

November 2023 Newsletter

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

Leveraging research to inform policy in Texas



REL Southwest study informs policy to promote more equitable funding levels for Texas community colleges

Findings from a recent REL Southwest study, which examined equitable funding levels for Texas community colleges, influenced the development of Texas House Bill 8, an innovative new model for funding the state's 50 public community colleges. REL Southwest is proud that our research is supporting the vital role of community colleges in providing individuals from diverse backgrounds with affordable pathways to careers, financial stability, and socioeconomic mobility.

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Celebrating Indigenous students

November is National Native American Heritage Month! To commemorate the occasion and share how we support Indigenous students, we gathered news, events, and resources for you to explore.



Lunch and learn: Supporting Indigenous English learner students

To kick off the U.S. Department of Education's National Native American Heritage Month activities, REL Southwest hosted a virtual lunch and learn for Department staff on October 31. The event discussed our work promoting native language preservation and culturally responsive education practices for supporting Indigenous students while highlighting a two-part mini-documentary, [Walking in Both Worlds: Native American Students and Language Acquisition](#). The mini-documentary centers on educators from Cuba and Jemez, New Mexico, and describes strategies they are using to preserve native languages and support English language development.



REL Southwest resources supporting Indigenous English learner students

To affirm and celebrate Indigenous English learner students, we gathered resources and research from across the Regional Educational Laboratories. REL Southwest is committed to working with partners across our five-state region to support native language preservation and Indigenous English learner students.

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Sowing culturally responsive educators to cultivate success for Indigenous students

Research has shown that students thrive when schools center their lived experiences using culturally responsive curricula and instruction. At two recent events, we partnered with the Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) to host researchers and education leaders for a discussion on the SFIS Educator Growth System, a framework grounded in culturally responsive instruction that currently includes a guidebook and performance rubrics for teachers and principals. Learn more about the events and the SFIS Educator Growth System.

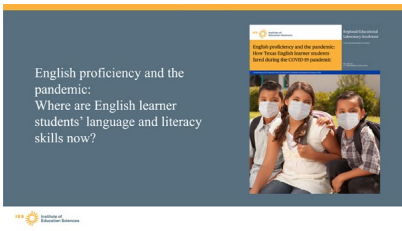
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Events on English learner student literacy



Showcasing the Seal of Biliteracy at the Embassy Language Forum

On October 17, the Embassy Language Forum brought together Embassy partners to share how each country supports language learning in the United States. REL Southwest researcher Brenda Arellano shared an overview of our [impact study](#) on biliteracy seals in New Mexico. The event was cohosted by the International Affairs Office and the Office of English Language Acquisition at the U.S. Department of Education in support of the department's "[Raise the Bar: Lead the World](#)" initiative.



Discussing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on English learner students' English language proficiency

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted learning for all students in the United States, but students who are English learners faced particular challenges. REL Southwest hosted a [webinar event](#) on November 14 to discuss two recent reports on changes in English learner students' English language proficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers and panelists from the Office of English Language Acquisition, REL Southwest, WIDA, Texas Education Service Center – Region 20, and Albuquerque Public Schools presented on study findings and discussed what they are seeing in their districts today.

[Webinar Archive](#)

Infographic on evidence-based writing practices



Exploring the evidence behind the Write to Succeed program in New Mexico

New Mexico prioritizes equitable educational opportunities and achievement for English learner students. Through the Southwest English Learner Literacy (SWELL) partnership, REL Southwest is working with New Mexico educators to develop, implement, refine, and test Write to Succeed, a professional learning program aimed at improving English literacy skills for all students. The [Evidence-Based Writing Practices to Support English Learner Students](#) infographic explains the research that informs the Write to Succeed approach, which weaves together a scaffolded writing approach with culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. Learn how evidence from four What Works Clearinghouse practice guides informed the Write to Succeed approach.

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.