



Center on  
**Innovations**  
in **Learning**

Educators and families need reliable, timely, and accurate tools to identify what technology holds the most promise for improving student outcomes. Evidence should ensure that the right technology is matched with the diverse learning contexts across the nation.

*Richard Culatta, U.S. Department of Education*

**October 2013**

Dear Colleague,

Greetings from the Center on Innovations in Learning! The new school year is in full swing and the CIL staff has been working to assist you with the rewarding work of increasing student learning.

CIL's new publication, ***Through a Student's Eyes: A Perspective on Personalized Learning and Practice Guide for Teachers***, by Sam Redding, was provided to all members of the Personalized Learning Committee of the **Michigan Department of Education (MDE)** interoffice team led by the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation (OEII). The goal of the committee, according to **Bersheril Bailey** of the **Great Lakes Comprehensive Center**, is to assist with operationalizing the Michigan State Board of Education priority: "Increase the use of personalized teaching methods, including the integration of technology for K–14 grade students to improve learning and outcomes." The team, led by **Gregg Dionne**, OEII supervisor of curriculum and instruction, will work to connect the personalized learning priority with other initiatives. The MDE staff also participated in the CIL webinar ***Keeping the Personal in Personalized Learning***.

Elsewhere in October, CIL's coordinator for evaluation, Allison Crean Davis, collaborated with the **Northeast Comprehensive Center** team of **Emily Rukobo**, **Jason Gaines**, **Anushka Paul**, and **Susan Frankel** to co-facilitate a 2-day event involving 20 participants from Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. The work session designed a draft rubric for evaluating online and blended learning programs, and the group aims to roll out the rubric in early 2014.

### ***News from the Indistar States***

Shepherd Stephanie Benedict conducted an Indistar training for coaches from the **District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)**, with assistance from DCPS's **Theresa West**, **Antione Vinson**, and **Kia Terrell**. A refresher course was also held for principals and staff.

Meanwhile across the country, at the request of **Susan McCauley**, director of teaching and learning support at the **Alaska Department of Education**, shepherd Gerry Briscoe led a group of state system of support team members who will be reviewing and supporting school improvement plans. Gerry led the group through an unpacking of the indicators and domains, and identifying their desired effect. Indistar shepherd Carol Diedrichsen and **Lesa Rohrer** of the **Oklahoma State Department of Education** facilitated a work session for school improvement coaches and district coaches from Tulsa and Oklahoma City on expanding their use of Indistar's features in improving schools and on new updates to its WISE tool. Participants also included other state-level personnel and **Donna Richardson** and **Sarah Hall** from the **South Central Comprehensive Center**.

Shepherd Maureen Richel, along with **Bill Pannel** and **Beth VanDeWege** from the **Wyoming Department of Education**, facilitated training for 38 superintendents, principals, process managers, coaches, teachers, and SEA personnel in the process of continuous improvement planning using Indistar's indicator-based system.

Two Indistar states, South Dakota and Kansas, will have new state feedback forms for responding to school plans. **Shawna Poitra** and **Jordan Dueis** from the **South Dakota Department of Education**, with **Heather Hoak** from McREL and the CIL team have been assisting in developing the new form. In Kansas, a team headed by **Sandy Guidry** and **Pat Hill** of the **Kansas State Department of Education**, are readying a state feedback form for schools using KansaSTAR.

### ***New Solution-Finding Report from CIL***

Looking for resources for incorporating physical fitness into school environments? Then check out our new ***Solution-finding Report*** with its annotated bibliography of research. This and past *Solution-finding Reports* are archived on the CIL website.

### ***Meet the CIL Staff***

This month's featured staff member is **Dr. Joseph Boyle**, scientific consultant. Check out his story and some great e-resources to support the great work you do. See you next month!

Best,  
**Marilyn Murphy**  
Director

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## **Meet the Staff**

### **Joseph Boyle**

**Scientific Consultant**



**Joseph R. Boyle** is an associate professor of special education in the College of Education at Temple University in Philadelphia and serves as a scientific consultant with CIL. He authored the chapter “Specialized Innovations for Students with Disabilities” in CIL’s soon to be released *Handbook on Innovations in Learning*.

Dr. Boyle received his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas in special education in 1993. His current research examines the effectiveness of teaching techniques and interventions for students with mild disabilities in general education and inclusive classrooms. He has developed a number of classroom interventions for students with mild disabilities in the areas of reading, writing, and note-taking. Dr. Boyle has over 40 publications that include books, research articles, and research-to-practice articles. He is currently principal investigator of a \$906,000 Institute of Education Sciences grant, *Improving the Science Performance of Students With Disabilities Through Strategic Note-taking*, which examines the effects of strategic note-taking on the science learning of middle school students with learning disabilities. In addition, he has developed and is currently field-testing a strategic note-taking app for the iPad. Finally, through a grant from Temple University, he will examine the effects of smartpen technology for enhancing the note-taking skills of students with learning disabilities.

Dr. Boyle is an avid runner and can often be found in local 5K or 5-mile races. He also enjoys hiking with his family on weekends or fly-fishing for trout in the rivers and streams of New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



## ***Innovation and Change***

### **Leadership in Transformation: Building Capacities for a New Age (2012)**

Levine, S., & Smyre, R. [in *New Horizons for Learning Journal*, 10(1)]

This article frames transformational leaders as master capacity builders and contrasts the traditional leader with a process leader.

## ***Personalized Learning***

### **Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond (2012)**

Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. A.

This report describes research on newcomer (immigrant) adolescent English language learners at middle and high schools, highlighting design features and policies promoting academic rigor and preparing students for the future.

## ***Students with Disabilities***

### **For Districts, Online Testing has Legal Liabilities**

Bathon, J. [T.H.E. Journal, 40(7)]

According to this July 2013 article, "From bandwidth issues to playing nice with assistive technologies, there's a lot that can go wrong in the world of high-stakes online testing," including addressing the needs of "special ed's special circumstances."

## ***Learning Environments***

### **E-learning 101: Putting the Big Picture into Focus (archived webinar)**

Twyman, J. S. (Center on Innovations in Learning)

This lively session is designed to introduce you to the rapidly changing e-learning world. Participants will leave the session with a new or enhanced understanding of the digital world of teaching and learning, feeling less like a technology tourist and more like a digital native.

## ***Data Use and Analytics***

### **Data Backpacks: Portable Records & Learning Profiles (pdf) (2012)**

Bailey, J., Carter, S. C., Schneider, C., & Vander Ark, T

This paper asks leaders and policymakers to consider two primary solutions to ensure that every student has a bright start: Data Backpack and Learner Profile, providing digital data about the student's learning levels, preferences, motivations, and personal accomplishments.

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