

Regional Centers of Excellence (RCEs)

Expanding the network from three to six

In 2011 the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) launched three RCEs in collaboration with three service cooperatives. This action was the Department's effort to establish a consistent, cohesive regional delivery system to provide effective, efficient and equitable access to the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) for all for Focus and Priority schools.



Through this collaborative partnership, the RCE SSOS staff members, consisting of a director and various content specialists, in Rochester, St. Cloud, and Thief River Falls, provided on-site assistance to school leadership teams in Focus and Priority school. This support was designed to build capacity at the school-level to increase student achievement.

Following the first year of implementation, approximately three-quarters of the Focus and Priority schools working with RCE SSOS staff made progress toward improved student outcomes. One-third of the schools made enough growth to be released from their status as Focus or Priority schools, and several achieved gains that earned them recognition as Celebration or Reward Schools. See

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/News/PressRel/053506> for more information.

In light of this compelling positive impact on student learning, the Minnesota legislature established a statute in 2013 to expand the RCE network, to enable this innovative partnership to have even greater impact on improved student outcomes in Minnesota.



This legislation, chapter 116, article 2, section 7, states that the RCEs will “...assist and support school boards, school districts, school sites, and charter schools in implementing research interventions and practices to increase the students' achievement within a region...” and increases the number of Centers from three to six. Three additional service cooperatives in Mt. Iron, Fergus Falls, and Marshall are in the process of being launched. This expansion will enable the RCEs to provide support to all schools, in addition to the SSOS offered to Focus and Priority schools. The types of services offered through the RCEs will included those areas for which MDE has an obligation to provide support. For example, this might include statute responsibilities or other regulations.

If the identified support is more effectively, efficiently or equitably provided through a regional delivery system, then it may be one of the services available through the RCEs. In the coming weeks and months, services in areas such as family and community engagement, transition planning for high school students, dropout prevention, implementation of academic standards, and the World's Best Work Force efforts will be available to throughout the State.

Educators wishing to receive more information regarding the services and support offered in the RCEs are encouraged to contact Anne Lundquist, RCE coordinator, at 651-582-8318, or anne.lundquist@state.mn.us.



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