

Spotlight

A publication of the Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL

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co-chair, facilitating the meeting. SECC staff Darlene Brown, PhD, SECC Louisiana state liaison, and Robyn Madison-Harris, PhD, also attended. During the meeting, Louisiana's team and SECC staff discussed next steps while enjoying lunch.

The post-institute meetings for the other states served by SECC were scheduled as follows:

September 30	Georgia
November 6	Mississippi, South Carolina
December 17	Alabama

Draft of College and Career Readiness Standards Released

The National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers have released [draft college and career readiness standards](#), as part of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, which is supported by 48 states and three territories. The goal of this initiative is to develop common core state standards in English language arts and mathematics for grades K–12.

According to the initiative's partnership, the draft standards define the knowledge and skills students should have to be prepared to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing, academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The partnership is accepting feedback on the draft standards until October 21, 2009.

SECC Regional Mathematics Institute Follow-up Meetings

SECC is hosting a series of post-institute meetings for state teams as follow up to its regional mathematics institute, which was held July 28–30, 2009, in Atlanta. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) team met on September 14, with Maria Torres, MA, SECC program associate and math institute committee

Highlights of State Work

Alabama

Alabama Regional Support Coordinators Meetings

With the transition into the new school year, the Alabama Instructional Services Division (ISD) Steering Committee made a shift in the organizational structure of the LEA Support Roundtable. The ISD Steering Committee has assumed the role of the LEA Support Roundtable, which is comprised of the state deputy, assistant superintendents, and section directors. The purpose remains to align the support and practices of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Additionally, the Alabama Regional Support Coordinators group will continue to convene with the purpose of increasing collaboration among field staffs in order to maximize the effectiveness of support provided to local education agencies. Mary Lou Meadows, EdD, SECC Alabama state liaison, has been invited to work with the state as a member of the coordinators group. Catherlene Williamson, PhD, school improvement coordinator for ALSDE, leads the group, which meets the third Friday of each month.

Georgia

Parent Engagement Planning Meetings

On September 22, 2009, Sally Wade, EdD, SECC program associate, met with Michelle Tarbutton, the newly named program manager of parent engagement for the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), to identify support needed for parent engagement work in the state. Wade also met with GaDOE staff and Julie Hollis, director of the Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center, to plan a strategy to support schools that are not having success with supplemental educational services in the state of Georgia. Glenda Copeland, MA, SECC Georgia state liaison, is working with GaDOE and SECC colleagues to coordinate ongoing technical assistance.

Louisiana

School Support Team Trainer Module

Louisiana's school improvement division continues work on developing a train-the-trainer school support team module. The module is based on the School Support Team Training manual, which was developed by SEDL's Texas Comprehensive Center.

On September 21–24, 2009, SECC staff Darlene Brown and Robyn Madison-Harris facilitated additional work sessions to support the state department's efforts in this area. The team has also scheduled eight work sessions to be conducted in October.

Statewide System of Support Work Sessions

Key cabinet members and division directors of LDE participated in two, half-day work sessions for self-assessment of the statewide system of support (SSOS).

On August 28, SECC staff and 14 LDE staff members representing the divisions of school

improvement, charter schools, special school district, recovery school district, regional service centers, literacy, numeracy, high school redesign, early childhood, career and technical education, student and school performance, Title I, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and educator support participated in an intense dialogue about the SSOS.

On September 2, SECC's Brown facilitated a second session during which representatives from the finance and



communication divisions joined the group. Four school districts have been identified as interview sites—East Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Recovery School District-New Orleans, and Madison Parish. Also, the group has scheduled interviews with LDE staff and district superintendents and principals.

Mississippi

Follow-up Work Session for SSOS

Debra Meibaum, MAT, SECC Mississippi state liaison, facilitated a follow-up SSOS subcommittee work session for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) on August 17, 2009. The purpose of the session was to

- identify MDE staff members to serve on the SSOS coordinating council;
- develop guiding principles for the SSOS coordinating council; and
- develop a one-page explanation of the SSOS concept

MDE/PIRC Collaboration

On August 15, SECC program associates Meibaum, Chris Ferguson, PhD, and Camille Chapman, MA, met with MDE and the Mississippi Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) staff members. Ferguson facilitated a discussion that allowed participants to explore Title I parental involvement needs and determine how this partnership can support those needs. The group identified four areas of joint action:

1. Develop indicators for quality, local parent centers
2. Foster resource sharing with high-need, low-performing local education agencies and schools
3. Review the PIRC's online Title I resources
4. Develop a Web-based tool to collect parent liaison contact information

MDE and PIRC staff also participated in an SECC regional parental involvement videoconference on August 26.

Response to Intervention Funding Tool

SECC program associates Ada Muoneke, PhD, Dale Lewis, PhD, and Debra Meibaum participated in a conference call with MDE staff to discuss the *Funding Rtl in Mississippi Schools: A Needs-Based Approach* resource tool and receive updates regarding State Board Policy 4300 that could impact the funding resource. After the group's discussions, it was agreed that SECC staff would revise and refine the draft document. Meibaum will schedule a follow-up meeting to review proposed changes.

Adolescent Literacy Professional Development

On August 14–16, SECC program associate Ramona Chauvin, PhD, facilitated, with assistance from Debra Meibaum, an interactive adolescent literacy seminar. The training focused on helping middle/high school teachers see their roles not only as teachers of reading but as teachers of how to access information from the different kinds of text used in their classes. During the session, staff from MDE and higher education institutions (pictured) examined their reading/literacy strategies, reviewed scientifically based reading/literacy approaches, and learned how to restructure learning tasks that emphasized both content and access of text as well as comprehension as essential goals.



As a result of this training, participants gained a deeper understanding of the major components of an adolescent literacy program and learned how to explicitly talk about instruction and the reading/literacy strategy connections.

According to the National Governors Association (NGA Center), “Early reading success is a strong predictor of academic success in later grades, and the early childhood years are critical ones for literacy development.” NGA goes on to say that although states have made progress in improving literacy achievement through initiatives that apply research and best practices, one out of four students in 8th through 12th grade cannot read, write, or analyze at basic levels.

The NGA Best Practices Center provides technical assistance to support work on improving adolescent literacy and resources on this topic and other issues

Issue Brief: Supporting Adolescent Literacy Achievement

[State Project Summaries](#)

To access additional education resources, visit the [NGA Center for Best Practices Education Division](#).

South Carolina

Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) Project

On September 15, 2009, a regional collaboration meeting was held in Walterboro, South Carolina, to support the South Carolina Department of Education’s capacity to support low-performing schools. Representatives from Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) and districts in the Lowcountry area of South Carolina attended.

During the meeting, Sandra Lindsay, EdD, SECC South Carolina state liaison, and the planning team developed and delivered learning tasks to three key audiences.

- School principals and their PPS liaisons received professional development in the use of instructional walk-throughs as a tool to enhance their instructional supervision skills.
- Superintendents discussed models to recruit and retain quality teachers including the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) model.
- School board representatives from each district reviewed the roles of board and administration in implementing effective policy and examined sample board agendas from their districts and others to critically discuss the amount of focus and time spent on instructional issues in their meetings as opposed to administrative tasks.

The Palmetto Priority Schools are designated for intensive services by SCDE. David Rawlinson, director, Special Projects, and his staff have the responsibility for providing direct services to a growing number of schools that have not made expected progress.

Each month, planning sessions are held to refine program activities for the coming months. Participants include Rawlinson, SECC’s Lindsay, as well as Beth Howard, Willie Frazier, and Paula Harris of PPS staff. Also, SECC program associate Dale Lewis has joined the planning team and brings expertise in Special Education and Response to Intervention strategies to the group.

Calendar of Events

Mississippi Department of Education Work Sessions

Jackson Marriott Hotel, Jackson, MS

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Statewide System of Support Work Session #8 December 1, 2009

During this follow-up work session, MDE and SECC staff will continue the planning process for strengthening the Mississippi SSOS. Participation in this event is by invitation only from MDE.

Response to Intervention Work Session #9 December 2, 2009

This follow-up work session will target ongoing planning of technical assistance for statewide implementation of the RtI initiative. Participants include MDE, Southeast Regional Resource Center, Southeast Equity Center, and SECC. Participation is by invitation only from MDE.

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality Conference

The Fairmont Washington, DC

Fourth Annual What Works Conference: "Beyond Highly Qualified: The Development and Distribution of Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders"

October 28–30, 2009

This [conference](#)—targeted to federal and state policymakers, regional comprehensive centers, and practitioners—will focus on the latest research on and strategies for addressing teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution. Sessions will address school leadership, RtI, and the impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on states. For additional information, visit the [Teacher Quality Center](#) or call 877-322-8700.

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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