

Center on Innovations in Learning

“Innovation is the creation of the new or the re-arranging of the old in a new way.”

Michael Vance: co-founder of the Creative Thinking Association of America

May 2013

Greetings from the **Center on Innovations in Learning (CIL)**. This is always the best time of year for education as we get a chance to see the beaming faces of the graduates. Congratulations if someone you know is part of the Class of 2013!

The web-based school improvement system Indistar continues to keep our staff on the go. Pamela Sheley was in Albuquerque for a planning session with the Bureau of Indian Education meeting with **Gaye Leia King** and **Sandra Poolaw**. Stephanie Benedict was in North Carolina with **George Hancock**, **Diane Antolak**, and **Donna Brown**, discussing changes and goals for using Indistar in North Carolina, including trainings for schools, districts, and coaches, and expectations of the users. Stephanie was also in Russellville, Arkansas, at a retreat for training state staff and coaches on role of coaches, expectations, quality, and the newest Indistar features. Evaluation data from the 3rd Annual Indistar Summit (April 2013) has been collected, and Allison Crean-Davis will be reviewing the results with the CIL team prior to sharing it with our participants as we plan for next year’s summit. If you have not visited www.indistar.org for summit materials and other valuable Indistar information, please plan to do so.

We are happy to report that two members of the CIL team, Sam Redding, senior learning specialist, and Janet Twyman, director of innovation and technology, were invited to participate in the 8th Annual Wing Institute Summit in Berkeley, California. Joining them from the Wing Institute was **Ronnie Detrich**, who is also a contributor to the soon-to-be-published *CIL Handbook on Innovations in Learning*. Wing is an independent nonprofit organization and “think tank” for evidence-based education. Participants at the Wing summit represented public schools, districts, universities, and public and private corporations from across the country.

Meet the CIL Staff: Dr. Michael Smith, CIL scientific consultant, is our featured staff member this month. Also attached are this month’s spotlighted resources to help you in the good work you do.

The **CIL website**, www.centeril.org, is continually being updated with vetted resources on innovations that improve teaching and learning. Current publications and tools for free download can be found on topics including personalized learning, data use and analytics, change and innovation and students with disabilities. Each has a short summary of the content for your convenience. Attached to this letter are several resources we think you will find useful. Do you have a resource you would like included? Let us know and we will feature it in upcoming newsletters.

Best,

Marilyn Murphy
Director

Meet the CIL Staff

DR. MICHAEL SMITH

Dr. Michael Smith is a professor in Temple University's College of Education, where he chairs its Department of Teaching and Learning. As one of CIL's scientific consultants, Michael will be focusing on innovative practice in teaching the English Language arts, especially on building bridges between literacy in school and out.

He joined the ranks of college instructors after 11 years of teaching high school English. He has won awards for his teaching at both the high school and college levels. His research focuses on understanding how experienced readers read and talk about texts as well as what motivates adolescents' reading and writing out of school. He uses that understanding to think about how to devise more effective and engaging reading and writing instruction for adolescents in school.

Michael has written, co-written, or edited twelve books and monographs, including *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, for which he and his co-author Jeff Wilhelm received the David H. Russell Award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English. Michael has also chaired the Literature Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association, co-chaired of the National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for Research, and co-edited *Research in the Teaching of English*. He is a fellow of the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy.

When he's not working, Michael's likely to be watching or talking about sports, reading, or playing with his granddaughter.



Michael W. Smith

The logo for the Center on Innovations in Learning features the text "Center on Innovations in Learning" in a sans-serif font. "Center on" is in a smaller, grey font, while "Innovations" is in a larger, teal font, and "in Learning" is in a blue font. The text is positioned to the right of a stylized graphic of vertical bars of varying heights in teal and blue, which form a partial frame on the left side of the page.

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CIL's *e-source* database has hundreds of resources for leaders of change and is growing constantly. It can be searched by topic and keyword. Below are some selected items from the database.

Change and Innovation

Promoting Learning in Rural Schools (pdf)

Redding, S., & Walberg, H. J. (2012).

This report synthesizes research on rural schools and offers recommendations on topics such as student motivation, effective instructional practice, distance technologies, parent engagement, academically constructive out-of-school activities, and effective preschool programs.

Personalized Learning

Personalizing Learning and Addressing Barriers to Learning: Two Continuing Education Units

Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. (2012).

Personalization strives to meet learners where they are—their capabilities and motivation. Classrooms may need to offer special assistance, and schools need to develop a unified system to address common barriers to teaching and learning and to reengage disconnected students.

Students with Disabilities

Learning Strategies as a Key to Student Success (pdf)

Protheroe, N., & Clarke, S. (2008).

Teaching metacognitive skills to students, including those with learning disabilities, improves their academic performance. The research summarized here identifies links between learning strategies and academic achievement.

Learning Environments

A Checklist for Inclusive Teaching

Burgstahler, S. (2012).

This checklist discusses the goal of Universal Design of Instruction (UDI), then has sections on a UDI process, practices, class climate, interaction, physical environments and products, delivery methods, information resources and technology, feedback, assessment, and accommodation.

Data Use and Analytics

Leading Indicators of School Turnarounds: How to Know When Dramatic Change is on Track (pdf)

Kowal, J., & Ableidinger, J. (2012).

This report outlines how state and district leaders can use data to monitor, diagnose, and make mid-course corrections to a school's turnaround progress. A description of leading indicators linked to success factors is included.