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Message From the Director

Though the school year is winding down, our work across the Pacific is just heating up. Our research alliances are working diligently and collaboratively to identify, meet, and exceed their goals for 2014 and beyond.

In this issue, we share the progress being made by the Pacific research alliances in each of the seven entities served by REL Pacific. You'll find updates on REL research projects, announcements about past and future workshops that integrate the best in education research and practice, and a glimpse into the state of education as reported by local media outlets. Following our regional updates, we offer new research and resources to add to your toolkits as administrators, educators, parents, and community members.

Although similar in climate, each of our entities face unique education challenges. We hope you enjoy learning more about what's happening across the region, and as always, please don't hesitate to contact us with questions or requests for assistance.

Nolan Malone

Director, REL Pacific at McREL International



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Research Alliance Updates

American Samoa Alliance for College and Career Readiness

In January, the REL Pacific team met with the American Samoa Alliance for College and Career Readiness in the capital city of Pago Pago in support of a technical assistance project on using student longitudinal data systems to increase college and career readiness in American Samoa. REL Pacific and the American Samoa Department of Education have negotiated a data-sharing agreement to prepare for the upcoming project.

Following this productive trip, Drs. Ceri Dean, Phillip



American Samoa Alliance for College and Career Readiness

Herman, and Daisy Carreon and Ms. Susan Shebby from REL Pacific met with the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE), American Samoa Community College (ASCC), representatives from various departments in the Governor's Office, and private organizations concerned with vocational education and life readiness for American Samoa's youth. Meeting attendees discussed definitions of college, career, and life readiness in the American Samoa context, as well as definitions of student-level data indicators that might prove useful in tracking students' long term trajectories. The Integrated Data Services Office gave a presentation on the electronic data system used within the ASDOE; the presentation highlighted available data, data that is yet to be collected, and the breadth of publicly available reports through the current system.

In the same week, senior leadership at the ASDOE participated in a workshop on using REL Pacific's *Education Logic Model (ELM)* application for the DOE's five-year strategic planning. For more on the ELM application, please see page 11.

For questions, please contact Phillip Herman at pherman@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8187.

Education in the News

American Samoa Youth Employment Program Receives Funds

The acting Governor of American Samoa, Lemanu Peleti Mauga, recently signed into law an additional appropriation of \$200,000 for the American Samoa Government Summer Youth Employment Program. These funds open the door to a 40% increase in participation in the program, which provides American Samoan youth with professional experience and growth in both the public and private sectors and helps to put them on the path to career and life readiness.



Lemanu Peleti Mauga

Research Alliance Updates

Alliance for Engaging Families and Communities in Education



REL Pacific and partner organization CEDDERS continued planning a technical assistance project for the Guam alliance, guided by the question, "What resources can be used to engage parents and community members in becoming partners with educators to support the education of their children?"

To assist the alliance in answering this question, REL Pacific is compiling a toolkit of resources that will include discussion protocols, templates, and strategies related to parent and community engagement.

For questions, please contact Jean Isip at jisip@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8181.

Education in the News

Meetings in Guam Pave the Way for Future Success

On March 26th, members of the Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Center and McREL International hosted the Pacific MATE Planning Meeting to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) education for the Pacific. This innovative project is made possible through funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) Advanced Technology Education Program. REL Pacific locally based consultants and governing board members joined MATE participants and other education stakeholders to discuss the technologies explored through the program and the potential implications for career opportunities for participants.



The REL Pacific Governing Board met for its first meeting of Year 3 on March 25–26, 2014 in Tamuning & Hagåtña, Guam. Attendees discussed progress being made on projects in the Pacific and were also provided an orientation to REL Pacific's *Education Logic Model (ELM)*, the *Program Outcomes, Measures, and Targets (POMT)* applications, and the *Five Steps to Structuring Data-informed Conversations and Action in Education* guide, which provides a framework for using data to drive decision making and strategic action. Following these discussions, locally based consultants from each of the seven entities served by REL Pacific met with board members to discuss successes, challenges, and new opportunities for future projects to better serve the Pacific community.

Research Alliance Update

Hawaii Partnership for Educational Research Consortium (HPERC)



Utilization of Hawaii-Specific, Publicly Available Data Sources gathering.

The first Hawaii Partnership for Educational Research Consortium (HPERC) advisory committee meeting of 2014 kicked off in January in Honolulu. REL Pacific facilitated while members debriefed on the well-attended 2013 HPERC Research Symposium at the East-West Center and reviewed feedback survey results to inform planning for the 2014 symposium. The upcoming project, Utilization of Hawaii-Specific, Publicly Available Data Sources, was also discussed. On February 26th, a brainstorming session at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, with approximately 40 participants, got the project off to an enthusiastic start.

Research Alliance Update

Pacific Alliance for Student Success (PASS)

The Hawaii State Department of Education Office of Strategic Reform provided an interactive map of Micronesian student enrollment, chronic absenteeism, and regular attendance rates in schools throughout Hawaii to PASS members. REL Pacific staff and PASS members attended the Highly Engaged Learning Placements (HELP) Symposium on May 2, which was coordinated by PASS member Vidalino Raatior. The HELP Symposium raises awareness around the needs of Pacific Island communities in Hawaii and features presentations from a team of researchers from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. This year's keynote speaker was UH Hilo researcher Dr. Denise Uehara, who presented on the preliminary findings of a five-year research study exploring the successes and challenges of Pacific Islander students at UH Hilo.



Graduating seniors from the Pacific Islands Studies Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Education in the News

Hawaii DOE Makes Progress in Hawaiian Education

Following the passage of a momentous bill in the State Legislature, the Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) will be adding an Office of Hawaiian Education (OHE) to oversee both a Hawaiian language immersion program, Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawaii, and new guidelines for Hawaiian culture instruction across state schools. The new policies set by the bill support the institution of Hawaiian values, language, and culture for students throughout the public school system. Funds and personnel will also be provided by the HIDOE for the creation and implementation of curricula, standards, performance assessment tools, and professional development for the 20 Kaiapuni schools and programs. The thirty-year-old Kaiapuni system was founded by grass-roots education leaders to preserve the Hawaiian language, now considered endangered.

In other education news, for the first time in ten years, the United States Secretary of Education made a visit to the state of Hawaii to congratulate the HIDOE on progressing from one of the lowest-performing school systems in the country to becoming a top five "rising star" in academic improvement. Secretary Duncan participated in a traditional Hawaiian greeting ceremony at Ka Waihona o Ka Naauao Public Charter School on the Waianae Coast, where he also met with education leaders to discuss state assessment tests for Kaiapuni students.



Secretary Duncan pounding kalo into poi at Waipahu High School.

The Utilization of Hawaii-Specific, Publicly Available Data Sources Competition

Submit a research project that makes use of data sources already publicly available in Hawaii for an opportunity to receive free technical assistance from REL Pacific.

The competition is open to education researchers in Hawaii interested in conducting research using publicly available data sources. Researchers are invited to review the guidance materials on the REL Pacific website, which include detailed information on these data sources, and submit a concept paper for consideration.



Five education researchers will be selected to receive technical assistance from REL Pacific throughout the course of their research projects. One researcher will be chosen to present his or her work at a national conference, sponsored by REL Pacific and HPERC.

For questions or more information, please visit <http://relpacific.mcrel.org/hperc-data-competition.html> or contact Nitara Dandapani at ndandapani@mcrel.org.

6 The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)

Research Alliance Updates

Marshall Islands Research Alliance

Although a planned research alliance meeting was not held in the Marshall Islands in March due to flooding from the recent king tides in Majuro, REL Pacific was able to meet with research alliance members in April to explore the IES publication, *Five Steps for Structuring Data-Informed Conversations and Action*. Alliance members specifically addressed the first step in the guide, *Setting the stage: recording questions of interest and data sources*. Alliance members also applied the *Education Logic Model (ELM)* application to plan for education programs related to optimizing data systems and strengthening teacher effectiveness. To read more

about the ELM application, please turn to page 11.

For questions, please contact Nitara Dandapani at ndandapani@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8185.



Education in the News

Makroro Education Scholarship Draws Community Support

In support of the Emson Makroro Development Education Scholarship, hundreds of Marshall Islanders gathered on Saturday, April 5th for the fourth annual 5K Fun Run. Participants met at the College of the Marshall Islands to promote healthful living, raise awareness around domestic abuse, and celebrate the life of the renowned educator, Emson Makroro. Makroro was a respected enrichment teacher who overcame great

hardship to obtain her advanced degree in Education Curriculum and Instruction through an online program. Her life came to an unexpected end when she was attacked and murdered by her husband. The incident raised awareness around domestic violence in the RMI, inspiring the passage of Bill 93, which provides protection to family members and counseling support for both the victims and offenders.



Archived Webinars

Recordings of our Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice (Bridge) events, *The Education Logic Model Applications: Logic Models Made Easy*, and *Impacting Teacher Quality through Human Resource Alignment* are now available online at <http://www.youtube.com/user/McRELSPCCO>.

For more information on the webinar, please contact Joanne O.S. Kelly at jkelly@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8186.

7 The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Research Alliance Updates

FSM Research Alliance

REL Pacific held research alliance meetings in all four federated states in the first quarter of 2014. In January, the FSM research alliance met on Yap at the College of Micronesia-FSM Yap Campus to discuss the upcoming project, *Exploring the Use of Education Data for Improving Student Outcomes in Yap*.

The REL Pacific team met with research alliances in Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Chuuk in March to discuss several 2014 projects:

- *Benchmarking Education Management Information Systems in the Federated States of Micronesia*
- *Strategic Human Resource Management and Teacher Effectiveness*
- *Environmental Scan on Teacher Absenteeism in the Pacific Region*

The REL Pacific team also introduced the newly-released *Education Logic Model (ELM)* application, and worked with members in Pohnpei, Kosrae, and Chuuk to set goals for their work over the next three years. Alliance members also used a template from the *Five Steps for Structuring Data-Informed Conversations and Action in Education* guide to begin identifying research questions and data.

For questions or more information on any of the projects in Kosrae, Pohnpei, or Chuuk, please contact Nitara Dandapani at ndandapani@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8185. For questions or more information on projects in Yap, please contact Daisy Carreon at dcarreon@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8180.



Upcoming Event

In support of the project, *Exploring the Use of Education Data for Improving Student Outcomes in Yap*, the FSM Department of Education and the FSM Research Alliance will be hosting the Education Data Institute, August 11-15, 2014 on the island of Yap. Several professional development workshops will be offered for data systems managers and teams, as well as for principals and coordinators. For more information on the summer institute, please contact Dominic Fanasog at dfanasog2006@yahoo.com.

Education in the News

Breakthrough Bill Boosts Communication Capacity

FSM President Manny Mori recently signed a groundbreaking telecommunication liberalization bill into law. This legislation has the potential to enable substantial progress in the areas of distance education, professional development, and general collaboration.

Research Alliance Updates

CNMI Alliance for College and Career Readiness

The CNMI alliance met on Saipan, the largest island in the fourteen-island CNMI chain, to discuss four major projects scheduled to be conducted in 2014:

- *College Readiness among High School Completers in American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*
- *College and Career Readiness Indicators: How Do We Know Our Students Are College and Career Ready?*
- *Exploring the Academic Readiness of Incoming Students to Northern Marianas College**
- *Exploring Patterns of Success at Northern Marianas College**

Northern Marianas College (NMC) and the CNMI Public School System (PSS) signed data-sharing agreements in support of these projects, marking the first formal collaboration on P-20 education in the CNMI.

In support of the project, *College and Career Readiness Indicators: How Do We Know Our Students Are College and Career Ready?*, leaders from the CNMI PSS, NMC, and REL Pacific hosted a workshop on college and career indicators. This workshop was open to all education stakeholders who were able to attend, including parents, educators, administrators, and researchers.

For questions, please contact Dr. Bethany Gleason at bgleason@mcrel.org or (808) 664-8182.

Education in the News

CNMI PSS and NMC Making Waves in Education



Northern Marianas College

In February of 2014, the Accrediting Commission on Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges reaffirmed Northern Marianas College's (NMC's) accreditation. NMC continues to provide opportunities for Pacific youth to progress in their professional, academic, and personal goals.

Congratulations are also in order to the CNMI PSS for their recent grant award of \$473,000 from the Department of the Interior (DOI). During a recent visit from the DOI, the CNMI PSS was recognized as a role model for the Pacific region.

*These studies have been proposed and are pending IES approval.

Research Alliance Updates

Palau Research Alliance

The Palau Research Alliance, which includes representatives from the Ministry of Education, Palau Community College, and the Ministry of Health, recently met to update and refine their goals for the next several years and to form workgroups to more effectively and efficiently address issues of interest. Collectively, the Palau Research Alliance focuses on the broad priority topics of strengthening teacher

effectiveness and optimizing data systems. Ministry of Education members will focus on student dropout, school consolidation, and student achievement on the Quality Assessment Test. Palau Community College group members will explore remediation and college readiness, and Ministry of Health members will set their sights on referrals for student health services.

Education in the News

Palau Community College Open Doors to Local High Schoolers

Palau Community College (PCC) hosted a Career & Technical Education Awareness Week March 11-13, 2014. More than 400 students from local high schools were invited to the college campus to encourage exploration of local college programs as they pursue

their higher education plans. Throughout the week, students were given presentations by instructors about their respective fields of teaching, as well as first-hand demonstrations by PCC students of the lessons learned in their current fields of study.



Participants at the first workshop in the series.

Ongoing Workshops

Early in 2014, the Palau Research Alliance met at Palau Community College to discuss the upcoming project, *Data Analysis Training in the Republic of Palau*. Following this meeting, staff from the Palau Ministry of Education, Palau Community College, and the Palau Ministry of Health participated in the first in a series data analysis workshops focused on developing research questions and exploring data quality. Dr. Robin Wisniewski will continue to facilitate the sessions, assisted by Drs. Isebong Asang and Daisy Carreon. For more information, please contact Robin Wisniewski at rwisniewski@mcrel.org or (303) 632-5536.

A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships is a publication of SEDL in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education. Written by family and community engagement experts Karen L. Mapp and Paul J. Kuttner, this new publication addresses an important challenge for educators: principals and teachers report that they value relationships with families, yet they receive little training for engaging families and say that they feel underprepared to develop these partnerships. Mapp and Kuttner outline a framework that focuses on helping both educators and family members develop the necessary skills, knowledge, confidence, and belief systems—the collective capacity—to sustain these important home-school relationships.

Partners in Education includes the U.S. Department of Education’s Dual Capacity-

Building Framework that is intended to serve as a scaffold for educators and policy makers planning new engagement initiatives and as a tool for facilitating dialogue among the varied stakeholders involved in these efforts. The framework

- Outlines the challenges that stakeholders must address to cultivate effective home-school partnerships;
- Explains the conditions that are integral to the success of family-school partnership initiatives and interventions;



Source: SEDL (2013). *Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*. Reproduced with permission.

- Identifies the desired intermediate capacity goals that should be the focus of family engagement policies and programs at the federal, state, and local level; and
- Describes the capacity-building outcomes for school and program staff as well as for families.

A free full-text version of the resource can be downloaded at <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/framework> on the SEDL website.

The Education Logic Model Application

IES recently released REL Pacific’s *Education Logic Model (ELM)* application, a simple downloadable computer app that guides users through creating a logic model, one step at a time. Throughout the process of creating a logic model, users can easily determine how data fit within the larger design of a program and how they relate to different program components. The app is fully interactive and runs locally on Google Chrome — no Internet connection is required.

How does it work?

Developed with funding from the Institute of Education Sciences, the ELM application takes the typical “how-to” guide to the next level, guiding users through a series of questions and providing opportunities to enter program resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Once all program information is entered, users will be prompted to draw lines between each component, illustrating their cause-and-effect relationships. The items can be grouped and color-coded to organize with ease. The end result is a printable logic model that functions as a map for the program team, visually connecting intended activities with intended outcomes.

Logic models are an invaluable tool for teachers, administrators, policy makers and evaluators for visually representing the structure, process, and goals of a program, both conceptual and actionable.

Logic models can contribute to the success of a program by:

- making the intention behind the program clear;
- introducing common language and references for collaborators in the program;
- defining resources and outlining activities, as in an action plan;
- showing measurable results as well as short-, mid-, or long-term effects;
- using a visual display as a proven and effective learning tool;
- illustrating the process of the program, speaking to its value beyond the measurable effects; and
- using theories of change to guide the planning process, making lessons learned more evident in the evaluation stage.

Did you know?

If you’ll be applying for a grant, logic models are a powerful – and often required – way to illustrate solid planning behind a future program. Specifically, the *Education Logic Model Application* is a highly recommended tool by the Arts in Education program under the United States Department of Education.

Want to know more about logic models?

In addition to the application, users may download the accompanying quick reference guides, *Logic Models: A Tool for Designing and Monitoring Program Evaluations*, and *Logic Models: A Tool for Effective Program Planning*, which introduce logic models as a tool to help education stakeholders plan and monitor program evaluations.

Visit the REL Pacific website to download! relpacific.mcrel.org/ELM.html

For more information on the Education Logic Model application, visit the REL Pacific website, www.relpacific.mcrel.org, or email Joanne O.S. Kelly at jkelly@mcrel.org. or (808) 664-8176

New REL Pacific Staff

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REL Pacific welcomes two new staff members, Ms. Johanna Carillo, Administrative Specialist, and Dr. Daisy Carreon, Research Specialist.



As the administrative specialist at McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds, Johanna provides administrative support to office personnel. Her duties include formatting documents, preparing information packets for meetings, copying, data entry and other related duties as assigned. Johanna also serves as receptionist for our offices, so when you call us, it's Johanna's voice you'll hear! Johanna has worked as an administrative assistant in both the transportation and dining industries, and most recently served as an event coordinator for Kamehameha Schools. She graduated with a diploma from Lahainaluna High School on Maui. As a wife and mother of four, Johanna enjoys spending her free time with her family.



As a research specialist at McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds, Dr. Daisy Carreon conducts research and evaluation studies of K–12 education programs. Her expertise is in quantitative analysis of large nationally representative databases and survey research. Daisy also serves as the lead for the Palau Research Alliance and the American Samoa Research Alliance, and co-lead for the FSM Research Alliance. Daisy has published peer-reviewed journal articles in the areas of program evaluation, racial and ethnic health disparities, and neighborhood and contextual effects. Prior to joining McREL, Daisy worked as a researcher at two University of California campuses (Irvine and Los Angeles) and holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and an M.P.H. in Community Health from these respective schools. When not working, she enjoys being outdoors and going on long walks with Durk, her dog.