

# links

## President's Message: SEDL Strategic Planning Progress by Wes Hoover, SEDL President and CEO

**S**ince January, our staff, management, and board members have invested many hours in SEDL's strategic planning efforts. We have held 21 distinct strategic planning sessions, conference calls, and meetings with the SEDL Management Council (SMC) and Austin and Metairie staff. I am pleased with our progress and wanted to take this opportunity to share a number of the highlights of this process, as well as some information about our next steps.

SEDL's new mission statement is one of the major strategic planning highlights. With the feedback and suggestions of staff, the SMC developed—and the board unanimously adopted—a bold and concise mission statement in April: The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory mission is to solve significant problems facing educational systems and communities to ensure a quality education for *all* learners.

Another highlight of our planning activities is the breadth and depth of ideas. During our staff work sessions and organizational survey, more than 800 items and ideas were generated with the participation of more than 90 percent of our employees. Some of these ideas focused on the substance of our work while others investigated how we work.

From these ideas, we identified five promi-



Wes Hoover, SEDL president and CEO

nent perceptions for our work together, including a sense of pride in our strong staff, a desire to foster a culture that contributes to organizational success, a need to collaborate more both internally and externally, an interest in diversifying our work and our client base, and finally, a desire to balance our time and resources between our current and future work.

*continued on page 2*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### Arkansas

Ms. Nancy C. Eddy, Little Rock  
Dr. Alvin Futrell, Arkadelphia  
Dr. Veda McClain, Jonesboro  
Mr. Raymond Simon, Little Rock

#### Louisiana

Dr. Brenda Garibaldi Hatfield,  
New Orleans  
Ms. Paula M. Patrick, Many  
Mr. Cecil J. Picard, Baton Rouge  
Dr. Anthony Recasner,  
New Orleans

#### New Mexico

Ms. Mary A. Abeita, Isleta Pueblo  
Mr. Michael J. Davis, Santa Fe  
Sen. Mary Jane Garcia, Doña Ana  
Ms. Sandra Prelo, Las Cruces

#### Oklahoma

Ms. Sandy Garrett, Oklahoma City  
Dr. Gloria Griffin, Oklahoma City  
Dr. Jo Arnold Pettigrew, McLoud  
Dr. Serafin Ramon, Goodwell

#### Texas

Ms. Imelda C. Guerra, Alice  
Brother John Paige, Austin  
Dr. Rosa Maria Vida, Laredo

## President's Message, continued

Our strategic planning goals form the final highlight of our planning work. Based on our mission and the ideas and key perceptions of staff, we developed three major goals for our work, our outreach, and our operations:

- We will strengthen and expand our research, development, and dissemination efforts.
- We will strengthen our presence with current and future clients and education stakeholders.
- We will strengthen our financial resources, human resources, and physical and technological infrastructure.

SMC members are working on the development of detailed objectives and strategies to

support these goals. The results of their work will be a comprehensive plan with priority objectives. We foresee reaching out to staff, the board, and our SEDL friends and supporters this fall to begin implementation of our plans.

I do want to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate each person at SEDL for the thoughtful consideration he or she has put into this strategic planning process. Our new mission statement and our major goals all came from ideas initiated in Austin and Metairie. I am proud of these efforts and of the staff members who developed and continue to refine them. I am excited to build upon our good work, and I expect that implementing our strategic plan will lead to accomplishing SEDL's mission. ■

## Education Leaders Gain Insight and Inspiration at SEDL Institute

**S**uperintendents, principals, assistant principals, instruction supervisors, federal programs directors, and other educators explored their roles in improving student achievement in their districts and schools at SEDL's Leadership for Systemic Improvement Institute, June 16–20, in Austin, Texas.

Education leaders from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas spent a week at SEDL to acquire the knowledge and skills that leaders must have to work systemically in their schools and districts as well as learn ways to apply that knowledge once they returned home. Through group discussions, video demonstrations, and even games, institute participants assessed the strengths and weaknesses of their schools and districts and learned how difficult change can be for faculty.

"This is a very, very slow process, and we're going to have to be patient," said David Crabbe, principal at Crooked Oak High School in Oklahoma City.

Most of the leadership institute participants have been working with staff from the SEDL Regional Educational Laboratory, Charles A. Dana Center of The University of Texas at Austin, and American Indian Research and Development, Inc., to implement SEDL's *Working Systemically* Model in their districts and schools. Participants learned how to assess the levels of concern among educators gearing up for school reform and to

determine what faculty members need to make changes using a technique called "one-legged interviews." Then they constructed visions of what their schools and districts would look like if administrators, teachers, and students worked together to improve student learning.

Institute sessions also included a presentation by Jean Rutherford, director of Education Initiatives at Just for the Kids, which joined UT–Austin and the Education Commission of the States in forming the National Center for Educational Accountability in 2001. ■



Javier Rodriguez, principal of Garfield Elementary School in Hatch, NM, and Carey Laviolette, supervisor of instruction for Iberia Parish Schools in New Iberia, LA, study what it means to work systemically during SEDL's Leadership for Systemic Improvement Institute, June 16–20, in Austin, TX.

# SEDL *in the field*

*“SEDL in the Field” describes the goals of major SEDL projects and programs. This section features SEDL work with teachers, administrators, policymakers, researchers, and community members to improve practice.*

## Evaluation Services (ES)

As a SEDL corporate office, ES works with most of SEDL’s major contracts as an internal evaluator to design and implement goals-based evaluation plans. This office also collects and manages performance indicator data and conducts a Quality Assurance process for those programs with such requirements. The primary purpose of ES is to assist SEDL’s internal programs in reaching their goals by working with program staff to monitor annual objectives and strategies for achieving their multi-year goals. ES provides formative and summative data and findings about program progress toward goals. All ES fieldwork for SEDL programs is included with the program’s section in this newsletter.

ES also provides external evaluation services for a growing number of educational entities, such as universities, school districts, state agencies, and professional associations. ES has been awarded contracts to evaluate programs such as Great Expectations and A+ Schools of Arkansas and the professional development institutes provided by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

## ES Staff Announcements

SEDL’s ES welcomed **Alexis Furuichi** as a program specialist on August 1. Before joining SEDL, **Furuichi** worked as an evaluation researcher for the Center for Social Work Research in the School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Austin. She has a doctorate in sociology with a specialization in quantitative analysis from UT–Austin. She evaluates the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation professional development institutes and works with Regional Educational Laboratory staff.

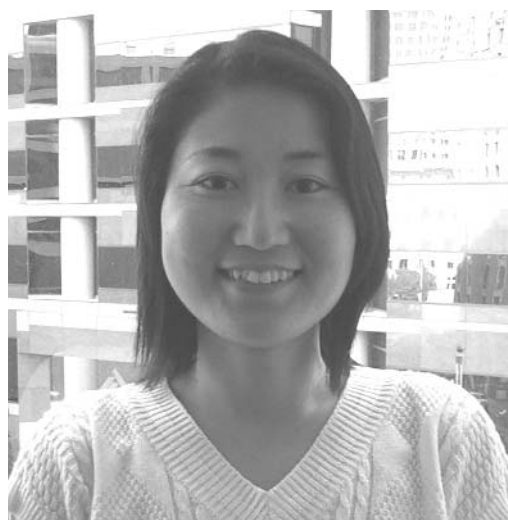
## Great Expectations of Arkansas (GEA) and A+ Schools of Arkansas (A+)

GEA schools offer a principle-centered method of teaching founded on the belief that when children are respected and expected to do well, they come to respect their own abilities and the likelihood of their academic and overall success increases. A+ Schools of Arkansas starts with a vision that arts-integrated instruction leads to enhanced learning opportunities for all students because using the arts taps into the multiple ways that students learn. ES staff work to understand the factors and impact of high GEA and A+ implementation processes and provide formative evaluation for the A+ first year of implementation.

Program manager **Sue Street** and program associate **Jeannine Turner** met with GEA and A+ staff and the faculties of the five A+ schools in **Little Rock** on May 2–3 to discuss SEDL’s evaluation work for the programs. **Turner** observed GEA Basic II Training in **Clarksville** on June 22–23.

## Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP)

OCTP awarded SEDL a three-year contract in April 2002 to evaluate its professional development institutes (PDIs) in literacy, mathemat-



Alexis Furuichi joined ES as a program specialist in August.

ics, science, and mentoring, as well as its Education Leadership Oklahoma program, which supports national board certified teachers. The PDIs provide intensive, ongoing training for teachers and administrators throughout the state.

ES staff evaluate the impact of professional development on teaching and learning at five levels: participant reactions, participant learning, organization support and change, participant use of new knowledge, and student learning outcomes. SEDL staff work with PDI designers and OCTP staff to develop and implement evaluation designs that inform the commission's instructional improvement efforts. In May and June, ES staff completed data entry and analysis and began writing annual reports for the PDIs.

### Other ES External Work

Program specialist **Cheryl Harris** evaluated the Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET) Project Integrate 2003 Training of Trainers Workshop in **Waco, TX**, on May 12–14, for the Killeen Independent School District TARGET contract. As evaluator for the Educational Service Center (ESC) I TARGET grant, **Harris** participated in an orientation meeting on May 15–16 in **Harlingen, TX**, for the ESC's TARGET Maximizing Achievement through Technology (MaXtech) Project.

Program associate **Erin McCann** held focus groups with teachers in five schools on May 18–20 in **Weslaco, TX**, as part of ES's evaluation of the American History Grant with Weslaco Independent School District.

Program associate **Jack Lumbley** conducted focus groups in **Washington, DC**, on June 6–7, to gather information from Year 2 Project DiSH (Diabetes, Stroke, and Hypertension) participants as part of ongoing evaluation work for Howard University.

In August 2003, ES was awarded a \$95,000 three-year contract to evaluate technology integration and professional development for the Oklahoma Achievement through Collaboration and Technology Support (OK-ACTS) Phase II Partnership Grants project. The project is supported with a grant from the Oklahoma Education Technology Trust in cooperation with the Center for Educational and Community Renewal. The project's goal is to improve student achievement by developing professional

learning communities to incorporate technology in their work.

### Regional Educational Laboratory (REL)

SEDL's REL creates and promotes procedural knowledge—the know-how—to help low-performing schools and districts improve student achievement in reading and mathematics in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Along with partners—the Charles A. Dana Center of The University of Texas at Austin and American Indian Research and Development, Inc. (AIRD), in Norman, OK—the REL conducts applied research and development with intensive sites, examines resource allocation and other policy issues, and operates a national center that disseminates research resources on school, family, and community connections.

### REL Staff Announcements

SEDL's REL welcomed **Deborah Biggers** as a program specialist on July 1. Before joining SEDL, **Biggers** was an English teacher in Yucca Valley and Oceanside, CA, and New Braunfels, TX. She also was chairwoman of the reading department at Harlandale High School and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) facilitator and campus reading specialist at Roosevelt High School, both in San Antonio. **Biggers** has presented information on adolescent literacy at the National Reading Conference annual meeting and the International Reading Association Southwest Regional Conference. She received the 2000 Harvard Book Prize for excellence in teaching and the 2003 HEB Excellence in



Deborah Biggers joined REL as a program specialist on July 1.



Teaching regional award. **Biggers** holds a master's in curriculum and instruction from The University of Texas at San Antonio. At SEDL, she assists staff at intensive sites on their systemic work to improve reading instruction and performance.

### REL Intensive Site Work

SEDL and site staff are working together to develop, test, and refine a model of systemic approach to improve the underlying problems that affect student achievement in reading and mathematics. SEDL also is documenting how districts and schools improve their performances. SEDL staff, along with AIRD and Dana Center partners, conducted the following intensive site activities in May and June.

#### Arkansas

- Dana Center program coordinator **Carl Juenke** analyzed *Blytheville* data and presented his analysis and information on SEDL work to the district leaders.
- Program associate **Stella Bell** continued to guide the *Grady* District Leadership Team in implementing the district curriculum alignment action plan for improving student reading performance. She monitored the results of the plan, helped the team modify the plan as needed, and supported the REL research team interview process. **Bell** also worked with Grady administrators to build their leadership capacity skills to improve student achievement in reading.
- Program associate **Ann Neeley** and the *Marked Tree* High School Leadership Team planned the next steps for the reading team and the school on the use of data. **Neeley** also helped administrators build their leadership capacity for school improvement and brought together the Marked Tree superintendent and the principal and teachers at Algodones Elementary School in *Bernalillo, NM*, to discuss using data, employing a reading specialist, and conducting walk-through observations. For the research study, REL contract manager **Joan Buttram** interviewed leadership team members about their work.
- Program associate **D'Ette Cowan** and program manager **David Rainey** met with district leaders in *Osceola* to describe SEDL's approach to systemic change, share information from the Osceola data scan conducted in April, and arrange for

administration of the reading survey to begin the systems exploration process.

#### Louisiana

- **Bell** and the *Lafourche* Parish District Leadership Team reviewed the district's anchor statement: Every teacher will have consistent instructional support systems that are monitored and assessed to achieve optimal performances by all learners. They also revisited the district's three critical elements in support of the anchor statement: (1) evidence shows that all students are learning mathematics objectives taught by all teachers, (2) the district's aligned mathematics curriculum is being taught in every classroom every day to improve teaching and learning, and (3) effective instruction systems are in place and used by all teachers to improve teaching and learning during daily classroom mathematics instruction. After this review, **Bell** and team members developed a plan of action to improve student achievement in mathematics and support the REL research team interview process.
- In *Madison Parish*, program associate **Ed Tobia** and Wright Elementary School staff made adjustments to the structure of the school's reading leadership team. **Tobia** and program associate **Jill Slack** held a planning and staff development session for the restructured team to review reading survey results and the district improvement plan and to align the reading curriculum with state standards and what is being taught and assessed in Madison Parish schools. **Tobia** facilitated a staff development session for the district leadership team to prepare for the 2003–04 school year and made a presentation to the Madison Parish School Board on the district improvement plan.
- Dana Center project director **Ted Hull** and *Monroe* Planning Committee members wrote a draft district improvement plan and presented it to the Systemwide Improvement Council. They also reviewed state-mandated testing results. Dana Center program coordinator **Janice Bradley** facilitated a summer institute for members of the Monroe City Mathematics Improvement Council to help district leaders clearly define, communicate, and implement mathematics curriculum that

in the field

- is aligned to state standards.
- Program associate **Chris Ferguson** and Dana Center program coordinator **Emma Treviño** facilitated team meetings on improving student achievement in mathematics in **Iberia Parish**. **Buttram** interviewed parish and school leadership team members about their work.

#### *New Mexico*

- Neeley**, the **Bernalillo** superintendent, and the principals from Bernalillo Middle School and Algodones Elementary School reviewed the work at the schools and determined how the district can support and collaborate on the process of improving student achievement in reading.
- Program associate **Joe Parker**, the **Hatch** District Leadership Team, and Hatch Valley middle and high school leadership team members focused on curriculum alignment and planning.
- In **Newcomb**, AIRD vice president **Mary Ann Brittan**, program associate **Sebastian Wren**, and Central Consolidated/Newcomb School Improvement Leadership Team members restructured the team into the Newcomb Attendance Area Reading Team. In **Shiprock**, **Brittan**, **Wren**, and district reading team members organized the team's goals and responsibilities for the 2003–04 school year.

#### *Oklahoma*

- Hull** and **Altus** District Leadership Team members analyzed increases in state-mandated testing data by asking themselves, “What do the data tell you?” “What do the data not tell you?” and “What other information is needed?” Team members also received a day of inservice on change. The inservice included a discussion on the Stages of Concern and the impact these stages have on campus and district change initiatives, as well as opportunities to role-play conversations for helping staff members adopt new procedures and processes.
- Cowan** and program specialist **Suzanne Ashby** worked with district leadership team members at **Crooked Oak** Public Schools to learn the root cause for the current reading performance of students. Team members recognized the need for all staff to have a clearer understanding of what a reading curriculum is and how to

develop and use it. **Cowan**, **Ashby**, and district leaders planned professional development to address this issue. Program associate **Mike Bohlig** interviewed leadership team members about their work.

- Brittan**, program associate **Marsha Loyd**, and **Kinta** School Improvement Leadership Team members finalized an action plan for school improvement and ways to inform others about the plan. **Brittan**, **Loyd**, and program associate **Jerry Elder** worked with K–12 staff to align reading and language arts curriculum. Kinta K–8 teachers participated in curriculum alignment training.
- Bradley**, program specialist **Tara Leo Thompson**, and Western Oaks Middle School staff in **Putnam City** reviewed third administration reading results from STAR, celebrated their accomplishments in reading, and planned for the 2003–04 school year. **Bradley** and **Thompson** worked with district leadership team members on a district action plan and attended training on secondary-level reading strategies, which they will implement at Putnam City West High School during the next school year. **Buttram** interviewed leadership team members about their work.

#### *Texas*

- Loyd** and Dana Center program coordinator **Margarita Greer** analyzed reading survey data with **Midland** Freshman Campus department chairmen and K–6 teachers at Santa Rita Elementary. **Loyd**, **Greer**, and K–6 teachers also reviewed TAKS data with an emphasis on TAKS fourth-grade writing results.
- Parker** further informed **Palestine** district leaders about SEDL partnership work and conducted data-scan activities at Story and Southside elementary schools.

### **REL Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Networking**

#### *Arkansas*

- Rainey** presented “Implications of the No Child Left Behind Act: Major Changes and Opportunities” to about 200 teachers and administrators at the Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 22nd Annual Conference

on Assessment and Instruction in *Hot Springs* on June 23.

#### **New Mexico**

- **Brittan, Neely, and Parker** met with representatives of the New Mexico State Department of Education on May 15 in *Santa Fe* to share information and establish collaborative relationships.
- Scholar emerita **Shirley Hord** delivered the Hatch Valley High School baccalaureate address on May 22 at the district's newly completed high school in *Hatch*.

#### **Oklahoma**

- **Brittan, Elder, and Loyd** met with Lightspan representatives on May 22 in *Tulsa* to exchange information and develop a reading assessment relationship for an Oklahoma site school.

#### **Texas**

- On June 18, **Hord** addressed more than 50 higher education faculty from Mexico attending a two-week professional development retreat at The University of Texas at Austin on implementing improved classroom instructional practices. She discussed the process of change and the strategies needed to successfully put new practices in place. The next day, **Hord** participated in a book signing for the group that was using the book *Implementing Change: Patterns, Principles, and Potholes*, which she wrote with Gene E. Hall.

#### **REL Policy Work**

Program associate **Zena Rudo** helped facilitate expert judgment panels of 60 educators and administrators for the Arkansas Adequacy Study in *Little Rock* on June 11–12.

#### **National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools**

Program manager **Catherine Jordan**, with Anne Henderson and Karen Mapp, co-authors of the Center's research synthesis *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, presented a session at the American Youth Policy Forum quarterly meeting on May 8 in *Washington, DC*.

On May 21, **Jordan** provided training for Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center staff in *Metairie, LA*, on *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*.

**Jordan** conducted the Spring 2003 After-School Training Roundup on June 1–3 in *Scottsdale, AZ*. Program associate **Deborah Donnelly** presented “Making the Transition from Enrichment to Academics: The Story of a School's Journey” at the training, attended by more than 100 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grantees from the Southwest.

**Henderson** and program specialist **Vangie Orozco** delivered a parent involvement seminar for the Interstate Migrant Education Council on June 4–8 in *Philadelphia*.

**Jordan** participated in joint research work for the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, based in Charlottesville, VA, and the Kettering Foundation, based in Dayton, OH, on June 16–17 in *Washington, DC*.

**Donnelly** presented “Assessing the Impact of Parental Involvement Programs: What Gets Measured Gets Done” at the U.S. Department of Education Summer Institute on June 22–26, in *Washington, DC*. **Jordan** participated in the semiannual National 21st CCLC Training Task Force meeting during the institute.

#### **REL National Activities**

**Hord** facilitated a session on change process factors, strategies, and tools at a retreat for 65 trainers and staff development directors in *Ogalalla, NE*, on May 6–7. She focused on applying the Stages of Concern and innovation configurations to school improvement.

On May 13, **Hord** and the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's development team met in *Memphis* to plan “Learning Success for Each Student: A Leadership Development Program,” a session held for 20 Memphis administrators on June 6.

**Buttram** described REL services and products at the Council of Chief State School Officers Deputy Leadership Commission Spring Academy in *Lexington, KY*, on May 17–19. The academy focused on realizing high expectations for all children.

**Hord's** work with the National Staff Development Council's study of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's professional development projects for practicing superintendents and principals in all 50 states continued in *Chicago* on June 23. She helped conduct focus groups of 12 “early adopter” superintendents from across the country to access data related to the effects of the projects and to learn about the participants' work based on their training.

## Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STM) Program

SEDL's STM Program supports systemic science and mathematics reform and assists teachers in using technologies to improve student learning. The STM Program houses the Eisenhower Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Mathematics and Science Teaching (SCIMAST) and the SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SouthCentral RTEC).

One of 10 science and mathematics consortia funded by the U.S. Department of Education, SCIMAST assists teachers, schools, districts, and states in developing and sustaining quality teaching and effective leadership. SCIMAST staff host state and regional annual forums, conduct intensive long-term professional development, and provide access to exemplary materials and information through such resources as 40 access centers across the SEDL region.

Through professional development, information dissemination, and technical assistance, SouthCentral RTEC supports schools, teachers, and leaders in using technology to foster student success in achieving state content standards, particularly in high-needs schools. With partners such as the Texas Center for Education Technology at the University of North Texas and The Aurora Project in Fairview, OK, SouthCentral RTEC staff help teachers use technology and enable education leaders to acquire, manage, and evaluate technology.

### STM Staff Announcements

**Kelley Reidt** joined SouthCentral RTEC as an intern in August. A doctoral student in curriculum studies at The University of Texas at Austin, **Reidt** earned a bachelor's in English and German literature at the University of California, Berkeley, a master's in comparative literature at UT–Austin, and a master's in educational technology at Texas A&M University at Commerce. “An English class on electronic discourse got me interested in how technological advances would affect the ways we disseminate information, including literature,” she said. This interest led to a teacher assistantship in the UT College of Engineering in the early 1990s. From 1994 to 2002, **Reidt** taught various courses at the secondary level, including English, special education, reading, and English as a second language. Most recently, she supervised elementary teacher interns at

UT–Austin. During her SEDL internship, **Reidt** is working on SouthCentral RTEC's Standards and Assessment Management Tool, which is a FileMaker Pro database that assists K–8 educators in deriving meaningful information from state test data and using that information to align classroom instruction and assessment to state content standards.

### SCIMAST Professional Development

#### Arkansas

- On May 6–8, Evaluation Services program associate **Jeannine Turner** collected evaluation information from **Fort Smith** participants in SCIMAST's Middle School Mathematics Project lesson study colloquiums, which are facilitated by program associate **Maria Torres** and program specialist **Como Molina**.
- Program associate **Nikki Hanegan** co-facilitated the “From Air to Earth: Shaping Our Environment” field science academy with John Hehr, professor and associate dean of the Fulbright College's Department of Geosciences at the University of Arkansas in **Fayetteville** on June 16–20. Science teachers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas learned about atmospheric science and geologic processes that affect plant and land structures, visited caves and other hydrologic sites, and participated in inquiry activities that enhanced their content knowledge and teaching practices to implement “constancy and change” lessons.



Kelley Reidt joined SouthCentral RTEC as an intern in August.



### **Louisiana**

- Program specialist **Phillip Eaglin** co-facilitated the SCIMAST Teachers as Leaders Calculator-based Lab (CBL) Science Academy titled “Physics Lab Activity Re-Design Using CBL Technology” with Grambling State University professor Teng Zhu in **Grambling** on June 9–13. In addition to increasing teachers’ chemistry and physics content knowledge and their skills in lab activity design, the session involved discussions on grant writing for technology in science.

### **New Mexico**

- **Molina** and **Torres** led the algebra strand at the 2003 MathStar Summer Lesson Study Conference in **Las Cruces** on May 26–30. About 150 teacher participants from various school districts in New Mexico attended the conference, which was a collaborative effort of MathStar, SEDL, and Hewlett Packard.
- With design and development support from **Hanegan**, Colorado geologist Steve Getty conducted SCIMAST’s “Experience the Past: Gee, a logical history” Teachers as Leaders Field Science Academy in **Albuquerque** on June 16–20. Teachers from New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas learned about fossils and the changing Earth. Participants assisted with work from the previous year’s academy, during which teachers and scientists discovered and excavated a prehistoric saber-toothed cat along with many other smaller mammalian fossils.
- On June 23, **Hanegan** met with National Center for Genome Resources staff in **Santa Fe** to design and develop a new professional development program for secondary biology teachers in the Southwest. The first of the series in this program will begin November 7.

### **Oklahoma**

- **Hanegan** co-facilitated the Teachers as Leaders Field Science Academy “A Geologic Walk through Time” with University of Oklahoma professor Charles Gilbert and retired Phillips Petroleum geologist Ben Powell on June 9–13 in **Lawton**. Oklahoma and Texas science teachers learned about geologic processes, foliage dependency on geology, geologic fault interactions, and mapping skills.

- On June 16–20, **Hanegan** conducted the Teachers as Leaders Field Science Academy “A Nature Adventure in the Wildlife Preserve” with Craig Clifford, dean of Mathematics, Science, and Nursing at Northeastern State University. Teachers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas learned about birds, water plants, insects, and biodiversity during the academy at the J. T. Nickel Preserve in **Tablequah**. The focus of this academy was the interdependence of life.
- **Molina** and **Torres** co-facilitated a Teachers as Leaders Middle School Mathematics Academy in **Tulsa** on June 23–27. Participants engaged in inquiry-based mathematics focusing on algebraic reasoning and learned about the certification process for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. SCIMAST staff will conduct follow-up research lesson colloquiums for academy participants.

### **Texas**

- **Hanegan** co-facilitated “West Texas Lesson Study Clinic” with Irion High School teacher Sterling Abbott in **Mertzson** on May 17. Our Lady of the Lake University faculty from San Antonio, science teachers, and their students attended the session. Abbott and his seventh graders completed an inquiry-based demonstration lesson called “Lesson on the Creek,” which was based on his work during SCIMAST’s Devils River Field Science Academy. Program specialist **Danny Martinez** videotaped the activities.
- On May 22, **Torres** presented “Promoting Teacher Growth through Lesson Study” to two focus groups at the Region I Educational Service Center in **Edinburg**. **Torres** also met with Region I staff to discuss the next steps in a mathematics and science integrated project using lesson study.
- **Hanegan** conducted the “Desert Stream Ecology” field science academy with Brigham Young University professor Riley Nelson in **Sonora** on June 2–6. Rural Texas science teachers learned about aquatic insects, insect-plant interactions, and desert plants. **Martinez** videotaped the academy.

## SouthCentral RTEC Professional Development and Technical Assistance

### Oklahoma

- In partnership with Oklahoma Achievement through Collaboration and Technology Support, program associate **Kim Hughes** presented three sessions on authentic teaching and learning on June 26 using the *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio to principals and superintendents as part of Oklahoma's Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grant for Leadership Development.

### Texas

- On May 13–14, **Martinez** presented "Active Learning with Technology" and "The People's Choice: Digital Imagery and the Art of Persuasion" to more than 50 teachers at the Region I Technology Conference in *South Padre Island*.

### SouthCentral RTEC Networking

**Heath, Hughes**, and **Martinez** participated in the National Educational Computing Conference on June 28–July 2 in *Seattle, WA*. SouthCentral RTEC hosted a booth at the conference and distributed videotapes, briefing papers, and information about products and

services for educators. More than 10,000 educators attended the conference.

### Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs)

Through a subcontract with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, SEDL provides technical assistance and professional development to seven SLCs award sites designated by the U.S. Department of Education. The SLCs program allows awardees to design and implement approaches to restructure their large high schools (more than 1,000 students) into smaller learning communities.

Program associate **Melanie Morrissey** visited two SLCs schools in *Anderson County, SC*, on May 12–13.

**Morrissey** and REL program associates **Deborah Donnelly** and **Jerry Elder** conducted SLCs site visits at Crockett and Travis high schools in *Austin, TX*, on May 15–16.

**Elder** and **Morrissey** conducted a site visit at Will Rogers High School on May 19–20, in *Tulsa, OK*.

On May 21–23, **Donnelly** and **Morrissey** visited two grantee high schools in *Irving, TX*, that are finishing their third and final year of the grant. They have been selected as Promising Practices sites for their work in developing SLCs districtwide.

## Online Database Shows Secrets to SLCs Success

SEDL's national Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs) online database at [www.sedl.org/slc/](http://www.sedl.org/slc/) features information on districts and high schools implementing SLCs. The database includes contact and demographic information, narrative profiles, implementation plans, simple and advanced search interfaces, and summary charts.

The database also contains a listing of the SLCs structures and strategies high schools are using to improve student achievement and behavior, as well as a link to a U.S. Department of Education primer on these approaches. Structures include academies, house plans, schools-within-a-school, and magnet schools. SLCs strategies include freshman transition activities, multiyear groups, alternative scheduling, adult advocate systems, teacher advisory systems, and academic teaming. ■

**SEDL** Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

**Smaller Learning Communities Awards Database**

Search for SLC Schools & Districts | Advanced Search Options | SLC Summary Charts | Learn about SLC Structures & Strategies | Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

**Search for SLC Schools and Districts**

This database includes districts and schools that have been awarded SLC funds. For each record, you will be able to view demographic information, information from the grant application, and a list of the structures and strategies each school is implementing.

You may search by school name or location using the form below, or you may use the advanced search form to search by other specific criteria:

Select which SLC Records to Search:	Search for <b>districts and schools</b>
Search by Location:	Show records from <b>all states</b>
	Search for school name, district name, or city containing <b>all</b> of the words: (Optional)
Format Results:	Sort results by <b>state</b>
	Show <b>200 records per page</b>

**Search**

If you have a question about the SLC database, please send an e-mail to Lacy Wood at [lwood@sedl.org](mailto:lwood@sedl.org).

SEARCH CONTACT

## Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC)

SEDL's SECAC, based in Metairie, LA, is one of 15 regional technical assistance centers mandated and funded under No Child Left Behind to assist states, school districts, and schools in meeting the needs of children served under the legislation, including children in high-poverty areas, migrant children, immigrant children, children with limited English proficiency, neglected or delinquent children, homeless children and youth, American Indian children, and children with disabilities.

SECAC provides professional development, technical assistance, and information services to state and local education agencies, regional educational service centers, tribes, and schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

### SECAC Information Provision, Professional Development, and Technical Assistance

#### Alabama

- Program associates **Debra L. Meibaum** and **Lou Meadows** and program specialist **Dallas Picou** provided updates on Title I, Part A, of the No Child Left Behind Act for administrators, central office staff, and principals on June 11 in *Huntsville*.
- Program associate **Jill Slack** conducted a workshop on tools for assessing and teaching writing on June 11 in *Cullman* for K–7 teachers in the North Alabama Teacher Exchange area.
- On June 24, **Slack** presented a questioning workshop for K–12 teachers and administrators in *Cleveland*. Participants



Teachers from Bauduit Elementary in New Orleans receive “hands-on” professional development as they complete an animal observation activity at Audubon Zoo on May 20. SECAC and Audubon Zoo are helping Bauduit become a New Orleans Public Schools signature school in elementary science.

learned the types of questions and combinations of questions that promote student thinking across all content areas.

#### Arkansas

- Program specialist **Philip Gapinski** continued crisis management technical assistance planning with district committee members in *Dardanelle* on June 24.

#### Georgia

- On May 6, **Meibaum** and program associate **Charles Scott** provided an update on Title I, Part A, of the No Child Left Behind Act for administrators, central office staff, and principals in *Dearing*. **Meibaum** and **Picou** delivered the same session in *Valdosta* on May 14.
- **Gapinski** delivered No Child Left Behind Title IV, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities updates at the annual Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency conference on May 22 in *St. Simons Island*. **Meibaum**, **Picou**, and **Scott** presented an update on Title I, Part A, of the No Child Left Behind Act at the same conference.

#### Louisiana

- Program manager **Marie Kaigler** and program associate **Carolyn Clausing** presented workshops on multiple intelligences and effective research-based classroom strategies at the Bridge City Elementary School's annual retreat on May 3 in *New Orleans*.
- On May 13 and June 3, **Gapinski** participated in meetings for the Coordination/Collaboration and Evaluation/Data Collection Subcommittee of Louisiana Partners in Prevention in *Baton Rouge* to develop a statewide youth prevention plan.
- **Slack** met with New Orleans Public Schools (NOPS) district staff and state department staff on May 14 at the Region I Educational Service Center in *Belle Chasse* to discuss testing and instructional strategies to improve student reading scores on standardized tests.
- Program specialist **John Hanley** co-facilitated professional development provided by Audubon Zoo staff in *New Orleans* on May 20. Zoo staff worked to increase zoo awareness among the elementary school teachers who attended and to develop prekindergarten and kindergarten lesson plans.

- On May 21–22, **Slack** facilitated a Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills workshop for NOPS teachers and administrators and Louisiana Department of Education staff in *New Orleans*. The next day, **Slack** participated in a NOPS district leadership meeting on ways the Center for Development and Learning, the American Federation of Teachers, NOPS, and SECAC can work together to ensure the success of the district's new literacy reforms. **Slack** also took part in an NOPS university coursework integration meeting on May 28 to develop plans to help current teachers become reading certified. Last, she participated in the district leadership's full committee meeting on May 29 to discuss and plan summer professional development activities for reading teachers, principals, and central office staff.
- Throughout May and June in *Baton Rouge*, **Gapinski** assisted in contacting speakers, identifying safety resources, and developing promotional materials for Southeastern Louisiana University's Excellence in Health and Education Project 2003 Summer Institute held in July.
- In May and June, **Gapinski** and **Kaigler** provided technical assistance on school-community collaboration and comprehensive school safety plan grant writing for the NOPS Violence Prevention Task Force.
- **Gapinski** presented "Widening the Depth and Breadth of Coalitions" at the Louisiana Association of Safe and Drug-Free Schools Summer Prevention Institute in *Hammond* on June 25. He also delivered two Title IV Principles of Effectiveness sessions at the After-School for All: Building Louisiana's Future Conference in *New Orleans*.

#### *Mississippi*

- **Gapinski** and **Meibaum** presented sessions on scientifically based research and Title IV at the Mississippi Department of Education's (MDE's) Title IV Institute on May 1 in *Jackson*.
- SECAC consultants conducted a Reading Success Network workshop on Reading First for K–3 teachers at Grenada School in *Grenada* on May 5.
- Program associate **Maggie Rivas** participated in Mississippi's English Language

Learners (ELL) Practitioners Committee on May 13 in *Jackson* to assist in the development of ELL standards for reading and language arts.

- On May 28 and June 5 and 26, **Gapinski** provided technical assistance to MDE staff in *Jackson* on the analysis of Smart Track survey data, the identification of No Child Left Behind benchmarks and indicators, and Mississippi's Uniform Management Information System.
- As a member of MDE's Bias Review Committee, **Rivas** reviewed test items from the statewide assessment instrument for bias on June 2–4 in *Jackson*.
- On June 3–4, **Meibaum** and program specialist **Suzanne Ashby** presented "ELL Strategies for Teachers" to administrators, teachers in grades 3–6, and support staff in *Forest*. On June 5–6, **Meibaum** and a SECAC consultant provided the session "From Comprehension to Communication: Teaching English Language Learners in the American Classroom" to the same audience. **Meibaum** and the consultant followed up on June 18–19 with "Teaching Reading in the Middle Grades" for *Forest* elementary teachers.
- **Slack** delivered "Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning" with a focus on reading content to 125 participants at the Improving Mississippi Schools Conference in *Biloxi* on June 13.
- **Meibaum** and a SECAC consultant delivered "Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read" to K–3 teachers in *Canton* on June 16–17.
- **Gapinski** presented "Preventing School Violence by Changing School Climate," "Comprehensive Drug and Violence Prevention Planning," and "The ABCs of Fostering Resiliency in All Students" on June 17–19 in *Meridian* to teachers and counselors served by the East Mississippi Center for Educational Development.
- On June 25, **Meibaum** and **Picou** provided a No Child Left Behind Title I, Part A update to administrators, central office staff, and teachers in *Jackson*.

#### **SECAC National Activities**

**Slack** served as chairwoman of a popular authors' session at the International Reading Association Conference on May 7 in *Orlando*.



## Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (SEARS) Program

SEDL's SEARS Program provides information and assistance on innovations and policies to improve special education and rehabilitation services. The SEARS Program encompasses the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), the Disability Law Resource Project (DLRP), and the Research Utilization Support and Help (RUSH) Project.

NCDDR works with more than 430 disability and rehabilitation research teams and product developers funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to develop and demonstrate successful methods and strategies that link researchers and information users. Through these linkages, NCDDR audiences may find utility and relevance in research findings. NCDDR activities include research, demonstration, technical assistance, and dissemination and utilization.

In October 2001, SEDL received funding from The Institute for Rehabilitation & Research (TIRR) in Houston to partner with DLRP, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. SEDL's DLRP work is part of TIRR's five-year grant to provide technical assistance, training, and information dissemination on the legal obligations of educational entities; to make available information technology to students with disabilities; and to conduct self-evaluations on information technology accessibility to promote best practices.



Mark Linder joined the SEARS Program as a communications assistant in August.



Stephanie Weaver joined the SEARS Program as a communications assistant in August.

Funded by NIDRR for five years in April 2003, the RUSH Project works to identify, describe, and encourage the use of effective research utilization strategies. It focuses on disability research findings in health, technology access, independent living, and community integration.

### SEARS Program Staff Announcements

SEDL's SEARS Program welcomed communications assistants **Mark Linder** and **Stephanie Weaver** on August 1.

Prior to joining SEDL, **Linder** served as a constituent services representative and grant coordinator in the district office of U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett. He holds a bachelor's in English from The University of Texas at Austin. At SEDL, **Linder** works to identify, describe, and encourage the use of effective research utilization strategies through the RUSH Project.

**Weaver** earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Victoria in British Columbia. She worked for several provincial government agencies in British Columbia, including the Special Programs Branch at the Ministry of Education. While there, she co-wrote a resource guide that details best practices for supporting students with special needs making the transition from high school to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. Most recently, **Weaver** was a community relations specialist for the Austin metropolitan transportation authority. At SEDL, she will focus on issues associated with information technologies appropriate for students with disabilities in Federal Region VI public schools through the Disability Law Resource Project.

*in the field*

## SEARS Program Activities

Program manager **John Westbrook** met with NIDRR staff on June 23–25 to inform them about the SEARS Program’s dissemination and utilization activities and to discuss the new RUSH Project scope of work.

## SEDL Fee-for-Service

SEDL conducts fee-for-service activities to ensure more effective distribution and use of SEDL’s products and services. The revenue generated from these services supports ongoing development. Services include evaluation services and training in school improvement, technology, reading, and mathematics.

### Louisiana

- SouthCentral RTEC program associate **Marilyn Heath** and program associate **Kim Hughes** and Evaluation Services program associate **Jack Lumbley** and program specialist **Cheryl Harris** conducted focus groups for approximately 60 educators in **Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Minden, and Monroe** as part of a year-long project to develop technology assessment tools for the Louisiana Center for Educational Technology.

### Oklahoma

- SCIMAST program associate **Maria Torres** co-facilitated the Coalition for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Education in Oklahoma’s (CASMEO’s) Teachers as Leaders Middle School Mathematics Academy in **Oklahoma City** on June 2–5. Participants learned about inquiry-based teaching strategies on proportional reasoning, examined research-based mathematics curriculum, and developed lessons and assessments for research lesson colloquiums.
- **Torres** helped conduct the University of Tulsa’s Teachers as Leaders Middle School Mathematics Academy on June 30–July 3. Participants studied inquiry-based teaching strategies on proportional reasoning and developed lessons and assessments that will be implemented through research lesson colloquiums.

### Texas

- **Heath** conducted classroom observations on May 1–2 of all K–5 teachers at the University of Houston Charter School to document their progress in implementing learner-centered practices supported by technology. ■

# SEDL

## calendar

SEDL staff will present the following events during the next quarter. Visit [www.sedl.org/new/calendar.html](http://www.sedl.org/new/calendar.html) for more SEDL events.

## October

### 3 Active Learning with Technology Professional Development Oklahoma City, OK

In partnership with the Achievement through Collaboration and Technology Support (OK–ACTS) program, SouthCentral RTEC staff will conduct *Active Learning with Technology* professional development as part of Oklahoma’s Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grant for Leadership Development. Contact: Kim Hughes

### 14–16 Active Learning with Technology Professional Development El Paso, TX

SouthCentral RTEC staff will conduct *Active Learning with Technology* professional development for the Ysleta Independent School District. Contacts: Kim Hughes and Danny Martinez

### 15 Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning Little Rock, AR

SECAC staff will conduct a follow-up training-of-trainers questioning workshop for Arkansas Educational Cooperative teacher center coordinators. Contact: Jill Slack

## October, continued

- 15–17 Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs) Literacy Institute**  
*Providence, RI*  
Hosted by LAB at Brown, this conference is for all newly awarded SLCs implementation grantee schools. SLCs grantees in their second or third year of implementation also may register.  
Contact: Melanie Morrissey
- 21 Teaching Reading in the Content Areas**  
*Dublin, GA*  
SECAC staff will conduct a workshop for middle school content-area teachers. Contact: Jill Slack
- 22 Reading Assessment and Intervention Strategies**  
*Eastman, GA*  
SECAC staff will present a workshop on reading assessment and intervention strategies to help special education students and students at risk. Contact: Jill Slack
- 22–24 National School Board Association’s T+L<sup>2</sup>’s: Leading Learning to a Higher Level Conference**  
*Anaheim, CA*  
REL staff will facilitate “School-Family-Community Connections: How Technology Can Support Parents’ Roles in Improving Academic Achievement.”  
Contact: Lacy Wood
- 22–24 Professional Development Network Workshop**  
*Austin, TX*  
SouthCentral RTEC staff will facilitate a workshop on the effective design of instruction based on learning theory and research-based instructional strategies for the RTEC’s professional development network. Contact: Marilyn Heath
- 23 Reading Strategies for the High School Student**  
*Eastman, GA*  
SECAC staff will conduct a workshop on high school reading strategies. Contact: Jill Slack

- 24–26 44th Annual Southern Regional Council on Educational Administration**  
*Little Rock, AR*  
REL staff will present the keynote address on lessons learned from SEDL’s work with low-performing schools. Contact: Joan Buttram
- 27–28 Forum on the District Role in Developing Capacity to Improve Learning for All Students Systemwide**  
*Seattle, WA*  
SEDL is cosponsoring this forum with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Center for Policy Research in Education, the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform, and the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.  
Contact: Joan Buttram
- 27–29 SLCs Literacy Institute**  
*Savannah, GA*  
Hosted by SERVE, this conference is for all newly awarded SLCs implementation grantee schools. SLCs grantees in their second or third year of implementation can also register.  
Contact: Melanie Morrissey

## November

- 3–5 Active Learning with Technology Academy**  
*Austin, TX*  
SouthCentral RTEC staff will present an institute for professional development providers based on SEDL’s award-winning *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio.  
Contact: Danny Martinez
- 3–5 SLCs Programs of Study Institute**  
*Austin, TX*  
SEDL staff will host newly awarded SLCs implementation grantees in the Southwest. Registration information is available.  
Contact: Melanie Morrissey

calendar

## November, continued

**5–8**     **American Evaluation Association  
Annual Conference**  
*Reno, NV*  
ES staff will present a paper at this conference. Contacts: Cori Groth and Cheryl Harris

**9–11**     **21st Century Community  
Learning Centers Fall Training  
Roundup**  
*Albuquerque, NM*  
SEDL's Midsouth and Southeast After-School Regional Advisory Committee will facilitate this session. Contact: Catherine Jordan

**14**     **Active Learning with Technology  
Professional Development**  
*Oklahoma City, OK*  
In partnership with OK–ACTS, SouthCentral RTEC staff will conduct *Active Learning with Technology* professional development as part of Oklahoma's Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grant for Leadership Development. Contact: Kim Hughes

**18**     **Facilitating Literacy  
Study Groups**  
*Marrero, LA*  
SECAC staff will present tips and tools for facilitating study groups that focus on reading improvement. Contact: Jill Slack

**18–20**     **Active Learning with Technology  
Professional Development**  
*El Paso, TX*  
SouthCentral RTEC staff will conduct *Active Learning with Technology* professional development for the Ysleta Independent School District. Contacts: Kim Hughes and Danny Martinez

## December

**2**     **National Community Education  
Association Preconference**  
*New Orleans, LA*  
REL staff will conduct a preconference on the research syntheses produced by SEDL's National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. Contact: Catherine Jordan

**6–10**     **National Staff Development  
Council (NSDC) Conference**  
*New Orleans, LA*  
ES staff will present the new NSDC Standards Self-Assessment Inventory, and REL staff will present "What Does Research Have to Do with School-Family-Community Connections? A Short Course for Teacher Leaders and Staff Developers." OIC staff will host a SEDL booth during this annual conference to promote SEDL products. Contacts: Sue Street, Catherine Jordan, and Jill Dodge

### SEDL LINKS

**Wesley A. Hoover**  
President and CEO

**Joan L. Buttram**  
Executive Vice  
President and COO

**Joyce S. Pollard**  
Director, Office of  
Communications

**Johanna Gilmore**  
Editor

**SEDL**  
800-476-6861  
[www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org)

*SEDL Links* is a bimonthly newsletter of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. *SEDL Links* complements and draws upon work performed by SEDL under a variety of funding sources, including the U.S. Department of Education and other agencies of the U.S. Government. The publication is not supported with direct program funds related to any SEDL programs or projects. *SEDL Links* does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government or any other source.

You are welcome to reproduce *SEDL Links*, and you may distribute copies at no cost to recipients; please credit the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory as publisher.

SEDL is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and is committed to affording equal employment opportunities for all individuals in employment matters.

*SEDL Links* is available in alternative formats.

