



Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific

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The **Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific (REL-P)** is 1 of 10 educational laboratories funded by the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. ED) 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* (Public Law 107-279, Part D, Section 174). The purpose of the REL-P is to carry out applied research, development, dissemination, and technical assistance activities to serve the needs of the Pacific region. The REL-P serves state education agencies (SEAs) in 10 Pacific jurisdictions, including 1 state (Hawai'i), 3 territories (American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), and 3 nations in free association with the U.S. (the Federated States of Micronesia: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap; the Republic of the Marshall Islands; the Republic of Palau).

THE WORK OF THE REL-P IS DIVIDED INTO FIVE TASKS

TASK 1: Regional Needs Analysis, Training and Technical Assistance, and Fast Response Applied Research and Development Projects

Task 1 begins with the critical work of needs assessment. To assist in this effort, the Pacific Resource Center (PRC) has been created to integrate and expand the REL-P's existing databases. The Research and Evaluation (R&E) Cadre is a working group comprised of the data specialists from all of the Pacific jurisdictions. The R&E Cadre is a collaborative effort to build research and evaluation capacity in the region, as well as generate data needed for REL-P initiatives. The following activities have been identified as high priorities:

Fast Response Training and Technical Assistance Activities

High-need training and technical assistance activities carried out in Year 1 were as follows:

- Improving the Teaching of Reading Comprehension
- Improving Achievement: Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)
- Improving Student Achievement in Middle Grades Mathematics
- Assessing Student Knowledge in Hawaiian Immersion Schools

High-need training and technical assistance activities being carried out in Year 2 are as follows:

- Improving the Teaching of Reading Comprehension in Middle and High Schools
- Improving Student Achievement in Middle Grades Mathematics
- Establishing an Assessment System for a Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework
- Training on Zip Zoom Into English, a Computer-Based Program To Support Early Reading Achievement
- Preparing Successful High Schools in the Pacific
- Continued Development of the Hawai'i Aligned Portfolio Assessment (HAPA)

Fast Response Applied Research and Development Projects

Highest priority applied research and development projects for Year 1 were as follows:

- English Language Proficiency Assessment in the Pacific Region
- Preparing and Licensing High-Quality Teachers
- Data Availability for Analysis of High School Achievement
- Assessing the Status of Kindergarten in the Pacific Region
- Improving Student Achievement in Middle Grade Mathematics: A Status Report on the Pacific

Highest priority applied research and development projects for Year 2 are as follows:

- Status of Principal Certification in the Pacific Region
- Status of Large-Scale Assessment Practices in the Pacific
- Culturally Relevant Science Applications in the Pacific Classroom
- Successful Strategies and Challenges in Developmental Math Courses in Pacific Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)

The nautilus is a cousin of the octopus and squid. Often called a living fossil, this ancient animal has changed little in the last 500 million years.

TASK 2: Rigorous Applied Research and Development

In Task 2, the REL-P will carry out a 5-year study of the effectiveness of a professional development model, Pacific Communities with High-performance In Literacy Development (P-CHILD), with a specific focus on teachers of English learners. The REL-P adapted the model from the results of Pacific Resources for Education and Learning's (PREL's) P-CHILD research (2001–2005) on early literacy. The new model focuses on three key reading comprehension strategies coupled with three key instructional strategies. The study of the REL-P's Principles-Based Professional Development To Improve Reading Comprehension for English Language Learners will target 4th and 5th grades. The study addresses several critical and enduring needs in the Pacific region, such as English learner achievement gaps and teacher quality.

The REL-P will use a randomized experimental design with an equal number of schools receiving and not receiving the professional development. The study will assess outcomes in both groups of schools for students, as well as teachers, by conducting a carefully developed statistical analysis to determine if there are differences in outcomes that can be traced to the use of P-CHILD.

TASK 3: National Laboratory Network

Task 3 provides the means for the REL-P to network with the other nine RELs through the National Laboratory Network (NLN). Examples of collaborative work include sharing materials, collaborating on common issues, and combining resources. Conference calls and the NLN intranet are the two most common methods of communication. The REL-P plays an active role in several NLN working groups, including Reference Desk, Rural Education, and Dissemination. The Reference Desk Working Group has undertaken a national initiative with plans to launch an NLN Reference Desk in 2007.

TASK 4: Regional Dissemination

The REL-P will carry out and evaluate region-wide dissemination of high-quality, useful, relevant, research-based reports and products in Task 4. This active plan includes the translation of scientifically valid research into products in various formats useful for educators in the region, including reports, leaflets, posters, and conference presentations. The REL-P approach to effective dissemination is based on a successful system which is continually monitored for relevance and utility. The Dissemination Group, a cross-lab effort to examine and implement collaborative dissemination methods, will enhance dissemination efforts.

TASK 5: Laboratory Management

Task 5 is the management portion of the REL-P. This includes preparing updated annual plans, convening a Governing Board, and participating in U.S. ED-required meetings and performance monitoring.

PRIMARY AGENCY

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL)
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MAJOR PARTNERS

In addition to the SEAs, regional IHEs, and other agencies and individuals, there are several other key partners in the REL-P, including the following:

- Berkeley Policy Associates (BPA)
- University of Hawai'i
- University of Guam

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG)

The REL-P has assembled a team of experts to assist in the design and implementation of the program. TWG members are as follows:

- Dr. Geoffrey Borman, University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Dr. Dan Brown, University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- Dr. Margo Gottlieb, Illinois Resource Center
- Dr. Rosa Salas Palomo, Micronesian Language Institute, University of Guam
- Dr. Hirokazu Yoshikawa, New York University
- Dr. Shuqiang Zhang, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

READING ADVISORY PANEL

In addition to the TWG, the REL-P continues to use a national reading expert panel to advise us in our work. Members are as follows:

- Dr. Michael L. Kamil, Stanford University, Chairman
- Dr. Anne Cunningham, University of California at Berkeley
- Dr. Jana Echevarria, California State University, Long Beach
- Dr. Gerald Duffy, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- Dr. Dorothy Strickland, Rutgers University

CONTACT

For additional information, please visit <http://edlabs.ed.gov/RELpacific> or contact Dr. Roger Chesswas, REL-P Director, at chesswasr@prel.org.