



The Story of CSLA

for ADMINISTRATORS

When Linda Jackson became principal of Coronado Elementary School in Richmond, California in 1996, she was fresh out of the classroom, had never surfed the Internet, and was completely new to administration.

Four years later, she is enthusiastically overseeing the school's technology plan and facilitating staff meetings to maximize communication between herself and the teachers.

She credits her confidence to training she received from more experienced administrators during a three-year, California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) program, now housed at WestEd.

"It was almost like going to Nordstrom. I could shop and see what my school could look like," Jackson says. "I got to go online for the first time during a CSLA seminar and meet another principal. Now, for my teachers struggling with new technology, I can be a leader."

Since its beginning 15 years ago, CSLA has been a national model for how states can serve their education administrators through regional leadership training programs. Funded by the state legislature through the California Department of Education to help administrators develop skills necessary to lead school reform, CSLA today offers seminars and workshops designed to help administrators make sense of their work in today's high-stakes, standards-based system.

"The job of a principal is becoming increasingly difficult, nearly impossible," says Jean Brown, Director of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Administrative Academy, a partner with CSLA. "Principals are expected to do and know more, but not with more time or resources. This is their opportunity for formal training."

Since 1985, thousands of principals and superintendents have participated in CSLA regional programs, either to earn course credits required to obtain administrative credentials or while getting support for the curriculum, instruction, and assessment components of their work.



From the CEO: Investing in Our Leaders

Welcome to the Summer issue of *R&D Alert*.

Advocating for children is a critical job requiring everyone's involvement. Teachers, parents, and political leaders are all needed, and their work will have more impact if they all work together.

In this era of top-down, standards-based reform, teacher-leaders, principals, superintendents, and school board members frequently have a big picture perspective, and they are best able to balance often conflicting state mandates and community priorities.

This diversity of opinion exists in every state and, on some level, in every community, making effective leadership more crucial than ever. Classroom teachers need support from leaders who have a vision of success and who can rally support to make that vision a reality.

But being a leader is often more science than art. For principals to know what their schools need to succeed, they need experience, practice, the support of colleagues, and time away from the school site to hone skills. School principals often report that they have no

time during their workweek to keep up with research or meet with other administrators to share experiences. In fact, many administrators work in isolation from one another.

We at WestEd know that leadership requires a unique set of skills and knowledge. We also know that investing in our leaders is critical to achieving the right outcomes for kids.

This issue of *R&D Alert* highlights several WestEd initiatives directed at developing leadership. The lead article explores the work of the California School Leadership Academy, which has trained thousands of school leaders in both individual and team-based

approaches. Other articles include an interview with WestEd's Rudy Crew, who earlier this year left his job as Chancellor of the New York City public schools. Rudy shares his perspectives on a number of key issues education leaders face today.

At WestEd, we work with administrators and teams of school and district leaders to help improve their craft as they pursue a vision of educational achievement for all children. We help new and aspiring principals develop management skills that model effective instruction techniques. We help districts interpret test results to better align curriculum and instruction for the benefit of every child.

We hope you will find the articles and approaches in this issue of *R&D Alert* helpful in your work.

Glen Harvey
Chief Executive Officer, WestEd

What it Takes to Become an Effective Leader

Principals work in the eye of the storm, responsible not only for how students in their schools perform but for remembering every child's name and making sure the buses show up on time. In fact, all administrators have to understand and do more, often with little formal training, than ever before.

On top of managing staff and staying current on the latest technology and curriculum, they are wise to understand the political system that generates educational standards and policies.

But there are strategies leaders use to keep the school focused on student learning.

"There's no common definition of what we want schools to do," says Kate Jamentz, Program Director of WestEd's Western Assessment Collaborative. "But there are ways to get agreement. A good leader draws out common ground, and the best place to start is to focus on quality instruction."

Jamentz joined Karen Kearney, Program Director of WestEd's California School Leadership Academy, to generate a thumbnail primer of skills educational leaders need to navigate top-down policy. Here are the strategies Jamentz and Kearney say are those most often observed in effective leaders:

They lead by finding what all members of the community have in common, rather than where they disagree. "They acknowledge the differences," says Jamentz, "but try to work on what is shared."

They know their students. Know that some are doing well and some are not and why. "Use this information as a basis for taking action," says Kearney. "Know them and what they can do through the quality of their work."

They make lemonade out of lemons. They take even the most incoherent policy and think about the intent behind it, and then act on that intent. "Take California's SAT-9 test, for example," says Jamentz. "Good leaders say, 'This may not be the best test, but let's use it to better understand what's going on with our students and what we might do about it.'"

They keep a mental map of what a successful school looks like and use it to guide decisionmaking.

They are willing to shift strategy with new input. They use judgment to decide when being focused on a goal comes at the expense of considering new information.

They find colleagues and others who give honest feedback on how they are doing.

They understand that as leaders, they are teachers. They take every opportunity to model the values and actions that make a difference for students.

"The goal is promoting student learning through high-quality instruction," says Kearney. "Teaching the knowledge and skills to deliver it, building a culture that supports it, and helping the community focus on it." 

"A good leader draws out common ground, and the best place to start is to focus on quality instruction."

Kate Jamentz, Program Director,
Western Assessment Collaborative, WestEd

Orchestrating a Chorus

Rudy Crew, former Chancellor of the New York City schools, recently joined WestEd, in partnership with the University of Washington, to create a new Initiative for K-12 Leadership (see also page 8 of this newsletter). Before New York, Crew was a school superintendent in Sacramento and Tacoma. R&D Alert found Crew working from his San Francisco WestEd office, and asked him to sit for an interview about himself, the superintendency, and his new project.



Paul Koehler, WestEd's Policy Director, conducted the interview. Koehler, too, is a former school district leader. Before joining WestEd's staff last January, he was Superintendent of the Peoria Unified School District, the fourth largest district in Arizona, and was named Arizona Superintendent of the Year in 1999. Koehler began by asking Crew which people most influenced him.

Crew: First and foremost: my father. He was a jazz musician, who played with Duke Ellington. My father told me that my life's work was going to be providing other people with opportunities for them to realize their dreams.

Also very influential was my school principal, Greta Pruitt, who taught me that race — a powerful part of how we function and experience the world — is not and should not limit how we experience each other or see the potential in children. Rather than an end point, it should be a beginning. And, of course, there is Wilson Riles — my mentor. Wilson was gentle and gracious in manner, but he was also forceful, someone whose work made a difference.

Koehler: How has the role of school superintendent changed in the years since you first began work in education?

Crew: It's changed a lot. Superintendents used to be managers, sitting back, overseeing mostly stable systems. Today they are activists, sleeves rolled up, engaged with the community. To

of Voices

accommodate those changes has required education leaders to develop a whole new set of skills.As one example, at one time superintendents had to know simply what needed to be done. Now they really must know how it needs to get done.

Koehler: To perform well in these demanding jobs, do we need superhumans?

Crew: No, but we do need highly skilled people. On a very basic level, we need people who are comfortable with themselves, who have the capacity for reflection, introspection. We also need folks with political skills, or, at least, knowledge about how to assess and navigate political structures. A good superintendent should be a coalition builder, someone who takes the many groups that want their voices heard and links them, producing a chorus where all voices are heard.

Koehler: Newspaper ads for superintendent jobs these days all seem to announce: “Strong leader wanted!” Yet, I often wonder, “Are these districts ready to put up with what a strong leader will do?”

Crew: “Strong leader” too often really means: “attack dog — someone vigilant and powerful but under our control.” If boards want a strong leader, they must be prepared for someone who will speak out, be a truth teller. A good example: The truth is that the issues we must address today often involve race and class. Our systems have for too long differentiated by race and class. We must expect education leaders to be brave enough to articulate such truths — ones we may all know, at heart, but too seldom acknowledge.

Koehler: Is there a particular vision of learning you would recommend superintendents embrace?

Crew: That learning has absolutely no walls. Carry a vision of learning as 24-7-365. No more 180 school days. No schools closed at night or during the summer. Open the schools, the system. Open it all! There are so many exciting possibilities.

Koehler: Finally, you are now embarking on a new venture — the Initiative for K-12 Leadership, based here at WestEd and at the University of Washington. What can this new entity do to contribute to improving school and district leadership?



Paul Koehler

Crew: First, it will model a way of thinking differently, using new, unconventional tools to address education’s problems. Second, ours, by design, is a collaborative venture. By setting goals together, we have a much better chance to find answers. We are assembling many individual candles. Together, I believe, they will produce a most powerful light. [W](#)

(continued from page 1)

CSLA seminars foster distributed leadership to help both seasoned and new administrators alike develop a strong presence while sharing leadership with school-site staff. Together, leaders and staff cultivate community input on strategies to improve student learning.

“It would be simpler to either have a leader or a group that leads, but the reality is that you need both,” says CSLA Executive Director Karen Kearney. “It is collegial action that will do most to increase student performance. Leadership isn’t just about having an idea and convincing others to follow. Leadership includes knowing how kids learn and having the skills to involve the community.”

Having helped administrators develop leadership skills since the mid-’80s, Kearney can see some tangible progress.

“We’re still trying to educate children, but now our tools include the fruits of 20 years of research, new technologies, plus the added complexity brought about by diversity, politics, and higher expectations.”



even veteran administrators develop a mental model of a successful school and to understand components of their work — curriculum, assessment, professional development, organizational culture, and standards-based teaching — from a “systems-based” perspective.

“The idea is to help administrators understand if things are working properly,” Kearney says. “And if they aren’t, to recognize how the components can become integrated and aligned.”

Technical assistance makes up about half of the CSLA staff’s work. The assistance involves direct work with schools and districts on specific projects, like coaching a superintendent or a school board to better respond to standards newly expected by the district or state.

Since last year CSLA has helped run a program for new principals in the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Administrative Academy. The program is unique to the district, having been customized to blend CSLA’s Foundation and Ventures programs.

In its infancy, CSLA was run jointly by Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (now WestEd) and the Santa Clara County Office of Education. The program is now operated from 12

regional leadership centers. CSLA eventually established its headquarters in the offices of the Alameda County (California) Office of Education.

Last year CSLA formally became part of WestEd, moving its headquarters into WestEd’s Oakland, California offices. While the two agencies have a history of collaboration, the organizational arrangement, says Kearney, is already reaping benefits.

“We have more ready access to research,” she says, “and we offer WestEd a pipeline to an even wider array of education practitioners.”

Bringing educational leaders together is an important feature of CSLA’s work. Like Richmond’s Linda Jackson, so many administrators work in isolation from others with similar jobs.

“At the job site we do everything: budget, personnel matters, developing a vision,” says Jackson. “It is crucial to delegate to others in order to keep up, but how can I delegate when I, myself, don’t know what is required? Through CSLA, I get help from other administrators. It’s made all the difference.”

For more information, contact Kearney at 510/302-4261; or visit CSLA’s Web site at csla.org/. 

“Leadership includes knowing how kids learn and having the skills to involve the community.”

Karen Kearney, CSLA Program Manager, WestEd

CSLA’s services are divided into four components: the Foundation program, a series of seminars for individuals; School Leadership Teams, for staff teams from school sites; Ventures, a reflective think tank for experienced administrators; and the Executive Leadership Center, for superintendents.

Participants in the Foundation program attend 10-12 seminars a year for two to three years. These seminars help new, aspiring, or

Tapping the Potential of Community Leadership

A group of elementary school children learns peer mediation strategies in Santa Ana, California. A partnership of parents, community members, and school personnel debates what constitutes an effective educational program in their schools. A team of early childhood educators provides technical assistance to preschools in rural Minnesota. What links these diverse groups? All of them exemplify WestEd's commitment to fostering leadership within the communities its projects serve.

Through the work of the Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers, the IRIS project, Creciendo Saludable, and the New Hampshire Best Schools Initiative, among others, WestEd staff are engaging community members in critical discussion and decisionmaking to inform the goals and practices of their projects.

As diverse as these projects are, some common themes related to developing leadership emerge. First, building leadership is a two-way street — a collaborative effort between trainers or consultants and community members. Second, the development of leadership is even more effective when exponential; therefore, a training-the-trainers model is often used. Finally, working with the community helps create a public policy-savvy cohort that is committed to reform efforts — support that is crucial in the often-political arenas of health, education, and human services.

Perhaps most importantly, these projects tap into the intrinsic leadership capacity within organizations and communities to meet local needs, something outside intervention cannot sustain. In this way, the stage is set for authentic, systemic, and enduring change.

For information about the programs highlighted in this article, contact:

Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (highlighted in the Fall/Winter 1999 issue of *R&D Alert*): Sheila Signer, Center for Child and Family Studies Program Associate and Communications Director, at 415/289-2300, or e-mail, ssigner@WestEd.org; or visit the Web site at pitc.org/.



Steve Hamilton, Director of District and School Services (far right), leads facilitators in a training session at one of two weeklong academies, as part of WestEd's New Hampshire Best Schools Initiative (BSI). Participating with Hamilton in a yarn mosaic experience are BSI facilitators Trish Perry (from left), Molly Watt, Michael St. John, and Chuck Bagley.

Learning Innovations (New Hampshire Best Schools Initiative; highlighted in the Spring 2000 issue of *R&D Alert*): Cheryl Williams, Best Schools Initiative's Director of Outreach, at 781/481-1100, or e-mail, cwillia@WestEd.org; or visit the Web site at nhbsi.org/.

Educational and Community Initiatives (IRIS project and Creciendo Saludable, both highlighted in the Spring 2000 issue of *R&D Alert**): Program Manager Cynthia Peck at 714/648-0333, or e-mail, cpeck@WestEd.org; or visit the Web site at healthy-ninos.com/. 

* Follow-up information on preliminary research findings for the IRIS and Creciendo Saludable projects, featured in the Spring 2000 issue of *R&D Alert*, can be obtained at healthy-ninos.com/.

Remembering Susan Loucks-Horsley



Beloved senior WestEd associate Susan Loucks-Horsley, known internationally for her pioneering work in education change, professional development, and science-mathematics

education, died tragically in August after an accidental fall.

Formerly co-director of WestEd's Science and Mathematics Program, she served as associate executive director of Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS) in Colorado Springs and had recently worked as a project director at the National Institute for Science Education and at the National Research Council.

She was an acclaimed developer of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), used to describe stages individuals and organizations encounter when making changes. CBAM was developed at the University of Texas with others, including Gene Hall, now dean of education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Author of books, toolkits, and many articles, Dr. Loucks-Horsley, 52, received numerous awards for professional achievement. Beyond the impact of her work, she will be remembered by the many people whose lives she touched as warm, genuine, and loving. Her influence on the WestEd community was indelible; Susan is profoundly missed.

*Contributions should be made to:
The Susan Loucks-Horsley Fund for
Educational Change
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
6601 East Grant Road, Suite 111
Tucson, AZ 85715*

“This is an all-call,” says Rudy Crew. “We are recruiting people who want to think deeper about the education agenda of the nation, who want to give us the benefit of what they have tried and how it is working.”

**Initiative
for K–12
Leadership
seeks** **HIGH
VELOCITY
SCHOOL
CHANGE**

“We need models — to discover them, lay them out, put them on a network. We need a highway from School A to Schools B, C, and D. We need a district in South Carolina to benefit from what five districts in New York have already figured out. Right now it's episodic; there's no pathway. You go to a conference, you bump into someone, and then you learn something. We want to make those connections explicit.”

Crew, former Chancellor of the New York City schools system, hopes that the new Initiative for K-12 Leadership, a collaboration between WestEd and the University of Washington, will be a place where policymakers, researchers, and educators make those connections. The initiative will conduct sustained work with school districts, resulting in an increased number of school leaders who, as Crew says, “create a higher velocity and wider range of change.”

Adds Crew, who is helping to create this initiative: “We want to turn the world on its ear.”

For more information about the Initiative for K-12 Leadership, which can work with up to 20 California and Washington districts to provide a tailored response to their needs, contact Linda Grimsson, Administrative Specialist, at 206/221-6882 or e-mail, lindag@u.washington.edu 

LEADERSHIP

IN SUPPORT OF

Standards-Based

INSTRUCTION

To realize the potential of standards-based instruction, principals, no less than teachers, must reconsider their practices. “If we’re going to get every student to achieve to high standards, then instruction and how it is supported, supervised, and evaluated needs to change,” according to Kate Jamentz, Director of the Western Assessment Collaborative (WAC) and WAC’s Leadership Initiative at WestEd.

“Good instructional supervision,” Jamentz says, “means that principals can sit down with a teacher and ask, ‘What did you learn from the work your students produced? What does it tell you about the effectiveness of your instruction? What will you need to do differently for those students who are not yet meeting the standard?’ The focus needs to be on student results, not just a teacher’s performance.”

In its first two years, the WAC Leadership Initiative, funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, has been collaborating with three districts in Northern California — San Leandro Unified, San Lorenzo Unified, and the San Mateo-Foster City Schools. WestEd staff work with two configurations of leadership teams: “systems teams” representing both the district office and the school sites, and principal teams. The systems teams come together in a summer institute to think about what tools, policies, and practices need to be in place to support standards-based accountability, and to make plans to strengthen their district systems.

During the school year, each district’s principal team — *all* principals as well as some teacher leaders and district office staff — meets in a series of five to eight Leadership Academies. The Academies are where ideas from the summer institute become concrete. Participants learn about the characteristics of effective standards-based instruction, about what data sources can be used to evaluate instruction, and about strategies for giving effective feedback.

Principals and other school leaders learn to formulate questions about the quality of the work students produce by digging into raw student work and comparing it with performance standards. They also learn to question the quality of the work students are *given*, to think about how assignments and instruction promote or fail to promote standards-based learning.

In her work with the Leadership Academies, Trudy Schoneman, Associate Director of WAC, finds that “there’s a widely held assumption that everyone understands standards-based instruction. But, in fact, it’s really new — for everyone in the system. Principals tell us they appreciate having the opportunity to learn this — what it takes for teachers to use standards well, and what it takes for them as supervisors to support their teachers.”

For more information about the WAC Leadership Initiative, contact Jamentz at 415/615-3111 or go to WestEd.org/pol/ to learn about the Western Assessment Collaborative. 



(photo to right)
A Systems Leadership Team from the San Leandro (California) Unified School District recently participated in a three-day institute, “Building Leadership Capacity for Standards-Based Accountability,” as part of the Western Assessment Collaborative Leadership Initiative. Members shown include Pat Dickson (from left), Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services; Gordon Surface, Curriculum Coordinator; Jim Bolar, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources; Tom Himmelberg, Superintendent; and Dan Spence, Principal, San Leandro High School.

WestEd

Resources

Principals' Institutes

Learning Innovations has been conducting one-day conferences and three-day retreats for principals as part of the Schoolwide Programs Network. Targeting high-poverty schools, the meetings are designed to help principals hone their leadership skills and become well-grounded in research. Participants learn from each other as they talk about the challenges they face, share success stories based on promising and proven practices for improving learning and teaching, and discuss why some programs have not been successful. For more information, contact Steve Hamilton, Learning Innovations Director of District and School Services, at 781/481-1104, or e-mail shamilt@WestEd.org

Superintendents' Institutes

Schools serving minority and low-income students, many of whom are also English language learners, continue to lag in educational achievement. To address this problem, the Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center (CAC) at WestEd sponsors the California Superintendents Council on Language, Culture, Poverty, and Race. To date, the CAC and the superintendents have held three institutes focused on solutions for increasing student achievement. One outcome of the institutes was a paper entitled, *Greater Expectations for California's Neediest Students: A Call to Action*, distributed to members of the California State Legislature. For more information or for a copy of the paper, contact Rose Owens-West, WestEd Senior Research Associate, at 510/302-4246, or e-mail, rowensw@WestEd.org

Schoolwide Programs Network

Together with the New England Comprehensive Assistance Center, WestEd's Learning Innovations continues to help raise student achievement through the Schoolwide Programs Network. The network brings together teams of teachers, principals, and community members to develop and implement Title I schoolwide programs to help children achieve academic success. As a result, some of the schools now part of the network have raised student achievement, received Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSR/D) program grants, and have become, or are becoming, nationally recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools. For more information, contact Steve Hamilton at 781/481-1104, or e-mail shamilt@WestEd.org

Aspiring Administrators Program

Outstanding candidates for school administration may be in each school district's backyard. Teachers are often tapped for administration jobs through the Aspiring Administrators Program, developed by WestEd Director of Policy Paul Koehler when he was Superintendent at Peoria Unified School District in Arizona. The program offers teachers a chance to explore career goals leading to jobs in school administration. After one year of orientation and training in administration, the teacher-participants decide either to be included in a pool of potential administrators or realize that they are not cut out for such leadership roles. For more information, contact Koehler at 602/322-7004, or e-mail, pkoehle@WestEd.org; or contact Ellie Perry, Assistant Professor at Arizona State University West, at 602/543-6318.

Leadership Programs

Leadership programs — some conducted independently by Learning Innovations and others in collaboration with the New England Comprehensive Assistance Center — help teams of educators and principals in Maine and Massachusetts use data to shape instructional programs. In workshops and team planning meetings, Learning Innovations staff guide team members in analyzing data to find out which programs are promising and which ones should be eliminated. One indicator of impact: A participating school in Manchester, Massachusetts had a 10-12% failure rate on the English portion of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) standards tests for eighth graders. One year later, not one student was at a "failing level." For more information, contact Steve Hamilton at 781/481-1104, or e-mail, shamilt@WestEd.org 

What's new, hot, and useful



Comprehensive School Reform Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards: A Guidebook on Schoolwide Improvement

Sylvie van Heusden Hale and the Region XI Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center, 2000

Is your school interested in comprehensive school reform — either as a participant in the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Project (CSRDP) or as a Title I school? This guidebook and two videos will help you as you plan, implement, and sustain reform efforts to improve teaching and learning.

190 pages
Price:

- Complete set (190-page guidebook binder, 15-minute overview video, and 30-minute schools profile video): \$59.95
- 2-video set (no binder): \$20.95
- 15-minute overview video: \$11.95
- 30-minute schools profile video: \$14.95

(Videos also available in Spanish and closed caption versions.)

Order #: CSRDP-00-00

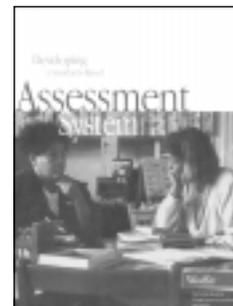
The *WestEd Resource Catalog 2000* recently won a Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing from the Association of Educational Publishers (formerly known as EdPress). The award recognizes dramatic progress in the standards and quality of editorial and design elements over time.

Developing a Standards-Based Assessment System

Kim O'Neill & Kendyll Stansbury
(Primary Contributors), 2000

This resource for schools and districts interested in developing and implementing a standards-based assessment system introduces key steps in the process. It also discusses several issues to consider when developing and implementing a new assessment system. Examples from existing systems are provided.

180 pages Price: \$29.95 Order #: ASDS-00-01



Making Assessment Work for Everyone: How to Build on Student Strengths

Assessment Laboratory Network Project of the Regional Educational Laboratories, 2000

A product of national research and development efforts, this guide for teachers and administrators provides practical information, activities, and resources for selecting, adapting, and developing assessments to promote excellence in each student while honoring his or her cultural experiences and ways of knowing and showing learning.

292 pages Price: \$20 Order #: REL-00-01



Grading and Reporting Student Progress in an Age of Standards

Elise Trumbull & Beverly Farr, Editors
Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2000

Real-life examples from districts across the country illustrate best practices in aligning grading and reporting with the goals of standards-based education.

224 pages Price: \$35.95 Order #: PD-00-02



WestEd Resource Catalog — 2000



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What it Takes to
Become an
Effective Leader

Remembering Susan
Loucks-Horsley



Tapping the
Potential
of Community
Leadership



Rudy Crew
interviewed
by Paul Koehler

R & D Alert

R&D Alert covers issues affecting schools in WestEd's four-state region — Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah — and nationwide.

Your letters are welcomed. Please send comments to Colleen Montoya, WestEd, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-5139; fax, 562/799-5138; or e-mail, cmontoy@WestEd.org

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For more information about WestEd, visit our Web site: WestEd.org/; call 415/565-3000 or, toll-free, (1-877) 4WestEd; or write: WestEd / 730 Harrison Street / San Francisco, CA 94107-1242.

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