

Academy of Pacesetting States

Seeing change through to the classroom

States ramp up their systems of support by *developing skilled experts* in three critical areas: leadership, change, and instruction.

Ramping Up

Need. States need well-trained, highly skilled change agents and instructional experts working together to build capacity for improvement in districts and schools.

Challenge. States are reorganizing their systems of support, but organizational change without people trained for the work leads only to better organized frustration.

Solution. The Center on Innovation & Improvement, through the Academy, will provide 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 and coordinate its components (including the people who carry it out),
2. Change Agents who understand not only effective operational practices, but also the dynamics of change in an educational setting, and
3. Instructional Specialists who understand effective classroom instruction and how it can be cultivated in district and school systems to reach a critical mass of instructional excellence.

Each state designates a team of five SEA staff to receive training and support through the year. The team includes a key administrator, two staff qualified to be change agents, and two instructional specialists. This team receives five days of training and planning in the summer of 2009, followed by a day each month of distance learning, monthly individual telephone conferences with Academy staff, and a year-end, three-day meeting and advanced training. One representative from each regional comprehensive center (with a participating state) participates in all events and is included in planning and follow-up support. The National Network of State School Improvement Leaders—facilitated by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

and the Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII)— provides the organizational structure and communication channel to share the work of the pacesetting states with others, giving the Academy widespread and dramatic impact.

Good to Great. By choosing to participate in the Academy, the state expresses its desire to strive for excellence, and devotes sufficient resources and attention to make a high-quality statewide system of support a reality. A focus of the program will be on leveraging existing resources, both personnel and funding, of the state systems so that they can more effectively (and cost-effectively) support improvement efforts of schools and districts in their states.

Cultivating Expertise

System Leaders. System Leaders will be trained and supported to:

- guide the continuous improvement of the statewide system of support,
- develop strong systems to assess district and school operations, identify needed supports, plan improvement, and evaluate results,
- coordinate the work of Change Agents and Instructional Specialists, and
- integrate the statewide system of support with other SEA functions.

In each state, someone is the key administrator in defining and managing the statewide system of support for district and school improvement. This person must possess a keen understanding of both state systems and their potential to effect constructive change in districts and schools. Each level in the system—state (including regional extensions and partners), district (including the local board and central office), school (including leadership and teams), and classroom (including instruction and family engagement) is critical to a strong system of education, as are the relationships among these levels. The Academy will provide training, collaboration, and continued support for

System Leaders to examine and improve their statewide systems of support. The training will be headed by Sam Redding, CII's Director and co-editor of the *Handbook on Statewide Systems of Support*, with assistance from experienced state leaders. Especially, the System Leaders will focus on linking the two areas of expertise—change agency and instructional leadership—to enable the full team of five to work coherently in their state.

Change Agents. Change Agents will be trained and supported to:

- serve as Change Agents themselves, raising expectations, developing leadership, and improving results in districts and schools,
- build Change Agent programs in their states,
- recruit the strongest Change Agents in their states,
- train, supervise, and coordinate the work of Change Agents in their states,
- align the work of the Change Agents with that of the Instructional Specialists.

Over the years, many states have deployed consultants, coaches, and distinguished educators to assist districts and schools, with disappointing results. The Academy is proposing a different way. With lessons learned from Kentucky's highly regarded program of Highly Skilled Educators, and new research on rapid improvement, the Academy will train and support Change Agents to develop high-quality Change Agent programs in their states and also serve as Change Agents. The training will be headed by Stephen Schenck, former Associate Commissioner at the Kentucky Department of Education, who directed the program there, and will include Barbara Kennedy, also formerly with the Kentucky Department of Education. The program for Change Agents will specifically focus on the dynamics of change, building leadership capacity, and creating safe, orderly, and positive learning environments.

Instructional Specialists. Instructional Specialists will be trained and supported to:

- serve as Instructional Specialists themselves, training and advising principals and teacher leaders to effect systematic improvement of instructional planning and delivery,
- build Instructional Specialist programs in their states,
- recruit the strongest Instructional Specialists in their states,

- train, supervise, and coordinate the work of Instructional Specialists in their states,
- align the work of the Instructional Specialists with that of the Change Agents.

To drive the impact of school improvement efforts into the classroom, and reach a critical mass of instructional excellence, the Academy will train two Instructional Specialists from each state, part of the team of five, to put in place high-quality state programs of Instructional Specialists. The training will be headed by Nancy Protheroe, an expert on instruction and a member of CII's Scientific Council, and will include trainers who launched the successful Instructional Leadership program in Virginia. The program will specifically focus on systematic implementation of standards-aligned, individualized, and personalized instruction in schools, including the role of the district and the school's leadership. This strong instructional element to district and school improvement will work in synch with the systemic improvement processes spearheaded by the district and school improvement teams, optimally supported by state Change Agents.

The Timeline

The 2009 Summer Academy

Location: Chauncey Training Center, Campus of ETS in Princeton, New Jersey

Dates: July 19-24

The 2010 Year-End Meeting and Advanced Academy

Location: TBA

Dates: TBA

Monthly Day of Distance Learning

Dates to be announced

Monthly Telephone Conference with Individual State Teams

To be arranged with each State Team

The Cost for State Team

Cost of Year-Long Program: \$29,750

Including travel (air and ground), room and board for Summer Academy and Year-End Meeting/Advanced Training for 5-Member Team

For more information or to register, please contact: Marilyn Murphy, Communication Director, Center on Innovation & Improvement, 215-204-3000, mmurphy@centerii.org