

Celebrating

40

YEARS OF COMMITMENT
TO QUALITY EDUCATION

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY

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“By passing this bill, we bridge the gap between helplessness and hope for more than 5 million educationally deprived children. . . . I believe deeply no law I have signed or will ever sign means more to the future of America.”

WITH THESE WORDS, PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) into law. It was Palm Sunday, 1965.

Part of President Johnson’s War on Poverty, the ESEA allocated \$1 billion annually to schools serving low-income children. Those who crafted the ESEA envisioned a network of institutions that would bridge the gap between research and practice, developing and disseminating research-based solutions to the nation’s most urgent education problems. The following year, 20 regional educational laboratories were established to meet that goal. The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) opened its doors in a one-room office “with four chairs and five employees,” according to one staff member. Forty years later, with plans to build a new 50,000-square-foot facility in Austin, SEDL continues to thrive.

Although from the beginning SEDL’s work extended well beyond the bounds of the regional laboratory, that program is indelibly imprinted on SEDL’s institutional history and culture. Beyond the laboratory program, the ESEA continues to be an influence on the organization, with each reauthorization bringing new approaches and philosophies to tackle educational challenges. Our work has evolved over the past 4 decades to meet changing times and needs, but our focus on linking research to practice and our dedication to ensuring a quality education for all learners—particularly those historically least served by our nation’s educational system—endure, a direct result of President Johnson’s vision for a Great Society.

THE 1960s: SEDL'S FORMATIVE YEARS

IN 1964, PRESIDENT JOHNSON established an education task force led by John Gardner, who was head of the Carnegie Corporation and later became the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The task force saw the educational laboratories as a way to improve learning through the dissemination of new ideas and practices. The labs would operate experimental schools, pilot innovative approaches, and provide teacher training.

In a message to Congress in 1965, President Johnson described the laboratories as drawing “equally on educators and the practitioners in all fields of learning . . . to improve curricula and train teachers.” A House committee report also envisioned a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach: “The laboratory program calls for involvement of the educational system at many levels—State departments of education, local school systems, colleges and

universities, the proposed supplementary educational centers, and experimental schools. In addition, private research organizations, industry, and other groups in the community with appropriate talent and resources have much to contribute” (Bailey, 1970). The report reiterated that the laboratories were not to be adjuncts of universities; rather, a new kind of institution was needed—one that was not “academically precious and socially irrelevant” but “more sensitive to the operating needs of practitioners” (Bailey, 1970).

In 1965, the Office of Education issued guidelines for the new laboratory program, calling for the institutions to “respond in different ways to research needs and the educational characteristics in the regions in which they are established and to the nation as a whole” (Bailey, 1970). The Office of Education received 40 formal prospectuses. Applicants and federal officials negotiated region boundaries.

“Poverty has many roots, but the taproot is ignorance.” –PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Dr. Edwin Hindsman: “Devoted to Finding Ways to Preserve and Develop Human Talent”

Dr. Edwin Hindsman was associate director of the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas when he chaired the committee that wrote SEDL’s original prospectus. He was chosen as the organization’s first chief executive officer in 1966 and served until his death on December 27, 1970, at age 47. Under his tenure, the organization grew from five employees to 218.

Dr. Hindsman was an educational psychologist who had served on the faculty at the University of Texas and the University of Indiana. He had also been a staff member at the U.S. Office of Education. Preston Kronkosky, who served as CEO of SEDL from 1981 to 1996, described Dr. Hindsman as “a visionary and dreamer devoted to children whose lives had been affected by poverty, those who were not being served by the education system.”

Dr. Hindsman believed in tackling the truly difficult problems—the problems no one else was willing or able or brave enough to take on.

As the late Congressman Jake Pickle said, “Dr. Hindsman’s entire energies were devoted to finding new ways to preserve and develop human talent.”



“Serenity does not exist in a state of inaction. It exists for us when we face up to our responsibilities, to our obligations in this changing world.”

—DR. EDWIN HINDSMAN

Under Dr. Hindsman’s 4-year tenure as SEDL’s first chief executive officer, the organization grew from five employees to 218.

Defining the Region and the Work

SEDL's prospectus clearly identified the needs of its region—initially defined as the states of Louisiana and Texas—and articulated a strong mission to address them. Edwin Hindsman, who would become SEDL's first chief executive officer, led a planning committee that also included Rogers L. Barton and James H. Perry, both of whom played important roles in SEDL's history (see sidebars on pages 5 and 9). The committee members proposed a focus on intercultural education, with particular attention paid to low-income Hispanic, African American, and Cajun student populations.

A committee was sent to evaluate SEDL after 6 months of operation. Robert Sutherland, who led the SEDL evaluation, wrote: "I believe that the staff members have remained remarkably 'honest' in holding their sights to the central problem They [also] have worked well beyond the call of any job specification, and in some instance[s] beyond the limits of human endurance. We commend the staff members for their achievements during the first six months of operation and for their clear direction concerning next steps" (Cook, Keislar, Novak, & Sutherland, 1966).

Complex Programs, Multiple Funding Streams

In the first few years of SEDL's existence, Dr. Hindsman oversaw the development of a complex structure of programs that yielded nationally acclaimed curriculum products and research results focused on educationally disadvantaged students. The vision of SEDL's founders, however,



was even more ambitious. Virtually from the beginning, Dr. Hindsman and his staff looked for additional opportunities beyond the regional laboratory program through which to further SEDL's mission. In fact, in only 1 year—its founding year, 1966—did SEDL obtain funds solely from its regional lab contract. Soon SEDL was conducting work under the auspices of other federal agencies, including the Office of Economic

“We commend the staff members for their achievements during the first six months of operation and for their clear direction concerning next steps.”

—ROBERT SUTHERLAND

Opportunity and the National Science Foundation, as well as state agencies and local school districts.

As the tumultuous 1960s neared their end, five of the 20 labs nationwide closed. The Vietnam War was escalating, creating demands for funding that might have gone to education and other programs. For SEDL, though, the future looked bright. The organization's innovative curricula, which focused heavily on basic literacy, math, and thinking skills for language-minority children, provided the basis for work with migrant students in south Texas. This work included the operation of



Rogers L. Barton: Man of Action

If Ed Hindsman was the visionary who helped define SEDL's mission early on, Rogers L. Barton was the man who worked to put the vision into action.

Although Barton never served as SEDL's executive director, he played a large role in the organization's early success. Barton knew how to organize and lead. "He loved good ideas, whether they were his own or someone else's," said SEDL staff member Martha Boethel, "and he put every idea to the strictest test."

Barton came to SEDL in 1967 from the Texas Education Agency. Preston Kronkosky, who later became CEO of SEDL, had worked previously under Barton in Corpus Christi Independent School District. At the time, Barton was the assistant superintendent of instruction for secondary schools. Kronkosky and Barton overhauled

the district's mathematics program, aligning curriculum districtwide. Kronkosky says Barton was devoted to his work and expected others to be as well. "If I was working 12 hours a day, 5 days a week, he asked why I wasn't working 14 hours a day, 6 days a week," Kronkosky said. "Barton pushed me to grow in ways I hadn't thought possible."

In 1970 Barton left SEDL for Dallas Independent School District. He later returned to SEDL for a year as a consultant shortly after Kronkosky had been appointed acting executive director. He helped Kronkosky develop a plan for the future of SEDL before his death in 1984.

“Dr. Hindsman oversaw the development of a complex structure of programs that yielded nationally acclaimed curriculum products and research results focused on educationally disadvantaged students.”

–SEDL, 1991

an early childhood development center in McAllen, Texas, and a “mobile migrant” program in which SEDL staff followed and worked with migrant students as they moved with their families during the growing season. SEDL’s curricula work also led to the development of the Follow Through Program, which was designed to extend the benefits of Head Start into the elementary grades and would be critical to SEDL’s work for the next 2 decades.

Finally, as the decade closed, SEDL submitted its application for funds to construct an innovative research and development facility that would house the organization. After a site visit by the U.S. Commissioner of Education, the facility grant was approved in August 1969.



Addressing Language and Culture

Diversity, particularly in terms of language and culture, has been an educational theme of SEDL's work since the beginning. In 1966, as a new organization, SEDL developed the nation's first bilingual curriculum *and* conducted the first research effort to provide a comprehensive picture of bilingual schooling in the nation. We have always approached diversity as a strength as well as a challenge, and we view it as integral to all educational endeavors and constituents.

SEDL's range of work addressing linguistic and cultural diversity is both broad and deep, as the following examples suggest:

- Curricular materials, from the comprehensive bilingual early childhood and kindergarten programs of the early 1970s to *Integrating Mathematics, Science, and Language: An Instructional Program*, produced through the Paso Partners project
- Educational television programming, including *Los Niños*, geared toward teaching both Spanish and English to young children, and *La Esquina* (The Corner), targeted to high school students
- Research, from groundbreaking longitudinal studies on teaching reading to bilingual children to an examination of high-performing schools with growing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students



“The goal for educators has moved from making all students the same to creating learning environments that nourish the differing strengths of each student.”

—FROM *CLASSROOM COMPASS*, MARCH 2002, A PUBLICATION OF
SEDL'S SCIMAST PROGRAM

- Teacher development, including training in multicultural education and in strategies for engaging learners from diverse backgrounds and activities to promote the recruitment and retention of minority teachers
- Networking and cultural exchange, including the 1991–1995 Border Colloquy project and a binational teacher exchange program
- Research and technical assistance on strategies to engage Spanish-language families in public dialogue about school improvement and reform

THE 1970s: SCALING UP, SCALING DOWN

PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON'S administration ushered in the 1970s. Nixon rejected much of the Great Society emphasis on the social function of schools and programs to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups, focusing instead on state and local control.

Although the change in administration brought more

uncertainties for federal support of education, SEDL began the decade on a high note, emerging as one of only four institutions

that received facility construction funds in 1970. SEDL's new building included television and media production facilities, an early childhood learning center with an audio-visual control booth for taping model lessons, and a state-of-the-art IBM System 3 computer that ran RPG and Fortran.

“No child fails. Schools may fail to provide a supportive environment, teachers may fail to communicate what they know, materials may fail to help the child learn. But no child fails.”

–SEDL, 1973

Leading the Way

By June 1971, SEDL had 264 employees. Most were based at the Austin headquarters; others were located in Baton Rouge or in field sites across the region. SEDL began working with a San Antonio television station to produce *Los Niños*, a Sesame Street-type weekly bilingual television

program for Spanish-speaking preschool children and their parents that was picked up by a number of other stations across the Southwest. With funding from the

Texas Education Agency, SEDL also began testing parent involvement and parent education activities in communities in east and south Texas.

By 1973 SEDL had fully developed and tested an integrated set of curriculum products for both English and Spanish speakers aged 3–8. Ten years before



Howard Gardner promoted his “multiple intelligences” theory of learning, SEDL staff used a multisensory approach. A progress report noted, “Because SEDL does not believe that the written word is the only way to reach a child, all of [our] programs contain multimedia materials,” including filmstrips, audiotapes, transparencies, pictures, puzzles, and games (SEDL, 1971).

Under the Follow Through Program, SEDL developed a bilingual, bicultural model and tested it in sites in Texas, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and California. The migrant program was also nationally significant. Migrant program staff were working with school districts and day care centers in Texas and other states to provide preservice and inservice training and to adapt materials that would meet the needs of migrant children.

To publish and distribute its curriculum products, SEDL set up its own publishing

Dr. James H. Perry: A Patient Second Administrator

Dr. James Perry became SEDL's second chief executive officer in June 1971. A

member of the original prospectus-writing committee, he came to SEDL from Louisiana State University. Dr. Perry's challenge was not to create but to survive, and he was to be tested to the limit. By 1979, with funding opportunities severely curtailed, SEDL was much reduced in staff size and scope of work. Dr. Perry led a comprehensive reorganization of SEDL's programs and signed agreements with the National Institute of Education that would ensure institutional funding through 1984. With SEDL's immediate security guaranteed, he resigned in November 1981.



Dr. James Perry

company in 1973. National Educational Laboratory Publishers, Inc., was established as a private, for-profit subsidiary of the organization. When several SEDL products were officially approved by the State of Texas's textbook adoption committee, business picked up considerably.

SEDL's outstanding work in curriculum development was about to be curtailed, however. Federal curriculum development initiatives began receiving a great deal



That 1970s Look and Feel

In September 1973, SEDL moved into its new facility at 211 E. 7th Street in downtown Austin, Texas. Designed by Brooks, Barr, Graeber, and White, the Southwest Tower was the first office condominium arrangement in Austin. SEDL's offices within the building were designed by the Quickborner Team (named for its members' home community, Quickborn, Germany). The team used an office landscape concept, designed to be ergonomically correct and structured to support the way SEDL staff worked and communicated. It incorporated flexibility and openness by using colorful, moveable modular pieces and planters to delineate office space. The design, cutting edge at the time, remains memorable in the minds of SEDL employees who lived with it until 1999, when the office space was renovated.

The specialized facilities were made possible by a \$4.1 million grant in 1970 from the U.S. Department of Education.

Designed by Brooks, Barr, Graeber, and White, the Southwest Tower was the first office condominium arrangement in Austin.



“The issues related to the education of minority groups cannot and should not be treated in isolation. . . .”

—DR. BLANDINA CARDENAS, IN A SPEECH ON JUNE 4, 1976*

of criticism by the mid to late 70s. Critics, including many publishers who believed the government was undermining their development efforts, argued this was not an appropriate role for the federal government. In 1977, Congress decided it would no longer fund full-scale curriculum development through the ESEA.

Though the regional laboratory program managed to survive this and other political shifts during the 1970s, the work was scaled back significantly, and only eight of the original 20 labs survived the decade. SEDL was one of them, with a reorganized region encompassing six states—Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas—and a revised agenda that focused heavily on field research, training, and technical assistance.

* *Dr. Cardenas is a former SEDL employee who is now the president of the University of Texas-Pan American.*



THE 1980s: A DECADE OF REBUILDING

SEDL'S SECOND CHIEF EXECUTIVE officer, Dr. James Perry, thought SEDL was secure when he signed agreements that provided federal support for the institution's work through 1984. He resigned in late 1981, and SEDL's director of field research—who had overseen the Follow Through Program and several innovative dissemination initiatives—took the helm on an “acting” basis. In February 1982, after an extensive nationwide search, Dr.

Preston Kronkosky was named SEDL's third chief executive officer, just in time for the Reagan revolution.

When Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, he vowed to curtail the federal role in education and even to abolish the Department of Education. That plan never won enough support to be carried out, but the administration consolidated many programs and redirected large portions of aid into block grants to the states. The

Reagan administration, however, helped jumpstart the education reform movement when a national commission appointed by the Secretary of Education released the groundbreaking report, *A Nation at Risk*, in 1983.

A Changing Federal Focus

Dr. Kronkosky had barely settled into his new position when the government announced that all regional laboratory contracts were to be unilaterally cancelled. Thanks

to the labs' good standing with key members of Congress, this death sentence was commuted to a national recompensation of all the lab contracts in 1985. Field research was out; capacity building through training, technical assistance, product development, and dissemination was in.

In 1985 SEDL conducted regionwide needs assessment surveys and designed an ambitious agenda that, as always, focused

“Even when we get caught up in our daily tasks of administration or management, we must always remember the children.”

—DR. PRESTON C. KRONKOSKY



strongly on English language learners, supports for basic skills instruction, and family involvement. SEDL also proposed a new program to provide rapid-response information for the region's education

policymakers, particularly legislative and governors' office staffs.

New Work, New Commitment to School Reform

With this proposal SEDL successfully defended a once-again reorganized five-state southwestern region (consisting of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) against a bid by testing giant Educational Testing Service. Dr. Kronkosky and his staff also undertook a rebuilding strategy, looking for additional funds to support and expand the national reform agenda spurred by *A Nation at Risk*.

Dr. Preston Kronkosky: Building a Foundation for the Future

Dr. Preston Kronkosky, SEDL's president and chief executive officer from 1981 to 1996, devoted more than 37 years to a career in education, 28 of them with SEDL. During his early career, Dr. Kronkosky served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He then became a classroom teacher and an administrator in Corpus Christi ISD. When he came to SEDL, he brought with him a deep concern for underserved children and teenagers.

Rogers L. Barton, once Dr. Kronkosky's supervisor in Corpus Christi, recruited him into SEDL's field services work. During his tenure

as CEO, Dr. Kronkosky successfully diversified SEDL's funding base and guided the regional laboratory work through its transition from a research focus to that of capacity building among state agencies, education service centers, associations, and school districts. Dr. Kronkosky also established a capital building fund for SEDL, which made possible the new headquarters building in Austin, set to open in Fall 2007.



Dr. Preston Kronkosky

In 1983 SEDL established the Regional Rehabilitation Exchange, the first in a succession of projects designed to ensure that products, services, and research findings targeted to people with disabilities are accessible, relevant, and of the highest quality. In 1986 SEDL began providing technical assistance to Texas schools through the Bilingual Multifunctional Resource Center, a precursor to the current regional comprehensive centers.

Dr. Kronkosky also struck a deal with the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas through which SEDL took custody of research-based products and tools related to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), a nationally recognized framework for understanding and facilitating the adoption of educational innovations. Along with the CBAM products, SEDL also was fortunate to take custody of Dr. Shirley Hord, one of the model's lead developers. Now a scholar emerita with SEDL, Dr. Hord conducted innumerable SEDL-sponsored trainings in the use of CBAM's tools. Over the next 2 decades, she also led a series of research and development initiatives addressing school leadership, professional learning communities, and systemic reform.

Once again, SEDL closed the decade on an upswing. From a low of less than \$2 million in funding in 1983, SEDL more than doubled its funding by 1990, its rebuilding efforts bolstered by the



national tide of educational reform. In 1989 President George H. W. Bush and the nation's governors met to lay the groundwork for the National Educational Goals, which emerged as the centerpiece for reform in both the Bush and Clinton administrations (Robelen, 1999).

Increasing Knowledge, Improving Lives: SEDL's Dissemination Work

SEDL is more than a research and development company—we're a research, development, and dissemination company. We help people understand research-based information so they can use it in their own settings. Nowhere, perhaps, is our dissemination work more apparent than in our Disability Research to Practice program.

In 1983, SEDL received a \$220,000 grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to establish the Regional Rehabilitation Exchange (RRX). The RRX identified and promoted exemplary rehabilitation and independent living programs and practices in SEDL's region and served as a model for four additional RRX projects. NIDRR continued to provide funding to SEDL for the next few years to operate other model programs.

In 1995, SEDL's dissemination work took a new turn with the establishment of the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research, also funded by NIDRR. The goals of the NCDDR were twofold: 1) to ensure the widespread dissemination and utilization of research outcomes resulting from NIDRR research projects and 2) to increase the capacity



of researchers to identify and use development and dissemination strategies that meet the needs of their target audiences. The NCDDR accomplished its goals through the production of resource guides, newsletters, trainings, modeling partnerships with researchers, and topic-centered portals and repositories accessible through its Web site.

The NCDDR began its third cycle of funding in 2006. Its new scope of work responds directly to NIDRR's concern for increasing the effective use of NIDRR-sponsored research results in shaping new technologies, improving service delivery, and expanding decision-making options for people with disabilities and their families. The NCDDR now serves as a lead center in the area of knowledge translation/knowledge dissemination and utilization.

As SEDL's dissemination work evolves, we will continue to work to help ensure that consumers and practitioners can access and use high-quality evidence-based knowledge on disability and rehabilitation issues. We understand that this knowledge can greatly impact—and improve—the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families, and we are committed to helping these individuals obtain the knowledge they need.

THE 1990s: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

AS THE 1990s BEGAN, SEDL JOINED other research and development leaders in seeking solutions that incorporated lessons learned from both the successes and the failures of the past. Why had so many of the instructional innovations of the 1960s and early 1970s disappeared from the educational landscape? Why hadn't more of them moved into widespread use? With the federal investment in education once again expanding, the R&D community explored critical questions as to how to bridge the persistent divide between policy and practice, and how to sustain and scale up innovative approaches.

The ESEA was reauthorized as the Improving America's Schools Act in 1994 under the administration of President Bill Clinton. It pushed states to develop standards-based systems applicable to all students—even students served under Title I. It also recognized the need

to maximize teaching and learning in core academic subjects and the need for intensive professional learning focused on improving teaching and learning.

As a result, much of SEDL's work throughout the 1990s focused on simultaneously supporting the smallest unit of change—the individual classroom teacher—and ensuring that the entire infrastructure of schooling in the United States, from the classroom all the way to state and federal policies and programs, were operating in synch.

Through its federal funding, SEDL addressed policy alignment and comprehensive reform strategies, and continued work in the areas of language and culture and family and community involvement. Staff also piloted new efforts addressing rural education and the use of technology to strengthen student achievement. In 1992, under the leadership of future CEO Dr. Wesley

“Meeting the needs of all children requires a strong research base that is tightly connected to practice.”

—DR. WESLEY HOOVER

Dr. Wesley A. Hoover: Improvement Requires a Strong Research Base

Dr. Wesley Hoover, arguably the most “hands-on” of SEDL’s CEOs, takes an active role in planning specific programs as well as guiding the institution’s vision for educational improvement. Throughout his tenure Dr. Hoover has fostered a vision for SEDL’s work that is client-centered and collaborative and that strengthens the organization’s research capacities.

By the time he was named president and CEO in December 1996, Dr. Hoover had spent 17 years at SEDL, developing an understanding of the institution—and the persistent education issues SEDL works to address—that is both broad and deep. He began his SEDL career conducting research on teaching reading to bilingual children. Later he directed SEDL’s institutional assessment unit, establishing and overseeing a rigorous quality assurance process for all institutional products and services. In the early 1990s he took over a struggling project focused on using community resources to strengthen science instruction in rural settings; this work led to the creation of SEDL’s Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Mathematics and Science Teaching, which Dr. Hoover directed from 1992 through 1996.

During Dr. Hoover’s tenure thus far, SEDL has initiated a number of new efforts and doubled its resources, with 2006 being the most prosperous year ever for the institution.



“Given our roots in LBJ’s vision for a Great Society, our institution has always had at its core two central ideas. The first is one of purpose, with a central focus on serving the education needs of children in poverty. We do so in the belief that a quality education is the best mechanism for freeing individuals and society from the ravages and inequities of poverty. The second idea is one of instrument, with a central focus on bridging education research and practice. We do this in the belief that the delivery of quality education must be founded on a knowledge base supported by evidence and applied with wisdom.”

–DR. WESLEY HOOVER

Complex Education Problems Require Working Systemically

One lesson SEDL learned early on in its history is that truly difficult problems cannot be approached apart from the matrix of social, political, organizational, and knowledge contexts in which they are embedded. That is precisely why education problems are often hard to solve: they are tightly bound within a larger complex system. They cannot be solved with a piecemeal approach but must be confronted systemically.

From 2000 to 2005 SEDL undertook a large research and development project, developing and refining a model for working systemically to build capacity at low-performing schools and districts for improved student achievement. Using the model's rational planning process, the 23 districts and 49 schools that SEDL partnered with demonstrated consistent progress in setting priorities and expectations about student achievement; aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to state standards; and targeting professional development to student learning needs.



Hoover, SEDL established one of 10 regional consortia focused on the new standards-based reforms in math and science instruction. Also in the 1990s, SEDL went national with its disability work; the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research, first piloted in 1991, still functions today.

In 1996, Dr. Kronkosky retired from SEDL, and Dr. Hoover was named president and CEO after a nationwide search. Dr. Hoover brought a strong research and evaluation perspective to the office of the president, an orientation that has served the organization well in the past decade. Under his leadership, SEDL greatly expanded its program evaluation work, moving beyond a focus on the institution's own work to conduct evaluation studies for a variety of other state and local programs.

Teaching and Learning: The Heart of the Matter

For SEDL, working systemically does not mean a reduced focus on what happens in the classroom. Instead, it means ensuring that all levels and functions of the educational system—from policy to administration, from curriculum to the structure of the school day—work in tandem to support teaching and learning.

We believe two things matter most in increasing achievement for all students: what we teach and how we teach it.

SEDL has addressed the “what” not only through its early curriculum development work but also through numerous initiatives that help teachers access, evaluate the quality of, and learn to implement research-based instructional materials. Through the Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Science and Mathematics Teaching (1992–2005) and other work, we’ve focused intensively on building teachers’ own mastery of the subject matter they teach. We’ve also set up and provided training in the use of Web-based systems that open classrooms to a rich, diverse universe of instructional content.



Providing professional development and related resources to address the “how” of teaching is a cornerstone of SEDL’s work, from the early Follow Through trainings to our recent collaborations with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC). SEDL has helped pioneer adaptations of the Japanese lesson study model and has developed and tested the Professional Teaching and Learning Cycle. Both of these approaches feature ongoing, job-embedded peer collaboration and coaching, with the infusion of strong external resources to strengthen instruction in reading, math, and science.

With our research and efforts in leadership training, we have helped bring to national attention the instructional importance of what happens down the hall from the classroom. SEDL has conducted research to explore and describe the critical roles of principals in providing instructional leadership. We continue to offer in-depth leadership training for both principals and superintendents and will increase these efforts through our growing Professional Learning Center.

THE 2000s: RIGOR, RESEARCH, AND RESILIENCE

WITH THE NEW MILLENNIUM CAME the presidency of George W. Bush and a strengthened emphasis on accountability and research. The 2001 reauthorization of the ESEA was dubbed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Though its funding and mechanisms have proved controversial, its goals of eliminating achievement gaps and ensuring that all students achieve at high levels have been broadly supported. NCLB sets a high bar for achievement in core content areas, outlines requirements for highly qualified teachers, and mandates professional development and educational services that are firmly grounded in rigorous scientific research. From 2000 through 2005, SEDL focused intensively on helping states understand and begin to address the new

“Since 1966, SEDL has strived to link research and practice and we have always worked to help communities and education systems meet the needs of all learners. And we will continue to do that as we enter our fifth decade.”

—DR. WESLEY HOOVER

NCLB requirements and to access research-based resources that meet the law’s strict standards.

In recent years, the Bush administration has made major changes in a number of federal programs, including several that had been linchpins for SEDL’s regional

service work. The administration eliminated the regional math and science consortia and the regional technology in education consortia, both programs for which

SEDL had long been a contractor. For the 2006 regional laboratory recompetition, the Department of Education once again shifted the labs’ mandate, this time requiring the bulk of resources to be devoted to randomized controlled trials of educational interventions. Though SEDL offered a competitive proposal, for the first time in the institution’s history, it failed

Strengthening Family and Community Involvement

During the past few years, family involvement has been in the spotlight like never before. NCLB supports the idea that involved and informed parents can help make schools better, while research findings have reiterated the importance of parent and family involvement in a student's achievement.

SEDL's work in the field of school and community involvement in schools began in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the influx of mothers into the workforce began to influence the structure of families and the role of families in education.

We undertook three projects that sought to study and help improve relationships among schools, families, and communities. The most significant work by SEDL in the field was its ground breaking 6-year study of beliefs and attitudes toward parent involvement in their children's education at the elementary level. Former program manager Dr. David L. Williams, Jr. says, "The results revealed that parents and educators had different views



about parents' involvement in their children's elementary school education. Educators were most comfortable with parents being involved in traditional roles, such as volunteer or receiver of information, whereas parents were far more interested in nontraditional roles such as co-decision maker and school advocate."

Since then SEDL has developed numerous products and tools to support school, family, and community partnerships that support student achievement, including the Collaborative Action Team process and *Beyond the Building*, a multimedia toolkit designed for educators and community organizers to learn to facilitate family and community involvement in schools. The family and community work laid the foundation for SEDL's work in the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning. SEDL has also recently teamed up with the Harvard Family Research Project in a new initiative to serve as the national coordinator for the 60 Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs).



SEDL Breaks New Ground

After 40 years in downtown Austin, SEDL broke new ground in the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport community redevelopment site in Austin, Texas, in August 2006. SEDL's new headquarters, which will comprise approximately 50,000 square feet, will be host to research and development efforts in addressing some of the nation's most pressing education issues. Designed by Milton Hime and Studio 8 Architects, the building will foster collaboration through community spaces, workrooms, and offices. The building will also feature a science and technology demonstration classroom, 5,200 square feet of conference space including eight break-out rooms, and an education research library.

“We’re excited that we have the opportunity to occupy a headquarters office that ideally meets the needs for our work in research and development, and also supports the collaborative work style of our staff.”

—DR. WESLEY HOOVER





to obtain the regional laboratory contract, losing its bid on the basis of its small business subcontracting arrangements rather than on the merits of the proposed work.

SEDL once again demonstrated both its resilience and its relevance to the educational reform landscape at state, regional, and national levels, however. In 2003, SEDL became the lead organization for the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, which is assessing the effectiveness of afterschool programs in strengthening student engagement and achievement. In 2005 SEDL was awarded contracts for two regional comprehensive centers, one serving Texas and the other serving five southeastern states. The comprehensive center program, a restructuring of the former regional consortia and regional technical assistance centers, is designed to help build state and local capacity to address the goals and requirements of NCLB.

The SEDL Management Council
oversees the organization's
operations and ensures the
quality of our work.

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Joyce Pollard
Director of Institutional Communications

Michael Vaden-Kiernan
Director of Research and Evaluation

John Westbrook
Program Manager
DISABILITY RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

SEDL also has been named as the national coordinator to provide technical assistance to the nationwide network of Parental Information and Resource Centers, an initiative that will be part of SEDL's National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, which is also conducting an exploration of models of community engagement through a partnership with the Kettering Foundation. SEDL has continued to grow its research and evaluation capacity through a number of projects, including evaluations of programs addressing English language learners, high school completion and success, core content instruction and professional development strategies.

At SEDL we are proud as our work continues into our fifth decade—as we change to meet the nation's educational challenges, strive to make a difference through quality research and development, and work with partners and clients to solve problems in classrooms and communities throughout the country. Today, more than ever, we affirm our enduring commitment to understanding and confronting the hard problems facing children, families, and educators throughout this great nation.



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Throughout its history SEDL has attracted and retained staff members of the highest quality and expertise. Our staff members have been honored for their skills and knowledge by their colleagues both within and outside the company.



SEDL staff at the groundbreaking event in August 2006

SEDL BOARD MEMBERS

SEDL's Board of Directors comprises educators, administrators, and policymakers from five states who volunteer their time to share our message and guide us in decision making. They also help inform our work by keeping SEDL staff and management council updated regarding the diversity and challenges of educational systems and communities in the regions we serve.

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SEDL AWARDS

Continuing a tradition of honoring staff that began in 1991, each year SEDL's president and CEO presents two staff awards, named for **Dr. Edwin Hindsman** and **Mr. Rogers L. Barton**, whose careers and contributions at SEDL personified excellence in services to children and in educational research. Below is a list of award recipients.

EDWIN HINDSMAN AWARD

1991	Betty Mace-Matluck
1992	Criselda Garza
1993	David Williams, Jr.
1994	Maggie Rivas
1995	John Westbrook
1996	Deborah Jolly
1997	Maria Torres
1998	Lillian King
1999	Debra Meibaum
2000	Catherine Jordan
2001	Jill Slack
2002	Marie Kaigler
2003	Cynthia Herring
2004	Brian Litke
2005	Thomas McVey

ROGERS L. BARTON AWARD

1991	Wesley Hoover
1992	Arnold Kriegel
1993	Martha Boethel
1994	Shirley Hord
1995	David Wilson
1996	Joyce Pollard
1997	Vicki Dimock
1998	Joan Buttram
1999	Pat Guerra
2000	Marilyn Heath
2001	Leslie Blair
2002	Sue Street
2003	Zena Rudo
2004	Lacy Wood
2005	Melissa Dodson



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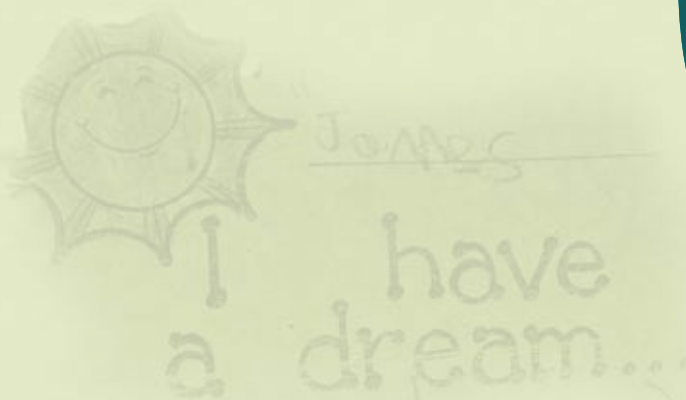
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