Education Systems Support

ADVANCING RESEARCH
SEDL
IMPROVING EDUCATION

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> Builds the capacity of states, districts, and schools to implement systemic improvement and research-based instructional practices to improve student achievement.

For more than 4 decades, SEDL has worked to turn around underperforming schools and to change fundamentally how schools operate. SEDL's systemic approach addresses an entire school or school system; makes student achievement the central focus; works to align performance standards, instruction, and assessment; and involves all levels of the system—district, school, and classroom.

By providing professional development, technical assistance, research, and resources, SEDL helps educators at all levels implement school improvement plans and overcome barriers to improving student achievement. Throughout the process, SEDL helps states improve the rigor of state standards and helps districts align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to those standards. SEDL provides professional development to help teachers improve instruction and boost student achievement in reading, math, and other core content areas. The role of technology to improve teaching and learning and the infusion of 21st century skills is another key piece of our professional development offerings. In addition, we conduct research and systematic reviews to identify best educational practices and to develop materials and tools to help educators.

Local Work
District- and School-Level Work

SEDL is helping build the internal capacity of school and district leaders, including teacher leaders, to carry out and sustain school improvement plans. For example, SEDL is providing support over multiple years to help school districts in New Mexico, Louisiana, and South Carolina implement the Professional Teaching and Learning Cycle. With our support, teachers and other school and district staff members are building their content knowledge in either reading or mathematics; developing their ability to use data in instructional and programmatic decision making; aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessments to state standards; and improving the quality and coherence of instruction across classrooms. In collaboration with a consortium of rural districts in New Mexico, SEDL is developing a professional development approach for rural teachers to support the implementation of technology in geographically isolated communities. In Louisiana, SEDL is in its third year of providing professional development and evaluation support to a rural community focused on improving literacy and language development of 3- and 4-year-olds through an Early Reading First grant involving both the local school district and the local Head Start program.

State-Specific Work
Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC)

The SECC assists the state departments of education in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina to implement statewide systems of support for high-need districts and schools engaged in improvement efforts. The specific type of assistance varies depending on the needs of each state. In Georgia, for example, SECC staff worked with the Department of Education to provide guidance on the creation of Pathway courses for public review and approval by the Board of Education. SECC staff collaborated with the Center on Instruction Content Center to create videos to support the states in their implementation of College and Career Ready–Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. SECC staff continue to develop Common Core State Standard Mathematics videos and resource reviews in order to provide SECC states with guidance in implementing CCSS work. SECC staff with South Carolina Department of Education staff to revise and update the state science standards.

Texas Comprehensive Center (TXCC)

The TXCC provides technical assistance and support to the Texas Education Agency to assure Texas has an education system with the capacity and commitment to eliminate achievement gaps and enable all students to achieve at high levels. The TXCC staff are collaborating with TEA to create and refine a process for writing and aligning Career and Technical Education (CTE) Educator Standards to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. This process will be used for all 16 CTE course clusters. TXCC is also assisting TEA with implementation of a principal survey regarding how well educator preparation programs prepare beginning teacher for their first year(s) of service. In addition, TEA asked TXCC staff to review and provide feedback on the state's ESEA waiver request application. Specific attention was given to the organization and presentation of the request. TXCC is partnering with Southern Regional Education Board to support TEA's development and implementation of project-based curricula for a coherent sequence of 4 CTE courses.

Services & Products

Center for High-Performing Schools at SEDL

Through the Center for High-Performing Schools, SEDL partners with schools and districts to improve teaching and learning and produce lasting changes in organizational cultures. The range of services provide leadership teams and teachers with the knowledge and skills to achieve and sustain their desired changes.

Measuring Implementation in Schools: Using the Tools of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a conceptual framework that describes, explains, and predicts probable teacher behaviors throughout the change process to help administrators and change facilitators avoid these problems. This set includes all three CBAM manuals as well as a DVD providing an overview of CBAM.

Working Systemically in Action: A Guide for Facilitators

Produced by a team of SEDL staff who drew upon more than 3 decades of school reform research and theory, the Working Systemically approach is a process for school improvement—and, ultimately, increased student achievement—that focuses on key components and competencies at all levels of the educational system. The guide gives technical assistance providers a framework and tools to help schools and districts establish a culture of continuous inquiry and collaboration, and develop the structures and leadership roles necessary to support and sustain both student and staff learning.

Taking Charge of Change

This easy-to-read introduction to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a cornerstone in the school change literature for educators. Hundreds of school leaders have turned to Taking Charge of Change when adopting and implementing a new program or school-reform model.