

Creates and increases the use of research to improve education outcomes for schools, teachers, families, and children.

Research and Evaluation (R&E) maintains a portfolio of rigorous research assessing to what degree education policies, programs, and practices addressing significant education problems are effective, for whom they work, and under what conditions. R&E also maintains a portfolio of research and evaluation projects to provide relevant and timely analysis of information to improve the outcomes of education policies, programs, and practices for schools, teachers, and students. Finally, R&E provides education policymakers, researchers, school systems, program developers, and practitioners with the information they need to make informed (evidence-based) decisions about education policies, programs, and practices.

Rigorous Research and Evaluation

SRA/McGraw-Hill's Imagine It! Randomized Controlled Trial

R&E is conducting a national research study assessing the effectiveness of SRA/McGraw-Hill's Imagine It! reading and language arts program in elementary school classrooms. The grant is one of the largest of its kind and one of only three that IES has awarded in the scale-up evaluations categories in reading and writing. In partnership with other nationally recognized researchers, R&E staff are conducting their research in 12 districts and 48 schools, which include approximately 200 classrooms and more than 5,000 students. The study uses a multisite cluster randomized trial design and will determine (a) whether Imagine It! affects reading outcomes for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and (b) how the effects of Imagine It! vary across students, schools, and districts.

Louisiana Striving Readers Project Evaluation and Randomized Controlled Trial

R&E will conduct a 4-year randomized controlled trial study of the Voyager Passport Reading Journeys curriculum for struggling adolescent readers to assess whether this supplemental program affects reading outcomes for students relative to the "business as usual" control students. The study will also assess under which conditions the program has the greatest impact. This efficacy study will involve the random assignment of three cohorts of 1,200 sixth and seventh graders from 10 Title I middle schools and four districts in Louisiana over 3 years of data collection. The project is funded through a Striving Readers grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs.

Formative and Summative Program Evaluations

The Texas and Southeast Comprehensive Centers located at SEDL are two of the 15 regional centers established by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005. The centers' task is to provide technical assistance to the state education agencies (SEAs) in their respective regions as they work to implement the goals and programs of NCLB. The centers' work is focused on building the states' capacity to support districts and schools so they can meet the goals of NCLB. SEDL's Research and Evaluation staff are supporting the Texas and Southeast Comprehensive Centers by conducting an internal evaluation to document the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the services provided by the centers as well as the

progress made toward short- and long-term impacts on building each state's capacity to implement NCLB. The SEDL evaluators have collaborated with the program staff at each center to develop evaluation questions, objectives, and measures related to the goals and objectives of the centers. Evaluators have provided collaborative feedback throughout the project as center program staff worked to establish relationships with SEA staff and define the course of work in response to state priorities and requests for assistance. SEDL Evaluators have completed four annual evaluation reports documenting each center's activities using multiple data collection strategies (survey, interview, and archival data) with multiple sources (professional development participants, SEA staff, and center state liaisons).

Madison Parish Early Reading First Grant Evaluation

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, this project evaluates the implementation and impact of the Bright Futures Early Reading First Project on outcomes for children, teachers, classrooms, and families in Madison Parish, Louisiana. SEDL is implementing a quasi-experimental study design to measure and analyze gains in children's reading outcomes, teacher literacy knowledge, classroom quality, and parental involvement.

Explore! Program Evaluation

R&E is the external evaluator to further develop the Explore! Program, an interactive science and space program for school-age children in afterschool and library settings. In this primarily formative evaluation, SEDL is providing information through participant and trainer surveys and interviews regarding the development of new modules as well as the use of Web-based versus in-person professional development. This work is in partnership with the Lunar and Planetary Institute and Goddard Space Flight Center, and was funded by the International Polar Year Program at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Vision 2020: Ysleta Virtual School Program Evaluation

SEDL is conducting an evaluation of the Vision 2020: Ysleta Virtual School project, funded by the Virtual Learning Strand of the Texas Education Agency's Vision 2020 Cycle 2 grant. The evaluation is assessing program implementation and outcomes, and providing information for improvement. The Ysleta Virtual School project aims to provide high school students with computers and access to the Texas Virtual School Network to enable all district students, and especially those who are homebound, to complete course work online. In addition, teacher representatives are receiving professional development in integrating technology into instruction and in planning online lessons and assessments.

MyMoon Program Evaluation

In partnership with the Lunar Planetary Institute, R&E is evaluating a new educational portal, MyMoon: The Public's Portal to Lunar Science Exploration Through New Media. The portal will provide science and lunar content, media exhibits, and opportunities for the public to interact with lunar scientists and experts. The work is funded through the Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences-2008 (ROSES-2008) program at NASA's Education & Public Outreach for Earth & Space Science.