

February 2024 Newsletter

REL Southwest partners with educators and policymakers in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas to improve learner outcomes.

Message from the director

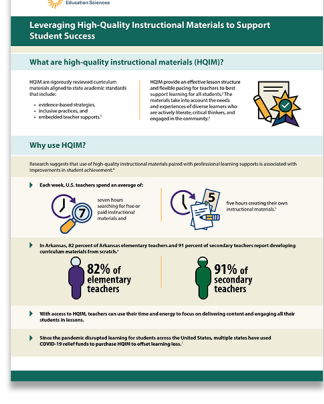


What's on the horizon for 2024?

There is a lot to celebrate as we kick off the second year of REL Southwest's current five-year cycle of work. Each state in our region initiated new partnerships committed to improving student outcomes. In this message from REL Southwest Director Amy Feygin, we share a sneak peek at what is coming in 2024.

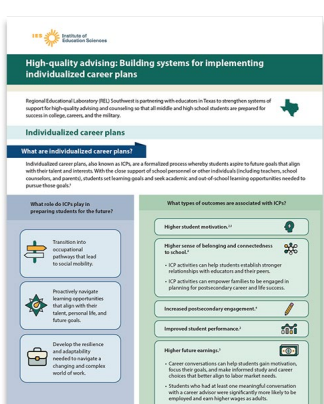
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Infographics on high-quality instructional materials and advising



Leveraging high-quality instructional materials to support student success

What are high-quality instructional materials? This recent [infographic](#) describes high-quality instructional materials and why they matter for student success. It also details how the [Building Pathways for Student Success](#) partnership is supporting Arkansas in implementing the [Arkansas Initiative for Instructional Materials](#).

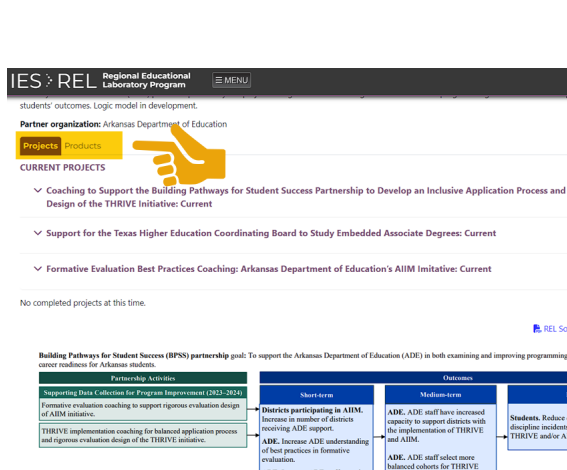


High-quality advising: Building systems for implementing individualized career plans

The [Texas Education Agency Tri-Agency Workforce Priorities](#) partnership aims to strengthen systems of support for high-quality advising and counseling so that all middle and high school students are prepared for success in college, careers, and the military. This new [infographic](#) describes the purpose of individualized career plans, also known as ICPs, how they prepare students for the future, and the practices that schools can adopt to implement high-quality ICPs.

New features on partnership pages

The REL Southwest website offers convenient features to help users navigate the project work and resources for each partnership. From the [About REL Southwest](#) homepage, users can select a specific partnership and view the logic model that outlines activities and anticipated outcomes for that partnership. After users open a partnership's page, they can read a short summary and click the following tabs: Projects and Products.



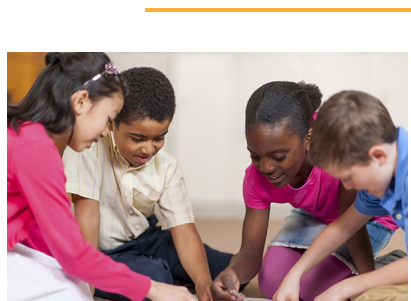
Highlights from partnership activities across the region



Effective teacher collaboration to support English learner students

On November 8–11, 2023, the 28th Annual La Cosecha Dual Language Conference brought together more than 3,000 educators, caregivers, researchers, and policymakers to network and share best practices related to dual language education. At the conference, members of the [Southwest English Learner Literacy](#) partnership presented on a collaboration framework to show how educators can effectively work with their busy colleagues to support English learner student instruction.

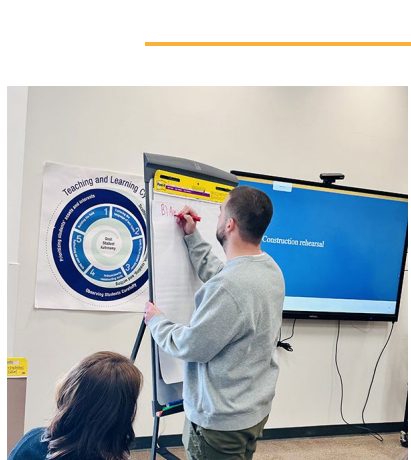
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Connecting academic standards and policy for play-based learning in Oklahoma

At a two-day training event on January 9–10, 2024, REL Southwest introduced the [Leading Early Childhood Achievement and Development](#) partnership's professional learning series to district and school leaders in Oklahoma. The presenters defined play-based learning and made connections to the Oklahoma [Academic Standards for Prekindergarten \(preK\) and Kindergarten](#) and Oklahoma's [Play to Learn Act](#). Attendees gained insights into fostering high-quality teacher-student interactions and implementing play-based learning across preK and kindergarten classrooms.

[Event Archive](#)



Reuniting to develop Write to Succeed in New Mexico

REL Southwest brought instructional coaches from New Mexico districts back together on January 22–23, 2024, in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, for the Write to Succeed Spring Coach Institute. Expanding on training held last fall, REL Southwest experts helped coaches deepen their understanding of [evidence-based literacy practices](#) and scaffolded writing instruction.

[Event Archive](#)

Upcoming REL Southwest presentations

53rd Annual Conference of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)

March 26–30, 2024 | New Orleans, Louisiana

REL Southwest experts will present at the 2024 NABE Conference, which advocates for educational equity and academic excellence for bilingual/multilingual students in a global society. [Learn more.](#)

- **March 29:** Scaffolded Writing Instruction for Middle Grade English Learners: The Write to Succeed Professional Learning Study (4:10–5:00 p.m. CT)

Teacher Leader Summit

May 28–30, 2024 | New Orleans, Louisiana

REL Southwest experts will present research on best practices to support early career teachers and facilitate a panel discussion with local educators at the Teacher Leader Summit. This event brings together Louisiana educators and content experts to develop skills in preparation for the 2024/25 school year. [Learn more.](#)

Partnerships



Building Pathways for Student Success (BPSS) Partnership

Helping Arkansas educators implement and evaluate high-quality interventions and initiatives that strengthen students' college and career readiness.



Supporting Early Career and Aspiring Teachers (SECAT) Partnership

Helping Louisiana educators nurture and sustain early career teachers to build a more diverse and supported teacher workforce.



Leading Early Childhood Achievement and Development (LEAD) Partnership

Helping Oklahoma early childhood educators deliver developmentally appropriate practices that improve student outcomes.



Southwest English Learner Literacy (SWELL) Partnership

Helping New Mexico educators deliver high-quality literacy instruction that supports all students, including English learner students, in developing stronger literacy and writing skills.



Texas Education Agency Tri-Agency Workforce Priorities (TTWP) Partnership

Helping Texas educators provide high-quality advising and counseling that prepares students for postsecondary success and meets the state's workforce needs.



TOOLKIT: PROVIDING READING INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS IN TEXAS

REL Southwest is partnering with Texas state and local education agencies on a comprehensive toolkit to support grade 6–8 educators and administrators in addressing gaps in reading achievement exacerbated by the pandemic. The toolkit will draw on the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide [Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4–9](#) to meet the needs of students reading below grade level.

Contact us

Please contact us for more information about the content in this newsletter or to speak to a member of our staff. We look forward to hearing from you.