

Spotlight

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NCLB Scanning Service Update

The focus of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) on efforts to improve the nation's education system may generate both opportunities and challenges for states and other decision makers. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) reports that Secretary Arne Duncan praised a new initiative by 49 states and territories to create common core standards in mathematics and language arts, during recent remarks at the National Press Club. The [initiative](#) centers on developing college- and career-ready standards in July 2009 and grade-by-grade standards in December 2009. The National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers are leading this effort in partnership with Achieve Inc., ACT, and the College Board.

In addition to collaborative efforts of organizations, many states have deployed [ARRA Web sites](#) that describe funds received, projects to be funded, and resources for eligible recipients of funds. To access other ARRA resources or information on the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), visit the [NCLB Scanning Service](#) of the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC). Current entries include

[ARRA: Stimulating the Economy and Advancing Reform](#)

[Smart Options: Investing the Recovery Funds for Student Success](#)

[Updated Implementing Guidance for ARRA](#)

For a full listing of entries or more information, visit the center's Web site or contact a SECC state liaison.

Highlights of State Work

Alabama

LEA Support Roundtable Meetings

The LEA Support Roundtable (SRT) met May 22, 2009, at the Alabama Public Library Services Building in Montgomery. Alabama State Department of Education staff Christine Spear, Rtl coordinator, and Ann Allison, SRT coordinator, welcomed members. Guest speaker Dr. Denise Gibbs, director of Scottish Rite Foundation Learning Centers, discussed Experiencing Success with Rtl and Rtl in the Alabama Context.

Additionally, state department staff Dr. Deann Stone, federal programs director; Dr. Mabrey Whetstone, special education director; and Cyndi Townley, federal programs; presented information on Rtl funding from the SECC Rtl Regional Summit on Funding Models, which was held February 25–26. Mary Lou Meadows, SECC Alabama state liaison, attended the meeting as an SRT member.

During the June 18 meeting, SRT members discussed Professional Development and the New Professional Learning Unit Process.

Georgia

School and Leader Quality Work Session and Meeting

On May 28–29, 2009, Glenda Copeland, SECC Georgia state liaison, attended a work session and meeting of the school and leader quality (SLQ) division of the Georgia Department of Education (GDE). In the coming year, the SLQ division will focus on four areas for professional learning—Thinking Maps®, data teams, active literacy, and formative assessments. During the work session, Thinking Maps content presenters met to review and revise their materials for the workshops. Also, each subgroup did a walk-through of their design and received feedback from the entire group.

Thinking Maps® Evaluation Plan

SECC program associates Copeland and Erin McCann continued work with Kathy Carrollton and Kristy Kueber of the SLQ division on refining a comprehensive evaluation plan for implementing Thinking Maps strategies in 27 schools during the 2009–2010 school year.

Georgia Literacy Task Force

On May 14, SECC program associates Ramona Chauvin and Kathleen Theodore met with Mary Stout, Pamela Smith, and Sue Snow of the GDE to continue review of the statewide literacy plan, focusing primarily on the executive report, which includes recommendations from the Georgia Literacy Task Force. In addition, the group reviewed the plan to ensure that all documents supported the recent decision by the English language arts section to include prekindergarten, Head Start, and afterschool instruction.

The task force meeting on May 15 included GDE staff Stout, Smith, Snow, Julie Morrill, and Jeffrey Dillard. Stout, program manager of the English language arts section, facilitated the meeting and shared draft documents that addressed the state's literacy achievement and related topics.

Snow, assistant superintendent of standards-based learning, and Smith, interim director of academic standards, thanked the task force members for their hard work and said that they hope to present the executive report of the PreK–12 Literacy Plan to Superintendent Kathy Cox and the Georgia Board of Education this summer. SECC staff Chauvin and Theodore were asked to participate in this presentation.

Kimberly Anderson, SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Heather Koons, MetaMetrics, also collaborated on the literacy plan project.

BRIDGE Board Meeting

On May 1, state liaison Copeland met with the BRIDGE Board to review activities to inform various organizations that might use the resource in supporting new teacher induction. The workgroup reviewed a sustainability model for marketing the BRIDGE and possible offerings for professional learning units to attract teacher participation. The group is also developing proposals for external funding. David Hill of the Professional Standards Commission, which sponsored the work of the project and board, requested that board members consider continuing to work with the project if funding is secured.

Louisiana

Follow-up Presentation for Title III Coordinators

As a follow-up to the April 22 meeting of Title III, English language acquisition grant recipients in New Orleans, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) and SECC have invited Robert Linqanti, project director, English language evaluation & accountability support (ELEAS) and senior research associate with WestEd, to Louisiana to present the methodology and data used to create the state's revised Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) 1 and 2. Local education agency Title III coordinators are invited to attend the presentation, which will take place July 21 in Baton Rouge.

School Improvement Plan Revision Project

The school improvement plan committees at LDE have made significant progress during multiple work sessions in May and June. With representation from the literacy and numeracy division, professional development division, distinguished educators, school improvement division, and the Louisiana State Improvement Grant (LaSIG) program, the team has successfully refined all components of the template and produced a final draft. SECC staff, Darlene Brown, Louisiana state liaison, and Robyn Madison-Harris, program associate, facilitated the work sessions, which took place at the state department.

On June 2, the school improvement section in partnership with SEDL hosted a 1.5-hour Webinar to update committee members on the document revisions. District participants arranged to participate in the Webinar at one of the regional service centers, while LDE and SECC staff participated at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge.

Parental Involvement Partnership

The state department's LaSIG program hosted "SIG Day" for school- and district-level administrators, state department of education administrators, classroom teachers, instructional staff, families, and community members across the state. The event was held June 5 at Louisiana State University. The topic was Building Better Relationships: Improving Outcomes for All, with keynote speaker Ted Quant, Twomey Center for Peace through Justice Loyola University New Orleans.

While the focus of the event was on relationships in general, the specific focus was on relationships with families. Chris Ferguson, SECC program associate and author of the ED-sponsored [Parental Involvement Toolkit](#), provided strategies on building relationships with families. In addition, SECC provided each participant with an electronic file of the 205-page toolkit and each district with a hard copy. An outreach expo was conducted throughout the day, during which participants provided materials about events, training, and educational resources.

Curriculum and Standards Division Work Sessions

In early June, LDE staff and invited guests participated in curriculum and standards division work sessions at the Sheraton Baton Rouge Convention Center. SECC program associate Concepción Molina facilitated the work sessions and state liaison Brown attended. The purpose of the sessions was two-fold: to develop a framework for comprehensive courses in the state and to develop a professional learning module for the mathematics curriculum for grade 5. SECC will coordinate training for teachers and staff of a pilot site to be held July 28–30.

Mississippi

Statewide System of Support Work Session

The mission of the Mississippi Department of Education's statewide system of support (SSOS) is to provide a seamless system of technical assistance, professional development, and support to school districts to increase student achievement. On May 21, 2009, SECC program associates Jack Lumbley, Robyn Madison-Harris, and Erin McCann; Debra Meibaum, Mississippi state liaison; Sylvia Pirtle, Texas CC program associate; and Michael Davis, SECC consultant, participated in work session #6. In preparation for the meeting, Meibaum facilitated a subcommittee work session on May 12 to finalize a draft document identifying services that are available from the MDE for its three RtI tiers.

RtI Work Sessions

SECC staff members Meibaum, Lumbley, Ada Muoneke, and consultant Davis, participated in RtI work session #7 on May 20. Participants included MDE, the Southeast Regional Resource Center, and SECC. During the session, participants discussed implementation efforts and developed detailed implementation plans as well as a calendar for new and continuing actions. Work session #8 is scheduled on September 2–3 and work session #9 on December 2.

Coaches Academy Program Meeting and Evaluation

SECC program associates McCann, Meibaum, Camille Chapman, and Ed Tobia met with Sara Maghan and Peggy Williams of the MDE's Office of Leadership and Professional Development on May 19–20. The group reviewed findings from the coaches meeting in April, results of surveys administered to inform program planning for the 2009–2010 school year, and the evaluation design for the program. They also developed a program description as well as drafts of a coaching academy application form and a brochure. The program description will serve as the foundation for the evaluation plan, which will be developed in a subsequent meeting.

RtI Funding Subcommittee Meeting

On May 19, SECC's Muoneke and Meibaum met with the RtI funding subcommittee for its third meeting to review a draft of the RtI Funding Decision Tool that was developed by Dr. W. David Tilly. To refine the decision tool, subcommittee members from various program offices provided feedback and guidance that were shared with Dr. Tilly during a teleconference on June 2. Also, the subcommittee chair provided updates on previously identified action items for developing an RtI funding guide. The updates were shared during MDE's RtI work session #7 on May 20.

Review of Dropout Prevention Efforts

On May 18, SECC staff met with Sheril Smith, director of the MDE Office of Dropout Prevention, to review outcomes of the Dropout Prevention Conference held in Jackson on April 16. The group also discussed priorities for 2009–2010, which included following up with school districts needing to refine their dropout prevention plans and designing regional dropout prevention meetings for the fall.

Brustein & Manasevit National Spring Forum

SECC sponsored participation of four staff members of MDE at the Brustein & Manasevit 11th National Spring Forum on May 6–8. The workshop focused on key fiscal issues, such as how federal funds may lawfully displace state and local funds, maintenance of effort and comparability issues, new developments on audits and monitoring, risk management, internal controls, and how the Obama Fiscal Stimulus Bill will impact the federal role in education.

South Carolina

Efforts Focus on Palmetto Priority Schools Project

Nearly 2 years ago, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) created the Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) project to provide intensive services to schools that failed to meet expected progress on student achievement as required by the Education Accountability Act. To assist in this initiative, SECC is working with the state department to build the capacity of PPS interventionists to plan and deliver professional development services to district and school leadership in priority schools and districts during the 2009–2010 school year.

Sandra Lindsay, SECC South Carolina state liaison, is leading strategic planning efforts with PPS staff to deliver training to PPS liaisons and to plan regional meetings for PPS principals, district superintendents, and board members. SECC also will assist with development of plans for program and process evaluations for PPS services. Planning meetings were held on June 23–25 at the South Carolina Summer Leadership Institute. Special sessions

focusing on PPS were held during the institute. Lindsay joined the PPS staff in attending and facilitating these sessions. On June 24, Dr. Rex Smith, state superintendent, delivered the keynote message at a luncheon for PPS schools and staff.

Accountability Division Planning Session

Dr. Teri Siskind, deputy superintendent, SCDE division of accountability, requested SECC support to hold a planning session/retreat for all staff in the division. On June 11, 100 staff members convened at the Embassy Suites in Columbia to plan, share, and learn new skills. SECC's Lindsay facilitated sessions on the Promises and Pitfalls of E-mail and on Communication and Trust-Building. Team leaders and staff conducted breakout sessions on the important work being delivered in the accountability division so that all staff members could be aware of and supportive of division efforts.

Deputy Superintendents Mark Bounds (educator quality and leadership), Valerie Harrison (standards and learning), and Betsy Carpenter (innovation and support) also shared the work from their respective divisions. State Superintendent Rex gave the keynote address at the luncheon meeting and reiterated his support for staff members and the work of the accountability division.

Rtl Statewide Awareness Meeting

In conjunction with SECC, the South Carolina Rtl State Leadership Team held an initial statewide awareness meeting on June 9. District teams included the district superintendent or assistant superintendent, Title I director, special education director, and a principal. Dale Lewis, SECC program associate, worked with Pam Huxford, SCDE Rtl coordinator, to develop the agenda and handle meeting logistics. Stacia Rush, National Response to Intervention Center, also played a key role in facilitating the meeting, which was held at the Brookland Conference Center in Columbia.

Calendar of Events

Constructing Foundations for Success: Implications of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel Report (NMPR)

July 28–30, 2009
Atlanta Marriott Airport Hotel
Atlanta, GA

Contact: Maria Torres, SECC program associate
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The purpose of this institute is to build capacity through timely, high-quality presentations and provide access to professional expertise and resources in mathematics based on the recommendations of the [NMPR](#). The institute is open to eight-member teams from each state department by invitation only.

The Professional Teaching and Learning Cycle (PTLC)

August 11–13, 2009
SEDL Headquarters
Austin, TX

Contact: Laura Shankland
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PTLC is an ongoing, job-embedded professional development approach in which teachers collaborate to plan and implement standards-based lessons. This session will introduce participants to the six-step cycle, the leadership roles that support the approach, and the contextual conditions necessary to implement the approach effectively.

Southeast Comprehensive Center Spotlight

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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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