Regional Education Labs: Early Childhood Research

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Background on the RELs:

Regional Education Laboratories (RELs) serve education needs in designated regions using research and technical assistance to help school improvement efforts. There are ten REL's that serve all fifty states and are grouped by region. Within these REL's are seventy research alliances, which identify different pressing education challenges within their region. Data collection and analysis help inform REL's on best practices in their regions and throughout the country.

For more information on the REL's and ongoing projects, see the following links:
- Regional Education (REL) Labs
- REL Work in Progress

Regional Education Labs Conducting Early Childhood Education research

The following Early Childhood Research Alliances are conducting research on early childhood issues on behalf of the states in their region.

Northeast and Islands

States: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, US Virgin Islands, Vermont

Early Childhood Education Research Alliance
The broad vision of this alliance is to bring together the region's early childhood stakeholders in the united pursuit of improving early childhood programming and children's outcomes through research- and evidence-based practices. The alliance will co-create a research agenda that focuses on standards, practices, and assessment in early childhood education.

Resources
Data Collection and Use in Early Childhood Education Programs: Evidence from the Northeast Region.
This study looks at how early childhood programs are collecting and using data, how they would like to be able to use data, and challenges they face going forward as the demand for new data increases.

Early Childhood Educator and Administrator Surveys. This tool collects and analyzes information to relate implementation of program standards and/or assessment use to program and student outcomes. The surveys will also help states and jurisdictions collect data to inform policymaking.

Mid-Atlantic

States: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington DC

Early Childhood Education Research Alliance (ECERA)
This alliance is focused on data-driven approaches to help SEAs, LEAs, charter schools, and institutions of higher education address early childhood education issues. The alliance provides a wide range of technical assistance to partners to ensure that young children are ready for school.

Resources
Early Childhood Data Systems: Putting Data to Work. The Mid-Atlantic REL convened a working group to address states challenges of using existing early childhood data to answer policy questions.

Teaching Elementary School Students to be Effective Writers (Webinar). Based on the Institute of Education Sciences' practice guide *Teaching Elementary School Students to be Effective Writers*, the guides co-authors present effective strategies for teaching writing.

Social and Emotional Learning Supports for Children Ages 3-8: A Resource Guide for Educators and Policymakers.(Coming in 2016). This user guide will summarize the benefits of social and emotional learning in early childhood and effective SEL interventions in school contexts.

Southeast

States: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina

School Readiness Research Alliance
The goal of the School Readiness Research Alliance is to build state and local capacity to use data and research to plan, support, and implement initiatives that will promote school readiness. The alliance is comprised of core members from Florida's Office of Early Learning, early learning coalitions, higher education institutions, and non-profit foundations in the State of Florida; the Early Childhood Director from the Mississippi Department of Education; and stakeholders from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Efforts of this alliance focus on the readiness of children and the readiness of families, communities, and early care and education providers to offer successful learning opportunities to young children.

Resources

Effective Early Literacy Interventions for At-Risk Students in Grades K-2. (Coming in 2016). This study analyzes what is an effective early literacy intervention to help struggling early childhood students become successful readers, and additionally, if those same interventions are effective for English language learners.

Growth of Teacher Knowledge in Early Literacy Skills, and Application to Classroom Instruction. (Coming in 2016). This study analyzed growth in teacher knowledge and changes in instructional practices when teachers and administrators are exposed to professional development. Professional develop focused on teaching reading to elementary students.

Midwest

States: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

Early Childhood Education Research Alliance
This alliance focuses on understanding and improving the quality of early childhood education programs.

Resources
Examining Ratings and Dimensions of Quality in an Early Childhood Education Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). The purpose of this study is to help Michigan and national stakeholders understand the different components of the QRIS system and how they relate to each other in Michigan's QRIS calculation method. The study also examines how these changes in the calculation system may affect the number of programs rated at each quality level.

Developing Integrated Statewide Early Childhood Data Systems. (Technical Assistance). The goal of this technical assistance is to understand how states facilitate interagency collaboration to develop an integrated early childhood data system.

Southwest

States: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

Arkansas Prekindergarten Research Alliance
This alliance focuses on the needs of early childhood education programs in Arkansas. The alliance seeks to increase state and local capacity to use data to plan, support, and monitor critical factors that affect programs, enrollment in pre-K, educator quality, and programmatic policy decisions.
Using Arkansas Research Center Data to Promote Data-Driven Practices Among Educators in Prekindergarten Settings: This technical assistance uses data collected to further the goals of the Arkansas Prekindergarten Alliance to make greater use of data to improve practice in pre-K settings.

Pre-K Participation Study and GIS Mapping. (Coming soon). This study is being conducted to describe participation patterns and state trends of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Pre-K program.

New Mexico Prekindergarten Research Alliance
This alliance brings together early childhood stakeholders representing publicly funded preK, community-based childcare, and Head Start to investigate prekindergarten program participation and student success, quality early childhood programs, students' transition to kindergarten, and funding of early childhood programs in New Mexico.

Resources
Literature Review and Gap Analysis of Prekindergarten: Preparing for Future Analyses of New Mexico Pre-K Programs and Student Academic Progress. This scan of research literature to determine what existing studies are characteristics of effective preschool programs as well as child skills associated with successful kindergarten entry and later academic success.

New Mexico Pre-K Kindergarten Readiness Study. (Coming soon). This study will examine differences in kindergarten readiness for different student subgroups and students attending state funded preschool programs.