

Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs)

Title I, Education Sciences Reform Act

Recognizing that some districts face challenges with recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, specifically teachers of color and indigenous teachers, REL Midwest and school districts in Minnesota have formed the Supporting Inclusive and Diverse Educator Environments (SIDEE) partnership with support from the Minnesota Department of Education, the state teachers' union, and the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota. The partnership's goal is to develop an approach that schools can use to cultivate and sustain a culture and working conditions that increase the retention of teachers of color and Indigenous teachers. The four main components to the SIDEE approach are as follows: training for school leaders and staff on cultural proficiency, continuous leadership coaching on building an inclusive school culture and supporting teachers of color and Indigenous teachers, providing teacher peer support through affinity groups, and developing connections between teachers and mentors of the same racial and ethnic background.

DESCRIPTION

The Regional Educational Laboratory program (REL) is composed of a national network of ten regional labs that help states and districts systematically use data and research to improve student outcomes and support their school improvement efforts. Created in 1965 and currently authorized under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, RELs carry out three broad types of work: applied research; dissemination of findings from rigorous research; and technical support for use of research. The current REL contracts were awarded in FY 2021 with one REL contract awarded last year for the 2022-2027 cycle. Much of the work is conducted through REL research-practitioner partnerships where researchers and educators work together on a problem and generate solutions that improve student outcomes. During pandemic recovery, RELs have provided evidence-based resources and guidance to support teaching and learning for states, school districts, educators, families, and caregivers.

FUNDING HISTORY (in millions)

FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 PRESIDENT'S REQUEST
\$57.02	\$58.73	\$58.73	\$60.70

IMPACT OF PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

The president's FY 2024 budget increases funding for the REL program by \$2 million in contrast to the flat funding it received in FY 2023. The budget justification recognizes that RELs provide expert advice, including training and technical assistance, to help states and school districts apply proven research findings in their school improvement efforts. Given the extraordinary needs of states and districts during ongoing pandemic recovery and the Administration's desire that states invest in evidence-based interventions, an increased investment in the REL program will positively impact the generation of applied research, the dissemination of findings, and technical support for the use of research.

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