

links

President's Message: Congress Replaces OERI with IES by Wes Hoover, SEDL President and CEO

In mid-October, Congress approved by unanimous consent a bill that affects four of SEDL's programs and creates the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to replace the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). The following summary of the impact of H.R. 5598 on SEDL's programs reviews congressional actions during the fall and gives a preview of the appropriations work that will be done this spring.

Background

SEDL administers four different but interrelated regional programs that provide education research, development, and dissemination: the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL); the Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC), one of the network of Comprehensive Assistance Centers (CCs); the Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Mathematics and Science Teaching (SCIMAST), one of the members of the Eisenhower Regional Mathematics and Science Consortia (EMSC) network; and the SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (RTEC), part of the federally funded network of Regional Technology in Education Consortia.

The RELs existed under the umbrella of OERI as defined in the Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improve-



Wes Hoover, SEDL president and CEO

ment Act of 1994. The CCs, EMSC, and RTECs were initially authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). When the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) amended ESEA in 2001, however, the three regional programs were moved for consideration in the reauthorization of the OERI law. The OERI statute was not fully considered by both the House and Senate until 2002.

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Issues	Final Version: H.R. 5598
OERI Office Restructuring	Replaced OERI with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).
Assistant Secretary for IES	Replaced assistant secretary with a director, appointed by the president and advised by a National Board for Education Sciences.
National Centers	Designated that the director appoints commissioners for the National Center for Research and for the National Center for Evaluation and Regional Assistance. The statistics commissioner will continue to be appointed by the president.
Regional Entities	<p>Maintained the RELs and CCs, maintained 10 RELs (same boundaries), and required no fewer than 20 CCs (of which 10 would be located in the same regions as the RELs).</p> <p>Designated that the CCs absorb current RTEC and EMSC functions; kept the RELs within IES under the National Center for Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Organized CCs within the department.</p>
Regional Governance	<p>Designated that the secretary (in consultation with governors and chief state school officers) appoint 25-member advisory committees for each of the 10 regions beginning in 2004 to do needs assessments and issue reports within six months to the secretary and director for use in determining priorities for competitions.</p> <p>Designated REL boards retain memberships, but now the boards must include members nominated by state organizations and governors (REL may appoint up to 10 percent). Required CCs to have advisory boards composed of chiefs and others jointly selected by the chiefs and governors.</p>
Regional Duties	<p>Specified that REL duties remain similar to current law and the CCs continue providing training and technical assistance, including absorption of RTEC and EMSC functions.</p> <p>Specified RELs provide research, development, and dissemination. Provided that both CCs and RELs impart assistance in academic areas (reading, mathematics, science), English language acquisition, education technology, and implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act.</p>
Regional Transition	Honored current contract terms for the RTECs and EMSC only until the new CCs are established (most likely in FY04).
Regional Authorization Levels	Authorized \$100 million for RELs for FY03 and such sums for each of the five succeeding fiscal years (not less than 25 percent obligated for rural purposes); authorized \$80 million for FY03, then such sums, for all regional technical assistance including CCs and the regional advisory committees.

President's Message, continued

OERI Reauthorization

The House passed its version of an OERI bill (H.R. 3801, "Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002") on April 30 on a voice vote under suspension of the rules. The Senate committee marked up its bill (S. 2969, also titled "Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002") on September 25. This bill passed out of committee without any discussion. The Senate bill remarkably resembled the House bill except for some significant improvements and a few disappointments for programs SEDL operates.

Because of limited time available in the 107th Congress, the Senate determined it would be best not to take its version to the floor. Instead, staff negotiated with the House on predetermined agreements that would easily and quickly pass both the House and the Senate during the waning days of Congress. This informal arrangement, called a "preconference," resulted in a new bill (H.R. 5598), which was approved by unanimous consent on the House floor on October 11 and by the Senate on October 15. An unrelated technical amendment required that the bill go back to the House for approval on October 16. The final bill was then sent on to the president, who signed it into law on November 5.

A summary of key issues in the final version is given in the chart on page 2.

Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2003

In an unusual budget-appropriations year, the Senate took on the FY03 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), Education appropriations bill before the House did.

The House passed a budget resolution that basically reflected the president's proposal but went no further toward acting on the allocation to the Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee. Many House subcommittee members, including Republican members, felt the president's budget levels were too low to meet the various funding needs, including education. The Senate was not willing to act on the inadequate House budget resolution; as a result, there was no congressionally approved budget for the president to sign.

As the federal fiscal year drew to a close on September 30, Congress passed the first of a series of continuing resolutions to keep the government running. As of January 6, the latest resolution funded the government until January 11. We expect level funding for SEDL's regional programs from Congress in the spring. ■

SEDL Board Member Reports

Arkansas Success in The Achiever



Raymond Simon

An article in the December 1, 2002, issue of *The Achiever* reports the success of the Arkansas Smart Start Literacy Initiative in the words of Raymond Simon, SEDL board member and director of the Arkansas Department of Education.

Simon wrote "Anchors Aweigh! For a Smart Start," one of the cover stories in *The Achiever*, which is the newsletter of the U.S. Department of Education's No Child Left Behind Act. In the story, Simon described how the Arkansas comprehensive school reform plan, a collaborative effort among multiple education levels in the state, improved teaching and learning.

The Smart Start program, launched in May 1998, focused on the needs of classroom teachers, as well as the need for specialized training, and support for schools in implementing comprehensive literacy services. The initiative resulted in the highest level of performance ever by Arkansas fourth graders on reading and writing exams. For more information or to subscribe to the newsletter, visit www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov. ■

Link

products

New SEDL Letter Examines Reading; NCDDR, LOTE Resources Available

SEDL develops resources for policy makers and practitioners. Many of these resources are free and available from SEDL's online catalog at www.sedl.org/resources or by calling the SEDL publications department at 800-476-6861.

The latest issue of **SEDL Letter**, SEDL's magazine, examines reading instruction and assessment, the instructional needs of migrant students, and phonemic awareness, one of Reading First's five essential components of effective reading instruction. This edition, located at www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/sedl1403.html, also includes articles about how teachers can help struggling secondary readers, a visit to a school where everyone puts reading first, 10 myths of reading instruction, and questioning techniques to improve student thinking and learning. And, for the first time, *SEDL Letter* contains some activities for teachers to use in their classrooms.

SEDL's National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) published issue 7.3 of *The Research Exchange*,

which investigates such media topics as researchers and their interaction with the press, how disability is interpreted and portrayed in the news, news coverage versus publicity, and resources for working with the press. The newsletter is online at www.ncddr.org/du/researchexchange/v07n03/.

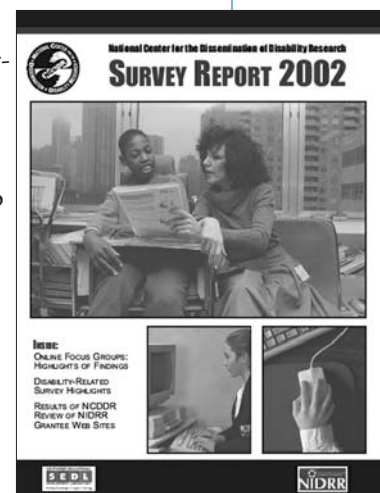
NCDDR's *Survey Report 2002* focuses on three major areas of

information: online focus groups, disability-related survey highlights, and a review of National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research grantee Web sites. The report is available online at www.ncddr.org/du/products/survey2002/.

The Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development (LOTE CED) completed the professional development module *TEKS para LOTE: Español para el hispanohablante*.

The training is designed to assist Spanish teachers whose students are heritage language learners in teaching lessons that align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for LOTE. A PDF version of the training module is available online at www.sedl.org/loteced/PD_training.html. The training is based on George Blanco's book by the same name.

LOTE CED also released the November 2002 issue of the *LOTE CED Lowdown* newsletter, which features information on the center's Action Research Initiative and is located online at www.sedl.org/loteced/lowdown/. ■



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, policy makers, 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 (www.sedl.org/scimast/accesscenters) and other sources.

SCIMAST Professional Development

Arkansas

- On Oct. 10, program specialist **Como Molina** and program associate **Maria Torres** led a follow-up research lesson colloquium in **Benton** for middle school mathematics teachers who participated in the Arkansas 2002 Teachers as Leaders Institute in Middle School Mathematics in Little Rock. The colloquium included a pre-observation debriefing, classroom observation of an implemented mathematics lesson on proportionality, individual reflection, and a post-observation discussion of the lesson.

New Mexico

- Molina** and **Torres** conducted a Middle School Mathematics Project (MSMP) visit to Harrison Middle School in

Albuquerque on Oct. 14–18. They gathered classroom observation and student interview data, and **Torres** facilitated a training session on assessing student mathematics proficiency. **Torres** returned on Oct. 17 to participate in a Math Star Lesson Study session.

- On Oct. 25–26, **Torres** and program manager **Stephen Marble** led a workshop in quality classroom assessment strategies for the Northern New Mexico Network in **Santa Fe**. Administrators, mathematics and science teachers, central office staff, and field representatives participated.

Oklahoma

- On Oct. 23, **Molina** and **Torres** led a follow-up research lesson colloquium in **Tulsa** for the middle school mathematics teachers who participated in the Oklahoma 2002 Teachers as Leaders Institute in Middle School Mathematics. The colloquium included a pre-observation debriefing, classroom observation of an implemented mathematics lesson on proportionality, individual reflection, and a post-observation lesson discussion.

Texas

- Torres** facilitated the first of three training sessions on SEDL’s Paso Partners curriculum for Title VII teachers in **Hidalgo** and **Progreso** on Sept. 21.
- In conjunction with Our Lady of the Lake University’s Mentor Teacher Project, **Torres** facilitated the second day of a multiple-day workshop on improving classroom assessment for 30 teachers in the **San Antonio** area on Oct. 1–2.

SCIMAST Networking and Information Provision

Louisiana

- **Eaglin** facilitated a session on inquiry-based science at the 2002 Louisiana Science Teachers Association annual convention in *Lafayette* on Oct. 24–26.

Oklahoma

- On Sept. 4, the SCIMAST Consortium Advisory Board met in *Oklahoma City*. **Marble** and administrative assistant **Dawn McArdle** presented SCIMAST accomplishments over the past year and discussed goals, objectives, and activities for the upcoming year. The Consortium Advisory Board scheduled the next fall forum for Sept. 4–5 in Little Rock.
- **Marble; McArdle; Molina; Torres;** program specialists **Phillip Eaglin, Nikki Hanegan,** and **Vangie Orozco;** communications specialist **Ashley Hawkins;** and Web production artist **Luis Martinez** facilitated the annual SCIMAST Fall Forum in *Oklahoma City* on Sept. 5–6. About 125 mathematics and science educators from the region attended the forum titled “Partnerships and Student Success: Developing Strategies for Collaborative Accountability.” State groups identified issues and dates for spring meetings in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.
- **Hanegan** and **Molina** presented sessions on inquiry in science and mathematics, respectively, at the “Bridging the Gap: Raising Expectations” conference in *Oklahoma City* on Sept. 19.

Texas

- On Oct. 1–2, SCIMAST staff partnered with the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History to host a regional meeting for informal science and mathematics educators in *Fort Worth* to consider how informal institutions might adapt to the current education reform climate.
- SCIMAST staff led the fall access center meeting in *Austin* on Oct. 7–8. Participants identified topics for spring material reviews and explored strategies to make resources available to teachers.

SCIMAST National Activities

Eaglin facilitated a session titled “Using the SCIMAST Mentoring Archives to Initiate a Needs Assessment under No Child Left Behind” at the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse Network’s Professional Development Session for the Council of State Science Supervisors on Sept. 24 in *Las Vegas*. SCIMAST supported the participation of state department science coordinators from four states in the professional development meeting.

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).

On Sept. 26–28, in *Austin, TX*, program associate **Elaine Phillips** and information assistant **Chuck Reese** hosted Texas foreign language educators participating in the ongoing LOTE CED Action Research Initiative. While learning the action research process, these educators are examining the issues they deal with as they implement standards in their classrooms. LOTE CED staff, in turn, are working to understand how teachers implement standards in the classroom, how students learn, and how educators can best help students attain the standards in their local teaching contexts. Participants will return in February to continue their training for the initiative.

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL)

SEDL’s REL creates and promotes procedural knowledge—the know-how—to help low-performing schools and districts improve student achievement in reading and mathematics in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Along with partners—the Charles A. Dana Center of The University of Texas at Austin and American Indian Research and Development, Inc. (AIRD), in Norman, OK—the REL conducts applied research and

development with intensive sites, examines resource allocation and other policy issues, and operates a national center that disseminates research resources on home-school-community connections.

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 September and October.

Arkansas

- Program associate **Stella Bell** worked to identify action plans for improving reading teaching, assessment, and evaluation with the **Grady** district leadership and reading teams. **Bell** also attended a district PTA meeting to observe parental involvement and assisted faculty in analyzing Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program data. Program associate **Marsha Loyd** participated in a Grady intensive site staff development workshop on aligning curriculum to the Arkansas language arts framework.
- Program associate **Ann Neeley** helped begin collaborative discussions among **Marked Tree** faculty on using data to improve student performance. With program associate **Sebastian Wren**, **Neeley** continued to assist Marked Tree administrators in the implementation of a K–12 reading assessment program developed by **Wren** and the Marked Tree Reading Team. During an all-district professional development session, **Neeley** and **Wren** also shared strategies to help students at different degrees of reading proficiency improve.

Louisiana

- Program associate **Chris Ferguson** and Dana Center program coordinator **Carl Juenke** collected data for improvement work at Westgate High School and Anderson Middle School in **New Iberia**. **Ferguson** and program manager **David Rainey** discussed upcoming work and investigated additional student data with New Iberia Parish administrators.

Ferguson worked with members of the New Iberia Parish Leadership Team to determine a focus for working systemically at the parish level and to investigate concerns related to mathematics performance.

- **Bell** met with the Lafourche Parish Curriculum Leadership Team in **Thibodaux** to examine teacher meeting feedback and plan for the school year. **Bell**, **Rainey**, and Dana Center program coordinator **Emma Trevino** conducted data scans in Thibodaux.
- Program associates **Jill Slack** and **Ed Tobia** and Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) staff held two planning and staff development sessions for Madison Parish teacher leaders in the reading initiative in **Tallulah**. They also met with an educational service center reading staff member to discuss current initiatives and plan future activities. **Tobia** and Dana Center project director **Ted Hull** worked with LDE staff to coordinate SEDL activities with the state's staff development initiative, Learning-Intensive Networking Communities for Success. **Tobia** facilitated two meetings of the district leadership team as they completed their district improvement plan.
- **Hull** and Dana Center program coordinator **Janice Bradley** met with system-wide improvement council members in **Monroe**. Members established a Monroe City Mathematics Improvement Council—with 20 teachers from three different elementary schools and district support staff—to grow as a mathematical learning community team and to support student achievement.

New Mexico

- Program associate **Joe Parker** assisted the Hatch Leadership Team in using data to plan action and, along with **Loyd**, facilitated curriculum development and alignment sessions with Hatch High School staff.
- **Neeley** attended an **Algodones** parent literacy dinner and meeting to build capacity and parental understanding for the reading process and the Algodones Reading Program. She also helped the Bernalillo Central Accountability Team plan professional development and divide into subgroups to address the district's

critical root cause for low achievement in reading—no quality control system in place that all staff understand and implement. The subgroups will focus on data, professional development, and instructional leadership.

- **Tobia** met with *Española* administrators to plan for the coming school year and assisted Española Valley High School in preparing for the school's accreditation visit from the state department of education. He also reviewed the implementation of the Española Valley High School improvement plan. **Tobia** and staff from the Center for Education and Study of Diverse Populations provided a staff development session on reading for high school teachers.
- **Wren** and AIRD vice president **Mary Ann Brittan** introduced the Central Consolidated/Newcomb School Improvement Leadership Team to SEDL's three-phase reading approach and made plans for reading professional development. **Brittan** and **Wren** also discussed the SEDL Reading Framework with leadership team members and met with the Central Consolidated Schools District Reading Team in *Shiprock* to develop the district's reading matrix and strengthen coherence in Newcomb school improvement planning.

Oklahoma

- **Hull** and program associate **Jerry Elder** worked with the Altus District Leadership Team to address the implementation of curriculum alignment plans and use of test score data to improve student achievement. **Hull** presented a progress report.
- **Brittan** and **Elder** helped the leadership team in *Kinta* finalize their communication and systems exploration plans to improve family and community connections. **Loyd** conducted reading classroom demonstrations for K–5 teachers to improve teaching reading strategies. **Brittan** and **Elder** also met with elementary reading teachers to improve teaching and learning through coaching professional development.
- **Wren** and program specialist **Tara Leo** discussed the formation and responsibilities of a reading task force with West High School faculty in *Putnam City*. The task force would be responsible for planning



SEDL program associate Sebastian Wren discusses reading improvement in Central Consolidated, NM, schools with teachers (from right) Barbara Thomas, Alice Warito, and Lynda McKenzie on Sept. 19.

and implementing strategies to improve reading across the campus.

- Program associate **D'Ette Cowan** met with the executive director of School Improvement Services in the Oklahoma State Department of Education to explore topics for discussion with key state-level personnel relevant to systemic educational improvement. Preliminary plans call for SEDL staff who work with Oklahoma sites to meet twice annually with state department personnel to share information about their approach for systemic reform, to learn about state initiatives impacting improvement efforts, and to explore ways to align improvement efforts with state legislation, requirements, and accountability standards.

Texas

- **Ferguson** and **Rainey** met with the new superintendent of Nova Charter Schools in *Dallas* to explore the continuation of work at the schools.

REL Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Networking

Texas

- REL program associates **Elder**, **Parker**, and **Tobia** and program associate **Tara Leo** facilitated the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) State Coordinators Meeting in *Irving* on Sept. 24. The meeting promoted networking among CSR staff in the Southwest and helped identify technical assistance needs for CSR grantees in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

REL Policy Work

Program associate **Zena Rudo** and Dana Center research science associates **Cynthia Schneider** and **Lotte Smith-Hansen** hosted SEDL's annual policy forum, "Spending for Performance: Current Topics in School Finance Policy and Practice," in **Little Rock, AR**, on Sept. 26–27. The forum provides an opportunity for policy makers and policy influencers in the region to learn new information on a current topic in education policy, engage one another in important issues related to the topic, and build relationships that will enhance their work and knowledge. The 2002 forum focused on the topic of education finance and investigated the linkages between funding, resources, and student performance.

Rudo and **Smith-Hansen** presented the paper *Resource Allocation and Improved Student Performance: Teachers' Perspectives on School Finance Administration* at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in **Columbus, OH**, on Oct. 19.

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools

Regional Activities

- Program manager **Catherine Jordan** presented "Building Family, Community, and School Collaborations to Support and Sustain Community Education" at the Texas A&M Community Education Annual Workshop in **San Antonio, TX**, on Sept. 5.

National Activities

- The National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools Steering Committee met Oct. 3–4 in **Austin, TX**, to provide input for the third-year synthesis and dissemination plans.
- Program specialist **Amy Averett** presented "Explore the Evidence: Family Involvement and Student Achievement" at the National Coalition of Title I/Chapter I Parents 29th Annual Conference in **St. Louis, MO**, on Oct. 17.
- The Center hosted a satellite conference, "Preparing Administrators: Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities to Improve Student Achievement," in **Austin** on Oct. 22. The following national school administrator education experts participated as panelists: Paul Bredeson, professor at the University of Wisconsin–Madison;

Paula Cordeiro, dean of the College of Education at the University of San Diego; Theodore Creighton, professor at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX; Ellen Goldring, professor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN; and Molly Schen, director of Program Development at The Big Picture Company, Inc., in Providence, RI.

REL National Activities

At a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation meeting in **Phoenix, AZ**, on Oct. 27–30, program manager **Shirley Hord** made a report on a study that she and some National Staff Development Council staff conducted to learn more about the professional development practices of the 50 state projects that received Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grants for Leadership Development. **Hord** also presented three breakout sessions on the use of the innovation configuration tool for describing and monitoring the vision of change identified by the projects.

Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC)

SEDL's SECAC, based in Metairie, LA, is one of 15 regional technical assistance centers mandated and funded under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to assist states, school districts, and schools in meeting the needs of children served under the act, 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

- Program associate **Jill Slack** presented a workshop on a framework for assessing and teaching writing to lead K–7 teachers at Morgan County Schools in **Decatur** on Oct. 1. The teachers gained strategies and

resources for helping students improve their writing performance. **Slack** returned on Oct. 30 to conduct a follow-up workshop to assist the lead teachers in using the framework to develop writing benchmarks for the district.

Arkansas

- In partnership with the Arch Ford Coop in **Conway**, program specialists **Philip Gapinski** and **Dallas Picou** presented comprehensive school safety professional development to administrators, teachers, and counselors from surrounding local education agencies on Oct. 7.
- **Picou** and program associate **Debra L. Meibaum** presented “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics” to educators in **Little Rock** on Oct. 8.

Georgia

- On Sept. 20, **Slack** and program associate **Charles Scott** met with Kennesaw State University reading staff and the Dalton Public Schools assistant superintendent in **Dalton** to discuss the Reading Success Network and a professional development plan for two schools.
- In cooperation with the Georgia Department of Education, **Gapinski** provided technical assistance at a preconference planning meeting for the Georgia Fall 2002 Conference for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities in **Savannah** on Sept. 23–24. He also presented an update on Title IV of the No Child Left Behind Act to school district and regional education service agency coordinators.
- **Slack** conducted a thinking skills and questioning workshop for K–12 teachers at the Heart of Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency in **Eastman** on Oct. 15.

Louisiana

- On Sept. 10, **Slack** presented “Asking Better Questions: Techniques for Teachers to Improve Students’ Thinking Skills” at the Louisiana Department of Education Preschool and Primary Grades Conference in **Monroe**. Classroom teachers, school district staff, state department personnel, and university professors participated in the session.
- **Slack** conducted a thinking skills and questioning workshop for teachers and administrators at DuLarge Elementary

and DuLarge Middle schools in **Houma** on Sept. 17. She modeled how to use learner responses to create questions that promote higher-order thinking. **Slack** conducted a follow-up workshop on Oct. 17 to demonstrate the use of effective questioning and to coach participants as they practiced the questioning strategies.

- On Oct. 18, **Slack** and New Orleans Public Schools reading coordinators conducted a workshop for K–3 district reading coaches to provide information on Reading First, coaching strategies, and reading intervention strategies.
- **Slack**, program associate **Moselle Dearbone**, and program manager **Marie Kaigler** facilitated a networking meeting with New Orleans Public Schools district reading staff and Louisiana Department of Education staff in **New Orleans** on Sept. 16. On Sept. 24, **Slack** met with the New Orleans Public Schools district reading coordinator and consultant to develop a long-term professional development plan for K–3 district reading coaches.
- On Sept. 23, **Slack** shared Reading Success Network information, coordinated reading initiatives, and created a professional development plan for reading coaches with the American Federation of Teachers New Orleans reading coordinator.
- In cooperation with the Louisiana Association of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, **Gapinski** presented a No Child Left Behind Act, Title IV, update in **Lafayette** on Oct. 24.

Clarification

On a page 2 story in the September/October 2002 issue of *SEDL Links*, the headline incorrectly reads “SECAC Partners with Zoo School.” In fact, SECAC and Audubon Zoo worked collaboratively to develop the Zoo School Educational Enhancement Project. Through this project, Audubon Zoo was able to develop the African Savanna School for first and second graders. The African Savanna School was successfully piloted in November and will be implemented in Spring 2003.

- Throughout September and October, SECAC staff provided the Office of School and Community Support at the Louisiana Department of Education more than 45 hours of school safety technical assistance to help the state comply with the requirements of the consolidated application for the No Child Left Behind Act. **Gapinski** also provided nearly 20 hours of technical assistance developing proposed HIV/AIDS activities for Louisiana schools.
- On Oct. 30–31, **Gapinski** reviewed suspension and expulsion data and consulted with the Title IV coordinator in *Natchitoches* to identify interventions at the secondary level to reduce inappropriate behavior. **Gapinski** also met with **Paula Patrick**, SEDL board member and Sabine Parish federal programs director, to plan technical assistance and data reviews in the district.

Mississippi

- On Sept. 18, SECAC provided overviews of Guided Reading theory and hands-on activities while emphasizing the needs and interests of K–1 teachers in *Canton*.
- **Meibaum** presented “No Child Left Behind: An Overview of the Basics” to Office of Innovative Support staff at the Mississippi Department of Education in *Jackson* on Sept. 23 and 26. **Meibaum** and **Picou** presented the same session to educators in *Meridian* on Sept. 25 and in *Benoit* on Oct. 17.
- On Sept. 25, SECAC staff provided information on test and curriculum materials selection and classroom instructional strategies in *Sunflower* for school climates that appreciate diversity.
- Program associate **Carolyn Clausing** presented information on the development and usage of rubrics to principals, teachers, and support staff in *Meridian* on Oct. 9 and 15.
- SECAC staff held an English Language Learners workshop on Oct. 14 in *Calhoun City* to offer information on the theory of language acquisition and the model of integration, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL) strategies and ESL lessons.
- In cooperation with the University of Southern Mississippi’s Regional Service Center, **Gapinski** presented comprehensive school safety planning professional development in *Laurel* to area educators on Oct. 14.

- On Oct. 16, **Clausing** provided basic information on questioning and higher-order thinking skills to educators in *Meridian*.

SECAC National Activities

Dearbone, Kaigler, Meibaum, Picou, Scott, and **Slack** participated in the Student Achievement and School Accountability Regional Title I Conference in *Orlando, FL*, on Oct. 2–4.

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’s 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 board meeting of the Traumatic Brain Injury National Data Center, which is funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, in **West Orange, NJ**, on Sept. 9–10.

Westbrook, communications specialist **Sean Claes**, and program associate **Joann Starks** met with U.S. State Department visitors from Vietnam on Oct. 17 in **Austin, TX**, to discuss the public image of people with disabilities in Vietnam.

On Oct. 23–26, **Westbrook** participated in the board meeting of the Research and Training Center on Full Participation in Independent Living as well as the Working Conference on Independent Living in **Kansas City, MO**.

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 Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Arkansas

- Program associate **Marilyn Heath** facilitated a Supporting Communities of Professional Practice with Technology session for the Arkansas Professional Development Network in **Plumerville** on Oct. 1–2.

Louisiana

- In collaboration with the Louisiana Center for Educational Technology, program manager **Vicki Dimock** and program specialist **Kim Hughes** facilitated work sessions in **Baton Rouge** and **Alexandria** on Oct. 23–25. The sessions focused on developing strategic technology plans for the districts that are aligned with the Louisiana State Plan for Technology. *continued on page 13*

RTEC Unveils New Web Site

SEDL's new SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SouthCentral RTEC) Web site, at www.southcentralrtec.org, is now organized by both topic and type of user and contains information to help educators use technology to increase student learning. Topical sections include the No Child Left Behind Act, evaluation, integration, planning, and research.

Drop-down menus in the "Teachers &

Faculty," "Leaders," and "Professional Developers" areas take site visitors directly to Web-based resources, SouthCentral RTEC's professional development portfolio, and standards and assessment tools. The menu also connects visitors to SouthCentral RTEC's experts on these subjects.

Site visitors can learn more about SouthCentral RTEC's publications, videos, *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio, INSIGHT (an online collection of research and evaluation instruments), and the SAM (Standards and Assessment Management Tool) in the "Products" section. The "Projects" area offers information on SAM, professional development, and SouthCentral RTEC's Master Teachers Network. Lastly, a "Quick Links" menu on the main page of this searchable site allows visitors to reach product information with just one click. ■



From the Field, continued

New Mexico

- Program specialist **Danny Martinez** presented the session “The People’s Choice: The Art of Visual Imagery” and hosted an exhibit booth at the 14th Annual New Mexico State Learning Conference in **Albuquerque** on Oct. 11–12.

Oklahoma

- **Hughes** presented “Employing Data to Target Instruction for Improved Teaching and Learning,” and **Martinez** presented “The People’s Choice: The Art of Visual Imagery” at Encyclo-Media XXII in **Oklahoma City** on Sept. 12–13.
- On Oct. 3–4, **Hughes** presented three authentic teaching and learning sessions using the *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio in **Oklahoma City** for principals and superintendents as part of Oklahoma’s Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation State Challenge Grants for Leadership Development.

Texas

- **Martinez** and program associate **Mary Burns** conducted Master Teachers training for high school teachers at the United Independent School District in **Laredo** on Sept. 5–7. **Burns** returned on Oct. 22–23 for follow-up coaching and mentoring.
- On Sept. 6–7, **Dimock** presented “Creating an Environment for Online Collaboration” at the 2002 Fall Technology Leadership Institute at The University of Texas at Austin.
- SouthCentral RTEC presented “Supporting Communities of Professional Practice with Technology” and introduced new print and electronic materials and tools at a Texas Professional Development Network session in **Austin** on Sept. 17–19.
- On Oct. 8–9, **Hughes** and **Martinez** facilitated the quarterly meeting of the Texas Education Technology Advisory Committee in **Austin**. The committee assesses the progress of Texas in meeting the goals of the Texas State Plan for Educational Technology and promotes the use of the Texas STaR chart to measure progress by school districts and campuses.
- In collaboration with Northwest RTEC and the Northeast & Islands RTEC, SouthCentral RTEC staff sponsored a national symposium on the use of interac-

tive videoconferencing in K–12 education on Oct. 17–18. For postconference information, visit <http://neirtec.terc.edu/k12vc/>.

- **Hughes** reviewed Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas grant proposals for the Texas Education Agency in **Austin** on Oct. 29–30. The grants are awarded from funds provided under Title II, Section D, of the No Child Left Behind Act.

TAP Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Dimock met with the directors of the other nine regional technology in education consortia in **Boston** on Sept. 18–19. The group discussed possible technical assistance and support activities the RTECs may provide for state departments of education.

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 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 associate **Jack Lumbley** participated in an REL work group meeting on the framework prototype field test evaluation in **Denver, CO**, on Sept. 4–5. He also participated in an REL Performance Indicators Task Force meeting in **Alamitos, CA**, on Oct. 8–9.

On Sept. 4–6, program associate **Jeannine Turner** conducted evaluation activities with the Consortium Advisory Board and participants

at the SCIMAST Fall Forum in **Oklahoma City, OK**.

Program specialist **Jessica Snell-Johns** evaluated the 2002 Policy Forum in **Little Rock, AR**, on Sept. 25–27.

Lumbley evaluated SouthCentral RTEC's interactive videoconferencing symposium in K–12 settings in **Dallas, TX**, on Oct. 17–18. He also interviewed teachers, principals, and district coordinators who participated in the SouthCentral RTEC's Master Teachers Project in **Laredo, TX**, on Oct. 21–23 and Oct. 28–30.

Office of Institutional Communications (OIC)

WestEd, a sister organization in the network of regional educational laboratories, acknowledged communications specialist **Víctor Rodríguez**, who represented SEDL, in producing *Voices from La Frontera: Study of School Districts along the United States/Mexico Border*, which is online at <http://web.wested.org/cs/wew/view/rs/664>.

SEDL Fee-for-Service

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

Arkansas

- REL program associate **Marsha Loyd** provided a technical assistance session, "Reading Strategies Using Non-Fiction Text," for elementary school staff in **Paris** on Oct. 25.

Louisiana

- REL program manager **Shirley Hord** and program associate **Ed Tobia** presented a Leadership for Changing Schools workshop in **Baton Rouge** on Oct. 20–23 to state department of education staff and regional service center personnel. The 125 participants worked to increase their knowledge base and skills for planning and implementing school change and improvement in Louisiana.

Oklahoma

- ES program specialist **Jennifer Beck** evaluated Phase I Literacy First training institutes for the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) in **Tulsa** on

Sept. 17–19 and Oct. 14–15. She returned to **Tulsa** to evaluate a Phase II Literacy First training institute on Oct. 22–24.

- ES program specialist **Cheryl Harris** observed OCTP professional development institutes in **Tulsa** on Oct. 2–4.

Texas

- On Sept. 7 and 14, program associate **Patricia Guerra**, along with staff from The University of Texas at Austin, provided training at the Teacher Diversity Institute in **Temple**. They also delivered the first module of the Organizing for Diversity staff development program to Temple principals on Oct. 10.
- REL program associate **Chris Ferguson** conducted the second in a series of three work sessions for junior and senior high school teachers to align assessments to state standards and school goals in **Belton** on Oct. 14. Activities included assisting and analyzing the effectiveness of assessments and developing nontraditional assessments to increase higher-order thinking skills among students.

National Activities

- REL program manager **Catherine Jordan** led sessions on using collaboration to sustain after-school programs at the National 21st Century Community Learning Centers Sustainability Training of the National Center for Community Education (NCCE) in **Baltimore, MD**, on Oct. 16–18. **Jordan** also attended a planning meeting of NCCE's regional associates in **Gloucester, MA**, on Oct. 31–Nov. 3. ■

Flashlight in Spotlight

"Compass, Flashlight, and a Helping Hand," an article by SEDL president and CEO Wes Hoover and ES program manager Sue Street, was published in the Winter 2003 issue of the National Staff Development Council's *Journal of Staff Development*.

The article discusses how educators can learn from SEDL's *A Flashlight and a Compass* professional development program, which includes resources for facilitators to help teachers become more reflective about their practice based on student learning. ■

SEDL

calendar

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

January

- 13 & 17 Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning**
Houma and Harvey, LA
Contact: Jill Slack
- 13–14 Mississippi Department of Education English Language Learners Annual Conference**
Jackson, MS
Contacts: Debra L. Meibaum and Maggie Rivas
- 14–15 Teaching and Assessing Writing in the Classroom**
Athens, AL
Contacts: Lou Meadows and Jill Slack
- 15 Organizing for Diversity Training**
Temple, TX
Contact: Patricia Guerra
- 15 Preventing School Violence by Changing the School Climate**
Meridian, MS
Contact: Philip Gapinski
- 17 Active Learning with Technology Session**
Many, LA
Contact: Mary Burns
- 18 Paso Partners Curriculum Training Session**
Hidalgo and Progreso, TX
Contact: Maria Torres
- 20–22 Active Learning with Technology Sessions**
Amarillo, TX
Contact: Kim Hughes
- 21 Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning**
Waggaman, LA
Contact: Jill Slack

- 21 & 23 No Child Left Behind Basics**
Jackson, MS, and Athens, AL
Contacts: Debra L. Meibaum and Dallas Picou
- 27–29 Master Teachers Sessions**
Laredo, TX
Contact: Mary Burns
- 27–29 Texas Mid-Winter Conference**
Austin, TX
Contact: Zena Rudo
- 30–Feb. 1 National Association for Bilingual Education Conference**
New Orleans, LA
Contact: Víctor Rodríguez
- 31 New Orleans Public Schools Reading Coaches Meeting**
New Orleans, LA
Contact: Jill Slack
- 31 The ABCs of Fostering Resiliency in Youth**
Meridian, MS
Contact: Philip Gapinski

February

- 1–4 National Title I Conference**
Anaheim, CA
Contact: Jill Slack
- 3–7 Texas Computer Education Association Annual Conference**
Austin, TX
Contact: Kim Hughes
- 11 Teaching Thinking through Effective Questioning**
Waggaman, LA
Contact: Jill Slack
- 12–15 Southwest Educational Research Association Conference**
San Antonio, TX
Contact: Zena Rudo
- 13 Organizing for Diversity Training**
Temple, TX
Contact: Patricia Guerra

February, continued

- 16** **Association of Teacher Educators Conference**
Jacksonville, FL
Contact: Lacy Wood
- 19** **Team Building to Reduce Conflict**
Meridian, MS
Contact: Philip Gapinski
- 20–23** **American Association of School Administrators Conference**
New Orleans, LA
Contact: Deborah Donnelly
- 21** **Organizing for Diversity Training**
Perry, GA
Contact: Patricia Guerra
- 21** **Paso Partners Curriculum Training Session**
Hidalgo and Progreso, TX
Contact: Maria Torres
- 24** **LOTE CED Action Research Initiative Meeting**
Austin, TX
Contact: Elaine Phillips
- 26–28** **SCIMAST Middle School Mathematics Project Session**
Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Maria Torres
- 27–28** **Oklahoma–Achievement through Collaboration and Technology Support (OK-ACTS) Session**
Oklahoma City, OK
Contact: Kim Hughes

- 27–28** **Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center Directors Meeting**
Washington, DC
Contact: Lin Harris

March

- 6** **SCIMAST Research Lesson Colloquium**
Little Rock, AR
Contacts: Como Molina and Maria Torres
- 8** **Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Conference**
San Francisco, CA
Contact: Lacy Wood
- 14 & 27** **Organizing for Diversity Training**
Perry, GA, and Temple, TX
Contact: Patricia Guerra
- 21** **New Orleans Public School Reading Coaches Meeting**
New Orleans, LA
Contact: Jill Slack
- 27–29** **Association of Texas Professional Educators Annual Convention**
Austin, TX
Contact: Kim Hughes

April

- 10** **Best Practices for Classroom Instruction Session**
Athens, AL
Contacts: Lou Meadows, Debra L. Meibaum, and Dallas Picou

SEDL LINKS

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