

# links

## SECAC Workshop Helps Educators Understand NCLB

**C**alled by many “the most sweeping reform” of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since ESEA was enacted in 1965, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) has meant important changes to and challenges for schools and districts across the country. Since its passage, SEDL’s Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC) has been meeting the needs for professional development and technical assistance required by NCLB.

“Schools and districts in our states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi are taking very seriously the changes they need to make to meet NCLB’s requirements,” says SECAC program manager Marie Kaigler. “However, understanding the law is the first challenge they face.”

Helping administrators and teachers understand key parts of NCLB is the basis of SECAC’s interactive professional development activity entitled “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of Title I, Part A Basics.” Since May of 2002, SECAC has provided NCLB training to approximately 1,600 educators.

The professional development activity covers the following concepts: Adequate Yearly



Jefferson Parish administrators Isaac Joseph, Aretha Eldridge-Williams, and Richard Carpenter work together during a SECAC No Child Left Behind professional development session.

Progress (AYP), school improvement, public school choice, supplemental educational services, corrective action and restructuring, standards and assessments, highly qualified teachers and Title I paraprofessionals, and scientifically based research. According to

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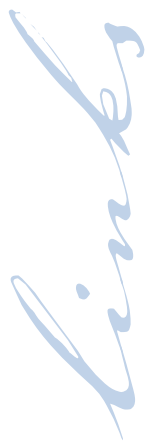
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## SECAC Workshop, continued

program associate Debra Meibaum, the basic information provided in the workshop comes from the NCLB Act, the Title I final regulations, USDOE draft guidance documents, and USDOE correspondence. “No interpretations regarding meaning, implementation, or ‘intent’ guidance are supplied at this professional development activity,” says Meibaum. “SECAC staff function as facilitators, enabling participants to identify and explain key concepts in Title I, Part A, to incorporate legislative requirements into their district and school plans, and to locate key information in NCLB when necessary.”

In designing the professional development activity, SECAC consulted with all five state departments of education in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi

to obtain state-specific information relevant to NCLB. Examples of the types of information obtained from the State Departments include AYP starting points, annual measurable objectives, intermediate goals, and definitions of terms such as a “full academic year” and a “persistently dangerous school.” The state information is provided as a supplement to the main handout from which each participant works during the professional development activity.

In addition to the technical assistance provided to its five-state region on Title I, Part A, SECAC provides services to help schools and school districts better understand and implement NCLB as it pertains to neglected, delinquent, or at-risk children and youth; English language learners and immigrant children; Indian children; and safe and drug-free schools and communities. ■

## SEDL Staff Participate in AERA Annual Meeting

**S**EDL staff members participated in eleven sessions at the 2004 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). This year’s meeting was held April 12–16 in San Diego and had the theme of “Enhancing the Visibility and Credibility of Educational Research.” SEDL staff members and partners who participated are listed here.

### APRIL 12, 2004

Using State Databases for Research, Policy, and Practice on Instruction Resources and Student Performance. Debra Hughes Jones, Rahel C. Kahlert, and Diane Pan. (Paper presentation)

Utilizing Research-Based Evidence in Planning for School Improvement: Setting Directions in Low-Performing Contexts. Suzanne Stiegelbauer, Edward Tobia, Tara Leo Thompson, and Keith Sturges. (Roundtable)

### APRIL 13, 2004

Going Beyond Achievement: Fostering Nurturing, Connectivity, and Character. Joan Buttram. (Chair)

Certification, Employment, and Attrition of Alternately and Traditionally Prepared Teachers in Texas. Celeste Alexander. (Paper presentation)

Allocating Resources to Impact Student Performance: Strategies Used by Successful Districts. Zena Rudo and Diane Pan. (Paper presentation)

Retaining Beginning Teachers Through the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TXBESS). Celeste Alexander. (Roundtable)

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# products

## Variety of New Publications, Reports Available

*SEDL provides resources and services for policy-makers and practitioners. Many resources are free and available from SEDL's online catalog at [www.sedl.org/pubs/](http://www.sedl.org/pubs/) or by calling the SEDL publications department at (800) 476-6861. SEDL accepts credit cards for online purchases and conference registrations.*

### New SEDL Letter Focuses on Finance and Policy

The March 2004 issue of *SEDL Letter*, "School Finance & Policy—Dollars and Sense" focuses on fiscal issues that state policymakers are facing around the country: resource allocation and school finance adequacy and efficiency. The issue also examines how the state of New Mexico is planning for technology in a way that takes *all* students into account—including those with special needs. Wrapping

up the issue is a "Voices from the Field" essay from a Texas parent who believes school and district policy is should be clearly defined and consistently implemented. Copies of *SEDL Letter* may be ordered from the SEDL publications

department or viewed online at <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/sedl-letter/>.

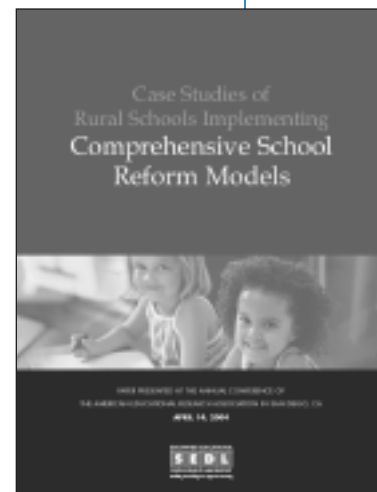
### Insights Examines School Finance Adequacy

Due to recent court decisions, adequacy has surpassed equity as the most visible school finance issue facing states today. Policymakers

throughout the country must deal with the challenge of determining what constitutes an adequate education and how much an adequate education costs. "School Finance Adequacy: The State Role," Issue No. 16 of *Insights on Education Policy, Issues, and Practice* provides an overview of some of the issues surrounding adequacy. *Insights* is published by the policy team of SEDL's Regional Educational Laboratory and may be downloaded at <http://www.sedl.org/policy/insights/>.

### Rural Schools That Adopted CSR Models Show Improvement

*Case Studies of Rural Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform Models* by Robert V. Carlson and Joan Buttram examines five rural schools that implemented comprehensive school reform models. The schools, each in a different state, implemented different reform models. This report shows that rural isolation, small size, and limited fiscal and personnel resources do not necessarily limit a school's capacity to improve. It also showed that state-mandated testing programs played a major role in motivating the schools in the study to pay closer attention all students' progress. *Case Studies of Rural Schools*



may be found online at  
<http://www.sedl.org/csr/research.html>.

### **NCDDR Releases Two Collections of NIDRR Grantee Awards, Citations, and News Stories**

SEDL's National Center for Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) has just released two compilations based on issues of its newsletter, *The Research Exchange*, pub-

lished 2000–2003.

*NIDRR Grantee and Staff Recognition*, is a compilation of citations of awards and special recognitions received by grantees of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The compilation is indexed numerous ways: by individual names, by project names, by funding type, and by research priority.

*Who's in the News* is a collection of news stories and briefs about the work of NIDRR grantees that have appeared in a variety of media outlets nationwide. It is indexed by names of the journalists and broadcasters who developed the NIDRR grantee stories and by

media venue, grant funding type, and research priority area.

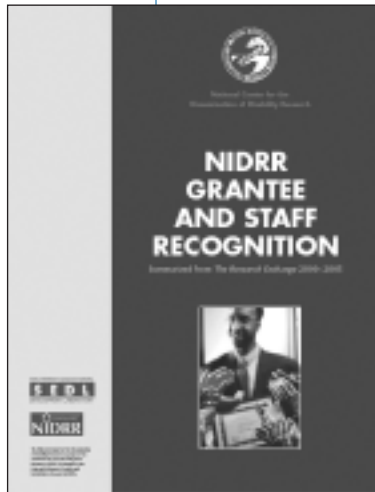
For a copy of either *NIDRR Grantee and Staff Recognition* or *Who's in the News*, contact Lin Harris at [lharris@sedl.org](mailto:lharris@sedl.org).

### **New NCDDR Posters Available**

NCDDR recently published four reference posters. The following three posters describe programs and provide information about each program's principal investigator, public contact person, mailing address, fax, e-mail, and Web address:

- *Brain Injury Rehabilitation Model Systems*
- *Model Spinal Cord Injury Systems*
- *Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems*

The fourth poster, Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC) provides an overview of NIDRR's RERC program as well as contact information listed alphabetically by project title for the 21 RERCs that NIDRR currently funds. ■



## **2004 Annual Meeting of AERA, continued**

Organizational Theories of Innovation and Change to Comprehensive School Reform: A Collective Case Study. Cori Groth. (Roundtable)

### **APRIL 14, 2004**

Case Studies of Rural Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform Models. Robert V. Carlson and Joan L. Buttram. (Paper presentation)

Research to Inform Middle School Reform Efforts Designed to Meet the Educational Needs of Students. Joan Buttram. (Discussant)

### **APRIL 15, 2004**

Does Teacher Certification Matter? Teacher Certification and Middle School Mathematics Achievement in Texas. Celeste Alexander. (Paper presentation)

Fiscal and Human Resource Allocation in Low-performing and High Performing Districts in Four States in the Southwest. Zena Rudo and Diane Pan. (Paper presentation)

SEDL also co-sponsored the International Network of Scholars on School, Family, and Community Connections which is held during AERA. During that special session, Lacy Wood presented "Diversity, School, Family, and Community Connections." ■

# 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.*

## Disability Research to Practice (DRP)

SEDL's DRP provides information and assistance on innovations and policies to improve special education and rehabilitation services. DRP 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 Networking

NCDDR works with more than 370 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.

- Program manager **John Westbrook** made a presentation entitled "Planning for Dissemination" during a teleconference for Agency for Healthcare Research Quality (AHRQ)/Westat patient safety grantees.

### DLRP Networking

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 infor-

mation technology to students with disabilities; and to conduct self-evaluations on information technology accessibility to promote best practices.

- Communications assistant **Stephanie Weaver** attended national training in **San Diego** sponsored by AccessIT on January 12–13. This training was attended by DBTAC members and affiliates. Project updates were offered as were discussions of successes and failures. Other presentation topics included implementing accessible IT policy at the K–12 level, how civil rights laws apply to accessible IT, and implementing accessible Web design.

### RUSH

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.

- On January 8, **Westbrook**, communications assistant **Mark Linder**, and communications specialist **Sean Claes** provided technical assistance to the Disability Law Resource Project in **Houston, TX**.
- Later in January, **Westbrook**, **Linder**, and **Claes** convened the RUSH Project's National Research Utilization Review Panel members via teleconference.

## 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 each 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 such programs as Great Expectations and A+ Schools of Arkansas, the professional development institutes provided by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, and the Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas project.

### ES Staff Announcements

Evaluation Services staff recently welcomed **Rachel Samsel** as a program assistant. Prior to joining SEDL, Samsel conducted an evaluation of an underage alcohol prevention curriculum for Mothers Against Drunk Driving. She also worked for the Organizational Excellence Group (OEG) through the University of Texas Center for Social Work Research. While with the OEG, she conducted research and evaluation of organizational development and leadership practices within state government agencies and other organizations. **Samsel** has also had experience in program management and direct practice of mental health and substance abuse services, juvenile and criminal justice practice and research, and health education.

At SEDL, **Samsel** will evaluate the Regional Educational Laboratory Task 1 and Task 2 work as well as providing evaluation services for external contracts.



Rachel Samsel joined Evaluation Services as a program associate in April.

### Texas

- Program specialists **Alexis Furuichi** and **Cheryl Harris** conducted a teacher focus group at Rice University and conducted student interviews at Attuck Middle School, Rice School, and Second Baptist School, all in **Houston**, to collect evaluation data for the NanoKids project at Rice University.

### 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, mathematics, 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.

Program specialist **Todd Sherron** observed and collected survey data for an OCTP Mathematics PDI in **Oklahoma City**. Furuichi observed and participated in the Leadership Training for the OCTP Literacy PDI in **Midwest City**. **Harris** observed and evaluated an OCTP Science PDI Module III Follow-up Day and a Middle School Follow-up Day in Stillwater. Program manager **Sue Street** and **Furuichi** conducted a teacher focus group, principal, consultant and learning research specialist at Little Axe Elementary School in **Norman** for the OCTP Literacy Phase IV.

### Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET)

TARGET grants serve high-needs students by enhancing education through technology, as stipulated in No Child Left Behind and by implementing the recommendations in the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996–2010. ES staff evaluate TARGET grant work in the Region 1 Education Service Center (ESC) area, Ysleta Independent School District, and a group of Central Texas districts.

- In **El Paso**, **Harris** interviewed participants of the Ysleta ISD TARGET grant

in the field

and of the Teaching Constructivism and Technology Integration project. She also observed teachers in the district and SEDL's Active Learning with Technology workshop.

### National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning

In September 2003, SEDL won a three-year \$9.6 million contract from the U.S. Department of Education to strengthen the content, methods, and retention of the nation's afterschool programs. The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning is a partnership of eight organizations that provide models, tools, and assistance to public, private, and community entities that help students and their families learn new skills and discover new abilities after the school day has ended.

The National Partnership held its first national steering committee meeting January 21–22, 2004 in Austin. In addition to the SEDL National Partnership team that includes program manager **Catherine Jordan** and program associates **Deborah Donnelly**, **Jerry Elder**, and **Joe Parker**, the following people participated:

- **An-Me Chung**, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- **Grace Davila Coates**, Family Math Equals
- **Harris Cooper**, Duke University
- **Pat Edwards**, National Center for Community Education
- **Stephanie Hirsch**, National Staff Development Council
- **Denise Huang**, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST)
- **Rhonda Lauer**, Foundations, Inc.
- **Priscilla Little**, Harvard Family Research Project
- **Carol McElvain**, Learning Point Associates
- **Claudette Morton**, Montana Small Schools Alliance
- **Elizabeth Reisner**, Policy Studies Associates, Inc.
- **Carla Sanger**, LA's Best

In February, the National Partnership hosted its first orientation meeting for its national content advisors and experts in Austin. Attendees included:

- **Brenda Britsch** and **Nicole Martin**, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)
- **Marie Mancuso**, Arizona State Education Department
- **Scott Paris**, Michigan State University
- **Danette Parsley**, **Maggie Cooper**, **Sandy Gilpin**, and **Jodi Holzman**, McREL
- **Maggie Myers**, The Dana Center, The University of Texas at Austin
- **Noemi Lopez**, Department of Education, Houston, Texas
- **Michael Vigliano**, **Errin McComb**, and **C. Ellen Washington**, SERVE
- **Marilyn Fowler**, consultant
- **Suzie Stieglebauer**, consultant
- **Tony Streit**, Education Development Center, Inc., Newton, Massachusetts

### Regional Educational Laboratory (REL)

SEDL's REL creates and promotes research-based knowledge 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 and resources on school, family, and community connections.

### REL Staff Announcements

On April 1, **Debra Hughes Jones** joined SEDL's REL policy team as a program associate. Before becoming a SEDL staff member, Jones was a research associate at the Charles A. Dana Center, The University of Texas. While at the Dana Center she conducted policy research in collaboration with the SEDL policy unit. Jones has also worked as a research associate at Center for Social Work Research (CSWR) at The University of Texas. As part of a program evaluation team contracted by the Texas Department of Human Services, she evaluated welfare reform programs that promoted work and economic self-sufficiency among TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) clients or potential TANF clients in Texas.

**Jones** received a B.A. in Psychology and a Ph.D. in child development and family relationships from The University of Texas at Austin.



Debra Hughes Jones joined SEDL's REL staff as a program associate in April.

### REL Intensive Site Work

SEDL and site staff are working together to develop, test, and refine a systemic-approach model to help solve 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 November and December 2003.

#### Arkansas

- Program associate **Ann Neely** met with the **Marked Tree** District Leadership Team (DLT) to plan next steps for the reading team and the school for collaboration on data use.
- Dana Center program coordinators **Carl Juenke** and **Janice Bradley** continued their work with teachers in the **Blytheville** District to improve mathematics instruction. In January and February they facilitated professional conversations with teachers from Central Elementary and Blytheville Middle School around student work and instruction. **Juenke** and **Bradley** also met with the District Math Committee and presented the Professional Teaching Model by modeling lessons for the fourth, sixth, and eighth grades. Teacher representatives then modeled the lessons for their colleagues and collected student work to analyze at the next meeting.

- Program associate **Stella Bell** met with the **Grady** DLT in January and February. The team continued to monitor the alignment of the literacy curriculum K-12. They also planned staff development for the months of February and March, and completed the implementation review survey. **Bell** also met with the Literacy Vertical Teacher Team both months. The team has been using the power standard process to study a reading standard and review the school-wide writing process.

#### Louisiana

- Dana Center program coordinator **Ted Hull** and **Bradley** conducted the January meeting of the system-wide Leadership Improvement Council for **Monroe City** Schools along with **Emily Rash**, Monroe City Schools mathematics coordinator. The council discussed progress on the district action plan and reviewed the critical path from research to action. **Hull** and **Bradley** also provided the research for change. **Rash** translated the research into actions taken by Monroe City.
- Program associates **Ed Tobia** and **Jill Slack** worked with district personnel in **Madison Parish** to plan and present a full-day staff development session that focused on aligning instruction with the state's Standards and Grade Level Expectations. More than 80 teachers from the district's two elementary schools worked in grade-level teams to design a standards-based lesson, which they will all teach. **Tobia** also facilitated a half-day session to demonstrate a process for looking at student work.
- In January, **Bell**, Dana Center program coordinator **Emma Treviño**, and LINC's coordinator **Ann Buisson**, met with math teachers from two secondary schools in **Lafourche Parish**—Raceland Middle School and Thibodeaux High School to develop a process for addressing constructive open-response questions as identified on the state standardized test. The group agreed to use the RICE process to help students with a step-by-step process for solving these types of mathematical word problems. RICE stands for Restate the problem, Illustrate the problem, Compute, and Explain.

in the field



- **Treviño** and **Bell** met with the *Lafourche Parish* superintendent and DLT in January to redirect focus on monitoring the written, taught, and tested math curriculum. In February they held another DLT meeting to take action and monitor implementation of the district plan to increase math achievement. Also, **Bell** and **Treviño** met again with math teachers from Raceland and Thibodeaux to analyze the constructive open response process using student work samples. They encouraged the teachers to discuss challenges and questions that arose during implementation of the RICE process.
- Program associate **Chris Ferguson**, **Treviño**, **Juenke**, and program manager **David Rainey** met with *Iberia Parish* staff to pilot mathematics benchmark assessments. They also helped Anderson Middle School staff finalize their plans for feeder school curriculum and instruction meetings and met with parish mathematics teachers to address issues on standards-based instructional strategies.

#### New Mexico

- Program associates **Tara Leo Thompson** and **Deborah Biggers** facilitated DLT meetings at *Hatch Valley Schools* to develop an action plan around reading improvement in the area of vocabulary. They also provided staff development to all secondary staff on the importance of vocabulary to reading proficiency and how to use the state standards to select words for direct instruction in each grade level and course.
- American Indian Research and Development (AIRD) vice president **Mary Ann Brittan** and program associate **Sebastian Wren** facilitated a meeting of the Central Consolidated Schools DLT in *Shiprock*. They developed a plan for monitoring and analyzing student reading assessment data for the improvement of reading instruction. Wren also provided training on Excel software to six principals to enable them to manage student reading assessment data.
- In *Bernalillo*, **Neeley** led a Bernalillo Middle School meeting to review the work at the schools and determine ways in which the district can support and collaborate within the working systemically

process. During February, the middle school and Algodones Elementary School leadership teams met to build capacity for school improvement.

#### Oklahoma

- Program associate **D'Ette Cowan** and **Biggers** helped the *Crooked Oak* DLT plan a professional development day for refining their grade-level vocabulary lists based on state standards. **Biggers** provided professional development to all district instructional staff on February 16–18. The sessions focused on a professional teaching model and research-based strategies for vocabulary instruction. **Cowan** facilitated meetings with the superintendent and principals to examine their leadership roles in supporting teachers as they used the new instructional strategies.
- **Biggers** provided professional development for all *Osceola* instruction staff on selecting vocabulary words for direct instruction connected to the state standards and in Success for All reading books. She also helped teachers learn to apply the state writing rubric to student writing samples. **Cowan** facilitated a meeting of the Osceola DLT. During the meeting, the team discussed teacher responses to the district professional development and explored implications for the district action plan for the remainder of the school year. **Cowan** also assisted the district in planning and facilitating a meeting with state department and cooperative personnel to present information to the DLT on the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program. **Cowan** led the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and principals in a book study of successful leadership actions and explored the leadership roles to support implementation of the professional teaching model that was introduced to the whole staff the next day.
- **Bradley** worked with teachers at Western Oaks Middle School in *Putnam City* to align instruction to Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS). She also met with the reading task force at Putnam City West High School. The task force reflected on the implementation of their reading action plan and discussed communicating student reading assessment

- results with parents.
- Dana Center project director **Ted Hull** facilitated a meeting of the *Altus* DLT to discuss progress on implementing a viable curriculum as explained in Robert Marzano's work. Team members also discussed the use of data and how it could be used to inform changes in the curriculum. **Hull**, district leaders, and campus principals conducted classroom walkthroughs January 26–28. The DLT met two weeks later to discuss the relationship between data gathered through formal observations and informal walkthroughs. The team discussed district and campus expectations for teachers, students, and campus leaders. Efforts were made to align the expectations of these three groups to what was expected from the state in relation to curriculum and instruction.
- **Brittan** facilitated a meeting of the *Kinta* School Improvement Leadership Team in January. Team members prepared for benchmark testing in reading and language arts and reviewed strategies for improvement of reading instruction. **Brittan** and **Wren** facilitated the meeting of the leadership team in February when it reviewed the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test Specification for Reading and Language Arts. **Wren** led a discussion of the SEDL reading framework, reading development, and instructional strategies.

#### *Texas*

- **Thompson** and **Wren** facilitated the systems exploration phase of the Working Systemically model with the *Palestine* ISD DLT in January. The two SEDL staff members also led the planning action phase when the DLT met in February.

#### **REL Policy Research**

**Debra Hughes Jones**, along with program specialist **Diane Pan**, program associate **Zena Rudo**, and Dana Center research associate **Rahel Kahlert** attended the Southwest Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, February 6, 2004, in *Dallas* to present "Allocating Resources in an Education Reform Environment: Findings from 12 School Districts."

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

- Information associate **Lacy Wood** and communications specialist **Victor Rodríguez** presented "School-Family-Community Connections: How Can We Support the Involvement of Language-Minority Families in Their Children's Education?" at the National Association for Bilingual Education 2004 Conference February 4–7, 2004 in *Albuquerque*.
- The quarterly videoconference hosted by the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools was held February 18, 2004, in *Austin*. During the conference, NWREL staff presented their current work, "From Classroom to Community and Back." Other RELs that participated were AEL, SERVE, and Lab at Brown.
- **Wood** presented "Advice from the Research for School Administrators: Involving Families to Support Achievement Among Diverse Student Populations" at the American Association of School Administrators Annual Conference and Exposition February 19–22, 2004 in *San Francisco*.

#### **21st Century After-School Regional Training Initiative**

- Program manager **Catherine Jordan** led workshop sessions on Collaboration, Evaluation, and Management at the National Center for Community Education Training I Workshop for Texas 21st CCLC Grantees February 23–25, 2004 in *Austin*.

#### **REL National Activities**

- As a member of the NWREL's Task 2 (Re-engineering Schools for Student Success) development team, SEDL scholar emerita **Shirley Hord** met in *Savannah, Georgia*, to review the project's work and to plan for the work of Year 4 of the REL contract. As part of the NWREL work, Hord also participated in professional development for the *Memphis City* Schools and visited six schools that are involved in the project.
- On January 27–29, **Hord** met with leaders of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School's Outreach Program to

*in the field*

plan for supporting the school improvement efforts of area districts and schools. She conducted professional development on the role that professional learning communities can play in school reform efforts. Fifty attended the development session including Delaware County superintendents, other central office staff, principals, external assistance providers, and key teachers. **Hord** also participated in the university's Penn Distinguished Speaker Series, with an address focusing on professional learning communities.

- **Hord** and educational consultant **Patricia Roy** presented a two-day professional development session in Phoenix on February 3–4. Seventy-four educators from across the U.S. participated in the session, “Using Innovation Configurations to Move Staff Development Standards to Practice.”
- **Hord** also conducted a one-day workshop on understanding Innovation Configuration as a tool for implementing staff development standards and other innovations in *Oshkosh, WI*.

### 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), the SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SouthCentral RTEC), and the Louisiana Technology Assessment Program.

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.

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

Congratulations are in order to **Como Molina** who successfully defended his dissertation at Texas A& M University. Dr. Molina's dissertation is titled “A Qualitative Case Study of the Subject Matter Knowledge of Central Texas Middle School Mathematics Teachers.”

- The STM program is happy to have **Margaret Alvarez** as its new administrative secretary. Before coming to SEDL, **Alvarez** retired from the Texas Department of Agriculture after serving the state for 28 years. **Alvarez** had been a program administrator over five state programs: Egg Law, Fruit & Vegetable, Piece Rate, Aquaculture, and Grain Warehouse. **Alvarez** has been married to Amador Alvarez for 34 years and has three grown daughters and one grandson.



Margaret Alvarez is the new administrative secretary in STM.

### Oklahoma

- Program associate **Maria Torres** met with two of the SCIMAST Oklahoma Teachers as Leaders to plan logistics for future research lesson colloquiums at Monroe Middle School in **Tulsa**. The two Teachers as Leaders participants, **Preston Hemphill** and **Patricia Powers**, will lead lesson study efforts in middle school mathematics during the spring of 2004.
- **Torres** co-facilitated a research lesson colloquium at Gilcrease Middle School with **Mary Stewart**, program director at the University of Tulsa. Participants included teachers and **Donna Farrior**, mathematics faculty at University of Tulsa and **Leigh Anne Locke**, mathematics faculty at Oral Roberts University.

### *Texas*

- **Torres** facilitated two research lesson colloquiums with mathematics teachers from **Brownsville ISD** middle schools. The colloquiums marked the second of a four-day follow-up series to the Texas Teachers as Leaders 2002 Summer Institute. The day-long sessions included researching the implementation of a lesson on addition and subtraction of fractions in a sixth-grade classroom and of a lesson on addition and subtraction of fractions in a seventh-grade classroom.

### **SCIMAST Networking**

#### *Louisiana*

- At a meeting of the Louisiana Science Teachers Association in **New Orleans**, program specialist **Phillip Eaglin** presented a session for middle and high school science teachers. The session focused on the use of chemistry in crime scene investigations.

### **SCIMAST Networking Nationwide**

- **Torres** participated in the Research for Better Schools TIMSS Facilitators' Training in **Philadelphia**. Participants were provided grants to attend by Intel through the Institute of Computer Technology (ICT).
- Program manager **Vicki Dimock** met with staff of four other Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Consortia in **Chicago** to plan development of cross-consortia products on Lesson Study. Products identified included an online reference list, an online directory of presentations on Lesson Study at regional and state conferences, and a facilitator's guide.

### **SouthCentral RTEC Professional Development**

#### *Oklahoma*

- Program specialist **Kim Hughes** presented two sessions to 45 Oklahoma principals and superintendents on the topic "Authentic Teaching and Learning," using the *Active Learning With Technology* materials. Held in **Tulsa**, the professional development was part of the state's Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grant for Leadership Development.

### *Texas*

- **Hughes**, program specialist **Danny Martinez**, and program associate **Marilyn Heath** conducted the Active Learning with Technology National Institute to professional development providers in SEDL's Austin office.
- **Hughes** and **Martinez** conducted Teaching Constructivism and Technology Integration at Ysleta ISD in **El Paso**, for 150 classroom teachers. This was the fourth of seven days of training using the *Active Learning With Technology* materials. The sessions are part of a two-year TARGET grant which focuses on serving high-need students by accelerating at the local level the Enhancing Education Through Technology section of the No Child Left Behind Act.

### **SouthCentral RTEC Networking**

#### *Louisiana*

- **Martinez** hosted a booth at the annual conference of Louisiana Computer Using Educators, held in **Baton Rouge**. Products developed by the SouthCentral RTEC were distributed at the conference.

### **Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs)**

Through a subcontract with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, SEDL conducts ongoing site visits and provides technical assistance and professional development to 30 SLCs award sites designated by the U.S. Department of Education. The SLCs program provides funding to assist awardees in restructuring their large high schools (more than 1,000 students) into smaller learning communities.

SEDL site visits with SLCs grantees include classroom observations and interviews with superintendents, campus administrators, teachers, and students. SEDL staff assess a grantee's progress toward implementation and identify technical assistance needs.

- Program associate **Melanie Morrissey** and communications specialist **Victor Rodriguez** conducted a site visit to Tyler ISD in **Tyler, TX**. They also made site visits to Ysleta ISD in **El Paso, TX** and Wichita Public Schools in **Wichita, KS**.
- With leadership teams from Irving High School and the Academy of Irving, **Morrissey** attended training to create a Design Studio, a formal reflective site visit



process in which other SLC grantees can learn about the implementation strategies that are working in *Irving, TX*. These two schools will be developing their own Design Studio process and are expected to host their first group of SLC visitors using this innovative process in March 2004.



Three Irving ISD administrators are helping to drive the success of Irving ISD's Smaller Learning Communities Initiative. From left to right: Irving High School principal Carolyn Dowler, The Academy of Irving High School principal Dr. John Brown, and district coordinator for Irving ISD's Smaller Learning Communities Initiative Robin Shrode. Photo by Brett Brookshire.

- **Morrissey**, an external consultant, and SECAC team members **Debra Meibaum** and **Mike Hargis** conducted a site visit in Little Rock. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, district office staff, and principals and staff members from McClellan and Hall high schools participated in the site visit.
- **Meibaum** also participated in an SLC site visit at *Junction City, KS*, along with external consultants, to provide technical assistance to Junction City High School staff and district personnel.

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

#### Alabama

- In January, program associate **Jill Slack** conducted the first in a series of workshops on tools for assessing and teaching writing for Conecuh County Board of Education teacher leaders and the Title I coordinator in *Evergreen*. She also conducted a literacy workshop in *Madison* for 135 K–4 teachers and administrators.
- **Slack** led a questioning workshop in *Limestone* in February. She also presented two workshops to the North Alabama Teacher Exchange in *Athens*. The first workshop focused on teaching reading to special education students and students at risk; the second examined strategies for teaching reading to struggling middle school and high school students. About 100 teachers attended each session.

#### Arkansas

- In late January, SECAC staff began a new continuing service with the Arkansas Department of Education Title IV–Safe and Drug-Free Schools Office in *Little Rock*. Program specialist **Phil Gapinski** consulted with Title IV coordinator **Dorothy Reynolds** to identify future activities and begin a plan of work. On two subsequent visits, **Gapinski** assisted the state in reviewing the compliance of local educational agencies (LEAs) with No Child Left Behind requirements. Reviews of 53 LEA reports and applications were completed. The process will continue in future months, with the expectation that SECAC will begin assisting identified LEAs to meet the Arkansas standards for Title IV.
- SECAC Reading Success Network coaches conducted a workshop on intervention strategies for K–6 teachers at Delta School in *Rohwer*.
- **Gapinski** facilitated planning with 10 Dardanelle school and district administrators for a curriculum inservice day.



### **Georgia**

- Program associate **Debra Meibaum** presented “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of Related School Improvement Issues” in **Grantville** to principals, administrators, and staff from the district’s exceptional education office.
- **Meibaum**, along with program associates **Charles Scott** and **Maggie Rivas** provided an overview of eight components of NCLB to technical assistance providers in Atlanta during a two-day event, “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of Title I, Part A Basics.” The assistance providers included staff from SERVE, AEL, the Southeastern Equity Center, and two comprehensive assistance centers.
- **Slack** conducted a three-hour reading workshop and a three-hour questioning workshop at the Lauren County Board of Education’s districtwide staff development day in **Dublin**.

### **Louisiana**

- In **Alexandra**, program specialist **Phil Gapinski** facilitated the first stage of a process to identify a four-year plan for the executive committee of the Louisiana Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Association (LASDFSC). He also presented a two-hour session, “Title IV Update,” at LASDFSC’s fall conference. It included a review of trend data that has been collected the past six years at Louisiana Schools.
- In **Denham Springs**, **Gapinski** presented an introductory workshop on “Bullying Prevention in the School and Classroom” to Southside Junior High faculty and staff.
- Program associate **Jill Slack** conducted a study group meeting on literacy centers at Kate Middleton School in **Gretna**.
- SECAC continued providing consultation services to the Southeastern Louisiana University in **Hammond** for its Excellence in Health and Education Project (EHEP). During a daylong meeting with EHEP coordinator **Wynn Gillan**, **Gapinski** offered guidance related a proposed HIV/AIDS youth summit that is being coordinated by EHEP in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Education’s Office of School and Community Support.

- **Slack** conducted two questioning workshops for teachers at Homedale Elementary School in **Harvey**. Teachers used lesson transcripts to examine the impact of their questions on student learning. She also presented a follow-up questioning workshop for teachers and administrators in **Houma** and a questioning workshop for pre-service teachers and faculty at Dillard University in **New Orleans**.
- **Slack** met with **New Orleans** Public Schools reading coordinator to discuss the district’s Reading First plan. She also presented a workshop on reading vocabulary and comprehension at the Louisiana Reading Association conference in **New Orleans**. She conducted a three-day training-of-trainers questioning workshop in **Metairie** for New Orleans Parish Schools elementary and middle school literacy facilitators.
- **Slack** conducted a follow-up questioning workshop for Live Oak faculty in **Waggaman**. She also led a follow-up questioning strategies workshop for Vic Pitre teachers and administrators in **Westwego**.

### **Mississippi**

- **Slack** presented a reading comprehension and questioning workshop at the Southeast International Reading Association Conference in **Biloxi**. Forty-three teachers from McEvans School in Shaw attended a questioning workshop delivered by **Slack** and **Meibaum**.
- Program manager **Marie Kaigler** and **Meibaum** presented “Classroom Management with Style and Grace” to teachers in **Lexington** and to teachers, administrators, and other staff in **Itta Bena**.
- **Meibaum** led two concurrent sessions in **Jackson** on “Nonlinguistic Representation—Using Imagery to Increase Student Achievement” at the Mississippi Department of Education’s Closing the Achievement Gap conference. **Slack** conducted concurrent sessions titled, “Teaching Thinking Through Effective Questioning.” She also presented “Best Practices for Classroom Instruction” in **Moss Point** along with program

in the field

- specialist **Dallas Picou**.
- **Kaigler** and **Meibaum** helped Coleman Junior High School staff in **Greenville** learn how to encourage a positive classroom climate, and how to build a successful classroom management plan through the "Classroom Management With Style and Grace" workshop.
- In **Jackson**, program associates **Carolyn Clausing**, **Maggie Rivas**, and **Debra Meibaum** initiated the planning process for the development of statewide migrant needs assessment instruments with State Department of Education staff. The January meeting was the first of three planning sessions.
- **Gapinski** provided technical assistance to Mississippi Title IV coordinators **Kathy Ellis** and **Bill Richardson**, regarding the state report for 2003–2004 and the 2004 consolidated application. **Gapinski** also met with **Ellis** and a representative from DREAM, Inc., to review a new analysis tool that can be used to review SmartTrack data.
- Program specialist **John Hanley** presented three Technology in the Classroom sessions to faculty and staff at **Woodville**.



Program specialist John Hanley was guest speaker Feb. 4 at the informal educators meeting held at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation. Hanley's presentation on "Community Connections" focused on how technical assistance from SECAC is helping community-based organizations enhance their education outreach.

- In January and February, faculty and staff in **Greenwood** participated in the first two of four sessions, "What Students Should Know and Be Able to Do in

Middle School Math." **Kaigler**, who was assisted by **Meibaum** and an external consultant, led the sessions.

### SECAC National Networking

- **Gapinski** attended the semi-annual meeting of the National Network of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities reviewing NCLB Title IV developments and to participate on the Uniform Management Information Reporting System (UIMRS) Data Committee. During the conference, **Gapinski** presented two reports. One report reviewed the technical assistance completed by SECAC with the Departments of Education in Louisiana and Mississippi. The work identified data for 12 state benchmarks and performance indicators required for all Title IV, Part A state programs. The second, reviewed the extent that five national questionnaires addressed the same performance indicators required in the annual UIMRS reports.

### SEDL Services

SEDL delivers services in addition to major projects and programs discussed above. The revenue generated from these services supports ongoing development. Services include training in assessment, school improvement, technology, reading, and mathematics.

- Program associate **Chris Ferguson** continued ongoing assessment trainings for Belton ISD in **Belton, TX**. These trainings are part of a districtwide plan to utilize multiple forms of assessment that correlate to the Texas statewide test (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) and standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). **Ferguson** conducted trainings in January and February that promoted the use of standards-based strategies in designing a variety of types of assessments for secondary students. Ferguson is training district staff who will become Belton ISD's assessment trainers. ■

# 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.*

### June

**2–3**      **What Students Should Know and Be Able to Do in Middle School Math**  
**Greenwood, MS**

Last two sessions of a four-session workshop for Greenwood faculty and staff. Contact: Debra Meibaum

**7–9**      **Summer Leadership Institute**  
**Lafourche Parish, LA**  
SEDL Institute is for school and district staff in Lafourche Parish who are involved in the REL Working Systemically project. Contact: Stella Bell

**8–10**      **Summer Leadership Institute**  
**Austin, TX**  
SEDL Institute is for school and district staff who are involved in the REL Working Systemically project. Contact: D'Ette Cowan

**15–16**

**Reading Comprehension Institute**  
**Jennings, LA**

SECAC staff will present strategies for improving comprehension skills across the curriculum. Contact: Jill Slack

**22**

**Teaching Thinking Through Effective Questioning**  
**Huntsville, AL**

SECAC staff will conduct a workshop on effective questioning strategies to promote student thinking across the content areas at the University of Alabama Huntsville Inservice Center. Contact: Jill Slack

**29–30**

**Teaching Thinking Through Effective Questioning**  
**Athens, AL**

SECAC staff will conduct a questioning workshop and a writing workshop for teachers at the North Alabama Teacher Exchange. Contact: Jill Slack or Mary Lou Meadows.

### SEDL LINKS

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