

links

School-Family-Community Partnerships Featured in Synthesis, Preconference

As schools work to meet No Child Left Behind standards, many educators are looking to families and community members to help improve student achievement. A new synthesis, introduced at a SEDL preconference in November, provides the evidence that shows family and community connections with schools do positively impact student achievement.

The synthesis, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, was produced by SEDL's National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools and coauthored by Anne Henderson, a con-

sultant on education policy since 1977, and Karen Mapp, president of the Institute for Responsive Education in Boston.

Henderson and Mapp reviewed more than 50 studies published since 1995 for the synthesis. Many of the studies covered in the report find that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, were more likely to

- earn higher grades and test scores.
- enroll in higher-level programs.
- attend school regularly.

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Karen Mapp, far left, discusses school, family, and community connections with National Community Education Association preconference participants in November at SEDL headquarters in Austin, TX.

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Partnerships, continued

- have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.
- graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

Mapp presented the synthesis at a SEDL-sponsored preconference to the National Community Education Association's 27th Annual Conference held in Austin, Texas, on November 13–16.

"I get a lot of calls from principals and teachers who say, 'I need some evidence to take to the superintendent and show that this is why we need to be involving parents and community members in our reform work,'" Mapp said. "This evidence shows that yes, these connections do work, but it takes hard, consistent work over time."

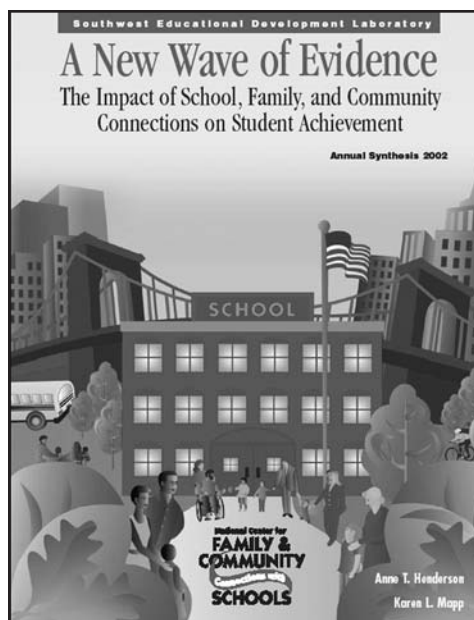
The synthesis, which can be found online at www.sedl.org/connections/resources, also explains that for parent involvement to have an impact on achievement, schools must link parent activities to student learning goals.

"Family and community involvement in schools often means no more than traditional parent involvement activities such as holding potluck suppers or having parents decorate bulletin boards—activities that build trust and community but do not necessarily lead to improved achievement," said Catherine Jordan, director of the national center. "Research tells us what does increase achievement—activities such as outreach to parents and workshops for parents on how to help their children at home, for example. Both of these are linked to higher reading and math scores for children, as are many other activities."

Studies reviewed in the synthesis also emphasized the importance of recognizing and being respectful of differences among families. Schools that succeed in engaging families from very diverse backgrounds

- focus on building trusting collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members.
- recognize, respect, and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural difference.
- embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.

Mapp said that family and community involvement is just as important to high



The National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools published its second synthesis in November.

schoolers as it is to kindergarteners. "That involvement doesn't disappear in middle school and high school. It changes," she said. "The studies showed us that involvement actually increases in the home environment as students progress through school."

The preconference also served as an opportunity for participants to network and learn more about SEDL's national center. The center's goals don't end with compiling the evidence that shows school-family-community connections improve student achievement, said SEDL president and CEO Wes Hoover: "The utilization of this knowledge is also a very important goal for the national center, and we hope that you will engage in your conversation today around how such research can be used at the local level so schools can, in fact, help students achieve high standards."

The synthesis, which includes an index and guides to the study summaries by topic and type of research, builds on the center's first synthesis, *Emerging Issues in School, Family, & Community Connections*. The center also published a research brief, "What do we mean by 'family and community connections with schools?'" This brief answers this question and includes related research studies as well as how to put these connections into practice. Both of these publications can be downloaded at www.sedl.org/connections/resources. ■

Kaigler, Street Earn Presidential Awards

Two Southwest Educational Development Laboratory program managers were honored in December with SEDL presidential awards for their work in 2002. President and CEO Wes Hoover presented the Edwin Hindsman Award for excellence in service to children to Marie Kaigler, Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC) program manager, and the Rogers L. Barton Award for work in education research that has contributed significantly to the field to Sue Street, Evaluation Services (ES) program manager.

After more than 30 years of service to New Orleans Public Schools, Kaigler joined SEDL in July 1997 as a program specialist in mathematics and science; she was promoted to SECAC program manager in March 2001. As a science and mathematics teacher in middle and high schools, Kaigler taught children whose cognitive levels ranged from the severely challenged to the highly gifted. As a high school assistant principal and elementary and middle school principal, she assisted teachers in understanding how to address the needs of their students.

These years taught Kaigler, who holds a doctorate in educational administration from the University of New Orleans, the value of service to children, which she applies to the SECAC plan of work. SECAC helps states, school districts, and schools meet the needs of children served under Title X of No Child Left Behind. "Much of my work involves interacting with SECAC's dedicated and resourceful staff to ensure that our activities lead to successful implementation of the plan of work," she said. Along with providing technical assistance to educational institutions in the region, SECAC staff are identifying ways to leverage resources because SECAC is level funded. They are also reviewing literature to develop a deeper understanding of scientifically based research.

Kaigler said the Hindsman Award is significant to her because it validates her lifelong career of providing services to children, particularly children who live in high poverty. Hoover agreed, "Through her leadership, Marie has focused SECAC's attention on helping educators who work with the neediest of

children in the southeastern region by supporting staff to provide high-quality professional development, training, and technical assistance."

ES program manager Sue Street believes her Barton Award validates the work of her staff over the past two years to reorganize the evaluation office to become more responsive to internal programs in their formative and summative evaluations. ES staff also expanded their external evaluation contracts so that SEDL is viewed by states, universities, schools, and other educational entities as an institution that can help them accomplish their goals.

"This award is a credit to our Evaluation Services staff," Street said. "They worked incredibly hard to design evaluations that will inform programs, and they've worked diligently to implement these plans."

Street, who earned a doctorate in educational administration from Louisiana State University, formerly worked with SECAC as both a program associate and senior research associate. She has also served as the first director of the Division of Professional Development at the Louisiana Department of Education. She was a program manager at the Region V Service Center in Lake Charles, Louisiana; an assistant professor in Educational Administration at Louisiana Tech University; a program administrator for PRAXIS III at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey; and a middle and high school teacher for 10 years in Louisiana. She began as ES program manager at SEDL in January 2001.

"Sue has worked to help SEDL's internal evaluation efforts become more goal-focused, providing our programmatic staff with useful information on how well our programs are achieving their intended goals," Hoover said. "She also has brought together a talented and diverse staff that has developed substantial opportunities for SEDL's evaluation expertise to be made available to external clients seeking information about the quality of their programmatic efforts." ■

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.

Eisenhower Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Mathematics and Science Teaching (SCIMAST)

One of 10 science and mathematics consortia funded by the U.S. Department of Education, SEDL’s SCIMAST shares and creates resources and makes them available to schools. Since 1992, SCIMAST has supported meaningful reform of mathematics and science education in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas through intensive, long-term professional development and teaching assistance, networking that brings together people across the education system to address common goals, and provision of information and resources through access centers and other sources.

SCIMAST Professional Development

Louisiana

- On Nov. 12, program specialist **Como Molina** and program associate **Maria Torres** co-facilitated a research lesson colloquium at the St. Anthony School of the Diocese of New Orleans in **Gretna**. The colloquium is the second of six scheduled for the 2002–2003 school year and is a follow-up event to the Summer 2002 Teachers as Leaders Institutes.
- Program specialist **Phillip Eaglin** led the “Less Physics Is More + CBLs” follow-up session to the SCIMAST Teachers as Leaders Academy at Grambling State University. High school physics teachers presented projects at the session on Nov. 16. **Eaglin** also facilitated a similar session on chemistry at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette on Nov. 23.

Texas

- **Torres** facilitated the second of three training sessions on SEDL’s Paso Partners curriculum for Title VII teachers with the **Hidalgo** and **Progreso** independent school districts on Nov. 9. Twenty-five teachers involved in a dual language program engaged in the hands-on science activities focusing on dinosaurs and the five senses.

SCIMAST Networking and Information Provision

New Mexico

- Program specialist **Nikki Hanegan** gave two presentations on genetics at the National Science Teachers Association Regional Conference in **Albuquerque** on Dec. 5–6.

Texas

- SCIMAST staff hosted 35 science educators to investigate for “Learning and Teaching Evolution: Lessons from Research and Practice” in **Austin** on Nov. 4–5. Teachers, administrators, university biologists and science educators, and representatives of national organiza-



High school science teachers presented their SCIMAST Teachers as Leaders Academy classroom projects at the “Less Chemistry Is More + CBLs” follow-up session on Nov. 23 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.



Keith Sturges joined REL as a program specialist in February.

tions met to investigate how standards, assessments, curricula, and research have influenced the teaching and learning of education. A short summary of the meeting will be available on the SCIMAST Web site at www.sedl.org/scimast in the spring.

- **Hanegan** gave a presentation on genetics at the Texas Science Teachers Association Conference for Advancement in Science Teaching in *El Paso* on Nov. 8.

Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development (LOTE CED)

LOTE CED assists pre-K–12 educators in enhancing the proficiency of Texas students in languages other than English. In partnership with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), LOTE CED staff have developed training modules and workshops to help familiarize language educators with new state standards. Trained facilitators work with regional education service centers and school districts to provide inservice professional development on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English (TEKS for LOTE).

Program associate **Elaine Phillips** presented “Reflecting on Teaching Culture: A Texas Adventure,” and information assistant **Chuck Reese** presented “Finding, Evaluating, and Using Web Resources” at the Texas Foreign Language Association Fall Conference in *Fort Worth* on Nov. 7–10. **Phillips** and **Reese**

hosted a booth at the conference and **Phillips** presented information on LOTE CED’s latest products and activities at TEA’s update session during the conference.

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 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 program specialist **Keith Sturges** in February. Prior to SEDL, **Sturges** conducted research on efforts to improve student academic success in struggling schools at Appalachia Educational Laboratory in Charleston, WV. He also has researched the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education, parent involvement in education, best practices for students with special needs, and the relationships between rural development, migration, and education. **Sturges** earned his master’s in applied anthropology at the University of Maryland in College Park. At SEDL, he analyzes REL research data from intensive work sites to help schools and districts improve student achievement.

REL Intensive Site Work

SEDL and site staff are working together to identify and address the underlying problems within the districts and schools that affect student achievement in reading and mathematics. SEDL also is documenting how districts and schools improve their performance. SEDL staff, along with AIRD and Dana Center partners, conducted the following intensive site activities in November and December.

Arkansas

- Along with the district leadership team, administrative team, and teacher teams, program associate **Stella Bell** monitored

and determined the impact of the implementation of the district and school plan for improving students' literacy performances in *Grady*. **Bell** also participated in a K–12 staff development workshop on the alignment of curriculum to the Arkansas Language Arts Framework. Program associate **Marsha Loyd** provided assistance on writing lesson plans and building classroom instruction using reading comprehension strategies. Evaluation Services program specialists **Cori Groth** and **Jessica Snell-Johns** observed leadership team meetings and conducted individual interviews with school and district staff members as part of a case study examining the strategies SEDL staff use when assisting schools and districts in creating sustained improvement. The data were analyzed to assess the degree to which program goals are being achieved and to provide formative feedback.

- Program associate **D'Ette Cowan** consulted with *Green Forest* instructional staff as they began conversations among grade levels about curriculum, instruction, and assessment alignment. She also met with the district leadership team to continue planning for district improvement. Program specialist **Michael Bohlig** interviewed Green Forest School District staff to assess their progress in learning to work systemically.
- Program associate **Ann Neeley** and *Marked Tree* faculty reviewed the reading assessment process for grades K–12, planned administrative action to improve the district's reading program, and discussed the creation of the second reading assessment. REL contract manager **Joan Buttram** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.

Louisiana

- Program associate **Chris Ferguson**, Dana Center program coordinator **Carl Juenke**, and program manager **David Rainey** met with the New Iberia Parish, Westgate High School, and Anderson Middle School leadership teams to improve student achievement in mathematics in the parish through a systemic approach. **Buttram** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
- **Bell** met with the Lafourche Parish school

board and curriculum team members to discuss the partnership with SEDL and the systematic process for school improvement. She also shared the data scan report to help district staff determine future efforts to improve student mathematics performance.

- SEDL program associates **Jill Slack** and **Ed Tobia** and an Educational Service Center reading consultant facilitated a district reading cadre meeting to discuss reading strategies with Tallulah and Wright elementary school administrators and grade-level reading facilitators. **Slack** and **Tobia** led a reading strategies workshop for elementary school teachers. Program associate **Suzanne Stiegelbauer** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
- Dana Center program coordinator **Janice Bradley** and Dana Center project director **Ted Hull** conducted a meeting for the System-wide Leadership Committee in *Monroe* to define, communicate, and implement the district's mathematics curriculum. **Snell-Johns** and Evaluation Services program manager **Sue Street** observed leadership team meetings and conducted individual interviews with school and district staff members as part of a case study examining the strategies SEDL staff use when assisting schools and districts in creating sustained improvement. The data were analyzed to assess the degree to which program goals are being achieved and to provide formative feedback.

New Mexico

- AIRD vice president **Mary Ann Brittan** and the Central Consolidated Schools District Reading Team continued analyzing the district reading programs in *Shiprock* via a program matrix. **Brittan** and program specialist **Sebastian Wren** met with the Central Consolidated/Newcomb School Improvement Leadership Team in *Newcomb* to work on school improvement plans and the analysis of reading assessments. **Groth** and Evaluation Services program specialist **Jennifer Beck** observed leadership team meetings and conducted individual interviews with school and district staff members in Shiprock and Newcomb as part of a case study examining the strategies

- SEDL staff use when assisting schools and districts in creating sustained improvement. The data were analyzed to assess the degree to which program goals are being achieved and to provide formative feedback.
- Program associate **Joe Parker** guided curriculum alignment work at Hatch Valley High School and critiqued course syllabi for high school teachers. He also provided facilitation assistance in campus planning at Hatch Valley Middle School. On the district level, **Parker** helped initiate the beginning teacher mentor study and assisted scholar emerita **Shirley Hord** in interviewing district and school staff to assess their progress.
 - **Neeley** worked with Bernalillo Middle School to plan a reading curriculum format for grades 6–8 and the implementation of this format. She also reinforced the components of a well-balanced reading program and observed the implementation of the current reading program at Algodones Elementary. **Hord** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
 - **Tobia** planned district leadership team meetings for the remainder of the school year with the superintendent and the associate superintendent of Española Public Schools to focus on the systemic work in the district to improve reading instruction. He also participated in meetings of the school improvement team for Española Valley High School during which the team reviewed the implementation of their school improvement plan and addressed the systemic organizational problems at the high school that were impeding instruction. **Stiegelbauer** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
- Oklahoma**
- **Hull** assisted the Altus District Leadership Team in using local pretest data to identify weaknesses and initiate plans to remedy these weaknesses. **Hull** and program associate **Jerry Elder** then led a session on creating action plans from the pretest results. **Hull** and the district curriculum director also discussed the district’s facilitative phase agenda and planned meetings for the next year. **Bohlig** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
 - **Brittan, Elder, Loyd**, and the Kinta School Improvement Leadership Team identified ways to improve family and community connections for the support of student achievement in **Kinta**. **Brittan** also shadowed the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) Title I Monitoring Team to further coordinate SEDL efforts with the SDE. **Loyd** presented secondary special education classroom demonstrations and grades 6–9 models to improve the teaching of reading and writing. **Stiegelbauer** interviewed district and school staff to assess their progress.
 - **Bradley** and program specialist **Tara Leo** worked with the faculty in grades 6–8 to incorporate reading strategies across the content areas in **Putnam City**. **Bradley, Leo**, and the district leadership team began the district’s implementation plan to improve student achievement in reading.
- Texas**
- **Ferguson** and **Slack** helped organize work for the upcoming year with Nova Charter Schools in **Dallas**. **Ferguson** also explored and analyzed Iowa Tests of Basic Skills data with Nova teams to diagnose possible problem areas in reading achievement.
 - **Bohlig** interviewed Midland Independent School District staff to assess their progress in learning to work systemically.
- REL Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Networking**
- Arkansas**
- **Tobia** conducted a Comprehensive School Reform workshop on program implementation strategies in **Little Rock** on Nov. 12–13.
- Louisiana**
- **Bradley, Hull**, and **Juenke** presented a workshop at the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics Conference on Nov. 7–9 in **Baton Rouge**.
- Texas**
- On Nov. 6, **Cowan** provided the welcome on behalf of SEDL at the 19th Annual Assistant Principals’ Conference at the University of North Texas in **Denton**. The theme of the conference, attended by more than 200 participants, was “Beyond Lockers, Textbooks, and Discipline.” SEDL has served as a cosponsor for the event for the past four years.

REL Policy Work

Program specialist **Diane Pan**, program associate **Zena Rudo**, and Dana Center research science associate **Lotte Smith-Hansen** presented findings from the analysis of 12 successful school districts in the Southwest at the Mid-South Educational Research Association Conference in **Chattanooga, TN**, on Nov. 7.

Pan, Rudo, Smith-Hansen, and Dana Center research science associate **Rahel Kahlert** hosted the Arkansas Policy Forum on Education Finance in **Little Rock** on Nov. 18. The forum's goal was to help policymakers better understand the strengths and limitations of the state's education funding system and to consider the education finance and reform policy decisions facing the state brought about by the *Lakeview v. Huckabee* court case. For more information, visit www.sedl.org/rel/ar_forum_summary.html

On Nov. 19, **Pan** and **Rudo** presented a summary of research findings to Arkansas Department of Education administrators in **Little Rock** to share state-specific findings with policymakers and gain insights on ways that such information might be best disseminated for use by decision makers and educators in the region.

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools

Regional Activities

- Center staff conducted the quarterly videoconference from **Austin, TX**, on Nov. 21. Seven regional educational laboratories participated in the videoconference, which featured Appalachia Educational Laboratory's family connections learning guides and related products, as well as their Maximizing Achievement for African-American Children in Kanawha project, which is a school, community, and faith-based organization partnership.
- Center staff hosted the 2002 Fall After-School Training Roundup on Dec. 5–6 in **Albuquerque**. A special preconference for 100 district and school leaders and after-school program directors was held Dec. 4. State department liaisons conducted concurrent sessions throughout the training, and Robert Stonehill, acting director of Academic Improvement and Demonstration Programs at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, discussed how

after-school programs can help schools address accountability standards for student success.

National Activities

- Program specialist **Amy Averett** attended the Public Education Network Conference in **Washington, DC**, on Nov. 10–12, to disseminate the 2002 synthesis, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, and identify potential partners and studies for the 2005 synthesis.
- On Nov. 12, center staff hosted the preconference to the National Community Education Association (NCEA) 37th Annual Conference in **Austin, TX**. Karen Mapp, coauthor of the 2002 synthesis, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, co-facilitated the preconference (see cover story). Program manager **Catherine Jordan** and program specialist **Vangie Orozco** presented "Evidence: Family and Community Impact on Student Achievement" at the NCEA meeting on Nov. 14.
- Program associate **Deborah Donnelly** participated in "Partners for Student Success," the National Summit on Parent Involvement in Teacher Education hosted by the National PTA and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, on Nov. 12–15, in **Washington, DC**.

REL National Activities

On Nov. 21–22, **Hord** met in **Memphis, TN**, with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's development team and members of the Memphis Independent School District Central Office Team to develop a partnership with the goal of improving student learning.

Hord co-presented "Blueprints for Change: NSDC's Study of the Gates Foundation State Challenge Grants for Leadership Development" at the National Staff Development Council Annual Meeting in **Boston** on Dec. 10.

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 education service centers, tribes, and schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

SECAC Staff Announcements

Program manager **Marie Kaigler** and program associate **Jill Slack** graduated from the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Academy during the NSDC annual conference on Dec. 8–11 in *Boston*.

SECAC Information Provision, Professional Development, and Technical Assistance

Alabama

- **Slack** conducted the third in a series of writing assessment workshops on Dec. 17 in *Decatur* to assist Morgan County teacher leaders in developing district writing benchmarks.



Dardanelle High School principal Marcia Lawrence (from left) and vice principal Lynn Balloun and Dardanelle School District superintendent John Thompson discuss the School Safety Assessment report presented by SECAC program specialists Dallas Picou and Philip Gapinski on Nov. 22.

Arkansas

- Program associates **Mike Hargis** and **Debra L. Meibaum** and program specialist **Dallas Picou** presented “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics” in *Dawson* on Nov. 6 and in *Plumerville* on Nov. 7.
- **Slack** presented a session on questioning strategies at the Arkansas Reading Association in *Little Rock* on Nov. 14. Participants learned about a framework for developing student vocabulary and comprehension.
- Program specialists **Picou** and **Philip Gapinski** completed three school safety assessments for the Dardanelle School District and presented the findings to school and district leaders on Nov. 22. More than 50 parents, teachers, and students were interviewed and policies, procedures, and physical facilities were reviewed for the assessment.

Georgia

- **Slack** conducted a reading assessment and intervention strategies workshop at the Heart of Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency in *Eastman* on Nov. 12 for K–6 teachers. Participants learned about diagnostic reading assessments and using data to determine appropriate instruction.
- **Meibaum, Picou**, and program associate **Charles Scott** presented “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics” in *Eastman* on Nov. 20.

Louisiana

- In cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Education, **Gapinski** provided information on Title IV of No Child Left Behind to 115 local education agency coordinators attending the fall conference of the Louisiana Association of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities on Nov. 1 in *Lafayette*.
- **Slack** presented a session on strategies to teach and assess content area reading at the Louisiana Reading Association State Conference in *Shreveport* on Nov. 2.
- On Nov. 4, **Slack** conducted a thinking skills and questioning workshop at Homedale Elementary School in *Harvey*. Teachers learned the types of questions that promote student thinking and how to utilize student responses effectively.

- **Gapinski** and **Picou** completed a safety walk-through of the Hammond Middle School on Nov. 8 in **Hammond**.
- On Nov. 14, **Gapinski** provided technical assistance to the Office of School and Community Support of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) in **Baton Rouge** by writing a history of LDE activities and recommendations related to the Unsafe School Choice Option.
- **Slack** met with New Orleans Public Schools reading coordinators Nov. 18 to plan professional development for district reading coaches. Later in the day, she met with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) national reading coordinator, the regional AFT reading coordinator, district administrators and reading and early childhood coordinators, and principals to discuss current reading initiatives.
- In November, **Kaigler**, program associate **Carolyn Clausing**, and program specialist **John Hanley** met with representatives from Audubon Zoo's Education Department to discuss their recent collaboration on the Zoo School Educational Enhancement Project and develop plans for exploring other informal science projects in the **New Orleans** area.
- Program associate **Moselle Dearbone** provided ongoing assistance for the Morehouse Parish School District 21st Century Community Learning Center during the fall. She shared information about mediated learning, an intervention program designed to enhance cognitive skills, and in November conducted follow-up classroom observations at all four school sites.
- **Gapinski** participated in the LDE Unsafe School Choice Option Advisory Committee meeting on Dec. 2 in **Baton Rouge**. The committee provided recommendations to the department defining criteria that will be used to identify "persistently dangerous" schools, which is a No Child Left Behind requirement. The draft of the committee's recommendations will be submitted to the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval.
- On Dec. 4, in **Baton Rouge**, **Gapinski** assisted the LDE Office of School and Community Support Title IV program staff in planning the development of Louisiana's Uniform Management Information Reporting System, community service grants, and the Dec. 16 Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities meeting.
- **Gapinski** provided program analysis technical assistance on Dec. 10 in **Many** to evaluate the effectiveness of the Life Skills Training Program, which has been used in the district for the past three years, and the Title IV Safe and Drug-Free Schools prevention plans.
- **Slack** and SECAC consultants conducted a story-mapping workshop on Dec. 6 for K–3 New Orleans Public Schools reading coaches in **Metairie**.
- On Dec. 11, **Gapinski** participated in a planning meeting in **Baton Rouge** with LDE staff and Governor's Title IV coordinators to discuss state performance indicators and the community service grant program. The next day, **Gapinski** facilitated two safe and drug-free schools and communities professional development sessions for local education agency representatives and Title IV community grantees.

Mississippi

- SECAC Reading Success Network consultants conducted a workshop on phonemic awareness for teachers at Grenada Elementary School in **Grenada** on Dec. 16.
- **Meibaum** presented "No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics" in **Jackson** on Nov. 21.

Special Education and Rehabilitation Services Program (SEARSP)

SEDL's SEARSP provides information and assistance on innovations and policies to improve special education and rehabilitation services. SEARSP encompasses the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) and the Southwest Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (Southwest DBTAC).

NCDDR works with the nearly 400 disability and rehabilitation research teams and product developers funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to make their research more accessible. In partnership with these NIDRR groups, NCDDR develops and demonstrates successful methods and strategies that link researchers and information users. Through these links, 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 Southwest DBTAC, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The U.S. Department of Education's NIDRR funds Southwest DBTAC regional projects through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide training, technical assistance, and dissemination services on ADA and other disability-related laws.

Through this TIRR subcontract, SEDL will provide technical assistance, training, and information dissemination on the legal obligations of educational entities to provide accessible information technology (IT) to students and employees. This includes assistance to conduct self-evaluations on IT accessibility and the promotion of best practices.

NCDDR Activities

Program manager **John Westbrook** participated in the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center Meeting in *Washington, DC*, on Nov. 2–6. On Nov. 7, **Westbrook** met with NIDRR staff.

Technology Assistance Program (TAP)

SEDL's TAP assists teachers in creating student-centered classrooms supported by technologies through projects such as the SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SouthCentral RTEC).

SouthCentral RTEC members include the Texas Center for Educational Technology at the University of North Texas and The Aurora Project. SouthCentral RTEC staff provide professional development, technical assistance, networking, and information and resource dissemination. They help teachers use technology and enable education leaders to acquire, manage, and evaluate technology.

TAP Staff Announcements

Program associate **Mary Burns** published "From Compliance to Commitment: Technology as a Catalyst for Communities of Practice" in the December 2002 issue of *Phi Delta Kappan*.

TAP Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Louisiana

- Program specialist **Marilyn Heath** conducted a seminar for teachers and hosted the SouthCentral RTEC booth at the Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators Conference in *Alexandria* on Dec. 5–7.

New Mexico

- In collaboration with New Mexico's Regional Education Technology Assistance center and the New Mexico State Department of Education, **Burns** and **Heath** facilitated technology-planning workshops based on SEDL's *Planning into Practice* in *Las Cruces, Roswell, Española*, and *Bernalillo* for district staff and professional development providers on Nov. 13–15.

Oklahoma

- On Dec. 6, program specialist **Kim Hughes** presented three sessions in *Oklahoma City* on authentic teaching and learning 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.

National Activities

Program manager **Vicki Dimock** joined other RTEC and state technology directors from across the nation in *Arlington, VA*, on Dec. 8–10, to develop tools and processes to meet the evaluation requirements of Title II, Section D, of No Child Left Behind. Sponsored by the State Educational Technology Directors Association and the U.S. Department of Education, the meeting focused on scientifically based research, technology literacy assessment, common core data elements, the evaluation of effective teaching and learning, and the National Education Technology Plan.

Corporate Offices

SEDL's corporate offices include Evaluation Services (ES), the Office of Fiscal and Technical Services (OFTS), the Office of Institutional Communications (OIC), and the Office of Institutional Development (OID).

ES staff work with every major SEDL contract as internal evaluators to design and implement evaluation plans and collect and



Jill Dodge joined OIC as a communications assistant in February.

manage performance indicator data. ES also is developing a program of external fee-for-service evaluations for a growing number of educational entities, such as universities and school districts, to document the quality and impact of programs.

OFTS manages SEDL's technical infrastructure and the corporation's human resources and accounting departments, while OIC supports SEDL's corporate and internal communications, provides information resources and training, and oversees product sales. OID oversees strategic planning and explores funding opportunities to support institutional growth and development.

Evaluation Services (ES)

Program specialist **Cheryl Harris** observed and evaluated an Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation's Success in Science Professional Development Institute in **Tulsa** on Dec. 2.

Program manager **Sue Street** graduated from the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Academy during the NSDC annual conference on Dec. 8–11 in **Boston**.

Program associate **Jack Lumbley** participated in a meeting of Regional Technology in Education Consortia directors, evaluators, and the federal project monitor in **Washington, DC**, on Dec. 12.

Office of Institutional Communications (OIC)

In February, OIC welcomed **Jill Dodge** as communications assistant. While earning a bachelor's in journalism from the University of Maryland in College Park, **Dodge** worked for Counterpart International, a nonprofit, non-governmental organization where she helped form the communications department. She also completed a community relations internship with a minor league hockey team, the

Chesapeake Icebreakers. At SEDL, **Dodge** strengthens customer relationships for SEDL products, maintains the *SEDL Letter* database, assists in catalog development, coordinates and attends trade shows, and develops marketing strategies.

Office of Institutional Development (OID)

In January, OID welcomed **JJ Baskin** as director of institutional development. A former private business and nonprofit consultant, **Baskin** earned a master's from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. He has spent his professional career honing skills, strategies, and systems to educate audiences about his clients and develop the partnerships to help them thrive. **Baskin** has also been active in the community, serving as president of the Austin Public Library Foundation and volunteering for the Texas Exes, McDonald Observatory, and other organizations. As OID director, **Baskin** assists with SEDL's strategic planning, fosters new partnerships and private contracts, and informs SEDL's diverse audiences about the corporation's research, staff expertise, services, and products.

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 training in school improvement, technology, reading, and mathematics and evaluation services.

Georgia

- Program associate **Patricia Guerra** and a consultant from The University of Texas at Austin delivered Module I of the



JJ Baskin joined OID as director in January.

Organizing for Diversity Staff Development Program at Houston County Public Schools in **Warner Robbins** on Dec. 9.

Texas

- REL scholar emerita **Shirley Hord** conducted the session “Professional Learning Community: Learning from Each Other” for the Meadows Principal Improvement Project at Texas A&M University at Commerce. Nearly 125 principals and teachers from the region attended the session on Nov. 15.
- **Guerra** and a consultant from The University of Texas at Austin led the first and second Organizing for Diversity Staff Development Program coaching sessions on Nov. 20 and Dec. 12 with 20 Temple Independent School District teachers who had previously completed

the program. They also delivered Organizing for Diversity modules I and II to Temple’s 15 principals and assistant superintendents. The teachers are training other teachers in the district using Organizing for Diversity staff development materials to help faculty understand the impact of culture on the teaching and learning process.

National Activities

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools director **Catherine Jordan** facilitated discussions of state education agency 21st Century Community Learning Centers liaisons in the Southwest at a national meeting sponsored by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education in **Washington, DC**, on Nov. 19–20. ■

S E D L

calendar

SEDL staff will present the following events during the next quarter. Visit www.sedl.org/new/calendar.html for more SEDL events.

March

18–20 SouthCentral RTEC Master Teachers’ Session Laredo, TX

SouthCentral RTEC staff will conduct a professional development session and two days of follow-up teacher coaching and mentoring at LBJ High School.
Contact: Mary Burns

21 Reading Success Network Workshop Grenada, MS

SECAC consultants will conduct a phonemic awareness workshop at Grenada Elementary School.
Contact: Jill Slack

24–27 National Association for Research in Science Teaching Conference Philadelphia, PA

26

SCIMAST staff will present the papers “Administrators’ Perspectives of Support for Elementary Science Education” and “Professional Development for Secondary Science Teachers in a Contextual Setting.”
Contact: Nikki Hanegan

No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics Jackson, MS

SECAC staff will provide an overview of Title I, Part A, of the newly enacted legislation.
Contacts: Debra L. Meibaum and Dallas Picou

27

Organizing for Diversity Training Temple, TX

SEDL staff will provide training on Module VI of the Organizing for Diversity staff professional development program to principals and the assistant superintendent, as well as conduct a coaching session with teachers.
Contact: Patricia Guerra

March, continued

27–28 American Educational Finance Association Conference
Orlando, FL
 REL policy staff will present “Resource Allocation Does Matter in Improving Student Performance.”
 Contact: Zena Rudo

27–29 Association of Texas Professional Educators 23rd Annual Convention
Austin, TX
 SouthCentral RTEC staff will lead the session “Technology in Learner-Centered Classrooms.”
 Contact: Kim Hughes

28 New Orleans Public Schools Reading Coaches Meeting
New Orleans, LA
 SECAC staff will conduct staff development for district reading coaches. Contact: Jill Slack

April

1 Mississippi’s English Language Learners: Celebrating Our Rising Stars!
Grenada, MS
 SECAC staff will conduct concurrent sessions on family involvement and literacy. Contacts: Suzanne Ashby, Debra L. Meibaum, and Maggie Rivas

3 Mississippi’s Comprehensive School Reform Institute
Jackson, MS
 SECAC staff will present concurrent sessions on instructional best practices that can effectively be implemented in day-to-day classroom instruction. Contacts: Debra L. Meibaum and Dallas Picou

4–8 National School Board Association 63rd Annual Conference
San Francisco, CA
 SEDL staff will present “New Waves of Evidence: Family and Community Impact on Student Achievement.”
 Contact: Deborah Donnelly

10

Best Practices for Classroom Instruction

Athens, AL

SECAC staff will provide an overview of instructional best practices that can effectively be implemented in day-to-day classroom instruction. Contacts: Lou Meadows, Debra L. Meibaum, and Dallas Picou

10

SCIMAST Professional Development Session

Albuquerque, NM

SCIMAST staff will provide professional development for more than 50 Albuquerque Public Schools science chairs on data-driven schools.
 Contact: Nikki Hanegan

11

SCIMAST Research Lesson Colloquium

New Orleans, LA

SCIMAST staff will lead a second follow-up research lesson colloquium for middle school mathematics teachers who were participants in the Louisiana 2002 Summer Institute in Middle School Mathematics. Contacts: Como Molina and Maria Torres

11 & 25

SCIMAST Science Professional Development Sessions

El Paso, TX

SCIMAST staff will present “Concentration, Diffusion, and Toxicity: Basic Chemical Principles for Understanding Bioterrorism” to science and mathematics mentors in the El Paso Urban Systemic Program Collaborative at The University of Texas at El Paso.
 Contact: Nikki Hanegan

14–15

Educational Technology Advisory Committee Meeting

Austin, TX

SouthCentral RTEC staff will facilitate the quarterly meeting of the Texas Educational Technology Advisory Committee and present information regarding the development of an online technology plan submission system.
 Contact: Vicki Dimock

April, continued

- 16 Best Practices for Classroom Instruction**
Itta Bena, MS
SECAC staff will present an overview of instructional best practices that can effectively be implemented in day-to-day classroom instruction. Contacts: Lou Meadows, Debra L. Meibaum, and Dallas Picou
- 16 Organizing for Diversity Training**
Temple, TX
SEDL staff will provide training on Module VII of the Organizing for Diversity staff professional development program to principals and the assistant superintendent, as well as conduct a coaching session with teachers.
Contact: Patricia Guerra
- 22 Writing Benchmark Workshop**
Decatur, AL
SECAC staff will meet with K–7 teachers at Morgan County Schools to continue developing writing benchmarks for the district. Contacts: Lou Meadows and Jill Slack
- 23–24 Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning Training**
Little Rock, AR
SECAC staff will conduct a training of trainers and a follow-up session for Arkansas Educational Cooperatives teacher center coordinators. Contacts: Mike Hargis and Jill Slack
- 24 SCIMAST Research Lesson Colloquium**
Agra, OK
SCIMAST staff will lead a second follow-up research lesson colloquium for middle school mathematics teachers who were participants in the Oklahoma 2002 Summer Institute in Middle School Mathematics in Tulsa. Contacts: Como Molina and Maria Torres

25

New Orleans Public Schools Reading Coaches Meeting
New Orleans, LA
SECAC staff will conduct staff development for district reading coaches. Contact: Jill Slack

25

Reading Success Network Workshop
Grenada, MS
SECAC consultants will present a phonemic awareness workshop at Grenada Elementary School.
Contact: Jill Slack

27–29

National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers Conference
Washington, DC
NCDDR staff will participate in this conference.
Contact: Joann Starks

28

Organizing for Diversity Training
Centerville, GA
SEDL staff will provide training on Module V of the Organizing for Diversity staff professional development program.
Contact: Patricia Guerra

29

Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning Workshop
Athens, AL
SECAC staff will lead a questioning strategies and thinking skills workshop for K–12 teachers.
Contacts: Lou Meadows and Jill Slack

May

7

Organizing for Diversity Training
Temple, TX
SEDL staff will conduct a reflection session on the implementation of the Organizing for Diversity Staff Development Program with teachers, principals, and the assistant superintendent.
Contact: Patricia Guerra

9

New Orleans Public Schools Reading Coaches Meeting
New Orleans, LA
SECAC staff will conduct staff development for district reading coaches. Contact: Jill Slack

calendar

May, continued

- 14 National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools Videoconference**
Austin, TX
REL staff will host the quarterly cross-laboratory videoconference.
Contact: Artie Stockton
- 16 Organizing for Diversity Training**
Centerville, GA
SEDL staff will provide training on modules VI and VII of the Organizing for Diversity staff professional development program and conduct a reflection session with teachers, principals, and the staff development director.
Contact: Patricia Guerra
- 16 SCIMAST Science Professional Development Session**
El Paso, TX
SCIMAST staff will continue the session "Concentration, Diffusion, and Toxicity: Basic Chemical Principles for Understanding Bioterrorism" for science and mathematics mentors in the El Paso Urban Systemic Program Collaborative at The University of Texas at El Paso.
Contact: Nikki Hanegan

17

SCIMAST Lesson-Study Demonstration

Mertzon, TX

SCIMAST staff will host a lesson-study demonstration for rural science teachers.

Contact: Nikki Hanegan

20–21

Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning Training

Little Rock, AR

SECAC staff will conduct a training of trainers and a follow-up session for Arkansas Educational Cooperatives teacher center coordinators. Contacts: Mike Hargis and Jill Slack

22

No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics

St. Simon's Island, GA

SECAC staff will provide an overview of Title I, Part A, of the newly enacted legislation.

Contacts: Debra L. Meibaum and Dallas Picou

June

1–3

Spring After-School Training Roundup

Tempe, AZ

In partnership with the Regional Associate for the National Center for Community Education, REL staff are offering spring training for after-school teams in Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Contact: Artie Stockton

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