

PRESENTERS



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Dr. Al Bertani currently works as an independent consultant focusing on: leadership development; organization development; professional learning; large-scale change; and strategic planning. Al spent the last third of his career working on urban school reform in support of the Chicago Public Schools having served as: a Senior Researcher for the Urban School Leadership Program with the University of Illinois at Chicago; Chief Officer for Professional Development with the Chicago Public Schools; Senior Executive Director for CLASS – Chicago Leadership Academies for Supporting Success – with the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association; and Co-Director of School and Leadership Development with CSI - Center for School Improvement at the University of Chicago.

During his thirty-six years in education, he divided his career between working in public schools and higher education having served as a classroom teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, college professor, university administrator, and senior research associate. Al regularly presents papers, workshops, and institute programs for numerous professional organizations. He has authored articles, research reports, and book chapters regarding staff development, systemic change, and strategic planning. Al is a past president of the Illinois Staff Development Council and former member of the Board of Trustees for the National Staff Development Council.

Lexie Domaradzki joined RMC Research as a Research Associate in December 2008 and works on the Reading First Technical Assistance contract. Previously she served as the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning in the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Prior to that appointment, she was the Washington State Reading First Director for almost 5 years. Washington is recognized as one of the leading states in Reading First implementation, and Lexie was selected to deliver a keynote address at the 2006 National Reading First Conference.

Deb Farrington is a Professional Development Specialist from Measured Progress who brings 20 years of experience as a classroom teacher, curriculum coordinator, district improvement coordinator, and graduate-level instructor to her work with district and state-level leadership teams engaged in using assessment data to improve instruction and student learning.

Deb sees herself as a resource for educators overwhelmed by the challenges and demands of the classroom. She believes educators who can align instruction, curriculum, standards, and assessment can unlock the door to learning. “Educators who have a comprehensive understanding of assessment practices can verify learning, reflect on instruction, and have a positive impact on student achievement. Isn’t that what we’re all striving to do?”

Julia Payne-Lewis, M.Ed. is a Professional Development Specialist with Measured Progress. She believes the biggest asset she offers to educators is her ability to roll up her sleeves and work alongside them to create positive change. She winner of the 2000 Presidential Award for Mathematics and Science, Julia’s expertise sparks her desire for all students and teachers to succeed. “Just as I believe all children can succeed, I also believe that educators can succeed at the initiatives they set out to undertake. I want to be part of the solution, not grumble about the state of education today,” she says.

Julia spent 20 years in the classroom in grades K through nine before working at the district level as a math coach and curriculum and assessment expert. Her assessment experience includes creating mathematics scoring guides and benchmarks with the Vermont Department of Education. In this role, she conducted item review for several large-scale assessments, including the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).