On August 31 and September 1, 2016, Glenda Ritz, Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction, shared her vision and plans for education in Indiana with educators at the first convening of the State Development Network districts.

Director's Corner

The Great Lakes Comprehensive Center (GLCC) team is growing. We are excited that long-time AIR staff member Tori Cirks, a senior consultant, is joining GLCC as our new deputy director. Tori has been adeptly serving as the Iowa state manager for the Midwest Comprehensive Center (MWCC) for the past four years. She has deep experience working with a variety of clients, including all three GLCC states, and providing strong technical assistance to support key education initiatives. In her new role, Tori will join the GLCC management team and contribute to the overall operation of the center. She also will lead the development of additional cross-state initiatives within the GLCC states as well as regional initiatives between GLCC and MWCC.

With our expanded team in place, we are primed to dive into the 12 dynamic state initiatives and four regional initiatives that comprise our Year 5 scope of work. Most of the initiatives build on the successful efforts of the past four years, allowing us to partner with our state education agencies (SEAs) to focus on deepening and sustaining the work for the long term. Your continued investment of time and energy to help our region's students to flourish is deeply appreciated.

State Work

Indiana

IDOE Internal Strategic Plan

In its continued support of the implementation of the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) internal strategic plan, GLCC has connected IDOE with two initiatives from the Building State Capacity and Productivity Center (BSCP Center): the Strategic Performance Management Guiding Coalition and Strategic Communications Benchmarking Process. The guiding coalition brings together representatives from multiple states to form a community of practice and facilitates conversations on the key components of organizational performance management. The coalition meets via a monthly webinar and has recently featured a presentation from IDOE's chief information officer on Indiana's internal strategic plan.

For the benchmarking process initiative, IDOE engages in a series of activities designed to lead IDOE toward establishing systems that improve internal and external communication. In the initial phase of the process, IDOE leadership discussed communication throughout the department. Then, the IDOE personnel responsible for communication participated in a series of interviews with BSCP about its communication practices and challenges. The next phase will include more direct interaction with other states. (Project lead: Frank De Rosa)

Support for the State Development Network Local Education Agencies

A cohort of seven local education agencies (LEAs) with significant achievement gaps have joined the second year of the Indiana State Development Network (SDN). With IDOE and GLCC support, these LEAs will draft and implement plans to close their gaps. At the August 31, 2016, 2-day meeting, GLCC led the LEAs through a data dive and root cause analysis to guide their planning. GLCC also will support IDOE by continuing to foster the alignment of several IDOE divisions in support of the SDN and by bringing in resources from the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and the National Center for Systemic Improvement. In addition, GLCC will support and help plan each of the remaining three quarterly in-person meetings of the SDN. (Project lead: Tara Zuber)

Michigan

Effective Educators: Student Learning Objectives

GLCC has been collaborating with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to codevelop a guidance document for implementing student learning objectives (SLOs), courselong academic goals designed to measure student growth. The team developed 11 modules to accompany the guidance document for intermediate school districts (ISDs) and LEAs to use. Each module guides users through the process of making decisions that help develop and implement SLOs to support educators in measuring student growth to improve instruction. (Project lead: Andrea Guiden)

Achievement Gaps: African-American Males

As part of the ongoing collaborative work with MDE on closing the achievement gap for African-American males, GLCC State Manager Bersheril Bailey assembled a team to join her in planning and presenting an online learning event for the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, titled *Creating Policies that Support a More Positive School Climate to Reduce Suspensions and Expulsions*. The event took place on September 19, 2016. The presenters included Lauren Kazee, MDE mental health consultant; Polly Brainerd, Eaton County Regional Education Service Agency prevention specialist; and Steve Gabriel, Grand Ledge Public Schools assistant superintendent for academic services. The session featured information on Michigan's Model Policy on Reducing Student Suspensions and Expulsions and the Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion Toolkit, which were codeveloped with GLCC. Assistant Superintendent Gabriel shared how his district has adapted policies and implemented initiatives to improve school climate and culture. (Project lead: Bersheril Bailey)

Ohio

Ohio's New Learning Standards, English Language Proficiency Standards, and Sheltered Instruction

During 3 consecutive weeks in July 2016, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), a GLCC subcontractor, collaborated with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Lau Resource Center to host regional trainings based upon the English Learner (EL) program "What's Different About Teaching Reading to Students Learning English?" These trainings were cofacilitated by CAL staff, ODE Resource Center Lau staff, and EL experts and coordinators invited from the regional support system and from local school districts. Participants included EL teachers, literacy teachers, educational service center (ESC) EL trainers, and district EL coordinators. GLCC and ODE are using CAL's "What's Different" program and the implementation of the early literacy reading approach called "Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling" (LETRS) to focus on improving early literacy outcomes for all students in Ohio. (Project lead: Mark Mitchell)

Ohio Competency-Based Education Pilot Program

Ohio's Competency-Based Education Pilot was conceived through legislation as a way to restructure how and when students master key content. As part of its ongoing support to ODE, GLCC has brought in the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation (CSAI) to support the development of an assessment framework for the competency-based education (CBE) pilot program and to provide content expertise and training to ODE and the pilot sites as they develop assessments that measure mastery of competencies. GLCC also is facilitating collaboration to conduct an external validation of state-developed overarching competencies. This external validation process will use the competency validation rubric as well as the professional judgement of content experts at CSAI. This process will result in a summary report that provides a rationale for scoring, competency revisions if needed, and guidance on future competency development.

GLCC, with support from Wendy Surr, AIR's Deeper Learning Initiative lead, has developed a draft performance review of the CBE pilot program that will serve as a focal point of conversation and feedback from ODE and the CBE Advisory Committee. GLCC, in collaboration with the College and Career Readiness and Success Center (CCRS) and the Cuyahoga ESC, will be meeting with ODE staff to continue plans for a CBE postarticulation

pilot that is informed by a new CCRS resource coming out in September, the CBE Articulation Agreements facilitator guide and materials. (Project leads: Mark Mitchell and Karen Sanders)

Regional Work

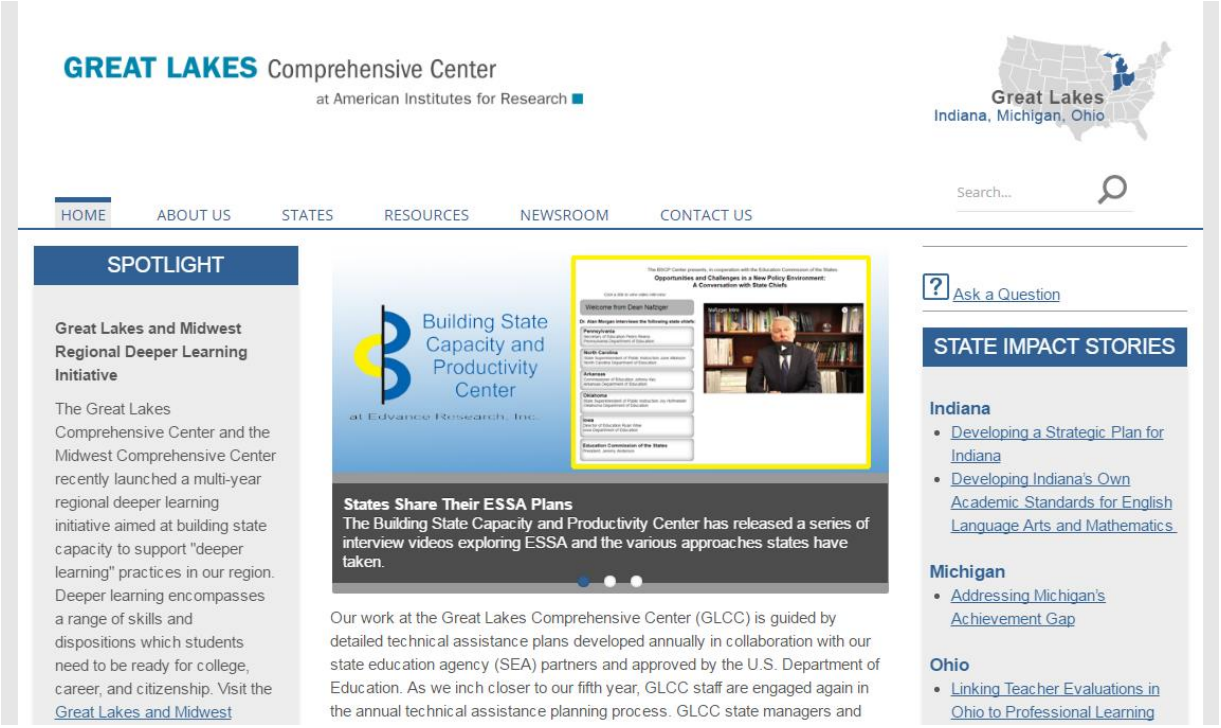
Regional Content Center Community of Practice

Earlier this year, the four regional centers at AIR identified representatives to engage in a community of practice (CoP), designed and led by Claudette Rasmussen (crasmussen@air.org), which shares and captures the wealth of knowledge gained over the past years of providing technical assistance to our states. The CoP enables us to learn from one another, build on our shared knowledge, and refine our practice. Currently, the CoP focuses on refining technical assistance knowledge management goals, designing professional learning activities, developing a framework to assess the value created by community experiences, and customizing technology for the optimal support of ongoing activities. In late October and early November, the design team will pilot activities in which cross-regional comprehensive center staff address a problem of practice about SEA impact and develop their collective approach to technical assistance.

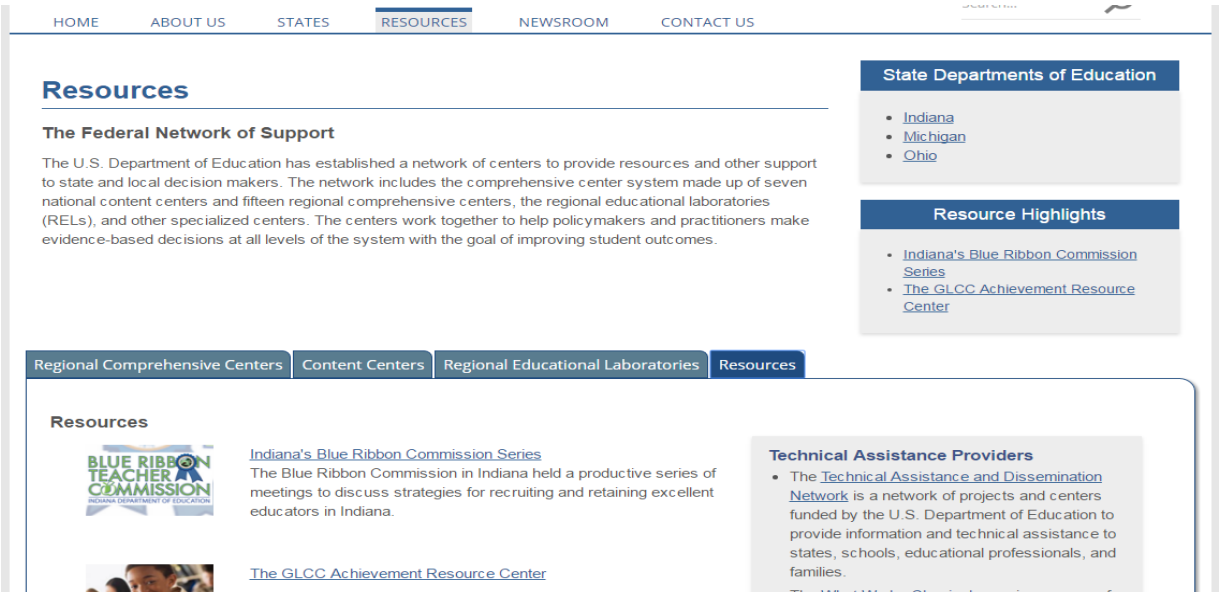
Our Resources

Great Lakes Comprehensive Center Website

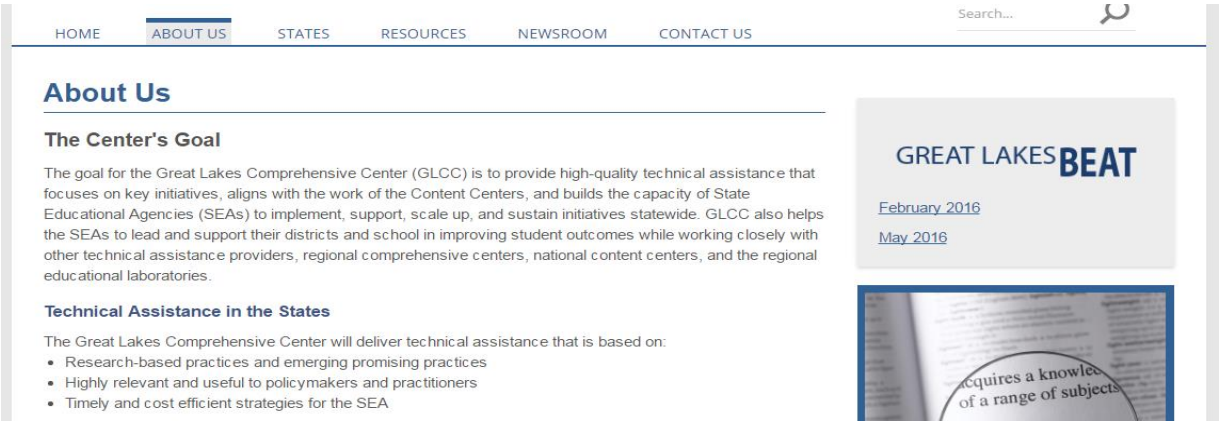
Over the past year, we have been quietly improving our website. We're excited to share the changes with you! We now integrate the material from these newsletters into our website, making it even easier to keep up with what's happening in the Great Lakes states and to share with others.



Our new Resources page highlights initiatives and websites from our work with the states.



We also upload all of these newsletters to our website. Just click on “About Us” and look in the sidebar on your right.



If you have suggestions for resources we can share on the site or events we should highlight in our carousel, let us know at tzuber@air.org!

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