

ADVANCING RESEARCH

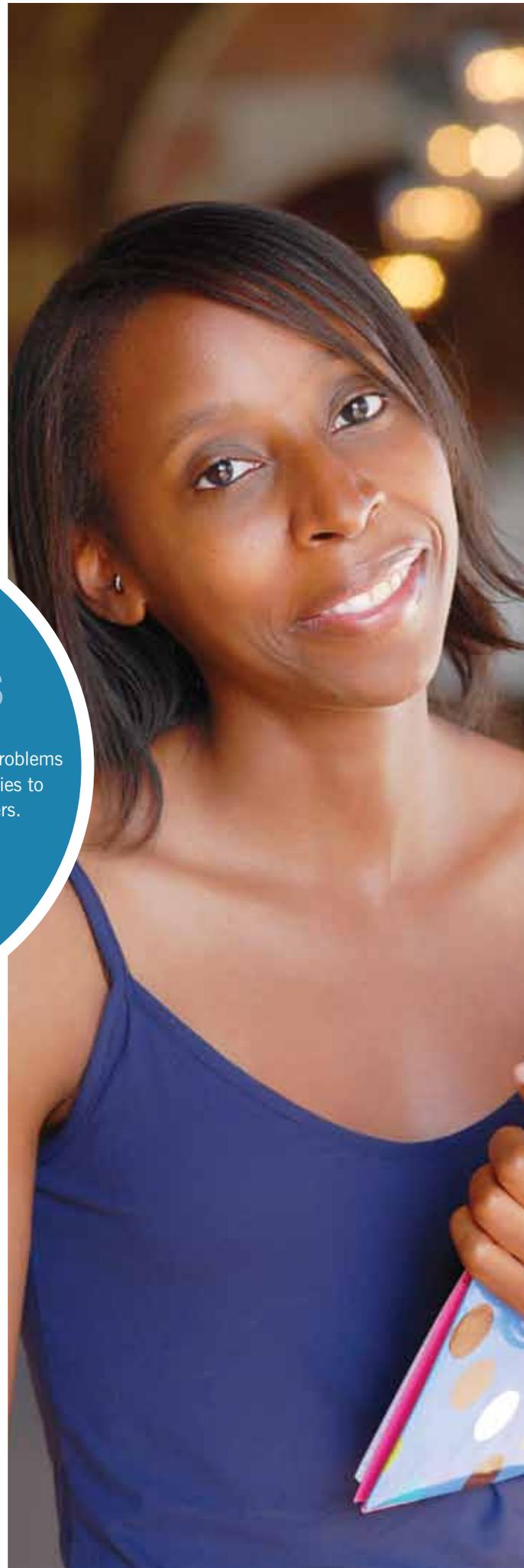


IMPROVING EDUCATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2009

solving **PROBLEMS,** *changing* **LIVES**



solving PROBLEMS

The mission of SEDL is to solve significant problems facing educational systems and communities to ensure a quality education for all learners.

changing LIVES

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Letter From the President and CEO



Dear Friends:

We at SEDL believe in changing lives. The success stories in these pages illustrate our passion for improving teaching, learning, and research. Whether supporting schools

and districts, state education agencies, family involvement agencies, or disability researchers, our work provides solutions that improve the lives of educators, children, and families.

Through rigorous research and evaluation, we advance knowledge about teaching and learning. Through research-based professional development, technical assistance, and resources, we help practitioners apply the latest research in their work. Through collaboration and networks, we help agencies more effectively serve their clients.

At the national level, our work on the Open Court Reading randomized controlled trial will do much to answer the question, “Does this popular reading program work across a broad range of students and settings?” One of the largest of its type, the study will advance the literacy field while helping struggling readers.

Additionally, SEDL works at the national level to support disability researchers in their quest to produce high-quality research. Our goal is to increase the number of quality research studies and make their findings more accessible to the people who really need them—policymakers, practitioners, and people with disabilities and their families.

At the state level, SEDL works through our Texas and Southeast Comprehensive Centers to identify and solve systemic education problems affecting student achievement. In Texas, we are helping the Texas Education Agency improve state support for English language learners and low-performing districts and schools.

At the local level, SEDL works directly with underperforming districts and schools nationwide to improve leadership, classroom instruction, and student achievement. In South Carolina, SEDL is helping several districts implement our research-based model for building professional learning communities.

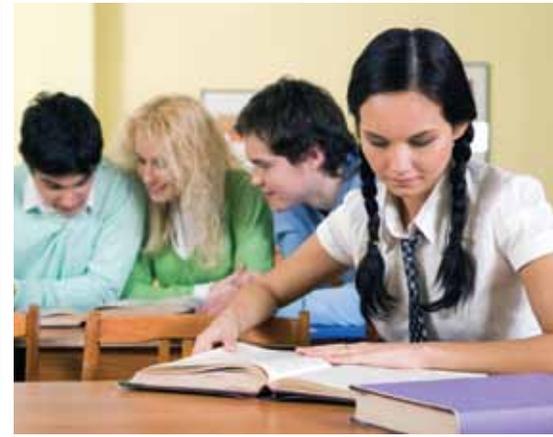
While we focus a great deal on schools and districts, parent/community involvement and expanded learning are equally important to student success. In 2009, we assisted the Parental Information and Resource Centers in engaging parents and families. We published *A Practitioner’s Guide: Building and Managing Quality Afterschool Programs* to share what we learned through research about successful afterschool leaders. We also continued to produce award-winning publications like *AfterWords*, our afterschool e-newsletter, and *SEDL Letter*, our corporate magazine.

From struggling readers to state administrators to national policymakers, SEDL is providing solutions. As we move forward, our dedicated staff continue this mission to improve the lives of the people we serve.

Sincerely,

Wesley A. Hoover

Promoting Literacy Through Research



Literacy is the foundation of academic success, and an effective reading curriculum can play a crucial role in helping students learn to read. Identifying which reading programs are effective can be difficult, though, because the research base is limited. Moreover, few studies of reading programs have been large enough to generalize the findings across a variety of instructional settings.

In 2009, SEDL's Research and Evaluation group worked to advance literacy research with the start of two randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of well-known reading programs. SEDL researchers are conducting the RCTs—the most rigorous research design for evaluating effectiveness—in partnership with other nationally recognized researchers and advisors. Michael Vaden-Kiernan, director of SEDL's Research and Evaluation group, is serving as principal investigator (PI) along with co-PI Geoffrey Borman, professor of education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and deputy director of the university's Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Program.

Open Court Reading National Effectiveness Study

In July, SEDL began a 4-year national effectiveness study of McGraw-Hill Education's *Imagine It!* reading program. *Imagine It!* is the latest generation of the Open Court Reading series, a core reading curriculum that has been widely used in elementary schools since the 1960s. Promising findings from studies conducted over the past 3 decades suggest the Open Court Reading series can be effective in reading instruction, particularly with low-performing students. The program is thus well positioned for a scale-up evaluation, and SEDL's study is the first rigorous, large-scale evaluation of the series. "This is a much-needed and timely study to provide more rigorous evidence regarding the effectiveness of a reading program that has been scaled up to the national level," explains Vaden-Kiernan.

SEDL's study will investigate whether *Imagine It!* shows significant positive effects on reading outcomes for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and how those effects vary across students, schools, and districts. One of the largest of its kind, the study will include approximately 60 schools within 15 districts in rural, urban, and suburban locations across the nation. In all, more than 5,000 students will be involved. This large-scale, national design will enable policymakers and administrators to apply the findings to a range of educational settings. In addition, the study will provide educators with strong evidence to guide adoption decisions.

Dan Caton, executive vice president of Learning Service Centers at McGraw-Hill, says that "with this extensive SEDL study, we are drawing on such a huge pool of resources, and this research is being taken to the next level. This is a unique opportunity to partner with a research institution as impressive as SEDL."

First-year planning activities included recruiting districts, developing and validating research instruments, and collaborating with program developers to verify implementation strategies. Data collection is scheduled to begin in Fall 2010.

Louisiana Striving Readers Evaluation

In October, SEDL began a 4-year independent evaluation of the *Passport Reading Journeys* program's use with striving adolescent readers in Louisiana. The state was one of eight to receive a Striving Readers grant from the U.S.



Department of Education. The Striving Readers program targets adolescents who are reading 2 or more years below grade level. In addition, the program seeks to build the research base by identifying the best strategies for increasing adolescent literacy. “The need to improve reading achievement among our older students is serious and real,” says Jill Slack, director of the Literacy and Numeracy Initiative at the Louisiana Department of Education.

Passport Reading Journeys is a supplemental reading program developed by Voyager Expanded Learning, and now owned by Cambium Learning Group, Inc. To date, 134 districts and 435 schools across 35 states have adopted the program. Under the Striving Readers grant, Louisiana will introduce *Passport Reading Journeys* to approximately 1,400 sixth and seventh graders in 10 middle schools across four districts.

SEDL’s study will evaluate whether students using the curriculum show greater advances in reading than students who participate in other elective course offerings. In addition, SEDL will evaluate whether the program’s impact varies according to factors such as students’ grade, gender, race/ethnicity, and reading level. “This opportunity,” explains Vaden-Kiernan, “allows SEDL to continue its long-standing partnership with Louisiana’s



SEDL’s study of *Passport Reading Journeys* will evaluate whether students using the curriculum show greater advances in reading than students who participate in other elective course offerings.

Department of Education to address the critical need to focus on adolescent literacy within the larger continuum of literacy education.”

First-year planning activities included refining the evaluation plan with assistance from Abt Associates, the technical advisors for the project, and developing instruments to measure teachers’ implementation of the program. Data collection is scheduled to begin in Fall 2010.



A paraprofessional at a Madison Parish preschool engages students in the writing center.

SEDL’s Early Reading First Work Shines

The future looks bright for three preschools in Madison Parish, Louisiana. The schools’ participation in the Bright Futures Early Reading First Project demonstrates a positive effect on both teacher and student performance, according to second-year results of a 3-year SEDL evaluation. SEDL staff are supporting the Bright Futures project, which seeks to improve the school readiness of preschoolers from low-income homes, by providing teachers and others with professional development in research-based literacy instruction and language development. The latest evaluation findings show statistically significant improvements in the quality of teachers’ literacy instruction and in students’ vocabulary skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.

Improving Access to Disability Research



Each day, millions of people with disabilities rely on evidence-based solutions to improve aspects of their lives, such as health, community participation, and work. To provide these solutions, policymakers, researchers, and service providers need access to the best research available.

Focus on Systematic Reviews

In 2009, SEDL's National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) continued to support the development and use of systematic reviews to improve access to high-quality disability research. The NCDDR accomplished this work through its ongoing partnership with the Campbell Collaboration (C2), an international organization that oversees systematic reviews across the social and behavioral sciences. SEDL program manager John Westbrook chairs the Disability Subgroup within the C2 Education Coordinating Group (ECG), and program associate Joann Starks serves as the ECG coordinator.

Systematic reviews are increasingly important in fields like disability and rehabilitation to determine the effectiveness of interventions based on the best scientific evidence available. To produce a systematic review, researchers first examine all the available studies on a well-defined topic that meet specific quality criteria. Researchers then synthesize and interpret the studies' findings using rigorous protocols to minimize bias. The result provides a more thorough and transparent assessment of what works than a traditional review or an individual study.

Training for Disability Researchers

Producing high-quality systematic reviews can be daunting and time-consuming, however. "It's not something you learn just by reading a book," explains Starks. To assist disability researchers, the NCDDR continued its Web-based series on conducting systematic reviews. The current

12-month course, which began in September 2009, includes four teams selected from a field of 10 applicants. Each team is committed to producing a review after the course's completion. C2 members serve as instructors, teaching the steps and skills involved in producing systematic reviews that comply with C2 guidelines.

Through this training—as well as workshops, webcasts, registries, task forces, and publications—the NCDDR seeks to increase the number and quality of systematic reviews in the disability and rehabilitation field. "We want to raise awareness of the value of systematic reviews as a way of knowing what works and of planning future research studies," says Starks. The ultimate goal is to increase access to evidence-based information so that people with disabilities and their families have the information they need to make well-informed decisions.

Disability researcher Rooshey Hasnain and her colleagues from the University of Illinois are the first team to complete a systematic review after participating in an NCDDR course. Soon to be published in the Campbell Library, their review examines the effectiveness of interventions to improve rehabilitation services for culturally diverse individuals with disabilities. "The online course provided us with a unique opportunity to form a collaborative partnership and interdisciplinary team," says Hasnain. "The support we received from the instructors was phenomenal."

"We want to raise awareness of the importance of systematic reviews as a way of knowing what works and planning future research studies."

Joann Starks, SEDL Program Associate



Providing Solutions for Afterschool Leaders

Student learning doesn't always end when the school bell rings. Afterschool and other expanded learning programs—whether offered before or after school, on Saturdays, or at other times—can help students develop skills and knowledge that may enhance school success.

Best Practices for Afterschool Leaders

In 2009, SEDL's National Center for Quality Afterschool responded to a growing need for resources to help afterschool leaders develop, manage, and sustain successful programs. With generous support from the C.S. Mott Foundation, the National Center produced *A Practitioner's Guide: Building and Managing Quality Afterschool Programs*. This innovative guide offers afterschool leaders a practical way to incorporate the wealth of information SEDL learned during a 5-year study of more than 50 high-quality afterschool programs across the United States. Refined through feedback from afterschool practitioners, the publication is tailored to the needs and challenges that afterschool programs face.

The practitioner's guide describes the practices of successful afterschool leaders in four key areas: program organization, academic programming, supportive relationships, and achieving program outcomes. The guide also provides two tools: the Quality-O-Meter to help readers reflect on and assess their program's practices, and the Planning for Action worksheet to help them plan and implement solutions. These tools enable practitioners to incorporate the research findings into their everyday operations.

"We have learned from our research what a successful afterschool program looks like. Now we have taken that knowledge and translated it

into a practitioner's guide that is one of a kind. This approach is a new way of presenting findings that can then be used in the field," says Catherine Jordan, a SEDL program manager and one of the book's authors.

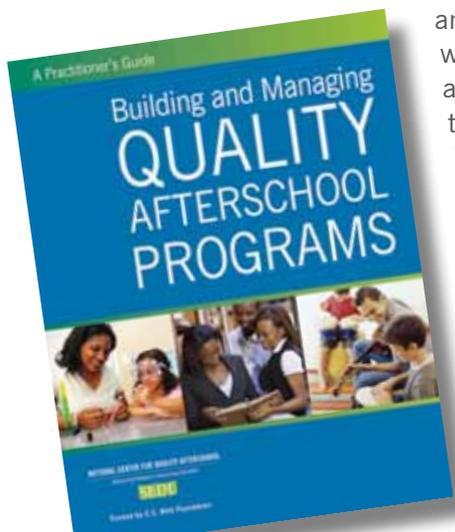
Professional Development Support

The National Center staff are already integrating the guide into their professional development sessions. "The practitioner's guide provides the missing piece of the puzzle," says Joe Parker, a program associate with the National Center. "We are now able to present a complete approach that addresses best practices for developing not only academic enrichment but also the leadership and management needed to support it."

Promoting Parental Involvement in Education

Research shows that children whose parents are actively involved in their education are more likely to earn higher grades, graduate, and pursue further education. SEDL promotes parental involvement in education through the National PIRC Coordination Center. A partnership of SEDL, Harvard Family Research Project, and the Miko Group Inc., the Coordination Center provides the nation's 62 Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) with technical assistance and professional development.

In 2009, the Coordination Center brought together PIRC leaders at its national conference in Washington, DC. Hosted by the U.S. Department of Education, the conference focused on key topics such as statewide leadership and early childhood parent education, and provided new sessions for PIRC financial managers and parent representatives. The Coordination Center also expanded its year-round support of the PIRCs with the launch of a webinar series covering topics related to grant administration and school reform.



Supporting English Language Learners



For students in the United States who speak little or no English, attending school can be a frustrating, confusing, and even fearful experience. As they struggle to understand what is being taught in their classes, many English language learners (ELLs) fall behind academically. To address this problem, educators must provide ELLs with the support they need to succeed both in school and in life.

In Texas, ELLs make up nearly 15% of K–12 students and often score lower on the state’s proficiency exam. In 2009, SEDL’s Texas Comprehensive Center (TXCC) began helping the Texas Education Agency (TEA) improve support for ELLs by ensuring that schools provide effective linguistic accommodations during instruction. Linguistic accommodations are ways to modify instruction and assessments to help ELLs understand the content, thereby boosting their chance for academic success.

Identifying ELL Needs

As part of their partnership, the TXCC and TEA held a series of focus groups to learn how Texas districts and schools provide linguistic accommodations. “We went to the educators who have to respond to the needs of ELLs every day,” says SEDL project director Haidee Williams, who heads the TXCC ELL project. “We found out what is really going on in the field and used that to shape our work.” The feedback from the focus groups highlighted the variety of ELL needs and services in the state.

The TXCC team next collaborated with the TEA and the Center for Instruction to hold a 2-day research summit. Nationally recognized ELL experts met with state educators to discuss the focus group findings and the leading research on linguistic accommodations. “The summit provided an in-depth dialogue among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners as a means for bringing evidence to bear on practice,” says SEDL program director Vicki Dimock, who directs the TXCC.

Collaborating to Put Research Into Practice

The focus group and research summit findings guided the TXCC and TEA as they determined how best to assist districts and schools in meeting the needs of ELLs. “Our research showed that the greatest need was for more professional development for teachers,” says Dimock. “They needed assistance incorporating research-based linguistic accommodations into daily instruction, and they also needed more guidance in appropriately integrating the state’s English Language Proficiency Standards.”

To provide teachers with this support, the TXCC is helping the TEA create an innovative online course, scheduled for completion in 2010. “This online resource will help teachers develop the skills required to enable limited English proficient students to meet the state’s performance standards,” says Roberto C. Manzo, program manager for the TEA’s Limited English Proficient Student Success Initiatives.

The TXCC team is pleased with the project’s success to date. “Our collaborative process in working with the TEA enabled us to translate the research into usable strategies for the classroom,” says Williams. “This process is at the heart of the TXCC researcher-practitioner relationship. And it directly supports SEDL’s mission to ensure a quality education for all students.”

“Our collaborative process in working with the TEA enabled us to translate the research into usable strategies for the classroom. This process is at the heart of the TXCC researcher-practitioner relationship.”

Haidee Williams, SEDL Project Director

Web site usage for select project sites

2.9 million

hits

National Center for the
Dissemination of
Disability Research

192,400

page views

Southeast Comprehensive
Center and Texas
Comprehensive Center

526,143

page views

Center for Comprehensive
School Reform and
Improvement

5.5 million page views for the SEDL Web site

The Web site provides articles and resources for educators, administrators, parents, community members, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

12,422 free afterschool publications
were distributed by SEDL nationally and internationally.



993

educators and administrators

were served by SEDL's fee-for-service work.

10,500
educators and administrators

were served by the Texas Comprehensive Center and
the Southeast Comprehensive Center through events
and publications.



Helping Texas Educators Work Systemically



All children deserve to attend high-quality schools that provide a sound education. Although educators work hard to meet this goal, they are not always able to identify the problems schools are facing or implement the most effective solutions. One of the many ways that SEDL helps low-performing districts and schools is through its Texas Comprehensive Center (TXCC). The TXCC works closely with the Texas Education Agency and the state's 20 Education Service Centers (ESCs) to help them assist districts and schools in need of improvement.

Since 2007, the TXCC has been using SEDL's Working Systemically approach to guide school improvement efforts. This unique approach involves all levels of an education system—from the state to the classroom level. At each level, the approach helps educators build competencies for continuous improvement, such as collecting and analyzing data, as they address critical system components, like curriculum and instruction. By using this process, educators are able to work in a more coherent way, establish a culture of collaboration and trust, and focus on what will most improve student achievement.

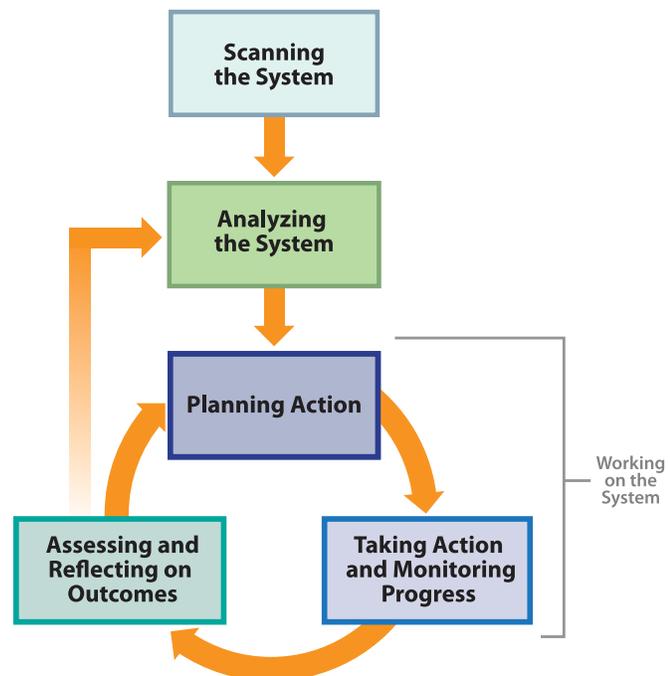
“Working Systemically is a comprehensive process that gives districts and schools the know-how and tools to translate the research about educational improvement into significant and sustainable gains in student learning,” explains D’Ette Cowan, a project director with the TXCC.

In 2009, the TXCC began providing six ESCs with expanded support using the Working Systemically approach. This support has included extensive coaching and monitoring through monthly phone calls, site visits, and other technical assistance. One of the ESCs receiving expanded TXCC support is Region 20 in San Antonio. The Region 20 staff are committed to the Working Systemically approach and have seen some of the state's best results with it.

Change in a Large, Urban School District

Cynthia Stone, an administrative specialist with Region 20 until mid-2009, used Working Systemically to transform a low-performing district in south San Antonio. The large, urban district of mostly Hispanic students struggled with high poverty, borderline and inconsistent achievement, and fragmented improvement efforts.

By involving leaders at both district and campus levels, the Working Systemically process helped unify and focus improvement efforts. District and campus leaders now have targeted plans in place and are actively implementing them. “They are also more confident about analyzing data to identify strengths and challenges,” says Stone. “And they are using the data to focus on how the system can better support schools and principals to solve problems.” Most important, achievement scores have begun to rise. In fact, district leaders



Phases in the Working Systemically Approach

“The Working Systemically process enabled us to have in-depth discussions, reach consensus, and align our goals. Now the stage is set to move forward in a new direction.”

Sheila Collazo, Component Director of School Support Services, Region 20 ESC

were so pleased with the progress that they hired Stone to direct and coordinate their systemic improvement efforts full-time.

Change in a Small, Rural School District

The TXCC has continued working at the Region 20 ESC with Sheila Collazo, component director of School Support Services. In Fall 2009, she began using Working Systemically with a small, rural district of four schools. Although meeting performance standards, the district previously had a low-performing high school and was experiencing changing demographics. District leaders sought to improve student achievement by focusing on 21st century skills and better integrating technology and differentiating instruction.

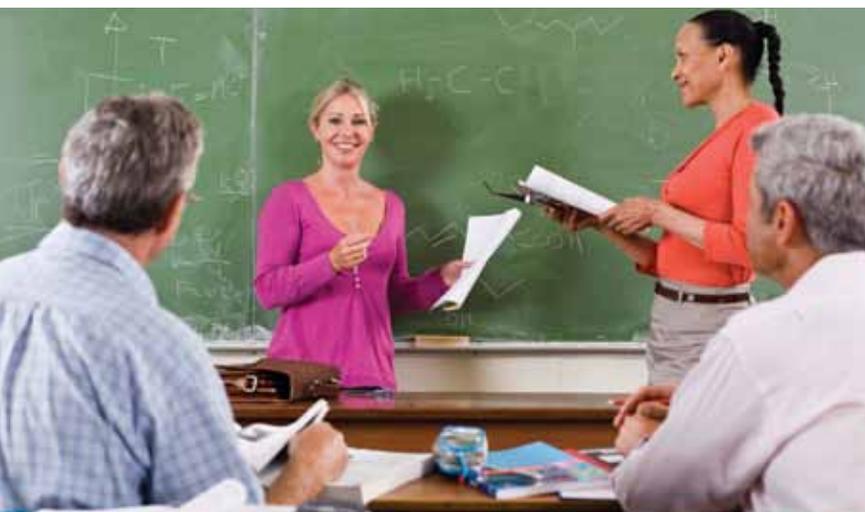
Early results are already visible. The district has formed a leadership team, analyzed student achievement data, identified a set of problems to address, and begun developing a focused and integrated improvement plan. Throughout the process, the Working Systemically approach has provided structure and tools to deepen dialogue and collaboration and align key components. For example, a comprehensive needs assessment indicated that English language learners and special education students were underperforming. “School goals for improving achievement in these groups did not align with the district’s existing goals,” says Collazo. “But instead of routing

multiple documents and having endless meetings, the Working Systemically process enabled us to have in-depth discussions, reach consensus, and align our goals. Now the stage is set to move forward in a new direction.”

TXCC staff have provided crucial support to help Collazo keep the process moving. “As problems and unique situations arise, we help the ESC staff address them,” says Stacey Joyner, a program associate with the TXCC. “We know the must-dos for the approach to work and how to tailor it to the specific needs of each district and school. At the same time, we build the ESC staff’s capacity to implement the approach in a variety of settings.”

Change at the Regional Level

The Region 20 ESC has seen changes not only in the districts and schools it supports but also in the way it operates. Ed Vara, component director of Instructional Programs and Services, is one of several leaders who has promoted the Working Systemically approach within the center. “The approach has helped ESC leaders become focused on the bigger picture, which has broken down the walls that kept us from working together,” says Vara. “For example, instead of making budget decisions separately, department heads meet and discuss the budget together, considering what is best for the entire system. This focused vision now guides our entire organization.”



A Comprehensive Approach

SEDL works through two regional comprehensive centers to assist state and district educators with meeting the challenges of underachieving schools. The Southeast Comprehensive Center serves state and local educators in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. The Texas Comprehensive Center serves state and regional educators in Texas. Both comprehensive centers use the Working Systemically approach as a way to support school improvement. SEDL staff developed and refined this approach through intensive site work with 60 schools and districts across five states from 2000 to 2005.

Promoting School Improvement at the Classroom Level



In South Carolina's Georgetown County School District, a culture shift is underway. Teachers who often worked alone are coming together to discuss student performance, identify strategies for improving instruction, develop standards-based lessons, and learn from one another. Helping drive this shift is SEDL's Professional Teaching and Learning Cycle (PTLC), an ongoing, job-embedded professional development process for improving teaching and learning.

In 2009, SEDL began a 2-year project with the Georgetown County School District to support the implementation of the PTLC. The project has become a major district improvement focus. Initially involving three middle schools, it has since expanded to include three high schools and one elementary school. Edward Tobia, a project director in SEDL's Improving School Performance group, is leading the team, which includes staff with expertise in literacy, special education, school improvement, professional development, and research and evaluation.

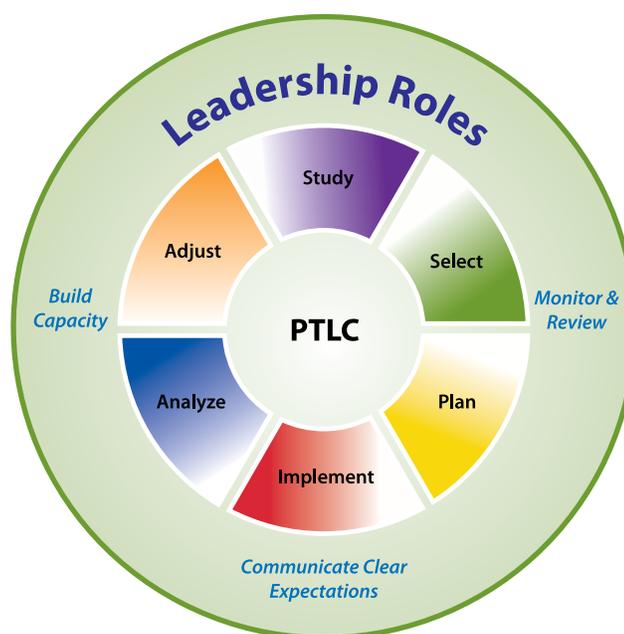
"The PTLC goes far beyond typical staff development," says Tobia. "It fosters a culture of continuous learning through a set of processes that change how teachers and administrators work together and think about their jobs."

The PTLC

The PTLC focuses on improvement at the classroom level and is a key component of SEDL's Working Systemically approach for school reform (see page 8). Consisting of six steps, the PTLC helps educators align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to their state standards through collaboration, collective learning, and shared practice. Teachers work in teams to discuss and analyze student performance and other data. The teams then use the discussions to guide them as they plan and implement lessons aligned to the standards. After carrying out the lessons, teacher

teams meet again to share their successes and challenges, analyze student work, diagnose student needs, and adjust their lessons accordingly.

During this process, SEDL staff serve as facilitators, helping teachers use data, build their content knowledge, incorporate research-based instructional strategies, and improve the quality and coherence of instruction across classrooms and grades. At the same time, SEDL works with school and district leaders to help them support the PTLC process. As the graphic shows, leaders do this by clearly communicating their expectations, building staff capacity to meet those expectations, and developing a system to monitor and review the results. "The PTLC process is effective because it simultaneously addresses teacher quality, leadership responsibilities, and school improvement," says Tobia.



SEDL developed the PTLC in partnership with the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. The process reflects the research on best practices in professional development and school improvement.

Systemic Change in Georgetown County

SEDL kicked off its work with Georgetown County by holding a 4-day summer institute. School leadership teams—each consisting of a principal, assistant principal, and instructional coach—learned the fundamentals of the PTLC and how to guide teachers through the process. “For the first time ever the district had leadership teams from every school come together and commit to a single improvement strategy,” explains Tobia.

To focus improvement efforts, district and school leaders pinpointed literacy as the core content area to target. In particular, they wanted to improve students’ ability to read and use informational texts. SEDL staff worked with the leadership teams to identify relevant state standards, research-based instructional strategies, and assessment techniques. The SEDL team then began helping teachers to develop and carry out common lessons, and to hold follow-up meetings to review and refine their practices.

Work also began on project evaluation, which SEDL is providing as well. Program associate Erin McCann worked with Georgetown County to develop the evaluation plan. McCann will process and analyze data from a variety of sources: meeting forms, discussion logs, focus group feedback, survey questionnaires, classroom walk-throughs, and student grades and standardized test data. She will provide district and school leaders with formative evaluations on teacher and student progress at regular intervals as well as a summative evaluation at the end of the project.

A Community of Professional Learners

Although SEDL’s work in Georgetown County is still in its early stages, the PTLC process is beginning to take hold. Patti Hammel, the district’s executive director for Student Performance and Federal Programs, is excited about the shift she is seeing. “We’re following a prescriptive plan for professional learning teams in which principals, teachers, and coaches collaborate to lead school efforts,” Hammel says.

Georgetown County teachers, who did some common planning before, now are working together far more extensively to discuss instruction, review student work, and share their practices, knowledge, and expertise. “For a long time, we went into our rooms and we went into private practice,” Hammel notes. “We never shared what we knew. Now we’re allowing



The PTLC focuses on improving classroom instruction and student learning, and is a key component of SEDL’s Working Systemically approach for school reform.

teachers to look at it all and talk about strategies they’re going to use together. If I’m a new teacher or a teacher who has difficulty with particular content, this gives me an open door with my colleagues so I can get some ideas.”

Research supports the PTLC’s emphasis on collaboration through professional learning communities. “If teachers can reflect on their own practices and then come together to share and learn, they begin seeing some immediate benefits,” explains Tobia. “Getting over that hurdle of opening up to other teachers, when they haven’t done that in the past, is one of the things our structure helps provide.”

SEDL’s goal is to give Georgetown County’s educators the knowledge and skills to take over after the project ends. Although leaders and staff may change, the PTLC process of continuous improvement—reviewing student work and data, planning lessons together, evaluating and refining classroom practices—should remain in place. Says Hammel, “It’s our belief that after 2 years, it’ll be automatic. It will be the way we do business.”

“We’re following a prescriptive plan for professional learning teams in which principals, teachers, and coaches collaborate to lead school efforts.”

Patti Hammel, executive director for Student Performances and Federal Programs



Jarvis, Starks Win President's Awards

Each year, SEDL president and CEO Wes Hoover presents president's awards to two employees to honor their outstanding achievements. The 2009 recipients were Robin Jarvis, who received the Edwin Hindsman Award for outstanding service on behalf of children, and Joann Starks, who received the Rogers L. Barton Award for outstanding contributions to educational research and development.



Robin Jarvis is a program manager in the Improving School Performance group. Her main responsibility is to provide leadership for the Southeast Comprehensive Center

(SECC). During her 2-and-a-half year tenure in this position, but especially during 2009, Jarvis has worked diligently to advance the quality of SEDL's work in each of the state departments of education in the Southeast. She brings to this work an extensive knowledge of school improvement from both a local and a state perspective. Through those perspectives, and her in-depth understanding of the benefits of education research and development, Jarvis has been able to help the states served by the SECC understand how their systems can better support improvement at the local level; even more important, she has helped states act on that understanding to adjust their systems. The effectiveness of her work is one of the key reasons that SEDL enjoys such a strong reputation in the Southeast.



Joann Starks is a program associate in the Disability Research to Practice group. One of her main responsibilities is to support the Disability Subgroup

of the Campbell Collaboration Education Coordinating Group. Her efforts have helped create a network of disability research professionals who are learning how to conduct systematic reviews to improve the quality of disability research and the ability to draw unbiased conclusions from it. Starks also performs many other key tasks: organizing and implementing national webcasts, serving as staff liaison with the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research Task Force on Systematic Review and Guidelines, organizing online training courses in conducting high-quality systematic reviews, and planning high-profile workshops on topics related to knowledge translation and disability and rehabilitation research.

Highlights of 2009



Caverly Attends IES Training

SEDL seeks to be a community of learners, and program associate Sarah Caverly exemplified that goal this past year by expanding her research capabilities. Caverly, who is part of SEDL's Research and Evaluation group, was selected from a competitive pool to attend the 2009 Cluster-Randomized Trials Summer Institute. Held by the Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Research, the institute provided intensive training in conducting cluster randomized trials.

385 SEDL publications and products

cover topics such as family and community, reading and literacy, math and science, improving school performance, and technology in the classroom.





SEDL Promotes Community Service

Through community service work, SEDL employees had a direct impact on the lives of local students and families. During the company's annual Adopt-a-Family drive, staff raised \$1,420 and donated gifts and their time to help two families in need. SEDL also continued its support of nearby Norman Elementary, a Title I school that serves predominantly impoverished students in Austin, where SEDL's headquarters is located. The school has limited resources, including many that are needed to help students meet state requirements. Through book drives and other efforts, SEDL employees supplied Norman Elementary with books, funds for a classroom bilingual library, and 200 safety goggles.



SEDL Staff Author New Articles

SEDL's staff share their research and knowledge by authoring articles on current education topics. In 2009, Frank Martin, program associate in SEDL's Disability Research to Practice program, co-authored "Knowledge Translation in Disability and Rehabilitation Research: Lessons From the Application of Knowledge Value Mapping to the Case of Accessible Currency." This article appeared in the *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*.

In addition, program manager Catherine Jordan and project director Danny Martinez both had articles published in the Winter issue of *SEEN*, the magazine of the Southeast Education Network.

In "Expanded Learning Programs Are School Improvement Strategies: Afterschool, Summer School and Community School," Jordan describes how recent research indicates that expanded learning programs have a positive impact on student achievement.

In "Integrating Technology for the 21st Century School," Martinez discusses the need for teachers and students to be able to use the latest technologies. He focuses on Web 2.0 applications, which are powerful means of communicating and collaborating online.



SEDL Publications Recognized

The Association of Educational Publishers recognized three SEDL publications as 2009 awards finalists. The SEDL 2007 Annual Report and 2008–2009 Catalog were finalists for the Beacon Award, and *SEDL Letter: Afterschool, Family, and Community* was a finalist for the Distinguished Achievement Award for Design of an Adult Periodical.

Executive Committee



Officers of the Board (left to right): Charles Cobbs, Gloria Griffin, Arturo Arce, Matthew Causey, and Catherine Cross Maple.

SEDL's work is guided by a 19-member board of directors with representatives drawn from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Gloria Griffin, CHAIRWOMAN

Dr. Griffin is superintendent of Millwood Public Schools (MPS) in Oklahoma City. Before joining MPS in 1994, Dr. Griffin was director of high schools and adult education for the Oklahoma City Public Schools (OCPS). In the late 1980s, she was director of middle schools and fifth-grade centers at OCPS. Dr. Griffin also served as a middle school principal and a middle and high school teacher during her 30-year career.

Arturo Arce, VICE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Arce is the executive principal of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) Leadership Development Center. He started his education career as a speech and language teacher in Kingsville, Texas. During his career, he worked at a number of schools in teaching and administrative positions before serving as the administrative supervisor for the AISD Professional Development Academy and later as the principal of Bryker Woods Elementary School.

Charles Cobbs, SECRETARY

Mr. Cobbs is currently an assistant superintendent for secondary schools for Jonesboro Public Schools in Arkansas. Formerly, he served as principal at Annie Camp Junior High, Pine Bluff High School, and Arkadelphia High School, and as assistant principal at Jonesboro High School.

In 1995, he received the Milken Family Foundation Award, presented to teachers and principals who are furthering excellence in education.

Catherine Cross Maple, TREASURER

Dr. Cross Maple is currently the deputy cabinet secretary of learning and accountability for the New Mexico Public Education Department. Previously, she was the assistant secretary for New Mexico Vocational Rehabilitation. She also has served as a senior administrator for the Albuquerque Public Schools. She has extensive experience and is considered an expert in strategic leadership and visionary planning, continuous improvement methodologies, educational administration and curriculum, and disability/special education.

Matthew Causey, IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN

Dr. Causey is associate professor of mathematics at Xavier University of Louisiana. He recently retired from his position as associate vice chancellor for academic affairs at Southern University at New Orleans, Louisiana, where he was also an associate professor of mathematics. Previously, he had served as dean of the College of Science and as chairman of the Department of Mathematics and Physics. He had been a member of the faculty since 1970.

Complete bios are online at www.sedl.org/about/board.html

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 Little Rock



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 Superintendent of Catholic Schools
 Diocese of Laredo
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Robin Jarvis
PROGRAM MANAGER



John Westbrook
PROGRAM MANAGER

Complete bios are online at www.sedl.org/about/management.html

2009 SEDL Staff

Shailla Abdullah	Media Design Associate	Frank Martin, PhD	Program Associate
Magda Acuña	Media Design Specialist	Danny Martinez, MA	Project Director
Margaret Alvarez	Administrative Secretary	Luis Martinez	Web Administrator
Marion Baldwin, MA	Program Associate	Erin McCann, PhD	Program Associate
Shirley Beckwith, MLIS	Communications Associate	Mary Lou Meadows, EdD	Program Associate
Nance Bell, PhD	Program Associate	Debra Meibaum, MAT	Program Associate
Stella Bell, EdD	Program Associate	John Middleton	Web Administrator
Leslie Blair, MA	Project Director	Concepción Molina, EdD	Program Associate
Martha Boethel, MA	Director of Development	Tashanda Moreno	Administrative Assistant
Darlene Brown, PhD	Program Associate	Christine Moses-Egan, MA	Director of Communications
Jackie Burniske, MA	Program Associate	Eva Mueller	Administrative Assistant
Sarah Caverly, PhD	Program Associate	Ada Muoneke, PhD	Program Associate
Camille Chapman, MEd	Program Associate	Kathleen Murphy, PhD	Project Director
Ramona Chauvin, PhD	Program Associate	Ann Neeley, EdD	Program Associate
Mary Ann Contreras	Operator/Receptionist	Joe Parker, MS	Program Associate
Glenda Copeland, MA	Program Associate	Cyndi Pasadeos	Accounting Supervisor
D'Ette Cowan, EdD	Project Director	Clifton Pierron	Network Administrator
Vicki Dimock, PhD	Program Director	Sylvia Pirtle, MEd	Program Associate
Deborah Donnelly, PhD	Project Director	Petra Ramirez	Administrative Assistant
Chris Ferguson, PhD	Program Associate	Lisa Raphael, PhD	Program Specialist
Stuart Ferguson, CPA	Accounting Supervisor	Nancy Reynolds, MLS	Information Associate
Joan Finlay	Administrative Secretary	Connie Rios	Accounting Assistant
Lori Foradory	Accounting Specialist	Deborah Ritenour, MA	Communications Associate
Amanda Frenzel	Administrative Assistant	Maggie Rivas, MA	Program Associate
Georgina Gonzalez, MA	Program Associate	Maria Rodriguez	Administrative Assistant
Darrel Gorel	Maintenance Assistant	Sandy Rodriguez	Executive Assistant
Cheryl Harris, PhD	Program Associate	Janis Rogers	Administrative Secretary
Lin Harris	Information Specialist	Zena Rudo, PhD	Project Director
Tracy Hoes	Human Resources Assistant	Laura Shankland, MA	Communications Associate
Marjorie Holford	Administrative Secretary	Joann Starks, MA	Program Associate
Wes Hoover, PhD	President and CEO	Kathleen Theodore, MA	Program Associate
Robin Jarvis, PhD	Program Manager	Chris Times, MBA	Communications Associate
Debra H. Jones, PhD	Project Director	Kati Timmons	Development Associate
Catherine Jordan, MAT	Program Manager	Edward Tobia, EdD	Project Director
Stacey Joyner, MEd	Program Associate	Maria Torres, MA	Program Associate
Loretta King	Administrative Secretary	Michael Vaden-Kiernan, PhD	Director of Research & Evaluation
Arnold Kriegel, CPA	Vice President and CFO	Joni Wackwitz	Communications Specialist
Jim Kunetka	Senior Development Advisor	Sally Wade, EdD	Program Associate
Dale Lewis, PhD	Program Associate	Judy Waisath	Information Specialist
Sue Liberty	Human Resources Generalist	Eric Waters, MSCIS	Database Development Associate
Brenda Lightfoot, PhD	Program Associate	John Westbrook, PhD	Program Manager
Brian Litke, MSCIS	Web Administrator	Haidee Williams, MS	Project Director
Jack Lumbley	Program Associate	Lacy Wood, MLIS	Project Director
Jesse Mabus	Information Specialist	Heather Wrightington, CPA	Accounting Supervisor
Robyn Madison-Harris, EdD	Program Associate		

42 former teachers, principals, and superintendents work at SEDL.
 Employees hold 29 doctoral degrees and 27 master's degrees in fields
 such as curriculum and instruction, experimental psychology, and education administration.

SEDL Relationships

SEDL's relationships with state departments of education, universities, service agencies, and other organizations allow us to better serve our clients. In the end, these mutually beneficial relationships help improve education for students across the country.

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ABLEDATA
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Afterschool Science Coalition
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ANALYTICA
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Kessler Medical Rehabilitation Research and Education Corp.
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The Catholic University of America
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The Public Education Network
Through the Looking Glass
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Vocational Rehabilitation Service Models for Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorders

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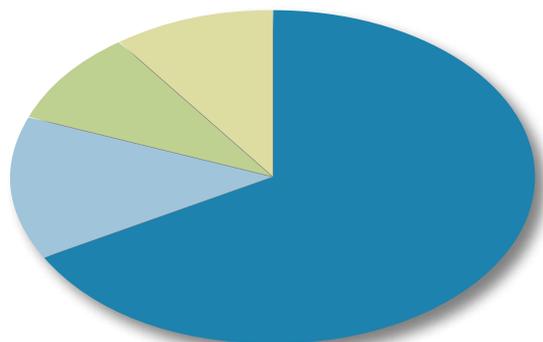
Financials as of November 2009

	2009	2008
ASSETS		
Current assets	\$ 5,190,837	6,144,198
Land	1,335,472	1,335,472
Building, net	9,137,558	9,334,554
Equipment, net	211,861	253,657
Total assets	15,875,728	17,067,881
LIABILITIES		
Accounts and other payables	909,422	1,363,924
Mortgage payable	6,773,522	7,347,906
Total liabilities	7,682,944	8,711,830
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted-designated building fund	1,157,095	1,129,114
Unrestricted-undesignated	7,035,689	7,226,937
Total net assets	8,192,784	8,356,051
Total liabilities and net assets	15,875,728	17,067,881

REVENUE AND SUPPORT		
Federal contracts and grants	12,182,782	17,810,344
Other contracts	1,922,806	1,829,990
Publications sales and royalties, net	71,297	92,822
Investment income, net	38,949	55,607
Total revenue and support	14,215,834	19,788,763
EXPENSES		
Federal contracts and grants	9,869,804	15,226,458
Other contracts	1,606,071	1,207,995
Publications sales and royalties, net	118,355	119,563
Total direct expenses	11,594,230	16,554,016
Indirect expenses	2,784,871	2,899,404
Total expenses	14,379,101	19,453,420
Increase in net assets	\$ (163,267)	335,343

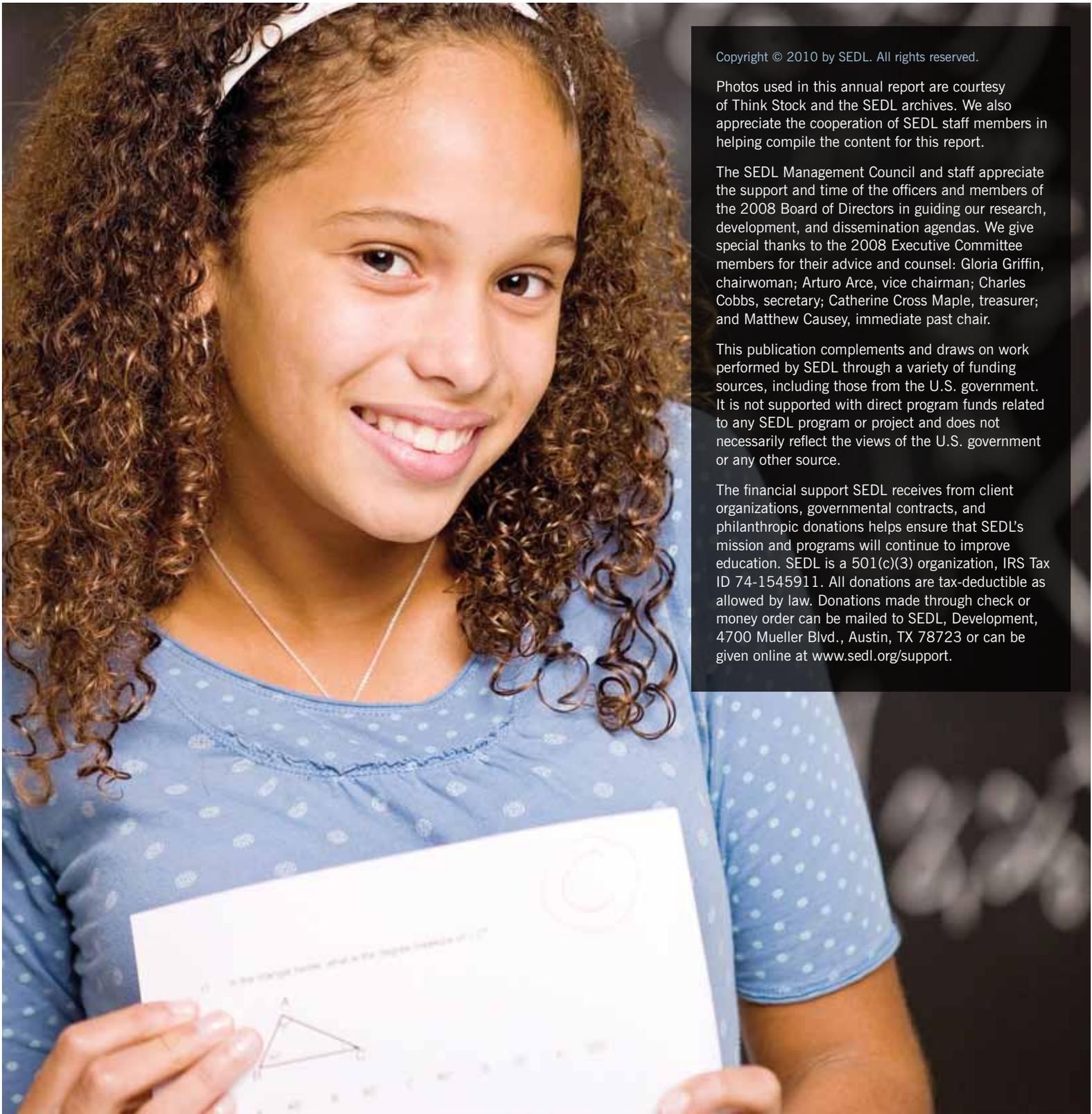
SEDL's Commitment

SEDL's resources for supporting our research, development, and dissemination work include competitive grants and contracts awarded by various public and private sources. We also offer fee-for-service arrangements to deliver professional development, conduct applied and policy research, evaluate programs, and develop customized Web applications and databases to help clients manage data and information. SEDL is a 501(c)(3) corporation committed to operating with financial integrity and rigorous oversight.



Program Area Funding

- Improving School Performance **67%**
- Afterschool, Family, and Community **14%**
- Research and Evaluation **9%**
- Disability Research to Practice **10%**



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Photos used in this annual report are courtesy of Think Stock and the SEDL archives. We also appreciate the cooperation of SEDL staff members in helping compile the content for this report.

The SEDL Management Council and staff appreciate the support and time of the officers and members of the 2008 Board of Directors in guiding our research, development, and dissemination agendas. We give special thanks to the 2008 Executive Committee members for their advice and counsel: Gloria Griffin, chairwoman; Arturo Arce, vice chairman; Charles Cobbs, secretary; Catherine Cross Maple, treasurer; and Matthew Causey, immediate past chair.

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Credits

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Director of Communications / Christine Moses-Egan

Writer and Editor / Joni Wackwitz

Contributors / Stuart Ferguson, Arnold Kriegel, Danny Martinez,
Laura Shankland, Chris Times

Designer / Shaila Abdullah

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