

FACILITATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Nick Pinchok, is a senior consultant with the Great Lakes Comprehensive Center at American Institutes for Research. His work focuses on the development and oversight of technical assistance plans focused on statewide initiatives that support the Illinois State Board of Education. Pinchok has managed and facilitated the work of contractors and subcontractors to provide support on new Common Core State Standards rollout and implementation, facilitating and supporting new ELL policy and guidance and other reforms. He has also consulted with state education agencies and local education agencies on ways to improve current state assessment systems and processes and co-authored *A Brief on Performance-Based Assessment Technical Considerations From an International Perspective* and *Connecting Formative Assessment Research to Practice*. Pinchok worked at Aurora East School District 131 as Assessment Coordinator and with private-sector education companies in the areas of assessment and curriculum development. He earned his master's degree in Education at Benedictine University.

Linda E. Miller, Director of the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center at AIR, manages the center's technical assistance support to the state education agencies in Illinois and Wisconsin. She has over 20 years of experience in program management as well as developing and providing technical assistance to states, districts and schools. Miller is one of 16 regional comprehensive center directors. Funded by the United States Department of Education, the regional centers are to build the capacity of the state education agencies in order to improve the support states provide to their low performing local education agencies and schools. As director of Great Lakes West, her responsibilities include fiscal management, reporting, staff supervision, the development and monitoring of the annual plan, and oversight of all technical assistance activities provided, including—facilitation, provision of resources and materials, needs sensing, content expertise and thought partnering, development of support protocols, professional development and coaching, and convening of state and local groups.

Since joining Learning Point Associates in 1999 (Learning Point Associates merged with AIR August 1, 2010), she has been a leader in the establishment of the North Central Response to Intervention Collaborative, led the New York audit team for Rochester, Syracuse, and Buffalo and helped design the co-interpretation process for the curriculum audits, created a toolkit, the *Reading First Supply Box for Competitive Subgrants*, represented Learning Point Associates, formerly known as the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) in the design of the REL 3.1 Workgroup's website for school improvement, and developed and provided technical assistance on full service schools for Illinois Project Success to the state's county coordinators.

As Program Coordinator at NCREL, Ms. Miller collected and reported on the regional educational laboratory's procedural knowledge regarding technical assistance and was the senior editor and author of *Notes and Reflections*, a quarterly brief that highlighted lessons learned. Her responsibilities as coordinator included convening internal groups to document the technical assistance research based practices, providing professional development to promote an organizational disposition for utilizing a client focused approach, and disseminating information to both internal and external audiences.

From 1997 – 1999, Ms. Miller worked at the Education Service Network (ESN), an intermediate education agency, establishing extended-day school programs to improve the achievement of students in low performing schools and was the Project Director for Project Success, the agency's full service school initiative. Her responsibilities included supervision of staff, reporting, fiscal management, and providing full service school expertise to schools and community organizations within the two-county region.

Ms. Miller was a project coordinator from 1989 – 1997 at RICCA, a community based not for profit. She provided coordination and oversight for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

grant to demonstrate that improving student achievement utilizing academic, extended-day programs can be a significant strategy to prevent substance abuse and was Director of Project Success. Her responsibilities included staff supervision, fiscal management, training staff and volunteers, reporting, and the development of academic resources and materials for the sites.

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Stanley N. Rabinowitz directs WestEd's [Assessment and Standards Development Services](#). As Program Director, Rabinowitz oversees program activities, directs assessment development for the Kentucky and Nevada statewide assessment programs, and consults extensively with policymakers and assessment staff at the national, regional, and state levels. WestEd is the Project Management Partner for the multi-state [SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium \(SMARTER Balanced\)](#) — the first collaboration of its kind to develop a common assessment system among a majority of states. WestEd's four-year, \$16.3 million contract includes project planning, documentation, governance support, budget monitoring, and communications. Rabinowitz leads the project, bringing his expertise as a member of the Common Core State Standards Validation Committee. Rabinowitz also directs the WestEd/CRESST [Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center](#). He has authored a number of published papers on issues related to the use of integrated standards and assessment systems in high-stakes state programs and worker-training initiatives. Previously, Rabinowitz directed the statewide assessment program for the New Jersey Department of Education. He received a BA in psychology from Brooklyn College, and an MS and a PhD in educational psychology and statistics from State University of New York at Albany.

Kurt Kiefer is Assistant State Superintendent of the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. Kurt was appointed to this position in September 2010. Prior to his appointment at DPI, Kurt served as the chief information officer and executive director of Research and Program Evaluation for the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD). He has also served as the district assessment coordinator and registrar, and began working for MMSD in 1994 as a research and evaluation coordinator. Prior to his work in the Madison schools, Kurt was a research analyst and manager of program evaluation for Wisconsin Power & Light Company, from 1986 to 1994. Kurt earned his master's degree in administrative science in May 1986, and his bachelor's degree in public administration in August of 1982, both from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Jared Knowles is the Policy Research Advisor at DPI as of January 2011 and currently is working on establishing the State Superintendent's Wisconsin Educational Research Advisory Council, providing data analysis of student data, and advising on pupil data privacy. Prior to working at DPI Jared was an intern with the Office of Education Accountability at DPI for data analysis, and worked on the Wisconsin Race to the Top application. Jared is also currently writing a dissertation on school board politics for the Political Science department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.