



Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

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Center for Accountability, Research, and Evaluation (CARE)

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) is organized internally into three centers, one of which is CARE. CARE is dedicated to providing services in the areas of school improvement, professional development, assessment, and research and evaluation to meet the needs of our clients. CARE develops and advances the use of research-based knowledge to improve educational, social, and cultural outcomes in the Pacific and beyond. PREL's other two centers are the Center for Information, Communications, and Technology (CICT) and the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT).

CARE is comprised of several programs that work to address the assessment, research, and evaluation needs of the Pacific region: the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Pacific, Pacific Assessment Systems and Services (PASS), JUMP into Reading for Meaning (JUMP), the Regional Education Master's Online Training in Evaluation (REMOTE), and External Evaluations.

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY (REL) PACIFIC PROGRAM

The REL Pacific is 1 of 10 educational laboratories that are funded by the U.S. Department of Education and serve to improve education in each geographical region across the United States in accordance with the provisions stated in the *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*.

The REL Pacific serves American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap), Guam, Hawai'i, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. The current work of the REL Pacific includes two major initiatives, or tasks, in the area of education.

Task 1 includes: (a) regional needs analysis, (b) training and technical assistance activities, and (c) fast response applied research and development projects. In the first year, the fast response projects include topics that meet the high-need areas of the region by offering activities and conducting studies on teacher quality, student achievement, and educational system improvement.

Task 2 involves the implementation of a rigorous applied research and development project. This research study will focus on the impact of a professional development model to be provided to teachers in the Pacific region.

This study will take place over a 5-year period and will look at the effectiveness of a model for Pacific region teachers of 4th and 5th grade students who are English language learners (ELLs). A randomized control trial experimental design will be used to test the impact of the model.

PACIFIC ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS AND SERVICES (PASS) PROGRAM

PASS contracts with state and local education agencies to serve the assessment and accountability needs of schools, districts, and states in the Pacific region.

PASS offers a variety of services, including consultation in such areas as assessment and accountability systems, student information databases, and standards-based reporting; professional development in assessment; alignment, data analysis, test scoring, and reporting services; and technical assistance in designing testing/accountability systems analysis, testing policy, testing students with special needs, and testing ELLs.

JUMP INTO READING FOR MEANING (JUMP) PROGRAM

JUMP is funded through a 5-year Star Schools grant that will develop and research the impact of a game-based vocabulary instructional program for supplemental educational services delivered on a mobile platform. The primary objectives of the project are to:

- Develop a research-based, content-situated vocabulary curriculum to be delivered on a handheld device to 4th grade students.

- Establish the effectiveness of a game-based vocabulary development curriculum through a scientifically-based research study.
- Disseminate information on learning in game-based environments delivered on handheld devices.

JUMP will address its primary objectives by designing a vocabulary game anchored in research-based content and learning principles that will deeply motivate young learners to:

- Build large vocabularies that are rich with images and associations.
- Acquire independent word-learning strategies.
- Develop a deep appreciation of words.
- Engage in extended extracurricular reading.

The JUMP curriculum will support content area reading for struggling readers in 4th grade to address the well-documented drop-off in reading test scores for this population of students. A rigorous, random control trial research plan has been designed to test the effectiveness of the game developed by the project.

REGIONAL EDUCATION MASTER'S ONLINE TRAINING IN EVALUATION (REMOTE) PROGRAM

Through funds provided by the National Science Foundation (NSF), PREL and the University of Hawai'i are developing a distance learning graduate program in evaluation specifically designed to meet the unique needs of participants in the Pacific region. This program incorporates a specialization in evaluation to an existing master's degree in education, and requires completion of 30 credit hours over the course of five semesters. The impact will be to build the capacity of educational leaders in the Pacific to appropriately and effectively conduct and utilize program evaluation.

EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS PROGRAM

External Evaluations contracts with outside agencies, schools, and programs to provide a variety of planning and program evaluation services. The main functions of the External Evaluations unit are to: (a) respond to requests for proposals (RFPs) and other requests for evaluation services by developing proposals to meet those evaluation needs; (b) collect, analyze, and interpret data on the implementation and outcomes of interventions; (c) provide timely, accurate, and meaningful information to improve program planning, implementation, outcomes, and long-term impact; and (d) consult with external service providers in the Pacific region to build the capacity of these service providers to conduct their own planning and evaluation activities.

CONTACT

For additional information, please contact Dr. Scott Keir, Executive Director, CARE, at (808) 441-1355 or at keirs@prel.org.

Sand dollars are found in coastal northern Pacific and Atlantic waters. For many North Americans, they are a symbol of the ocean.