

Video Transcript

Discover REL Central

ROBERT J. MARZANO: I really believe that if K-12 education was aware of what's available through the RELs, they would be able to solve problems, right now, they can't solve.

CARRIE GERMEROTH: At the Regional Education Laboratory Central, we work with seven states in our region: Colorado, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Missouri, and Kansas.

We work with our stakeholders to address high-leverage needs and we do this through three primary ways: we provide training, coaching and technical support, we conduct applied research, and then we also disseminate evidence-based research in ways, that are more easily understandable to our stakeholders.

ROBERT J. MARZANO: Capacity-building is one the major emphases of our REL and of all RELs.

JOSH STEWART: Really, when you think about it, a lot of these school districts or local education agencies have programs that they're implementing but they just, sometimes don't have the tools or resources in order to study that. And so the real goal is to provide them with resources and tools to build their own capacity to conduct their own evaluations

MARY POINTEK: It's multiple ways of working with people to help them strengthen what they do but also to build the capacity and knowledge they have so they can continue to apply it across other programs or other services or other content areas.

ROBERT J. MARZANO: It's not we just, we come in and do a project for them, or do an evaluation or write a report, when we're done, they can do things that they couldn't do before. And it's at all levels, I mean, it's at the state department level but also at the district level.

TRUDY CHERASARO: What we do really well is that we have really strong relationships and partnerships with the educators in our region.

CARRIE GERMEROTH: REL Central have developed 10 research partnerships to address high-leverage needs in our region.

We collaboratively work with our diverse group of stakeholders in these partnerships to develop coherent research agendas and goals.

MARY KLUTE: We really take to heart the idea that all of our work should come from our region. And so, we don't approach this work with our own agendas. We really do take the time to talk the people in our region, find out what really matters to them, and then really try to design all of our work around that.

JOSH STEWART: We're really working with our stakeholders to look at the issues that are most important to them. And to the stakeholders within their region. And so, I think it's much more needs-driven as opposed to research for the sake of research.

MARY POINTEK: We don't come with sort of our programs, here's what we do for you, it's, what do you need? And how can we bring our sort of knowledge and sort of services and experience to bare and to help you do what you do better.

CARRIE GERMEROOTH: In areas, especially in rural communities, relationships are so important. That's how, in rural areas, people do business, it's all based on relationships.

DOUG GAGNON: Each lab gets one topic area that they bring the other nine RELs together on to create solutions too and share best practices and etc. So, rural is ours.

Over 80% of the school districts within the region are classified as either remote towns or rural districts. And rural schools, they aren't a monolith, they differ in what they look like and their successes and their challenges. But at the same time, they're by definition rural so they are less populous and they're more remote and so that does create some similarities as well.

Rural issues take on national prominence in recent years and as one of the most rural regions in the country, and the leader of across REL work in rural education, REL Central could play an important role in bringing evidence to bare on policy to practice throughout rural schools.

MARY KLUTE: It's really rewarding work for me to do as a researcher because I feel like the work I'm doing really has an impact and it's really helping somebody.

ROBERT J. MARZANO: So, it's this huge untapped resource. I mean, they really provide states with access to expertise. You know, it's just really unparalleled. So, I think it's really important work.

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