

Low-performing  
**Schools**  
begin **TURNING** the  
**Corner**



Thanks to a program established by the California legislature two years ago, selected low-performing schools are eligible to work with “external evaluators” — including those at WestEd — to help them focus on the most effective ways to improve student achievement. Last year, the first year of this state-funded project, WestEd began work with 21 low-performing schools. This year, the agency took on responsibility for 31 more.

El Verano Elementary School is one example of a low-performing school that WestEd’s External Evaluator (EE) project is committed to helping: a burgeoning student population of English learners, increasing numbers of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, and staff looking for knowledge and skills to address these changes.

At the beginning of this school year, El Verano administration and staff met with WestEd External Evaluator Margit Birge and WestEd Senior Research Associate Robert Linquanti to review data from WestEd-conducted staff interviews and classroom observations.

*(continued on page 6)*

WestEd’s External Evaluator Project

*Schools under the most pressure to improve achievement also face intense pressure to address other problems. The challenge often is how to focus on the main objective, despite the distractions. WestEd believes it can help structure such a focus.*

WestEd

*Improving education through research,  
development, and service*

# Increasing education opportunities for all



from the CEO

WestEd has worked extensively to understand the challenges of "low-performing schools." We believe every school has the potential to be exemplary. The reasons why so many do not live up to this potential are complex, involving factors both inside the school and beyond.

It is particularly troubling that schools most often designated as low performing tend to be those serving high percentages of students who are minorities and/or living in poverty. Many of WestEd's efforts focus on equity issues, economic and health conditions, speaking and reading skills for second-language learners, and developing needed resources for schools, communities, and policymakers.

WestEd's work includes direct services and research both in and out of school settings to increase education opportunities for all children. We have found it important to create positive, healthy environments for children outside of school as well as in school. And we develop resources and conduct research to help policymakers better support schools and communities.

In this issue, we describe a sampling of what we have learned.

The lead article describes lessons from our External Evaluator project focusing on low-performing schools in California. Building on our experience and the latest research, WestEd's External Evaluators help school-based leadership teams through a process of collaborative planning and intensive data analysis designed to identify areas for improvement. The project helps schools create and implement comprehensive plans. These plans have clear, specific targets and include assessments and supports needed for students and schools to succeed.

Other articles focus on our work with three Comprehensive Assistance Centers (in Massachusetts, California, and Arizona) as part of a national network of centers providing service to schools and districts whose students have been traditionally underserved by the education system. We also look at our efforts to remove barriers to learning (such as violence and alcohol and other drug use) and to create positive school, family, and community environments. WestEd's work helping children acquire the speaking and reading skills they need to succeed is also highlighted. And we describe WestEd school and district leadership teams that support student achievement and our efforts to understand the disproportionate representation of minority students referred to special education classes.

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

Glen H. Harvey  
Chief Executive Officer, *WestEd*

# Bridging Cultural Differences

offers key to student success

**A**mada Pérez was frustrated using conventional methods to motivate her third graders to learn multiplication tables up to five. Her students, mostly Latino immigrants, were not spurred on by individual competition. The star charts, which publicized students' progress, only served to make some of the students feel bad.



Students work together on a math project in Kathryn Eyler's kindergarten classroom at Hoover Street Elementary School in Los Angeles. Eyler participates in WestEd's Bridging Cultures Project.

"I felt the emphasis was on failure rather than success," says Pérez, who teaches at Mar Vista Elementary School in Oxnard, California.

Then Pérez became a part of WestEd's Bridging Cultures Project, which supports teacher use of cultural knowledge to increase the academic success of immigrant Latino students. These students tend to have a collectivistic orientation to learning — to be focused on the success of the group as a whole rather than on individual achievement, says Bridging Cultures Project Director Elise Trumbull.

"All cultures value both the individual and the group, but dominant culture in the United States is vastly more individualistic than the cultures of most immigrants from Latin America and Asia," explains Trumbull. "Children who have learned at home to help each other may find their natural strengths ignored or suppressed by well-meaning teachers who believe in the value of individual work. But the source of such conflict between teacher and students often goes unrecognized, leaving everyone frustrated."

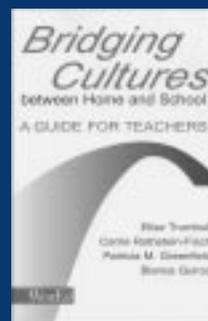
Funded primarily by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Bridging Cultures began five years ago with seven teachers — four Latino, including Pérez, and three European-American. After a series of workshops, in which the teachers learned about individualism and collectivism, they became researchers in their own classrooms. Using their new knowledge as a starting point for understanding cultural differences, they began to devise ways to bridge them. In the past four years, at least another 3,000 teachers have been introduced to Bridging Cultures through more than 100 workshops.

Pérez's ongoing discussions with project members sparked an idea. Back in her classroom, she met with students to talk about the star chart. Consistent with their cultural valuing of group success, students suggested a way to fill in the stars for every student.

"They wanted to help each other," Pérez says. "Everyone who needed help got 'adopted' by students who had already mastered (the multiplication table)."

Pérez's students learned their multiplication tables to the sixes, and many went to the twelves. She believes the children were successful because her strategy worked *with*, as opposed to *against*, their collectivistic nature.

For more information, contact Trumbull at 510.302.4246 or e-mail, [etrumbu@WestEd.org](mailto:etrumbu@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/bridging/](http://www.WestEd.org/bridging/) 



*Bridging Cultures between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers* shares what researchers and teachers of the Bridging Cultures Project have learned (see page 10 of this newsletter for more information). *Bridging Cultures in Our Schools: New Approaches That*

*Work* also is available through *WestEd's Resource Catalog 2000*. See page 11 of this newsletter for information on accessing the catalog.

# Providing needed



*Part of a nationwide network of 15 technical assistance providers established under the federal Improving America's Schools Act, Comprehensive Assistance Centers pay special attention to programs serving students who traditionally have been underserved by the education system. WestEd operates one such center, the Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center, as part of the agency's Comprehensive Assistance Program; and partners with two other centers — the Southwest Comprehensive Center and New England Comprehensive Assistance Center.*

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE CENTER

Five years ago, Vallejo City Unified School District in Northern California was struggling to raise test scores. Part of the problem, says the district's Special Projects Assistant Director, Sherwin Low, was that the district lacked a good plan for reform.

The district found one — after its leaders attended a Schoolwide Institute conducted by WestEd's Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center. As a result, Low says, each school in the district crafted its own reform plan, and test scores started to climb.

"[The center has] been our main avenue when we needed information in terms of school reform," says Low. "It's been a wonderful relationship."

"What we really try to do," says Comprehensive Assistance Program Director Fred Tempes, "is work with others to build the capacity of schools and districts" to carry out their own reforms that aim to improve student achievement. The center collaborates with agencies like the California Department of Education and county offices of education. For example, center staff work with county offices of education to establish local teams of educators to improve the reading achievement of elementary school students.

## SOUTHWEST COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

More students at Isaac Middle School in Phoenix are reading at or above grade level — the result of a pilot reading program begun one year ago with the help of the Southwest Comprehensive Center.

The challenge was daunting in a school of 1,100 students, a majority of whom were English learners and on the federal free lunch program. However, with the pilot reading program and the center's help in training a cadre of teacher-trainers to help classroom teachers provide an effective literacy program, the students' reading skills improved significantly.

Former Principal Carol Erickson, now the district's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, says a group of students she meets with weekly have made dramatic gains. "Probably 95 percent of them didn't speak English last year. Now they all speak English...and know that reading is important," she says.

# support for reform

to Northern California, Southwest, and New England schools

“[The Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center] has been our main avenue when we needed information in terms of school reform.”

Between August 2000 and February 2001, the percentage of the school’s sixth graders reading at or above grade level rose from 17 to 38 percent. Seventh graders improved from 28 to 45 percent, and eighth graders climbed from 28 to 54 percent. The reading program now is being used as a model for the district, says WestEd Senior Research Associate Huck Fitterer.

## NEW ENGLAND COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE CENTER

Faced with poor student achievement five years ago, Armory Elementary School in Springfield, Massachusetts, needed help with undertaking reform. Principal Cathy McCarthy turned to WestEd’s Learning Innovations and its partner, the New England Comprehensive Assistance Center. She then sent a staff team to professional development institutes run by the center.

Since then, test scores on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests, Stanford Science tests, and other assessments have improved steadily.

The center has helped schools in Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire increase their students’ test scores. It has sponsored three-day institutes to support schools’ individual reform efforts. Learning Innovations’ Steve Hamilton, who co-coordinates the institutes, calls this the Authentic Task Approach, “where leadership teams from schools come together, focused around a specific task or objective of reform.” 

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTERS, CONTACT:

Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center:  
Rose Owens-West, WestEd Senior Research Associate, at 510.302.4246,  
or e-mail [rowensw@WestEd.org](mailto:rowensw@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/NCCAC/](http://www.WestEd.org/NCCAC/)

Southwest Comprehensive Center: Fitterer at 602.322.7002, or e-mail,  
[hfitter@WestEd.org](mailto:hfitter@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/SCC/](http://www.WestEd.org/SCC/)  
[www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/swcc/](http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/swcc/)

New England Comprehensive Assistance Center: Hamilton at  
781.481.1104, e-mail, [shamilt@WestEd.org](mailto:shamilt@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/NECAC](http://www.WestEd.org/NECAC)  
or [www.edc.org/NECAC/](http://www.edc.org/NECAC/)



## Leadership program's approach credited for

# HIGHER Achievement

When Ed Brand became superintendent of Sweetwater Union High School District in California six years ago, he tackled student achievement by first building a "critical mass" of support among his staff.

Last year, when the SAT-9 scores increased by nearly 10 percent at all 21 middle and high schools, Brand had proof that the district's involvement with California School Leadership Academy's (CSLA's) San Diego center had paid off.

South Bay Union Elementary School District, which feeds into Sweetwater, has experienced similar gains through the School Leadership Team program, which is housed within CSLA at WestEd. CSLA is funded by the California Department of Education.

The School Leadership Teams bring together principals, teachers, and other school and community leaders to increase student achievement. They revolve around a "continuous improvement model," says Bill McKeever, Director of Program Support and Development for CSLA.

"Teams basically answer two questions: What are we getting in terms of student results? And, What do we want to get?," says McKeever. "Answering the second question results in a goal that focuses the future work of the team."

Adds Brand: "The CSLA concept allows us to mobilize staff to ensure that each and every student has access to a high-quality curriculum, excellent teaching techniques, and that their achievement is of concern to each and every member of the organization."

Elaina Hershowitz, Executive Director of the School Leadership Center at the San Diego County Office of Education, credits much of the success in Sweetwater and South Bay to their districtwide, systemic approach.

"If you give people a chance to talk with each other and figure out how they're going to solve problems, [they] can do it," she says. "I provide the venue. I provide them with good data and research. They've got the willingness and, now, they've got the skills."

For more information, contact McKeever at 510.302.4239 or e-mail, [bmckeev@WestEd.org](mailto:bmckeev@WestEd.org), or visit the CSLA Web site at [www.csla.org/](http://www.csla.org/)

*(continued from page 1)*

"That meeting was eye-opening," recalls El Verano Elementary School Principal Louann Carlomagno. "We needed an outside person to help us define our vision."

Prior to the meeting, Carlomagno and staff recognized they were not providing an adequate, coordinated program for a rapidly growing population of students in need of English language development (ELD). However, the meeting with WestEd staff provided focus and, according to Birge, "allowed [El Verano staff] to roll up their sleeves and get to work."

EE project staff are working with El Verano to develop an "Action Plan" for improvement, emphasizing ELD. The plan calls for an ELD coordinator who will assess and monitor students' academic performance and determine curricula that meet their needs.

"The core of our approach is that we take schools through a process that is collaborative and standards-based," says EE Project Director Sheila Weiss.

WestEd's EE model builds on the knowledge and experience gained from the first year of the project, as well as from two WestEd programs: the Western Assessment Collaborative — focusing on relationships among standards, assessment, curriculum, and instruction, and the Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center — focusing on improving the academic performance of all students, particularly those traditionally underserved by the education system.

An individual EE works with each school using a set of principles developed by WestEd. The EE also brings in other support and expertise, including WestEd curriculum experts and teacher leaders from the California Reading and Literature Project and the California Mathematics Project.

When working with low-performing schools, EE staff stress the importance of focus.

"It's really easy to give people a laundry list of issues they ought to address — there's lots to work on. But, if we do that, school staff get lost in the details," says Fred Tempes, Director of WestEd's Comprehensive School Assistance Program, which houses the EE project.

WestEd also ensures the entire school is involved in the EE process. The EE provides an external review, but it is school faculty, administrators, students, parents, and community members who must come together to write a plan for improving student achievement.

"It is not a document that we write that goes on the principal's bookshelf," says Weiss. "It is a living document that *they* create with our help and that we will help them implement in the coming years."

WestEd also emphasizes the involvement of the school district by requiring districts to name a liaison to each school the agency is working with.

“We want the district to really know what’s going on the whole way,” says Tempes.

that we come back periodically, monitor implementation of the plan, coach them on the implementation, help them modify the plan if it’s necessary, but keep them focused on the main issue, which is student achievement.”

El Verano’s principal and staff believe this outside perspective, the focus on a specific area of need and concrete steps to improvement, and the ongoing support of WestEd’s External

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“The core of our approach is that we take schools through a process that is collaborative and standards-based.”

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The entire WestEd EE process — external review, planning, involvement of staff, community, and district — ultimately is geared toward an impact on student learning.

“We can write action plans that start to unravel the minute the ink is dry,” says Tempes. “So we now only work with schools that are willing to contract with us on an extended, three-year basis, so

Evaluators — what Principal Carlomagno calls a “combination of specifics and follow-up” — will make a difference.

“Teachers here are very responsive to the needs of this changing population, but it’s a matter of resources. What resources do we need in place to be sure every child is going to succeed?” says Carlomagno. “People are very willing to change once a vision is developed and goals are in place, but we need some coaching to know how to make that change.”

For more information, contact Weiss at 415.615.3183 or e-mail, [sweiss@WestEd.org](mailto:sweiss@WestEd.org) 

## Data-tracking pilot provides focus for COMPREHENSIVE REFORM SUCCESS

The decision to undertake major reform at Salt Lake City’s Rolling Meadows Elementary School almost failed before it began. Considering the prospect of undertaking major math curriculum changes and adding 15 testing tools as part of the curriculum, it’s no wonder Principal Gail Howe felt overwhelmed.

“The first year, we almost gave up,” she says.

That was three years ago. Now, Rolling Meadows is successfully completing participation in the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program, thanks in part to WestEd’s help in organizing and understanding the school’s student test data. CSRD is a federal initiative that pays for schools to adopt proven, research-based reform models.

WestEd researchers studied seven CSRD schools to learn what factors helped them move forward with comprehensive reform. In the process, they learned that many educators struggle to organize and understand student test scores.

To redress the issue, WestEd Program Associate Kim Taylor enlisted Jeanne Miyasaka, then a WestEd Assessment Specialist, to help build a pilot project around Quality School Portfolio (QSP), assessment software developed by the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). Rolling Meadows was one of three CSRD schools involved in the QSP pilot project, a collaborative effort between a Regional Educational Laboratory — WestEd — and a research center, CRESST.

“What we’re trying to do is help schools find ways to use all this evidence they gather to back up what they are doing,” Taylor explains.

The pilot project involves a WestEd cross-program focus on data-driven decision-making. The goal is to craft a process to help educators develop questions for studying student achievement, pool and assess data, and use the findings in their decision-making process.

For more information, contact Taylor at 602.322.7011 or e-mail, [ktaylor@WestEd.org](mailto:ktaylor@WestEd.org), or visit the CSRD Web site at [www.WestEd.org/csrd/](http://www.WestEd.org/csrd/)



# removing barriers

## T O L E A R N I N G

Today's youth face myriad challenges that make learning difficult. The obstacles to learning include poverty, family dysfunction, violence, and the use of alcohol and other drugs.

WestEd's Human Development Program has created the Healthy Kids Survey (HKS), funded by the California Department of Education (CDE), to help schools assess and address risky behaviors and environments that can be barriers to achievement. The survey's Resilience Module assesses the degree of student connectedness to school as well as other assets that can protect against risky behavior and motivate youth to succeed.

The HKS has helped many schools evolve from a punitive response to problem behaviors to the promotion of healthy, positive behaviors and supportive environments, says CDE Consultant Greg Wolfe. "This is a huge shift that is having a dramatic impact on the state as a whole," says Wolfe.

In addition, WestEd's Strengthening Families Program helps children and their siblings and parents improve family communication and resolve issues that affect academic achievement. Five-year-old Richard is one of many success stories. Before participating in Strengthening Families, Richard was disruptive to both his classmates and teacher.

"He (Richard) is now starting to see the importance of getting along with others, and his attendance and home-

work have improved," says Eleanor Rodriguez, Principal at Lowell Elementary School in Santa Ana, California.

Strengthening Families is one of many components of a Student Assistance Program (SAP) managed by WestEd's Educational and Community Initiatives and funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program.

WestEd's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program provides safe, drug-free, supervised, and cost-effective after-school, weekend, or summer havens for children and their families in rural and inner-city schools.

The program recently increased the number of students involved in after-school activities at Oakland's Bret Harte Middle School — from 25 to 225. The impact has been felt in the classroom, says Geri Murphy, the program's Project Director for Bret Harte. "We have kids coming to school who didn't come to school before," she says. The program is funded primarily by CDE, as well as the JCPenney Foundation and Mott Foundation. 

### For more information, contact:

Healthy Kids Survey: Human Development Program Director Greg Austin at 562.799.5155 or e-mail, [gaustin@WestEd.org](mailto:gaustin@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/hks/](http://www.WestEd.org/hks/); or the Resilience Module: Senior Program Associate Bonnie Benard at 1(888) 841.7536, or [bbenard@WestEd.org](mailto:bbenard@WestEd.org)

SAP: Educational and Community Initiatives Program Director Cynthia Peck at 714.648.0333, or e-mail, [cpeck@WestEd.org](mailto:cpeck@WestEd.org), or visit [www.healthy-ninos.com/](http://www.healthy-ninos.com/)

21st Century Community Learning Centers: Leonard Beckum, Director of WestEd's Center for Educational Equity, at 510.302.4207, or e-mail, [lbeckum@WestEd.org](mailto:lbeckum@WestEd.org), or visit [www.ed.gov/21stcecl/](http://www.ed.gov/21stcecl/)

Researchers have long studied the disproportionately high number of minority students referred to special education. Recognizing that this is a complex issue, several efforts at WestEd are under way to help understand the causes and offer solutions.

## leveling the playing field for students with

Factors contributing to the overrepresentation are being addressed by the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC), the Equity Assistance Center (EAC), and the Center for Prevention and Early Intervention (CPEI), all housed within WestEd.

Students with limited English skills, for example, are often misdiagnosed with learning disabilities, says NERRC Director Kristin Reedy. In the Compton Unified School District in California, EAC workshops address the concern that too many of the district's limited English proficient students are assigned to special education classes.

In other instances, students may be routed into special education for behavior problems instead of more legitimate needs.

"Teachers will make allegations like, 'These kids are too hyperactive. They don't want to sit still,'" says EAC Project Director Anthony Sancho. "But teachers can conduct classroom activities to get these students more appropriately involved."

The EAC, which covers California, Nevada, and Arizona, recently conducted cultural diversity training for educators in Chino Valley Unified School District in California to address this issue. EAC training workshops overall have helped teachers become aware of Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the consequences of misplacing students in special education classes.

NERRC is tackling the issue from a number of fronts. For example, Reedy and her staff are helping improve one state education department's monitoring of school districts' special education programs and their compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

"We are having an impact in terms of helping bring the issue into the spotlight, increasing awareness and then providing expert technical assistance," Reedy says.

WestEd's CPEI addresses the issue from a prevention perspective. "We look at students' learning styles and incorporate their culture and language into joint training for teams of general education

and special education classroom teachers," says CPEI Program Director Virginia Reynolds.

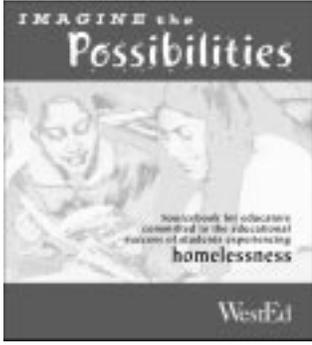
"By giving teachers the skills to recognize and address learning differences," she adds, "they are better able to meet the needs of diverse learners and therefore make fewer referrals to special education. In many cases it can be a language difference or behavior problem, rather than a 'learning disability.'"

Dona Meinders, Project Director for CPEI's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Resources Project, uses consultants to strategize with groups of general education and special education teachers to better meet the needs of all learners. Such strategies — differentiated instruction, modifications to curriculum and instruction, positive behavioral supports, and using special education support within the classroom — create a more accessible learning environment for all students.

Increasing both special education assessment staff and collaboration between general and special educators, providing cultural diversity training for psychologists, and educating parents about alternatives prior to placement in special education are other solutions that WestEd staff have found workable. 

# Special needs

For more information, contact Reedy at 802.951.8218, or e-mail, [kreedy@WestEd.org](mailto:kreedy@WestEd.org), or visit the NERRC Web site at [www.WestEd.org/nerrc](http://www.WestEd.org/nerrc); Reynolds at 916.492.4000, or e-mail, [vreydol@WestEd.org](mailto:vreydol@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/CPEI](http://www.WestEd.org/CPEI); or Sancho at 562.799.5108, or e-mail, [asancho@WestEd.org](mailto:asancho@WestEd.org), or visit [www.WestEd.org/EAC](http://www.WestEd.org/EAC)



**Imagine the Possibilities: A Sourcebook for Educators Committed to the Success of Students Experiencing Homelessness**

BethAnn Berliner, 2001

What can educators do to help homeless students attend school and achieve once there? *Imagine the Possibilities* is a comprehensive sourcebook for people who work with homeless students — teachers, school secretaries, site administrators, school nurses, counselors, district or county office staff, shelter workers, and volunteers. Both research-based and practical, it includes reproducible awareness materials, training activities, classroom strategies and activities, and ready-to-use sample presentation and workshop agendas.

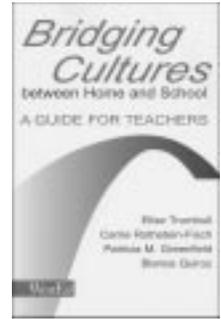
198 pages Price: \$27.95  
Order #: HD-01-01

**Bridging Cultures between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers**

Elise Trumbull, Carrie Rothstein-Fisch, Patricia M. Greenfield, & Blanca Quiroz  
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates & WestEd, 2001

Teaching students from a range of cultural backgrounds is made easier when teachers understand the cultural norms of both the mainstream culture of schools and the cultures of their students. This guide provides a framework for learning about culture along with many teacher-created strategies for making classrooms more successful for students, particularly those from immigrant Latino backgrounds.

172 pages Price: \$17.50 Order #: LCD-01-01

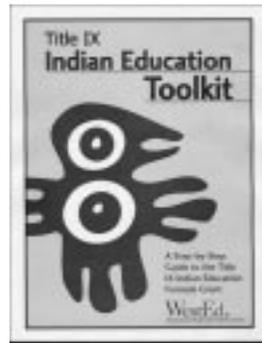


# WestEd Resources

## FOR LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Many WestEd resources address issues faced by low-performing schools. A few are summarized here. For additional related products, please refer to the *WestEd Resource Catalog – 2000* (see p. 11 of this newsletter for more information).

For ordering information, please refer to the product order insert.



**Title IX Indian Education Toolkit**

Floyd Beller, 2001

This step-by-step toolkit helps both new applicants and continuing grantees complete Title IX Indian Education Formula Grant applications. These federal grants help local education agencies and Indian and Alaska Native tribes provide sound education programs and opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native students.

31 pages Price: \$20 Order #: LCD-00-01



**Comprehensive School Reform: Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards**

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 (CSRD) 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.

Also available online in HTML or PDF version at [www.WestEd.org/csrd/guidebook/](http://www.WestEd.org/csrd/guidebook/)

190 pages Price: \$59.95 (binder & 2 videos) Order #: CSRD-00-00 (complete set)



**Building a Workable Accountability System: Key Decision Points for Policymakers and Educators (Knowledge Brief)**

Sri Ananda & Stanley Rabinowitz, 2001

Aimed at policymakers and educators who are either planning or redesigning statewide education accountability systems, this Knowledge Brief identifies and annotates a sequence of seven key questions that must be addressed in developing such a system. It then lays out the issues, options, and potential pitfalls related to each one, drawing on the experiences of three states that have implemented accountability measures: California, Kentucky, and Texas.



12 pages Price: \$8 Order #: KN-01-03



**Making Time Count (Policy Brief)**

WestEd, 2001

Research about the complex relationship between time and learning reveals that, as with money, the result of providing more school time for students depends on how it is used. Drawing from an earlier WestEd research report, *Improving Student Achievement by Extending*

*School: Is It Just a Matter of Time?*, about the connections between time spent in school and student learning, this new WestEd Policy Brief teases out the implications of that research for policymakers and makes policy recommendations aimed at both the state and local levels.

Also available online at [www.WestEd.org/time/](http://www.WestEd.org/time/)

2 pages Price: Single copies available free of charge; 10 copies for \$3 Order #: PO-01-01



**MindWorks**

Barbara Becker  
Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2000

*MindWorks* is a middle school physical science program designed to get students intrigued by the real world of science, especially students who "hate" science. Brief docudrama videotapes help students identify with the

emotional and political aspects of doing science, while hands-on investigations pull them directly into the work of being a scientist. Developed with funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and field-tested extensively, eight *MindWorks* modules promote students' concept development in core areas of light and color, electricity and magnetism, dynamics, atoms and matter, kinematics, thermodynamics, statics and structures, and "tomorrow's challenges." Pilot teachers found the *MindWorks* modules intellectually stimulating and easy to integrate into their existing science programs. They reported that their students asked more questions, expressed more enthusiasm, and spent more time on task.

*Teacher materials for individual modules are \$64.95. Student readers range from \$7.95 to \$11.95. For more information, visit [www.WestEd.org/mindworks/](http://www.WestEd.org/mindworks/) or contact Publications Assistant Danny Torres at 415.615.3227 or [dtorres@WestEd.org](mailto:dtorres@WestEd.org)*

**WestEd Resource Catalog**

For a free copy, call 415.565.3000 or toll-free, (1-877)

4WestEd; or write: WestEd / 730 Harrison Street / San Francisco, CA /94107-1242.

The catalog is also available at [www.WestEd.org/pub/docs/81/](http://www.WestEd.org/pub/docs/81/)

For ordering information, please refer to the product order insert.

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*R&D Alert* covers issues affecting schools in the Western Regional Educational Laboratory's (WREL) four-state region — Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah — and throughout the United States.

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](mailto:cmontoy@WestEd.org)

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