

Flashback

1. IMPLEMENTING PLTs

A summer institute hosted by staff members of NWREL's Center for School and District Improvement aimed at helping teachers and administrators organize and lead professional learning teams (PLTs). The training was attended by 29 people from seven schools and districts around the country, including San Diego, Los Angeles, and Van Nuys, California; League City, Texas; Pasco, Washington; St. Helens, Oregon; and Orangeburg, South Carolina. A two-day follow-up training is scheduled for November to introduce more PLT tools and strategies. Periodic conference calls will also check on the group's successes, challenges, and insights in introducing PLTs into their own schools.



2. LEARNING ABOUT INTERVENTION

A symposium sponsored by NWREL's Comprehensive Center brought together state-level representatives from general education and special education to learn about Response to Intervention (RTI) and to discuss its implications for policy and practice. The event was attended by Title I, Reading First, and special education staff members from Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. Highlights of the first day included a presentation on Why RTI? Integrating Prevention and Remediation, by Jack M.

Fletcher of the University of Houston. Joseph Witt of Louisiana State University spoke about RTI Implementation: Issues and Lessons Learned.

3. INVESTIGATING MATHEMATICS PROBLEM SOLVING

At a training for middle school teachers, NWREL launched a research project to validate the effectiveness of the Laboratory's Mathematics Problem-Solving Model. The teachers are participating in a five-year project funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and led by Principal Investigator Edith Gummer. Using the NWREL model's rubric, the teachers solved open-ended problems and scored examples of student solutions. They will also receive training on a feedback scoring guide—appropriate to their grade levels—to use throughout the year with their own students. Professor Tom Dick of Oregon State University (pictured) described data collection requirements for the project. ■



What's New on the Web

There are currently hundreds of Web sites, catalog retailers, and retail outlets selling six-trait writing products. To distinguish the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's offerings from the others and to build brand recognition, NWREL has launched a new Web site: www.thetraits.com.

The site will feature 6+1 Trait® Writing products and trainings. It will also give users of the model an opportunity to offer feedback and data. NWREL hopes to use the site to identify who is using the model and how, as well as to develop ideas for new

TRAIT-based products and services. In addition, the site is designed to position NWREL as the creator and primary innovator of the model.

According to Marketing Manager Cary Craig, the site will offer valuable features to encourage frequent visits:

- A users' forum or blog where users can share information and relate experiences
- A training schedule promoting upcoming NWREL trainings
- A complete catalog of 6+1 TRAIT products

- Tips, strategies, and an "ask the experts" column
 - Various 6+1 TRAIT resources
- Additional URLs have also been acquired to further drive traffic to the new 6+1 TRAIT site. These related URLs will redirect users to www.thetraits.com:
- www.thetraits.org
 - www.weecanwrite.com
 - www.six-traits.com
 - www.6-traits.com ■