

ADVANCING RESEARCH

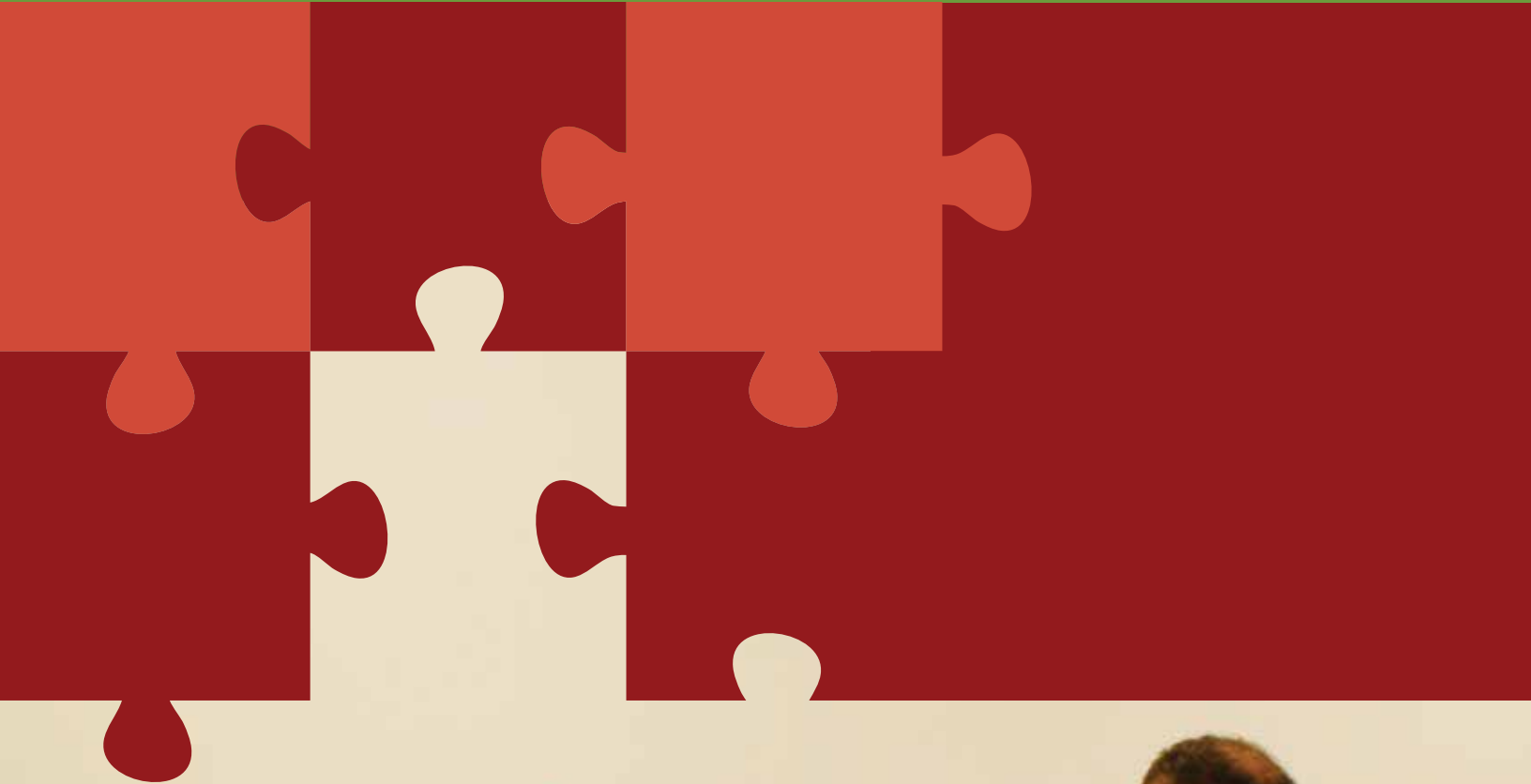
**SEDL**

IMPROVING EDUCATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

# EVIDENCE TO PRACTICE



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## **EVIDENCE TO PRACTICE**

### **Putting the Pieces Together**

It takes a lot to put high-quality evidence into practice to improve teaching and learning. At the heart are the relationships researchers have with practitioners; teachers with students; administrators with teachers; and the community with their schools and districts. You can't expect to improve teaching and learning without touching all of these different audiences, and without a framework of understanding and a clear idea of the destination. At SEDL, we work to unite these groups and provide the best possible evidence to inform policies and practices to make sure all students have opportunities to learn and grow. Our goal is to put the pieces together to improve outcomes for all learners.





A Letter from

## WES HOOVER, PRESIDENT & CEO

### Dear Friends:

Putting evidence into practice generally takes a team approach. Different types of expertise and experience are required to identify—or create—relevant, high-quality research, to understand its limitations in any given application, to use it appropriately to inform decisions about both policy and practice, to integrate it with other research and evidence, and to implement it in context. A lot of different pieces must be put together to help people successfully shift behavior when research is one of the driving forces behind the change.

In order for SEDL to do this work, we build trust and forge relationships with a singular mission in mind—use the best research to inform policy and practice and apply it in a way that will support users to make improvements. Our staff know how to identify and create the highest-quality, most useable research, they know how to adapt research to fit individual situations, and they know how to support implementation and assess whether particular adaptations matter to the outcomes achieved.

This focus on the entire complex process is what makes SEDL unique. Some institutions focus on doing research, others on supporting practice. We are one of the few institutions that can conduct rigorous research to build the knowledge base, develop products and services based on high-quality research, and disseminate products and services in ways that engage users in the successful application of such knowledge.

And as you will see, over the past year our thinking about how to improve the use of research has led us to develop new ways to bring both practitioners and researchers together to collaborate throughout the entire process of building and using knowledge.

In 2013, we were challenged to provide our best work while taking on new work with our Comprehensive Centers and the Regional Educational Laboratory efforts. When those projects started, we were understaffed. Our staff-intensive process for making hiring decisions put a lot of pressure on staff members who were already working hard to deliver high-quality work. I'm very pleased with the 27 new staff we've brought on since the beginning of 2013. Hiring, mentoring, and now successfully deploying these staff has been our biggest accomplishment of the year.

In addition to increasing our staff, we expanded our Board of Directors, as five new members joined the Board in November. The Board modified its membership categories, and soon we will achieve our goal of having all ten states we serve through our regional work represented on the Board, as well as the nation at large.

Throughout these pages, keep in mind the extensive expertise we provide schools, districts, and state departments of education. Whether it's providing new professional development strategies in our New Mexico work, assisting practitioners with knowledge translation strategies on the national level, supporting educators and policy makers to create a new teacher effectiveness program in Texas, investigating the research base for school turnaround policies, developing alliances of researchers and practitioners to bring about change in states and districts, or conducting rigorous investigations, SEDL is providing practitioners and policy makers with the necessary puzzle pieces—and the support to put them together—so we can achieve the best outcomes for all learners.

Wesley A. Hoover





Center for High-Performing Schools  
**BRINGING EVIDENCE  
 INTO THE CLASSROOM**

***“Our focus is about having our staff stay current in the latest research so they can make sure it’s included in the work they do with our clients.”***

—ROBIN JARVIS, PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF SEDL’S EDUCATION SYSTEMS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Through the Center for High-Performing Schools, SEDL partners with schools and districts to improve teaching and learning and produce lasting changes in organizational cultures. Our staff members read the latest research and evaluate it in terms of its limitations, its applicability to different populations, the level of evidence it provides, and how it applies to the work we do.

Over the last two decades, research has clearly shown that professional development that involves a stand-alone presentation doesn’t really result in changed practice. In order to change practice, professional development should involve modeling and ongoing coaching for teachers. An excellent example of this approach is the work we are doing in New Mexico, where a SEDL staff member is working with a reading coordinator from the Southwest Regional Education Cooperative to bring research-based strategies into the classroom.

Every month, SEDL staff member Kathleen Theodore visits the schools and districts in the region with the regional reading coordinator from the cooperative. To introduce a new research-based strategy, Theodore conducts professional development sessions to model the strategy and talk with teachers about how they

can implement the strategy in their classrooms. The next month, Theodore and the reading coordinator, along with the school-based reading coach if there is one, go into the classrooms and observe the teachers using the strategies with their students. Using a checklist that describes actions that indicate successful implementation of the strategy, they take notes on what they observe and use the information to provide feedback and coaching to the teacher later. Part of this process involves building the coaching skills of the regional reading coach and the school-based reading coaches.

As the work continues, additional strategies are identified and introduced based on data from student assessments. Because formal assessments are conducted relatively infrequently, Theodore provides a monthly report that describes what work was done during her visits, what progress has been made since her previous visit, the progress in the teachers’ implementation of the strategies, what strategies will be targeted in the next visit, and how those strategies are intended to address current issues. Through this work, the Center for High-Performing Schools brings research to practice by supporting teachers and reading coordinators and coaches to use research-based strategies to improve reading outcomes for their students.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact the program director of SEDL’s Education Systems Support program Robin Jarvis at [robin.jarvis@sedl.org](mailto:robin.jarvis@sedl.org) or at 504-838-0606.*



 Knowledge Translation

## TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO KNOWLEDGE

***“Knowledge translation is focused on causing change: in behaviors, in attitudes, in policy, in awareness and understanding. These are appropriate and intended goals aimed at using evidence to support decision making.”***

–JOHN WESTBROOK, PROGRAM MANAGER OF SEDL’S DISABILITY RESEARCH TO PRACTICE PROGRAM

SEDL’s Disability Research to Practice (DRP) program is home to two major knowledge translation centers: the Center on Knowledge Translation for Employment Research (KTER) and the Center on Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (KTDRR). The goal of knowledge translation (KT) is to analyze available high-quality research so practitioners can make informed decisions about the most effective interventions to use in addressing specific awareness, behavioral, or policy issues.

As funding agencies increase their expectations for the use of evidence-based practices, KT activities facilitate access to high-quality evidence about “what works.” Systematic reviews are essential tools in this process by providing a comprehensive analysis of the existing research related to the effectiveness of specific interventions.

In September 2013, SEDL’s DRP staff, working with the Campbell Collaboration, completed a systematic review focusing on transition to work programs for school-age youth with autism spectrum disorders in terms of how effectively the programs support actual movement into integrated, community-based jobs. The results of the systematic review

found that very limited research was available, and most did not link employment outcomes to the effectiveness of school-to-work transition programs. The review will help direct future research and lead to more evidence-based decision making. The review did identify selected characteristics of programs that may contribute to increased effectiveness. In the few months since this report was published in the Campbell Collaboration Library of Systematic Reviews, it has been downloaded over 50,000 times and is currently the third most frequently downloaded systematic review in the library. This popularity reveals a crucial desire for high quality evidence in the disability community.

The process of KT requires intended stakeholders to play a central role in identifying questions that need an evidence-based answer. DRP staff initiated an annual survey with National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) grantees about their KT challenges and issues. The results, in part, have led to implementation of an online conference to address respondents’ priorities in measuring KT activities. The Center on KTDRR plans to present webcasts on topics such as developing high-quality research syntheses, tools for analyzing research, evidence-based practice guidelines, retrieval of international research, implementation of evidence-based policies, among other topics, to alleviate the other KT challenges of the NIDRR grantees.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s Disability Research to Practice director John Westbrook at [john.westbrook@sedl.org](mailto:john.westbrook@sedl.org) or at 512-391-6565.*





Texas Comprehensive Center

## DEVELOPING RESEARCH-BASED STANDARDS

***“In our work, putting evidence into practice is really about context. It’s about understanding what the social and political context of the state is, because it changes over time.”***

–DALE LEWIS, DIRECTOR, TEXAS COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

*TEA and TXCC staff have enabled the development of new standards that are grounded in research and emerging promising practices.*

Education in Texas is part of a dynamic, ever-changing landscape. The geographical diversity of the state, the decisions made by legislators, and the changing economic and social needs and priorities present unique challenges for Texas educators, and impact the direction that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) needs to take.

In 2013, our Texas Comprehensive Center (TXCC) partnered with the TEA on a project that began with revision of Texas’s teaching-practice standards that were developed in 1997. The Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System initiative is guided by a steering committee composed of classroom teachers, principals, education professors, and other stakeholders from around the state. Because the steering committee is representative of the diversity of our state, it is able to serve as a sounding board and filter for how to apply the promising practices around teacher evaluation systems to the specific needs of Texas schools.

As a comprehensive center, our primary function is to bring research to practice through dissemination, training, and technical assistance. In collaboration with the TEA, SEDL’s TXCC engaged teacher effectiveness experts to provide the steering committee with high-quality research



that is available on effective teaching, teacher standards development, and implementation of teacher evaluation systems that include student growth measures. This research base is reflected in the new teacher practice standards, which address planning and delivery of instruction, basing teaching on what students know and how they learn, demonstrating content knowledge and expertise, creating effective learning environments, using data to drive practice, and developing as a professional. The second draft of Texas’ revised teacher practice standards was completed in October.

Throughout the revision of the Texas teacher practice standards, which is Phase I of the project, SEDL’s TXCC team worked with TEA staff to recruit and facilitate the steering committee and to build a partnership with one of the national content centers, Great Teachers and Leaders, which provided research to guide the revision of the standards and reviewed the draft revisions against national teaching frameworks. By facilitating these partnerships, and by ensuring that the project tasks were completed in a timely and thoughtful manner, TEA and TXCC staff have enabled the development of new standards that are grounded in research and emerging promising practices while also addressing the unique requirements of Texas teachers and educators.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s TXCC project director Dale Lewis at [dale.lewis@sedl.org](mailto:dale.lewis@sedl.org) or at 512-391-6513.*





Southeast Comprehensive Center

## IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH-BASED INITIATIVES



***“I applaud our staff at SEDL because they simplify the process when looking at the research, and they make it user friendly.”***

—BETH HOWARD-BROWN, DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHEAST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER AT SEDL

Like our Texas Comprehensive Center, SEDL’s Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) is one of 15 regional comprehensive centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Much of the work our SECC performs in the five states it serves is focused on supporting programs authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waivers. In addition, the SECC assists with the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based school improvement reforms for School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools.

When state departments of education or state school boards begin to develop state-wide initiatives, they want to know what the research shows. In the initial stages of most projects, the SECC provides research-based evidence through our Information Request program. Through a rigorous quality assurance process and with the assistance of SEDL’s Research and Evaluation staff, we are able to ensure that the information we provide has a strong evidence base, can be tied to a measure of effectiveness, and is current and relevant.

Two of the SECC’s highest priority focus areas, low-performing schools and educator evaluation systems, are supported by a strong research



Supporting  
Sustainability Efforts in  
**School Turnaround**

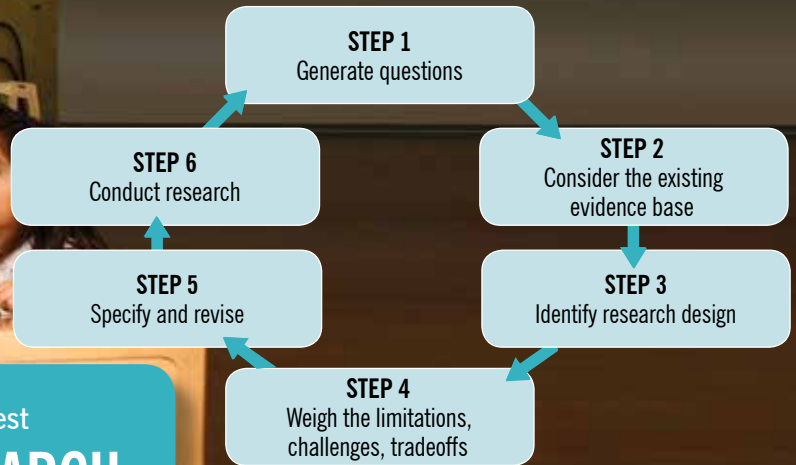
base. In November, the SECC and the Texas Comprehensive Center, both at SEDL, hosted a regional institute, Supporting Sustainability Efforts in School Turnaround. This institute provided the opportunity for state educators working in school turnaround to network and learn about the research supporting effective school turnaround. This research is essential for SIG schools, because the grants required the implementation of evidence-based school reform models. Ongoing professional development is key to the success of these reforms, and sustainability will be a major focus as this work continues.

The SECC is also involved in ongoing work with states in our region to design, pilot, and scale up educator evaluation systems that include professional growth, professionalism, and student growth measures to meet the requirements of the individual states and of the federal requirements of the SIG programs and ESEA Flexibility Waivers. Both federal programs require the use of research to put evidence into practice in the educator evaluation systems that are being piloted and will be implemented in the next 2.2 years.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s Southeast Comprehensive Center project director Beth Howard-Brown at [beth.howard@sedl.org](mailto:beth.howard@sedl.org) or at 803-936-0752.*



Steps for Developing a Research Agenda



Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest  
**ALLIANCE-BASED RESEARCH  
 MEETS EDUCATOR NEEDS**

**“Generating a research agenda that is relevant to problems of practice and then conducting studies to address those problems can go a long way in increasing the relevance and usefulness of research studies.”**

–VICKI DIMOCK, DIRECTOR WITH SEDL’S REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY (REL) PROGRAM

*The REL Southwest aims to build a body of knowledge around key issues in the southwest region related to improving outcomes for students.*

SEDL resumed operation of the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest in January 2013. The REL Southwest is moving research into practice using an innovative approach. This year, we worked with members of six research alliances to develop research agendas that identify specific and meaningful research questions related to the focus of the alliance, each of which addresses a high-priority area of education for the southwest region. The alliances include educators, state administrators, and policymakers as well as researchers; this is a departure from previous academic and researcher-driven projects and allows us to identify research that will help practitioners and policymakers answer questions about the challenges they face educating their students on a daily basis.

This approach is designed to alter the way educators are using research and the way researchers are doing research. The RELs are part of a large-scale national program implementing this innovative alliance-based research model. In the first year of the contract, REL Southwest staff focused on working with the members of each alliance to identify a research agenda,

educating practitioners and policy makers about what types of questions may be answered with research, and developing the research methods and designs appropriate to address those questions. The REL Southwest process (see figure above) for creating a research agenda was presented during a cross-alliance webinar, Framing Your Research Agenda Using a Research Continuum, to prepare all alliance members for their face-to-face work sessions.

In the remaining years of this contract, the REL Southwest, in collaboration with our alliances, will be engaged in designing and conducting research studies identified in the agendas. As a first step, REL Southwest staff are conducting data inventories in all five of the states in the region. A large part of our mandate is to use existing data sources whenever possible and to help alliance members understand how these data sources can be used. While the evidence that can be collected from existing data and research has limitations, this use of state-specific data allows research to be more relevant to educators and policy makers.

Good research leads to more good questions. By showing alliance members how to make use of their data to answer their questions and how a research agenda can be developed and adapted over time, the REL Southwest aims to build a body of knowledge around key issues in the southwest region related to improving outcomes for students.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s REL Southwest director Vicki Dimock at [vicki.dimock@sedl.org](mailto:vicki.dimock@sedl.org) or at 512-391-6511.*



Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast

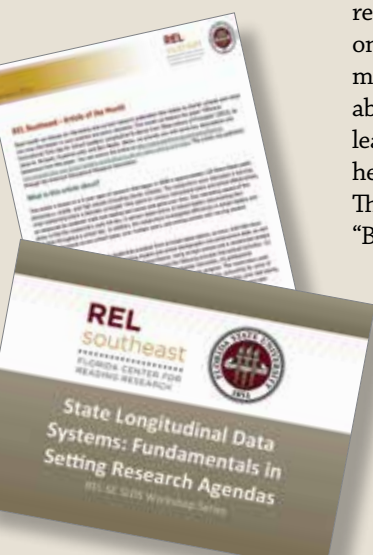
## MAKING EDUCATORS BETTER CONSUMERS OF RESEARCH

***“The topic of charter schools is so new. Our goal is to help educators become better consumers of research, particularly because there isn’t a plethora of rigorous research out there.”***

–DARLENE BROWN, PROJECT DIRECTOR WITH SEDL’S REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY (REL) PROGRAM

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southeast is located at Florida State University in partnership with SEDL, Instructional Research Group, and RMC Research Corporation. This year, the REL Southeast carried out its work through four research alliances that focus on priority issues in education for the region it serves, which comprises the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

SEDL staff are working with the REL Southeast’s Determining Charter School Effectiveness and Improving Charter School Performance alliance to help its members identify current rigorous research and apply it to their work. A monthly one-page *Research Review* is sent to all alliance members; it highlights high-quality research about charter schools and charter school leadership and includes questions designed to help educators apply the research to their work. The monthly newsletter also includes a feature, “Bridging Research to Practice,” that poses the questions again and invites readers to discuss the research and the questions using the alliance’s online discussion board. These discussions are particularly important because the research base for charter schools is limited, and effectiveness findings are mixed.



In July, the charter school alliance conducted a workshop on charter school leadership. This program was well attended by charter school principals, state department of education staff, and university researchers and educators. A panel discussion with charter school researchers and professors who are educating future charter school leaders focused on the differences between effective charter school leadership and traditional education leadership. In addition, presentations provided research specific to charter school leaders and served as examples of rigorous charter school research.

In November, the alliance conducted a breakout session at a state charter school association conference. The session, which centered around the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences practice guide on using student data to support instructional decision making, was conducted specifically for charter school teachers and principals and provided strategies for translating data into effective practice at their schools.

This past year, the REL Southeast also prepared for ongoing work in helping educators become more sophisticated users of research. In addition to planning an upcoming Beat the Odds study that will include every charter school in South Carolina, the REL Southeast developed a three-part video workshop series that explains what a State Longitudinal Data System is and describes how the data can be used in making policy decisions.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact Regional Educational Laboratory project director Robin Jarvis at [robin.jarvis@sedl.org](mailto:robin.jarvis@sedl.org) or at 225-257-4986.*



Research

## CONDUCTING GOLD-STANDARD EDUCATION RESEARCH



**“As part of recruitment and site development, we work closely with all the teachers, principals, and district staff to build trusting relationships, which we hope will ultimately provide us with high-quality data.”**

—MICHAEL VADEN-KIERNAN, SEDL DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Researchers at SEDL and the University of Wisconsin–Madison are conducting a study of two curricula, *SRA Imagine It!* Today’s Open Court reading program and *Everyday Mathematics*®, to determine the impact of the programs on teacher practices and student achievement. Both programs are widely used and have been found to have positive—or “potentially positive”—impacts on student achievement. However, most of the studies did not meet the standards for high-quality evidence set by the What Works Clearinghouse or used small-scale, quasi-experimental designs. SEDL’s study uses experimental methods in a large sample of schools, which will provide important evidence about the effectiveness of these programs.

A challenge in bringing evidence to practice in education is that there often isn’t enough high-quality evidence available to support a specific curriculum or practice. Schools and districts are often hesitant to participate in research, especially in large randomized controlled trials like this one. This year, we recruited the final set of schools—25 for the Open Court study and 24 for *Everyday Mathematics*®. SEDL’s research team used this challenge as an opportunity to build mutually beneficial and ongoing relationships with districts and schools as part of our recruitment and site development efforts.

Initially, we embraced the traditional recruitment approach of offering free materials and professional development. We highlighted the benefits of research for education. We thought schools would be eager to join a study offering free research-supported materials. We created materials to highlight the benefits of joining the study, the free resources, and the evidence for each program to give to eligible districts.

We encountered a different decision-making framework within each district. We discovered that districts were interested in how they could use the study to achieve their goals, such as complying with the Common Core State Standards and alleviating the burden of the study on their teachers. We had to refocus our efforts to determine each district’s needs and how to complement their goals without compromising our research design. The result is that we now have 48 schools participating in each study across eight states, as well as an understanding of each school’s needs and how to support and sustain their involvement in the study. SEDL’s ability to build meaningful relationships with district and school staff while adhering to the study design has been a key to this success.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s Research and Evaluation unit director Michael Vaden-Kiernan at [michael.vaden-kiernan@sedl.org](mailto:michael.vaden-kiernan@sedl.org) or at 512-391-6562.*



Evaluation

## PROVIDING THE BEST RESEARCH POSSIBLE

***“To have evidence implies that you have a wealth of research on a particular area, a body of evidence, but there’s very little in education that actually has that.”***

– MELISSA DODSON, SEDL DIRECTOR OF EVALUATION

The Information Request service provided through SEDL’s two comprehensive centers allows us to provide high-quality evidence to state department of education staff in building their knowledge and capacity to address topics related to implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the priorities of the U.S. Department of Education. Information Requests provide summaries of applicable evidence-based strategies, approaches, and programs as well as current resources from the regional content centers and various education advocacy, policy, research, and dissemination organizations. In 2013, SEDL’s Evaluation staff assisted with 16 Information Requests: 14 for the Southeast Comprehensive Center and 2 for the Texas Comprehensive Center.

Working with program staff and content experts, SEDL’s evaluators apply a set of standards to every response to make sure the responses are evidence-based and are transparent in terms of disclosing any limitations or weaknesses of the resources as they apply to the audiences who requested the information. This transparency is essential, and it ensures that practitioners and policy makers are aware of the type of evidence available.



The levels of evidence range on a continuum from anecdotal evidence to rigorous research, and each type of evidence is valuable to different stakeholders in the field of education. The information provided in the response is used by state boards of education and other decision makers as they set education policies for their states.

One Information Request that SEDL evaluators worked on this year, “Closing Consistently Low-Performing Charter Schools,” included a section on the limitations of the resources used to inform the response, stating that the education field currently “lacks a strong research base around best policies, practices, and criteria for closing consistently low-performing public charter schools.” In the absence of such rigorous data, the response includes resources that provide descriptive information about state-specific practices as well as practices recommended by nonprofit institutions and organizations that provide charter school resources and information. The response also includes an annotated appendix describing every resource used and giving an overview of the type of information that resource provides, including its limitations and weaknesses. The transparency of SEDL’s response allowed the state department of education to make informed decisions in its work on developing performance-based monitoring activities for charter schools.

*For more information, please visit [www.sedl.org](http://www.sedl.org). You may also contact SEDL’s evaluation director Melissa Dodson at [melissa.dodson@sedl.org](mailto:melissa.dodson@sedl.org) or at 512-391-6606.*



2013

## NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

*SEDL has been growing! This year we expanded not only the scope of our work but also our staff. New work brought challenges and opportunities to work in more effective ways with our colleagues, clients, and partners. We are building relationships and using new technologies to bring people together in the interest of improving education through evidence-based products and practices.*



### Regional Educational Laboratory Contracts

This year, SEDL established the groundwork for the work of the REL Southwest, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. We established research alliances, each focused on a specific regional priority, to build state capacity to use data and evidence to address regional educational needs. The REL Southwest also produced two bridge events, Aspirations of Rural Youth and The Data-Informed District: Research on How Educators Use Data to Inform Practice. Both events were presented as webinars and are available on the SEDL website.

SEDL is also a partner in the REL Southeast, which serves Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The lead partner is the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University. The REL Southeast conducted meetings with all its research alliances to begin work on the research agendas that will be used to further the work of each alliance and respond to the needs of regional stakeholders.



### Schools Recruited for Curricula Study

In 2013, SEDL researchers accomplished a major feat when they recruited the final set of schools for the study of *SRA Imagine It!* Today's Open Court, and *Everyday Mathematics*® we are conducting with the University of Wisconsin–Madison. In this large-scale study, 49 schools are in the first year of implementation, while four schools are in the second year of the study, and 20 schools finished data collection in the spring of 2013.



### Launch of Center for High-Performing Schools at SEDL

Through the new Center for High-Performing Schools, SEDL partners with schools and districts to help improve teaching and student performance. The center offers both short-term and long-term professional development. We also provide online learning resources on such topics as school turnarounds, professional learning communities, mathematics, English language arts, and the implementation of school improvement initiatives. Professional development services are

based on a combination of education research and the experience and expertise of SEDL staff. In addition, SEDL offers long-term consulting services to manage change initiatives within schools and districts.

### Helping People With Autism Succeed in the Workforce

SEDL staff and partners completed a systematic review focused on the effectiveness of pre-graduation programs for transition-age (approximately 14 to 22 years old) people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The authors located qualitative research and other related studies that addressed elements of promising employment placements. However, the authors did not identify definitive interventions that predictably and positively supported the development of transition programs that help people with ASD find and keep jobs because no high-quality quantitative studies assessing the effectiveness were found to exist.



### SEDL Gives Back to the Community

As a way of extending our mission to the community, SEDL staff participate in the Adopt-a-Family program every year. In 2013, we collected nearly \$1,800 and a huge pile of gifts for two families in need in Austin, Texas. Contributions from the vendors at our annual Holiday Arts, Crafts, and Bake Sale, combined with proceeds from the silent auction, totaled \$270; SEDL donated this money to Crossnore Academy, a Title I K–12 charter school in North Carolina.

2013

# PEOPLE AND PUBLICATIONS

## 2013 Presidential Award Winners



**Kathleen Theodore** is the 2013 recipient of the Edwin Hindsman Award, which honors outstanding SEDL service on behalf of children. Theodore is a program associate in the Education Systems Support unit.

This past year, through her Comprehensive Center work, she has been helping state

departments of education understand how to better implement the Common Core literacy standards. In addition, through her efforts in the Center for High-Performing Schools, Theodore has developed and delivered high-quality, intensive, long-term professional development to literacy teachers and coaches working in rural New Mexico. Through both of these efforts, Theodore is fulfilling SEDL's mission and benefiting those underserved students that Dr. Hindsman, SEDL's first executive director, was so committed to serving.



**Shaila Abdullah** is the 2013 recipient of the Rogers L. Barton Award, which honors outstanding contributions to SEDL's educational research and development. She is a media design associate in the Communications department. Abdullah

develops high-quality materials that

effectively engage SEDL's audiences in the content of our work. Her work in the visual design of both print and digital vehicles merges high aesthetic value with the efficient delivery of content. Abdullah's design of the 2012 annual report earned an international MarCom Gold Award. Her commitment to excellence is just the ideal Mr. Barton, an early proponent for high-quality work at SEDL, would urge us all to embrace.

## Achievements

**Brenda Arellano, Jason LaTurner, and Shana Shaw** presented "Demystifying the Measurement of Teacher Quality" at the SXSWedu education conference.

**Kathleen Murphy** coauthored a research article titled "Moving Employment Research into Practice: Knowledge and Application of Evidence-based Practices by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Staff." The article was published in the *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

**Jason LaTurner** and **Dale Lewis** wrote an article, "Managing the Implementation of School Improvement Efforts," that was the lead article in the Fall 2013 issue of *SEEN* (SouthEastern Education Network) magazine.

**Concepción Molina**, SEDL program associate, wrote an article, "Conceptual Understanding of Mathematics From a Language-Focused Perspective," that was published in the Spring 2013 issue of *SEEN* magazine.

**Michael Vaden-Kiernan, Sarah Caverly, Nance Bell, Kate Sullivan, and Erin Atwood** presented a paper titled "A Multisite Trial of a Supplemental Reading Program for Adolescents: The Louisiana Striving Readers Evaluation of Passport Reading Journeys" at the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness in Washington, DC. The paper was prepared and presented with partners from the University of Texas–Austin and the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

**Glenda Copeland, Jesse Mabus, Ann Neeley, Shana Shaw, and Chris Times** authored a Briefing Paper titled "Identifying Competencies and Actions of Effective Turnaround Principals."

## Retirements and Remembrance



**Jack Lumbley** retired from his position as research associate in SEDL's Research and Evaluation unit. During his 38 years at SEDL, he worked on a wide range of research, development, and dissemination projects. He designed, developed, implemented, and reported on

evaluations of multiple SEDL educational interventions in school districts, intermediate education agencies, state departments of education, and institutions of higher education. Lumbley also collected and analyzed a wide range of SEDL performance indicator data and developed reports for presentation and delivery to a variety of funding agents and clients. He continues to serve as a consultant, ensuring that we still have access to his vast stores of institutional knowledge, his high-quality work, and his unique personality.





**Stella Bell** retired from her position as program associate. During her 11 years at SEDL, she was instrumental in the development and the dissemination of the Working Systemically process. She also collaborated on a variety of publications.



**Shirley Beckwith** retired from her position as communications associate with SEDL's Education Systems Support unit. During her 10 years at SEDL, she managed databases, produced Rapid Responses, and developed both print and online resources.



In June, the executive Board room at SEDL's Austin headquarters was dedicated to **Michael Davis**. Davis was a long-time friend and supporter of SEDL and trusted advisor and executive consultant to SEDL's president and CEO, Wes Hoover. He served on the

SEDL Board of Directors from 1997 to 2003, and was board chair from 2001 to 2002. His widow, Karen A. Davis, visited from Santa Fe, New Mexico and shared memories of her husband's long involvement with SEDL. The Board room is now marked with a beautiful plaque that details the many contributions Davis made to SEDL over the years.

## New Publications

**Vocational Rehabilitation Service Models for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Guide to Effective Employment Programs**, from the Vocational Rehabilitation Service Models for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) project at SEDL, outlines effective practices of

vocational rehabilitation programs. The intended audience of this guide is people with ASD, their families, service providers, and employment specialists.

**SEDL Insights** is a quarterly publication based on the experience, expertise, and research of SEDL staff. It is designed to give educators practical suggestions for implementing school improvement strategies.

The **Common Core State Standards (CCSS) videos** are designed to support states, schools, and teachers in the implementation of the CCSS. The videos were created in collaboration with the states in the Southeast Comprehensive Center region based on their needs for professional development support for the implementation of the CCSS. Each video is an audiovisual resource that focuses on one or more specific standards and usually includes examples and illustrations geared to enhancing understanding. The intent of each content-focused video is to clarify the meaning of the individual standard rather than to be a guide on how to teach each standard, although the examples can be adapted for instructional use.

The **Aspirations of Rural Youth Bridge Event Webinar**, hosted by the Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest at SEDL, examines research and initiatives related to the challenges and successes that rural schools and communities experience in supporting students in the transition to college and careers. This webinar is available free online.

The **REL Southwest Spotlight** was launched in Summer 2013. This e-bulletin highlights the work of the REL Southwest as well as services, resources, and events relevant to educators in its five-state region of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

2013

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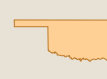
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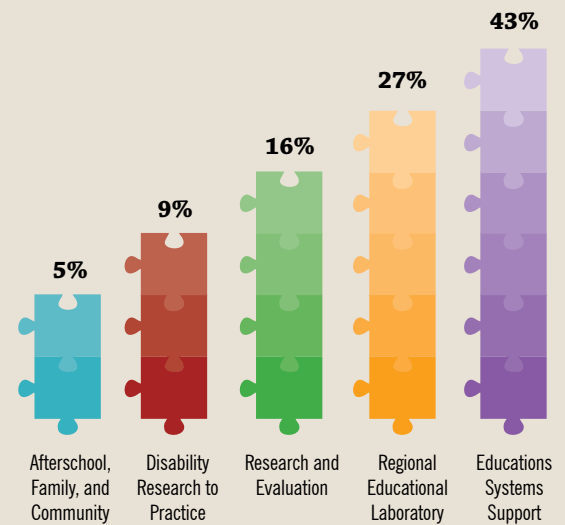
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SEDL's resources for supporting our research, development, and dissemination work include competitive grants and contracts awarded by various public and private sources. We also offer fee-for-service arrangements to deliver professional development, conduct applied and policy research, evaluate programs, and develop customized web applications and databases to help clients manage data and information. SEDL is a private 501(c)(3) corporation committed to operating with financial integrity and rigorous oversight.

	2013	2012
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets	\$ 6,779,341	6,070,461
Land	1,335,472	1,335,472
Building, net	8,043,210	8,311,539
Equipment, net	126,114	79,467
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>16,284,137</b>	<b>15,796,939</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts and other payables	1,421,074	1,095,249
Mortgage payable	6,762,918	6,522,944
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>8,183,992</b>	<b>7,618,193</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted-designated building fund	1,559,942	1,195,654
Unrestricted-undesignated	6,540,203	6,983,092
Total net assets	8,100,145	8,178,746
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>16,284,137</b>	<b>15,796,939</b>
<b>REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>		
Federal contracts and grants	16,201,016	12,497,657
Other contracts	1,610,158	1,110,936
Publications sales and royalties, net	26,368	29,857
Investment income, net	68,189	20,385
<b>Total revenue and support</b>	<b>17,905,731</b>	<b>13,658,835</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Federal contracts and grants	13,758,501	9,595,921
Other contracts	1,218,177	1,138,832
Publications sales and royalties, net	25,187	28,047
<b>Total direct expenses</b>	<b>15,001,865</b>	<b>10,762,800</b>
<b>Indirect expenses</b>	<b>2,982,467</b>	<b>2,983,882</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>17,984,332</b>	<b>13,746,682</b>
<b>Decrease in net assets</b>	<b>(78,601)</b>	<b>(87,847)</b>



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The SEDL Management Team and staff appreciate the support and time of the officers and members of the 2012–2013 Board of Directors in guiding our research, development, and dissemination agendas. We give special thanks to the 2012–2013 Executive Committee members for their advice and counsel: Linda Johnson, chair; Dr. Linda Villarreal, vice chair; Dr. Barbara Staggs, secretary; Gwenneth Price-Picard, treasurer; and Jack McCoy, immediate past chair.

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