

Welcome to the July Issue of CollabNews

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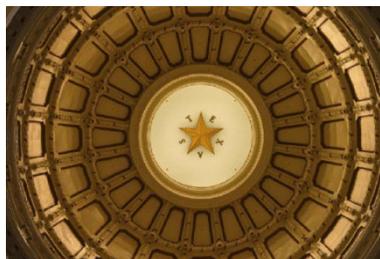


The [Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative](#) is a network of special and general education leaders working together to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in the nation's urban schools.

FALL MEMBER MEETING - AUSTIN TEXAS

Highly Effective Special Education Teachers in Urban Schools: Taking the Measure

October 26-29 2011
Austin Hilton Hotel



The national focus on accountability in education has led to an increased emphasis on the measurement of teacher effectiveness, its relationship to various measures of student achievement, and the methods that should be used to evaluate teachers. There is an ongoing examination of what constitutes good teaching and how to develop fair and reliable measures for assessing teacher performance. This effort has proven to be particularly challenging when looking at the work of special education teachers in urban schools. The roles of these educators have been changing and have become increasingly more entwined with those of their general education colleagues. What are the attributes of highly effective special education teachers? How are these different from those of their general education colleagues? How are special education teachers to be fairly evaluated when student performance and outcomes are part of the equation? The focus of our Fall Member Meeting will be on how urban school districts are addressing these issues and how research is - or is not - informing the process.

We will soon be issuing a Call For Presentations to our member districts. Online registration will be available in August.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Lynn Holdheide



We are pleased to announce that the keynote speaker for the Fall Member Meeting will be Lynn Holdheide, a Vanderbilt University Research Associate in the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center). Dr. Holdheide works on several projects related to evaluating teacher effectiveness and improving the preparation of teachers for students with at-risk characteristics and disabilities. Prior to her current position at Vanderbilt University, she served for nine years as project coordinator and education consultant at Indiana Department of Education's Division of Exceptional Learners. She served as the school-to-work transition consultant and directed a statewide study collecting post-school outcome data for students with disabilities.

Dr. Holdheide will provide an overview of current national efforts related to teacher evaluation and discuss the challenges in designing comprehensive teacher evaluation systems that have the capacity to differentiate among specialty-area educators. The presentation will conclude with a discussion that will focus on the following questions:

- Can the teacher evaluation framework be standard across teachers while still allowing room to differentiate for instructional context and content? If so, what are the benefits and challenges it presents?
- What are the implications if the evaluation process is not differentiated?
- How should the field of special education enter the teacher evaluation discussion to help inform policy and practice?

Dr. Holdheide will provide a thought provoking lead-in to our concurrent sessions and conversations on our meeting topic.

POLICY-TO-PRACTICE BRIEF

Alternative Measures of Teacher Performance

One of the topics we will be exploring at our Fall Member Meeting is the use of alternative measures of teacher performance. Typically, school districts have used classroom observations as the primary tool to assess teacher performance. Although classroom observations - in combination with student growth measures - provide multiple data points on teacher performance, there is a move to consider alternative measures in order to ensure a robust teacher evaluation system that captures the many facets of effective teaching.

The [National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality](#) (TQ Center) has issued a [Policy-to-Practice Brief](#) that introduces five current examples of measures of teacher performance. The goal is to assist in building local capacity to incorporate the use of alternative measures of teacher performance into the overhaul of state evaluation systems-especially in states with looming legislative deadlines.

NEW MEMBER DISTRICTS

Bibb County Schools and Leominster Public Schools

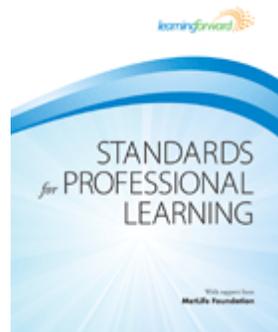
The Collaborative is pleased to welcome our newest members, Bibb County Schools and Leominster Public Schools. [Bibb County Schools](#) is located in Macon, GA, and has a total district enrollment of 24,961 students. Our member contact for this district is Ms. Donna Garner-Poole.

[Leominster Public Schools](#) is located in Leominster, MA. Our member contact for this district is Mr. Ned Pratt.

We look forward to getting to know our new members at our 2011 Fall Member Meeting!

STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Learning Forward Releases Revised Standards for Professional Learning



[Learning Forward](#), the largest non-profit professional association committed to ensuring success for all students through staff development and school improvement, has released the newly revised [Standards for Professional Learning](#). The standards call for a new form of educator learning and this document outlines the characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results. The standards were developed with the contribution of 40 professional associations and education organizations. These standards make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions they need to help students perform at higher levels.

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS NETWORK

World Report on Disability



Each month, Inclusive Schools Network News reports on current resources and events that focus on inclusive education around the world. Our most recent edition highlighted one of the most important documents released in the past decade relating to the status of disability globally.

The World Report on Disability was launched June 8, 2011 at the UN Headquarters. This jointly published report by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank summarizes the best available scientific evidence on disability and makes recommendations for action to support the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). The report will also provide new disability prevalence estimates, identify the needs of people with disabilities, and highlight what works to ensure their access to

health and rehabilitation services, education, and employment among others. To read the report, [please click here](#) .

To view our most recent edition or to access archived editions, please visit <http://inclusiveschools.org/news>.

Collaborative Help Desk:

Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458

Phone: 617-969-7100 x2447

TTY: 617-964-5448

Fax: 617-527-8906

Email: collaborative@edc.org

Website: www.urbancollaborative.org