

Spotlight

A publication of the Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL

Volume 3 Number 1

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NCLB Scanning Service Update

The [NCLB Scanning Service](#) of the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) features timely resources and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and education research and dissemination organizations. Two press releases from ED are highlighted below

[Education Department Announces Second Round of Public Meetings Seeking Advice From Experts On Ways to Improve Assessments](#)

[Duncan Calls on State Legislators to Lift Barriers to Reform](#)

Highlights of State Work

Alabama

ELL Academic Language Project

Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) staff members Dely Roberts and Heidi Goertzen participated in a planning session December 21, 2009, with SECC program associates, Mary Lou Meadows, EdD, Alabama state liaison; Maggie, Rivas, MA; and Georgina Gonzalez, MA. The group discussed technical assistance for the English Language Learner Academic Language Project, which will focus on grades 4–12. The objective of the project is to develop academic language as a component of core instruction in Response to Instruction.

Evaluation of School Support Team Efforts

On December 16–17, SECC program associates Meadows and Erin McCann, PhD, met in Montgomery with Ann Allison, Cheryl Sparks, Debbie Webster, and Catherliene Williamson from ALSDE to continue designing an evaluation process for the school improvement team efforts. The team completed the chart describing the goals, objectives, activities, and expected outcomes of the school improvement efforts. The team also began developing the evaluation plan, which consists of evaluation questions and sources of data.

Regional Support Coordinators Meeting

The monthly Regional Support Coordinators group met December 18. Agenda items included reports from individual members. Alabama state liaison Meadows thanked ALSDE staff who have written articles about state department projects for SECC's *eBulletin* publication and provided an update on current SECC work in Alabama.

Program Evaluation Training

SECC staff Meadows and McCann met with ALSDE staff in Montgomery December 17. State department staff included Brooke Blair, Sallye Longshore, and Mark Ward. The group met to discuss SECC technical assistance for a series of training sessions on program evaluation for 131 local education agency federal program coordinators in Alabama. The first training session was scheduled February 8–9, 2010.

Planning for Alabama Leadership Success Academy

On December 4, SECC program associates Meadows and Sylvia Segura Pirtle, MEd, participated in a telephone conference with Angela Mangum and Catherliene Williamson of the Alabama Leadership Academy and School Improvement sections. The group developed a plan to deliver training for the Alabama Leadership Success Academy, which is scheduled in Summer 2010.

Georgia

SES Outreach State Leadership Team Training

On December 1, 2009, the Supplemental Educational Services Outreach State Leadership Team Training, Technical Assistance, and Planning Activity was held at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Reatha Owen, Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII), presented SES Parent Outreach project training to the department's state-level team. Participants in the training and planning included Michelle Tarbutton and Brenda Williams of GaDOE; Judy Hollis, Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center; as well as SECC program associates Glenda Copeland, MA, Georgia state liaison; and Sally Wade, EdD. Wade assisted in facilitating the project planning. This training resulted in the development of a state leadership team and a project implementation plan.

A second leadership team meeting was scheduled January 4, 2010, at GaDOE. In addition, statewide training for pilot districts was scheduled May 4.

English Language Arts Standards Review

Ramona Chauvin, PhD, SECC program associate, met with GaDOE staff Mary Stout, English language arts program manager, and Kimberly Jeffcoat, ELA specialist, December 14–15 to begin a precision review of the ELA K–12 standards. The Precision Review Team consists of Dr. Michael McKenna, University of Virginia; Dr. Sharon Walpole, University of Delaware; Elizabeth Niemi, Education Service District #189, Anacortes, Washington; Ann Marie Johnson, GaDOE Regional Education Service Agencies; and SECC's Chauvin.

Stout and Jeffcoat gave a brief overview of the ELA standards and tasked the review team with identifying gaps and making recommendations. After examining the standards, the review team provided recommendations, which included possible alignment of the component labels with the core components, numbering consistency of standards by component and grade level, and inclusion of comprehension instruction. The team plans to meet again in early spring to complete the task.

Thinking Maps® Training Sessions

Chris Yeager of Thinking Maps conducted a final training session on December 14 to prepare 22 GaDOE staff to support utilization of the thinking strategies in needs improvement (NI) schools. Participants included staff from the divisions of State-Directed Schools; Special Education and Support; Standards, Instruction and Assessment; and the Georgia Learning Resource System.

Yeager also provided a 2-day workshop December 15–16 to extend the learning of participants about implementation and

use of the thinking strategies in the work of GaDOE and made the connection to work Heidi Hayes Jacobs has done with state department staff on active literacy. Approximately 150 GaDOE staff and five SECC staff participated in the workshop.

Support for Thinking Maps® Implementation

On December 17, Dale Lewis, PhD, SECC program associate, met with Joel Standifer, GaDOE state director, and LaPaul Shelton, principal of BEST Academy in Atlanta, to discuss ways to support implementation of Thinking Maps (TM) at BEST. Standifer provided a campus tour and introductions to teachers. Student work posted in halls and classrooms indicated the use of TM with a primary focus on describing/brainstorming and compare/contrast. Also, isolated examples of students "taking work off the map" were observed in writing assignments.

Louisiana

Statewide System of Support Initiatives

The Louisiana Pacesetter Team continues to forge ahead to accomplish the four action items set forth during the Pacesetter States Academy, held in Princeton in July 2009. To date, three of the action items have been achieved. Currently, the team is working to complete action item 4—develop an SSOS operational manual. The self-assessment results, rubric evaluation, and cross division collaborative meetings will inform this manual. SECC's Louisiana statewide system of support team members Darlene Morgan Brown, PhD, Louisiana state liaison; Dale Lewis; Camille Chapman, MEd; Robyn Madison-Harris, EdD; and consultant Michael Davis, EdS, continue to provide technical assistance in this effort.

In addition to development of the SSOS manual, the team is participating in monthly conference calls and distance learning opportunities with CII staff. A conference call and distance learning session were conducted on January 8, 2010. During the learning session, the team continued their dialogue on differentiated statewide support systems. Also, pacesetter team members provided an update on the work to the CII liaison.

School Improvement Division Work

During January, SECC's Brown facilitated work sessions on the ongoing development of the School Support Team training modules. The School Improvement Division is in the final stages of the development process, with a tentative plan to roll out training in Spring 2010.

Mississippi

Literacy Collaborative Meetings

Debra Meibaum, MAT, SECC Mississippi state liaison, participated in the Mississippi Department of Education's (MDE's) Literacy Collaborative December 16, 2009. The group reviewed implementation efforts and developed plans for continuing and new actions. The next meeting was scheduled March 11, 2010.

Response to Intervention Initiatives and Meetings

In December, SECC staff continued the collaborative technical assistance provided to MDE in its statewide RtI implementation initiative. Follow-up work sessions were scheduled March 4 and June 16.

In addition, SECC program associates Meibaum and Ada Muoneke, PhD, participated in a conference call with MDE staff to continue development of the *Funding RtI in Mississippi Schools: A Needs-Based Approach* resource. SECC staff will incorporate the changes and will send the revised draft to MDE for review. In March, the team will meet to finalize the funding resource.

Review of Alternative Education Materials

On December 2, Robyn Madison-Harris, SECC program associate, met with MDE's alternative education staff to review the alternative education procedures document, the Individual Instructional Plan form for alternative education students, and the program assessment tool. A protocol for the alternative education program teams was established for the completion of the assessment, and a follow-up meeting was scheduled January 19–20.

Statewide System of Support Work Sessions

SECC staff Meibaum, Mississippi state liaison; Robin Jarvis, PhD, program manager; Robyn Madison-Harris; Jack Lumbley; and consultant Michael Davis participated in the MDE SSOS work session December 1. MDE staff reported on SSOS development and implementation efforts. Follow-up work sessions were scheduled March 3 and June 15.

On December 15, Meibaum also participated in the SSOS Coordinating Council meeting, the Recovery School District work session, and the RtI Coordinating Council meeting.

South Carolina

Turnaround Specialists Project

On January 14, 2010, the first in a series of meetings was held to share research and provide guidance to the South Carolina

Department of Education (SCDE) in the use of turnaround specialists. The Office of Federal and State Accountability is exploring the option of hiring turnaround specialists to work in several of South Carolina's lowest performing schools.

The major tasks of the project are defining what a turnaround specialist is, finding people available to serve in that capacity, and developing a training regimen to ensure fidelity in implementing the plan. SECC program associates Camille Chapman, Dale Lewis, and Robyn Madison-Harris are working with SCDE education associates Marsha Johnson and Kathy Mason to complete this project.

Curriculum Review Project

SECC is continuing work with SCDE on the Standards Support System (S³), an important curriculum project that includes 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 providing leadership for the project.

As a part of these efforts, several SECC staff members are reviewing curriculum components—Concepcion Molina, EdD, and Camille Chapman are reviewing mathematics, Glenda Copeland is providing expertise in social studies, and Kathleen Theodore, MA, is focusing on English language arts. In January, the team focused on reviews of the science curriculum. SECC contracted with Dr. Sandra K. Enger, University of Alabama in Huntsville, to review the science curriculum and support documents and provide feedback to SCDE.

Parental Involvement Work

In November 2009, SECC, SCDE, and the South Carolina Parent Information and Resource Centers sponsored the third annual collaboration meeting for organizations in the state that have parental involvement as a primary goal. At the meeting, participants provided feedback on several tools but specifically focused on a rubric intended to measure meaningful parental involvement.

After reviewing the feedback, Karen Williams, SCDE Title I parent involvement coordinator, requested assistance with developing a resource that would help users to effectively apply the rubric, stressing shared accountability for student success among educators, students, families, and other stakeholders. Chris Ferguson, PhD, SECC program associate, will work with Williams and other SCDE associates to complete this project over the next few months.

Calendar of Events

Tiered Interventions and Evidence-Based Strategies for Improving Student Outcomes in High School

February 24–25, 2010
Charleston Place Hotel, Charleston, SC

The purpose of this [Response to Intervention Summit](#) is to build the capacity of state education agencies to support the implementation of tiered interventions and evidence-based strategies in high schools to improve outcomes for students. Participation in this event is by invitation only.

Contact: Ada Muoneke
Phone: 800-476-6861
E-mail: ada.muoneke@sedl.org

Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL

Response to Intervention (RtI) Summit:
Tiered Interventions and Evidence-Based Strategies for Improving Student Outcomes in High School

Description:
The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) is hosting a summit on *Tiered Interventions and Evidence-Based Strategies for Improving Student Outcomes in High School*. The purpose of this summit is to build the capacity of state education agencies (SEAs) to support the implementation of tiered interventions and evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes for high school students.

Date:
February 24–25, 2010. The meeting will begin at 7:30 a.m. EST on the 24th and end at 3:00 p.m. on the 25th.

Participants:
Seven-member teams will be led by at least one person at the deputy/associate/assistant superintendent or senior management level in the department. SECC will support travel expenses for the recommended staff with program and/or budgetary responsibilities in the following offices:

- School Improvement
- Curriculum (adolescent literacy and secondary mathematics)
- Transition and Post-High School Outcomes
- Dropout Prevention
- Alternative Education
- College and Career Readiness/Course-taking
- School Safety/Discipline
- Response to Intervention

Hotel
Charleston Place, 205 Meeting Street, Charleston, South Carolina.
Room reservations will be made during online registration.

Registration
Registration is by invitation. Additional information will be forthcoming.

For additional information:
Contact Ada Muoneke, SECC program associate, at ada.muoneke@sedl.org or 800-476-6861, extension 6540.

February 24–25, 2010
Charleston, South Carolina

SEDL Advancing Research, Improving Education | **SOUTHEAST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER**
3501 N. Causeway Blvd, Suite 700 Metairie, LA 70002 | 800-644-8671 | secc.sedl.org | www.sedl.org

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Wesley A. Hoover, PhD, SEDL President and CEO
Robin Jarvis, PhD, SECC Program Manager
Chris Times, MBA, SECC Communications Associate and Publication Editor

Alabama State Liaison: Lou Meadows, EdD (lou.meadows@sedl.org)
Georgia State Liaison: Glenda Copeland, MA (glenda.copeland@sedl.org)
Louisiana State Liaison: Darlene Brown, PhD (darlene.brown@sedl.org)
Mississippi State Liaison: Debra Meibaum, MAT (debra.meibaum@sedl.org)
South Carolina State Liaison: Sandra Lindsay, EdD (slindsay@mailbox.scedu)

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).

SEDL
4700 Mueller Blvd., Austin, TX 78723, 800-476-6861, www.sedl.org

SOUTHEAST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER at SEDL
3501 N. Causeway Blvd., Suite 700, Metairie, LA 70002, 800-644-8671, secc.sedl.org

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