



### Director's Corner

Greetings everyone,

Thank you for making the work of the Pacific Comprehensive Center (PCC) over the past 4 ½ years worthwhile. While this may be the final year of the current Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) contract with the U.S. Department of Education for the current PCC scope of work, we hope that we will continue to work together and support each other's growth in education through other arrangements in the future. We appreciate your input and invite you to be a more active partner in the PCC services and events throughout the coming months.

Hilda C. Heine  
Director, Pacific Comprehensive Center

### Highlights of PCC Activities

#### **Contextualizing Pacific Education—Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Kosrae**

Contextualizing Pacific education guided the visit and presentations provided in Majuro and Kosrae in February 2010 by doctors Sharon Nelson-Barber and Hilda C. Heine. They visited a cross section of K–20 schools and classrooms in the RMI and Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), conducted classroom observations and informal interviews with teachers, students, Ministry of Education staff, Institute of Higher Education staff and other interested educators. Classroom visits in four schools were carried out, including three elementary schools and one high school.

Formal presentations in the RMI and in Kosrae to education staff, K–20 leadership, teachers, local business leaders and researchers were also conducted. Each talk centered on ways for educators to make use of indigenous knowledge and ways of strengthening achievement. Informal observations and interviews about contextualized education in the RMI and in Kosrae revealed a number of key ideas that connect with those of other indigenous groups that might be explored more systematically. Some of these are:

- Inclusion of community values and connections with daily activities are believed to motivate student interest and attitudes about schooling and to increase attendance rates.
- Teachers identify the importance of having a purposeful goal and meaningful teaching process.

- Traditional activities (such as fishing) and other community practices have important roles in the lives of students, and can provide essential curricular and pedagogical opportunities.
- Reinforcement of relationships, respect and reciprocity (key values in indigenous teaching/learning) can be capitalized on in local classrooms.
- Effective strategies to engage students include storytelling, use of tangible materials, experiential learning, task-oriented activities and elder involvement.
- Obstacles reported by teachers dealt mainly with issues of time, accessibility to elders, lack of resources, and reduced intrinsic resources, such as students losing their language and knowledge of culture.
- Some essential elements identified by teachers highlighted a greater need to engage elders, integrate standards with indigenous knowledge, contrast problem solving and solution finding using traditional and western paradigms, and share learning with other like communities.

Both RMI and Kosrae have been working not only to identify the cultural and linguistic resources their students bring to the classroom, but also how to articulate these resources with the values and practices of disciplinary and school content, toward the enhancement of outcomes in school and beyond. For example, one elementary school in the RMI is beginning to infuse local traditions of building construction in its schoolwide program. Similarly, the Kosrae State Department of Education has devised a Cultural Curriculum Standards-based Guide to accentuate traditional knowledge, skills, values, and history in the daily lives of students.

#### **Micronesian Youth Service Network Conference (MYSN)—Pohnpei**

The week of April 12, 2010, was a very busy one for youths and youth service providers in the Micronesian region as over 200 young people and their supporters congregated in Pohnpei for the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Micronesian Youth Service Network (MYSN) conference. The theme of the conference was “Weaving Traditional Cultures into Youth Services”. Representatives of youth groups and service agencies from RMI, Palau, FSM, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam gathered to discuss youth issues ranging from teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS to lack of opportunities, drugs,

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and crime. As MYSN continues to strengthen and expand, it is in need of more service providers to support and deal with critical youth issues in the region, as well as sponsors for its annual conferences.

#### ✦ **Bridge Events Hosted by REL-Pacific (REL-P) and PCC**

In February 2010 the REL-P presented two webinars on the topic of “Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision-Making.” Dr. Ellen Mandinach, lead presenter, described the five recommendations in the practice guide and discussed practical ways schools can move toward meeting the recommendations. Doctors Don Burger and Kyaw Soe, PREL employees and local experts in the area of formative and summative assessment, led follow-up sessions.

In a second Bridge Event, Dr. Russell Gersten, one of the co-authors of the practice guide, “Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades,” provided a description and facilitated a discussion of the findings and recommendations that are offered through the practice guide. Dr. Marilyn Low and Ms. Josi Jones-Lizama offered comments and local context to Dr. Gersten’s discussion. If interested in accessing recordings of these events, please contact the PREL Service Center staff in your jurisdiction.

#### ✦ **Integrated Service Delivery (ISD)**

The ISD regional service providers (Western Regional Resource Center—WRRC at the University of Oregon, the Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service—CEDDERS at the University of Guam, and PREL) collaborated to host a two-day technical assistance seminar in February 2010. In addition to addressing state education agency (SEA) universal screening needs in literacy, service providers continued to develop the capacity of SEA teams to develop and implement ISD models that improve learning for every student. Further capacity building events are planned for July in Guam.

#### ✦ **Communities of Practice—Adolescent literacy**

The Center on Instruction held the first two webinars in a series of five this quarter. [Enhancing Academic Literacy of ELLs in Science and Social Studies Classrooms](#) provided an opportunity to engage with national experts in an interactive learning process centered on English Language Learners (ELL) adolescent literacy best practices for traditional science and social studies classrooms. [What Social Studies Teachers Can Do to Help All Students Understand \(and Like\) History](#), presented what students need to know about history reading to fully engage in learning it. PCC staff will

repeat these webinars for specific jurisdictions upon request.

#### ✦ **Building Academic Vocabulary — Yap**

In April, Pacific Center staff conducted a three-day workshop on building academic vocabulary for all teachers and school staff at Yap High School in Yap State, FSM. Participants included content area teachers, SPED staff, school administration and support service staff. The Yap State DOE closed school at noon each day of the training to enable full school staff participation.

### **National Content Centers Update**

#### **Center on Instruction (COI)**

The COI has recently released “Instructional Models and Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners (K12),” offering educators and policy makers guidance on research-based strategies. Publication can be downloaded at [www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Instructional\\_Models\\_for\\_ELLs.pdf](http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Instructional_Models_for_ELLs.pdf)

#### **Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center (AACC)**

A presentation on *Assessments Don’t Change Practice, So What Does?* shared at the AACC Mini Conference on March 11-12 can be viewed at [www.aacompcenter.org/cs/aacc/view/pro/1147](http://www.aacompcenter.org/cs/aacc/view/pro/1147)

#### **National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTO)**

Newest publications developed by the TQ Center include “Ensuring the Equitable Distribution of Teachers: Strategies for School, District, and State Leaders” and can be downloaded at [www.tqsource.org/publications/February2010Brief.pdf](http://www.tqsource.org/publications/February2010Brief.pdf)

#### **Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII)**

“Communicating about School Reform” is a newly posted narrated webinar, which is the sixth in the series on School Improvement Grant topics. [www.centerii.org/webinars/](http://www.centerii.org/webinars/) A link for “What LEAs are Doing” is now available to find tools and reports already in use in selected districts. [www.centerii.org/WhatAreDistrictsDoing/](http://www.centerii.org/WhatAreDistrictsDoing/) Download resource spotlight for State Systems of Support at [www.centerii.org/support/](http://www.centerii.org/support/)

#### **National High School Center (NHSC)**

March 2010 news spotlight—A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This new resource is available at [www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf) Want to know more about the NHSC and services offered? Go to Quick Links on the PCC website, [www.pacificcompcenter.org](http://www.pacificcompcenter.org), or visit the NHSC website directly at [www.betterhighschools.org](http://www.betterhighschools.org).

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