

The Center’s Signature Initiatives

Strengthening Statewide Systems of Support

**Challenge.** States are challenged to build more efficient and effective systems of support for school and district improvement.

**Inquiry.** CII’s researchers combed the evidence while its technical advisors studied four states in depth. The result in 2007 was the *Handbook on Statewide Systems of Support*, research succinctly synthesized, confirmed with field studies.

**Ingenuity.** CII put experienced staff and consultants to work creating a comprehensive self-assessment and planning process for regional comprehensive centers and state education agencies to take a fresh look at systems of support.

**Application.** Within two years of the publication of the *Handbook on Statewide Systems of Support*, CII had trained all 16 regional centers to facilitate technical assistance with their states and 12 regional centers had initiated the process in 18 states.

**Results.** Dr. Barbara Hicks, Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center, commented, “The SSOS process helped the Delaware Department of Education improve coordination to make services to districts more coherent. The SEA captured the recommendations from the process and built an action plan to address the needs they identified.”



Partnership with CCSO

CII partners with the Council of Chief State School Officers to provide ongoing support for states through:

- ★ National Network of State School Improvement Leaders,
- ★ *Support for School Improvement*, a monthly e-newsletter, and
- ★ Institute for School Improvement and Education Options.

Indistar™

**Challenge.** States are challenged to efficiently align the work of all levels of the education system to improve learning outcomes for students, making coherent and effective the contributions of the state, the district, the school (including families), and the classroom.

**Inquiry.** In 2007, CII’s *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement* succinctly synthesized research and crystallized plain-language indicators that align the work of the district, the school, and the classroom. In the spring of 2008, the American Educational Research Association’s Division H (Program Development and Evaluation) recognized the *Handbook* as the outstanding publication of the year.

**Ingenuity.** Working with state education agencies and their regional comprehensive centers, CII develops web-based planning and coaching systems aligned with CII’s state, district, school, and classroom performance indicators from the *Handbooks* (or the state’s own standards and indicators), training materials, and protocols for each rung in the ladder.

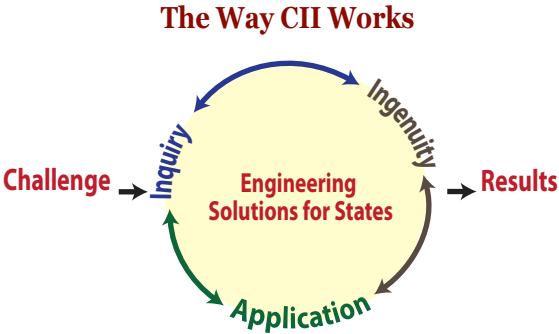
**Application.** Several states now use a tailored version of CII’s indicator-based systems and trainings as a key component of their comprehensive support for district and school improvement. CII continues to refine and improve the systems and trainings to better meet the states’ challenges.

**Results.** Dr. Kathleen Smith, Virginia Director of School Improvement, noted, “We were thrilled! At the end of the first year, 20 of the 30 schools participating in Indistar and identified as chronically low-performing made the benchmark pass rate to meet full accreditation status.”

The Center’s Cycle of Work

Engineering Solutions for States

The Center on Innovation & Improvement works alongside regional comprehensive centers to identify the challenges facing state education departments. Then CII calls upon its Scientific Council to synthesize the relevant research and generate ideas to meet the challenges and solve problems. But research-based concepts are not enough. CII’s technical advisors and staff, with loads of experience in schools, districts, and state and federal education departments, pass the good ideas through the sieve of common sense, converting them into practical applications to place in the hands of the state agencies. Getting the desired results means sticking with the work, and CII maintains strong consulting and problem-solving support for the regional centers and the states.



Academy of Pacesetting States

The Academy provides training, consultation, and support for state teams to develop skilled experts in three critical areas:

1. System Leaders who administer the state system of support,
2. Change Agents who understand effective operational practices and the dynamics of change, and
3. Instructional Specialists who understand effective classroom instruction.

The Center’s Personnel

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The Center on Innovation & Improvement  
is a partnership of

- Academic Development Institute**  
Lincoln, Illinois
- Temple University Institute  
for Schools and Society**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Little Planet Learning**  
Nashville, Tennessee

# CENTER ON INNOVATION & IMPROVEMENT

**Twin paths to better schools.**

**Innovation—the intersection of a  
challenge, inquiry, and ingenuity,  
with improvement  
as the result.**

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## The Center's Purpose

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) supports regional centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students.

## The Center's Priorities

- ★ School and District Improvement
- ★ Restructuring and Turnarounds
- ★ Statewide Systems of Support
- ★ Families and Schools
- ★ Extended Learning (SES, Tutoring)
- ★ Charter Schools

## The Center's Services

- ★ Training and consultation for regional centers and states
- ★ Website at [www.centerii.org](http://www.centerii.org)
  - » Database of resources on school and district improvement, restructuring and turnarounds, state systems of support, charter schools, parent involvement, and supplemental educational services
  - » Database of state policies, programs, and progress
- ★ Web-based planning and monitoring systems for states, districts, and schools
  - » Working Together for Student Success™
  - » Parent Involvement Analysis
  - » Achievement Profile Analytic Tool
  - » Project Management (Title I, SES)
- ★ National Network of State School Improvement Leaders (with CCSSO)
- ★ Academy of Pacesetting States
- ★ Solution Finding reports for regional centers
- ★ Monthly e-newsletter on school improvement (with CCSSO), monthly resource Spotlights
- ★ Handbooks, guidebooks, and other publications

