interview key people at the district to get a sense of what processes and structures were in place. Findings from this visit will be used to inform Ohio's training and support of regional providers and district and building leadership teams.

The larger state-level design team, facilitated by Great Lakes East, met on March 30–31 and April 27–28 to review and comment on the work of the Stage 3 subcommittee and to begin planning for a large training session in September for state support teams and Educational Service Center staff. The purpose of this training session is to



build the capacity of the state system of support to effectively facilitate and monitor the work of district and building leadership teams as they implement and monitor their improvement plans.

Another aspect of the OIP design and implementation work has been recognition that large urban districts require different strategies for facilitation of district and building leadership teams. ODE held an urban strategies meeting, facilitated by Great Lakes East on February 20, 2009, to help the team identify these strategies and techniques for facilitation and discuss implications for training and for the refinement of the *Facilitator Guide*. In addition, work continues on the Ohio Improvement Process website, which will help members of the Ohio educational system access data tools and evidence-based resources that align to and support each stage of the OIP.

Ohio Improvement Process Evaluation. On March 31, 2009, an ODE working group, supported by Great Lakes East, completed a draft of indicators for each level of Ohio's education system: building, district, region, and state. These indicators are intended to demonstrate whether significant elements of the OIP are occurring and to what extent. Most indicators provide a measure of change in adult behaviors and practices across the system and a few measure changes to the system of support provided to districts and buildings. One example of an indicator at the district level under Stages 1 and 2 of the OIP is as follows: "One hundred percent of districts served identify/affirm critical needs and probable causes contributing to those needs using the Ohio Decision Framework by November." When combined, these indicators should provide a composite picture of the healthy functioning of the OIP as well as indicate areas of weakness. Next steps for the working group include identifying existing capacity in the system for measurement of indicators and describing how data about these measurements are collected, analyzed, and used across levels of the system, from building to district to region to state.

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

Feds OK Ind.'s Education Stimulus Application—*Courier Journal*, May 19, 2009

<http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20090519/NEWS02/90519022/Feds+OK+Ind.+s+education+stimulus+application>

"The federal government has approved Indiana's application for \$765 million in economic stimulus money aimed at preventing cuts in education and other state services.... Indiana can get an additional \$242 million in "state stabilization funds" this fall after state officials show how they're spending the first portion."

Bennett Announces Graduation Rate Performance Program—Indiana Department of Education, May 18, 2009

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/05-May/incentive.html>

"Recognizing the effort and leadership necessary to ensure all Hoosiers graduate from high school ready for college or a career, the Graduation Rate Performance Program will reward up to \$20,000 to staff members of twelve Indiana public high schools with the greatest increase in 2009–10 graduation rate (without waivers and as measured by state audited results) over 2008–09."

About Half of Schools Show Progress on State Accountability Measure—Indiana Department of Education, May 6, 2009

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/05-May/pl221.html>



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“The fourth year of school ratings under Indiana’s Public Law 221 accountability system showed just over half (53 percent) of public schools are making progress. The results follow last month’s announcement that half (50 percent) of schools met the federal adequate yearly progress benchmark this year.”

Bennett Announces Superintendents’ Study Council—Indiana Department of Education, April 21, 2009
http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/04-April/study_council.html

“Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett announced today the creation of a Superintendents’ Study Council whose members will work with Bennett and the Department of Education to provide input on issues affecting Indiana school corporations.”

Half of Indiana Schools Meet Raised Standard for Academic Progress—Indiana Department of Education, April 15, 2009
<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/04-April/ayp.html>

“Half (50 percent) of Indiana schools met a raised standard for adequate yearly progress (AYP) this year—a decrease from 54 percent a year ago when schools faced a comparatively lower bar for making AYP. ‘It’s unacceptable that only half our schools are achieving the minimum federal standard,’ said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett.... Out of the 836 Title I schools assessed for AYP, 30 percent (257) are in improvement this year, an increase of 37 schools compared to last year. Twenty-three (23) Title I schools exited improvement status this year after making AYP for two consecutive years.”

Bennett Announces Changes to 180 Instructional Day Policies—Indiana Department of Education, March 17, 2009
http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/03-March/instructional_day_policy.html

“Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett announced changes in Department of Education policies designed to ensure students receive at least 180 days of instructional time each year, the minimum number required by state law.... Beginning in the 2009–2010 school year, the Department of Education will no longer permit schools to use half-days for professional development activities within the 180 full instructional day requirement.”

Information About the Spring 2009 ISTEP+—Indiana Department of Education, March 4, 2009
http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2009/03-March/ISTEP_info.html

“The following [information] is provided to clarify questions and provide you the most accurate and up to date information about the spring 2009 ISTEP+ and its administration.”

What Indiana’s Education Schools Aren’t Teaching About Reading—National Council on Teacher Quality, March 2009
<http://www.nctq.org/p/publications/reports.jsp>

“As a follow up to NCTQ’s national study on how well elementary teachers are prepared to teach reading, NCTQ looks at reading preparation in Indiana.”

Full report is available at: http://www.nctq.org/p/publications/docs/nctq_full_study_indiana_reading_20090304110141.pdf



MICHIGAN

U.S. Education Secretary Takes “Listening and Learning” Tour to Detroit—U.S. Department of Education, May 13, 2009
<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/05/05132009.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan traveled to Detroit today to meet with students, community leaders and elected officials to hear their ideas for education reform and how the federal government can help advance reforms in their community and throughout the state.”



Schools Can See How They Measure Up Statewide—Michigan Department of Education, May 4, 2009

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_34785-214165--,00.html

“Michigan school districts can see how their local schools measure up academically with a new feature offered by the Michigan Department of Education. The feature, called “[How Does YOUR School Measure Up?](#)” allows schools and the public to see how individual districts and schools compare to the statewide averages on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests and high school Michigan Merit Exam (MME).”

State Needs to Emphasize Education, Michigan Future Inc. Study Says—*Crain’s Detroit Business*, April 14, 2009

<http://www.craisdetroit.com/article/20090414/FREE/904149997>

“A new report that authors say underscores the importance of a knowledge-based Michigan economy finds that during the national recession, the country shed low-education jobs while adding jobs that require a higher education.”

State Superintendent Podcast: Here’s How to Lead with Innovation—Michigan Department of Education, April 9, 2009

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_45256-212487--,00.html

“State Superintendent Mike Flanagan offers concrete examples how school districts can use their federal Stimulus funds to innovate and help lead Michigan’s Project Re-Imagine.”

State Test Scores Show Increases in Math for Fourth Straight Year—Michigan Department of Education, April 2, 2009

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_34785-211941--,00.html

“Scores on the statewide math tests have risen for the fourth consecutive year, the Michigan Department of Education announced today. Students’ scores in social studies and writing rose overall, as well.”

Shorter School Years Stir Worries—*Detroit News*, March 17, 2009

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090317/SCHOOLS/903170370/1409/METRO>

“Three out of four Michigan school districts educate children fewer than 180 days a year, the minimum required by state law until lawmakers eliminated the mandate six years ago, according to an analysis of Michigan Department of Education data....

Michigan is one of seven states without a minimum-day requirement for public schools; 30 states mandate 180 or more. Children in Korea and Japan attend school more than 220 days per year.”

OHIO

State Board of Education Passes Resolution Supporting Education Reform—Ohio Department of Education, May 13, 2009

<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=285819834263366751>

“The State Board of Education of Ohio...passed a resolution by vote of 15 to 3 to support reforms that will establish a 21st century education system for the state of Ohio.... In the resolution, the Board urged the General Assembly to include flexibility for school districts as part of the final plan.”

Educators Question School Plan—*Columbus Dispatch*, March 10, 2009

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/03/10/copy/NOT_AGAIN.ART_ART_03-10-09_B1_JND62C3.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

“Educators in some of the state’s poorest school districts say the governor’s education plan holds great promise, but it needs significant changes to ensure an adequate education for all students, including those in Appalachia.”



ELSEWHERE IN THE NATION

Recent Education News

Education Secretary Launches National Discussion on Education Reform—U.S. Department of Education, May 4, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/05/05052009.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will travel to 15 or more states in the coming months to solicit feedback from a broad group of stakeholders around federal education policy in anticipation of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The tour will gather input on the Obama administration's education agenda, including early childhood, higher standards, teacher quality, workforce development, and higher education.”

School Reform Means Doing What's Best for Kids—*Wall Street Journal*, April 22, 2009

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124035679795740971.html>

“As states and school districts across America begin drawing down the first \$44 billion in education funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, they should bear in mind the core levers of change under the law. In order to drive reform, we will require an honest assessment by states of key issues like teacher quality, student performance, college-readiness and the number of charter schools. We'll also have a strategy to address low-performing schools and provide incentives to compel improvement.”

NGA, CCSSO Launch Common Standards Drive—*Education Week*, April 17, 2009

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/04/16/29standards.h28.html?tkn=VSVFZ6%2BmCAh%2F0%2BkqXBZMrMMp8b128hInpyIW>

“After years of debating the idea of national content standards, representatives from 41 states convened in Chicago...in what organizers hope will be a first, concrete step toward common guidelines in mathematics and English-language arts.”

Secretary Arne Duncan Speaks at the National Science Teachers Association Conference—U.S.

Department of Education, March 20, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2009/03/03202009.html>

“The primary goal of the stimulus is to save jobs—but the larger goal is to drive a set of reforms that we believe will transform public education in America. The four issues are: higher standards, data systems, turning around underperforming schools, and teacher quality.”

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Using ARRA Funds to Drive School Reform and Improvement—U.S. Department of Education, April 24, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/uses.doc>

“This document includes framing questions for decision making and examples of potential uses of funds to improve educational outcomes from early learning through high school. It is intended to spark ideas about how districts and schools might use *ARRA* funds, particularly those available under the SFSF, Title I, and *IDEA* Part B programs.”

Tips Given on Best Use of Stimulus Money—U.S. Department of Education, April 7, 2009

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/04/07/29stim-spend.h28.html?tkn=YOYF5SWk6db%2F2upQE0VPI2zVutvUyNav9jsX>

“After delivering a stern warning that states and school districts must use their federal stimulus money smartly or risk losing billions more, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and his staff are starting to spell out exactly what they mean by “smartly.”



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Saving and Creating Jobs and Reforming Education—

U.S. Department of Education, April 3, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/presentation/index.html>

“This slideshow looks at guiding principles and funding availability for programs funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Act provides over \$100 billion for education and is a historic opportunity to stimulate the economy and improve education.”

\$44 Billion in Stimulus Funds Available to Drive Education Reforms and Save Teaching Jobs—U.S.

Department of Education, April 1, 2009

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/04/04012009.html>

“Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today announced that \$44 billion for states and schools is now available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. This funding will lay the foundation for a generation of education reform and help save hundreds of thousands of teaching jobs at risk of state and local budget cuts.”

Guidelines Sketch Out Use of Aid— *Education Week*, March 10, 2009

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/03/10/25guidance-2_ep.h28.html?tmp=1480872744

“The eagerly awaited federal guidelines on some \$100 billion in stimulus funding for public education aim to pump money out quickly, while giving the U.S. Department of Education leverage to demand improvements from states and districts.”

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Recommendations for Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners—Stanford University, March 20, 2009

<http://www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/ARRA/>

“This document offers a set of recommendations that target specific opportunities for improving ELL outcomes through ARRA allocations to Title I, IDEA and special education, education technology, statewide data systems, improving teacher quality grants, early childhood education, the National Science Foundation, and state stabilization grants.”

Resources

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

The Education Stimulus: Too Big to Fail— Learning Point Associates, April 2009

http://www.learningpt.org/recovery/LPA_MM_Brief.pdf

“Learning Point Associates and Mission Measurement interviewed more than 50 education leaders to determine how they are defining successful implementation of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. We explored what these leaders expect in terms of the impact of this funding on the educational system. In response to our findings, we offer considerations for building metrics to monitor success and impact.”

The Nation’s Report Card: Long-Term Trend 2008—National Center for Education Statistics,

April 28, 2009

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2009479>

“This report presents the results of NAEP’s long-term trend assessments in reading and mathematics that were administered in the 2007–08 school year to students aged 9, 13, and 17.... Overall, the national trend in reading showed gains in average scores at all three ages since 2004. Average reading scores for 9- and 13-year-olds increased in 2008 compared to 1971, but the reading score for 17-year-olds was not significantly different. The national trend in mathematics showed that both 9- and 13-year-olds had higher average scores in 2008 than in any previous assessment year. For 17-year-olds, there were no significant differences between the average score in 2008 and those in 1973 or 2004.”



Expanding Restructuring and Taking on High Schools: An NCLB Follow-Up Report in Michigan—

Center on Education Policy, April 2, 2009

<http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=545&nodeID=1>

“This report describes Michigan’s efforts to assist schools in restructuring during school year 2008–09 and reports on the state’s implementation of a growth model to measure student performance for purposes of accountability.”

Coherence in Statewide Systems of Support—Center on Innovation & Improvement, 2009

<http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/CoherenceintheStatewideSystemofSupport.pdf>

“The document...draws on some of the lessons learned and best practices gleaned from CII’s work alongside various comprehensive centers striving to help states improve the functioning of their state systems of support for districts and schools. It also includes a case study of Ohio’s decade-long efforts to bring coherence to their various systems in working to develop a streamlined and efficient system of support and provides a first-hand account of work one state is doing to support student learning.”

Comparative Indicators of Education in the United States and Other G-8 Countries: 2009—National

Center for Education Statistics, March 25, 2009

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2009039>

“This report describes how the education system in the United States compares with education systems in the other G-8 countries—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom.”

New Measures of English Language Proficiency and Their Relationship to Performance on Large-Scale Content Assessments—National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, January 2009

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=172&productID=125>

“Using assessment results for 5th and 8th grade English language learner students in three Northeast and Island Region states, the report finds that the English language domains of reading and writing (as measured by a proficiency assessment) are significant predictors of performance on reading, writing, and mathematics assessments and that the domains of reading and writing (literacy skills) are more closely associated with performance than are the English language domains of speaking and listening (oral skills).”

Summary: Lessons From the Classroom Level About Federal and State Accountability in Rhode Island and Illinois—Center on Education Policy, February 6, 2009

<http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=494&parentID=481>

“In the winter of 2008, the Center on Education Policy released reports examining the impact of national and state accountability systems on curriculum, instruction, and student achievement in Rhode Island and Illinois. Using classroom observations and interviews with school administrators, instructional specialists, teachers, parents, and students, CEP developed case studies of 12 schools in the two states. This report summarizes the common findings across the two states and discusses findings that were unique to each state.”

High School Literacy: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet—National High School Center, January 2009

http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_HighSchoolLiteracy.pdf

“These statistics paint a portrait of some of the challenges high school students encounter in obtaining high levels of literacy.”

Mathematics Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities or Difficulty Learning Mathematics: A Guide for Teachers—Center on Instruction, 2008

<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Teaching%20Math%20to%20SLD%20LD%20Guide.pdf>

“[The] document guides K–12 teachers of students with disabilities and at-risk students in their selection and use of effective mathematics instructional methods. For each of the seven recommendations, we explain what works, describe how the practice should be done, and summarize the evidence supporting the recommendation.”



Mathematics Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities or Difficulty Learning Mathematics: A Synthesis of the Intervention Research—Center on Instruction, 2008

<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Teaching%20Math%20to%20SLD%20Meta-analysis.pdf>

“This meta-analysis synthesizes experimental and quasi-experimental research on instruction that enhances the mathematics performance of students in grades 1–12 with learning disabilities (LD).”

Calendar of Events

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

MAY 2009

Dates: May 26	Topic: Recommendations for Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
Location: Online	Audience: State- and district-level educators and advocates for English language learners
Format: Webinar	Sponsor: WestEd
Dates: May 28	Topic: Development and Enhancement of a Comprehensive ARRA Communications Strategy for SEAs
Location: Online	Audience: Invited SEA representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Format: Webinar (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Sponsor: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West
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, and institutions of higher education
Format: Webinar	Sponsor: Regional Resource Center Program

JUNE 2009

Dates: June 8	Topic: Indiana Institute for School Leadership Teams—Distinguished Principals Training
Location: Indianapolis, IN	Audience: Office of Title I Academic Support, school leadership teams, and distinguished principals
Format: Training (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Sponsors: Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Title I, Great Lakes East



Dates: June 9–11	Topic: Indiana Institute for School Leadership Teams, Summer Academy Cohort II
Location: Indianapolis, IN	Audience: Office of Title I, school leadership teams, and distinguished principals
Format: Academy (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Sponsors: Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Title I, Great Lakes East
Dates: June 16	Topic: SEA and local education agency reporting strategies related to Title I and IDEA funding (<i>Series 2 of 4</i>)
Location: Online	Audience: Invited state representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin
Format: Web conference (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Sponsors: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West
Dates: June 17	Topic: Promising Research-Based Instructional and Assessment Practices for ELLs
Location: Online	Audience: Anyone interested in the ELL-related topic
Format: Webinar (To register , enter: COIERELL)	Sponsor: Center on Instruction
Dates: June 24–25	Topic: Indiana Support Student Learning Conference
Location: Indianapolis, IN	Audience: Office of Title I, school leadership teams, and distinguished principals
Format: Conference	Sponsors: Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Title I, Great Lakes East
Dates: June 26–28	Topic: ASCD Summer Conference on Differentiated Instruction, Understanding by Design, and What Works in School
Location: Houston, TX	Audience: Teachers, principals, building-level administrators, district- and state-level administrators, staff developers, and university professors
Format: Conference	Sponsors: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Dates: June 28–July 1	Topic: 17th Annual Model Schools Conference
Location: Atlanta, GA	Audience: K–12 educators and policymakers
Format: Conference	Sponsor: International Center for Leadership in Education

JULY 2009

Dates: July 8–10	Topic: 2009 ECS National Forum on Education Policy: “Shifting Education and the Economy into High Gear”
Location: Nashville, TN	Audience: Governors, legislators and their staff; chief state school officers and state higher education executive officers; local and state school board members; foundation officials; business leaders; teachers and principals; college and university faculty; federal agency representatives; and state and national education stakeholders
Format: Meeting	Sponsor: Education Commission of the States



Dates: July 14	Topic: Strategies to Build Effective Reporting and Monitoring Structures (<i>Series 3 of 4</i>)
Location: Online	
Format: Web conference (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Audience: Invited state representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin
	Sponsors: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West

AUGUST 2009

Dates: August 11	Topic: Use of Communications, Reporting, and Monitoring Strategies to Prepare for the Competitive Grant Application Process and Disbursement (<i>Series 4 of 4</i>)
Location: Online	
Format: Web conference (<i>Invitation only</i>)	Audience: Invited state representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin
	Sponsors: Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dates: October 5–6	Topic: Improving Outcomes for English Language Learners: Oral Language and Literacy Learning Across the Curriculum
Location: Austin, TX	
Format: Conference	Audience: Instructional leaders in state and regional agencies, school districts, schools, colleges of education, and publishing companies
	Sponsor: Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) in collaboration with University of Houston, California State University–Long Beach, Center for Applied Linguistics, Harvard University, University of Texas–Austin, and University of California–Berkeley

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