

# Spotlight

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## Common Core State Standards

On June 2, 2010, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers announced release of the Common Core State Standards for [English language arts](#) and [mathematics](#) for grades K–12. The standards provide goals for learning that were developed to prepare children in the U.S. for success in college and work.

According to the NGA Center, release of the standards marks the conclusion of a yearlong process led by governors and chief state school officers in 48 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia. The center indicated that each state will follow its own procedures for adoption of the standards and that the two organizations will work closely with various partners to support states and districts in their implementation efforts.

For information on how SECC can assist with alignment of individual state standards with the common core state standards, contact an [SECC state liaison](#) or [Robin Jarvis](#), PhD, program director.

## Response to Intervention Resources

SECC has published resources from its Response to Intervention (RtI) Summit: Tiered Interventions and Evidence-Based Strategies for Improving Student Outcomes in High School, held earlier this year. To access agendas, presentations, podcasts, and session notes, visit [http://secc.sedl.org/events/10/hs\\_rti\\_march/index.html](http://secc.sedl.org/events/10/hs_rti_march/index.html).

Also, SEDL offers [RtI resources for high school](#) on topics such as assessment measures and programs as well as free online resources related to [RtI](#).

## Highlights of State Work

### Alabama

#### Regional Support Coordinators Meeting

The monthly Regional Support Coordinators group met May 21, 2010, in Montgomery, Alabama. Discussion points included follow-through on proposed activities, support updates, and refinement of coordinator support information.

In addition, Mary Lou Meadows, EdD, SECC Alabama state liaison, gave an informational presentation on resources that are available on the [SEDL Web site](#).

#### LEA Program Evaluation Training for ALSDE Staff

Erin McCann, EdD, SECC program associate, and state liaison Meadows continued planning with team members Brooke Blair and Mark Ward from the federal programs section of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Fran Stewart, also from federal programs, joined the team May 20.

The team is planning activities for a workshop session that will take place at the Mega Conference July 22. During the session, participants from local education agencies (LEAs) will increase their understanding of outcomes and knowledge of indicators and performance measures for reporting the effectiveness of actions.

#### Leadership Success Academy Summer Session 2010

SECC staff and ALSDE staff members Catherliene Williamson and Angela Mangum are continuing planning for the Alabama Leadership Success Academy Summer Session 2010. State liaison Meadows attended a planning session in Austin, Texas, May 13 with presenters Sylvia Pirtle, MEd, SECC program associate; and Celina Estrada Thomas, PhD, principal, Bastrop High School. Training for the academy will occur July 7–8 in Montgomery.

### ELL Academic Language Session 1

On April 27–28, SECC staff presented the first performance development session of “English Language Learner Academic Language with a Focus on Grades K–12” in Prattville, Alabama. Thirty-two individuals who work with LEAs and schools in the state participated in the session.

During the 1½-day session, participants increased their knowledge and skills to facilitate ELLs’ development of academic language across content areas by implementing research-based strategies. They also learned how to integrate English language development in academic grade-level instruction. SECC program associates Maggie Rivas, MA, and Georgina Gonzalez, MA, conducted the session, which was facilitated by Meadows, Alabama state liaison.

## Georgia

### Technical Assistance for Thinking Maps

On May 17, 2010, SECC program associate Dale Lewis, PhD, assisted Lynn Malone, Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), in conducting interviews with focus groups of teachers, academic coaches, and administrators about implementation of Thinking Maps (TM) at Steward High School in Preston, Georgia. On May 18, Lewis also assisted Nina Goodroe, GaDOE, with interviews at Washington Middle School in Cairo, Georgia.

On May 18, Sally Wade, EdD, SECC program associate, and Barbara Lee, GaDOE, conducted interviews with focus groups at Coretta Scott King Middle School in Atlanta. They also conducted interviews at Marshall Middle School in Columbus on May 19.

Glenda Copeland, MA, SECC Georgia state liaison, and Beth Newton, GaDOE, conducted interviews with focus groups at Murphy Middle School in Augusta and at T. J. Elder Middle School in Sandersville on May 20.

The focus group interviews were designed to collect experiences and impressions of the success of TM implementation at schools in needs improvement status from administrators, teachers, and academic coaches. Data collected will be combined with interviews from the state directors, online surveys, and ewalk observations from state directors to adjust implementation strategies for future groups.

### Support for Thinking Maps Implementation

On May 10, Kathleen Theodore, MA, SECC program associate, conducted a second visit to support state director Gwendolyn Carter at McNair Middle School. During this visit, Theodore and Carter worked with content area teachers. Each grade-

level group, consisting of science and social studies teachers, presented a thinking map lesson to the group that they had taught or were planning to teach. The team provided feedback to each group along with additional strategies for using the maps. Also, Theodore and Carter provided clarification on how to unpack the standards and select a thinking map.

In addition, Theodore participated in the state director’s meeting with McNair Middle School’s leadership team on May 19. State director Carter and Theodore examined students’ work that utilized thinking maps. The team reviewed data from the school year and discussed strategies for improvement. They identified mathematics as a weakness schoolwide. They also discussed kudos, recommendations, and next steps.

## Louisiana

### Response to Intervention Initiative

On June 1, 2010, the Rtl Task Force of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) met to continue its work. Ada Muoneke, PhD, SECC program associate, provided an update on national Rtl topics. She also is assisting Diana Jones, PhD, state Rtl coordinator, with development of a memorandum of understanding and application for intensive technical assistance from the National Center on Response to Intervention.

During the meeting, task force members received information on Rtl processes in other areas of the state, such as Plaquemines and Lafourche Parishes and a data system that is used by Recovery School District of New Orleans. They also participated in work groups to create a survey and process guide.

Jones thanked the task force for its hard work in creating the Rtl implementation plan, which will be reviewed by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Literacy Committee at its June meeting.

### Pacesetter Project—State System of Support

The Louisiana Pacesetter Team continues to work on the identified action items and participate in monthly distance learning opportunities and conference calls with the Center for Innovation & Improvement (CII). On May 13, Louisiana conversed with Nancy Protheroe, CII liaison, providing the last update of the year for the Academy of Pacesetter States. Action item #4—development of an operational manual—is in the final stages of completion.

On May 26, the pacesetter team participated in the last of the distance learning sessions offered during this year’s academy. The session focused on the turnaround leader and implications for a state system of support. Team members explored selection

criteria for candidates, interview skills, and other issues related to supporting and/or hiring principals and teachers.

The pacesetter team is looking forward to participating in part two of the academy in June. Camille Chapman, MEd, SECC's CII liaison, will attend the event along with Darlene Morgan Brown, PhD, SECC Louisiana state liaison.

### **Migrant Education Plan**

On May 5–6, SECC's Brown attended the first of two Migrant Education Service Delivery Plan meetings, which was facilitated by Susan Duron, PhD, consultant to the MEP Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Service Delivery Plan Update Committee. This 14-member committee formed four subcommittees to identify services provided to migrant education students in the areas of reading/literacy, mathematics/numeracy, school readiness, and graduation. The committee met June 1–2 to complete the Louisiana MEP service delivery plan.

### **Reading/Literacy Division Work**

Kathleen Theodore, SECC program associate, met with LDE reading and literacy staff member Andrea Thompson and regional literacy coordinators for three work sessions in May. On May 4, the team began revisions to the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Intervention presentation and developed an outline of components to include in the presentation. LDE will require all schools to administer the new DIBELS Next assessment for all students.

On May 11, the team began developing a visual framework for the intervention presentation, reviewed research articles, and clarified the outline of components.

On May 17–18, the team revised the intervention presentation, and Theodore provided feedback in critiquing videos for use in the presentation. She also was invited to attend the DIBELS Next presentation, which is a presentation on how to score and administer the new assessment. Attendance at this presentation will help to ensure a successful DIBELS Intervention presentation.

### **Distinguished Educator Training**

On April 29, "Parental Involvement Training for Louisiana Distinguished Educators" was held at the state department. Session content included exploring resources available in *A Toolkit for Title I Parental Involvement*, infusing parental involvement into the new Louisiana school improvement plan format, and participating in train-the-trainer on the "Creating Family-Friendly Schools" training module. Sally Wade, EdD, SECC program associate, designed and facilitated the session.

During the event, Stephanie Carlos, of LDE, provided an update on state-level issues and initiatives. Brown, Louisiana state liaison, also attended the session.

In post-session feedback, the distinguished educators indicated that they are currently using the session content as they assist schools in planning for school improvement.

## **Mississippi**

### **SIG 1003(g) Inter-rater Reliability Training**

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) hopes to award LEAs with bold, well-crafted intervention plans school improvement grants (SIGs) ranging from \$50,000–\$2,000,000 per year for the next 3 years to implement their respective school improvement intervention model.



On May 19, 2010, Darlene Morgan Brown, SECC Louisiana state liaison, and Quentin Ransburg, bureau director, MDE Office of Innovative Support, facilitated inter-rater reliability training for more than 20 reviewers of the SIG application representing MDE, higher education, retired educators, and community agencies (pictured are participants). Debra Meibaum, MAT, SECC Mississippi state liaison, also attended. The review process was held May 20–June 4.

### **Teacher Quality Task Force Meetings**

The MDE's Office of Teacher Quality and Special Schools convened two stakeholder task force meetings to obtain input regarding development of a comprehensive statewide teacher evaluation system. On May 18, MDE met with field directors from Mississippi's institutions of higher learning and on May 19 with representatives from educational professional organizations.

Meibaum, Mississippi state liaison, presented information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Race to the Top funds as they related to development of a statewide teacher evaluation system.

### Teacher Quality Center Workshop

A two-member MDE team and SECC's Meibaum participated in the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality national workshop, *Enhancing Teacher Evaluation: A Critical Lever for Improving Teaching and Learning*, May 10–11 in Arlington, Virginia. The two-member team represented MDE's Office of Teacher Quality and Special Schools.

The workshop's purpose was to advance the work of state education agencies and regional comprehensive centers on the design and implementation of robust teacher evaluation systems. Topics included using teacher evaluation results to improve teaching and learning, building a quality teacher evaluation system, evaluating teachers of at-risk populations, connecting evaluation to teacher tenure and dismissal, and engaging stakeholders in systemic reform.

### Education Department Delta Superintendents' Forum

On April 28, Meibaum, Mississippi state liaison, attended the U.S. Department of Education's forum for Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee superintendents of rural school districts. Dr. Thelma Melendez, assistant secretary of education, and other ED staff met with the superintendents to discuss challenges, opportunities, and promising practices of rural Delta school districts.

### Accreditation Review Work Session

SECC's Meibaum facilitated an MDE accreditation review work session on May 3. The purpose of the session was to revise the Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards. A planning meeting was conducted April 27.

## South Carolina

### School Improvement Grants Council

Sandra Lindsay, EdD, SECC South Carolina liaison, serves on the School Improvement Grants Project 180 Council for the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). The council's primary responsibility is to serve as central oversight for SIG applicants and to monitor progress in designated schools. In May, council members reviewed grants and scheduled meetings for June 8–10 for applying schools and districts to provide final clarifications about details of their grants prior to decisions on funding individual grants.

### Palmetto Priority Schools Initiative

The Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS) are designated for intensive service by SCDE. David Rawlinson, director, Special Projects, and his staff coordinate direct services to schools that have not made expected progress.

On May 24–26, 2010, Lindsay, SECC South Carolina state liaison, and Dr. Cindy McIntee, director for South Carolina, SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina Greensboro, facilitated an off-site planning retreat for Special Projects and PPS office staff members. Participants included Rawlinson, Beth Howard, Willie Frazier, Paula Harris, Barbara Johnson, and Amanda Burnette of the Special Projects staff and two PPS liaisons, Jim Wright and Betty Dicks. Agenda items included a review of data about program effectiveness, refinement of PPS liaison roles and responsibilities, assignment of new and former PPS schools for 2010–2011, and plans for professional development for both liaisons and designated schools during this time frame.

The staff spent time reviewing a draft and expanding an innovation configuration for PPS liaisons to use in their work with designated schools. On May 26, McIntee led review and refinement of the logic model the PPS office uses to guide its work. As a follow-up, Dale Lewis, SECC program associate, will assist the PPS staff in producing a final version of the innovation configuration discussed during the work session.

## Calendar of Events

### LEA Program Evaluation Work Session

June 29–30, 2010

Public Library Services Building, Montgomery, AL

The goal of this work session is to complete development of a 3-hour workshop presentation for the Alabama Mega Conference on July 22. Participation is by invitation only.

Contact: Mary Lou Meadows

Phone: 256-272-8072

E-mail: [marylou.meadows@sedl.org](mailto:marylou.meadows@sedl.org)

## 2010 MASS/Alliance Summer Convention

July 11–16, 2010  
 Beau Rivage Casino and Convention Center,  
 Biloxi, MS

The Mississippi Association of School Superintendents (MASS) is a nonprofit association whose membership consists of the 152 public school superintendents across the state. The Alliance of Educational Leaders of Mississippi consists of more than 2,000 public school administrators whose superintendents are members of MASS. Topics will include legal issues, the principal's role in district literacy improvement, and raising test scores with an affordable 21st century classroom.

Contact: Mississippi Association of School Superintendents  
 Phone: 601-352-8868  
[Event Web Site](#)

## Best Practices in Title I Schools

July 14–15, 2010  
 Embassy Suites Airport Convention Center  
 North Charleston, SC

South Carolina Title I schools that have a poverty rate of at least 35% and that have met adequate yearly progress in specific objectives aligned to their presentation topic have been invited to send a team of educators to present their success to conference participants from fellow Title I schools. Participation is by invitation only.

Contact: Kathy Mason  
 Phone: 803-734-2722  
 E-mail: [kmason@ed.sc.gov](mailto:kmason@ed.sc.gov)

## Response to Intervention in Secondary Schools

A session offered by [The SEDL Center for Professional Learning](#)

August 3–5, 2010  
 SEDL Headquarters, Austin, TX

This interactive session will build the capacity of school and district staff to implement RtI in secondary schools. Participants will examine the essential features of the RtI framework; components of RtI and its application in secondary settings; key features, issues, and challenges related to RtI implementation; and resources and tools for implementing components of RtI in middle and high school.

Contact: Christine Moses-Egan  
 Phone: 800-476-6861, ext. 6538  
[Event Web Site](#)

<b>Southeast Comprehensive Center Spotlight</b> <i>A publication of SEDL's Southeast Comprehensive Center</i>	
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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 ( <a href="http://secc.sedl.org">secc.sedl.org</a> ).	
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