

Spotlight

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NCLB Scanning Service Update

The [NCLB Scanning Service](#) of the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) is currently featuring guidance and other resources on key education topics

[Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement](#)

[The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Opportunities for High School Improvement](#)

Highlights of State Work

Alabama

Review of Seclusions and Restraint Policy

In a July 31, 2009, [key policy letter](#) to all state chiefs, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan urged the states to review their policies and guidelines on the use of seclusions and restraint in schools. He also encouraged the states to develop or revise their policies and guidelines, as necessary, to ensure that all students in their jurisdictions are protected from unnecessary or inappropriate seclusion and restraint techniques.

In response to the secretary's letter, SECC offered to assist the states that it serves with policy development or review, upon request. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) requested SECC to review changes to its seclusions and restraint policy and to provide feedback. On September 21, SECC staff Mary Lou Meadows, EdD, Alabama state liaison, and Ada Muoneke, PhD, program associate, participated in a conference call with ALSDE staff Dr. Mabrey Whetsone, state director of Special Education, and Dr. Sue Adams, director of Prevention and

Support Services, to discuss a review of the Alabama Seclusions and Restraint Policy. In October, SECC's Muoneke reviewed the policy to determine whether it contained important elements of effective practices outlined by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of General Counsel on seclusions and restraint and provided feedback to ALSDE.

Professional Development Sessions

On September 24, staff from ALSDE—Dr. Whetsone, Sherrill Parris, assistant state superintendent of education, Cynthia Brown, director of curriculum and instruction, and Christine Spear, project administrator for Response to Instruction—participated in a telephone conference with SECC staff Meadows and Sandra Lindsay, EdD, South Carolina state liaison. The group discussed SECC assistance with a plan for staff in ALSDE's Instructional Services Division to have a shared learning and training experience once a quarter. RtI will be the focus of the first four sessions, which will be facilitated by Lindsay.

Alabama Regional Support Coordinators Meeting

The Alabama Regional Support Coordinators Meeting was held September 18 at the state department. Catherliene Williamson, PhD, ALSDE school improvement coordinator, led a discussion of the following objectives:

- Understand the history behind this group
- Become more familiar with each other's roles and support
- Develop ideas for 2009–2010 collaborative activities to be presented to the steering committee

Meadows, SECC Alabama state liaison, serves as a member of the coordinators group.

Georgia

Regional Math Institute Follow-Up Meeting

On September 30, 2009, SECC staff Camille Chapman, MA, and Glenda Copeland, MA, Georgia state liaison, met with state team members who attended SECC's regional math institute in July. Pictured are Chapman and Craig Gears, division director of Outreach Programs, Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE),

during the follow-up meeting. The team is initiating several actions to address the mathematics advisory panel's recommendations: (a) providing links to the report and resources regarding the recommendations



on various Web pages on the state department's site, (b) informing other staff in their divisions about the report and recommendations, (c) working with other state agencies to create more consistency across the state in math specialist certification, and (d) connecting with math teachers throughout the state via a biweekly newsletter. The team also has identified other actions to increase awareness of the recommendations and support inclusion in their work.

Thinking Maps® Planning

SECC's Copeland and Kathy Carrollton, GaDOE project director, school support and improvement, met on September 24 to identify dates for SECC staff to provide support and mentoring to state directors in schools in improvement status for implementation of the Thinking Maps® visual thinking strategy. Besides facilitating work sessions with department content experts, SECC staff will mentor state directors in supporting implementation in the schools, observing in classrooms, and analyzing data.

School Improvement Training Conference

On September 23–24, Glenda Copeland attended a meeting of the state department's Division of Needs Improvement and State-Directed Schools. Nearly 140 participants explored CLASS Keys, the new teacher evaluation process that was used in a field study during the 2008–2009 school year. There were 55 systems, 176 schools, and 1,154 participants involved with the study, and revisions were made based on their experiences. CLASS Keys is part of the standards-based system for quality education that includes the Georgia Performance Standards, School Keys, and Leader Keys. Participants met with their work teams and received an overview of the state department's strategic plan.

Louisiana

Parental Involvement Toolkit Events

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) was unable to participate in SECC's Parental Involvement Toolkit Webinar that was held in September. On October 13, 2009, Darlene Brown,

PhD, SECC Louisiana state liaison, met with LDE's parental involvement staff to review the toolkit and plan a presentation for the Louisiana Association of School Administrators of Federally Assisted Programs (LASAFAP) 2009 Conference. Sally Wade, PhD, SECC program associate, and LDE staff members Shelia Campbell and Margaret Brolin copresented information on the toolkit at the LASAFAP conference in Marksville, Louisiana, on October 28–30.

Academy of Pacesetting States Activities

Team Louisiana participated in the first distance learning session of the [Academy of Pacesetting States](#) on October 2. Louisiana is one of nine states from seven regional comprehensive centers chosen for the yearlong academy. The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII), through the academy, is providing training, consultation, and support for state teams to develop expertise in effective statewide systems of support.

Communication was the chief topic of the day for the distance learning session. Alabama, another state served by SECC, has made a name for itself with the Alabama Regional Support Coordinators and the related communication systems it has in place. ALSDE staff Tommy Bice, EdD, deputy state superintendent of education, and Deanne Stone, PhD, federal programs director, discussed the evolution of collaboration in the state of Alabama.

On October 5, Team Louisiana participated in a conference call with CII representative Nancy Protheroe to discuss a 4-step action plan and next steps for the process. Also, the team took part in a second distance learning session on October 21. During the session, participants representing six states—Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, and Oklahoma—briefly discussed how school districts and schools are differentiated to determine the desired trajectory and the support services and interventions needed.

Statewide System of Support Initiative

As part of LDE's statewide system of support (SSOS) initiative, key cabinet members participated in a self-assessment interview conducted by SECC consultant Michael Davis and SECC program associate Camille Chapman on September 25. To obtain additional information, the team also interviewed LDE staff from Title I, Distinguished Educators, Special Education, and the School Improvement divisions. To collect district-level data, Davis and SECC program associates Chapman, Brown, Louisiana state liaison, and Robyn Madison-Harris, EdD, conducted interviews with superintendents and principals in specific districts. SECC's staff also is compiling the data and drafting an inventory report that will assist in strengthening the SSOS.

Rtl Task Force

SECC program associate Ada Muoneke recently attended the first Rtl Task Force meeting at LDE. The 30-member task force consists

of school, district, and LDE staff that are doing RtI-related work in the state. The purpose of the meeting was to begin to formulate a coherent plan for statewide implementation of RtI and to guide schools and districts in the process. The team compiled a list of implementation steps for the 2009–2010 school year and will meet again on December 3 to prioritize the list and create subcommittees to develop action plans.

Mississippi

Work Sessions for Statewide System of Support

Providing a seamless system of technical support, professional development, and assistance to school districts to increase student achievement is the mission of the Mississippi Department of



Education's statewide system of support. MDE is tackling this mission through a series of collaborative work sessions. On September 1, 2009, SECC staff Robin Jarvis, PhD, program manager, Debra Meibaum, MAT, Mississippi state liaison, program associates Jack Lumbley, Robyn Madison-Harris, and Lisa Raphael, PhD, as well as consultant Michael Davis participated in SSOS Work Session #7.

Outcomes for the meeting included gaining a consensus on a conceptual framework for the SSOS, analyzing MDE's current situation in relation to the framework, discussing development efforts, identifying next phase priorities, and developing implementation plans. Pictured are Dr. Kris Kaase, deputy superintendent, Instructional Programs and Services (standing), and other MDE staff. The next work session is scheduled December 1. Also, SECC's Meibaum participated in the first SSOS coordinating council meeting, which was held September 22.

Coaches Academy and Follow-Up Session

Debra Meibaum, SECC Mississippi state liaison, copresented with Peggy Williams, MDE consultant, at the MDE Office of Leadership and Professional Development's Mississippi Coaches Academy for central and southern Mississippi school districts on September 9–10. The purpose of the academy was to help participants gain an understanding of coaching roles and responsibilities for school-based instructional coaches, school administrators, and MDE external coaches. A follow-up session is scheduled November 17.

Response to Intervention Work Session

On September 2–3, SECC staff Jarvis, Meibaum, Lumbley, Raphael, Dale Lewis, PhD, and consultant Davis participated in the MDE RtI Collaborative Work Session #8. Participating organizations



included MDE, SECC, and the Southeast Regional Resource Center. On day 1, participants (pictured below) reported on implementation efforts and developed plans for new and continuing actions. On day 2, RtI collaborative members participated in training on Positive Behavior and Interventions Support (PBIS). The next work session is scheduled December 2.

In addition, Debra Meibaum participated in the RtI Coordinating Council meeting on September 22. SECC staff Ada Muoneke, Dale Lewis, and Meibaum also participated in a conference call with MDE staff to continue work on the RtI funding guide.

South Carolina

Design of New Accreditation System

Beginning in October and continuing through the fall, SECC staff Robin Jarvis, program manager, Robyn Madison-Harris, and Dale Lewis will work with designated staff at the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to rethink the accreditation process for South Carolina's schools and school districts. Specifically, Nancy Busbee, director of the Office of State and Federal Accountability, has requested SECC's assistance in designing a new accreditation system including indicators on accountability, ongoing planning for school improvement, educator quality, school climate and safety, compliance with statutes and regulations, as well as financial compliance.

Curriculum Review Project

SECC staff is continuing work with SCDE on the curriculum project Standards Support System (S³), which includes multiple tools and resources to assist teachers in effectively using the state's academic standards. Dr. Valerie Harrison, deputy superintendent for the Division of Standards and Learning, and Robin Rivers, interim director for the Office of Academic Standards, are the lead staff at SCDE who requested SECC assistance with this curriculum project.

During October, a major focus for this project was review of the science curriculum. SECC engaged the services of Dr. Sandra K. Enger—a consultant from the University of Alabama

in Huntsville—to lead the science review work. Dr. Enger is completing reviews of the biology and physical science courses. Following these, she will complete reviews of the remaining kindergarten–8th grade courses. In addition, four SECC staff members are serving on the curriculum review team. Concepcion Molina, EdD, and Camille Chapman are concentrating on the review of the mathematics components, Glenda Copeland is providing expertise in social studies, and Kathleen Theodore, MA, is focusing on English language arts.

Palmetto Priority Schools Project

On October 13, the final fall regional collaboration meeting was held in Columbia, South Carolina. Representatives from the Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) and districts in the Midlands and Upstate area of South Carolina attended. The SCDE team delivered learning tasks to three key audiences at the regional meeting.

The Palmetto Priority Schools are designated for intensive service by SCDE. David Rawlinson, director of Special Projects, and his staff are responsible for providing direct services to a growing number of schools that have not made expected progress. Each month, SECC facilitates planning sessions to refine program activities. Participants include SECC’s Sandra Lindsay, South Carolina state liaison, and Dale Lewis, as well as SCDE’s Rawlinson, Beth Howard, Willie Frazier, and Paula Harris of PPS staff.

Calendar of Events

GaDOE Thinking Maps Training

November 2–3, 2009, and December 14, 2009
Holiday Inn Select, Atlanta, GA

Members of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) will learn to use the Thinking Maps process and develop the knowledge and skills needed to support others in the use of this process throughout the state. Participation in this event is by invitation only from GaDOE.

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MDE Statewide System of Support Work Session #8

December 1, 2009
Jackson Marriott Hotel, Jackson, MS

Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and SECC staff will continue the planning process for strengthening the SSOS. Participation is by invitation only from MDE.

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MDE Response to Intervention Work Session #9

December 2, 2009
Jackson Marriott Hotel, Jackson, MS

This session will target ongoing planning of technical assistance for statewide implementation of the RtI initiative. Participation is by invitation only from MDE.

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MDE RtI High School Focus Group Work Session

December 3, 2009
Northwest Rankin Career Center at Northwest Rankin High School, Flowood, MS

The outcome for this session is to identify ways to create a seamless transition of the RtI process from elementary/middle school to high school. Participation is by invitation only from MDE.

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The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) is one of 16 regional centers established by the U.S. Department of Education. The primary goal of the regional centers is to build the capacity of the state education agencies and statewide systems of support to implement NCLB. Links to the other regional centers, the content centers, and the U.S. Department of Education may be found on the SECC Web site (secc.sedl.org).

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