

Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships: Supporting Early Childhood Education in Connecticut



Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



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November 21, 2015



PEER

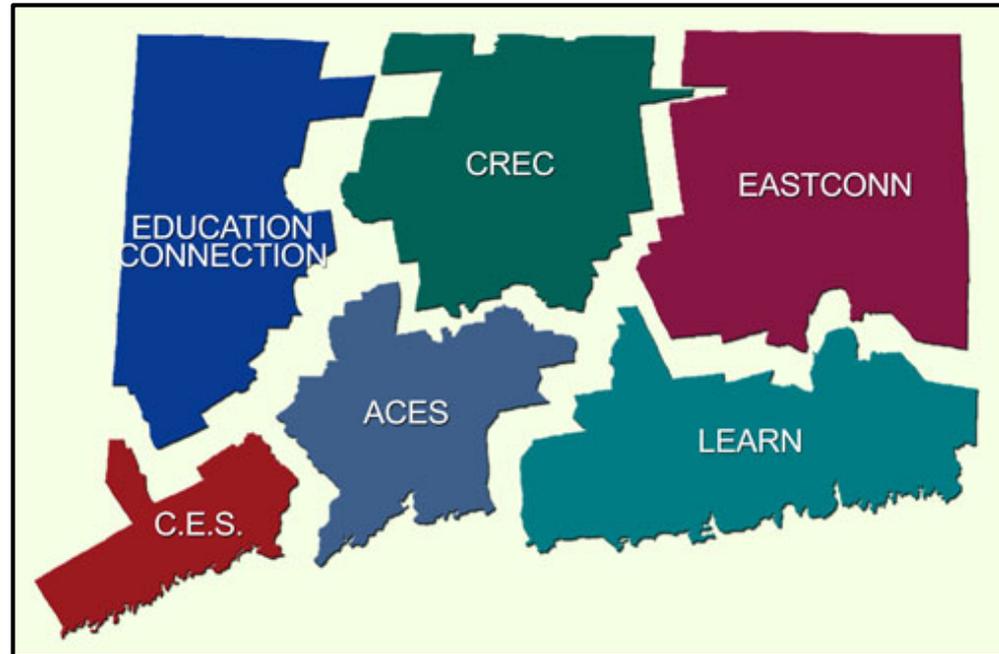
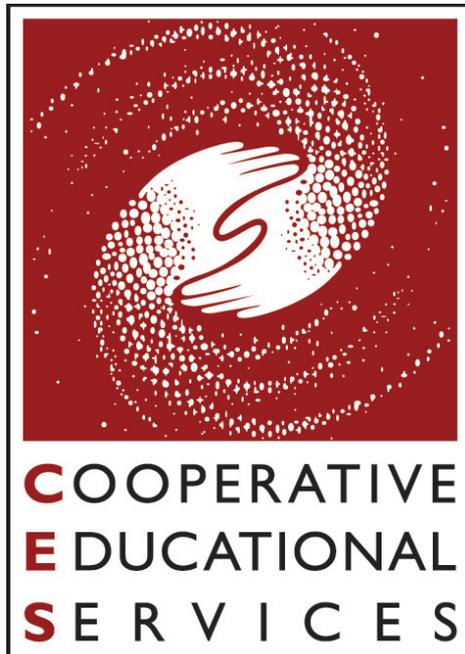
Partnership for Early Education Research

Objectives

- Provide an overview of researcher-practitioner partnerships and their benefits
- Discuss regional resources related to researcher-practitioner partnerships
- Highlight the work of a Connecticut researcher-practitioner partnership and how participants can become involved in this work

What is C.E.S.?

- Cooperative Educational Services, one of CT's six Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs)



About C.E.S.

- **Mission:** To identify and provide quality educational opportunities for educators, students, families, and communities in coastal Fairfield County, Connecticut.



C.E.S. Early Childhood Education Goals

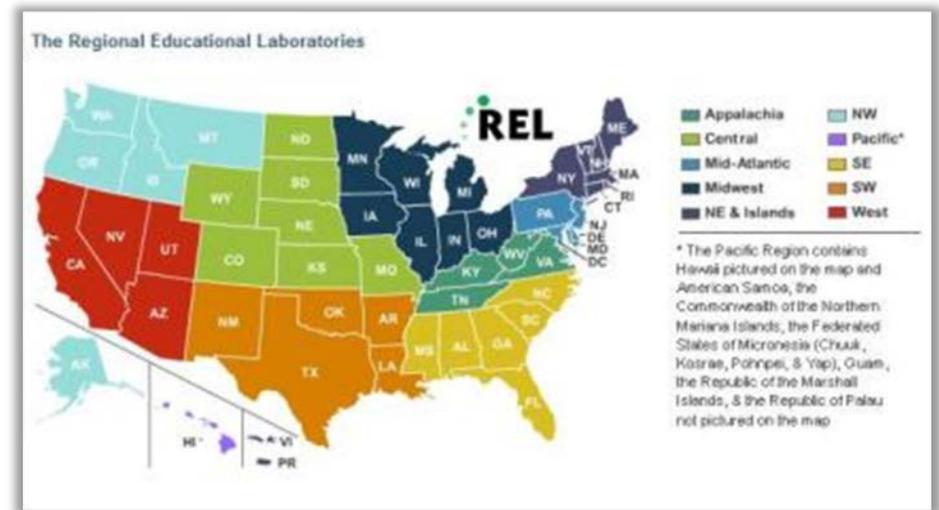
1. Develop a model in-house School Readiness program as part of a regional ECE professional development and technical assistance services to schools, programs and families.
2. Establish a program of scientifically informed preschool professional development that is accessible to providers in the region.
3. Engage higher education and regional teacher preparation programs in developing professionals prepared to educate children and students who generally enter the public educational system behind their statewide age cohort.

C.E.S.'s interest in Collaborative Research

- Collaborative research can:
 - Give public educational systems better scientific knowledge that allows them to affect systems accountability and goal-oriented learning for young children.
 - Increase public investment in and expectations for substantial growth and reduced initial learning disparities.
 - Provide the tools to produce early educational gains that can be sustained throughout the public school experience.

What is a Regional Educational Laboratory?

- Network of 10 RELs across the country
- Help states and districts use research and data to inform policy and practice with the goal of improving student outcomes
- Funded by USED Institute of Education Sciences

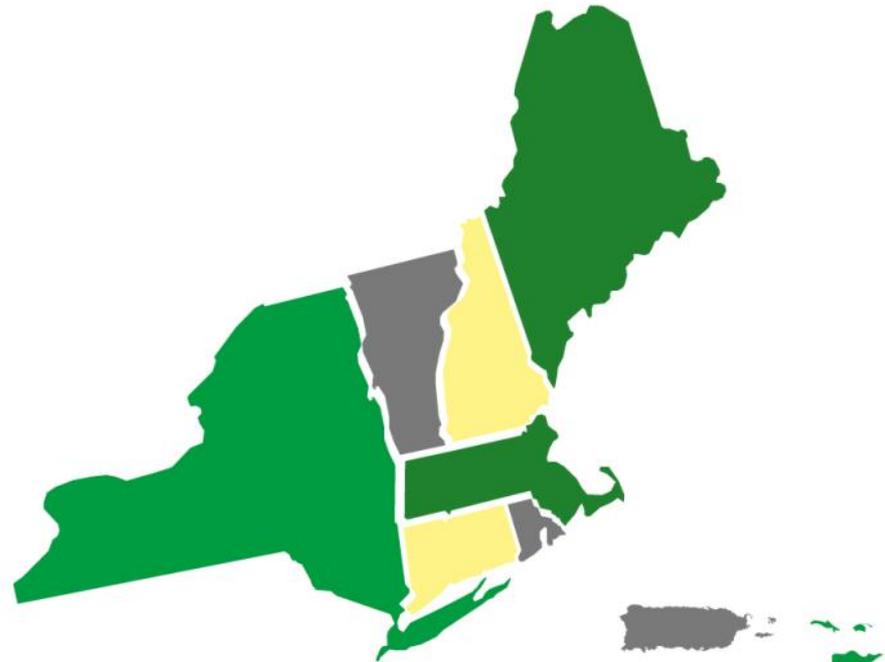


ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/



REL Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI) States and Territories

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New York
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- US Virgin Islands
- Vermont



REL-NEI Outreach: 2014 Year-End Statistics

CONTACT LIST

+13%

mailing list
growth

+37%

contacts beyond
the NEI region



603 FOLLOWERS (+62%)



28 BLOG POSTS

TOTAL EVENTS AND
CONVENINGS

74

2166

TOTAL EVENT
PARTICIPANTS

3254

TOTAL EVENT
REGISTRANTS

+22%

FEEDBACK SURVEYS
PROCESSED



webinar
technology use

+46%



What is a REL-NEI Research Alliance?



REL-NEI Research Alliances

Each alliance addresses one or more regional priorities:

- Early Childhood Education Research Alliance
- English Language Learners Alliance
- Northeast College and Career Readiness Research Alliance
- Northeast Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance
- Northeast Rural Districts Research Alliance
- Puerto Rico Research Alliance for Dropout Prevention
- Urban School Improvement Alliance
- US Virgin Islands College and Career Readiness Research Alliance



REL-NEI Resources

- Publications
- Bridge Events
- Skill-Builder Webinars
- Online Professional Development
- Reference Desk
- Blogs and Newsletters

<http://www.relnei.org/>



Origin of PEER



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PEER

Partnership for Early Education Research

What is PEER?

- Alliance among early childhood stakeholders in Bridgeport, Norwalk, and Stamford
 - Classroom-level practitioners
 - Administrators
 - Child advocates
 - Policymakers
 - Researchers
- Funded in 2014 by U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences

Alignment among Management Team Members

- Shared emphasis on **practitioner**-oriented research that can drive policy and practice
- C.E.S. and PEER serve the same three priority school districts
- Roles of core partners:
 - C.E.S. serves as convener/liaison
 - Yale contributes research expertise
 - EDC contributes collaborative research expertise

PEER Organizational Structure

Affiliate Members

Primary Responsibilities: Input on Alliance research agenda and direction of Alliance & assist with knowledge utilization/dissemination activities. Expert advisors will also review study reports prior to publication.

Larger EC Community

Additional School
District Representatives

EC Centers

Home-based Childcare
Providers

EC advocates

Community-based
organizations

University Depts. of
Education and EC
preparation programs

Community funders

State Head Start

Expert Advisors

Walter Gilliam
Mike Lopez

Participating Members

Primary Responsibilities: Input on Alliance research agenda, facilitate data collection (primary & secondary) and provide data, participate in Alliance workshops (as appropriate), & assist with knowledge utilization/dissemination activities.

Community Teams Include (at a minimum): School Superintendent or designee, school district director of early childhood, school district data management representative, Head Start representative(s), and School Readiness representative(s).

Bridgeport, Norwalk, & Stamford Community Teams

School District
Superintendent or
designee
Director of Early
Childhood
Director of Data
Management
Head Start
School Readiness

Core Members

Primary Responsibilities for Key Members: Develop Alliance research agenda, facilitate data collection (primary & secondary), review reports, & assist with knowledge utilization/dissemination activities.

Alliance Management Team

Yale University
C.E.S.
EDC

Key Members

CSDE Reps
OEC Reps
Community Team Reps

PEER Goals



PEER Capacity Building Progress

- Engaged with potential partners
- Developed communication structures
- Held two agenda-setting workshops with stakeholders
- Applied for research grant involving PEER partners
- Developing data sharing agreements
- Planning to fund research agenda

Potential Research Topics



Potential Types of Research

- Review of scientific literature on best practices
- Examining links between practices and outcomes
- Examining effects of policies
- Exploring predictors of student success/failure

What's Next for PEER

- Finalize research agenda
- Administer early childhood educator survey on assessment practices
- Organize early childhood conference (Spring 2016)
- Secure funding for pursuing research agenda

Benefits of Local Partnerships Like PEER

- Bridge the gap between researchers and practitioners
- Use resources more efficiently
- Make data more relevant and useable
- Give research a key role in guiding practice and improving outcomes for children
- Example: Consortium on Chicago School Research

How can you get involved?

- Advocate for research partnerships in your district and in Connecticut
- Support data-sharing with research partners
- Suggest ideas for possible funders

Thank you!



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Learn more about PEER at
<http://peer.yale.edu>



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Partnership for Early Education Research