

Introducing the Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline in South Dakota to Alleviate Teacher Shortages Partnership



South Dakota is facing a worsening teacher shortage. With approximately 10,000 teachers across the state, the number of unfilled teacher openings in December rose from 111 in 2021 to 176 in 2022. Members of this new partnership in South Dakota are looking to develop new pathways into teaching for paraprofessionals who want to be able to become teachers while continuing to work in South Dakota schools. REL Central will help partners learn more about how to build pathways for paraprofessionals and address any barriers to their pursuit of teaching credentials. A particular focus of the project will be to help partners design and implement mentoring that is tailored to the needs of paraprofessionals. Partnership members include representatives from the South Dakota Board of Regents, South Dakota Department of Education, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, Dakota State University and several districts and schools across the state.

Resource Roundup

[REL Central Blog: How REL Central is Supporting Math Achievement in the Central Region](#)

When the 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, also known as The Nation's Report Card) results were released in October 2022, educators, policymakers, and journalists immediately began to dig into the findings—and just as immediately had major concerns. As the first NAEP assessment since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the results provided a snapshot of the pandemic's impacts on student achievement. Although scores fell in both math and reading in grades 4 and 8, the [decline in math scores](#) was particularly precipitous, with grade 4 scores dropping 5 points and grade 8 scores dropping 8 points. Our [latest blog](#) details how REL Central is supporting several math partnerships in the Central region to change how students experience math, improve math achievement, and work to reverse this trend.



[Archived REL Central Webinar: Supporting a More Diverse Teacher Workforce Research and Promising Approaches: Efforts in Colorado](#)

In case you missed it, check out this archived REL Central webinar on teacher diversity in Colorado, teacher diversity trends nationwide, the student-teacher diversity gap at national and state levels, and how students benefit from having a diverse teacher workforce. Learn about the research behind teacher diversity, recruitment, and retention and the innovative strategies that our partners at the Colorado Department of Education, the University of Northern Colorado, Calhan School District, and the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs are using to support diverse teachers from teacher preparation onward.

Where in the World is REL Central?



In January, REL Central and the Partnership for Strengthening Culture-based Elementary Math Education in Standing Rock held its first Design Institute to begin conceptualizing what culture-based math instruction might look like in Standing Rock schools. The design team, which includes teachers, administrators, and Native language experts from Sitting Bull College, discussed how to collaborate, on what, and how the REL can help support their efforts. The session also included a discussion on the design team's initial vision for math improvement on Standing Rock, improvement frameworks and tools that may be helpful to clarify the challenge and support a comprehensive approach to improvement, and the intended outcomes of the work. Participants were especially interested in the design of culture-based math materials from Alaska and Hawai'i, which REL Central presented as examples of culture-based math in Indigenous settings.

REL Central also recently developed a [fact sheet](#) to share resources on culturally based education. Check it out if you're interested in learning more about how to infuse culture into your own classroom!

Coming Up Next...

Stay tuned for our next newsletter for more news about our work, additional resources, and updates on our partnership work!

Connect with Us



For more frequent updates, please follow us on Twitter [@RELCentral!](#)