

Spotlight

A publication of the Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL

Volume 3 Number 7

In this issue:	Page:
Content Center Update	1
Highlights of State Work	1
Calendar of Events	4

Content Center Update

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII), one of five content centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education, provides information and technical assistance to regional comprehensive centers and their clients on school and district improvement, school restructuring and turnarounds, supplemental education services, and statewide systems of support.

Among its online resources, CII offers Indistar, a web-based system that may be implemented by a state education agency, district, or charter school organization for use with district and school improvement teams to inform, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. The system has a number of features including:

- Research alignment of indicators
- Mechanisms for creating documents, setting timelines, allocating resources, and monitoring implementation
- Electronic reporting of progress at the district and school level
- Operational data on district, school, and classroom behaviors and practices that contribute to student learning
- Capability for multiple school teams to work on different sets of indicators (i.e., school improvement, special education, response to intervention, and English language learners)

For additional information or to access a demo of Indistar, visit the [CII Web site](#).

Highlights of State Work

Alabama

Workshop Session on Conducting Program Evaluations for Federal Programs

During the Alabama Mega Conference on July 22, 2010, SECC staff Erin McCann, PhD, program associate, and Mary Lou Meadows, EdD, Alabama state liaison, presented a workshop session with staff members Brooke Blair and Mark Ward of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Seventy-four participants from local education agencies (LEAs) and ALSDE attended the interactive session, which focused on helping to increase understanding of the

- Connection between local program evaluation to the Title I LEA Plan, the Federal Programs Monitoring document, and eGAP planning
- Differences between various outcomes
- Indicators and performance measures for reporting the effectiveness of actions

CBAM Training To Assist ALSDE

The Alabama State Department of Education has asked SECC to assist with developing a process for monitoring some of the state's School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools related to implementation of selected intervention strategies by local education agencies. ALSDE included the Concerns-Based Adoption Model or CBAM in its School Improvement Grant application as part of the monitoring component.

CBAM is a conceptual framework that describes, explains, and predicts probable teacher concerns and behaviors throughout the school change process. The three principal diagnostic dimensions of CBAM are stages of concern, levels of use, and innovation configurations. CBAM tools and training center on helping educators, administrators, and others who are charged with measuring the implementation of a new practice in school settings.

Dr. Shirley Hord, a leading researcher in CBAM and former SEDL staff member, and other SEDL staff members were instrumental in the early work of CBAM and are nationally known in this area. SECC will train ALSDE staff in CBAM and will help them to develop specific innovation configurations (IC) to monitor implementation. This series of training sessions will strengthen the staff's capacity for this work and ensure that they receive effective, job-embedded professional development and technical assistance. The team will finalize training dates and times in coming months.

Georgia

Parent Outreach Project Meeting

Sally Wade, EdD, SECC program associate, hosted a Supplemental Education Services Parent Outreach Project planning conference call on July 19, 2010. Participants included Reatha Owen, CII; Michelle Tarbutton and Brenda Williams, from the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE); Julie Hollis, of the Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center; and Glenda Copeland, MA, SECC Georgia state liaison.

The group discussed an agenda and organization plan for a webinar for the two pilot districts and their community partners, which was held July 20. They also discussed technical assistance schedules and project progress. A second planning conference call was held August 16 to prepare for an additional webinar on August 24.

Thinking Maps Summer Training and Debrief

On July 12–14, SECC state liaison Copeland and program associates Wade, Dale Lewis, PhD, and Concepcion Molina, EdD, attended the Thinking Maps (TM) training for about 10 middle and high schools at Callaway Gardens Conference Center. TM staff conducted the Day 1 overview training and assisted GaDOE staff in conducting the content specific sessions for mathematics, English language arts, science, social studies, and other content teachers on Day 2.

In addition, SECC program associates Camille Chapman, MEd, and Kathleen Theodore, MA, joined the group for a debrief session to discuss lessons learned from data collected during the past year's implementation of TM in needs improvement schools. Chapman and Theodore also attended the final TM training for schools on July 15–16.

Louisiana

Follow-Up Meeting for Blueprint Forum

SECC and the Texas Comprehensive Center hosted a regional forum—Turning Around Low-Achieving Schools: A Blueprint for Reform—at SEDL headquarters July 21–22, 2010. During the forum, attendees from states served by the centers explored the priority areas identified in *A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* and gained insight from key U.S. Department of Education staff on the department's current priorities and possible next steps.

On August 26, SECC staff Robin Jarvis, PhD, program manager, and Darlene Morgan Brown, PhD, Louisiana state liaison, met with Nicole Honore' and Jacob Landry of the Innovations Office of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) to discuss technical assistance needs. On September 13, Brown also met with key leaders of the newly reorganized LDE for the purpose of developing and prioritizing the Year 6 work plan. Key staff from all divisions and goal offices attended the meeting. SECC work will center on these priority areas and focus on systemic activities that are connected and aligned.

Academy of Pacesetting States

Many of the "graduates" of the CII Academy of Pacesetting States decided to continue their work on improving their statewide system of support (SSOS). Continuous communication among the pacesetting states and constant professional growth of the graduates will be attained through monthly group conference calls with the regional comprehensive center (RCC) representatives.

During these monthly interactions, RCC representatives will share common issues and solutions, inform the development of a series of webinars by providing input on topics germane to SSOS work, and provide updates on SSOS work in their respective states. The first two conference calls were held August 5 and September 9.

Louisiana DIBELS Intervention Team Activities

SECC program associate Kathleen Theodore continues to work with LDE staff on the new DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) intervention presentation entitled *Navigating Student Learning*.

The project began on May 3 and was scheduled for completion in September. The overall goal of the project is to revise the previous DIBELS intervention presentation as well as to align it with the new DIBELS Next Assessment. The team is developing a formal draft of the presentation to redeliver to state staff.

Mississippi

Management Information Systems Workshop

Debra Meibaum, MAT, SECC Mississippi state liaison, met with staff from the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Management Information Systems (MIS) on June 30, July 9, and July 19, 2010. The purpose of the meetings was to initiate planning for the MDE Mississippi Student Information Systems (MSIS) Data Collection Workshop on August 17–18. During the meetings, the group discussed workshop logistics, formed committees, and identified staff assignments. An additional committee meeting was held August 10.

English Language Learner Guidelines

On July 13–15, Maggie Rivas, MA, SECC program associate, met with Yvette Gilbert, Title III coordinator, MDE, to review and finalize the Mississippi Guidelines for English Language Learners (ELLs). The document will be submitted to the State Board of Education for final approval. Additional technical assistance regarding rolling out the ELL guidelines will be provided to MDE during the upcoming school year.

Research, Best Practices on Parental Involvement in Schools and Teacher Quality

In response to a request for information from MDE, SECC staff Meibaum, state liaison, and Chris Ferguson, PhD, program associate, identified current research and best practices on parental involvement in schools and relevant professional development for educators. The information was used to inform members of a House Bill 1047 task force. On June 30, Meibaum met with Ann Necaie, MDE's Office of Quality Professionals and Special Schools, to answer questions about the resources and to determine if more information was needed. Also, Ferguson reviewed an additional resource on parent involvement and provided feedback.

School Improvement Symposium

On June 30, state liaison Meibaum served on the School Improvement Symposium planning committee for MDE's Office of Innovative Support (OIS). Committee members discussed the purpose of the symposium and brainstormed various session topics and delivery formats to achieve the desired outcomes. A smaller working committee will meet to identify the optimal format. Committee members will be notified by OIS when a follow-up meeting date is scheduled.

Coaches Academy Evaluation

SECC staff Erin McCann, Debra Meibaum, and Camille Chapman recently met with Marsha Wansley, Title II coordinator for MDE's OIS, and Sara Maghan, an MDE external consultant, to review evaluation data collected throughout the past year on the Coaches Academy Program.

The team worked on a plan for synthesizing the data and developed a draft structure for a comprehensive year-end evaluation report on the progress and effectiveness of the program. The evaluation document will be comprised of both a comprehensive report and a shorter, user-friendly version.

South Carolina

Palmetto Priority Schools

The Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) are designated for intensive service by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). The PPS office provides tiered services based on the designation of need for each priority school. The Office of Special Projects also oversees the Turnaround Schools Project.

Each PPS is assigned a liaison who works from 2 to 8 days per month on-site in the PPS with the principal and leadership team. Turnaround schools are assigned a team of educators who work on-site with assigned schools.

On July 27–28, 2010, an intensive 2-day summer professional development meeting was held for PPS and Turnaround School team members. Attendees worked on logistics and procedures for the new academic year and heard update sessions from other offices in the SCDE, which included curriculum and standards, Title I, data systems, and the newly formed school improvement grants office. They examined data from their schools and attended sessions on data use. Dale Lewis, SECC program associate, presented a keynote session on response to intervention (RtI) with a focus on secondary school application.

Sandra Lindsay, EdD, SECC South Carolina state liaison, continued a series of professional development sessions on effective coaching techniques. Participants also reviewed an innovation configuration (IC) that was jointly developed by the PPS office and SECC staff. The IC will guide the work of PPS principals and their liaisons.

Corrective Action School Districts

On July 14–15, the Title I Best Practices Conference in North Charleston provided training and guidance planned specifically for schools and districts in improvement. SECC state liaison Lindsay presented a session entitled, “What Can We Do About District Improvement?” She partnered with Belinda Snow from Spartanburg 5 School District to share how targeted professional development and leadership strategies can move a district forward and out of improvement status.

Karen Williams, a former SCDE staff member, highlighted A [Toolkit for Title I Parental Involvement](#), authored by SECC’s Chris Ferguson, during a session on the important role parents play in their child’s education. In addition, staff from Georgetown and Lancaster County School Districts—with whom SEDL has partnered—highlighted efforts undertaken to improve curriculum and instructional delivery in their classrooms.

School Improvement Grants Activities

SECC’s Lindsay serves on the School Improvement Grants Project 180 Council for SCDE. The council’s primary responsibility is to serve as central oversight for SIG applicants and to monitor progress in designated schools. Grants have been awarded, and professional development activities for the newly named SIG schools were held on July 12 and 13, at the Embassy Suites in North Charleston, South Carolina. Wayne Green, principal, Orange County Public Schools, provided a keynote address on leading change and following results.

Dr. Wayne Callendar, a consultant from the University of Oregon, helped participants think about ensuring success through a schoolwide approach using an effective RtI model. In addition, district teams worked on their final SIG implementation plans and budget documents as SCDE, and Project 180 staff members provided technical support.

Calendar of Events

National Rural Education Association Convention

October 15–17, 2010

Chateau on the Lake
Branson, MO

Contact: John Hill
Phone: 765-494-0086
E-mail: jehill@purdue.edu
[Event Web site](#)

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Regional Conference and Exposition

October 28–29, 2010

Courtyard by Marriott Convention Center
New Orleans, LA

Contact: NCTM customer service representative
Phone: 800-235-7566

[Event Web site](#)

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Conference on Teaching and Learning

October 29–31, 2010

Hyatt Regency
Chicago, IL

Contact: ASCD Service Center
Phone: 800-933-2723

[Event Web site](#)

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The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) is one of 16 regional centers established by the U.S. Department of Education. The primary goal of the regional centers is to build the capacity of the state education agencies and statewide systems of support to implement NCLB. Links to the other regional centers, the content centers, and the U.S. Department of Education may be found on the SECC Web site (secc.sedl.org).	
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