

**Presented by REL Pacific at McREL
Available Resources and
Work in Progress: Volume 2**



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Regional Educational Laboratory
At Mid-continent Research
for Education and Learning

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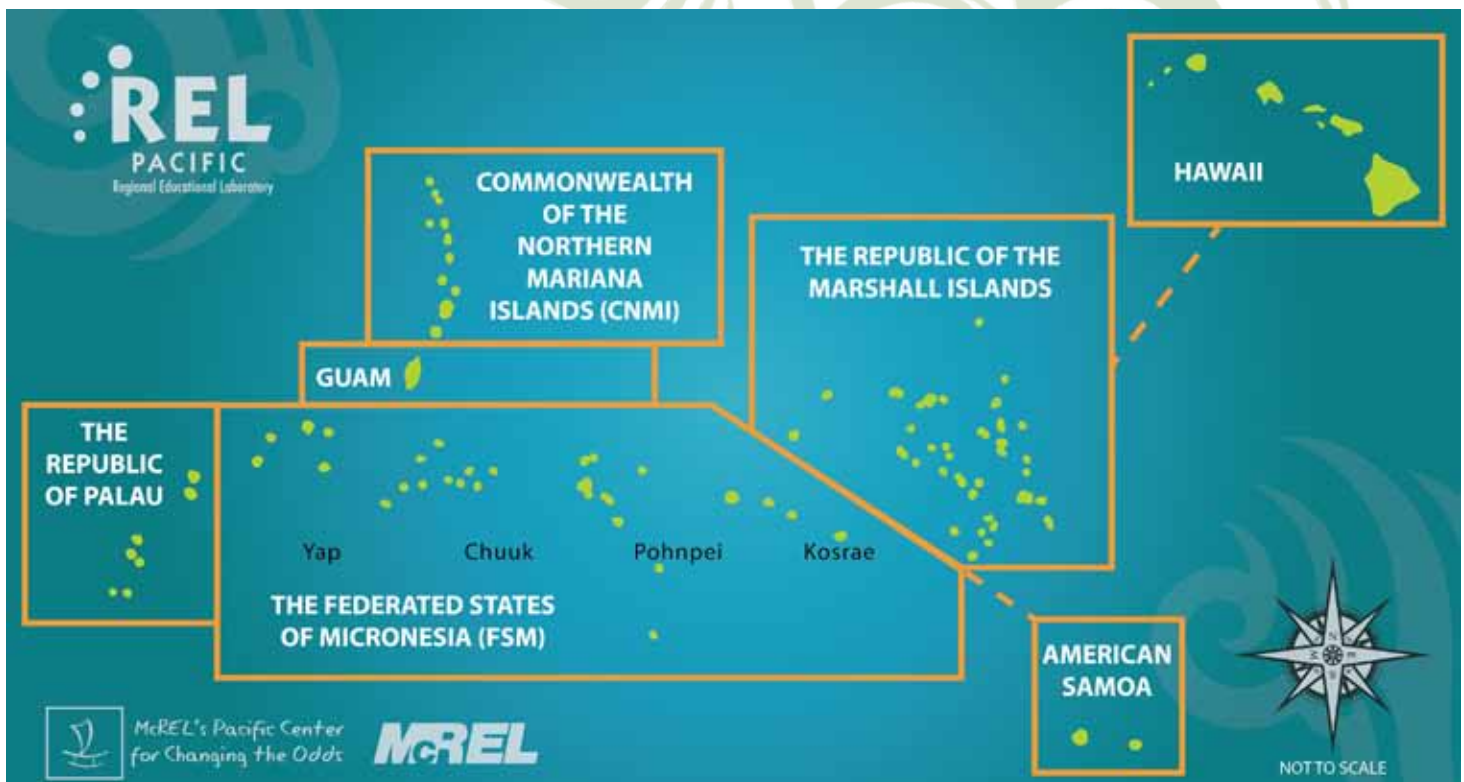
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Introduction to the Regional Educational Laboratories

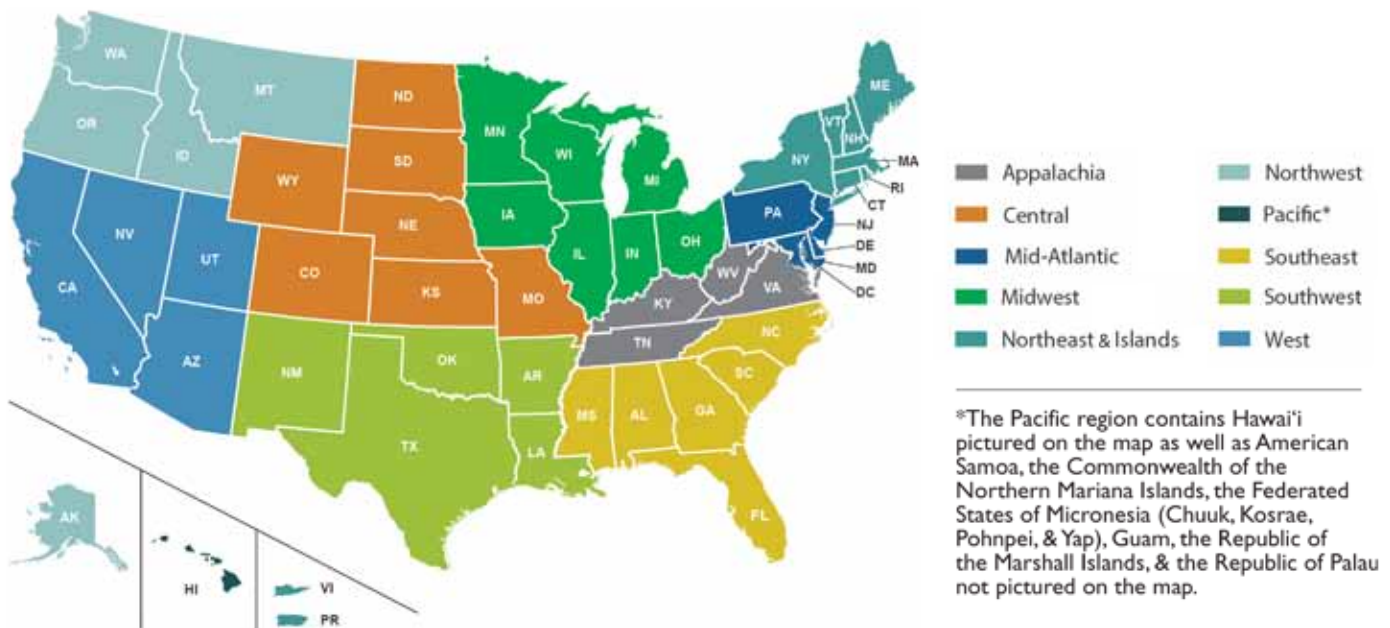
REL Pacific at McREL, one of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), serves educators in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), Guam, Hawai'i, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

REL Pacific is committed to providing educators with resources that support the development of a deep and cohesive body of knowledge in priority topic areas. Like REL Pacific, other RELs across the United States and in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have developed studies that address these topics. In this Research Digest, you will find information on the purpose and design of several REL studies that focus on engaging families and communities in education, ensuring college and career readiness, optimizing data systems, and strengthening teacher effectiveness.

These abstracts have been compiled from the REL Work in Progress web page on the IES site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/relwork/index.asp>. For additional information, please contact relpacific@mcrel.org or 808.664.8186.



Presented by REL Pacific at McREL: A Summary of Cross-Regional Educational Laboratory Studies



Engaging Families & Communities in Education

REL Pacific: Enrollment, Demographic, and Program Participation Characteristics of Guam's Freely Associated State (FAS) Micronesian Students

Guam is home to a diverse population, including a high percentage of indigenous Chamorro, Filipino and Micronesian residents. This study will address the need for more precise information regarding FAS Micronesian students in Guam Department of Education (GDOE) schools, a need resulting from a substantial migration of Micronesians from the FAS in Guam in recent years. Results will inform educators' and policymakers' need for information about this student population, as well as potential ways in which to engage families and the community to better serve Micronesian students.

Ensuring College and Career Readiness

REL Appalachia: The Implementation of Dual Enrollment and Dual Credit Programs in Non-Urban Kentucky School Districts

Kentucky has made college and career readiness the primary goal of its public education system. One of the key strategies Kentucky schools are emphasizing is providing students the opportunity to participate in college-level courses while still in high school. This study will examine the implementation of dual enrollment/dual credit (DE/DC) programs in a sample of Kentucky school districts.

REL Mid-Atlantic: Descriptive Analysis of College-Going in Rural Pennsylvania Schools

The Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools (PARSS) requested that the Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Mid-Atlantic conduct a study to describe the college-going and persistence rates of rural high schools in Pennsylvania. In response to PARSS's request, REL Mid-Atlantic will conduct a descriptive study of college-going rates in rural Pennsylvania high schools using secondary data obtained from Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The study will help PARSS members begin to explore how locale appears to be associated with college enrollment and persistence, and how the influence of school and district characteristics on college-going may vary across locale.

REL Mid-Atlantic: Affective and Cognitive Engagement Survey of Rural Students in Pennsylvania

The literature consistently finds that students who exhibit higher levels of engagement in school and school-related activities are more likely to demonstrate desirable academic and social outcomes. Recognizing the importance of student engagement, the leaders of two intermediate units in rural areas of northwestern Pennsylvania requested REL Mid-Atlantic assistance. The leadership of Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9 (IU9) and Bradford, Lycoming, Sullivan, and Tioga Intermediate Unit 17 (IU17) asked that the REL help them identify a valid measure of student engagement and conduct a study that would produce an empirically sound, descriptive snapshot of student engagement in their districts. The results of this study will provide the participating districts with a sound, empirical measure of a construct that is an established predictor of academic and social outcomes and a snapshot of student engagement in grades 6–12.

REL Midwest: College Enrollment Patterns for Rural Indiana High School Graduates

Increasing the number of individuals who obtain college credentials is a priority for many states. However, relatively little is known about the potential path to college completion for rural students. This study will use state data from Indiana to examine the differences in college enrollment for rural versus nonrural students. The research will assist the efforts of the REL Midwest Rural Research Alliance and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to increase the number of individuals with postsecondary education by showing the extent and correlates of differences between Indiana rural and nonrural students in college enrollment patterns associated with college completion.

REL Midwest: Impact of an Early Warning and Intervention Monitoring System on Student and School Outcomes

One in four students fails to graduate from U.S. public schools. Although an increasing amount of attention is focused on using data to identify students as early as possible who are at risk of dropping out, no rigorous evidence exists about the overall effects on student outcomes of establishing an early warning and intervention monitoring system (EWIMS). At the request of its Dropout Prevention Research Alliance, REL Midwest will work in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio to evaluate the impact of the EWIMS model in a cluster randomized trial, and fill an important gap in the knowledge base. Districts and schools in the Midwest region and around the country will be able to use the results to inform their own decisions about implementing early warning systems. The study builds on initial work to validate indicators of student risk for failure to graduate in Ohio districts (see page 4).

REL Midwest: Local Validation of Early Warning Indicators

States, districts, and schools are increasingly using early warning indicator systems in which readily available data on student attendance, academics, and behavior are used to identify students at risk for not graduating from high school. Identified students can then be matched with interventions in an attempt to help them get on track for graduation. REL Midwest is working with three Ohio districts to develop a set of locally tailored early warning indicators for each district. Study results will provide information about the strongest indicators of four-year graduation for the students in each district, as well as the indicator thresholds at which students are most accurately identified as graduates or nongraduates.

REL Midwest: Predictors of College Readiness Using State Data

Many seniors graduating from high school plan to enroll in college, but many encounter obstacles on the path to college completion. This study will use data from Indiana high school graduates to examine three measures of college readiness based on first-year college indicators and to identify predictors of college readiness among measures collected in Indiana's longitudinal data system. This study, requested by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and REL Midwest's College and Career Success Research Alliance, will inform the efforts of Indiana's policymakers and educators to increase the number of students graduating from high school ready to succeed in college.

REL Midwest: Study of the Implementation of the Ramp-Up to Readiness Program

Nearly all high school students (97 percent) plan to go to college, yet many fewer (75 percent) enroll in college and fewer still (45 percent) ultimately succeed in college. To increase the rate of college application, enrollment, and success, most high schools use the traditional approach: providing one-on-one counseling—outside of the classroom—to students at students' initiative. High school counselors, however, often have heavy case loads and job duties unrelated to college counseling. Ramp-Up to Readiness (Ramp-Up) takes a comprehensive, proactive approach to college counseling by incorporating teacher-led advisories on multiple dimensions of college readiness into school activities for all students in Grades 9–12 throughout the school year. A general question related to intensive comprehensive programs at the secondary level (such as Ramp-Up) is whether such programs can be implemented with fidelity. This study will examine whether schools are able to implement Ramp-Up with fidelity and whether the core components of Ramp-Up (e.g., college readiness-related activities, services, and resources) also are found in schools not implementing Ramp-Up.

REL Northeast & Islands: Identification of US Virgin Islands College Readiness Indicators

REL Northeast and Islands and the US Virgin Islands College and Career Readiness Research Alliance are conducting a study of longitudinal student-level data to identify a set of indicators to determine which USVI high school students are on track for enrolling and persisting in postsecondary education. The indicators will support the development of a CCR indicator system for the islands.

REL Northwest: A Practitioner's Guide to Implementing Early Warning Systems

Many districts and states have recently adopted early warning systems (EWS) to identify students in the early years of middle and high school who are at risk of falling off track and dropping out. Despite the increasing popularity of these systems, very little research exists on the effectiveness of EWS and their implementation. This guide will describe the core ideas, recommendations, and experiences of national organizations and provide examples of EWS practices in use across the country. It seeks to address a common challenge for teams using EWS: developing and refining a process for accessing, interpreting, and using early warning data. It also looks at ways to map appropriate interventions in response to student needs and how to evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions.

REL Northwest: Developmental Education Participation and Postsecondary Outcomes of Oregon High School Graduates at Community College

Nationally, there is a push to ensure that high school graduates are college and career ready. However, large numbers of high school students are placed in developmental (or remedial) math and English courses when they arrive at college because they are underprepared for rigorous postsecondary work. In Oregon, no clear picture exists of statewide participation in developmental education or the progress of students who participate in these programs. This study seeks to fill this gap. Findings will inform changes to policy and practice at both the secondary and postsecondary levels by helping to frame the issue of academic preparation of high school graduates in Oregon and their subsequent outcomes in community college.

REL Northwest: Earning College Credits in High School: Options, Participation, and Outcomes for Oregon Students

In 2011 Oregon passed legislation that established the ambitious target of having 80 percent of Oregon adults earn a postsecondary degree by 2025. Ensuring that students can earn college credits in high school is central to achieving this goal. Although there are a variety of accelerated college credit (ACC) options already available in Oregon, there is a lack of understanding about those options, their distinctive features, and the characteristics of students participating in them. In addition, the lack of consistent reporting structures makes it impossible to track who is accessing these programs and the impact on students' educational outcomes.

This study will fill these gaps by:

- Providing a clear definition and description of the different ways high school students earn college credits while in high school
- Analyzing the costs of these programs
- Calculating the statewide participation rates for dual credit
- Describing the characteristics and outcomes of students in each of these different programs, as well as students who did not participate in any ACC programs while in high school

The study will also highlight the types of analyses that can be conducted with richer data and the types of data elements that agency members may want to collect and report in the future. This could inform policy changes related to statewide data collection.

REL Northwest: How Ready Are Alaska Students for College Coursework?

Many students who enter open-access postsecondary institutions are underprepared for college coursework and, as a result, are placed into remedial courses. Also called developmental education, these remedial courses typically do not carry college credit or count toward a degree and students enrolled in these courses have lower graduation rates than their peers enrolled in college courses. This study examines the proportion of students referred to developmental education at University of Alaska (UA) campuses and how well indicators such as high school grades, state assessments, and college placement exams predict success in courses needed to complete a college degree. “Gatekeeper” college courses include entry-level college English and math coursework. The study results potentially can be used by administrators and faculty at UA and other postsecondary institutions across the country that are considering reforms to how they identify and serve academically underprepared students.

REL Northwest: Pathways of Alaska High School Students Into Postsecondary Options

Through this study, Alaska stakeholders hope to identify patterns of college and career readiness, access, and persistence for specific groups of students as the first step in thinking about state-level interventions for keeping students on track. The study describes patterns of high school exiting (dropping out, graduating, or earning a graduate equivalency diploma) and postsecondary choices (immediate and delayed two- and four-year college enrollment and entry into workforce). Study results will help policymakers target resources and services. The findings will also provide the foundation for an Alaska research alliance that is creating college/career readiness indicators, which will align secondary and postsecondary standards, curriculum, and assessment programs and measure and support student progress.

REL Pacific: College Readiness Among High School Completers in American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Many students entering college in the Pacific region are required to enroll in developmental or remedial education programs, which can increase the time required to achieve a degree and are associated with less successful college outcomes. In American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), education leaders have expressed concerns about college readiness of graduating high school students and the percentage of students testing into remedial courses. This study responds to requests from education leaders to examine the condition of college readiness in these entities and to identify opportunities to strengthen and improve students' college and career readiness.

REL Southwest: A Review of the Literature to Identify Leading Indicators Related to Hispanic STEM Postsecondary Educational Outcomes

The United States faces a major challenge in attracting, preparing, employing, and retaining a qualified workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. With significant shifts in the demographic composition of the United States, an increasing share of the national pool of potential STEM workers is and will continue to be composed of minority populations. Participation rates of minorities in STEM education and careers are low, a concern in terms of both equitable opportunities and the sustainability of the STEM workforce. Some racial and ethnic minorities continue to be underrepresented among degree holders and employees in STEM fields. In 2009, Hispanic employees accounted for 14 percent of the workforce but held just 6 percent of STEM jobs. The combination of economic promise from STEM careers and the current underrepresentation of Hispanic individuals within these fields has spurred policymakers' interest in interventions to improve STEM outcomes for Hispanic students.

The study will answer the following two research questions:

1. What are K–12 leading indicators of enrollment in, persistence in, and completion of postsecondary STEM degrees?
2. To what extent do leading indicators of enrollment in, persistence in, and completion of postsecondary STEM degrees differ for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students?



Optimizing Data Systems

REL Northeast & Islands: Access and Use of Data and Research by District Administrators

Increased access to data collected to meet NCLB requirements has increased calls for districts and schools to engage in data-informed decisionmaking. To better understand current processes and factors influencing decisionmaking, REL Northeast and Islands in collaboration with the Urban School Improvement Alliance (USIA) is conducting a study of research and data use in districts.

USIA is a group of district leaders in key research, assessment, and accountability roles from eight mid-sized urban districts in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island. The alliance's main goal is to help district staff build capacity to use and access their local data and apply research-based practices in order to improve academically low-performing schools. This project will examine current data- and research-driven district-level decisionmaking practices from the perspective of district administrators, including their perceptions of factors that facilitate or hinder their access to and use of data about the district and research. The study will allow us to describe what kinds of data about the district and research evidence key members of district leadership use when making policy decisions, how they use these kinds of evidence, and what systems impact how they are used.

REL Northeast & Islands: Culture of Data Use Workshop Toolkit

The Culture of Data Use Workshop Toolkit provides materials designed to host a workshop to build a context that supports practitioner data use to inform instruction. The workshop outlines five key elements that, collectively, are necessary to developing a data-using culture. It highlights examples of practices in each of the framework's five elements, offers guidance about sustaining key practices in each area, and provides a template for schools and/or districts to complete a self-assessment regarding their own culture of data use. The workshop is designed for administrators at the district or school level and grew from the research agenda of two REL-NEI alliances: the Urban School Improvement Alliance and the Northeast Rural Districts Research Alliance. The workshop toolkit includes an agenda, participant workbook, and a facilitator's guide with references to an accompanying slide deck. The materials are designed for use by schools, districts, states, and other groups serving them.

REL Northeast & Islands: Data Catalog Tool for College and Career Readiness Indicators

The Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI) is working with the U.S. Virgin Islands College and Career Readiness Research Alliance to support the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education as it develops a college and career readiness (CCR) indicator system. As part of this effort, REL-NEI conducted a data catalog to identify data elements that could be used in creating a CCR indicator system. REL-NEI has refined the materials used for the data catalog project and will make them available for other jurisdictions to use. A data catalog matches data elements to constructs and subconstructs. In addition, it compiles information about those data elements that can help identify gaps in the data that might compromise or prevent an analysis. The inventory of elements and identification of weaknesses or gaps can help agencies plan for future data collection and auditing to accomplish policy goals. The Data Catalog Tool for CCR Indicators provides a template with CCR constructs and subconstructs in row headings and data element characteristics in column headings. In addition, a user's guide is provided to help states and districts use the tool to assess their data for use in creating a CCR indicator system.

REL Northeast & Islands: District and State Tools for Working With External Researchers

For the past decade, Urban School Improvement Alliance (USIA) member districts have experienced an increase in responsibility for the collection of data elements longitudinally. During this same time there has been a decrease in research staff as a result of budget cutbacks. Districts also have experienced an increase in external data requests, many of which are not designed or related to district priorities. Similar themes have been reported at the state level by data directors and directors of research. Given these events, how can states and districts partner with external researchers to increase their capacity to make decisions based on meaningful data analysis? How can state and local agencies ensure that external researchers support the agencies' research agenda and comply with federal regulations? Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI) is working with an advisory group of USIA members on the development of District and State Tools for Working With External Researchers. The goal of this project is to create processes and tools that allow districts to establish research priorities, communicate expectations with external researchers, process research requests more efficiently, recruit external researchers to work on district priorities, and publicly disseminate findings. The tools will be presented in four modules. The first module includes a guidance document with process flows and templates for creating a research agenda within a district or state research department and materials for running a more inclusive workshop to set agency priorities including a slide deck and facilitator's guide with an agenda, participant workbook, and detailed instructions. The second module includes a research and data request application packet that can be adapted for use by states and districts, a review of research and data requests worksheet, and guidance on the use of fees for data requests. The third module includes a guidance document with resources to identify researchers with the appropriate skills for district or state projects along with a sample Request for Resources for external researchers. Finally, the fourth module includes a guidance document for disseminating research results to parents and community members with a sample press release and tips for media interviews.

REL Northeast & Islands: Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkits

The Practitioner Data Use Workshop Toolkit provides resources for schools and districts to host a workshop that engages practitioners in a collaborative process to build foundational skills for data-driven inquiry and instructional decision-making. In the workshop, practitioners explore approaches to systematically and accurately using data to inform their teaching practice. Topics covered in the sessions include developing data literacy, engaging in a cycle of inquiry, accessing and analyzing available data, identifying and creating student goals, and using data to make action plans about instructional decisions. The workshop grew from the research agenda of three REL Northeast and Islands alliances: the Northeast Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance, the Urban School Improvement Alliance, and the Northeast Rural Districts Research Alliance. The workshop toolkit includes an agenda, participant workbook, and a facilitator's guide with references to an accompanying slide deck. The materials are designed for use by schools, districts, states, and other groups serving them.

REL Northeast & Islands: Program and Policy Evaluation Workshop Toolkit

The Program and Policy Evaluation Workshop Toolkit introduces program and policy leaders to the fundamentals of logic modeling and program evaluation. The workshop toolkit includes an agenda, a participant workbook, and a facilitator's guide with references to an accompanying slide deck. Schools and districts will be able to host a workshop where participants engage in activities to build a logic model on their program or policy. The workshop demonstrates how a logic model is a tool for uncovering both the evaluation questions that are most relevant to the program or policy goal and the constructs that an evaluation may be designed to measure. In addition, participants focus on how to determine not only what to measure but how to determine what success of the initiative looks like. The workshop grew from the research agenda of three REL-NEI alliances: the Northeast Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance, the Urban School Improvement Alliance and the Puerto Rico Research Alliance for Dropout Prevention. The materials are designed for use by schools, districts, states, and other groups serving them.

REL Pacific: The State of Chuuk: Benchmarking Education Management Information Systems in the Federated States of Micronesia

The availability of quality data is critical in order to effectively monitor and report education activities and outcomes. Education management information systems are designed to provide comprehensive, integrated, relevant, reliable, unambiguous, and timely data to education leaders, decision makers, planners, and managers. In the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), education data have been used primarily for demonstrating compliance with programmatic (e.g., special education) and funding requirements (e.g., U.S. health and education compact funds). The proposed study will provide an assessment and benchmarking of the education data system in use in the Chuuk State Department of Education. This study will complement an effort already underway at the National FSM Department of Education. Concurrent assessment and benchmarking of the state education data systems in the states of Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap will be pursued through separate REL Pacific research and evaluation studies.

REL Pacific: The State of Kosrae: Benchmarking Education Management Information Systems in the Federated States of Micronesia

The availability of quality data is critical in order to effectively monitor and report education activities and outcomes. Education management information systems are designed to provide comprehensive, integrated, relevant, reliable, unambiguous, and timely data to education leaders, decision makers, planners, and managers. In the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), education data have been used primarily for demonstrating compliance with programmatic (e.g., special education) and funding requirements (e.g., U.S. health and education compact funds). The proposed study will provide an assessment and benchmarking of the education data system in use in the Kosrae State Department of Education. This study will complement an effort already underway at the National FSM Department of Education. Concurrent assessment and benchmarking of the state education data systems in the states of Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Yap will be pursued through separate REL Pacific research and evaluation studies.

REL Pacific: The State of Pohnpei: Benchmarking Education Management Information Systems in the Federated States of Micronesia

The purpose of this study is to provide Pohnpei State Department of Education and other Federated States of Micronesia stakeholders with information about the quality of Pohnpei's education management information system (EMIS), which is related to the ability to produce quality data. This information will be collected through the use of an assessment tool developed by the World Bank (2011). The SABER EMIS assessment tool provides stakeholders with a scoring tool that allows for comparison of data systems within a country over time as well as comparison across countries. The tool, developed from the Data Quality Assessment Framework by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), assesses and monitors the quality of education management information systems on six aspects of quality. Upon completion of the scoring for each aspect of quality, a visual summary will be created for Pohnpei state to depict its EMIS quality along the six aspects of quality.

REL Pacific: The State of Yap: Benchmarking Education Management Information Systems in the Federated States of Micronesia

The availability of quality data is critical in order to effectively monitor and report education activities and outcomes. Education management information systems are designed to provide comprehensive, integrated, relevant, reliable, unambiguous, and timely data to education leaders, decision makers, planners, and managers. In the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap), education data have been used primarily for demonstrating compliance with programmatic (e.g., special education) and funding requirements (e.g., U.S. health and education compact funds). The proposed study will provide an assessment and benchmarking of the education data system in use in the Yap State Department of Education. This study will complement an effort already underway at the National FSM Department of Education. Concurrent assessment and benchmarking of the state education data systems in the states of Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Kosrae will be pursued through separate REL Pacific research and evaluation studies.

Strengthening Teacher Effectiveness

REL Appalachia: Teacher Retention, Mobility, and Turnover in Kentucky Between 2008/09 and 2010/11

Members of the Kentucky College and Career Readiness Alliance (KyCCRA) and stakeholders throughout Kentucky have expressed interest in learning more about teacher retention, mobility, and turnover in their state. This study will provide stakeholders with up-to-date descriptive information about variations in teacher retention, mobility, and turnover.

REL Central: Evaluation of the Retired Mentors for New Teachers Program

District leaders and chief state school officers in the Central Region are interested in expanding teacher mentoring in high-need schools. Student achievement continues to lag in high-poverty schools, large numbers of teachers are expected to retire in the near future, and state and district budget shortfalls continue to preclude many districts from undertaking more expensive approaches to supporting their teachers. This study involves a randomized controlled trial of the Retired Mentors for New Teachers program for probationary teachers developed by Aurora Public Schools (APS) in Aurora Colorado. The program uses recently retired, master educators to support probationary teachers in high-need elementary schools. Data sources will include student reading and math assessments, teacher turnover data, and teacher evaluation data.

REL Central: Review of Approaches for Assessing Teacher Preparation Programs in the Central Region

Constituents in all seven Central states have identified assessment of the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (TPPs) as a priority and many are developing or implementing new assessment approaches. States are looking for information to develop new systems for tracking the outcomes of TPPs and their graduates. This study is designed to provide information that builds capacity to assess the effectiveness of TPPs by describing data sources and methods currently used (or planned) to assess TPPs in the Central states by identifying available data in Central states that may be used to assess TPPs. Data sources include documentation of approaches for TPP assessment and available state data and interviews with key informants in each state.

REL Central: Review of Effective Teacher Performance Feedback Interventions

All seven Central states are either implementing or developing performance-based teacher evaluation systems in which teachers are provided with targeted and ongoing feedback to guide their practice. These states need information about best practices for providing feedback to teachers. This study will inform development of teacher feedback policies in evaluation systems by reviewing and summarizing current research on teacher performance feedback interventions (programs, practices, or strategies which examine teacher practice and provide teachers with feedback aimed at changing their practice and increasing student achievement), such as mentoring, coaching, walkthroughs, and clinical supervision.

REL Mid-Atlantic: Evaluation of a District-Wide Implementation of a Professional Learning Community Initiative

The West Chester Area School District (WCASD) in Pennsylvania planned for the implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs) in all of the District's schools beginning with the 2013–14 school year. The PLCs are intended to facilitate the professional development of teachers in the District by engaging them in a collaborative process of collective inquiry that is focused on student learning and student outcomes. The Superintendent of WCASD sought assistance with evaluating the first year of implementation of PLCs in the district. In response to WCASD's request, REL Mid-Atlantic will conduct a study to describe the process of implementing PLCs in WCASD during the first year of implementation. The study will also assess and compare the progress that PLC teams make on implementing the PLC protocols during the first year of implementation.

REL Mid-Atlantic: Examination of the Delaware Development Coaches Program

In 2011, the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) began implementing a strategy to improve the quality of teacher evaluations in the state — the use of development coaches. The Development Coaches program is intended to improve the fairness and reliability of teacher evaluations by enhancing principals' knowledge and ability to administer the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II). DDOE sought assistance with evaluating the progress of the program. In response to DDOE's request, REL Mid-Atlantic will conduct a study to explore how principals' participation in the Development Coaches program is related to outcomes measured at the principal and teacher levels, including quality and timeliness of the assessments and perceptions of the objectivity and equity of the performance appraisals.

REL Midwest: Intrastate and Interstate Educator Mobility: An Examination of State Policies and Movement of Educators Within and Across Midwestern States

In many states, policymakers and state education agencies have relied on anecdotal information to determine whether educators are moving from certain types of schools or districts to other schools or districts. Even less information exists regarding the movement of educators across state lines to neighboring states. Without such information, policymakers are unable to determine whether policy changes are needed to incentivize positions in certain schools or districts, or to restrict or enhance the flow of educators to neighboring states. REL Midwest, in partnership with the Teacher Effectiveness Research Alliance, is conducting a study that fills this need for information by estimating the mobility rates of educators within three contiguous Midwestern states, estimating the mobility rates of educators among these states, and examining two key policy areas that may affect the movements of educators within and across these states.

REL Northeast & Islands: Gearing Up to Teach the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics: What Are the Needs and Available Online Resources for Rural Educators?

In the Northeast and Islands Region, all six New England states as well as New York have adopted the Common Core State Standards. As schools and districts prepare and begin to implement the standards, rural communities and educators face unique and particular challenges. To help rural schools and districts better prepare for the CCSSM, this study will (1) identify key emerging needs and challenges faced by rural educators as they prepare to implement the CCSSM, and (2) link these needs and challenges with information about available online supports and resources for implementing the CCSSM. The findings will help administrators, teacher-leaders, and teachers in rural schools and districts in the Northeast to improve their instructional activities as they prepare for full implementation of the CCSSM in 2014–15.

REL Northeast & Islands: Implementation Study of New Hampshire's Teacher Evaluation System

A wide array of studies has called attention to the limitations of traditional educator evaluations, in particular their inability to differentiate among teachers and link teacher evaluations to student learning outcomes. In October 2011, the NHDOE released a set of guidelines for a new statewide framework for teacher evaluation that includes multiple measures of student learning and teacher performance. The state then required its 15 School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools to design and implement new teacher evaluation systems aligned with the new state guidelines during the 2012–13 school year. The purpose of this study is to describe (1) the features of the new teacher evaluation system in each SIG school, (2) the fidelity of implementation of the new evaluation systems during the pilot year as well as the factors that influence implementation, (3) the extent to which schools use their multiple rating systems to differentiate across teachers, and (4) the changes in teachers' perceptions of professional school climate during the pilot implementation year. This study will provide NEERA and the NHDOE with data to inform the scaling up of the framework in the state's remaining schools in subsequent years.

REL Northeast & Islands: Policy Brief: State College and Career Readiness Definitions and Measures

The Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI) is working with the U.S. Virgin Islands College and Career Readiness Research Alliance to support the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education as it develops a college and career readiness (CCR) indicator system. Alliance members requested a brief study of current state policies to learn what other jurisdictions are doing to define and measure college CCR. Researchers examined extant literature to provide a foundation and guidance for this study; identified a sample of six states; searched these states' education agency websites for relevant resources; interviewed state education representatives working directly with CCR definitions, measures, and data; and analyzed the resulting information.

REL Southeast: The Impact of Professional Development in Fractions for Fourth Grade Teachers on Student Achievement and Teacher Knowledge in Georgia and South Carolina

A recent literature review of rigorous studies found only limited support for the assertion that teacher professional development (PD) in mathematics can improve student mathematics performance. This study adds to the limited evidence base by evaluating a PD program, Developing Mathematical Ideas (DMI). The program attempts to increase teacher's content knowledge of fractions and rational numbers, represented in the Common Core standards in grade 4. Findings will be of interest to stakeholders considering mathematics PD as a strategy for improving student mathematics performance.

REL West: Combining Classroom Observations with Other Measures of Educator Effectiveness During Pilot Implementation of Arizona's New State Teacher Evaluation Model

This study will apply a methodology developed within the framework of the Gates Foundation's Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project to explore the statistical relationships among the results from the three component teacher effectiveness metrics—classroom observation scores, stakeholder survey results, and student academic progress/growth calculations—that were used to assess approximately 300 teachers in Arizona's four pilot school districts in the 2012/13 school year. Although generalizability of the results may be limited by the nature of the pilot sample (generally smaller, rural districts), this exploratory study will provide an important first examination of the Arizona Department of Education's new multiple-measure teacher evaluation model process. The primary audiences for this project are members of the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), the Arizona State Board of Education, the Arizona State Legislature, and local education agencies across the state that may subsequently choose to adopt ADE's newly developed model teacher evaluation process.



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(866) 730-6735; (630) 649-6500
relmidwest@air.org
<http://www.relmidwest.org>

REL Northeast and Islands

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New
Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode
Island, Vermont, & the Virgin Islands
(617) 969-7100
relneiinfo@edc.org
<http://www.relnei.org>

REL Northwest

Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, & Washington
(800) 547-6339, ext. 454
relnw@educationnorthwest.org
<http://educationnorthwest.org/rel-northwest>

REL Pacific

American Samoa, Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of
Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap),
Guam, Hawai'i, Republic of the Marshall Islands,
& Republic of Palau
(808) 664-8175
RELpacific@mcrel.org
<http://relpacific.mcrel.org>

REL Southeast

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North
Carolina, & South Carolina
(850) 644-9352
rel-se@fsu.edu
<http://rel-se.fsu.edu>

REL Southwest

Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma,
& Texas
(800) 476-6861
askrelsw@sedl.org
<http://relsouthwest.sedl.org/>

REL West

Arizona, California, Nevada, & Utah
(866) 853-1831
relwest@wested.org
<http://relwest.wested.org>