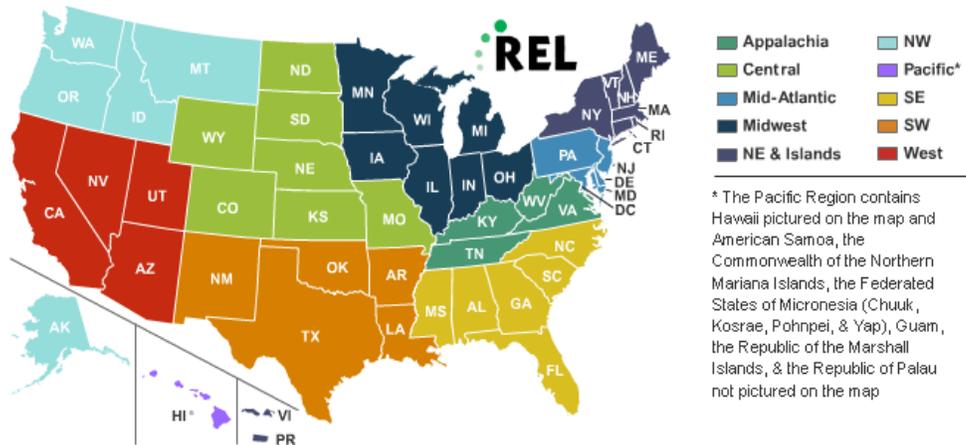


# Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program



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## Regional Educational Laboratory Research Alliances

As our nation addresses the challenge of improving academic achievement for all students, the role of evidence in shaping practice and policy becomes even more critical. During the past five years, the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) program, sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education, has significantly advanced the quality and reliability of available evidence through its focus on producing and disseminating high quality, rigorous research.

The current RELs, launched in 2012, promise further strides in building an education system in which decisions are firmly grounded in data and research.

Under the new contract, RELs are working in partnership with nearly 70 “research alliances” comprised of education practitioners and policymakers at the district and/or state levels. In collaboration with the RELs, research alliance members identify specific, pressing education challenges in their region. Then they analyze data and conduct research to gain a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and to develop and test strategies for improvement.

The goal of this work is to build capacity to use data and research by:

- *Assisting states, districts, and schools in using their data systems*
- *Conducting and supporting high quality studies on key regional priorities*
- *Helping education policymakers and practitioners to incorporate data and research into everyday decision making*

Research alliances operating in each region are addressing critical issues such as:

- *Providing effective early education*
- *Identifying and retaining effective teachers and principals*
- *Adopting and implementing rigorous standards and assessments*
- *Increasing college readiness, access, and completion*
- *Improving low-achieving schools*

Many alliances address the needs of subgroups, such as rural or charter schools, or special populations, such as American Indian, Alaska Native, English language learner, Pacific Islander, low-income, or Special Education students.

For further information visit: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.