

## NOVEMBER 2009 E-NEWSLETTER

### 1. Evaluating the Statewide System of Support

The Center on Innovation and Improvement recently published a practice guide built on rubrics that assists states in evaluating their statewide system of support. The guide is targeted at states that have used, or are using, the Center's previously released resources: Handbook on Statewide System of Support, and Strengthening the Statewide System of Support: A Manual for the Comprehensive Center and State Education Agency.

Visit: [http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Evaluating\\_the\\_SSOS.pdf](http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Evaluating_the_SSOS.pdf)

### 2. Exploring the Pathway to Rapid District Improvement

The Center on Innovation and Improvement's report describing a framework for district capacity building and improvement is now available. Through the use of two illustrative case stories, the publication explores how districts can engage in rapid and sustainable improvement efforts. Included in the report is a summary of issues for consideration by states and districts focused on creating the conditions necessary to catalyze rapid and sustainable district improvement.

Visit: [http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Exploring\\_the\\_Pathway\\_to\\_Rapid\\_District\\_Improvement.pdf](http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Exploring_the_Pathway_to_Rapid_District_Improvement.pdf)

### 3. Race To The Top Applications

The U.S. Department of Education has released the final application for the Race to the Top Fund. The four billion dollar fund will be awarded in grants to states that have shown success in raising student achievement and have the most solid plans to accelerate their educational reforms in the future. The intent is for these states to offer models of best practices for the rest of the nation to follow.

Information conference calls will take place in November and December; technical assistance workshops are scheduled for December 3, in Denver, Colorado, and December 10, in Washington, D.C.

Visit: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/index.html>

### 4. America's Opportunity: Teacher Effectiveness and Equity in K-12 Classrooms

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality recently released a report synthesizing the emerging research base on teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution of K-12 teachers. This research base reinforces the federal focus on ensuring highly effective teachers for all students.

Visit: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/2009TQBiennialReport.php>

**5. Why Rural Matters 2009: State and Regional Challenges and Opportunities**

The Rural School and Community Trust has published the fifth in a series of biennial reports analyzing the contexts and conditions of rural education in each of the 50 states and calling attention to the need for policymakers to address rural education issues in their respective states.

Visit: <http://files.ruraledu.org/wrm09/WRM09.pdf>

**6. New and Experienced Teachers in a School Reform Initiative: The Example of Reading First**

REL Northwest completed a study comparing the experiences and perceptions of new and experienced teachers in 235 schools in six western states (Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming) that have adopted the Reading First school reform initiative. Using previously collected data from surveys and interviews, the study considers four areas of the reform initiative for bringing all K–3 students up to grade level in reading by grade 3: instructional coaches, teacher collaboration, use of student assessment data, and support for reform.

Visit: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL\\_2009082.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL_2009082.pdf)

**7. Leaders and Laggards: A State-by-State Report Card on Educational Innovation**

The Center for American Progress, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Frederick M. Hess, director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute have released a report exploring the future of education and what states are doing to prepare for upcoming challenges. Its grading system is based on innovative educational practices. Thus, some states with positive academic results receive poor grades on their measures of innovation, while others with lackluster scholarly achievement nevertheless earn high marks for policies that are creating an entrepreneurial culture in their schools. The report is accompanied by an interactive map that grades each state in eight areas, including school management, finance, staffing, and technology. Data is derived from a wide variety of sources, including federal education databases and state surveys conducted by the Center for American Progress.

Visit: [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/11/pdf/leaders\\_and\\_laggards.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/11/pdf/leaders_and_laggards.pdf)

**8. Strengthening Indian Country Through Tribal Youth Programs**

The American Youth Policy Forum recently released a report examining how Tribal Youth Programs (TYP), supported by the office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) at the U.S. Department of Justice, are succeeding in improving the lives of youth and strengthening families through detailed case-studies of five tribal communities. TYP provides funds to Native American tribes to support and enhance tribal efforts to prevent and control delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system for American Indian and Alaska Native youth ages 10–17.

Visit: [http://www.aypf.org/publications/documents/TYPReportfinal\\_000.pdf](http://www.aypf.org/publications/documents/TYPReportfinal_000.pdf)