Chicago Alliance For Equity in Computer Science

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Welcome to the NNERPP Yearbook! Similar to the good old high school yearbooks from way-back-when (or maybe fairly recently for some of you!), the purpose of the NNERPP Yearbook is to record and commemorate this past year and highlight members of our community – in our case the NNERPP community.

The NNERPP Yearbook is our new iteration of what started out as the “NNERPP Year in Review” report in 2017, which also functioned to capture the accomplishments of a given calendar year. However, the new yearbook format allows us to be more concise and more focused on what truly matters: Our community and the impact each RPP in the network has been working towards this year in order to improve education.

NNERPP would not be what it is today – or even exist, for that matter – if it wasn’t for our wonderful community: our member RPPs, who are in turn made up of various different organizations, who are in turn made up of people – some of the most passionate and wise people there are in the education space!

In this document, we seek to showcase the work of this very special community: The work we have undertaken together, in gatherings, workshops, and publications, and the work each individual partnership has engaged in throughout 2022. Here, we are specifically highlighting stories of impact our partnerships chose to share for this year, getting at the question: What has changed as a result of the RPP this year (2022)?

To that end, we begin with an overview of NNERPP and our history, continue with highlights from the NNERPP community in action this year and fun facts about the NNERPP community, and then dive into each partnership’s story of impact for 2022, showcasing the many ways in which RPPs can catalyze change.

We hope you enjoy learning more about the NNERPP community in this yearbook! If you have comments or questions about the NNERPP Yearbook, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.

Finally, we would like to share a note of gratitude for our family of funders, whose continuing financial support and thought partnership makes NNERPP possible: The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, William T. Grant Foundation, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and The Wallace Foundation. We are also very grateful to the Kinder Institute for Urban Research and the Houston Education Research Consortium for providing critical operational support for NNERPP.

Happy reading!

PAULA ARCE-TRIGATTI
Director | National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships

The National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships (NNERPP) is a professional learning organization for research-practice partnerships (RPPs) in education. Housed at the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University, NNERPP was launched in 2016, guided by its mission to develop, support, and connect education RPPs in order to improve the relationship between education research, policy, and practice. NNERPP’s activities are organized around four key objectives aimed at supporting its members and the larger RPP field: (i) develop and share promising partnership strategies; (ii) facilitate cross-partnership collaborations; (iii) synthesize and share RPP-produced knowledge; (iv) advance policies and systems reforms.
CREDITS

We’d like to acknowledge the excellent work of Nina Spitzley, NNERPP Marketing Specialist, on this report, and give a special thanks for her indispensable contributions to the team. We’d also like to acknowledge and thank all of our members for their tremendous help in bringing together the details of their work.

Design: O’Neill Design Co.

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Have a question about this yearbook? Reach out to us here!

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As NNERPP has grown and evolved over the last seven years, our mission has evolved as well. We have spent time on a draft for a new mission, which we first revealed at the NNERPP Annual Forum this year. While not final yet, we share this tentative new mission here as well.

NNERPP is a professional learning community that connects its members and the education field with resources and supports to strengthen research-practice partnerships so that they may successfully pursue their goals.

There are several keywords here that mean a lot to us and we hope resonate with our community as well. In particular:

**We conceptualize our current work across four major areas of effort, which include:**

**Curate**

We curate knowledge for our members and the RPP field at large.

For example: Newsletter, Knowledge Clearinghouse, Year in Reviews, Twitter, NNERPP website

**Teach**

We teach about RPPs by offering training and professional development opportunities.

For example: Annual Forum, workshops, monthly webinars, tool development, university course

**Lead**

We provide thought leadership to the emerging field of RPPs.

For example: NNERPP Extra, partnership with the National Center for Research in Policy and Practice (NCRPP)

**Broker**

We broker connections between partnerships, organizations, people, roles, and ideas in the RPP and education fields.

For example: Subnetworks, matchmaking services, joint conference sessions

Be on the lookout for opportunities in the near future to help shape this mission together with us.
Numerous singular efforts by leaders from several partnerships to convene regularly in order to share best practices and learn from each other take place.

### BI-WEEKLY NNERPP NEWSLETTERS LAUNCHED
Published every two weeks, the NNERPP Newsletter shares the research that is being produced by NNERPP members, conference presentations by NNERPP members and friends, relevant literature in the RPP and broader education field, NNERPP announcements and webinars, and new funding and job opportunities.

### FIRST NNERPP-BRANDED PRODUCTS PRODUCED
1. A guide for state education agencies (SEAs) to assess their potential to successfully engage in a research-practice partnership
2. A guide for SEA leaders about launching research-practice partnerships

### FIRST ISSUE OF NNERPP EXTRA PUBLISHED
NNERPP’s quarterly magazine NNERPP Extra aims to deliver key insights from the intersection of education research, policy, and practice by sharing deep and reflective articles around pressing issues in education tackled by RPPs and high-priority questions that consider how to engage in RPP work more effectively.

### FIRST NNERPP LISTENING TOUR LAUNCHED
This virtual journey to each member’s home base helps build deeper connections with each partnership in NNERPP.

### FIRST NNERPP BRANDED SUBNETWORKS LAUNCHED
NNERPP Subnetworks are specialized learning communities for members organized by topic or role and provide space for targeted knowledge exchange and collaborative learning.

### NNERPP ANNUAL REPORTS LAUNCHED
The NNERPP Annual Report highlights the work of the network and its members for the calendar year, providing a sneak peek into the efforts of RPPs across the nation throughout the years.

### NNERPP KNOWLEDGE CLEARINGHOUSE LAUNCHED
This curated collection of the most relevant and up-to-date resources from across the web is for those working in RPPs, teaching about RPPs, and learning about RPPs.

### MONTHLY VIRTUAL BROWN BAGS LAUNCHED
Monthly one-hour virtual brown bags provide space for NNERPP members to present past and current research projects, discuss specific partnership challenges, and workshop promising solutions. Additionally, invited external speakers share relevant research.

### SEVENTH ANNUAL FORUM VIRTUAL
59 RPPs
Close to 500 participants

### VIRTUAL BROWN BAGS REIMAGINED
The monthly NNERPP Virtual Brown Bags turn into two regularly occurring series: A workshop series that takes on RPP challenges and the design of possible solutions; and the NNERPP member spotlight series, where we get to know different NNERPP members better.
NNERPP EXTRA

In addition to NNERPP staff, we were thrilled to have the following wonderful people or author contribute to NNERPP Extra articles this year: Jasahn Larsosa from Focus; HOPE: Shauna Dunn from the Houston Education Research Consortium; Callie Wamble Edwards from the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University; Chelsea Farley from the Research Alliance for New York City Schools; Jessica Holter from the Tennessee Education Research Alliance and Nashville PEER; Meghan McCormick from MDRC; Rachel Ruggirello from the Institute for School Partnership at Washington University in St. Louis; Stacey Sexton from RPPerSC; Sara Slaughter from ERA New Orleans; Laura Wentworth from California Education Partners; Hilda Borke from the Stanford-San Francisco Unified School District Partnership; Sarah Lenhoff from the Detroit Partnership for Education Equity & Research; David Naff from the Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium; Emily Ozzer from the University of California, Berkeley; Nicole Patton Terry from The Village at PCRR; Maggie Reeves from the Georgia Policy Labs; Erica Van Steenis from the Orange County Educational Advancement Network; Isela Peña, Rodolfo Rincones, and Holly Fields from the Paso Del Norte Partnership for Education Research; Beth Vaade and Bri Monahan from the Madison Education Partnership; and David Hersh from Proving Ground.

Together, we examined the following topics: Facilitating racial justice and healing through RPPs; project management in RPPs; how RPPs distinguish among communication, dissemination, and engagement; how early career academic scholars wishing to engage in RPP work can navigate the tension between the two goals of supporting early stage RPP work and also pursuing tenure; how to address barriers to improvement work; how RPPs can design partnership learning opportunities; how districts perceive improvement supports; and brokers in RPPs and how the RPP Brokers Handbook can help foreground this role.

Additionally, we heard about research on: The overrepresentation of African American students in special education services and suspensions in San Francisco; and how to center African American youth as knowledge generators to address stress issues; supporting parent involvement in at-home informal STEM learning in Houston; kindergarten outreach, application, and enrollment in New York City; teacher retention and teacher evaluation in Richmond, VA, as well as the states of Michigan, Tennessee, and Wisconsin; and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools in El Paso, TX, and Richmond, VA.

MONTHLY WEBINARS

In our Virtual Brown Bags this year, we heard from the Carolina Youth Coalition Research-Practice Partnership about small RPP capacity building and sustainability and examined how to best support matchmaking between Rs and Ps to engage in collaborative education research in a brown bag co-hosted by WestEd and NNERPP. In our newly introduced NNERPP Member Spotlights, participants got to know the Orange County Educational Advancement Network (OCEAN) better as they learned about OCEAN’s themes and lessons learned from creating a university RPP.

BROKERS WORKSHOP

Nine early-career brokers from the NNERPP community participated in a year-long pilot training program for brokers in RPPs, coached by Paula Arce-Trigatti, Carrie Conway, David Stevens, and Laura Wentworth. Participants met with their designated RPP broker coach three times for personalized learning sessions, attended two 2-day workshops (one in-person, one virtual), and reviewed and worked on materials examining their RPP brokerage and the functioning of the RPP itself, with the goal of experiencing a transformational improvement in their ability to broker in their RPP setting.

COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH WORKSHOP

In response to a current lack of programs and pathways to support collaborative education research, NNERPP is taking part in a multi-organizational effort launched this year to build formal training opportunities as a means to broaden participation in this type of research. Following three virtual meetings open to anyone and co-hosted by CU Boulder School of Education and Stanford University Graduate School of Education, NNERPP hosted an in-person workshop in October open to anyone interested in coming together in person to start designing some potential ways forward. A wonderful group of over 20 participants, both from within the NNERPP community and beyond, gathered together in-person, while a parallel virtual version of the meeting also took place.
COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

NUMBER OF RPPS IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT PARTNER WITH THESE GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS

- College Students • 12
- Community Members • 18
- Community Organizations • 30
- Evaluators • 13
- K-12 Students • 15
- Multi Schools • 25
- Multi School Districts • 35
- Multi State Agencies • 17
- Multi Universities • 22
- One School • 2
- One School District • 16
- One State Agency • 7
- Other Research-Focused Orgs • 16
- Teachers • 18
- Other • 4

NUMBERS OF RPPS IN THE COMMUNITY THAT HAVE EXPERTISE IN THESE AREAS

- Quantitative Research Design • 44
- Qualitative Research Design • 42
- Mixed Methods • 42
- Evaluation • 38
- Culturally Responsive Approaches • 27
- Participatory Action Research • 17
- Design-Based Implementation Research • 16
- Improvement Science • 15
- Youth Participatory Action Research • 8
- Networked Improvement Communities • 6
- Quantitative Critical Race Theory • 4
- Other • 1

PERCENTAGES OF CORE PARTNERSHIP TEAM SIZES

- 18% Less Than 5 Members
- 29% 5–10 Team Members
- 40% 10–15 Team Members
- 13% 20+ Team Members

COMMUNITY

NEW MEMBERS THIS YEAR

- 2022: 59
- 2021: 54
- 2020: 48
- 2019: 43
- 2018: 30
- 2017: 21
- 2016: 16

MEMBERS OVER THE YEARS

- 27 States
- 45 Cities

STATES

CITIES

REPRESENTED IN THE NETWORK TODAY

COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE
It has been a great year for Research-Practice Partnerships (RPP) projects in the BYU-Public School Partnership (BYUPSP). In 2021, the McKay School of Education provided grant funding for RPPs and four projects were funded. In 2022, three new projects were funded. The new projects include Promoting High-Quality Supervision and Career Satisfaction Through the School Psychology Supervisor Leadership Program that involves all five partnership school districts; another, Integrating Students’ Instructional and Behavioral Needs During Literacy Instruction, in Provo City School District, and one in Alpine School District, Incorporating Principles of Research into Practice in a Middle School Reading Engagement Course. The BYU-PSP includes all the arts and sciences colleges at the university who prepare educators. The project focusing on reading engagement was awarded to faculty in English Education and there is interest from other colleges to apply for funding in 2023.

There was great synergy at our first RPP Summit in the fall of 2021 so we decided to do a Spring Showcase to allow teams to report on progress and network. This was well supported by both school district and university leaders. The three teams working on proposals for funding attended and all were funded. The new projects include Promoting High-Quality Supervision and Career Satisfaction Through the School Psychology Supervisor Leadership Program that involves all five partnership school districts; another, Integrating Students’ Instructional and Behavioral Needs During Literacy Instruction, in Provo City School District, and one in Alpine School District, Incorporating Principles of Research into Practice in a Middle School Reading Engagement Course. The BYU-PSP includes all the arts and sciences colleges at the university who prepare educators. The project focusing on reading engagement was awarded to faculty in English Education and there is interest from other colleges to apply for funding in 2023.

We recently held another successful RPP Summit with objectives to: 1) learn ways to create and maintain strong research-practice partnerships, 2) showcase current projects and departments that participate in preparing secondary teachers, 3) inspire ideas for potential partnerships, and 4) build positive, trusting relationships with others in the Partnership. Over 90% of the 40 participants surveyed – including superintendents – agreed that objectives were met and many listed significant positive impact on their work and collaborations.

One of the best outcomes of the Summit was when the principal investigator for the reading engagement RPP was approached by district-level people from multiple districts asking about meeting to collaborate around issues surrounding literacy in secondary schools. The hope was to meet to discuss a possible path forward in designing a partnership-wide approach to secondary literacy. The possibility of a secondary literacy endorsement for teachers approved by the state and offered through the Partnership’s Center for the Improvement of Teacher Education and Schooling (CITES), in addition to the other endorsements offered was discussed. As noted by one participant, “The desire to improve student outcomes remains at the forefront of all RPP initiatives. It’s inspiring to be part of a collective group of professionals trying to achieve this.” RPPs have a bright future within the BYU-PSP.
Digital Promise is a global nonprofit working to expand opportunity for every learner. We work with educators, researchers, technology leaders, and communities to design, investigate, and scale innovations that support learners, especially those who’ve been historically and systematically excluded.

Digital Promise has engaged with seven RPPs in 2022 to address pressing problems of practice through equity-centered co-design with district leaders, educators, students, parents, and community members. Our projects have advanced or developed solutions by: helping broad-access higher education institutions redesign gateway courses and leverage digital learning systems to improve outcomes for students who are low-income, Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color; applying and studying a “kinship-based” approach to Computer Sciences/Computational Thinking (CT) by situating introductory computing initiatives in the maker-oriented, problem-solving Appalachian heritage; partnering with eight schools districts from eight different states (from geographies as varied as Alaska to Mississippi) to develop and refine K-12 computing pathways that attract and retain a broader and more diverse range of children in computer science.

Drawing on Kinship: Rurally Sustaining CT Pathways
This National Science Foundation-funded research-practice partnership is applying and studying a “kinship-based” approach to Computer Sciences/Computational Thinking (CT) by situating introductory computing initiatives in the maker-oriented, problem-solving Appalachian heritage. We’re also collaborating with teachers in two Eastern Kentucky districts to create, implement, and refine CT lessons for their classrooms.

Districts Helping Districts: Scaling Inclusive CT Pathways
Districts Helping Districts is a National Science Foundation-funded research-practice partnership project in which Digital Promise will partner with eight schools districts from eight different states (from geographies as varied as Alaska to Mississippi) to develop and refine K-12 computing pathways that attract and retain a broader and more diverse range of children in computer science.

Integrating Science with Mathematics and Engineering: Linking Home and School Learning for All Young Learners
This National Science Foundation-funded early learning project brings together public preschool teachers, families from historically excluded communities, media and curriculum designers, and early childhood researchers to co-design a preschool STEM program that connects home and school learning and builds on children’s and families’ funds of knowledge.

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Education Northwest is engaged in a new research-practice partnership: What Keeps Noyce Scholars Going? Understanding Noyce Scholar Career Trajectories (UNSCT) is a Noyce Track 4 RPP between Pacific University, University of Oregon, University of Portland, and Education Northwest. UNSCT will study the effectiveness and retention of 100 Oregon Noyce scholar alumni entering STEM teaching between 2011 and 2022. UNSCT will build on recent NSF Noyce-funded research efforts to carry out a 5-year narrative inquiry research project to broaden and deepen our understanding of the complex factors influencing Noyce Scholar effectiveness and retention in high needs schools. Methods include a survey of approximately 100 Noyce scholar alumni, in-depth interviews with approximately 40 of these scholars, and engagement of a smaller subset of scholars in year-long narrative inquiry groups. By centering its work on the voices, experiences, and stories of effective Noyce scholars teaching in the field, UNSCT will provide authentic, richly layered, culturally responsive insight into “What Keeps Noyce Scholars Going” as teachers in high- needs schools.
A major initiative of our RPP at present is focused on the redesign and testing of open access materials co-designed by teachers and researchers in science. CU Boulder is the lead institution in the OpenSciEd High School Developers Consortium, which is developing courses in biology, chemistry, and physics aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards. As part of this effort, we are building from prior work in mathematics and science.

In these presentations, candidates showcased their use of improvement science methodology to conduct system investigations, pilot change strategies, and improve learning for multilingual students. The presentations were well received and used to shift instruction and assessment practices district-wide. In December 2022, candidates will once again share their work only this time they will highlight their work in conducting individual critical policy analysis with administrators, district leaders, and board members.

Meanwhile, our partnership with Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) was recognized at the state level. LEAD Director Jennifer Goldstein was awarded Professor of Education of the Year for 2022 by the Association of California School Administrators, in large part for her work spearheading and implementing Leadership Education for Anaheim Districts (LEAD). The AUHSD team also presented at the AERA conference in April, where we were the only paper in a session devoted to district partnerships to have actual district representation (both AUHSD Superintendent Michael Matsuda and Chief Academic Officer Manuel Colón co-presented with Jennifer). In addition, Maritza Lozano—who heads up the AESD cohort—co-presented with AUHSD graduate Claudia Ruiz on growing Latina leaders.

In May 2022, candidates presented their work to senior administrators and board members, who served as critical friends in this process.
Over the last several years, the Los Angeles Education Research Institute (LAERI) has collaborated with L.A. Unified on several projects related to middle school students’ math skills and course-taking. This suite of projects includes work on disparities in students’ math skills at the end of elementary school, access to advanced math courses in middle school, and the impact of taking an accelerated middle school math course on students’ middle and high school outcomes and college enrollment. Collectively, these projects have helped the district develop a deeper understanding of secondary math course-taking and have led to several changes in district policies and practices:

“LAERI’s middle school math research has caused us to re-evaluate some of our math placement policies. We have revised our high school placement policy for consistency for students who complete Algebra I in middle school or ninth grade. LAERI’s analyses highlighted that rising seventh graders who attended an elementary school in sixth grade were less likely to take accelerated seventh-grade math than peers with the same skills that attended a middle school. This was due, in part, to differences in the math placement policy for students who attended elementary versus middle schools in sixth grade. Thus, we are revising our placement policy so that all students follow the same eligibility requirements. Our collaboration with LAERI has provided a re-emphasis of family awareness for middle and high school pathways.” – L.A. Unified District Leader

In the coming year, LAERI plans to continue collaborating with district leaders to better understand math course-taking as well as college readiness in the early grades, college access and success, and the impact of different instructional practices and curricula.

In 2022, we undertook our first long-term, systematic investigation of the impacts of the Multnomah County Partnership for Education Research on one of our key stakeholders - practitioner-scholars. Each summer, cohorts of students pursuing an EdD in educational leadership support the six local Multnomah County school districts in conducting district-driven research as part of one of their courses. This specific partnership-devoted course provides hands-on, authentic learning experiences in which students answer school districts’ research questions while applying the research skills learned in prior academic courses. To investigate whether there were sustained effects from participating in our RPP this year we undertook a case study of 67 practitioner-scholars from eight different previous doctoral cohorts. The participants were fairly evenly balanced across the cohorts, with 30% (n = 20) participating in the RPP five to seven years prior to the study; 37% participating in the RPP two to four years prior; and 31% participating in the RPP one or two years prior. At the time of completing their district research projects, the majority of these practitioner-scholars were highly experienced education professionals (i.e., the mean was 17 years of experience in education). They held teaching or administrator positions of varying levels (i.e., elementary, middle or high school, or university), and varying positions: (a) classroom teacher, (b) instructional coach, (c) counselor, (d) assistant principal, (e) principal, (f) deputy superintendent, or (g) directors of offices in higher education or the central office). Some of the doctoral participants worked in districts involved in the RPP. The findings of this investigation largely validated the importance of involving doctoral students systematically and explicitly within RPPs. Results showed positive impacts of participating in the RPP in terms of building capacity, serving the local community, and enhancing researcher identity. Of these leaders, 98% described using research in their current professional role to address problems of practice, while 95% described engaging in collaborative inquiry in their current professional role. One practitioner-scholar summed it up well, stating: “This was as much of a “boots on the ground” experience as a classroom research project could get!” We are currently working on an article documenting these findings and encourage other RPPs to achieve sustained effects by strategically building the capacity of educational leaders through the work of the RPP in their own contexts, in line with Henrick et al’s (2016) framework of RPP effectiveness (i.e., there is capacity building of participating members).
Teacher recruitment and retention is one of the priorities of the partnership. This year, three teams working on topics related to this area shared the process and the findings of their collaboration. The first one explored educators’ well-being after returning to in-person instruction for the school year. The study surveyed teachers from other districts as well as OUSD to contextualize the findings. The second collaboration followed pairs of new teachers and their induction mentors throughout the year to trace how the new teachers make sense of equity as they proceed through their first year. The researcher observed and interviewed the teachers and mentors, leading to more than 300 hours of data. The third team was curious about the experiences of educators without credentials on their way to receiving them. Supporting this pipeline is an important mechanism for recruiting new teachers into the district. The team recruited 13 teachers to interview and learn about their experiences. The teacher social-emotional well-being project team presented at a large public webinar—the first of its kind for the partnership—in May. The collaborators shared not only the findings about how educators’ strong SEL competencies help them endure stressors but also the years-long process through which they fostered their relationship. The audience was captivated by the stories—they were excited about the partnership and many sought to engage further with it. The other two collaborations made sense of the findings in smaller settings. For both the induction mentoring and the uncredentialed teachers projects, the researchers shared themes and noticings emerging from their rich and extensive qualitative data. For the district-side partners, the findings both corroborated what they previously suspected and brought up novel issues hitherto unexplored. For example, in the uncredentialed teachers project, the interviews revealed that some highly educated immigrants entered the teaching profession through this channel because they could not make use of the professional degrees/licenses from their home countries in the U.S. These projects contributed to the immediate learning of the participants in the sessions. In the medium-term, OUSD teams will incorporate the lessons learned into the planning process for reinforcing support for teacher well-being, for clarifying the pathway for uncredentialed teachers, and for strengthening the equity-oriented induction mentoring. Most importantly, the partnership is working on building the infrastructures to combine the knowledge and the experience across projects into larger and more systemic insights and implications.

### Key Areas of Work
- Early childhood
- Non-cognitive or behavioral outcomes
- School choice
- Teacher pipeline

**ODE/OSU English Language Learner Partnership**

**Corvallis, OR**

**Founded**
2014

**Joined NNERPP**
2018

**Mission**
Using research to improve education for English Language Learners in Oregon.

**Partners**
- Oregon Department of Education
- Oregon State University

**Blog**
blogs.oregonstate.edu/odeosuellpartnership

ODE/OSU partnership has historically put an emphasis on building relationships. This includes looking for ways for meaningful participation and input of a broad range of collaborators and stakeholders. We put our approach to test this year, as we embarked on the creation of the Multilingual/English Learner Resource Bank (ML/EL Resource Bank). The resource bank will be a comprehensive, curated online repository in the form of research-practice briefs that will include resources for ML/EL programs and services. The research-practice briefs will be created by researchers on a selected list of topics and subtopics, using a template brief we developed to serve as a guide and a blueprint.

We created multiple engagement opportunities for stakeholders and thought partners to participate in the process of resource bank development. Our stakeholders included teachers, staff, administrators, researchers, community advisory group members, as well as our colleagues from the agency. The engagement included surveys, group and individual meetings, and other forms of interaction and communication, resulting in close to hundred contributions to develop a list of topics and subtopics for the resource bank, as well as to create a template brief. We are now moving to the next phase of the project, which is working with researchers to develop the research-practice briefs. Reflecting on this process, we can say that we fulfilled our goal of having a broad participation of the research and practice community, which informed the structure and content of the ML/EL Resource Bank, while ensuring meeting the needs of intended users.
ORANGE COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT NETWORK
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

FOUNDED
2018

JOINED NNERPP
2020

MISSION
Creating initiatives and partnerships with the UCI School of Education that positively impact local partners, with a focus on Orange County, CA but also across other regions.

PARTNERS
University of California Irvine
Several schools, districts, and cities across Orange County and across the United States.

ocean.education.uci.edu/
@uciocean

Since 2018, OCEAN has helped support doctoral students and faculty to create nearly 50 partnership projects with the local community. The initiative has also provided graduate student funding for more than 30 doctoral students in this time span, and provided them training in community-engaged research methods. We have also worked with our partners and faculty to raise nearly $14 million in external grant funding to support various community-based research projects, from diverse funders including the National Science Foundation, Institute of Education Sciences, Spencer Foundation, William T. Grant Foundation, and the Gates Foundation. As we enter future years, OCEAN is experimenting with ways to sustain infrastructural support to continue to train researchers in community engaged work, sustain relationships with partners, and continue to build capacity in our local communities while furthering education research.

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Anti-racism
• Curriculum and instruction
• Early childhood
• School climate and/or culture
• STEM

ORANGE COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT NETWORK
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

SILICON VALLEY RESEARCH PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP
SAN JOSE, CA

FOUNDED
2019

JOINED NNERPP
2021

MISSION
The RPP’s current research focus is on computational thinking and positive identity in computer science for Latinx female students.

PARTNERS
• Santa Clara County Office of Education
• San Jose State University
• Krause Center for Innovation
• WestEd
San Jose area school districts
- Berryessa Union School District
- Franklin McKinley School District
- Milpitas Unified School District
- Orchard School District

Our RPP has had to reinvent itself each year because of teacher turnover and the pandemic. We have been able to secure another school district, and we have finally found all of the teachers we need to be successful! It’s through our existing partnership with the additional district that helped us find teachers to participate in our project.

Our RPP has been focused on intentional professional development sessions grounded in Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). Explicit connections between CRP, Mathematics, and Computational Thinking (CT) skills were made through our plan to actualize project goals. This led to the creation of student assessments that will help us gauge students’ acquisition of CT skills through re-designed lessons by participating teachers. It has been a fantastic team of educators involved in this journey.

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Computer Science
• Curriculum and instruction
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
• Program evaluation
• STEM

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Computer Science
• Curriculum and instruction
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
• Program evaluation
• STEM

San Jose area school districts
- Berryessa Union School District
- Franklin McKinley School District
- Milpitas Unified School District
- Orchard School District
STANFORD–SAN FRANCISCO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

FOUNDED
2009
JOINED NNERPP
2016

VISION
Stanford University and San Francisco Unified School District work together to design research that informs policies, practices, and scholarship to maximize the potential for each and every student in San Francisco and beyond.

PARTNERS
• California Education Partners (partner manager)
• San Francisco Unified School District
• Stanford University’s Graduate School of Education

San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) formed an initiative in 2013 called the African American Achievement and Leadership Initiative (AAALI), and in 2015 an administrative team was formed to help the initiative work across the San Francisco community and school systems to achieve its goals. One of the goals of AAALI has been to recruit and retain African American educators and leaders, including Black teachers. SFUSD’s AAALI leaders partnered with Stanford University Graduate School of Education doctoral candidate Jessica Stovall and her undergraduate research assistant Tara Sullivan to examine conditions in SFUSD that challenge and support Black teacher retention. The connection between AAALI and Stovall happened thanks to Stovall and SFUSD’s parallel work with the Black Teacher Project and the support of the RPP Director of the Stanford-SFUSD Partnership, Laura Wentworth, who works at California Education Partners.

SFUSD’s Supervisor of Research, Norma Ming, and Wentworth organized a discussion of research findings and recommendations from the study in fall 2022. In attendance were several stakeholders in the district, and the presentation stressed the importance of having affinity spaces for Black teachers to support well-being and learning and the importance of having teacher training programs that purposely supported Black teachers, like SFUSD’s Pathway to Teaching Program. Since the discussion of findings, there has been a renewed effort by the AAALI team to focus on connecting educators to affinity spaces, elevating the voices and experiences of Black educators and intentionally partnering with community based partners and SFUSD’s Human Rights Department to recruit and retain high quality educators. Also, Stovall has written and has publications in Phi Delta Kappa, a practitioner journal, and the peer reviewed journal The Journal of Negro Education so that the knowledge can spread to other school districts and the larger field of education research.

During the 2022 calendar year, the Stanford-Seqouia K-12 Research Collaborative continued to support a range of research projects. Over the last five years, there have been several projects examining multilingual learner (MLL) academic trajectories. Research on this topic brought to light issues related to math placement among MLLs, which motivated one of the partner districts to make some pilot changes with regard to math placement to build more equitable and flexible course pathways. The pilot change entails rethinking high school math placement to ensure students from all achievement levels enroll in and have access to 9th grade Algebra I coursework or above. As such, students who previously would have been placed in a remedial or additional support course for Algebra I are now enrolling directly in Algebra I, and are no longer required to have a double block of math, freeing up their schedule to meet more A-G approved courses. Through a randomization process designed to measure the impact of this pilot policy change, some students in the district were placed in the former course pathways while other students were placed directly in Algebra I.

In addition to changes in course pathways for math placement, the district is also providing support with regard to assessments, professional development, and curriculum and instruction to educators engaged in the pilot. In a co-presentation with district partners, researchers revealed preliminary results suggesting that removing students from the remedial math pathways improved access to college-ready math trajectories and improved overall engagement. The research is a compelling proof-point for removing remedial track, especially when paired with support for teachers.

As the district continues to digest these findings, they are interested in potentially exploring further policy changes for ninth graders. They are also interested in exploring longer term student outcomes and digging into pathway changes for other course pathways, such as data science.
Our partnership in 2022 was focused on continuing to create sensemaking spaces for high school science teachers wanting to learn more about Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned classroom assessment, as well as looking forward to ‘what’s next’ in our partnership. Following an asynchronous learning experience in 2020-21 where science teachers connected via Flipgrid to share what was working and challenges they encountered during online and hybrid teaching, University of Colorado (CU) STEM Education researchers met with Aurora Public Schools (APS) science curriculum coordinators to identify areas to continue to support secondary science teachers in formative assessment, building on findings from a one-year study of teachers’ formative assessment practices in 2019-15 focused on energy. CU researchers designed a multiple-session professional learning experience for a small group of high school teachers that began with working from an example of a teacher who had already been doing this work, along with student ideas and experiences as part of a formative assessment activity. We supported teachers in using this example to broaden the ways they were thinking about formative assessment of the Next Generation Science Standards. We then supported teachers in ‘unpacking’ performance expectations for their classes and making enactment plans where they thought in advance about the level of grouping they would use for a task, talk strategies to draw out student thinking, and norms and routines they planned to enact with the formative assessment task. These sessions—which the research team facilitated online in the evenings—ultimately led to school-based, in-person follow up professional learning at one high school at the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year. This collaboration also created opportunities for two visiting researchers—one from Turkey, and the other from the Czech Republic— to participate in co-design of professional learning as part of our RPP. Looking ahead, we are growing our 8-year partnership into Earth and Space science with support from a new NSF grant to Erin Furtak. The project will support co-design of learning experiences for high school science students related to space weather over the next three years.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

• Classroom Assessment
• Curriculum and instruction
• STEM
WESTED: REL WEST
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

FOUNDED
1966

JOINED NNERPP
2022

BASED IN
Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah

MISSION
The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) West helps bridge education research and practice. REL West partners with educators and state and local leaders in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah to build their capacity to make evidence-informed changes that improve student outcomes. REL West is funded by the Institute for Educational Sciences, the research and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education.

PARTNERS
The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest is led by WestEd, a nonpartisan research, development, and service agency. REL Northwest partners with state and local education agencies, school boards, institutes of higher education, and student, family, and community organizations in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington to address their high-leverage needs using knowledge of the evidence, while taking into consideration local education contexts.

ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/region/west
@REL_West

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Anti-racism
• Curriculum and instruction
• English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
• Program evaluation

Since being awarded the REL West Contract in January 2022, staff has been focused on needs sensing with districts throughout Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah to identify high-leverage needs. That work has led to the creation of several partnerships:

• For example, REL West is partnering with a school district in California to identify, test, and implement evidence-based strategies to reduce discipline disparities for Black students.

• In addition, REL West is partnering with a school district in Nevada to strengthen the use of evidence-based tiered interventions in a multi-tiered systems of support framework to reduce chronic absence.

• A third partnership in northern California is focused on increasing the number of adults with some college who reengage in order to return to college and complete a degree.
CAFÉCS is committed to ensuring that all students in Chicago participate in engaging, relevant, and rigorous computing experiences by addressing problems of practice through research and development that increases opportunities for all students to pursue computing pathways and prepares all students for the future of work.

**PARTNERS**
- Chicago Public Schools (CPS)
- The Learning Partnership
- DePaul University
- Loyola University
- University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)

key areas of work
- Computer Science
- Curriculum and instruction
- English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
- Postsecondary
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps

Each year, about 14,000 Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students graduate with one year of high school computer science (CS) in fulfillment of the district’s CS graduation requirement. This accomplishment was the culmination of a decade of work by the Chicago Alliance for Equity in Computer Science (CAFÉCS), which includes CPS teachers and administrators, university CS faculty, and educational researchers. CAFÉCS research indicates that CPS significantly increased the capacity of schools to offer the Exploring Computer Science (ECS) introductory course, resulting in a rapid, equitable increase in students’ participation in CS. Making CS mandatory did not negatively impact performance in ECS. Students after the graduation requirement were also equally likely to be inspired to take additional CS coursework, thus doubling the number of students pursuing CS pathways. A large number of these students are now attending the City Colleges of Chicago with increased interest in CS. Recently, CAFÉCS launched a collaboration with Wright College (one of the City Colleges) and Mentor Collective to support students as they transition from CPS to the city colleges. A pilot group of 17 Wright College students are receiving peer mentoring from students at UIC and DePaul.

The rapid expansion of CS in CPS has relied on teachers from disciplines other than CS. CAFÉCS research shows that teachers from other disciplines who successfully complete the ECS professional development are able to support equivalent student outcomes to teachers who are endorsed in CS. However, it is challenging for them to teach more advanced courses thus leading to inequitable access to intermediate and advanced CS courses across the district. CAFÉCS supported the design and implementation of a 2-week summer institute for 29 CPS teachers to deepen their understanding of core CS concepts and develop their capacity to engage students in a culturally relevant way. Through the Exploring Connections project, teachers have access to several tools that support teachers in adapting CS lessons to the needs and interests of their students. At the start of the year, students complete an identity survey about their interests, values, and hopes for the future. Students receive a bookmark with their responses to use as a reference for their project coursework. Teachers use the results of the survey to adapt lessons to meet the needs of their students.

Having laid a strong foundation for equitable CS in high school, CAFÉCS is now primarily focusing on strengthening the pathways from high school to college and supporting students in their journey to becoming CS professionals.
In 2022, the former Detroit Education Research Partnership was institutionalized as a center at the Wayne State University College of Education, and we changed our name to the Detroit Partnership for Education Equity & Research (Detroit PEER). We now have sustainable internal funding and a strong foundation on which to expand our work, particularly with longitudinal and interdisciplinary projects. We also have partnerd with affiliate researchers whose projects help us reach beyond the schoolhouse doors to issues that impact youth and families in housing policy, transportation policy, and community development.

One project that we’re particularly proud of was a representative survey of Detroit students’ parents/caregivers in January 2022. This survey, which includes both traditional public school students and charter school students, can be linked back to student attendance and achievement measures. We are excited about the potential of these data for research that will uncover the mechanisms through which poverty shapes student attendance and enrollment, in a city in which administrative measures of student socioeconomic circumstances tend to paint almost all Detroit students with a broad brush. These survey data were used in our first report under the Detroit PEER name, where we examined how families’ experiences during the pandemic related to their opinions on COVID mitigation measures. We took forward to conducting many important studies using these data in the future, as we work more closely with our partners to develop research-informed, community-centered, equity-focused policy solutions for Detroit schools.
Since 2022, we’ve found essential insights into the effects of the Illinois civic education legislative mandates in middle school classrooms across the state. This spring, we begin our second phase of data collection to include more schools in both urban and rural areas. The classrooms surveyed have provided meaningful insights into the quality of civic education in Illinois and highlighted areas that stakeholders can work to improve. Additionally, we’ve had productive meetings with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regarding the work of Illinois Civics Hub. We are working toward ISBE recognition of the Guardians of Democracy Microdentials program. The accreditation of this free and asynchronous course will help provide high-quality civics instruction to students and increase access to high-quality civics training and resources for teachers across disciplines and grade bands.

Since the summer of this year, we’ve expanded our partnership to include a research partner from Illinois State University’s Stevenson Center Program. The partner will assist in the research and analysis of our Middle School study and support the design and implementation of Illinois Civics Hub programs. We’ve also begun redesigning the Illinois Democracy School Program, which has over 80 schools in its network, to create a model that aligns with the Educating for American Democracy Framework. We are working toward creating a model that can be adopted district-wide so that more schools can participate in the program. This new model will expand the program’s current reach to communities and families of the participating schools, working toward advancing youth civic knowledge and efficacy in the state of Illinois.
INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

ST. LOUIS, MO

FOUNDED
1991, RPPs first initiated in 2005
JOINED NNERPP
2020
MISSION
Through meaningful collaboration with schools and districts, we advance equitable quality education.

PARTNERS
- Washington University in St. Louis
- University City School District
- St. Louis Public Schools
- Ritenour School District
- Mehlville School District
- Maplewood Richmond Heights School District
- Additional regional K-12 school districts

KEY AREAS OF WORK
- Curriculum and instruction
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- Program evaluation
- School leadership or governance
- STEM

BUILDING A GROWTH MINDSET COMMUNITY

When a school district sets sights on something as bold as improved math outcomes for all students, it’s essential to consider who’s invited to the effort. Students are naturally at the top of the guest list, leaving teachers and administrators tasked with a tall order: creating learning spaces and teaching practices that welcome all. Students are naturally at the top of the guest list, leaving teachers and administrators tasked with a tall order: creating learning spaces and teaching practices that welcome all.

“Even though we come from districts very different in size, resources available, and students served, there are some very clear commonalities. We’ve built a community,” Harvell says. ISP’s researchers and education specialists provide not only the support districts need to implement research-based practices, but also a commitment to listening and providing evidence to reflect on and guide decision-making. “We elevate teacher voices in district decisions and recognize the practical challenges educators face,” says ISP Research Director Abbey Loehr.

“The Madison Education Partnership (MEP) is evaluating the Madison Metropolitan School District’s (MMSD) implementation of full-day four-year-old kindergarten programs (FD4K). This is MEP’s first evaluation contract, made possible because of the deep relationship University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) and MMSD partners have built over the past several years. Through MEP, UW graduate students and researchers are evaluating this exciting initiative aimed at reducing gaps in foundational skills for student success in five-year-old kindergarten and beyond. Our initial work established baseline measures of early literacy, numeracy, executive function, and social-emotional skills for 186 FD4K and 300 traditional half-day 4K students spread across 46 classes in 19 schools. Ongoing work combines this data with the district’s administrative data to assess how attending FD4K affects learning relative to half-day programs. Related ongoing work incorporates qualitative methods that uncover how instruction, time use, and culturally responsive practices differ among full-day and half-day environments. As active collaborators in the research, district leaders gain early access to insights from the research team on challenges to the program’s implementation and assessment.”

MADISON EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

MADISON, WI

FOUNDED
2016
JOINED NNERPP
2017
MISSION
Engaging in and supporting high-quality, problem-based research, contributing to policy discussions based on MEP-generated research, and regularly disseminating findings to the research community, school district, and the public in order to improve the experiences and individual outcomes for all Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) students.

PARTNERS
- Madison Metropolitan School District
- University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Wisconsin Center for Education Research

KEY AREAS OF WORK
- Early childhood
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- Program evaluation
- School climate and/or culture
- School mental health

The Madison Education Partnership (MEP) is evaluating the Madison Metropolitan School District’s (MMSD) implementation of full-day four-year-old kindergarten programs (FD4K). This is MEP’s first evaluation contract, made possible because of the deep relationship University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) and MMSD partners have built over the past several years. Through MEP, UW graduate students and researchers are evaluating this exciting initiative aimed at reducing gaps in foundational skills for student success in five-year-old kindergarten and beyond. Our initial work established baseline measures of early literacy, numeracy, executive function, and social-emotional skills for 186 FD4K and 300 traditional half-day 4K students spread across 46 classes in 19 schools. Ongoing work combines this data with the district’s administrative data to assess how attending FD4K affects learning relative to half-day programs. Related ongoing work incorporates qualitative methods that uncover how instruction, time use, and culturally responsive practices differ among full-day and half-day environments. As active collaborators in the research, district leaders gain early access to insights from the research team on challenges to the program’s implementation and assessment.
This year, through a Northwestern Evanston Education Research Alliance (NEERA) collaboration, the Evanston-Skokie K-8 School District’s boundaries were redrawn to allow students to attend school and build community—closer to their homes. As members of the district’s Student Assignment Committee, charged with updating district boundaries for the first time in decades, Northwestern researchers and several master’s research courses, developed a set of attendance boundary scenarios using data shared by the district. They employed an innovative stream-based approach that efficiently modeled enrollment at neighborhood and magnet schools and specialty programs. They then tested the implications of each scenario for busing and school-level demographics, trying to work toward a scenario that best reflected their needs of the school. Master’s student researchers will now be embedded with a team of educators at the district so that they can co-create relevant research questions and collaborate more seamlessly with practitioners.

The Saint Louis Research-Practice Collaborative (SRPC) launched our inaugural research project on student mobility in September 2021. From launch until December, practitioners and researchers worked together to design a mixed methods research study, from creating surveys and interview questions to grounding quantitative portions of the work in insights about what information would be actionable on the ground. Throughout 2021, SRPC has been working through IRB processes, data requests, MOUs, and more. Now that we have logistics out of the way, we are ready and excited to dig into the data and start interviews!

In addition to launching our inaugural research project last year, for much of this year, the SRPC Data Committee has been parsing through current local and state data systems to understand how to support data infrastructure and help create faster, more responsive cycles of research for practice. The Knowledge Engagement Committee has been hard at work throughout 2022 creating relationships, building trust, and bringing awareness for the need to address student mobility to ensure the research team has clear pathways for engagement once the study is complete.
Chicago Public Schools leadership has made student voice an essential part of achieving their instructional core vision, and decided to adopt the Consortium-developed Cultivate system this year to support this goal districtwide in grades 5-12. Cultivate consists of a student survey plus associated tools, and is based on Consortium research and frameworks. The survey provides information on students’ mindsets and strategies—how they see themselves as learners in particular classes—along with their perceptions about classroom conditions that research has shown influence student mindsets and strategies. It differs from the annual survey of school climate and organization (5ESS surveys), on which the partnership also collaborates, in its specific focus on classroom environments and mid-year feedback. District leaders and Consortium staff have been working together to develop implementation supports and guidance for using Cultivate. In the long-term, Consortium researchers hope to do research to support continuous improvement of the tool and its implementation in schools.

Another district priority this year has been the rollout of a comprehensive, standards-aligned, culturally relevant, digital curriculum for grades PreK-12 in five content areas, called Skyline. Because of the enormous scope of Skyline, district leaders asked their partners across multiple RPPs together to identify ways researchers could provide formative and summative assessments of Skyline, and then asked the partners to take on pieces of the large research plan. CPS convened monthly meetings of researchers who took on studies to share information across research partners and CPS staff implementing Skyline. This has been a new way of working that allows for information-sharing across researchers from different institutions working with the same district leaders. Consortium researchers participated in the sessions to identify potential strands of research, and took up several different studies to support implementation. One study was an initial field scan to understand how Skyline was being enacted in its first year; this research was presented to the Skyline team who now plan to use the resulting research memo to support conversations with senior leaders and network chiefs around changes in the second year of implementation. Consortium researchers and district staff also worked closely to develop a proposal for an IES competition around pandemic recovery in grades K-2, which was awarded in July, and has led to relationships with different CPS departments as part of the partnership.

The DSToPP initiative is dedicated to contributing to Detroiters’ efforts to counter carceral and educational injustices. DSToPP members also strive to increase the capacity-building and knowledge-sharing that generates equitable, empowering, and solution-oriented community-university research partnerships. The DSToPP coordinating team not only facilitates our RPP network and events, but we also study the successes and challenges of striving to disrupt traditional, hierarchical, colorblind research that has a progressive impact. We have aimed to have this critical collaborative approach benefit DSToPP collectively while also enhancing the professional growth and critical social capital of all RPP participants. We have begun to see evidence of such gains through recent partnership developments.

In 2022, a key area of change that has occurred is the extended partnerships that have emerged out of the DSToPP RPP work involving both new and sustained relationships. For instance, through meeting each other via DSToPP, one of our action research teams is becoming part of a separate collaboration with Focus:Hope, a coordinating partner of our RPP. This team will participate in Focus:Hope’s social justice youth program, Generation of Promise, which promotes youth leadership. Through ULLC contacts—and given the well regard of our RPP—our co-PI from Focus:Hope also recently partnered with another University of Michigan (U-M) faculty member (outside of the DSToPP RPP) to secure a prestigious RPP grant from the William T. Grant Foundation to improve outcomes for youth in workforce development programs through mental health-informed program designs and support.

Building on the energy of DSToPP, the Wayne State University (WSU) School of Social Work is making community-engaged research a focus of its strategic plan. WSU-linked DSToPP researchers are also leveraging their action research insight to facilitate anti-racist professional development and various restorative practices amongst their faculty colleagues and through additional research partnerships.

Beyond DSToPP, our RPP principal investigator from U-M is developing programming related to youth-engaged research at the Community-based Research for Equity, Activism, and Transformative Education (CREATE) Center she directs, and co-sponsoring a school-based action research endeavor related to Detroit policing that builds upon DSToPP learnings. This will provide an additional opportunity for RPP members to connect.

So, in all, change for us has meant expanded and varied collaborations in ways that allow our two and half years of RPP work to inspire and fuel continued learning and additional strides for educational justice and for young people of color.
Our RPP has been impacted by leadership change at our practice partner organization, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Our practice partner director has left DPI and another partner director has not yet been identified. Meanwhile, we have made progress supporting practitioners across the state in their internal evaluation and capacity building efforts about school leadership, teacher retention, and inclusive practices. We have developed a dashboard – wedsr.org – that provides each district and school with valid and reliable data about their professional climate and culture. The dashboard also provides schools and districts with information about the inclusive and antiracist practices they engage in. School and district data can be filtered to focus on teacher subgroups, such as Black or male teachers.
CAROLINA YOUTH COALITION RESEARCH–PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP
CHARLOTTE, NC

FOUNDED
2019

JOINED NNERPP
2021

MISSION
Advancing educational outcomes for CYC’s high-achieving, under-resourced students and other Mecklenburg County students.

PARTNERS
• Carolina Youth Coalition (CYC)
• University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte)

In 2022, Carolina Youth Coalition’s RPP was awarded the 2023 ABC Board’s Community Health & Wellness Grant to explore alcohol use and risk perceptions of Charlotte Mecklenburg high school seniors and first-year college students. The project titled “Turn down for what?: Exploring Attitudes and Risk Perceptions of Underage Alcohol Use among Under-Resourced Students in Mecklenburg County” will use San Diego’s State University e-CHECKUP TO GO, an interactive web program that allows students to enter information about their drinking patterns and receive immediate, personalized feedback about their use of alcohol. This project will also use the Brief Self-Control Survey to assess students’ capacity to refrain from or reflect on behavior and student perseverance. The need to address substance use among Charlotte students came from a previous 2 year study that found substance use and socialization among college students acted as barriers toward maximizing their academic success and adaptation. CYC RPP intends to reduce the rate of underage drinking and inform and equip students with the skills and knowledge to navigate alcohol use. Additionally, CYC RPP seeks to learn about the risk perceptions of students and their understanding of underage drinking to inform needed programming in high school and prepare students with the tools to cope with the socialization they will experience in college. The project will run from July 2022-July 2023.

In September 2022, CYC RPP presented at the National College Attainment Network Conference in Atlanta on the role RPPs play in educational equity. In a roundtable format, attendees learned about the benefits, feasibility, and guidelines of the partnership between a college-access non-profit organization and research institution in advancing student outcomes. CYC’s RPP presentation title was “Stronger Together: The Power of Research-Practice Partnerships for Transformational Student Success.”

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Non-cognitive or behavioral outcomes
• Postsecondary
• Program evaluation
This year, our research was used to support continuation of current policies in the face of proposed legislation that would increase the local school board’s authority over its charter schools. Specifically, our study on the impact of charter schools in New Orleans cited by Orleans Parish School Board member Olin Parker in a presentation to the Louisiana State Senate responding to the proposed bill. Ultimately, the bill did not pass, and the school board retained its limited oversight role over charter schools in the district.

We also released two more studies in partnership with our Advisory Board and the local school district: How Does Student Mobility Affect New Orleans Students? and How Do New Orleans’ Educators Salaries Differ by Race and Across Racial Groups? The study on student mobility was used by school district partners to consider whether changes to the enrollment system were needed due to the frequency and magnitude of students switching schools. Our advisory board partners used the findings around pay differences to further guide their work on equity within the public school system, specifically in addressing racial salary gaps at local schools for administrators, counselors, and teachers.

The study on student mobility was used by school district partners to consider whether changes to the enrollment system were needed due to the frequency and magnitude of students switching schools. Our advisory board partners used the findings around pay differences to further guide their work on equity within the public school system, specifically in addressing racial salary gaps at local schools for administrators, counselors, and teachers.

The Georgia Policy Labs (GPL) RPP continued to have impact in 2022. The groundbreaking research we released in 2021 measuring the impact of the pandemic on student learning outcomes continued with an updated report that evaluates the pandemic’s impact through fall 2021. We’re also looking forward to releasing another updated report soon assessing results through spring 2022.

This year also marked an exciting first-time opportunity for GPL: partnering with a non-profit organization. We are excited to have added Achieve Atlanta to our RPP, which works with students from Atlanta Public Schools to access, afford, and succeed in college. Our research portfolio with Achieve Atlanta will include examining the impact of its scholarship on student debt and other postsecondary financial outcomes.

We also released the third iteration of our innovative cross-state report that examines trends in career and technical education (CTE) across our consortium of states. This report examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on CTE, particularly changes in CTE concentration just before and just after the pandemic began in Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Tennessee, and Washington.

Our summer professional development series also continues to be a success. This summer, we had the opportunity to partner with the Microsoft team in Atlanta to offer four workshops on its Power BI software. Over 140 total people attended these workshops, bringing our total number of people trained since 2019 to more than 660.
A few highlights of 2022!

- In 2022, one of our school district partners asked the Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC) to be active participants in their district’s strategic planning process, as they wanted to ensure HERC research guided their decision making and planning.
- In 2011, HERC began as a partnership with one school district (Houston ISD). This year, we celebrated the 10 year anniversary of partnership with 10 additional districts in the Houston region!
- In September of 2022, HERC and Houston Independent School District (HISD) hosted the first annual Research Poster Gallery Walk at HISD’s Central Office Building. Posters highlighting a variety of HERC’s and Houston ISD’s own internal research projects were displayed for a week in the reception area of the central office. The event culminated in a poster session where researchers were present to answer questions about their work.
- HERC has been working with the Student Support Services Department at HISD since 2019 to help identify key out-of-school, wraparound needs of students and families in the district. This on-going work has already led to a variety of changes at the district, including: 1) Increased resource rooms to address lack of school supplies and food insecurity, 2) Increases in the size and scope of the Houston Food Bank’s Backpack Buddy program to further address food insecurity, and 3) The district offered one-time emergency financial relief through the Powell Foundation and the HISD Foundation.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Early childhood
- English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
- Postsecondary
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- School choice

LITERACY, LEARNING, AND LEADING IN GEORGIA

ATLANTA, GA

MISSION

We promote the overall development and school success of children and youth in urban contexts through innovative, translational research that informs policy and practice.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Anti-racism Curriculum and instruction
- Early childhood
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps

The L4GA (Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading) RPP has continued its work to understand a 39-county wide literacy initiative that ranges from PreK to 11th grade. Over the past year, analyses undertaken by researchers from Georgia State University and implementation experts from the Georgia Department of Education have continued to focus on the literacy achievement and trajectories of students in target districts in the wake of COVID-19 and to try and understand promising practices that are supporting students in addressing academic learning opportunity loss. Drawing on a conceptual model from the Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions (VIQI), our RPP has sought to understand macro and micro features of implementation and quality related to student level outcomes. Using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data sources, we engaged in a number of studies to understand the various organizational, leadership, and quality drivers that are contributing to PreK-11th grade student literacy achievement. We have spent considerable time exploring local education agencies’ (LEA’s) professional development approaches and offerings in order to understand structural, interactional, and instructional quality features. Because LEAs are allowed to choose the professional learning and instructional supports they provide, we have engaged in building out additional guidance documents and professional learning opportunities to support LEA partner decision making. We have also worked to link LEA, school, and student level data sources in order to more closely examine which LEAs are performing better than expected on literacy assessments by attending to demographic and previous performance metrics. We plan to work closely with LEAs who are showing particular success to better understand innovations across the PreK to 11th grade continuum.
Co-Constructing a Research Agenda on Disrupting Inequities in the Pathway to College and Career

In late spring of 2021, while planning conversations for the larger partnership between Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) and Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College (Peabody) were underway but prior to Nashville PEER’s official launch, a working group on College and Career Readiness (CCR) was formed to pilot the research-practice partnership structures and processes for Nashville PEER. The group, which included MNPS Support Hub staff and Peabody researchers, met regularly for a six-month period, and early in 2022 articulated four primary research questions regarding high school student participation and outcomes in early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs). The EPSOs research agenda is grounded in MNPS’s focus on increasing equity in academic opportunities and outcomes, and is motivated by data indicating significant disparities in EPSOs participation and outcomes tied to race and socioeconomic status.

With the facilitation support of one of the PEER co-directors, the group also established norms and routines for open dialog and equitable participation as they co-constructed research questions and planned for research. This year, a small evaluation team conducted a formative evaluation of this process for PEER’s pilot working group using the framework developed by Vanderbilt’s Erin Henrick et al. (2017) and adapted into an assessment tool by the Regional Education Lab Southwest (Scholz et al. 2021). Additionally, a small research team led by the other co-director analyzed meeting transcripts to track the co-construction of research questions as they emerged, were taken up by different members of the group, and evolved. The formative evaluation data suggest that the norms, routines, and tools for facilitating the group’s work were effective in promoting trust, participants’ sense of agency in conducting research, and understanding of the problem space; the analysis of meeting transcripts underscored this finding. The result has been a truly collaborative research agenda on reducing inequities in EPSO access and outcomes that will serve as a model for future PEER working groups. This pilot working group has since been adopted by the Steering Committee as a formal part of PEER’s research agenda—though it will continue to serve as an important space for ongoing learning and growth.

OFFICE FOR EDUCATION POLICY
FAYETTEVILLE, AR

FOUNDED 2003
JOINED NNERPP 2019
MISSION
Supporting state lawmakers, educators, administrators, and other leaders in thoughtful, research-based decision-making concerning PreK-20 education in the State of Arkansas.
PARTNERS
• Arkansas State Board of Education
• Arkansas Legislature
• Several Arkansas school districts

We continued our work investigating access to high-quality early childhood education in Arkansas. As part of this effort we hosted an event with a diverse set of stakeholders to discuss opportunities for improvement and policy solutions. We fielded a parent survey, gathering perspectives of policy-relevant issues from a representative sample of the state’s parents of school-aged students.

We initiated a significant project investigating the teacher pipeline. We have linked, longitudinal data connecting k-12, higher education, and workforce, allowing us to see the whole teacher pipeline and identify leaks and barriers.

We are initiating a partnership with the Arkansas Division of Career and Technical Education to study access to and effectiveness of CTE programming.

We are working with the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute and a diverse group of stakeholders to develop policy recommendations for the coming legislative session and new gubernatorial administration.

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Early childhood
• Postsecondary
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
**PASO DEL NORTE PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH**

**EL PASO, TX**

**FOUNDED** 2020
**JOINED NNERPP** 2020
**MISSION** Working together to positively affect student outcomes for the diverse communities in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties.

**PARTNERS**
- The University of Texas at El Paso
- Clint Independent School District
- El Paso ISD
- San Elizario ISD
- Ysleta ISD
- Fabens ISD
- Socorro ISD
- Tornillo ISD
- Anthony ISD
- Community agencies in the region

**utep.edu/education/research-partnership/ @pedprr**

**KEY AREAS OF WORK**
- English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
- Non-cognitive or behavioral outcomes
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- STEM
- Teacher pipeline

In 2022, the Paso del Norte Partnership for Education Research focused much of their work on addressing the priority of mental health/well-being of students and educators in the community based on feedback received from a Fall 2021 Summit. Three projects have contributed to addressing this community need. Project BLESSED is a grant funded by the DOE Office of Special Education in collaboration with seven partner school districts aimed at addressing mental health and social-emotional learning (SEL). The key objectives of this project are to develop a new concentration in SEL for M.Ed. candidates in Special Education and a new Graduate Certificate in Special Education Counseling by providing funding for approximately 48 educators to complete the new programs and finally, to evaluate the program effectiveness and disseminate for research/practice for other institutions to adopt. The second project that addresses this need is titled Educator Well-Being: A Study of Fatigue, Stress, Burnout, and Self-Care Practices Among Teachers and Administrators, and Characterizing Perceived and Physiological Early Childhood Teacher Stress and it aims to examine the impact of COVID-19 on educator well-being; identify behaviors and/or tools used to thrive; identify additional supports needed; and recommend policy and practices to address the mental health needs of educators in the region. Finally, Characterizing Perceived and Physiological Early Childhood Teacher Stress is a project aimed at examining early childhood education teacher well-being, focusing specifically on stress. To do so in the current study, measures of perceived (self-report survey) and physiological (hair cortisol concentration) stress will be employed, thereafter pairing these quantitative measures with qualitative interviews to more fully detail the lived experiences of ECE teachers. Each of these projects are aimed at addressing mental health/well-being of students and adults in the Paso del Norte Region and the findings from this research are anticipated to have a direct impact on improved practices and outcomes for students in our community.

**TEACHING TOGETHER**

**HOUSTON, TX**

**FOUNDED** 2012
**JOINED NNERPP** 2019
**MISSION** Empowering and preparing parents to engage as partners in their child’s educational support team and to support learning at home.

Our RPP has iteratively developed and evaluated virtual and hybrid pre-kindergarten STEM family engagement offerings in the past two years. We implemented an entirely virtual program model with 60 families in the 2020-21 school year. Although there were benefits to this convenient approach, we were eager to return to hands-on STEM activities this year. We adjusted the Teaching Together STEM delivery approach to a hybrid model in 2021-22; this included a combination of virtual and in-person activities with 92 families. An important feature of our programs was delivery in English and as a Spanish/English bilingual program. Although analysis is ongoing, we found increased parent attendance for in-person family engagement events relative to virtual events. Similar trends occurred alongside additional support of families to take-home STEM kits. Teaching Together STEM is now entering an exciting phase of broadening impact through dissemination. Over the next year, our team will disseminate resources and provide a series of in-person and virtual ‘training of trainer’ sessions for educators and paraprofessionals across the greater Houston region and hosted both at the Children’s Museum Houston as well as at partner sites of local community organizations.

The latest endeavor for our RPP is a new grant that is an upward extension of our goals for broadening access to informal STEM learning, but for older students in Kindergarten to Grade 6. We continue to focus on students experiencing poverty and offering engaging, hands-on STEM learning experiences. This new line of research specifically examines ways to best engage young girls in feeling interested in STEM and breaking stereotypes that science and math are not engaging for girls.

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In 2022, TERA received a four-year $1.7M grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to explore opportunities for increasing teacher diversity across Tennessee. Though 37% of Tennessee’s students are people of color, only 13% of the state’s teachers are, according to a 2018 report by the Tennessee Department of Education. TERA’s work aims to narrow this representation gap.

Through this grant, the research team will investigate pathways into teaching for Tennessee teachers of color and barriers they encounter along those pathways. By partnering closely with an advisory council of education leaders throughout the state and several local school districts, TERA hopes to comprehensively map the diverse pathways into teaching for teachers of color as compared to other teachers, pinpoint which stages and why teachers of color leave the pipeline, and ultimately identify specific interventions to increase the representation of teachers of color in Tennessee schools.

To carry out the work, the research team will conduct extensive interviews with teacher candidates, preparation program leaders, school district leaders, and future-career teachers alongside analysis of survey data and state data on potential teachers’ job-seeking and their first few years in the classroom. TERA hopes to glean new insights to help Tennessee meet its goals of making teaching a more diverse profession.

Results stemming from this project will help school districts and education preparation providers think about increasing teacher diversity more strategically. This research will not only allow policymakers and practitioners to understand more about where Tennessee is losing prospective teachers of color, but it will also provide educator preparation providers and school districts with information about specific interventions they can use to help with recruitment efforts.

This research grows out of ongoing work exploring issues related to educator diversity in Tennessee and will continue to expand TERA’s growing partnership efforts with the district. In January 2022, TERA released a brief documenting race and gender gaps in classroom observation scores for teachers across Tennessee. Going forward, TERA will partner with several districts across Tennessee to pilot an intervention specifically targeting observer bias in evaluations. This work, along with the teachers of color pipelines research, will enable TERA to partner closely with local school districts and expand our research footprint beyond Nashville.

As part of our work to develop the Computer Science (CS) ecosystem and provide students and families with opportunities to be successful in computational thinking and coding, our Research-Practice Partnership has put in place: An active teacher leader program; computational thinking and coding in all subject areas; and family engagement opportunities, such as our joint Family Code Night.

These partnership activities are producing many positive outcomes. Students are experiencing computer science and computational thinking as core skills. As they study subject-area course content, students also learn and practice important technology skills such as creating products with code and collaborating with one another through a peer programming environment. Many of these lessons were developed through RPP collaboration in professional learning sessions offered during the summer and throughout the school year. Researchers and practitioners continue to participate in regular Digital Sciences Team meetings in order to plan and evaluate CS/CT implementations, review and discuss partnership activities, and analyze data findings.

This partnership work leads to relevant digital sciences learning for students in all subject areas and helps to expand and extend the CS ecosystem beyond school walls. In the 2022-23 academic year, the success of our RPP’s efforts is evident in classes throughout Reedy Creek Magnet Middle School (RCMMS). Independent from the Friday Institute (FI), teachers are implementing effective and challenging CS/CT lessons. These lessons and our teachers’ ability and eagerness to create and deliver them stem from the knowledge and training provided by FI and our partnership activities. Our RPP’s vision of creating a thriving STEM ecosystem has been realized, and RCMMS and FI are now building upon this by investigating ways we can continue working together and new technologies we can implement to enhance student learning.
After the successful launch of our RPP, the ReadUp Partnership, between FCRR and the local school district three years ago, we are excited to develop a model for how other college-town universities can partner with their communities to reduce educational disparities. Funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, Spencer Foundation, and Doris Duke Foundation, this Institutional Challenge Grant will allow us to expand the current partnership, while also creating a toolkit and framework to help universities leverage the expertise of the university and promoting research-practice partnerships as a mechanism to address the needs of students, families, educators, and communities.

Mid-career faculty fellows at Florida State University and Florida A&M University will also carry out their own research projects within the partnership, increasing their capacity to create and sustain RPPs. Focusing on reading achievement, early learning, special education, and college and career readiness, this work will directly impact the trajectory of the children growing up in our community.

Additionally, we are expanding our partnership with our local public library through a project called Engaging Librarians in the Science of Reading. As librarians play an important role in our communities in fostering a love for reading, youth services librarians from the seven local library branches are currently participating in a series of professional development workshops to increase their knowledge of language and literacy development. Together, we will investigate barriers and facilitators to increasing librarian’s use of evidence-based practices during story time sessions and youth programming, and while engaging families who attend library events. Our team is also partnering with Maya’s Book Nook to develop Book Nook Bundles, a box filled with a diverse children’s book, aligned Beyond the Book guide, and extension language and literacy activities, that will be available in each library branch. Families will be able to check out 25 different bundles filled with these interactive and engaging materials, helping to build strong language and literacy foundations.

**KEY AREAS OF WORK**
- Curriculum and instruction
- Early childhood
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- School leadership or governance
- Teacher Knowledge and efficacy
Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC)’s Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) is a partnership with publicly funded early childhood programs in Baltimore City. ECDC addresses questions of critical importance to research, policy, and practice so that early childhood stakeholders can use evidence to identify challenges, move conversations forward, design strategic and practical responses, advocate for resources, and capitalize upon promising practices or levers for positive change.

In 2022, in collaboration with the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success Children’s Cabinet Early Childhood Workgroup and Baltimore City’s Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), we published a report entitled “Baltimore City’s Young Children: Prenatal to Five Experiences.” This report was designed to understand how families and children use early childhood services and how the use of those services is related to children’s long-term progress in school. This report tells us how services can meet the needs of families with young children more effectively. We found that births in Baltimore City decreased by 21% between 1996 and 2019. Baltimore City’s decrease is greater than the decrease in the U.S. overall decline in births within the same time period. The groups declining most are Blacks, teenagers, and mothers, living in poverty and on medical assistance.

One of the prominent findings was that participation in Head Start or Public Pre-K was related to better school readiness outcomes for children, particularly for those with young mothers, living in poverty and on medical assistance.

Using the findings, researchers, practitioners, and local policymakers in ECAC generated a set of action plans and are working towards implementing those goals in practice. BERC also published its first Kindergarten Success Fact Book, which will become an annual report examining kindergartners’ experiences in Baltimore City. The report highlights the range of disparities that persist across subgroups of children, and marks the necessity of a comprehensive data archive so that stakeholders can make well-informed decisions about resource allocation.
The Boston P-3 RPP team was heavily focused in 2022 on supporting research activities to strengthen Boston’s move to a Universal PreK model for four-year-olds. Key to this approach is partnering with local community-based organizations who have typically operated as private PreK and childcare providers. These organizations also tend to serve a larger proportion of children from historically marginalized groups. The Boston RPP team has worked to conduct rigorous research on implementation of the BPS public school prekindergarten model in these settings, to understand coaching in these schools, and to provide data on classroom quality and student outcomes back to providers and the district in real-time. Results have been used to tailor professional developmental supports, target settings in need for further strengthening, and to understand the extent to which UPK settings have supported students’ development as the city continues to recover from the pandemic.

The DC Education Research Collaborative spent 2022 in build mode – building infrastructure, building partnerships, and building trust. Though we have not yet begun the research work in earnest, the process of co-creating a mission and vision created new connections across researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, and resulted in growth and learning for all involved. While researchers learned about the demands practitioners face and the questions families feel are most pressing, members of the community Advisory Committee learned about research, the research process, and the limits of research. This learning and collaboration culminated in the creation of a draft research agenda, which we hope to finalize before the end of the year.

In addition to working with the Advisory Committee, the Collaborative held its first public listening sessions in 2022 and held focus groups with different sets of education stakeholders to begin to build public awareness of the Collaborative, its role, and its goals. By engaging with community members beyond the Advisory Committee, we have expanded our view of the problems and possibilities facing DC education, and have focused our thinking about the research agenda and potential initial research projects.

Importantly, because of the time spent in 2022 laying a foundation, bringing research partners and practice partners together, and engaging with the community, we are primed to jump into the work as soon as the research agenda is finalized. Though trust-building and engagement is an ongoing process, the work undertaken by research and practice partners this year means the Collaborative is ready to jump to action in 2023.
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER: REL NORTHEAST & ISLANDS

WALTHAM, MA

MISSION
Helping states and school districts in the Northeast and Islands use research and data to improve student outcomes.

BASIS IN
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Vermont

PARTNERS
The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northeast and Islands translates research to practice in partnership with policymakers and practitioners in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Vermont.

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• Early childhood
• English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
• STEM
• Teacher pipeline

Our REL Northeast & Islands consists of nine individual RPPs—one per state/jurisdiction. Two of our RPPs have been in place since 2017: The Puerto Rico Partnership to Engage Families in Data Use and the Rhode Island Partnership to Support Early College Opportunities. The work that took place in each of these partnerships during the last five years set the foundation for these partnership iterations, which are delving deeper into their respective topics. For example, our prior work in Puerto Rico focused on effective data use by school and district educators and REL Northeast & Islands provided a workshop series on using education data.

The partnership has now shifted its focus to build educator capacity to communicate student achievement data effectively to families and to help families use these data to advocate for and support their children’s learning needs. Similarly, in our Rhode Island partnership our previous efforts focused on conducting a research study on Rhode Island’s early college opportunities (i.e., dual or concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement courses). Our research found that these programs had a positive effect on students’ chances of graduating high school and enrolling in college. Building on this evidence of the value of these programs, the partnership is going deeper to better understand the costs of such programs and help districts use information about program enrollment to increase access. REL Northeast & Islands is conducting another research study and providing a workshop series using available dashboards of early college data. Meanwhile, our other partnerships are tackling new topics, such as personalized learning, play-based learning, early educator certification, and mathematics instruction for multilingual learners, to name a few. Lastly, throughout all of our partnership activities we have also infused an even stronger focus on equity than in our past REL partnerships.

In 2022, REL Central launched multiple new partnerships throughout the Central Region states and in Tribal jurisdictions, including the Partnership for Strengthening Culture-based Elementary Math Education in Standing Rock. This partnership brings together educators, community members, and Tribal Nation leaders to address student proficiency on standardized math exams. One possible contributing factor to proficiency rates may be that Native students feel alienated by the way in which math is often taught through a western model, which may not fit their needs or align with their lived experiences of how they learn in their culture, their family and community structures, or the physical world they inhabit. Additionally, many teachers in reservation schools are non-Native and only teach on the reservation for a short period of time, so they do not have a chance to build connections through an understanding of the lived experiences of their Lakota/Dakota students. The partnership has identified the need to create high quality, culture-based math modules grounded in research that build upon the strengths of the community, are relevant to the lives of students and families, and that support teachers in applying a culture-based framework in their math instruction. REL Central is supporting a design team of teachers to develop and refine standards-aligned, elementary math modules that blend evidence-based math pedagogy with Lakota/Dakota pedagogical approaches and culture. This work will also amplify the voices of community members, parents, and Tribal leaders.

MATHEMATICA POLICY RESEARCH: REL CENTRAL

PRINCETON, NJ

FOUNDED
2017

MISSION
Partnersing with key stakeholders in Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming to develop evidence that can inform consequential decisions about policy, programs, and practice.

BASED IN
Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming

PARTNERS
REL Central is led by Mathematica with support from the following partners:

• PMC Research
• Kauffman & Associates
• Policy Research in Missouri Education Center at Saint Louis University
• Denver Public Schools
• Colorado Department of Education
• Colorado Department of Higher Education
• Adams State University
• Fort Lewis College
• University of Colorado Denver
• Metropolitan State University of Denver
• Keystone Policy Center
• Kansas State Department of Education
• Wichita Public Schools
• Shawnee Mission School District
• Kansas Department of Labor

JCL CONSULTING

• Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
• Hillsboro Unified School District
• Dodge City Public Schools
• Kansas Board of Regents
• Kansas Department of Commerce
• Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
• University City School District
• Bismarck School District
• Lincoln Public Schools
• North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
• Standing Rock Tribal Education Department
• Sitting Bull College
• Wyoming Department of Education
• Wyoming Community College Commission
• Wyoming Professional Standards Teaching Board
• University of Wyoming College of Education

KEY AREAS OF WORK
• English Learners and/or Dual Language Learners
• Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
• STEM
• Teacher pipeline
As we wrap up the first year in the current cycle of the REL program, the Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic has several exciting partnerships under way. Examples include:

- We are collaborating with the School District of Philadelphia to examine and disrupt inequitable practices and provide more equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students. We are helping the district use evidence to inform, monitor, and refine its equity initiatives. This work includes developing and testing measures of culturally and linguistically inclusive practices. We are also supporting a fellowship program for staff and students who lead equity groups and conduct research to support equity in their schools.

- We are hosting a national community of practice for state education agencies that want to refine and improve school performance measures for accountability and improvement. This initiative builds on growing interest in understanding how to assess school performance and identify low-performing schools in 2022. The disruptions of the pandemic—cancellation of the 2020 assessments and problems with interpreting the 2021 data—mean that states’ standard approaches may not work for 2022. We are supporting states in developing robust and creative solutions for 2022 and beyond, with the aim of ensuring that their measures of school performance are reliable, valid, and useful to inform school improvement.

**MATHEMATICA MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY**

**PRINCETON, NJ**

**FOUNDED**
2017

**JOINED NNERPP**
2018

**MISSION**
REL Mid-Atlantic works to bridge the worlds of education research and education practice to improve academic outcomes for students through supporting collaborative research partnerships and other stakeholder groups in the Mid-Atlantic region.

**BASED IN**
Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania

**PARTNERS**
- Mathematica
- WestEd
- All five mid-Atlantic state agencies
- School District of Philadelphia
- DC Public Schools
- DC Public Charter School Board
- Pittsburgh Public Schools

**KEY AREAS OF WORK**
- Anti-racism
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- School climate and/or culture
- School leadership or governance
- Teacher pipeline

**MDRC - LAB FOR EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (E3 LAB)**

**NEW YORK CITY, NY**

**FOUNDED**
2017

**JOINED NNERPP**
2020

**MISSION**
E3 Lab uses insights from behavioral science and human-centered design to address issues of educational equity in school application and enrollment.

**PARTNERS**
- MDRC
- CABS @ MDRC
- New York City Department of Education’s Office of Student Enrollment

**KEY AREAS OF WORK**
- Poverty, equity, or achievement gaps
- School choice

New York City’s Lab for Equity and Engagement in School Enrollment (E3 Lab) is a collaboration of MDRC and the New York City Department of Education’s Office of Student Enrollment (OSE). Its most recent project focused on supporting OSE’s communication strategies for middle school admissions in Fall 2021, during the rapidly changing COVID-19 pandemic. The E3 Lab aimed to help OSE integrate principles from behavioral science into their communications with families and family-facing staff and to support the office’s use of data to improve the process for families (see here and here). While the short-term project wrapped up at the end of 2021, the E3 Lab facilitated development of a “playbook” for middle school admissions this year. This playbook documents strategies developed inside and outside the E3 Lab to support equitable family engagement in the middle school admissions process during the Fall 2021 admissions cycle, including lessons learned and ideas for future improvements and for other grade levels. E3 Lab members from MDRC and NYC Department of Education recently reflected on the playbook’s development in a case study for the latest edition of the RPP Brokers Handbook, published this fall.
Starting in 2018, at the request of our regional partner school districts, Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC) initiated a line of collaborative research into professional development models for culturally responsive teaching. This work led to an IES funded Research Practice Partnership Grant (R305H190053) that supported the iterative development of an action research professional development curriculum (e.g., activities, case studies, and specific teaching strategies) that can be offered to secondary teachers, is adaptable to various content areas, and that can be paired with teacher action research groups for transformative professional development.

... future community members. 

In 2021, the Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER) was invited to join two community-based collaborations focused on expanding access to home visiting programs for the families of young children (birth to age 5). In both collaborations, PEER’s role is to support the continuous quality improvement (CQI) of home visiting services, including the enrollment of new families. Both collaborations are funded by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Greater Stamford Parenting Partnership (GSPP) is led by Family Centers and Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut, with support from Stamford Cradle to Career, Child Development Infoline, and PEER. Greater Norwalk Home Visiting Partnership (GNHVP), is a collaboration led by Family & Children’s Agency and Odyssey Family Executive Center of South Norwalk, Inc., with support from Maritime Odyssey Preschool and PEER.

The current CQI projects aim to understand families’ experiences with home visiting services, including potential barriers to enrollment and participation. In the first phase of this project, PEER conducted a review of the literature on home visiting that identified individual, interpersonal, organizational, and community factors associated with participation in home visiting. For example, research suggests that parental age, perceived stigma related to home visiting, and the orientation of programs towards mothers may influence families’ decisions to enroll.

PEER worked with the GSPP lead organizations to use information from this literature review to design a family survey that could illuminate barriers to and facilitators of engagement in home visiting. Each of the lead GSPP organizations administered a personalized version of the survey to their families this summer. Both Family Centers and Child Guidance Center said they found the results interesting but that the survey left unanswered questions about families’ experiences. The GNHVP lead organizations had similar questions after conducting their own annual surveys.

Both GSPP and GNHVP agreed that it would be valuable for PEER to go deeper into understanding these questions and that collaborating on a family survey could illuminate barriers to and facilitators of engagement in home visiting. Each of the lead GSPP organizations administered a personalized version of the survey to their families this summer. Both Family Centers and Child Guidance Center said they found the results interesting but that the survey left unanswered questions about families’ experiences. The GNHVP lead organizations had similar questions after conducting their own annual surveys.

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Our research focus for 2021-24 is on providing evidence to support the School District of Philadelphia’s (SDP) goal for all students to graduate prepared for college or careers. Our work follows two strands of research.

Strand #1: Our systems-supporting research studies will aid the district in navigating new statewide graduation requirements as the district makes plans to accommodate alternative pathways and respond to increased capacity needs to promote high school completion under the new policy.

Strand #2: While our research agenda will support strategies to ensure every SDP high school student is well supported to graduate on time and college-prepared, we also have identified a specific need to focus on the transition to high school for English Learners and students with disabilities, who, together, constitute over a quarter (27.2%) of the high school student population in the District. Exploring factors that support 9th grade transitions for ELs and students with disabilities will better support SDP in identifying weaknesses in instruction, staff professional development needs, and additional intervention for students who are experiencing multiple challenges early on in their high school trajectories.

In 2022, we completed two reports related to strand #1, Changing Requirements in Pennsylvania for High School Graduation: A Research Brief on Pennsylvania Act 158 and Changing the Finish Line: Implications of new graduation requirements in the School District of Philadelphia which have been used to help inform district and community partner efforts to support students to achieve the new PA graduation requirements, which go into effect for the graduating class of 2023.

One of the most important—and impactful—areas of work for the Research Alliance has revolved around the development of evidence-based frameworks for school improvement, support, and accountability. These frameworks are grounded in an understanding that schools are not simply collections of individual teachers and students; they are also organizations, with structures, practices, and norms that can either hinder or support strong teaching and learning. For more than a decade, the Research Alliance has collaborated with the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to create frameworks that help school and district leaders identify, measure, and nurture organizational capacities that make a difference for student outcomes.

The latest incarnation of this work focuses on NYC Schools Chancellor Banks’ vision of schools as “the pathway to economic prosperity”—where all students graduate well prepared for “a rewarding career, long-term economic security, and equipped to be a positive force for change.” With this goal in mind, the Research Alliance is helping the DOE reimagine its approach to assessing effective learning environments. Together, we are reviewing relevant research and grappling with important questions about how to define and measure success for students and schools: What do young people need to earn a high-quality degree and/or be employed with a meaningful, family-sustaining job? What skills and experiences will help students be “a positive force for change”? How can we measure and support progress toward these objectives, for all students, beginning in the earliest grades? Diverse Research Alliance studies—including those of Career and Technical Education, Computer Science and School Climate—are providing evidence to inform these conversations.

Through this joint work, the Research Alliance and the NYCDOE are building vital knowledge about the organizational factors that promote strong teaching and learning. This information is being used in multiple ways—to improve the district’s accountability and school support systems, to arm school leaders with a clearer sense of strengths they can build on and areas they need to improve, and to help families make more informed decisions about which schools their children should attend. We have sustained this collaboration for more than 10 years, across three different mayoral administrations, offering a powerful example of how a research-practice partnership can support continuous improvement in a large, complex system.
After a two year hiatus, our RPP focused on CS Integration efforts reconvened in August of this year and added five additional school district teams – bringing our partnership up to eight districts spread throughout the state. The addition of these schools to our work will help strengthen the growing grassroots efforts to broaden participation in Computer Science and was a source of celebration.

In addition to this growth, we are particularly excited by the inclusion of additional educators from some of our districts whose voices had not been a part of our original team make-up. Thanks to a grant from the Google CS-ER program, we were able to include special educators, paraprofessionals, and math instructional coaches in several of our district teams. These voices are critical to the overall goals of our RPP – making sure that we are truly bringing CS to all students. The one-year pilot grant – focused specifically on studying the supports educators need to integrate computational thinking to engage neurodiverse math learners – was also an example of our long term vision for the Workforce Ready (WFR) RPP.

By including a diversity of participant perspectives, the RPP will have a more successful understanding of our research questions, which focus on breaking down the nuances of the problems school districts face when integrating CS, learning how to navigate those problems in culturally conscientious ways, and embracing the growing prevalence of CS in our community workforces by connecting them back to the K-8 classroom.

With a commitment from the Alfond Family Foundation to support the RPP over the next three years, we are able to seek additional funding (from Google and others) to support initiatives the RPP develops to meet emerging problems of practice. We are thankful for the support and the stability it offers as we continue to dream and discover together.

Speaking of discovery, a highlight from our summer institute with participants was an RPP participant-designed field trip to a local lumber yard. Building on his personal relationships, one of WFR’s teacher leaders went into the community and helped coordinate an eye-opening excursion to Hancock Lumber. WFR members were given a tour of the facility and shown the key CS practices and skills employed by the workers each day. From the outside, Hancock Lumber is very much like every other lumber yard but on the inside, it is a clear example that our traditional Maine economies are changing and changing quickly. Teachers were inspired to dive into our work this year thanks to the community connections of one member. We will lean heavily on these assets as an RPP as we move forward and are excited to say that CS is, indeed, everywhere!