

Message from the SECC Director

The Southeast Comprehensive Center's (SECC) contract ends on September 30, 2019. Therefore, this is the final issue of the newsletter. We have enjoyed partnering with you and our states in the valuable work in the Southeast and appreciate your support. To learn more about SECC's transition and how to access materials through our archived website, please visit the [American Institutes for Research website](#).

Beth Howard-Brown, Ed.D., SECC Director

SECC Supports Statewide Education Initiatives in North Carolina

SECC supports the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in multiple statewide education initiatives, including the development of data-collection tools and the refinement of the state's regional support model to provide targeted support to low-performing schools in the state. A recent [video](#) features a number of NCDPI staff discussing their work with SECC. For more information about SECC state-based project work, visit [Overviews By State](#).

Advisory Board Convenes for Annual Meeting

Atlanta, Georgia, was the setting for the annual meeting of the SECC Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is composed of 14 members, which include leaders from state education agencies, districts, schools, and other education-based organizations.

On June 18, 2019, board members convened with SECC leaders, state liaisons, project leads, and evaluation staff for updates on project work and evaluation efforts (pictured below are participants during the meeting). Advisory Board members participated in a gallery walk highlighting state projects. Group discussions promoted sharing among individuals from other states and reflections on the long-term impact of SECC in the southeast region.

When asked to provide feedback regarding the meeting, one board member found it valuable to learn more about SECC's great work in the five states and was particularly impressed with the talent management efforts in Mississippi and the focus on English learners in Alabama. Another board member said, "As always, the gallery walk was very informative. The two panel discussions provided opportunities for direct input from advisory board members with very useful observations." Regarding next steps, one board member said, "We will be reviewing the resources developed by other states [and] looking for ways to use these to advance student outcomes in our SEAs and LEAs."



Elevate Conference Engages and Inspires Educators

The second annual [Mississippi Elevate Teachers Conference](#) took place July 8–9, 2019, in Jackson. The goal was, in the words of Dr. Akil Ross, “to empower the heart of education” through professional learning designed to extend the reach and positive impact of educators while elevating perceptions of the teaching profession.

Conference keynote speakers included Monica Genta, National Speaker and Teacher, Mattoon Middle School (Illinois); Dr. Akil Ross, Chapin High School Principal and National Association of Secondary School Principals’ (NASSP) 2018 National Principal of the Year; Hanna Gadd-Ardrey, 2019–20 Mississippi Teacher of the Year; and the esteemed Professor Emerita Dr. Gloria Ladson–Billings, who coined the term culturally relevant pedagogy. Conference topics included classroom management, supporting English learners, engaging parents in the student learning process, effective strategies for addressing student behaviors, co-teaching, making learning fun, data tools on the web, building a positive school culture, culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices, and more.

Panelists Tammie Causey-Konaté, Ph.D., SECC Deputy Director; Dr. Ladson–Billings; and four other professional educators who lead work on CRT practices led discussions that engaged over 800 public-school educators. Following the panel discussion, Dr. Causey–Konaté conducted a post-conference learning session on data-informed instruction with 68 of Mississippi’s first cohort of candidates for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Performance-Based Licensure (PBL) program. Mississippi is piloting this program as one strategy to address its critical teacher shortage.



Pictured are (left–right) Dr. Saroja Warner, Co–Director of Mid–Atlantic Comprehensive Center; Dr. Tammie Causey–Konaté, Deputy Director of SECC at American Institutes for Research; Sandra Elliott, English Learner Intervention Support Specialist for MDE (preK–12); Dr. Gloria Ladson–Billings, Professor Emerita, University of Wisconsin–Madison; Dr. Erica McCray, Associate Professor of Special Education at University of Florida and Co–Director of the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center; and Dr. Nichelle Boyd–Robinson, School of Education Diversity Officer and Associate Professor (tenured) of Teacher Education, University of Mississippi.

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Upcoming Events

Student Support Team Association of Georgia Educators Fall Conference

Macon, Georgia
September 12, 2019

The Student Support Team Association of Georgia Educators (SSTAGE) has announced its fall conference. The featured speaker will be Pat Quinn, “The RTI Guy.” He will show step–by–step how to implement response to intervention (RTI) in schools. Registration includes access to follow-up online training, a copy of Quinn’s book, *Ultimate RTI: Everything a Teacher Needs to Know to Implement RTI*, and SSTAGE membership.

[Event site](#)

Annual Conference for Middle Level Education

Nashville, Tennessee
November 7–9, 2019

The Annual Conference for Middle Level Education will offer over 300 learning sessions for middle school educators. Sessions will include one-on-one discussions with education leaders, networking opportunities, and more.

[Event site](#)

ASCD Conference on Educational Leadership

National Harbor, Maryland
November 8–10, 2019

The theme for this year’s ASCD educational leadership conference is Resilient Schools in Action. Sessions will allow participants to explore a number of key topics including cultivating school safety, fostering a healthy climate, raising student performance and trust, instilling the mindset of equity and respect for identity, and making connections to one another and the entire education community.

[Event site](#)

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