

# Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center

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## Another Look at School Improvement

Turning around the lowest performing schools in the country has been at the center of the national radar since last spring, when the U.S. Department of Education released *A Blueprint for Reform* and renewed the call for effective school turnaround. Within months, School Improvement Grant (SIG) money became available to states to help their districts and schools implement rigorous interventions and reforms.

In our region, more than \$312 million was awarded to Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio for local schools struggling to improve teaching and learning and increase achievement for all students. Districts competed for a portion of the funding to implement one of four intervention models, and, by now, the turnaround efforts are in full swing and expectations for dramatic outcomes are sky high.

One of the biggest concerns is related to the needs of high schools. More than half of the SIG schools in our region (as well as the nation) are high schools, and it is a top priority to continue conversations and support for high school improvement. This issue's special report by the National High School Center provides a quick overview of the SIG implementation approaches in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio schools (see pp. 6–7).

Transforming and turning around chronically underperforming schools is a difficult task, and, as states develop supports and strategies to assist districts and schools, it is critical that success stories are shared and learning communities with peers are formed. The U.S. Department of Education has launched a series of four regional conferences to build capacity and provide support to states, districts, and schools that are implementing SIG funds (see the Spotlight on p. 5). Within the Midwest region, we are collaborating with the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center and the National High School Center to host **a two-day SIG conference on needs for high schools, May 18–19, 2011, in the Chicago area**. We invite you to [register](#) for this event before April 26 because conference participation and space are limited!

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

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

# Highlights of the Quarter

## New Governors Take Office in Michigan and Ohio



Rick Snyder

Rick Snyder was sworn in as the 48th governor of Michigan on January 1, 2011. In his inaugural address, Governor Snyder said, “I have been hired to represent all people of the state of Michigan and move us all forward together. We all want to live in a state of high expectations and results. We can only achieve extraordinary things if we aspire beyond traditional thinking. The old, unbelievable needs to become the new achievable. Let today be the birth of a new chapter in Michigan’s history. Let today be the birth of the era of innovation and reinvention.” Expressing his vision regarding education, Governor Snyder said, “We must do more to help students achieve academic success. We have been spending money

without delivering the results needed to give our young people a bright future. It is time that we review our educational system as one that runs from prenatal through lifelong learning. It’s time we started talking about P–20 instead of K–12.” For additional information, please view the governor’s [website](#).



John R. Kasich

John R. Kasich was sworn in as the 69th governor of Ohio on January 10, 2011. In his [inaugural address](#) Governor Kasich said, “You know, my inauguration, the conductor of a great orchestra, with all of you playing an instrument in that orchestra, my inauguration is your inauguration. I want everyone to understand that I hope you can realize we accept this responsibility together. I have a sense that across Ohio, people know we have a challenge. So today, we’re all inaugurated into a better day. You know, I’m only a servant. I am only a servant, a public servant. I report to the people. I report to you, the people.” Kasich also said, “The obstacles at times seemed great. The light is dimmed in our great state. But I

believe we have not yet begun to fight for our families, for our children, and for a legacy.” For additional information, please visit Governor Kasich’s [website](#).

## Great Lakes Region Collaborates for Implementation of the Common Core State Standards

On January 24–25, 2011, Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center, Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center, and Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest held a regional meeting titled “Building a Collaborative Work Plan for Implementation of the Common Core State Standards,” in Rosemont, Illinois. The two-day meeting convened state education agency (SEA) teams from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin who are responsible for implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in their states. Prior to the meeting, the centers administered an SEA needs assessment survey to ensure that each state had a voice in planning the structure and content of the meeting and to ensure that the challenges of each state would be discussed. The goal of the meeting was to assist states in forming multistate teams to create plans for developing

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resources, strategies, and tools for implementation of the CCSS. Each selected a primary contact person to be on an SEA planning team to ensure continuous communication and feedback during development of the agenda.

All five SEAs identified a group of their staff members to attend the meeting, and each selected a primary contact person to be on an SEA planning team to ensure continuous communication, feedback, and action planning. During the two days, the teams engaged in activities designed to build a common understanding and a collaborative environment among states regarding standards implementation. They brainstormed implementation plans and shared resources for the common core adoption and rollout in each state. They also identified specific successes and challenges that impact implementation and shared their commitment to communicate the work to the assessment consortia. This meeting created a community of practice, within the Midwest region, so that resources and ideas can be shared about the Common Core State Standards and implementation activities. Several cross-state teams were formed as a result of the meeting, which will continue regular conversations, facilitated by Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West staff, and design tools to meet states' implementation needs. These conversations will focus on the topics of alignment, communication, leadership, and teaching and learning as they relate to the Common Core work.

## Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network

The Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network is a new network funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The network is being operated by ICF International, American Institutes for Research, Cross & Joftus, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, SEDL, and Education Northwest to provide technical assistance to help states facing the most significant challenges in carrying out the broad range of reform initiatives envisioned under their Race to the Top grants.

The Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network has assigned a state coordinator to work individually with each of the 12 Race to the Top states and has designated content experts to provide support to the states in six priority areas: teacher and leader effectiveness and evaluation; standards and assessments; turning around low-performing schools; data systems; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction; and financial accountability and sustainability.

The issue of educator performance evaluation has emerged as a first priority. In response to this priority, the Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network has worked closely with the U.S. Department of Education to develop and deliver a webcast examining value-added models and another focused on evaluation strategies appropriate for nonassessed subjects and grades. On December 10–11, 2010, the Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network hosted a meeting of state teams, supported by nationally known experts in educator effectiveness, to go further into depth in discussing, sharing, critiquing, and implementing appropriate state-based strategies for stronger educator assessment procedures.

Eventually, the technical assistance resources developed through the Race to the Top Technical Assistance Network, including content-specific materials as well as identified best practices, will be available to help the states that have not received Race to the Top funding to improve their applications for subsequent Race to the Top competitions and to move their own planned reforms forward.

## American Institutes for Research Hosts a National Symposium on English Learners and RTI

On November 18, 2010, the American Institutes for Research English Language Learners Center held a symposium titled “Using RTI to Improve Achievement for English Language Learners.” The symposium brought together and engaged researchers, policymakers, and leaders in the field in an ongoing discussion about connecting research, practice, and policy to support success for English learners. Darren Woodruff, Ph.D., from the National Center for Response to Intervention provided the audience with an introduction to RTI and an overview of the national center. Participants had an opportunity to attend two panel discussions. During the first discussion, presenters addressed the importance of high-quality instruction for English learners in Tier I of RTI, highlighted the appropriate use of screening and progress-monitoring tools, and engaged the audience in an interactive discussion about the implications for federal policy. Panel presenters included Julie Esparza-Brown, Ed.D., from Portland State University; John Nelson, Ed.D., assistant superintendent in the Chula Vista Elementary School District; and Rosalinda Barrera, Ph.D., assistant deputy secretary and director of the Office of English Language Acquisition at the U.S. Department of Education. The second discussion focused on the effective implementation of RTI for English learners. Janette Klingner, Ph.D., from the University of Colorado at Boulder, reviewed the research. State and federal perspectives were provided by Theresa Janczak, Ph.D., principal investigator and project director of the New York State Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center, and Melody Musgrove, director of the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education. When sharing her state perspective on how New York state is supporting districts with English learners through RTI, Dr. Janczak introduced the state’s recently released guidance on RTI implementation. Mary Ann Zehr, Education Week’s assistant editor, highlighted the symposium in the [Learning the Language](#) blog and noted that New York’s RTI guidance “gives substantive recommendations” for educators to address specific English learners’ needs. View [presentations](#) from the symposium.

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# Spotlight: U.S. Department of Education Announces Regional SIG Conferences

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## SIG Regional Conferences

SPOTLIGHT

LEADING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL TURNAROUNDS:  
LEARNING FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE



**Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana,**  
Assistant Secretary  
of Elementary and  
Secondary Education

The US Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with our Comprehensive Centers, will host a series of regional capacity building conferences in support of state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs) and schools implementing the School Improvement Grants (SIG). As a former superintendent, principal, and teacher, I know how challenging it is to turn around low-performing schools. One of the supports I found most useful as I began the work was learning from peers who had seen success in their schools, and forming learning communities with peers who were starting their work, just as I was. Four conferences are planned to facilitate this learning—Eastern and Western regional conferences for all SIG grantees in those regions and two regional conferences focused on specific segments of SIG grantees: high schools and rural/ Native American schools. We look forward to creating a learning community among SIG grantees that will thrive well beyond the two-day conferences!

### AUDIENCE:

Teams from SEAs, LEAs, and schools implementing the SIG program.

DATE/LOCATION	REGION	CONFERENCE THEME
<b>April 5-6, 2011</b> Los Angeles, CA	<b>Western</b> (CA, UT, CO, NV, OR, WA, HI, AZ, NM) California CC, West/Southwest CC, Northwest CC, Pacific CC <b>Contact:</b> Meg Livingston Asensio, <a href="mailto:mliving@WestEd.org">mliving@WestEd.org</a> , <b>Registration:</b> <a href="http://westsig.eventbrite.com/">http://westsig.eventbrite.com/</a>	<b>"Leading Successful School Turnarounds: Learning From Research and Practice"</b>
<b>April 13-14, 2011</b> Washington, DC	<b>Eastern</b> (DC, DE, MD, PA, NJ, VA, WV, SC, TN, GA, LA, AL, MS, FL, PR, USVI, ME, NH, MA, RI, NY, KY, NC, VT, CT) New England CC, New York CC, Mid-Atlantic CC, Appalachia CC, Florida and Islands CC, Southeast CC <b>Contacts:</b> Robin Ahigian, <a href="mailto:rahigia@wested.org">rahigia@wested.org</a> , and Jan Phlegar, <a href="mailto:jphlega@wested.org">jphlega@wested.org</a> <b>Registration:</b> <a href="http://www.eastsig.eventbrite.com">www.eastsig.eventbrite.com</a>	<b>"Leading Successful School Turnarounds: The Role of State, District, and School Leadership"</b>
<b>May 18-19, 2011</b> Chicago, IL	<b>Midwest</b> (MI, IL, IN, IA, WI, OH, MN, plus interested others) Great Lakes West CC, Great Lakes East CC, NHSC <b>Contact:</b> Barbara Youngren, <a href="mailto:byoungren@air.org">byoungren@air.org</a> <b>Registration:</b> <a href="http://www2.learningpt.org/MidwestHSSigConference/">http://www2.learningpt.org/MidwestHSSigConference/</a>	<b>"Leading Successful High School Turnarounds: Learning From Research and Practice"</b>
<b>May 24-25, 2011</b> Denver, CO	<b>Central</b> (NE, ND, SD, KS, MO, AR, OK, AK, TX, MT, ID, WY, and interested others) North Central CC, Mid-Continent CC, Texas CC, Alaska CC (plus BIE and interested others) <b>Contact:</b> Anne Tweed, <a href="mailto:atweed@mcrel.org">atweed@mcrel.org</a> <b>Registration:</b> <a href="https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=941082">https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=941082</a>	<b>"Rural School Turnaround and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives"</b>

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Megan Lebow

## School Improvement Grants for High Schools: A Look at Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio

By Megan Lebow, Research Associate, and  
Joseph Harris, Ph.D., Director, National High School Center

The School Improvement Grants (SIG) program targets schools that are persistently low achieving. Through this program, the U.S. Department of Education provides \$3.4 billion dollars funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through increased appropriations for individual schools.



Joseph Harris, Ph.D.

Although the SIG program is designed to fund struggling schools at all grade levels, numerous states have made high schools a priority. A total of 540 schools serving high school grades—about half of the total number of schools—have received funds so far. This emphasis on high school is even stronger in the Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center region. Fifty-six percent of all Ohio's grantees, 61 percent of Michigan's grantees, and 71 percent of Indiana's schools serve high school grades. This article provides a snapshot of the current SIG efforts related to high schools in the Great Lakes East region.

To receive SIG funds, schools must implement one of four school reform models: closure, restart, transformation, or turnaround. The closure model includes closing the school and enrolling students in other, higher performing schools in the district. The restart model mandates that a school closes and reopens under the management of a charter school operator, charter school management organization (CMO), or education management organization (EMO). Any student who attended the previous school must be admitted to the newly opened alternative. The transformation model focuses on developing teacher and leader effectiveness, implementing comprehensive instructional programs using student achievement data, providing extended learning time, and creating community-oriented supports. Similarly, the turnaround model includes comprehensive instructional reform, use of increased learning time, and community-oriented supports but further requires the replacement of 50 percent of previously employed teaching staff and the adoption of a new governance structure for the school. The restart, transformation, and turnaround models all require replacement of the principal unless that position has been filled in the past two years as part of another reform effort. Seventy-six percent of schools that have received SIG funds have elected to implement the transformation model. Seventy-one percent of schools in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio have chosen to implement the transformation model, with the remaining 29 percent selecting the turnaround model.

Although the transformation and turnaround models differ in their staffing requirements, there is considerable overlap between the two of them. The requirements of these models belong to four distinct categories: developing and increasing school leader effectiveness, comprehensive instructional reform strategies, increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools, and providing operational flexibility and sustained support. Although schools and local education

agencies (LEAs) must implement a plan fulfilling each requirement to receive funding, SIG applications often give emphasis to specific requirements based on individual school and district needs.

Across all three Great Lakes East states, in almost every district and school, high-quality, job-embedded professional development is a focus of SIG applications. Professional development topics emphasized include training on the implementation of specific curricula, differentiating instruction for diverse learners, integrating technology into instruction, and classroom management. Delivery methods include on-site coaching, professional learning communities (PLCs), and regular principal walkthroughs to monitor implementation. Despite diverse offerings across Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio, a common theme that emerges is that SIG-funded professional development will be based on student achievement data and how it informs teacher professional development needs.

Another requirement that has been emphasized in schools across Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio is increased learning time. Strategies for increasing learning time range from removing learning time interrupters by decreasing passing time between classes or the number of students in each core classroom to adding minutes to the school day or days to the school year. In Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio, the most popular approach is targeting specific groups who are in need. Seventy-five percent of all schools in these three states will be implementing sessions before and/or after school, Saturday academies, and/or summer programs in an effort to provide additional learning time to identified groups. Districts such as Hammond (Indiana), Grant (Michigan), and Springfield (Ohio) have emphasized using this increased time to help students get back on track for graduation, providing time for content and credit recovery. Other districts, including Detroit, are using increased time to provide accelerated opportunities, such as dual enrollment.

In addition to SIG-required activities, many schools and districts have opted to emphasize activities deemed “permissible” by the SIG guidelines in response to documented student needs. For example, in recognition of a growing population of English language learners in the district, Grand Rapids (Michigan) has opted to implement supports that target this specific population. Similarly, just over a quarter of all schools in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio emphasized integrating technology and/or technology-related skills into their curricula in response to low student engagement and/or lack of access to technology outside of school. Twenty percent of schools have emphasized the importance of using funds to implement high school transition programs in response to the low performance of ninth-grade students relative to the rest of the school.

It is clear from posted SIG applications that schools and districts have put in efforts to identify student needs and match them to research-based interventions. As schools in the Great Lakes East region and across the nation gear up for round two of SIG funding, it will be interesting to see how their applications benefit from the lessons learned in round one. As SIG interventions are implemented over the next 2½ years, it will be beneficial to SIG schools and non-SIG schools alike to share their promising practices.



## REL Midwest Update

By Marianne Kroeger, Senior Communications Specialist, REL Midwest

### Research Reports Nearing Completion, Under Way, and Proposed

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) recently approved two REL Midwest short-term studies for publication. *State Policies and Procedures and Local Implementation*

*Practices Related to Response to Intervention (RTI)* focuses on the following two research questions: (1) What do six Midwestern states report about their interest in, policy development for, and planning for RTI? (2) How and to what extent are six Midwestern states supporting RTI?

Between September 2009 and March 2010, the study team collected data in six of the seven REL Midwest region states. This study describes the RTI approaches and strategies that these six states use in policy and practice and serves to add to the limited research on state-level RTI policy and practice. REL Midwest expects the report to be available soon on the [Regional Educational Laboratory Program website](#).

The other study is *Parent Involvement and Extended Learning in School Improvement Plans in the Midwest*. According to the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2002 (Public Law 107-110), also referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act, Title I schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years are required to develop or revise school improvement plans that describe proposed activities aimed at boosting student achievement, including parent involvement and extended learning activities. Schools must submit the plans to the local education agency for approval. REL Midwest conducted a content analysis of school improvement plans for schools identified for improvement based upon 2007–08 data in the Midwest region to examine the reported plans for parent involvement activities and extended learning programs. The study addresses six research questions and also will be published on the Regional Educational Laboratory Program website.

Work has begun on a research project that emerged from REL Midwest's ongoing relationship with the Midwest Urban Research Network, a collaborative group of 32 midsized urban districts. *Using the Freshman On-Track Indicator to Predict Graduation in Three Midwest Urban Districts* focuses on the following research questions: (1) What are the freshman on-track and off-track rates in the 2005–06 to 2009–10 cohorts within the participating districts and for demographic subgroups within these districts? (2) How do four-year graduation rates compare for on-track versus off-track freshmen in the 2005–06 and 2006–07 cohorts and for demographic subgroups within each district? (3) To what extent does the on-track indicator predict the likelihood of graduating in four years for the 2005–06 and 2006–07 cohorts after accounting for baseline student characteristics? Of potential use in the study is the freshman on-track indicator [Allensworth, E. M., & Easton, J. Q. (2005). *The on-track indicator as a predictor of high school graduation*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research].

A recent REL Southwest study, [Applying an On-Track Indicator for High School Graduation: Adapting the Consortium on Chicago School Research Indicator for Five Texas Districts](#), also looks at an on-track indicator. According to the report summary, "This study uses a measure of the on-track or off-track status of students at the end of grade 9 as an indicator of whether students in five

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Texas districts would graduate from high school in four years. In all five districts, on-time graduation rates were higher for students who were on track at the end of grade 9 than for students who were off track, both for students overall and for all racial/ethnic groups.”

Among new research projects that REL Midwest has proposed for 2011 is *Sensitivity of Teacher Value-Added Results to Different Measures of Student Growth in Indiana*. In this study, REL Midwest proposes to compare teachers’ value-added estimates from Indiana state test data (ISTEP+) to those from the Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) Measures of Academic Performance (MAP)—an assessment designed specifically to measure growth at all points within the spectrum of achievement. The findings from this research have the potential to influence the ways in which Indiana districts use NWEA data to measure teacher effectiveness.

### Connecting Research to Practice Events Continue

REL Midwest is planning a full schedule of Connecting Research to Practice events for 2011, beginning with a cross-REL collaborative webinar.

#### **February 24, 2011—Webinar (1:30–3:30 p.m. Central Time) *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: How ESAs and SEAs Can Help Low-Performing Schools & Districts***

Featured is Sam Redding, Ph.D., director, Center on Innovation & Improvement. Join experts from the nation’s regional educational laboratories for an informative and interactive webinar on the *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools Practice Guide*, one of 14 guides produced by the What Works Clearinghouse, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Dr. Redding, a nationally recognized school improvement expert, will present recommendations with a special emphasis on how education service agencies (ESAs) and state education agencies (SEAs) can work together to help low-performing schools and districts with turnaround efforts. A panel of ESA and SEA representatives will share their insights and experiences about turning around low-performing schools. To register for this free event, visit the [webinar website](#). Visit the [What Works Clearinghouse](#) to access all 14 Practice Guides.

Topics for events in the planning stage include dropout prevention, leadership in turnaround schools, and teacher effectiveness. There are no registration fees, and participants must make their own travel arrangements. To watch for new announcements and browse the archives of completed events, visit the [REL Midwest Upcoming Events](#) page.

### Practice Guides Available

In collaboration with the Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center, REL Midwest has been working with Dropout Challenge team members in Michigan by providing IES Practice Guides for a variety of events and professional development activities. IES Practice Guides—available on a variety of the challenging topics that educators face every day—present not only specific recommendations for action but also an indication of the quality of the evidence that supports them. Fourteen Practice Guides are available for download from the [What Works Clearinghouse](#). REL Midwest may be able to provide copies of Practice Guides for your events. To request copies, contact Marianne Kroeger by [e-mail](#). Be sure to specify the name of the Practice Guide you need, the quantity, the date needed, your phone number, and a complete shipping address.

## Focus on States

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



### INDIANA

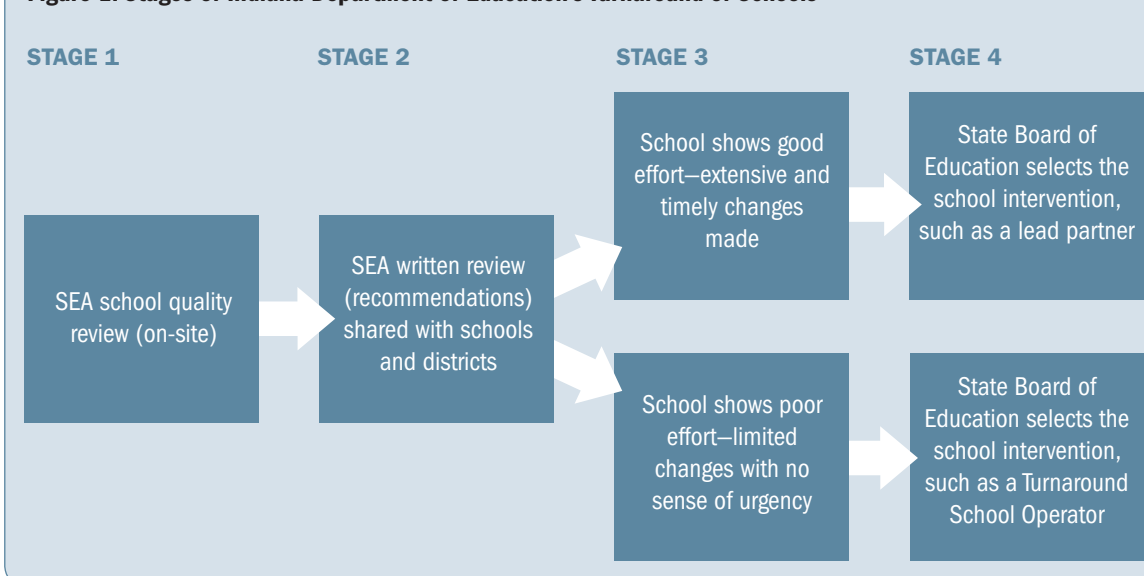
**State Manager:** Frank De Rosa | **E-Mail:** fderosa@air.org

## State Systems of Support

**School Improvement: State Turnaround of Schools.** The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has completed Stage 1 (see Figure 1) of turning around its chronically lowest performing schools. In late fall, four middle and high schools were visited by IDOE staff and community members to conduct school quality reviews. The reviews by the technical assistance teams were based on Mass Insight Education's survey of the literature related to actions of high-poverty, low-performing schools that led to their becoming high performing. IDOE compiled the reviews into final reports, which included the schools' areas of strengths, areas of improvement, and recommendations. In February 2011, IDOE will begin Stage 2 with Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett, Ed.D., and IDOE staff meeting with the schools and districts to discuss the written reviews. During the remainder of the current school year and next school year, the schools are required to demonstrate good efforts in implementing and addressing the recommendations. Their efforts are monitored by regular onsite visits by IDOE staff.

In the 2011–12 school year, Stage 3 will begin with IDOE determining whether the schools are making good *efforts* toward change. Effort refers to extensive changes that occur rapidly—not simply “playing around the edges.” In Stage 4, the Indiana State Board of Education will determine the intervention for each school. A range of interventions exists, such as assigning a lead partner to assist the school or having a Turnaround School Operator (TSO) manage the school.

**Figure 1. Stages of Indiana Department of Education's Turnaround of Schools**



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This winter, IDOE Turnaround Director Lee Ann Kwiatkowski led the effort to write the response for proposals for national and state organizations that describes the roles and requirements of Indiana's TSOs. A number of management companies and community organizations applied. The responses were scored, and seven were selected to give oral presentations to a panel of IDOE staff and external partners. For those that scored well, IDOE and external partners will conduct visits to schools currently managed by those TSOs and then select the final group to operate up to 20 of Indiana's lowest performing schools. The Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center assisted in these efforts by codeveloping scoring rubrics for TSOs' responses to the proposals, their oral presentations, and the visits to their schools.

Copanning by IDOE and Great Lakes East is occurring now for community meetings in five areas of the state, which represent the 20 schools that are the persistently lowest performing in the state. The meetings will bring together key individuals such as business owners, clergy, and service organizations to learn of the turnaround process and timelines and to seek their input as to how to best communicate with parents. In addition, IDOE and Great Lakes East are developing systems for identifying and recruiting exceptional teachers and principals based on the research of turnaround schools, such as developing a website titled *INcredible Educators*. Finding educators who have the skills and the desire to serve in low-performing schools is one of the greatest challenges districts face. IDOE and Great Lakes East hope to address this challenge by providing Indiana districts and TSOs with educators that are well prepared and eager to serve in the state's lowest performing schools.

**School Improvement: Response to Instruction.** Indiana's Response to Instruction (RTI) Pilot Schools Program accelerated into the winter with professional development sessions for staff at each of the 11 pilot schools. During the week of November 15, separate four-hour sessions were held, one in each of the pilot schools' corporations. The sessions addressed RTI foundations and differentiated instruction with special considerations for English learners (ELs). The sessions were led by Alyson Luther, IDOE director of RTI, with technical assistance and feature presentations from Stacy Rush, Ph.D., Great Lakes East staff member, and Lisa Tabaku, ELL education specialist and associate manager at the Center for Applied Linguistics.

## Instruction

**Common Core State Standards.** On January 24–25, 2011, Great Lakes East, Great Lakes West, and REL Midwest held a meeting titled "Building a Collaborative Work Plan for Implementation of the Common Core State Standards" in Rosemont, Illinois. The two-day meeting convened state education agency officials from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin who are responsible for implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in their states. The purpose of the meeting was to assist states in forming multistate teams to create plans for developing resources, strategies, and tools for implementation of CCSS. The teams engaged in activities designed to build a common understanding and a collaborative environment among states regarding standards implementation. The IDOE team consisted of Schauna Findlay, Ph.D., director of curriculum and instruction; Zach Foughty, secondary mathematics consultant; Adam Jones, English language arts specialist; Will Krebs, school leadership and policy specialist; Alyson Luther, director of RTI/ELL/integrated services/textbook; and Michele Walker, director of student assessment. The teams identified specific successes and challenges that impact implementation and shared their

commitment to communicate the work to their assessment consortia. Indiana is one of 11 governing states in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) with 26 member states.

**Theory of Action for Mathematics Reform.** Great Lakes East continues to provide technical assistance to IDOE as they begin to develop a theory of action for mathematics reform within the current CCSS implementation plan. The theory of action is a new title for work that was previously referred to as a new secondary integrated mathematics policy statement and business plan. When completed, components of the theory of action will include the following: (1) an introduction and statement of reasoning including an analysis of NAEP, ISTEP+, and End of Course Assessments data and of CCSS for mathematics, (2) changing curriculum and instruction K–12, (3) elementary mathematics specialists, (4) high school mathematics pathways and making informed decisions about the integration of secondary mathematics, and (5) graduation requirements, which includes achieving the goal of “90-25-90” (90 percent graduation rate of all Indiana students, 25 percent of all Indiana students have a college-level experience in high school, and 90 percent of all Indiana students pass ISTEP+).

Overall, the new theory of action will emphasize mathematics curriculum, instruction, assessment, and K–12 professional development. It will point out the soundness of an integrated secondary mathematics model. In March 2011, key sections of the theory of action will be presented to the Indiana State Board of Education. Ultimately, Indiana school corporations will be able to use it as a guide in annual textbook selection. The authors of the IDOE theory of action include key members of the CCSS team, who are Schauna Findlay, Ph.D., Zach Foughty, and Trice Black (elementary mathematics specialist). Great Lakes East technical assistance providers are Lisa Palacios and Frank De Rosa. Great Lakes East continues to facilitate an advisory relationship with the Center on Instruction’s mathematics experts Russell Gersten, Ph.D., director of the mathematics strand, and Richard Schaar, Ph.D., executive advisor to the Office of Education Policy of Texas Instruments, Inc.

**College and Career Preparation.** Throughout fall 2010, Great Lakes East continued to support the academic integration efforts of IDOE’s Division of College and Career Preparation (CCP). IDOE has been tasked with recommending three courses to the Indiana State Board of Education that integrate academic and career and technical education (CTE) standards. These integrated courses would provide high school students the opportunity to earn interdisciplinary credit. Great Lakes East and CCP have collaborated this fall to develop a knowledge base to inform IDOE’s recommendations.

The knowledge base consists of three components. First, Great Lakes East and CCP, with support from the National High School Center, researched the characteristics of effective integrated courses and student achievement results related to participation in integrated courses. Second, Great Lakes East and CCP designed and launched a statewide survey of local CTE directors to collect baseline data on what integrated courses are currently offered across the state. Third, Great Lakes East and CCP completed a scan of state policies and procedures related to academic integration and interdisciplinary credit to identify best practices nationwide. This information, in addition to data previously collected by IDOE, will be used to inform discussions and decisions on the identification and development of the state’s course recommendations. The CCP academic integration team consists of Matt Fleck, director of college and career preparation; Davis Moore, trade and industrial career preparation specialist; and Great Lakes East representatives Beth Ratway and Tori Cirks (lead).

In addition, with assistance from Great Lakes East, IDOE has continued to support its Math-in-CTE professional development program, conducting a fall workshop on November 4–5, 2010. This workshop brought together mathematics and CTE teacher teams who participated in a five-day training session last July to advance their work on the development and refinement of integrated lessons. Teams had opportunities to share challenges and learn from each others' experiences as they implemented the first set of lessons during the fall semester. The next workshop is scheduled for March 10–11, 2011. In addition, Great Lakes East will collaborate with CCP staff members Davis Moore, Peggy Wild (family and consumer sciences specialist), and Kelly Dunn (consultant to Indiana's College and Career Pathways project) to support the second phase of the development of Indiana's [College and Career Pathways](#).



## MICHIGAN

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### Teacher Quality

**Michigan System of Highly Effective Professional Learning: Policy Revision.** The Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center continues to support the work of a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) cross-functional stakeholder team made up of leaders from each of the MDE departments and from key stakeholder groups throughout the state. MDE and Great Lakes East have convened monthly meetings of the Stakeholder Team since October 2010 for the purpose of creating a more comprehensive System of Highly Effective Professional Learning. The team is preparing a system overview policy and corresponding guidelines to take to the State Board of Education in spring for the board's consideration and for public review. The team also is developing a communication dissemination plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure that highly effective professional learning is embedded throughout the system. The work of the team is expected to continue into summer 2011.

### High School

**High School Redesign.** On November 23, 2010, Jenny Scala, National High School Center, and Bersheril Bailey, Great Lakes East, cofacilitated an MDE needs assessment for high school improvement. The data gathered through this process may be used to begin the development of a five-year strategic plan for high school improvement in Michigan. Participants represented various offices at MDE: Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, Education Technology, Office of Career and Technical Education, Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability, Office of Field Services, Office of Professional Preparation, and Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services.

A week later, on November 30, 2010, representatives from MDE (Jan Ellis, spokesperson for the Superintendent of Public Instruction Office; Leisa Gallagher, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services), Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (Myra Munroe), Michigan Association of Secondary School Administrators (Diane McMillan), Michigan's Children



(Michele Corey), and Bailey planned and cofacilitated a session at the MDE School Improvement Conference titled “Dropout Prevention and School Improvement: Tapping the Power of School Community Partnerships.” All session participants received a copy of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide [Dropout Prevention](#). Jerry Czarnecki, teacher at Kelloggsville High School, and Kristine Gullen, high school consultant for Oakland Schools, shared strategies and interventions from the Practice Guide that they use in their school and intermediate school district. IES *What Works Clearinghouse* resources also were shared with participants. [Graduation Town](#), an online electronic learning community, was introduced during the session; it is dedicated to supporting state, district, and building efforts to ensure that all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready. Graduation Town provides a place for educators, parents, students, and community partners to share, ask, advise, collaborate, teach, learn, and network. The platform was designed by the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals in partnership with MDE. Great Lakes East regularly provides research and other resources from national content centers for the site.

In addition to the high school dropout prevention and improvement work, Great Lakes East and MDE collaborated with the Michigan Alternative Education Organization to hold a professional learning opportunity, “Mastering the Maze of Michigan Merit Math,” on November 11, 2010, for alternative educators across the state. The session was designed to increase educators’ capacity to teach mathematics to struggling learners. Presenters included Dan LaDue, MDE high school mathematics consultant, and Mike Lehman and Marie Copeland, project managers for EMATHS (Embracing Mathematics, Assessment, and Technology in High School). Approximately 75 educators attended the one-day session. Great Lakes East and MDE will continue to work with alternative education organizations to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities to assist alternative educators with helping students meet the state-mandated Michigan Merit Curriculum, which all students must meet in order to obtain a Michigan diploma.

On December 20, 2010, MDE welcomed the Office of Innovation and Improvement’s new Alternative Education Consultant Gregg Dionne. Great Lakes East supported Dionne’s participation at the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center Equity and Diversity Summit on January 26, 2011, in Arlington, Virginia. The purpose of the event was to increase the capacity of state education agencies (SEAs) to address equity and opportunity through policy, procedures, and practices; to provide a forum for discussion of the U.S. Department of Education’s renewed emphasis on equity; to identify underlying barriers to equity; and to share strategies, promising practices, and tools that address equity concerns. Sessions included staff from the Education Department (ED) and a panel of students from the Ron Brown Scholar Program and the Academic Development Institute high school Liftoff program, who discussed what public education did to assist them as well as what more could have been done.

## Statewide System of Support

**Michigan’s Statewide System of Support (SSOS).** MDE’s Pacesetter Academy team members participated in the Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) Distance Learning Session on January 7, 2011. Participants included Mark Coscarella, assistant director for the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation; Karen Ruple, manager for the statewide system of

support, and Bailey. The theme for the session was “Operations Manual: Staying on Message in Disruptive Times.” Cindy Koss, Ed.D., assistant state superintendent at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, presented “Staying on Message in Changing Times: Oklahoma’s Statewide System of Support.” Gerry Briscoe, Alaska Comprehensive Center, discussed how to strengthen a standards-aligned system for SSOS. MDE continues to refine Michigan’s SSOS *Operations Manual*. Technical assistance to the Pacesetter Team will continue by revisiting CII’s SSOS rubric and the SSOS Self-Assessment report provided by Great Lakes East to continue to redesign and improve the statewide system of support and development of the SSOS *Operations Manual*.

As part of the SSOS redesign, MDE is developing a School Improvement Review Visit (SIRV) process in collaboration with Great Lakes East and CII. During the first two weeks of December 2010, teams made up of representatives from MDE, Calhoun Intermediate School District, and Great Lakes East visited two schools to pilot the SIRV process. The teams conducted three-day site visits where they gathered data from classroom visits, student, teacher, and parent focus groups, individual interviews with administrators and teachers, as well as an examination of artifacts. Information from the visits was compiled to produce reports that were reviewed with the schools and process mentor team members. Great Lakes East provided MDE with CII’s *Patterns of Practice: A School Review Process* to support the development of Michigan’s process.

Great Lakes East facilitated a full-day debrief meeting on December 13, 2010, to review and refine the SIRV process. The debrief participants included representatives from CII, MDE’s Office of Education Improvement and Innovation; Calhoun Intermediate School District; AdvancED; University of Wisconsin; and Great Lakes East. Great Lakes East further collaborated with MDE to develop a site visit training manual to be used with site visit team members who received training on February 8–10, 2011. MDE plans to pilot SIRV in seven additional schools this year. Lisa Kinnaman, Ed.D., director of Statewide School Improvement Programs and associate director of Center for School Improvement and Policy Studies, met with Great Lakes East and MDE on February 11, 2011, to share information on Idaho’s Instructional Core visit and to answer questions to inform the continued development of SIRV. MDE’s new website *MI Excel Working Together for Student Success, Statewide System of Support* was launched in January 2011 (a collaborative effort between Great Lakes East, MAISA, MDE, and Pace and Partners, a Lansing-based marketing company). The website is a resource for SSOS participants as well as anyone interested in learning more about supports available to increase student achievement. Resources from the National High School Center, Center on Innovation & Improvement, Center on Instruction, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, What Works Clearinghouse, and American Institutes for Research will be posted on the site on a continual basis.

**English Language Learners (ELLs).** As a part of its ongoing capacity-building effort with mainstream teachers, Michigan Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) trainers (Cohort 1, summer 2009, and Cohort 2, summer 2010) participated in one of three follow-up meetings planned for this school year. More than 20 SIOP trainers from around the state participated in this initial November 19, 2010, meeting. Facilitated by Great Lakes East subcontractors from the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) staff members Emily Evans and Dennis Terdy, this follow-up training focused on team-building activities, sharing resources and training support information, MDE ELL Strategic Plan updates, and statewide SIOP planning.

On December 7, 2010, the cross-office ELL core team held its regular meeting. With an ongoing goal to coordinate and leverage ELL-related activities at MDE, Shereen Tabrizi, Ph.D., MDE Office of Field Services manager, and Terdy cofacilitated this meeting. The primary focus was to inform MDE office participants about the new ELL Strategic Plan components and to initiate connecting these components to initiatives within the various MDE offices. The next meeting discussing this cross-office connection to the newly revised strategic plan took place on February 4, 2011. In addition, on January 6, 2011, Great Lakes East staff participated in the MDE ELL Advisory Committee held in East Lansing, Michigan. The primary focus of this meeting was to finalize the state's ELL Strategic Plan and initiate the work of four subcommittees.

**Response to Intervention (RTI).** The Michigan RTI Team collaborated with the MDE School Improvement Office to provide an RTI preconference to the annual statewide School Improvement Conference. The preconference event was held on November 29, 2010, and was attended by more than 300 participants. The day included:

- A keynote address by Victoria Bernhardt, Ph.D., presenting her most recent work on RTI and continuous school improvement
- A presentation of Michigan's Essential Components of RTI
- Stories from the field on implementation of RTI at the school, district, and regional levels

The RTI team continues to work to identify and develop next steps to encourage statewide implementation of RTI in a consistent and effective manner. The team will continue to present Michigan's Essential Components at statewide conferences. In addition, the implementation of a system of RTI is presented within Michigan's Continuous School Improvement Process. Michigan continues to strive for One Common Voice—One Plan for schools in order to increase their focus on working together coherently to increase student achievement. The Statewide Guidance Team is now working on the development of an implementation guide for Michigan schools, which will include Michigan's Essential Components of RTI, Continuous School Improvement, and Implementation Science.



## OHIO

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### Assessment and Accountability

**Credit Flexibility Implementation.** Statewide implementation of Ohio's credit flexibility policy in all districts is moving forward. The Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center continues to support the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) as it offers Web conferences on credit flexibility topics important to districts. (See a list of the past online events in the [fall 2010 Great Lakes East e-newsletter](#), p. 13.) The first part of the Web conference series, from August 2010 to November 2010, was followed by a participant survey. On December 20, 2010, Great Lakes East staff members Tori Cirks and Mark Mitchell met with ODE's Tom Rutan, associate director, Curriculum and Instruction; Mike Hubbell, consultant, Education Reform; Pete LuPiba, Public Information Officer, and Patti Grey, public liaison/ombudsman, to review the survey results and to forecast credit flexibility work for the remainder of Year 6 and into Year 7.

The Web conference survey collected data from a range of respondents who participated in Web conferences from August 2010 to November 2010. Most respondents identified themselves as school counselors, district staff, or administrators (principal or vice principal). To gauge the overall merit of the Web conferences, survey respondents were asked to rate the quality of the Web conference attended as well as the relevance and usefulness of the content presented. More than 80 percent of respondents found the quality of the Web conferences to be either good or *excellent*, and approximately nine out of 10 rated likewise for the relevance (93 percent) and usefulness (89 percent) of the content. Survey respondents also indicated that they appreciated the information provided by ODE and found experts invited to present on specific topics or issues most helpful. They particularly liked that the information was current and sufficiently comprehensive. One respondent commented, “I am glad that these are available to us—especially from the ODE—because they are more ‘informed’ as to the myriad of changes that keep occurring.” In addition, the respondents indicated they also liked the question-and-answer segment of the Web conferences.

- A summary of the November 20, 2010, discussion points and forecasted work is included below:

- **2011 Credit Flexibility Web Events.** There is a need (based on participant feedback) for additional Web-based events to support local implementation. However, for spring, participants would like to see a differentiated approach where there would be some “Credit Flex 101” options as well as more specific and intensive “Advanced Credit Flex” options. The advanced options also would provide an opportunity for ODE to pose implementation questions to the field to see how different districts are approaching common challenges.
- **Community of Practice.** ODE has identified a state team to begin work on developing the credit flexibility community of practice (COP). There are some “quick wins” or topics that may be good test subjects for the COP (e.g., district policies). ODE and Great Lakes East will work with the state team, with assistance from the IDEA Partnership, to discuss and make final decisions on COP structure and the roles and responsibilities of team members.
- **Case Studies.** The field has expressed a need for additional illustrations of local credit flexibility implementation. Districts want to know how others are addressing and approaching some of the common implementation challenges. Although the final format of these illustrations (or case studies) may change, ODE and Great Lakes East plan to work together during the next few months to identify possible sites and to collect the necessary information for statewide dissemination.

Planning and implementation for these areas of credit flexibility support were further discussed and refined at a February 9, 2010, meeting between Great Lakes East and ODE representatives.

**Standards, Assessment, and Accountability.** Staff from both Great Lakes East and REL Midwest attended a meeting with Stan Heffner, associate superintendent, and Center for Curriculum and Assessment staff along with Cynthia Lemmerman, associate superintendent, Center for School Improvement, to identify areas of work that Great Lakes East could support. Following is a list of collaborative work that emerged from this meeting:

- Great Lakes East will continue to support ODE as they build the capacity of educational service centers (ESCs) and other regional providers in support of district implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Great Lakes East is positioned to play a collaborative role through an internal-external working group to support this work.

- Great Lakes East and REL Midwest are ready to provide technical assistance to ODE as it convenes a state-level panel for moderation and scoring; this group would work with ESCs to form regional moderation panels. Great Lakes East and REL Midwest could again serve as a thought partner in the design and operation of these panels and the training required to build the capacity of regional partners to do this work.
- Great Lakes East can help support cross-center work between ODE's Center for School Improvement and Center for Curriculum and Assessment. On December 20, 2010, Great Lakes East met with staff from these two centers to walk through a preliminary draft of the Innovation Configuration Map (see the [fall 2010 e-newsletter](#)) and to gauge interest in reconstituting an assessment system workgroup.

On January 24–25, 2010, an ODE team attended a Great Lakes East- and Great Lakes West-sponsored Common Core State Standards regional meeting in the Chicago area. The meeting was attended by state teams from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The Ohio team included Heffner, Jim Wright, assessment director, and Denny Thompson, curriculum director, from the Center for Curriculum and Assessment; Pamela VanHorn, director for Statewide System of Support, Center for School Improvement; Brinda Price, educational consultant, Center for the Teaching Profession; and Daniel Badea, technology consultant for ODE. Following the meeting, Heffner and Wright traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in a Council of Chief State School Officers Common Core State Standards meeting for the State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards program.

A next step in this work is support for design of a transition roadmap targeted at districts and schools as they move toward implementation of the Common Core State Standards. This roadmap will then be adapted to additional audiences in Ohio.

## State Systems of Support

**State Systems of Support and the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP).** In order to realize the transformational change to Ohio's educational system as articulated in Race to the Top and Assurance Area E, Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools, ODE has restructured the work of their centers and offices—none more so than the Center for School Improvement. Under the leadership of Cynthia Lemmerman, associate superintendent, Center for School Improvement, there are some new leadership team members with whom Great Lakes East will work: Jay Keefer (director, Ohio Network for Education Transformation [ONET]), Pam VanHorn (director, Statewide System of Support), Jeanne Paliotto (director of Transformation Specialists), Ron McGuire (contractor), and Barbara Boone (director, Office of Education Reform).

At the November 2–3, 2010, meeting, the Statewide System of Support Transition Team adopted an overarching goal and three strategies that, if realized, would ensure an effective and sustainable statewide system of support. This transition team included many of the original state-level design team members. At the meeting, levels of the statewide system of support were defined (state, regional, and local) and role descriptions were established for each.

On November 17, 2010, Great Lakes East staff members Sheryl Poggi, Claudette Rasmussen, and Mark Mitchell designed and facilitated a meeting with an OIP Leadership Team, including Center for School Improvement and Office of Exceptional Children staff. Participants reviewed the draft



goal and strategies developed by the transition team and made slight changes. The overarching goal crafted by the team and adopted by the OIP Leadership Team is to “build the capacity of districts and schools to engage in inclusive, continuous, and sustainable improvement in order to raise student achievement and close the achievement gap.” The strategies for achieving this goal are as follows:

- **Accountability for Improvement:** The statewide system of support will monitor and evaluate the impact and fidelity of plan implementation based on defined performance indicators.
- **Leadership:** The statewide system of support will build, support, and extend leadership capacity to accelerate ongoing improvement efforts.
- **Collaboration:** The statewide system of support will implement and sustain efficient and consistent policies, procedures, and practices that foster and advance collaboration across all levels and with all stakeholders to drive continuous improvement and achievement for all students.

A number of activities also were identified by the transition team regarding the design and implementation of a statewide system of support evaluation, need for ongoing professional development, enactment of quality assurance measures for professional development and use of resources, and improvements to the OIP *Facilitator’s Guide* and Resources. Plans for development and implementation of a plan for work teams to continue this work will be taken up by the Center for School Improvement Leadership Team.

The goal and strategies were shared with the Single Points of Contact and Special Education Points of Contact in a December 10, 2010, meeting. Great Lakes East provided support to ODE in the design of this meeting. Next steps for this work include a planned meeting with the Center for School Improvement Leadership Team on February 15, 2011, and a cross-center ODE meeting on February 16, 2011.

## 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

**Bennett Testifies Before U.S. House Education and Workforce Committee**—Indiana Department of Education, February 10, 2011

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2011/02-February/education-and-workforce.html>

“Bennett’s testimony focused on the necessity of approaching our nation’s education problems with a wide-ranging set of targeted reforms, and he described Indiana’s “Putting Students First” education agenda as an example of that comprehensive approach. In particular, Bennett’s remarks highlighted the importance of striking a balance between accountability and flexibility.”

**Indiana Second in AP Performance Gains, First in AP Access Gains**—Indiana Department of Education, February 9, 2011

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2011/02-February/ap.html>

“The College Board’s 7th Annual AP Report to the Nation revealed Indiana had the nation’s second highest one-year increase in the percentage of graduates who earned a passing score (3, 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale) on an Advanced Placement (AP) exam and the highest gains in AP access.”

**IDOE Releases Model Teacher and Principal Evaluations**—Indiana Department of Education, February 3, 2011

<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2011/02-February/modevaluations.html>

“Indiana’s teachers and school leaders got a sneak peak at drafts of model teacher and principal evaluation rubrics the state plans to offer local school corporations next year. The release is in anticipation of legislation pending in the Indiana General Assembly that would require local school corporations to develop and put to use annual evaluations based on multiple measures, including some type of student performance or growth data.”

**Put Students First in Turning Around Schools**—*NWI Times*, January 30, 2011

[http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/guest-commentary/article\\_f2c08dcf-e002-55c2-8341-6328c551c6ee.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/guest-commentary/article_f2c08dcf-e002-55c2-8341-6328c551c6ee.html)

“In Indiana, nearly 25,000 students attend chronically failing schools. While these schools account for only about 1 percent of all Hoosier schools, the fact remains they have failed to improve even when given continual opportunities. Many of their students cannot read or compute basic math problems at grade level, and they are twice as likely to drop out of high

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school as the average Hoosier student. As the Indiana Department of Education seeks to provide equal and exceptional educational opportunities to all children, turning around these failing schools will be a top priority. Some stakeholders wonder what constitutes a failing school and what steps may be taken to provide the students who attend these schools a better education. These are important questions, and I hope this column will provide readers with a solid understanding of this challenging, but necessary, process.”

**Gov. Mitch Daniels’ State of the State Address**—Governor Daniels, January 11, 2011

[http://www.in.gov/gov/11stateofstate.htm?WT.cg\\_n=GOV\\_billboards&WT.cg\\_s=11111\\_01\\_SOS](http://www.in.gov/gov/11stateofstate.htm?WT.cg_n=GOV_billboards&WT.cg_s=11111_01_SOS)

“What we did in 2008, and 2009, and 2010, we will do again this year.... We say tonight, whatever course others may choose, here in Indiana we live within our means, we put the private sector ahead of government, the taxpayer ahead of everyone, and we will stay in the black, whatever it takes.... In no realm is our opportunity larger than in the critical task of educating our children. The need for major improvement, and the chance for achieving it, is so enormous tonight that opportunity rises to the level of duty.”

**Indiana Approves New Teacher Standards: First to Align with Common Core**—Indiana Department of Education, December 27, 2010

[http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/common\\_core\\_standards.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/common_core_standards.html)

“The Indiana Professional Standards Advisory Board, in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), unanimously approved new developmental and content standards for educators.... This action makes Indiana the first state in the nation to fully align its teacher standards with Common Core State Standards. Produced in partnership with the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, the new, rigorous standards are also aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards as well as national standards in each field.”

**Indiana Grad Rate Improves Again**—Indiana Department of Education, December 20, 2010

[http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/ma\\_gradrate.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/ma_gradrate.html)

“Indiana’s public school graduation rate improved to 84.1 percent in the 2009-2010 school year, increasing 2.6 percentage points over last year and inching closer to the goal of 90 percent of students graduating from high school. Thirty-six percent of high schools have already reached this benchmark set by Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett in January of 2009.”

**Education Roundtable Endorses Key Pieces of 2011 Education Agenda**—Indiana Department of Education, December 8, 2010

[http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/ed\\_agenda.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/12-December/ed_agenda.html)

“Indiana’s Education Roundtable passed measures in support of rigorous teacher and administrator evaluation systems and accelerated graduation opportunities for high school students.... Both items are central pieces of Indiana’s 2011 Education Agenda and support the Roundtable’s long-term objective to prepare all Hoosier students for college and career success.”

**IDOE Releases State and Federal Accountability Results**—Indiana Department of Education, November 23, 2010  
<http://www.doe.in.gov/news/2010/11-November/aypl221.html>

“[Indiana’s accountability system PL 221] results show 38 percent of public schools made Exemplary Progress, 8 percent made Commendable Progress and 27 percent made Academic Progress. Public Schools in the lowest two categories, Academic Watch and Academic Probation, sit at 13 and 14 percent, respectively.... Indiana schools saw results improve with 58 percent meeting [federal] AYP requirements. The last time AYP was released in 2008, only 50 percent of schools made AYP.”



## MICHIGAN

**Superintendent Flanagan Podcast: “Pursuing Your Dreams”**—Michigan Department of Education, February 3, 2011  
[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818\\_45256-250871-,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_45256-250871-,00.html)

“State Superintendent Mike Flanagan explains how students can get help with financial aid so they can pursue their dreams of a higher education and a brighter future.”

**Michigan Top to Bottom List Overview**—Michigan Department of Education, January 26, 2011  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/top\\_to\\_bottom\\_overview\\_1.26.11\\_343910\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/top_to_bottom_overview_1.26.11_343910_7.pdf)

“MDE was required to identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools for a federal grant application (school improvement grants, or SIG), which netted the state \$115,000 million to support the lowest-achieving schools to enact dramatic reforms to turn persistently lowest achieving schools around. As a part of this identification, all schools in the state were ranked on their performance and improvement over time in reading and mathematics.”

**Snyder Offers Road Map to Drive Change in Michigan’s Economy and Government**—Governor Snyder, January 19, 2011  
[http://www.michigan.gov/snyder/0,1607,7-277-57577\\_57657-249852-,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/snyder/0,1607,7-277-57577_57657-249852-,00.html)

“Governor Rick Snyder’s relentless drive to energize Michigan’s lagging economy and reshape state government is under way, and his first State of the State address provides a detailed road map to keep that positive momentum moving forward.”

**Superintendent Flanagan Podcast: “You Say You’ve Got a Resolution...”**—Michigan Department of Education, January 11, 2011  
[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818\\_45256-249239-,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_45256-249239-,00.html)

“State Superintendent Mike Flanagan rings in the New Year with renewed resolve as power transitions in state government and we continue to move Michigan forward. ‘You know it’s gonna be all right....’”

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**Redesign Plans for 45 Lowest Achieving Schools Approved by the State Reform Officer—**

Michigan Department of Education, December 17, 2010

[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818\\_34785-248368-,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-37818_34785-248368-,00.html)

“Forty-five of 92 schools identified by state law as the Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools received approval of their redesign plans by the State School Reform/ Redesign Office in the Michigan Department of Education.... Twenty-two schools received ‘conditional approval’.... Five of the 92 schools have been or are slated for closure by their districts, and the remaining 20 redesign plans either were incomplete or require changes before they can be approved.”

**High School Graduation Rates on Upswing—***Traverse City Record Eagle*, November 23, 2010

<http://record-eagle.com/statenews/x161015944/High-school-graduation-rates-on-upswing>

“Flanagan said graduation rates are going in the right direction. Statewide, the graduation rate was above 75 percent from 2007 to 2009, he said. In the previous recording period it was 70 percent. Flanagan said there is also a focus on demonstrating proficiency, which can be determined through testing and teacher evaluations.”



OHIO

**More Ohio Students Earn College Credit Through AP Exams in 2011—**Ohio Department of Education, February 10, 2011

<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=863944497335718886>

“In the Ohio public school class of 2010, 23,045 high school seniors took at least one AP exam and 14,323 scored 3 or higher at any point in high school. Those numbers are up significantly from 2001 when 12,923 seniors took an AP test and 8,063 earned a 3 or higher.... While Ohio continues to make progress, the state’s percentage of high school seniors earning AP college credit is 11.8 percent, below the national average of 16.9 percent. Making further gains is a top priority.”

**Kasich Names Robert Sommers Director of the Governor’s Office of 21st Century Education—**

Governor Kasich, February 7, 2011

<http://governor.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=9xecSS7-3M%3d&tabid=70>

“Gov. John R. Kasich announced that Robert Sommers will serve as Director of the Governor’s Office of 21st Century Education.”

**Ohio’s Race to the Top Funds Arrive—**Ohio Department of Education, January 28, 2011

<https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cncs/view.asp?id=166467229232695154>

“Over the next four years, the federal funds [\$400 million] will be used to support Race to the Top activities either directly through Ohio schools, districts or through state-supported initiatives. A list of participating schools and funding amounts can be found at [www.rttT.education.ohio.gov](http://www.rttT.education.ohio.gov).”



**John R. Kasich Takes the Oath of Office to Become Ohio's 69th Governor**—Governor Kasich, January 10, 2011

[http://governor.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=\\_Eq6zk8Aays%3d&tabid=40](http://governor.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=_Eq6zk8Aays%3d&tabid=40)

"In a ceremony in the Ohio Senate chamber where he began his political career as a state senator in 1979 at the age of 26, John R. Kasich took the oath of office at 12:07 a.m. and became the 69th governor of the State of Ohio."

**Quality of Teacher Training Programs at Ohio's Colleges to Be Rated**—*Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 16, 2010

[http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2010/12/quality\\_of\\_teacher\\_training\\_pr.html](http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2010/12/quality_of_teacher_training_pr.html)

"The state became the first in the country to set standards for annual performance reports assessing the training provided by every program and whether its graduates are thriving or struggling in the classroom."



## ELSEWHERE IN THE NATION

### Recent Education News

**Education Secretary Launches United States Education Dashboard**—U.S. Department of Education, January 24, 2011

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/education-secretary-launches-united-states-education-dashboard>

"The U.S. Department of Education today launched a new website that provides convenient and transparent access to key national and state education data, highlighting the progress being made across the country in every level of the education system and encouraging communities to engage in a conversation about their schools. The United States Education Dashboard, available at <http://dashboard.ed.gov>, presents important indicators of whether the country is making progress toward the President's goal – that, by 2020, the United States will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world."

**ISTE Releases 2011 U.S. Education Technology Priorities**—International Society for Technology in Education, January 18, 2011

[http://www.iste.org/news/11-01-18/ISTE\\_RELEASES\\_2011\\_U\\_S\\_EDUCATION\\_TECHNOLOGY\\_PRIORITIES.aspx](http://www.iste.org/news/11-01-18/ISTE_RELEASES_2011_U_S_EDUCATION_TECHNOLOGY_PRIORITIES.aspx)

"[ISTE] released its "Ed Tech Trio for 2011," identifying the top three education issues central to strengthening schools, instruction, and U.S. competitiveness."

**Making P-16 Meaningful**—*Inside Higher Ed*, December 17, 2010

[http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/12/17/colleges\\_high\\_schools\\_and\\_the\\_common\\_core\\_standards](http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/12/17/colleges_high_schools_and_the_common_core_standards)

“Education reformers have held out hope that the Common Core State Standards Initiative... could get college and K-12 leaders out of the silos in which they too often operate. If it does, a new partnership between the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the State Higher Education Executive Officers could be the mechanism that brings them together. The arrangement...aims to connect public higher education leaders with elementary and secondary officials in their states, with a specific focus on the two key tasks that lie ahead if the embrace of common academic standards is to have the desired effect of producing more high school graduates ready for college.”

**What’s High School For?**—*Inside Higher Ed*, December 16, 2010

<http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2010/12/16/sharfman>

“One increasingly popular way to encourage college attendance is through dual enrollment, in which students take courses in high school for both high school and college credit.... In reality, though, dual enrollment may do more harm than good.”

**U.S. Department of Education and Partners to Convene World’s Education Leaders for Summit on Teaching Profession in March 2011**—U.S. Department of Education, December 15, 2010

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-and-partners-convene-world%E2%80%99s-education-leaders-summit-te>

“The summit will convene education ministers, national union leaders, education organization leaders and accomplished teachers from countries with high performing and rapidly improving educational systems to identify best practices worldwide that effectively strengthen the teaching profession in ways designed to enhance student achievement.”

**U.S. Rises to International Average in Science**—*Education Week*, December 7, 2010

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/12/07/15pisa.h30.html?tkn=OMZFFCq4KFOL67XBBkW5fLcNELrL16iaMuRU&cmp=clp-edweek>

“American students’ science performance climbed to the average for leading industrialized nations, while their mathematics performance remained below the average, despite gains in that subject from the last round of testing in 2006.”

**Study: Most Students Fail to Meet Common-Standards Bar**—*Education Week*, December 6, 2010

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/12/06/15standards.h30.html?tkn=NWVFpgzACsZLcXxQI05II%2Bnh2fD8ciGuNThq&cmp=clp-edweek>

“Most students have far to go before they master the skills and knowledge outlined in the new common standards that have been adopted by all but seven states, concludes a report released today. The study is the first to try to identify the ground that must be covered if states and school districts are going to hold their students to the new standards.”

The report *A First Look at the Common Core and College and Career Readiness* is available at <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/FirstLook.pdf>

## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

**White House Launches 2011 Race to the Top Commencement Challenge**—U.S. Department of Education, February 1, 2011

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/white-house-launches-2011-race-to-top-commencement-challenge>

“Students from public high schools across the country are invited to demonstrate how their school prepares them for college and a career by going to [www.whitehouse.gov/commencement](http://www.whitehouse.gov/commencement) and submitting an application. The winning school will host President Obama as their 2011 commencement speaker.”

**Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs (SASA) Monitoring Plan for School Improvement Grants**—U.S. Department of Education, January 12, 2011

<http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/monitoring/sigmontool2011.pdf>

“This document, designed for the 2010-2011 school year, describes the purpose, rationale, and process used by the Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs (SASA) office in monitoring the use of Title I, section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds by State educational agencies (SEAs).”

**Race to Top Winners Get Guidance on Plan Alterations**—*Education Week*, January 8, 2011

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/01/08/15rtt.h30.html?tkn=UWOFcDnQxTdmKE4DMpsqrreB6wb%2FpNn1Jkq%2B&cmp=clp-edweek>

“The Obama administration has released guidance meant to spell out what kinds of amendments it will accept to plans submitted by states that won a share of \$4 billion in grants under the federal Race to the Top competition—and the types of changes that would put the awardees’ funding at risk.”

Guidance is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/grant-amendment-submission-process.pdf>

**Schools Seek Donors’ Money**—*Wall Street Journal*, December 15, 2010

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704694004576019791542116626.html?mod=dist\\_smartbrief](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704694004576019791542116626.html?mod=dist_smartbrief)

“Months after winning \$700 million in the federal Race to the Top competition, New York state’s education department says it needs another \$18 million, and is turning to foundations, hedge fund managers and other private donors for the money. The \$18 million will pay for systems, technology and research that will help ensure that the state spends the \$700 million effectively.”

**Report Finds Few School Turnarounds**—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, December 14, 2010

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/education/111831759.html>

“A study released Tuesday that looked at chronically underperforming schools in Wisconsin and nine other states between 2004 and 2009 shows that only a tiny fraction dramatically improved over the five years, and that true ‘turnarounds’ are hard to come by.”

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**Highest Percentage of Turnaround Funds Are Going To High Schools**—U.S. Department of Education, November 30, 2010

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/highest-percentage-turnaround-funds-are-going-high-schools>

“Of the more than 700 schools receiving School Improvement Grants (SIG) to implement one of the four turnaround models this year, 48 percent are high schools.”

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## Resources

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

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**Closing the Expectations Gap, 2011: 50-State Progress Report**—Achieve, February 2011

<http://www.achieve.org/ClosingtheExpectationsGap2011>

“The report details state progress implementing the American Diploma Project policy agenda.”

**How Well Are American Students Learning? Part III: NAEP and the Common Core State Standards**—Brown Center on Education Policy, February 2011

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2011/0111\\_naep\\_loveless/0111\\_naep\\_loveless.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2011/0111_naep_loveless/0111_naep_loveless.pdf)

“How well does NAEP match up with the Common Core standards in mathematics? We tackled this question by analyzing NAEP items from the eighth-grade assessment.”

**The Nation’s Report Card: Science 2009**—National Center for Education Statistics, January 25, 2011

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011451>

“This report presents results of the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in science at grades 4, 8, and 12.”

**Quality Counts 2011: Uncertain Forecast: Education Adjusts to a New Economic Reality**—*Education Week*, January 13, 2011

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2011/01/13/index.html?Intc=EW-QC11-EWH>

“The nation receives a C when graded across the six distinct areas of policy and performance tracked by Quality Counts, the most comprehensive ongoing assessment of the state of American education.” [Press release]

**States’ Progress and Challenges in Implementing Common Core State Standards**—Center on Education Policy, January 6, 2011

[http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent\\_file.cfm?Attachment=KoberRentner%5FReport%5FStateProgressCommonCoreStateStandards%5F010611%2Epdf](http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=KoberRentner%5FReport%5FStateProgressCommonCoreStateStandards%5F010611%2Epdf)

“In the fall of 2010, the Center on Education Policy surveyed state officials about their efforts to adopt and implement the Common Core State Standards in reading and math.”

**Meeting the Challenge: The Role of School Leaders in Turning Around the Lowest Performing High Schools**—Alliance for Excellent Education, January 2011

<http://www.all4ed.org/files/MeetingTheChallenge.pdf>

“This policy brief addresses high school improvement and the imperative to focus on advancing the ability of principals and teachers to significantly increase student learning and school performance. This brief will review the limitations of previous high school reforms and examine the conditions under which evidence-based designs for school improvement can lead to improved student learning.”



**Eight Elements of High School Improvement: A Mapping Framework**—National High School Center, January 2011

<http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/EightElementsMappingFramework.pdf>

“This document offers descriptions of the eight elements of high school improvement: rigorous curriculum and instruction, teacher effectiveness and professional growth, stakeholder engagement, organization and structure, assessment and accountability, student and family involvement, effective leadership, and sustainability.”

**Coaching for School Improvement: A Guide for Coaches and Their Supervisors**—Center on Innovation & Improvement, 2011

[http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Coaching\\_for\\_School\\_Improvement.pdf](http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Coaching_for_School_Improvement.pdf)

“This guide offers tools, tips, and strategies...for coaches working with school improvement teams. Ideas in the guide can be used to inform the training and supervision provided by state agencies, districts, or other organizations responsible for recruiting, hiring, and assigning coaches to work with school teams.”

**State High School Tests: Exit Exams and Other Assessments**—Center on Education Policy, December 21, 2010

[http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent\\_file.cfm?Attachment=CEP%5FHSEE10report%5F01%2E05%2E11%2Epdf](http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=CEP%5FHSEE10report%5F01%2E05%2E11%2Epdf)

“CEP’s 9th annual report on high school exit exams discusses new developments in state high school exit exam policies and how students enrolled in school in states with these policies are affected.”

**Indiana report:** [http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent\\_file.cfm?Attachment=IndianaHSEE2010%2Edoc](http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=IndianaHSEE2010%2Edoc)

**Ohio report:** [http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent\\_file.cfm?Attachment=OhioHSEE2010%2Edoc](http://www.cep-dc.org/cfcontent_file.cfm?Attachment=OhioHSEE2010%2Edoc)

**Are Bad Schools Immortal? The Scarcity of Turnarounds and Shutdowns in Both Charter and District Sectors**—Thomas B. Fordham Institute, December 14, 2010

<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/are-bad-schools-immortal.html>

“This study from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute finds that low-performing public schools—both charter and traditional district schools—are stubbornly resistant to significant change. After identifying more than 2,000 low-performing charter and district schools across ten states, analyst David Stuit tracked them from 2003-04 through 2008-09 to determine how many were turned around, shut down, or remained low-performing.”

**Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972–2008**—

National Center for Education Statistics, December 8, 2010

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011012>

“The report includes discussions of many rates used to study how students complete or fail to complete high school. It presents estimates of rates for 2008 and provides data about trends in dropout and completion rates over the last three and a half decades (1972-2008) along with more recent estimates of on-time graduation from public high schools.”

**Learning About Teaching: Initial Findings From the Measures of Effective Teaching Project—**  
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, December 2010  
[http://www.metproject.org/downloads/Preliminary\\_Findings-Research\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.metproject.org/downloads/Preliminary_Findings-Research_Paper.pdf)

“The goal of the project is to improve the quality of information about teaching effectiveness, to help build fair and reliable systems for teacher observation and feedback.”

**Leveraging the Unique Features of Small, Rural Schools for Improvement—**Lessons Learned,  
1(5), Education Northwest, December 2010  
[http://educationnorthwest.org/webfm\\_send/1052](http://educationnorthwest.org/webfm_send/1052)

Research, development, training, and technical assistance activities with rural districts over the last four decades are used to distill “important lessons for working with rural schools. These lessons will benefit policymakers, researchers, and technical assistance providers who may be providing services to rural schools.”

**Response to Intervention (RTI): Funding Questions and Answers—**National Center on Response to Intervention, December 2010  
[http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/NCRTI\\_RTI\\_Funding\\_Questions\\_and\\_Answers.pdf](http://www.rti4success.org/images/stories/NCRTI_RTI_Funding_Questions_and_Answers.pdf)

“This document provides written responses from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on the use of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds for the implementation of RTI and answers eight commonly asked questions on funding RTI.”

**School Improvement Grants: Take 2—**Mass Insight Education, December 2010  
[http://www.massinsight.org/publications/stg-resources/125/file/1/pubs/2010/12/07/STG\\_-\\_School\\_Improvement\\_Grants\\_Take\\_2\\_Dec\\_2010\\_\\_.pdf](http://www.massinsight.org/publications/stg-resources/125/file/1/pubs/2010/12/07/STG_-_School_Improvement_Grants_Take_2_Dec_2010__.pdf)

“While SIG is not a new program, Round 1 is a game-changing shift in the nature of the program. By employing significant regulatory changes, SIG now serves as both a bold attack on the status quo and a bet that it is possible to make significant and sustainable improvements in low-performing schools.”

**What Are the Characteristics, Qualifications, Roles, and Functions of School Support Teams? An Examination of Survey Results for Four Northwest Region States—**National Center for Education Statistics, December 2010  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL\\_2010095.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL_2010095.pdf)

“While existing research describes statewide systems of support and school support team structures, it does not provide information about individuals who serve on the teams.... This study expands on the current literature by focusing on school support team member characteristics, qualifications, roles, and functions in four Northwest Region states: Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.”

**Renewal and Optimism: Five Years as an Ohio Charter Authorizer—**Thomas B. Fordham Institute, November 29, 2010  
<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/renewal-and-optimism-five.html>

“The report...contains a year in review for Ohio’s charter school program, detailed information on the Fordham Foundation’s work as a charter school sponsor, and data on the performance of our sponsored schools during the past year.”

**A Coherent Approach to High School Improvement: A District and School Self-Assessment**

**Tool**—National High School Center, November 2010

<http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/EightElementsSelfAssessmentTool.pdf>

“The National High School Center has developed A Coherent Approach to High School Improvement: A District and School Self-Assessment Tool to help districts and schools assess their current high school education policies and practices, identify areas of strengths and limitations, and implement coherent school reform initiatives.”

**When Success Is the Only Option: Designing Competency-Based Pathways for Next Generation**

**Learning**—Nellie Mae Education Foundation and iNACOL, November 2010

<http://www.inacol.org/research/bookstore/detail.php?id=24>

“This paper has been designed to generate a deeper understanding, as it is critically important that competency-based pathways be implemented effectively with a vigilant focus on student learning. Otherwise, we risk creating an empty system that undermines our nation’s efforts to raise standards and expectations for our children and ourselves.”

**Now What? Imperatives and Options for Common Core Implementation and Governance—**

Thomas B. Fordham Institute, October 19, 2010

<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications-issues/publications/now-what-imperatives-and.html>

“This Fordham Institute publication...pushes folks to think about what comes next in the journey to common education standards and tests. Most states have adopted the “Common Core” English language arts and math standards, and most are also working on common assessments. But...now what?”

**Guide to Working With External Providers**—Learning Point Associates, September 2010

[http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/External\\_Provider\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/External_Provider_Guide.pdf)

“The guide is based on existing research and field experience related to how schools and districts can work most effectively with a host of external providers. During its initial development in 2004, researchers reviewed the academic literature on school-provider partnerships, interviewed top scholarly experts on the subject, and interviewed a wide-ranging group of practitioners involved in school-provider relationships.... With the current investment that the U.S. Department of Education is making in School Improvement Grants, it is critical for both schools and providers to have the tools they need to ensure that their partnerships are successful. The guide was updated in 2010 to help schools and districts get started.”

# Calendar of Events

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

## February 2011

<b>Date:</b>	February 24	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: How ESAs and SEAs Can Help Low-Performing Schools and Districts</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Online		
<b>Format:</b>	Webinar	<b>Audience:</b>	SEA and ESA policymakers and staff; state education leaders; district and school administrators; representatives of professional associations and unions; and teachers, parents, and students
		<b>Sponsors:</b>	Regional Educational Laboratory Program, Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA)
<b>Date:</b>	February 24–27	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Improving Student Performance</a>
<b>Location:</b>	San Francisco	<b>Audience:</b>	Individuals, teams, K–12 teachers, parents, students, and officials of community-based organizations
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsor:</b>	National Association of Secondary School Principals
<b>Date:</b>	February 26	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Voices in Action: National Youth Summit</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Washington, DC	<b>Audience:</b>	High school and middle school students
<b>Format:</b>	Summit	<b>Sponsor:</b>	U.S. Department of Education

## March 2011

<b>Dates:</b>	March 7–8	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">National Conversations on English Learner Education</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Los Angeles and Seattle, WA	<b>Audience:</b>	English Learner stakeholders—educators, school administrators, researchers, parents, students, advocates, and policymakers
<b>Format:</b>	Meeting	<b>Sponsors:</b>	Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education
<b>Dates:</b>	March 7–9	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">CTE: Today's Students = Tomorrow's Prepared Workforce</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Washington, DC	<b>Audience:</b>	ACTE members, career and technical educators, and policymakers
<b>Format:</b>	Seminar	<b>Sponsor:</b>	Association for Career and Technical Education
<b>Dates:</b>	March 10–13	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Celebrating the Joy of Science: Imagine and Create!</a>
<b>Location:</b>	San Francisco	<b>Audience:</b>	National Science Teachers Association members and science teachers
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsor:</b>	National Science Teachers Association

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<b>Dates:</b>	March 15–16	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">2011 Leveraging Resources Conference and the Comprehensive Center Meeting</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Washington, DC	<b>Audience:</b>	Comprehensive center directors, equity center directors, and technical assistance and dissemination network center directors
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsor:</b>	Academy for Educational Development
<b>Dates:</b>	March 16	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Common Core Standards: What They Mean for States and Schools</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Online	<b>Audience:</b>	School personnel at the intermediate, local, and public school academy levels, parents, and organizations
<b>Format:</b>	PD session	<b>Sponsor:</b>	National Association of State Directors of Special Education
<b>Dates:</b>	March 24–26	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">31st Annual Conference</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Albuquerque, NM	<b>Audience:</b>	Rural educators, administrators, researchers, and policymakers
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsor:</b>	American Council on Rural Special Education
April 2011			
<b>Dates:</b>	April 5–6	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Leading Successful School Turnarounds: Learning From Research and Practice</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Los Angeles	<b>Audience:</b>	Teams from state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and schools implementing the SIG program, especially in the Western region (CA, UT, CO, NV, OR, WA, HI, AZ, NM)
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsors:</b>	California, Northeast, Pacific, and Southwest Comprehensive Centers in collaboration with the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, Center on Innovation & Improvement, Center on Instruction, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, National High School Center, and U.S. Department of Education
<b>Dates:</b>	April 11–12	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">National Conversations on English Learner Education</a>
<b>Location:</b>	New York and Charlotte, NC	<b>Audience:</b>	English Learner stakeholders—educators, school administrators, researchers, parents, students, advocates, and policymakers
<b>Format:</b>	Meeting	<b>Sponsors:</b>	Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education
<b>Dates:</b>	April 11–13	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">NCSM Annual Conference: On Track for Student Success: Mathematics Leaders Making a Difference</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Indianapolis	<b>Audience:</b>	Mathematics educators
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsor:</b>	National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics



<b>Dates:</b>	April 13–14	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Leading Successful School Turnarounds: The Role of State, District, and School Leadership</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Washington, DC	<b>Audience:</b>	Teams from state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and schools implementing the SIG program, especially in the Eastern region (DC, DE, MD, PA, NJ, VA, WV, SC, TN, GA, LA, AL, MS, FL, PR, USVI, ME, NH, MA, RI, NY, KY, NC, VT, CT)
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsors:</b>	Appalachian Regional, Florida and the Islands, Mid-Atlantic, New England, and New York Comprehensive Centers; Equity Assistance Centers (EACs), Regions I, II, and III; and New England and Mid-South Regional Resource Centers

#### Upcoming Events

<b>Dates:</b>	May 18–19	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Leading Successful High School Turnarounds: Learning From Research and Practice</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Chicago	<b>Audience:</b>	Teams from state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and schools implementing the SIG program, especially in the Midwest region (MI, IL, IN, IA, WI, OH, MN, plus interested others)
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsors:</b>	Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center, Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center, and National High School Center at American Institutes for Research

<b>Dates:</b>	May 24–25	<b>Topic:</b>	<a href="#">Rural School Turnaround and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives</a>
<b>Location:</b>	Denver	<b>Audience:</b>	Teams from state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and schools implementing the SIG program, especially in the Central region (NE, ND, SD, KS, MO, AR, OK, AK, TX, MT, ID, WY, plus interested others)
<b>Format:</b>	Conference	<b>Sponsors:</b>	Alaska Comprehensive Center, Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center, Midwest Equity Assistance Center, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, North Central Comprehensive Center, Northwest Comprehensive Center, and Texas Comprehensive Center, with the Center on Innovation & Improvement, Center on Instruction, National Comprehensive for Teacher Quality, National High School Center, and Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center

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