

Impact on Communities of ED Research Contract Cancellations: Parents, Students and Educators Miss Out Part II

Regional Educational Laboratories

Driven by a State or district's expressed priorities, the Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) generate research, evidence and tools for States to implement to improve student outcomes. REL work supports consequential local, regional and statewide decisions about education policies, programs and practices.

The following are additional examples of REL projects that were cancelled and the impact and opportunity cost for students, parents, educators and the public. *This brief includes additional examples from the February 19, 2025 version.*

Arkansas

Increasing College and Career Readiness

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) wants to increase college and career readiness for all Arkansas students. Through the Building Pathways for Student Success (BPSS) partnership, REL Southwest partnered with ADE to provide guidance on how best to implement and evaluate high-quality post-secondary practices to strengthen student success. REL Southwest staff also helped ADE teams train school leaders in areas related to student support and well-being to contribute to college and career readiness. Now, REL Southwest can no longer continue this support to ADE, lessening their capacity to increase college and career readiness for all Arkansas students.

Contract number: 91990023C0003

Project name: Building Pathways for Student Success

California

Supporting Adult Learners in California to Complete College

Six higher education institutions in northern California —Shasta College, Sierra College, College of the Siskiyous, the Yuba Community College District, California State University Chico, and California State University Sacramento—are partnering to increase the number of individuals who return to college and complete their degrees. These institutions asked REL West to gather data and evidence-based strategies on how to reengage adult learners, track their progress on reengagement and identify ways to scale reengagement of this adult learner population across the California State University and community college systems. Now, these six institutions will lack data and

evidence to effectively reengage the nearly 2,000 adults they identified to support. Also, REL West will not be able to share with other California universities and colleges the insights they were collecting to support reengagement efforts that would have helped the 16.3 million adults in the State with some college but no degree.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: California Adult College Completion Partnership

Improving Discipline Outcomes in San Francisco Unified School District

The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) engaged REL West to identify and test evidence-based practices to address disparities in discipline of Black students in the district and help them succeed academically. Now, the district will not have these evidence-based practices to address these disparities for approximately 7,500 fourth- and fifth-grade students in the district. Also, the research REL West was going to use to study these evidence-based practices would have informed similar approaches for approximately 22,000 fourth-grade and fifth-grade students in neighboring districts in the next two years. Now, these districts will not receive this research to improve their efforts to support this student population.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Creating Equitable Educator Practices and Improved Discipline Outcomes for Black Students in San Francisco Unified School District

Reducing Chronic Absenteeism Through Expanded Learning Programs in Santa Ana Unified School District

The Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) is investing in Expanded Learning programming as a strategy to decrease chronic absence rates among middle and high school students. SAUSD asked REL West to evaluate the Expanded Learning programming and to develop evidence-based resources to decrease chronic absence among the 7,000 students in the program. Now, the district will not have access to any resources REL West would have developed, leaving these 7,000 students without this additional support.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Improving Expanded Learning Programs in Santa Ana Unified School District to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism in Middle and High Schools

Supporting multilingual Learners in Santa Clara County

Leaders at the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) want to improve math achievement among multilingual learners in middle school, who have lower math scores compared to their peers. SCCOE asked REL West to help implement and evaluate an evidence-based math program for the approximately 3,000 multilingual learner students in two districts in Santa Clara County. Now, without this math program, the multilingual learners in these districts will miss out on the opportunity to further improve in math

achievement. Additionally, with the evaluation cancelled, county leaders cannot use the results they would have gotten to support the additional 50,000 or so multilingual students in the county to improve their math achievement as well.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Improving Math Outcomes for Middle School Multilingual Learners in Santa Clara County

Supporting K–12 Students in Foster Care in Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) wants to reduce school mobility and absenteeism of its K–12 students in foster care to improve their academic outcomes. LACOE asked REL West to strengthen its data system that links information across child welfare and education agencies to better serve students. The revamping of the data system was about 90 percent complete and now cannot be launched, leaving the nearly 16,000 students in Los Angeles County who are in the foster care system without the help of this improved data system to better support their academic success.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Measuring and Improving the Education Outcomes of K–12 Students in Foster Care in Los Angeles County

Improving Elementary Reading Proficiency in Sacramento County

The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) wants to help local school districts improve students' reading proficiency on grade 3 assessments. SCOE engaged REL West to provide coaching and resources to educators, and REL West had nearly completed the development of evidence-based tools for literacy instruction. Now, these tools will not be completed and shared with approximately 150 teachers who work with about 4,500 students, nor with the California Department of Education, which planned to use them across the State and would have reached thousands more students to help them improve in literacy.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Sacramento County Partnership for Joyful Literacy in Preschool through First Grade

Colorado

Sharing Promising Practices of Districts Implementing Reduced Academic Calendars

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) wants to learn about promising practices that three quarters of districts in the State are using to implement reduced academic calendars. CDE engaged REL Central to use student outcomes data to identify districts where students are excelling and develop data collection tools to learn about their practices. CDE was planning to share this data from districts implementing promising practices along with recommendations to districts across the state. Now, CDE has less capacity to collect and share this important data to help districts support student learning.

Contract number: 91990022C0015

Project name: REL Central

Delaware

Strengthening Career and Technical Education

The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) Career and Technical Education (CTE) team wants to better understand CTE student participation and performance across the State. To contribute to this understanding, DDOE engaged REL Mid-Atlantic to do a statewide needs assessment of secondary CTE. Additionally, DDOE and REL Mid-Atlantic were preparing to study participation in postsecondary CTE, including how outcomes for postsecondary CTE participants compare to the population. Now, the needs assessment and the research agenda will not be completed and the State's K-12, post-secondary and workforce leaders who wanted to use this research to strengthen Delaware's education and workforce outcomes will not be able to.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: REL Mid-Atlantic

District of Columbia

Strengthening MTSS Implementation To Support Student Learning

District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) wants to improve implementation of its multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework. MTSS is an evidence-based strategy to improve student academic and related outcomes. DCPS partnered with REL Mid-Atlantic to support district and school leaders on effective MTSS implementation, including creating and supporting use of an implementation rubric for district staff. REL Mid-Atlantic also helped DCPS design a system for teachers to select and implement evidence-based interventions for students needing differentiated services and supported DCPS's use of generative artificial intelligence to analyze data more efficiently. Now, DCPS will have less capacity to sustain this work, particularly on the use of generative AI models.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: Enhancing Multi-Tiered System of Supports for District of Columbia Public Schools

Illinois

Teaching Fractions Through Evidence-Materials

School districts across Illinois wanted support to strengthen middle school students' understanding of fractions, which are an important step towards more advanced math. Responding to this need, REL Midwest developed and shared evidence-based learning resources, including a "Teaching Fractions Toolkit," for grade 6 math teachers with a focus on teaching fractions and other concepts. REL Midwest was sharing and testing

these resources with nearly 40 teachers and 3,000 students in nine States and was planning to share these resources with all teachers across the country by 2026. One 6th-grade math teacher in Illinois said about the toolkit and REL Midwest’s support:

“This experience was like a go-to guide for the best ways to teach fractions concepts to 6th graders. Everything in here was valuable and usable.”

Now, these materials will never be released, and teachers will not have the related tools and evidence-based practices to support their students.

Contract number: 91990022C0011

Project name: Teaching Fractions Toolkit

Indiana

Supporting Meaningful Career Pathways for High School Students

Indianapolis Public Schools wanted to strengthen work-based learning experiences within the school district’s career and technical education (CTE) programs. Through the Employability Skills Partnership (ESP), REL Midwest staff helped the school district identify barriers to student participation in work-based learning and planned to develop action plans to improve student and employer engagement. REL Midwest staff were also working to align programs of study in the schools to in-demand occupations to help students learn about their postsecondary opportunities. Now, the school district will be without REL Midwest’s support to build on this progress and support career pathways for high school students.

Contract number: 91990022C0011

Project name: Employability Skills Partnership

Kansas

Supporting College and Career Readiness Through Individual Plans of Study

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) wants to strengthen implementation of Individual Plans of Study (IPS), plans that students are required to develop with school staff and family members to help them prepare for college and careers. KSDE partnered with REL Central and districts in Kansas to do a study on which components of IPS most link to positive student outcomes. REL Central was also developing resources for evidence-based IPS practices and was starting to support schools to use their IPS data effectively. Now, the study will not be completed and schools in Kansas will not receive the support they requested.

Contract number: 91990022C0015

Project name: Supporting postsecondary and workforce readiness of students in Kansas

Kentucky

Helping Improve Student Mathematics Achievement

In 2022, the Kentucky State legislature invested in school-based mathematics coaches to improve students' math outcomes that had declined over the last decade. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) engaged REL Appalachia (AP) to develop a tool to support the training and supervision of the school-based mathematics coaches. Recently, REL AP also helped KDE analyze evaluation data of the coaches' program that led to its expansion to 40 schools. REL AP had planned to help disseminate a tool to assess the coaches' performance with other State leaders in Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee and Utah. Now with the contract cancelled, KDE will no longer have REL AP's support to improve this program, and REL AP cannot help to bring this approach to more States.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: Professional Learning for Mathematics Coaches and Educators

Supporting Efforts to Address Chronic Absenteeism for Economically Disadvantaged Students

Leaders from the West Kentucky Educational Cooperative (WKEC), the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), and the Graves, Lyon and Murray school districts came together to address chronic absenteeism across their States and districts. They engaged REL AP to launch a project that was scheduled to begin this spring and would have offered professional development for educators in these States and districts to tackle chronic absenteeism, with a focus on helping economically disadvantaged students particularly in rural areas. Now, REL AP cannot support this important project and the educators in these States and districts will not receive the professional development REL AP had planned.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: REL Appalachia

Maryland

Expanding Computer Science Education in Maryland

The Maryland Center for Computing Education wants to expand effective computer science education to all 8th-grade students in the State. The Center had asked REL Mid-Atlantic to do data analyses to help them meet this goal. REL Mid-Atlantic was developing plans to do these analyses when the contract was cancelled. Additionally, the Center engaged REL Mid-Atlantic to create a tool to provide evidence about St. Mary's County Public Schools' 8th-grade computer science course as a model for statewide expansion. Now, the tool that would have provided evidence about the course will not be developed, missing the opportunity to identify a potential model course and

delaying the expansion of effective computer science education to all 8th grade students statewide.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: REL Mid-Atlantic

Massachusetts

Improving Students' Math Achievement in the Elementary Grades

Massachusetts education leaders want to improve students' math achievement following declining elementary math scores in recent years. They asked REL Northeast and Islands (NEI) to develop a toolkit for teachers on strategies to support students struggling with math in the elementary grades that was set to be published this fall. Now, the toolkit will not be published and all the resources it included will not reach teachers and their students. REL NEI was also conducting a study on the toolkit with participating educators and students that was more than 80 percent complete that will now go unfinished and the results of the study unknown.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: Massachusetts Partnership to Support Student Learning through Math Intervention

Montana

Improving Teacher Retention

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO DESE) wants to strengthen professional supports for teachers in an effort to increase teacher retention across the state. MO DESE engaged REL Central to do a statewide study that was nearly completed on the mentoring received by early-career teachers. REL Central was also coaching two Missouri districts that included nearly 20 schools on using data to strengthen principals' support and professional development for teachers. Now, without the study's release, MO DESE will lack information on what areas of mentoring to improve to support early-career teachers, and without the coaching, districts will have less capacity to learn how to improve teacher retention.

Contract number: 91990022C0015

Project name: Improving Early-Career Teacher Retention in Missouri

Montana

Improving Student Literacy Outcomes in Four Districts in Montana

Four school districts in Montana—Hardin, Laurel, Lockwood and Whitehall—engaged REL Northwest to improve their use of evidence-based practices in multi-tiered systems of support in reading (MTSS-R) for improved student literacy outcomes. REL Northwest delivered training that helped the districts evaluate their practices and create plans to improve. With REL Northwest's support, teachers have been implementing these

evidence-based practices in MTSS-R and were already seeing positive outcomes. With the contract now cancelled, these districts will no longer receive REL Northwest's support to continue improvements in their literacy instruction that would have benefited them and their students.

Contract number: 91990022C0009

Project name: Literacy Evidence-Based Practices in Montana Districts

Nebraska

Supporting Literacy Proficiency

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) wants to support districts in their implementation of the Nebraska Reading Improvement Act, which requires schools to create reading improvement plans for identified students so all students can reach reading proficiency by grade 3. NDE partnered with REL Central to understand the practices that educators and administrators are using to implement reading improvement plans. REL Central developed data collection protocols and planned a series of focus groups with teachers, school leaders, and district administrators across the state. Now, NDE staff will not have REL Central's support to conduct the focus groups and analyze the findings to help guide state and local efforts across Nebraska to improve foundational literacy.

Contract number: 91990022C0015

Project name: REL Central

New Hampshire

Supporting Play-Based Learning for Kindergarteners in New Hampshire

The New Hampshire legislature has mandated play-based learning in kindergarten to increase early elementary student outcomes, including for students with disabilities. REL NEI has supported the statewide implementation of play-based learning through creating resources for parents and educators, designing a survey to measure implementation of play-based learning and reviewing educators' survey responses with attention to access to professional development in rural districts. Now, REL NEI can no longer support and strengthen this statewide initiative, leaving the students, parents and teachers involved without this additional help.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: New Hampshire Partnership to Increase Early Learning Outcomes through Play

New Jersey

Supporting Use of A Toolkit To Improve Writing Instruction

Dozens of educators across seven schools in Clifton, New Jersey have been piloting a toolkit on evidence-based practices for writing instruction in grades 2 and 4 that REL

Mid-Atlantic developed. These educators had also nearly completed professional learning sessions focused on toolkit implementation supported by REL Mid-Atlantic. Now, these educators no longer have the support the REL Mid-Atlantic team was providing, schools participating in the pilot cannot access the website housing the toolkit and elementary educators nationwide will not have the insights this pilot was gathering to strengthen their writing instruction.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: REL Mid-Atlantic

New York

Increasing Access to Early College Programs For Rural Students and Students With Disabilities in New York

New York has invested in early college programs that enable high school students to pursue college credits and/or obtain their associate's degree. The State engaged REL NEI to identify rural areas of the State, where 12 percent of the student population live, that could support new early college programs so rural students could have similar access to these programs. REL NEI was also conducting research to understand students with disabilities' access to and participation in early college programs, since they are currently underrepresented in these programs. Now, the findings that would have come from this research will not be available to help State leaders increase access to early college programs for rural students and students with disabilities.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: New York Partnership to Support Equity in Early College Programs

Oklahoma

Strengthening Early Learning

Oklahoma education leaders want to strengthen early childhood education for students across Oklahoma. As a result, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), REL Southwest, Anadarko Public Schools and Shawnee Public Schools formed the Leading Early Childhood and Achievement Development (LEAD) partnership. Through this partnership REL Southwest staff had developed a professional development opportunity for early childhood and elementary educators that helped increase their use of effective early learning practices, such as play-based learning. This professional development also built school leaders' capacity to support their teachers' practices. Now, the LEAD partnership will not have the guidance and support of REL Southwest to build on these successes.

Contract number: 91990023C0003

Project name: Leading Early Childhood Achievement and Development

Oregon

Supporting the Implementation of Oregon's Literacy Framework to Improve Student Literacy

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is implementing the Oregon Literacy Framework focused on using evidence to teach reading and improve student literacy outcomes. ODE engaged REL Northwest to integrate the latest research and evidence-based practices into its Early Literacy Grants as part of its Literacy Framework. This work that was in progress and now cancelled would have ensured that all Oregon teachers involved in these grants are using evidence-based practices. Also due to the contract cancellation, now REL Northwest cannot analyze data as they had planned that would have identified and shared district-level strategies to improve reading outcomes for students across Oregon.

Contract number: 91990022C0009

Project name: Oregon Department of Education Literacy Initiative Partnership

Pennsylvania

Supporting School Climate and Safety In Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) partnered with REL Mid-Atlantic to strengthen its data on school climate and safety and help districts and schools use this data for school improvement. REL Mid-Atlantic was validating the state's school climate survey when the contract was cancelled, leaving state staff without the capacity to complete this work. PDE was also working with REL Mid-Atlantic to strengthen its statewide system of school support by connecting school climate and related data with evidence-based practices to improve student and school staff experiences. Finally, REL Mid-Atlantic was supporting a statewide network of technical assistance leads who had just started working with districts to implement evidence-based practices to strengthen school climate. Now, the state will not have the additional support across these efforts to improve students' and educators' experiences and safety in schools.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: Using Data to Foster Supportive Learning Environments and Social-Emotional Wellness in Pennsylvania Schools

Puerto Rico

Strengthening Family Engagement With a Focus on Students with Disabilities and Schools Identified for Improvement in Puerto Rico

Education leaders in Puerto Rico wanted to increase family involvement in their students' learning, including students with disabilities. REL NEI has partnered on this effort by building teachers' and district leaders' capacity in evidence-based family engagement practices and having effective data conversations with their families, with a focus on schools in improvement status and supporting parents that have students with

disabilities. REL NEI was scaling this support to other schools on the island in improvement status when the contract was cancelled, denying the parents and teachers at these schools the opportunity to benefit from these family engagement practices to improve student learning.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: Puerto Rico Partnership to Engage Families in Data Use

Standing Rock Reservation (Spanning North Dakota and South Dakota)

Supporting Project-Based Math Learning at Standing Rock

Educators on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, spanning North and South Dakota and where the Dakota and Lakota tribes reside, want to help their students become more engaged in learning math. REL Central has partnered with educators in Standing Rock, Tribal members and community members to increase student interest and achievement in math through the creation and testing of project-based math modules. These modules are culturally relevant and include evidence-based math instruction and project-based learning approaches that give students more choice and real-life examples of math problems. REL Central with its partners had designed two math modules that teachers in Standing Rock were piloting in their classrooms, was providing professional learning for teachers and hosted an institute last summer to increase teachers' capacity to use the modules and implement project-based learning. Finally, REL Central was facilitating design meetings to create future modules. Now, educators in Standing Rock and their students will be without the support that REL Central was providing in many ways to increase students' interest and achievement in math.

Contract number: 91990022C0015

Project name: Strengthening culture-based education in Standing Rock

Tennessee

Supporting Students' College and Career Readiness in Tennessee

Employers in northeastern Tennessee had indicated that many students were lacking employability skills such as communication, problem-solving and interpersonal skills, and lacking knowledge of high-demand careers in the region. Leaders from nine northeastern Tennessee districts along with the Niswonger Foundation engaged REL AP on projects to address these challenges and improve students' college and career readiness. First, REL AP was connecting educators to regional employers to increase educators' understanding of the employability skills students needed, and REL AP was equipping educators with research-based strategies to help students gain these skills. Second, REL AP helped the district leaders to better use data to improve their college and career programs. In part due to REL AP's support, early indicators of college and career readiness in these districts have increased, including rates of dual enrollment

and industry credential attainment. When its contract was cancelled, RELAP was scheduled to evaluate the impact of CareerConnect, a program that helps students to plan career pathways and connect with local employers during the summer. Now, district leaders will not know the impact of this program and will not have the additional support RELAP was providing to increase students' college and career readiness.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: Strengthening Students' Preparation for College and Careers

Supporting Students Living With Grandfamilies and Kinship Caregivers

Educators in the four States of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia within Rel AP asked for support to better meet the needs of students who live with grandparents or other kin, and their caregivers. For nearly two years, RELAP hosted a community of practice for educators and others who support grandfamilies and kinship caregivers. RELAP facilitated quarterly meetings to build participants' understanding of supporting research, provide a forum for peer learning and to collect and monitor data. RELAP was going to host a culminating event to convene school, district and community leaders across the region to share the resources developed through the community of practice and to support participants to identify ways they could apply these strategies to their communities. Now, education and community leaders across the region will not be able to learn and apply the effective practices the community of practice developed to better support students who live with grandparents or other kin.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: Supporting Students, Grandfamilies, and Kinship Caregivers Community of Practice

Texas

Improving Literacy Outcomes

Texas education leaders identified middle school math achievement as a challenge they wanted to address, and recognized the importance of developing students' literacy skills to help them improve in math. REL Southwest partnered with the Texas Education Agency, Texas Education Service Centers, and school districts to develop the Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Middle School (PRISMS) Toolkit. This toolkit, which was going to be released shortly, was designed to strengthen middle school students' literacy skills through resources and professional development activities for teachers, administrators and literacy leaders. Now, this Toolkit will not be released, and middle school teachers will not have access to these resources to better support their students in math.

Contract number: 91990023C0003

Project name: Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Middle School Toolkit

Utah

Increasing Early Career Teacher Retention in Utah

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) wants to address the challenge that over 40 percent of Utah teachers leave the profession within their first five years. USBE engaged REL West to work with eight school districts to identify and address the root causes of early career teacher attrition. REL West supported districts to conduct “Stay Interviews,” a retention improvement strategy. Then REL West helped districts analyze the data from the “Stay Interviews” and develop strategies to reduce early career teacher attrition. REL West and USBE also produced a brief containing survey responses from early career teachers that offers insights to improve retention. Now, USBE will not have the additional support that REL West would have given to continue the research, analysis and training to improve early career teacher retention in Utah.

Contract number: 91990022C0003

Project name: Utah Early Career Teacher Retention Partnership

Vermont

Identifying High-Quality Assessments and Supporting The New Interim Secretary’s Priorities

The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) has developed the Local Comprehensive Assessment System (LCAS), which collects data from different locally administered assessments to evaluate student learning and inform teacher professional development. Part of this effort is to ensure that rural students in the State are taking high-quality assessments and receiving effective instruction. REL NEI had been working with the State to develop and analyze a survey to understand from local leaders which assessments are administered and how they inform instruction. REL NEI’s planned analysis of the survey results would have helped AOE identify collaboration opportunities across school districts to provide high quality assessments of learning, regardless of geographic location. Now, AOE will not have these results and districts will not be able to collaborate as effectively to ensure all students, including rural students, have access to high-quality assessments.

Additionally, REL NEI was creating workplans to support recently appointed Interim Secretary Saunders’ new priorities when this contract was cancelled. Now, REL NEI cannot help advance Secretary Saunders’ and Governor Scott’s education priorities for the State, leaving them with less capacity to implement their education goals.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: Vermont Partnership to Strengthen Flexible Pathways for College and Career Success

Virgin Islands

Providing High-Quality Professional Learning For USVI Educators Through Online Modules

Following legislative mandates for teacher certification in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), REL NEI partnered with the USVI to provide professional learning to educators through evidence-based online modules that count towards certification. These modules encourage teachers to adopt practices that will benefit all students, including students with disabilities, and include an asynchronous option to accommodate the challenges of traveling between islands. When this contract was cancelled, REL NEI was educating USVI leaders across the education system on the modules with the goal to increase their sustainability. Now, REL NEI can no longer deliver these modules that would have helped more teachers with effective instruction, including for students with disabilities.

Contract number: 91990022C0013

Project name: U.S. Virgin Islands Partnership to Strengthen the Early Childhood Workforce

Virginia

Improving Teachers' Math Instruction in the Early Grades

Virginia education leaders wanted to improve teachers' mathematics instruction in the early grades following findings that recently, children's math skills declined significantly. To support this effort, REL AP had developed a toolkit for preschool and kindergarten teachers on evidence-based practices to improve math instruction and student learning. REL AP was going to evaluate the impact of the toolkit on early math achievement that would have been shared in 2026. Now, this evaluation will not occur, and educators will not know the impact of this toolkit that could have helped more students improve in mathematics.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: REL Appalachia

West Virginia

Improving Middle School Student Engagement and Academic Outcomes

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is aiming to improve stagnating academic performance of its middle school students through a program called the Empowerment Collaborative, which is focused on student engagement through career-oriented experiences and problem-solving skills. WVDE engaged REL AP to help State partners use data to measure the strength of school–community partnerships that are part of the program. REL AP was also going to create a tool to measure school readiness to implement the program effectively that would have been used in three other States to select schools to participate. Now, West Virginia and other States will not receive this tool to select schools for the program as they look to expand this work to engage more students and help them improve academically.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: REL Appalachia

Improving Literacy Instruction

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is developing a Comprehensive State Literacy Plan focused on improving K–12 literacy instruction to address low reading proficiency rates. WVDE leaders asked REL AP for support to include evidence-based practices in literacy instruction, and to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of initiatives in their plan. Now, WVDE will not have the results of the evaluation that REL AP had planned to share with districts and teachers on how to strengthen students' reading proficiency.

Contract number: 91990022C0008

Project name: REL Appalachia

Wisconsin

Transforming Math Education in Wisconsin

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) identified student math achievement as a priority to address below average math scores. As a result, MPS collaborated with REL Midwest to establish the ENGagement and Achievement through Computational Thinking (ENACT) partnership, focused on computational thinking and student-focused instruction to increase middle school students' engagement and confidence in math. REL Midwest was providing guidance and resources, testing them with 26 teachers and approximately 650 students in Wisconsin and had committed to providing the same supports to an additional 71 teachers and 1,775 students in the upcoming school year. Now, none of these teachers and students will receive these supports to improve their students' math achievement.

A math curriculum specialist in Wisconsin said about the support: "We have [had] a great partnership with REL Midwest. They have been very supportive of our vision and our goals, and they have been very respectful of our voice and our input. They have been very responsive to our feedback and our needs, and they have been very flexible and adaptable to our context and our challenges."

Contract number: 91990022C0011

Project name: Engagement and Achievement through Computational Thinking

National

A Tool to Give Schools Better Information About the Performance of Students with Disabilities

Because, on average, a relatively small number of students with disabilities take State assessments in reading and math, the performance of this group of students is not very reliable and can lead to States identifying schools for improvement erroneously or failing to identify others for improvement when they should be identified. REL Mid-Atlantic

developed a tool that was set to launch this spring to improve the accuracy of performance measures for small groups of students, enabling schools to have better information about the performance of its students with disabilities. Now, this tool that would have been available for free to all States and districts will not be available, schools will continue to struggle with understanding the performance of their students with disabilities and States may misidentify schools for improvement as a result, causing unnecessary costs and efforts.

Contract number: 91990022C0012

Project name: REL Mid-Atlantic

Comprehensive Centers

Comprehensive Centers (CCs) provide support to States and districts to improve student outcomes and close achievement gaps. The CCs help States and districts identify, implement and sustain effective evidence-based practices that support improved educator and student outcomes. Each CC's plan is determined by and responsive to the priorities set by the States. Each CC has an advisory board of business leaders, representatives from State educational agencies (SEAs), school districts, institutions of higher education (IHEs), policymakers and researchers.

States and CCs had just developed plans for a new set of work when the cooperative agreements were cancelled. Cancelled cooperative agreements means cancelled opportunities for States to accelerate improvement in student outcomes.

Alabama

Supporting the Implementation of the Alabama Numeracy Act

The Alabama State legislature recently passed the Alabama Numeracy Act to improve student math outcomes, and the Gulf Comprehensive Center had planned to support the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to implement this law. The Gulf CC had planned to help design and implement the Academic Intervention Framework for schools identified for intervention, the Turnaround Leaders Academy and an accountability system for math coaches working in local districts and schools.

Increasing the Effectiveness of School Administrators

ALSDE wants to increase the recruitment and retention of effective school administrators. ALSDE had planned to have the Gulf CC develop a school administrator evaluation system and resources for schools that are having difficulty recruiting and retaining effective administrators.

Arkansas

Math Education

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) wants to improve its approach to mathematics education to ensure that students are receiving the strongest curriculum and instruction and are well prepared for high school algebra. The ADE and Southwest (SW) CC had planned to conduct a national scan of models in other States on math education, with a focus on work in rural districts, to inform ADE's approach.

Strengthening The System for School Vendors

In 2023, the Arkansas legislature passed the LEARNS Act, which called on ADE to create a list of vendors that could be engaged as high-quality professional partners and provide high impact tutoring in schools. However, ADE does not have a system to evaluate and revise this list. ADE and SWCC had planned to work together to develop a process to maintain a rigorous and updated list of potential vendors, and a plan for vendors to submit required data to remain on the approved vendor list.

Strengthening On-Site Monitoring

ADE identified the need to streamline reporting and become more efficient in its on-site monitoring of schools. ADE planned to work with SWCC to develop more simple and efficient ways to monitor schools to increase efficiency at both the State and local level.

Strengthening Communications With Families and Educators

ADE wants to improve its communication with parents and educators through its website. ADE and SWCC were going to work together to refresh ADE's website to improve communication channels and better serve the needs of families and educators.

Improving Response to Students in Crisis

ADE wants to ensure that districts and schools have the tools they need to appropriately and efficiently respond to a student in crisis. ADE wanted to work with SWCC to provide guidance to districts on how to handle these situations. SWCC was going to conduct a national review of available resources and facilitate a convening of key stakeholders from ADE and other relevant agencies (such as Health and Human Services) to explore potential models and solutions to inform the district guidance.

Colorado

Combatting Chronic Absenteeism

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has identified combatting chronic absenteeism as a high priority. The Central CC planned to support CDE and local school districts to implement evidence-based practices to decrease student absences.

Florida

Strengthening High-Quality Instruction in Reading and Math and Establishing a Professional Learning Marketplace

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) wants to implement benchmark-aligned, high-quality instruction in reading and mathematics statewide. The Gulf CC was planning to provide professional learning on evidence-based practices in both reading and mathematics for State, regional, district and school leaders. Additionally, the Gulf CC was going to help FDOE establish a professional learning marketplace aimed at offering teachers a variety of high-quality resources to strengthen their instructional practices and improve student outcomes.

Improving Outcomes for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

The FDOE wants to support improved outcomes for English Learners and students with disabilities. FDOE has asked the Gulf CC to help in a few ways. First, the Gulf CC had planned to develop, implement and scale two Instructional Guides with evidence-based practices for high-quality instruction to train education leaders to apply these Guides in a set of districts. Second, the Gulf CC was going to facilitate professional learning communities for teachers and school leaders in the participating districts to support their implementation of the Guides.

Kansas

Reducing Superintendent Turnover

The Kansas Department of Education (KDE) wants to reduce superintendent turnover in the State, with studies showing that superintendent tenure impacts student achievement. This year, the Central CC was asked to support this effort by assessing needs, developing evidence-based resources and implementing a professional learning pilot program. The Central CC was also going to continue to implement and scale a leadership development system developed last year with KDE to provide superintendents with knowledge and skills to improve student outcomes.

Kentucky

Supporting Implementation of MTSS and the Kentucky Numeracy Counts Act

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) asked the Appalachia CC to support the statewide implementation of two of its priorities: MTSS and the Kentucky Numeracy Counts Act that the legislature passed last year. The Appalachia CC was going to help KDE assess the needs of the regional educational cooperatives and school districts for information, resources and support to implement the requirements of the new numeracy bill and its alignment to MTSS implementation. Second, the Appalachia CC was going to help KDE identify existing resources, processes and tools that could further support the cooperatives and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to implement these priorities.

Louisiana

Improving Student Literacy

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has been focused on improving student literacy, including strengthening teacher knowledge and skill in literacy instruction. Additionally, in late 2024, LDOE received a \$70 million, five-year grant under the Comprehensive Literacy State Development program from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). LDOE asked the SWCC to continue its support for LDOE's Literacy Team to expand its focus to literacy initiatives including to early childhood. The SWCC was also going to partner with LDOE teams to help ensure effective State and local implementation of the Federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development grants.

Strengthening State-Level Communications

LDOE had engaged the SWCC to continue to help overhaul its website for improved communication to stakeholders.

Mississippi

Improving English Learner Outcomes

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) wants to improve English learner outcomes, and had partnered with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to develop a District Self-Assessment Toolkit to help educators use data to strengthen learning opportunities for English learners. The Gulf CC had planned to help MDE implement and scale this toolkit through building teacher and school leaders' capacity to use data effectively.

Supporting Administrators to Retain Teachers

MDE is focused on strengthening school administrators' capacity to support teacher retention. MDE wanted the Gulf CC to help prepare the adoption of the Administrator Growth Rubric by ensuring alignment with research and including the role of administrators to use evidence-based instructional practices.

Strengthening School Improvement and Resource Allocation

MDE wants to better support the schools identified for Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI) status based on identification of their students with disabilities or other subgroups (e.g. high poverty). The Gulf CC was planning to develop and deliver supports for these schools including improving instruction and instructional leadership.

Reducing Chronic Absenteeism

Education leaders in Florida and Mississippi want to address chronic absenteeism in their States. The Gulf CC was asked to develop training and coaching on the use of

early warning systems along with other nationally recognized and State-specific evidence-based interventions to address chronic absenteeism.

Missouri

Reducing Teacher Vacancies

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is focused on reducing high levels of teacher vacancies and had partnered with the Central CC to design, implement and evaluate a long-term strategy for teacher recruitment and retention.

Nebraska

Increasing Early Childhood Literacy

The Nebraska Department of Education wants to increase early childhood literacy, with a goal of 75 percent of students demonstrating proficiency in reading by 2030. The Central CC had been asked to increase educators' use of evidence-based practices and interventions for K-3 literacy instruction.

New Mexico

Assessing School Improvement Strategies

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) wants to update its strategy for school improvement and identify best practices from other States to inform their own improvement strategies. NMPED asked SWCC to partner to help them develop an understanding of its current school improvement practices to inform changes.

Implementing the State's Strategic Plan

NMPED has invested significant effort to align its key education strategies, including the Martinez-Yazzie Action Plan, NMPED's existing Strategic Plan, and their ESSA Plan. Now, to achieve the outcomes in their comprehensive strategic plan, released in late 2024, NMPED engaged SWCC to help with effective implementation of the plan.

North Dakota

Improving Teacher Working Conditions

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) wants to increase retention of qualified teachers through improving working conditions in their schools. Currently in the State, teachers are leaving the profession at a higher rate, which is especially challenging for small rural schools that comprise over half of the State's public schools. The Central CC had planned to partner with NDDPI to develop their knowledge, skills and resources that they could use to improve teacher retention in the State.

Oklahoma

Strengthening the State's School Improvement Plan

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) wants to design a plan for their school improvement system that moves away from compliance to meeting outcomes. OSDE had planned to work with the SWCC to review the plan to revise OSDE's school improvement system, share insights from the evidence on school improvement and high performing school systems and guide discussions among OSDE staff to help them build a stronger system.

Supporting Native Students

OSDE was working with the SWCC to develop a professional learning plan, including a timeline for implementation and possible connections with Oklahoma's federally recognized tribal nations, to expand the State's successful Circles of Reflection program to more communities across the State to improve outcomes for Native students.

South Dakota

Increasing Math Achievement and Supporting Native American students

The South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE) is focused on increasing math achievement in grades 4–8. The Central CC was going to help SD DOE staff develop a math framework with high-quality, evidence-based math practices. In addition, the CC was going to support the State's Department of Tribal Relations-Office of Indian Education to increase the well-being, academic achievement and graduation rates of Native American students.

Tennessee

Supporting Implementation of High School Pathways

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) wants to improve implementation of its high school pathways including integrating the military as a pathway, tailoring high school courses to students' interests and identifying partnerships to increase students' exposure and experience with different pathways. To support these efforts, TDOE was planning to have the Appalachia CC help identify key features of successful high school pathway frameworks and CTE models in other States to inform effective pathway implementation in TN. In addition, Appalachia CC was going to develop tools and resources that would have helped TDOE evaluate how well the pathways were being implemented across school districts.

Texas

Supporting Emergent Bilingual Students

Texas serves nearly 1.2 million Emergent Bilingual students in general education classrooms across the State. In 2023, the Texas legislature passed a bill requiring the

Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop a plan to improve and expand bilingual education, including to educate teachers on how to best support Texas' Emergent Bilingual (EB) student population. TEA wanted the SWCC to plan and develop “micro courses” designed to provide accessible professional learning for school leaders that serve EB students in a bilingual or ESL program model. The SWCC was also going to provide guidance on adult learning best practices and stakeholder analysis to inform TEA's strategy to implement these “micro courses.”

Supporting Dual Language Immersion

Texas currently implements six State-approved program models to teach EB students, including the Dual Language Immersion model that demonstrates results in improving English language proficiency and increasing students' preparation for the workforce. TEA had planned to have the SWCC help develop professional learning pathways to educate school and district leaders as well as teachers, families and community members, on effective dual language implementation.

Virginia

Supporting School Improvement

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) wants to transition its school improvement efforts from a historically compliance-based approach to an evidence-based continuous improvement approach through its Virginia Support Framework. VDOE had previously engaged the Appalachia CC to support these efforts, when the CC and the Office of School Quality created a Networked Improvement Community (NIC) that began in 2022 and continues to operate with 14 participating districts. The NIC is a set of local professional learning communities that offer implementation support, coaching and peer learning to district leaders to strengthen school improvement. Appalachia CC had been asked to help expand the NIC model to more district leaders and Office of School Quality staff, and to co-facilitate learning sessions for district leaders with VDOE staff.

West Virginia

Strengthening West Virginia's Educator Workforce

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is focused on strengthening its educator workforce to recruit and retain more high-quality educators for improved student outcomes. Currently, nearly 10 percent of the total 19,000 teachers across the State work outside their certification or are working with an emergency certificate. The WVDE has made progress and investments since 2020 to strengthen the educator workforce and engaged the Appalachia CC to create tools and guidance for WVDE on using data to assess its workforce initiatives. This data would have helped WVDE

understand solutions for addressing shortages of licensed teaching staff, conditions that support teacher leadership and cost-sharing models that remove barriers to enter the teaching profession.

Wyoming

Retaining High-Quality State Agency Staff

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has identified the importance of retaining high-quality department staff to better support district and school services. WDE was planning to work with the Central CC to develop a plan to increase the retention of high-quality WDE staff.

U.S. Territories

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Supporting Alignment Efforts

The CNMI Commissioner of Education and his leadership team partnered with the Pacific West CC to focus this year on alignment of various programs within the school system into an organized approach. These alignment efforts will help ensure high-quality instruction across all grade levels and are a strategic plan priority of the school system.

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Improving Teacher Performance and Literacy Instruction

The National Department of Education (NDOE) has identified as a priority the creation of a system to improve teacher performance and literacy instruction to improve student outcomes. The Pacific West CC had planned to support the creation of this system and help build NDOE's staff capacity to sustain these efforts.

Guam

Improving Student Literacy Outcomes

The Guam Department of Education (GDOE) wants to improve student literacy outcomes. Pacific West CC staff were going to help GDOE design and implement a system for improving student literacy outcomes, which would have included ways to understand assessment data, the selection of appropriate curricula and interventions and the support of professional learning communities.

Palau

Improving College and Career Readiness

Education leaders in Palau want to improve high school students' college and career readiness, which is aligned with a national initiative to strengthen the Palauan

workforce. Pacific West CC staff were going to help to increase career pathways and work-based learning opportunities at Palau High School, private high schools and Palau Community College.

The National Comprehensive Center

The National CC supports the work of the 14 regional CC and the 4 Content Centers across the country, including sharing strategies and resources on cross-State priorities. The National CC had planned to conduct the following activities to support States and districts:

Strengthening Literacy, Mathematics, Tutoring and Extended Learning

- Provide research about effective literacy and tutoring practices and tools to share the information with States and school districts.
- Provide evidence-based strategies for teaching mathematics in grades K-12 and help SEAs scale implementation of effective mathematics instruction with school districts.
- Develop a guide to help principals support teachers on high-impact instructional strategies, targeted at low performing schools, to improve student learning outcomes.
- Develop information about how to leverage extended learning (including summer, afterschool and tutoring) to improve student learning outcomes.

Providing Capacity Building to States, Districts and Schools

- Strengthen the operations of SEAs to increase efficiency and effective use of funds, including using models of Consolidated Plans.
- Help States measure progress on the goals in their state strategic plans, using data that States are currently collecting but not using.
- Provide guidance for teams of State, district and school staff in rural areas whose schools are low performing to improve student outcomes.
- Support the regional CCs, Content Centers and SEAs to uphold their legal obligations to consult with tribal education agencies.
- Conduct educational webinars for States on components of Federal law (ESEA) related to school performance.

National Contracts

The Department of Education through the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) issues a number of contracts that collect, study and evaluate data on Federal programs as well as the performance and experiences of students, families, educators and communities related to education at all levels including early childhood, K-12, post-secondary and

workforce. The following are examples of some of the contracts that were cancelled and that collect, analyze and share data that States, districts, schools and parents rely upon. Some of the contracts were congressionally mandated and were set to produce final reports this year. Finally, these contracts provide the in-the-weeds data gathering and management that we rely on to understand the state of local, State, national and international education, a key component of America's ability to compete globally, and to help ensure a thriving economy for all here at home.

Examples of Cancelled Contracts

Supporting IES in Collecting Data for International Comparison

Multiple studies help countries around the world understand how students and adults are performing educationally relative to each other. Several of these studies are conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This contract assisted IES with collecting nationally representative data on U.S. populations for the purposes of contributing to these international studies.

Education at a Glance is the definitive, very detailed guide to the state of education around the world, published annually by OECD. The work done under this contract provided the data that the U.S. submits for this report. It supported America's interest in understanding how our country's education system is competing with the rest of the world.

Contract Number: 91990023D0006/91990024F0301

Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) consolidated several programs to give States and districts greater flexibility in how they use Federal funds. The resulting Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program (Title IV, Part A) tries to maintain the different purposes of the original programs by prioritizing and requiring spending in three broad areas: 1) providing students with a well-rounded education, 2) ensuring a positive school environment, and 3) improving and personalizing learning through technology.

This evaluation — a six-year contract from 2019-2025, with a report due later this year — was collecting data from all States and a nationally representative sample of districts to examine how districts are taking advantage of these new flexibilities, how districts spent across the emphasized content areas, to what extent funding decisions and patterns of spending aligned with Congress's intent to target funds to communities and students with the greatest needs and the key benefits and challenges that arose from this funding flexibility.

Evaluation of Teacher Residency Programs

Teacher residency programs combine coursework with on-the-job training in schools under the guidance of experienced mentors. Typically, graduates of these programs are placed in hard-to-staff positions, most often in the same low-income, lower-performing or rural districts where they trained.

These programs are rapidly increasing in popularity, as a potential way to address persistent inequities in student access to high-quality teachers. ESSA allows States and districts to use Title II funds to support teacher residency programs. However, very little research has been done about the specific strategies used by these programs, and there has been no rigorous study done to prove that they are more successful than traditional methods of teacher training.

This contract was to conduct the first large-scale, in-depth description of *all* current teacher residency programs in the U.S., focusing on the strategies used to improve the effectiveness and retention of teachers from these programs. It would have allowed local, State and Federal policymakers to determine whether a teacher residency program is right for their area and which practices to implement.

This contract had been in place since 2019 and was expected to go through 2026, with the first report due later in 2025.

National Teacher and Principal Survey

The National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) is a series of questionnaires that provide descriptive data on educators' experiences at public and private schools in the U.S. The survey results provide local, State and national policymakers with useful statistics about the condition of education across the country. NTPS results can act as a monitoring system to track trends and conditions related to teacher preparation, supply and demand of the educator workforce, workplace conditions, educator professional learning and teacher and principal salaries. States and localities use this data to benchmark their situation (including their compensation systems) with those across the country.

This contract developed, designed and validated the appropriate statistical sampling, collection operations and statistical analysis for valid and accurate measures. Methodological advances made under this contract included questionnaire development, which reduces the burden on schools to respond to the survey, and new sampling methods to maintain estimates of new teachers with a reduced and less expensive sample.

Evaluating Programs and Strategies to Improve Postsecondary Education Access and Success: A Study of Strategies to Promote Access to Dual Enrollment Design and Feasibility

This contract was funding two studies related to postsecondary education.

Study 1 was focused on identifying and developing strategies to increase high school students' access to and success in dual enrollment courses, which allow students to earn college credits while still in high school. Researchers were also designing a study to test the impact of dual enrollment strategies so that schools and districts could be sure the strategies work before investing time and resources into them.

Study 2 (GEAR UP Scholarships) was conducting the Congressionally mandated evaluation examining States that received Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grants, after changes were made to the program through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. This discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year or seven-year grants to States and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

The study was assessing the extent to which States administered scholarships in ways aligned with the law's goals and the challenges those grantees faced in carrying out this component of the program.

Contract ID: 91990022A0016/91990022F0377

Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives

Title I and Title II-A programs of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) promote equal access to high-quality schooling by providing funds to schools in order to better serve low-income students and improve teacher and principal quality. These two programs account for three-quarters of ESEA funding, and some aspects of this funding shifted with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015. ESSA shifted authority over many education policies from ED to States and localities — how these entities responded to this increased control will determine if ESSA was successful in improving educational outcomes.

This study was examining Title I and Title II-A implementation at three key points: 2013-2014, under the prior version of ESEA; 2017-2018, when States were transitioning to fully implementing ESSA; and 2021-2022, when ESSA implementation was expected to

be further along. The contract had already produced multiple reports, including a supplemental volume created to report on how Title I and Title II-A funds were used during the pandemic. More data analysis and reporting was expected.

Contract Number: 91990021D0002/91990022F0051

What Works Clearinghouse Supporting and Analyzing Grantee Evaluations (WWC-SAGE)

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is an ED initiative that reviews, reports and synthesizes findings from publicly available research to identify “what works” to improve student outcomes. The WWC-SAGE contract provided technical assistance to evaluators of projects funded through evidence-building grant programs, such as the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program. The WWC maintains rigorous technical standards, and SAGE contractors helped grantees meet those standards without compromising their process and expertise. SAGE supported evaluation of grantees’ impact and implementation, to ensure that we learned which investments are working. Without quality evaluations, we risk delivering ineffective and wasteful interventions and failing to identify what works and should be scaled.

Contract Number: 91990023D0002/91990025F0014

Design and Conduct of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2022-23

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) program provides important information about children's knowledge, skills and development from birth through elementary school. For more than 20 years, the ECLS program has helped educators, families, researchers and policymakers improve children's educational experiences.

This contract was providing detailed, comprehensive data to describe and better understand children’s early learning and development, transitions into kindergarten and beyond, progress through the elementary grades and how children’s early experiences relate to their later development, learning and school experiences.

Contract Number: 91990019C0002

Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR)

Washington, D.C. houses the only federally funded private school voucher program in the country, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP). Since its reinstatement in 2015, there have been two rigorous evaluations done. This third evaluation, which is Congressionally mandated, was gathering detailed information that was not included in the first two studies, in order to learn more about how the OSP is implemented and to identify areas where support for families could be improved. The evaluation was also seeking to assess OSP participants’ academic progress.

Contract Number: 91990019C0004

Common Education Data Standards Support Services

The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) is an education data management initiative whose purpose is to streamline the understanding of data within and across P20W (preschool to age 20 and the workforce) institutions and sectors.

CEDS is actively being implemented in more than half the States and is a foundational tool they have come to rely on.

This contract provided support to States, districts, postsecondary institutions, non-profits, foundations and federal agencies as they implemented CEDS. It included facilitation of an open-source community where standards-based resources are developed by the community, including an open-source data warehouse, operational data store and reporting tools built on the standard. This community represents over 4,500 active stakeholders, millions of lines of open-source code, more than 1,000 data system mappings and over 1,200 community shared-use cases.

Contract Number: 91990023D0008/91990024F0367

Federal Financial Aid Information and Delivery Strategies

Two studies were being done under this contract. Both were considered low-cost, quick-turnaround evaluations.

Study 1 was a random assignment evaluation of over 100,000 students in 31 colleges, testing whether requiring annual loan counseling (instead of simply when students first take out a Federal student loan) helps students borrow enough to stay in school to completion without borrowing more than they will be able to repay. This study was being done in response to a presidential directive to help Federal student loan borrowers manage and understand their debt.

Study 2 was related to the Second Chance Pell program, which offers prison education programs. The study was based on already-completed surveys and interviews with 129 colleges who offered Pell-eligible prison education programs and was meant to help ED roll out informed policies that can help more colleges provide these programs, improving students' post-release labor market outcomes and reducing recidivism.

Contract Number: 91990019D0003/91990020F0369

Post-High School Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) seeks to address challenges faced by students with disabilities by requiring schools to provide the supports students need to complete high school and pursue postsecondary education and work, among many other things.

This longitudinal study had been going on for 15 years (since 2010) to provide an ongoing national picture of students' paths through high school and beyond and measure the progress youth with an individualized education plan (IEP) have made since the most recent reauthorization of IDEA in 2004. The study was following a cohort of youth with disabilities as they transition from high school into postsecondary education and employment.

The study was also providing the first direct comparisons of the in-school experiences and outcomes of high-school aged youth with and without an IEP. This 16-year study was expected to be completed in 2026.

Contract Number: ED-IES-15-C-0046

Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

ESSA consolidated several programs to give States and districts greater flexibility in how they use Federal funds. The resulting Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program (Title IV, Part A) tries to maintain the different purposes of the original programs by prioritizing and requiring spending in three broad areas: 1) providing students with a well-rounded education, 2) ensuring a positive school environment, and 3) improving and personalizing learning through technology.

This evaluation — a six-year contract from 2019-2025, with a report due later this year — was collecting data from all States and a nationally representative sample of districts to examine how districts are taking advantage of these new flexibilities, how districts spent across the emphasized content areas, to what extent funding decisions and patterns of spending aligned with Congress's intent to target funds to communities and students with the greatest needs and the key benefits and challenges that arose from this funding flexibility.

Contract Number: ED-PEP-16-A-0003/91990019F0334

International Activities Research, Evaluation, and Quality Control Support

Multiple studies help countries around the world understand how students and adults are performing educationally relative to each other. These international studies include the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS), and the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies.

This contract supported the release of data and results from these studies in the U.S. It ensured that the public had access to data and information on U.S. student performance in critical areas — such as math, reading, computer literacy and adult

literacy — that are key to educational and career success. It also helped Americans understand how our country is competing with other countries' education systems.

Contract Number: 91990023D0005/91990024F0348

Support for Household Surveys (NHES)

The National Household Education Survey (NHES) is the flagship household survey of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). It collects nationally representative, descriptive data on the educational activities of children and families in the U.S. These surveys are conducted every three-to-four years and cover various topics. Right now, the NHES is examining early childhood care and education, family involvement in schools and homeschooling. This survey provides key information, including “soft” data like optics, reasons and experiences related to parental choices in education. It is helping to understand, for instance, not only *how many* students are being homeschooled but *why* their parents are making that choice for them.

This contract helped NCES provide accurate and reliable statistics.

Contract Number: ED-IES-12-D-0002/91990021F0343

School Survey on Crime and Safety

The School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) is the primary source of school-level data on crime and safety for NCES. The SSOCS is a nationally representative cross-sectional survey of teachers and principals in approximately 4,800 public elementary and secondary schools. The SSOCS is the only national measure we have of the safety of U.S. schools. This survey measures important topics like mental health, use of school resource officers, pandemic planning, students' sense of safety and the prevalence of crime in schools.

This contract supported the collection of this critical data and at the time of cancellation was just days away from supporting the release of this data to the public

Contract Number: 91990022C0048

Impact Evaluation to Inform the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program intends to provide out-of-school learning opportunities by funding a broad range of academic enrichment activities in community learning centers, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is the only Federal funding source dedicated exclusively to afterschool programs and has been in place since the 1994 ESEA passed.

However, more research is needed to understand recent program activities and to get a grasp on which approaches improve student outcomes. This impact evaluation was

producing a national picture of funded program activities and improvement efforts and also implementing an evaluation of one element of these programs (a continuous quality improvement system). The contractor was responsible for developing the study, recruiting approximately 100 21st CCLCs to participate, assigning them to the experiment group or the control group, implementing the intervention and collecting data.

Contract Number: 91990019C0056

Impact Evaluation to Inform the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program

ESSA established the Teacher and School Leader Incentive (TSL) program, which aims to help specific districts improve their human resources systems — making and implementing educator preparation, recruiting, hiring, making placement decisions, teacher retention, dismissal, compensation, professional development and tenure and promotion decisions. TSL also encourages districts to implement performance-based pay.

To better understand this program and its effectiveness, Congress mandated this evaluation. It was examining how the first set of TSL grantees used their funds and was measuring the effects of one key use of TSL funds: identifying, training and supporting one or more teachers in a school to be a “teacher leader.”

This contract was issued in 2018 and was expected to continue through October 2025, with a final report due later this year.

Contract Number: 91990018C0044

Study of Perkins V Accountability Changes: Defining Career and Technical Education Concentrators

To help ensure that Federal support for career and technical education (CTE) is paying off, Congress mandates States to report on a core group of students, referred to as CTE “concentrators.” CTE educators are responsible for improving these students’ key skills and workforce outcomes. The most recent reauthorization of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act established an official definition of a CTE concentrator, to increase consistency and improve comparability among State reporting. However, changing the definition could also affect who States consider their programs responsible for.

This study was examining the implications of changing this definition, to help policymakers better understand how the law is affecting students and workplaces throughout the country and to inform potential changes to the definition in the next reauthorization.

Contract Number: 91990024D0012/91990024F0394

Impact Study of Strategies to Accelerate Math Learning: Phase IV Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic led to substantial unfinished learning in math and a debate about how best to address it. Traditionally, policymakers and educators have advocated a "broad foundation skill building" approach, which systematically reteaches all below-grade content where there are knowledge gaps. "Just-in-time skill building" has received attention more recently, which reteaches only below-grade content deemed most essential to understanding the current grade-level topic. There is limited evidence on which approach is most effective for which students and in which contexts.

This evaluation was comparing the effectiveness of these two catch-up strategies when delivered in elementary schools. Participating students in these schools were assigned by lottery to use either "just-in-time" or "broad foundation" skill-building for two school years (2024-25 and 2025-26). Data collection was set to include a teacher survey, product data to describe student engagement and implementation and assessment data from both the products' diagnostics and State assessments, to examine the effect of the catch-up strategies on students' achievement.

Contract Number: 91990021D0001/91990025F0023

Annual Reports and Information Staff Program (ARIS)

ARIS produces reports every year that summarize data from over 25 surveys administered by NCES and other government agencies. This group produces the Congressionally mandated Condition of Education, as well as the Digest of Education Statistics and Projections of Education Statistics. These reports support evidence-based policymaking at the national level and provide access to education statistics used by researchers, policy analysts, media and the public.

This contract was providing support for the production and dissemination of these critical reports and web products to ensure that parents, educators and policymakers would have easy-to-access information.

Contract Number: 91990023D0042/91990024F0347

Technical Assistance for Education Innovation and Research Program Grantees

The EIR Program provides funding to create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale entrepreneurial, evidence-based, field-initiated innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students — and then to rigorously evaluate these innovations. The EIR program, established by Congress in ESEA, is designed to generate and validate solutions to persistent educational challenges and to support the expansion of effective solutions to serve substantially larger numbers of students.

This contract provided technical assistance to the EIR grantees on how to effectively evaluate their programs, to ensure that we learn whether the investments in education

interventions are working. Without quality evaluations, we risk delivering ineffective and wasteful interventions and failing to identify what works and should be scaled. This contract has been renewed since 2019 because it provides a valuable service to ED.

Contract Number: 91990020A0028/91990022F0303, 91990020A0028/91990021F0304 and ED-ESE-15-A-0005/91990020F0305

Assisting Students Struggling with Behavior in Grades K-12

The WWC PESTO Task Order 1 and 4 contracts identify evidence-based effective practices and deliver actionable recommendations and resources to empower teachers to improve elementary student behavior and literacy.

Contract Number: 91990021A0003/91990021F0370

Statistical Standards and Data Confidentiality Staff (SSDCS) Support

NCES is required by law to develop and enforce standards designed to protect individually identifiable information of its respondents. This requirement includes protecting the information during the collection, analysis, reporting and publication of the data.

This contract provided technical assistance and expert advice to support NCES in matters of statistical standards, confidentiality and data security. Under this contract, NCES received support for technical reviews of publications and data files (including data and publications for the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the Digest of Education Statistics, and the Condition of Education), the revision of statistical standards and the review of all products that utilize restricted-use data to ensure that Federal data confidentiality requirements are met.

The contract helped ensure that the public receives accurate and objective data and reports about schools, students and the status of education in the U.S. It also helped ensure that any conclusions made in these publications were evidence-based and free from political influence.

These products help people make decisions about where to live, where to send their children to school, and options for vocational training and college. These products also help businesses understand the skills of the U.S. workforce and it is critical that the information provided in these products is reliable.

Contract Number: GS-00F-428GA/91990022F0006

Teaching and Learning International Survey Study 2024

The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) is the world's largest international survey about teachers and school leaders. Since 2008, this survey has gathered information from teachers and school leaders about working conditions and

learning environments in over 60 education systems. The survey's results are used by policymakers to improve teaching and learning around the world. It is conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

This contract was intended for the design, data collection administration, documentation and reporting for the TALIS survey. Without high-quality implementation of TALIS, it is much harder for policymakers to understand how the working experiences of principals and teachers in their communities compare to their peers in other countries.

Contract Number: 91990021C0052

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Statistical Policy Directive 15 (SPD-15) Implementation Support

On March 28, 2024, OMB finalized revisions to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15). The revisions to SPD 15 require the use of one combined question for race and ethnicity and encourage respondents to select as many options as apply to how they identify.

This contract was providing communications, research and coordination-related support to NCES related to SPD 15, in order to ensure that all data gathering was consistent with the order. This contract was helping NCES ease the burden on schools, districts and States in implementing this change.

Contract Number: 91990023D0005/91990025F0009

English Learner Status Study

English Learner (EL) status governs the instructional settings, language supports and educational opportunities available to students. Since former ELs are no longer entitled to language supports, exiting EL status too soon can leave these students linguistically unprepared for success in general education settings. However, maintaining EL status for too long can compromise students' opportunities to learn academic content among their peers. The decision is complicated by lack of universal agreement on a definition for English proficiency and wide variation in entrance and exit criteria.

To reduce variability in EL entry and exit procedures within States, the 2015 reauthorization of Title III of ESSA required States to develop standardized procedures.

This study was evaluating the implementation and impact of standardized statewide entrance and exit policies on English learners' instructional opportunities, experiences, achievement and attainment.

An initial report was expected in 2025.

Contract Number: 91990021D0004/91990022F0057

Longitudinal Surveys Branch: Postsecondary Publications

This contract was responsible for producing short reports and data tables to inform the public about the state of postsecondary education – including how military students use veterans' benefits to support their undergraduate and graduate education, educational preparation for teachers in America's schools and characteristics and educational experiences of a recent cohort of college students.

Contract Number: 91990023D0005/91990024F0330

Evidence-Based Math and Science Strategies Practice Guide (Grades 3-8)

This contract prepared publications, informed by a systematic review of evidence on the impacts of instructional practices and routines that promote student learning and engagement in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in grades 3-8.

Contract Number: 91990021A0004/91990023F0325

Elementary/Secondary Administrative Data Support

The Common Core of Data (CCD) is the ED's primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the U.S. CCD is a comprehensive, annual, national database of all public schools and school districts. It provides the official count of students, teachers, finances, expenditures, revenues, staffing, schools, districts and school types and is the basis of sampling for any nationally representative survey.

The Administrative Data Division (ADD) at NCES collects the data for CCD, among many other responsibilities. This contract provided support to ADD in order to ensure data quality, improve statistical methodology and increase production efficiency of data files and reports.

Without this contract, the hard data and statistics used to create reliable samples for studying American education could be compromised.

Contract Number: 91990020A0014/91990022F0350

National Training and Education Workforce Survey

The National Training, Education, and Workforce Survey (NTEWS) is a nationally representative survey of individuals ages 16 through 75. This survey collects information on educational enrollment and attainment, non-degree credential types (vocational certificates, occupational licenses and industry-recognized certifications), work experience programs such as apprenticeships and internships, employment characteristics and demographic characteristics. Data from this survey provides information on the prevalence of work-related credentials and the relationship between these credentials and employment outcomes, with a particular focus on the Skilled

Technical Workforce, the segment of the U.S. workforce that is highly skilled in science and engineering fields but does not have a bachelor's degree or higher.

NCES partners with the National Science Foundation for the NTEWS survey, which is the only data source for measuring work-related licenses and certifications, including sub-baccalaureate credentials. These data enable us to assess the capabilities of our skilled technical labor force and the preparation of our workforce to compete globally.

This contract supported NCES and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) to conduct the 2024 NTEWS.

Contract Number: 91990020A0014/91990023F0303

Evaluation of Title I Pilots That Provide Flexibility Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

This study was designed to meet Congressionally mandated reporting requirements for the Innovative Assessment and Accountability Demonstration Authority (IADA) program as specified in ESEA. IADA exempts authorized States from certain Federal testing requirements so they can design and pilot innovative assessments that provide more timely data to measure students' progress, tailor classroom instruction and hold schools accountable for students' academic learning. The study was examining State progress toward meeting program objectives, describing whether IADA is facilitating innovation in assessment as intended and presenting key players' perceptions on implementation challenges and successes.

Contract Number: 91990019C0059

What Works Clearinghouse Preschool-to-Postsecondary Evidence Synthesis Task Orders

WWC publishes practice guides, which present recommendations for educators to address challenges in their classrooms and schools. They are based on reviews of research, the experiences of practitioners, and the expert opinions of a panel of nationally recognized experts. WWC contracted with experts to provide these practice guides on topics of national importance.

This contract was developing a practice guide on promoting student attendance in kindergarten through grade 12.

Contract Number: 91990021A0022/91990024F0342

WWC Practice Guide on College and Career Readiness

WWC publishes practice guides, which present recommendations for educators to address challenges in their classrooms and schools. They are based on reviews of research, the experiences of practitioners, and the expert opinions of a panel of

nationally recognized experts. WWC contracted with experts to provide these practice guides on topics of national importance.

This contract was developing a practice guide on improving students' readiness for college and careers.

Contract Number: 91990021A0022/91990022F0342

WWC Tools, Online Assistance, Standards, and Training (TOAST)

This contract was supporting WWC infrastructure by setting the WWC standards for reviewing studies, training WWC reviewers, developing and maintaining tools used to review and synthesize evidence for WWC practice guides and maintaining the WWC website.

Contract Number: 91990023A0001/91990023F0308

WWC Technical Assistance for Studies of Effectiveness

The Postsecondary Student Success Grant (PSSG) Program is intended to equitably improve postsecondary student outcomes, including retention, upward transfer and completions of value, by leveraging data and implementing, scaling and rigorously evaluating evidence-based activities to support data-driven decisions and actions that lead to credentials that support economic success and further education. Eligible grantees are Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs).

This contract provided technical assistance to the external evaluators of the projects funded by a PSSG, as required by the Performance Work Statement. It also provided technical assistance to grantees as they compiled evidence on promising strategies to improve college retention, credit accumulation and course completion.

Contract Number: 91990023D0031/91990024F0304

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): How do SAP Requirements and Procedures Vary by Institution?

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is the process a school uses to determine if a student is meeting all of his or her educational requirements and is on target to graduate on time with a degree or certificate. This is relevant to students' eligibility for continued financial aid. This process varies across schools but must include a qualitative standard (like GPA), a quantitative standard (like credit hours completed) and a maximum timeframe standard (like how much more time a student should require to finish school).

Currently there is no nationwide information about how colleges use the flexibility in Federal SAP regulations to make their requirements more stringent or lenient, or how

those decisions ultimately affect students' aid eligibility and college persistence outcomes.

This contract was evaluating how different SAP requirements affect college students' ability to maintain eligibility for Federal financial aid.

Contract Number: 91990022A0017/91990024F0369

Third Follow-Up of the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009

The High School Longitudinal Study (HSL:09) is a nationally representative, longitudinal study of 9th graders who have been tracked through their secondary and postsecondary years, with an emphasis on understanding students' trajectories from the beginning of high school into postsecondary education, the workforce and beyond. What students decide to pursue when, why and how are crucial questions for HSL:09, especially in regard to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) courses, majors and careers.

The follow-up study planned to use administrative data with a short survey to understand further education outcomes of the original entrants to the study.

Contract Number: 91990023D0042/91990024F0321

2019-2020 and 2023-24 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study and Postsecondary Longitudinal Studies

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is conducted every four years. It uses survey and administrative data from about 162,000 students enrolled in postsecondary education across all types of institutions to provide nationally- and State-representative estimates of how students pay for college and serves as the base year for longitudinal follow-ups with first time college students.

These contracts were fulfilling a requirement of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 by conducting a series of studies, based largely on administrative data collections and some student interviews, in order to describe how students and their families finance postsecondary education and students' persistence, attainment and workforce outcomes.

Contract Numbers: 91990018C0039, 91990022C0017

The High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 2022

The High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study (HS&B:22, formerly HS&B:20, but delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic) is the sixth in a series of complex longitudinal studies following a nationally-representative sample of ninth grade students from the start of high school in the fall of 2022 to the spring of 2026 when most will be in twelfth

grade, and beyond into postsecondary education and the workforce, to understand how the education experience impacts student outcomes.

Contract Number: GS00Q14OADU217/91990018F0018

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study & International Computer Information Literacy Study

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) provides reliable and timely trend data on the mathematics and science achievement of U.S. students compared to that of students in other countries. TIMSS data have been collected from students at grades 4 and 8 every four years since 1995, with the U.S. participating in every administration of TIMSS. The International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) is an international assessment of 8th-grade students' capacities to use technology productively for a range of different purposes.

The studies provide educators and policymakers with data necessary to understand how students perform compared to their peers worldwide and to learn from other countries how to improve education nationally.

This contract was intended to go through 2030 to help implement and report these studies.

Contract Number: GS00Q14OADU217/91990021F0001

2022 & 2025 Crime and Safety Surveys Program

The Crime and Safety Surveys Program is composed of two data collections: the School Survey on Crime & Safety (SSOCS) and the School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The SSOCS reports on crime and safety at school from the perspective of principals, while the SCS reports on crime and safety at school from the perspective of students. NCES maintains over 30 years of crime and safety survey data and publications, offering the public invaluable information about crime and safety in schools in the U.S.

This contract provided support to NCES to provide special analyses as requested by policymakers and provide survey information and data to a wide range of individuals.

Contract Number: 91990020A0017/91990023F0316

School Courses for the Exchange of Data (SCED) Support

The School Courses for the Exchange of Data (SCED) is a voluntary, common classification system for elementary and secondary school courses. This classification system was developed to meet the need for common, widely understood, standardized course codes that can be used to compare course information, maintain data about students' coursework and efficiently exchange course-taking records.

The contract was providing course coding expertise and knowledge to improve the classification system and assist SCED users.

Contract Number: 91990021F0031

Evaluating Implementation of the 2022-2027 Cycle of the Regional Educational Laboratories

This study was assessing the extent to which the 10 Congressionally-mandated, federally funded 2022-2028 RELs align with ongoing and new Federal objectives for the program. This contract was conducting an independent evaluation of each of the RELs and reporting the results to Congress.

Contract Number: 91990023D0050/91990024F0386

First International Studies Consolidated National Contract

Multiple studies help countries around the world understand how students and adults are performing educationally relative to each other. These international studies include PISA, PIRLS and PIAAC. PIRLS is an international assessment that focuses on the reading knowledge and skills of fourth-graders. PISA is an international assessment of 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics and science literacy, as well as, occasionally, other subjects (e.g., financial literacy; collaborative problem solving). PIAAC is an international household study, which measures adults' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, literacy components and problem-solving in technology-rich environments.

This contract supported NCES's work collaborating with the other international organizations, partners and statistical organizations who make these studies happen.

Contract Number: GS00Q14OADU223/91990019F0025