

SERC

STATE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

2010-2011

EQUITY. EXCELLENCE. EDUCATION.



SERC, created by statute and funded in part by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), was established in 1969 as the Special Education Resource Center. In 2005, SERC became the State Education Resource Center, reflecting our belief that schools are most effective when general education and special education function as one system. To this end, SERC offers a broad array of services and programs in areas important to both general and special education.

SERC'S Mission...

We provide resources, professional development, and a centralized library to educators, families, and community members in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education and other public and private partners.

SERC'S Vision...

EQUITY. Excellence. Education.

SERC believes that all students have the right to access opportunities and experiences that reflect and respect their differences and abilities. We are concerned that in Connecticut, educational outcomes for students of color, students who are English Language Learners, and students with disabilities continue to lag behind outcomes for other students. To help eliminate these achievement gaps, SERC addresses institutionalized racism and other issues of social justice in schools and districts and both models and facilitates equity in education.

Equity. **EXCELLENCE.** Education.

Our professional development and information dissemination are built around best practices that educators apply to their work, highlighting the 21st-century learning skills students need to achieve their life and career goals. To maintain and enhance our own knowledge base, SERC conducts ongoing staff professional development on topics at the forefront of education.

Equity. Excellence. **EDUCATION.**

We want ALL of Connecticut's children and youth to achieve positive personal and professional life outcomes through their educational experience. Since that experience extends far beyond the classroom, we help facilitate strong relationships among schools, agencies, community organizations and businesses, and families—and promote family engagement as a critical component of a child's education.



SERC

EQUITY.
EXCELLENCE.
EDUCATION.



SERC has long provided services on behalf of children and youth whose schools are struggling to meet their educational needs. Today, as leaders from the General Assembly to business and industry to professional and family advocacy organizations have called critical attention to Connecticut's academic achievement gaps, SERC helps link policy with application in the classroom.

We have successfully galvanized action on the individual school and district levels for reforms that improve outcomes for the student population. The Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC), which operates under SERC, is recognized as a statewide leader in leveraging efforts to foster parental involvement—universally recognized as one of the key factors for predicting a student's success in school.

Our aspiration that all Connecticut students succeed is rooted in our far-reaching technical assistance and other professional development for schools and school districts. SERC's comprehensive approach to training goes beyond the traditional professional development model of taking theory to practice; we include theory combined with demonstration, combined with practice, combined with feedback, and combined with coaching. Through this combination, educators not only gain knowledge and skills but also transfer their training to the school and classroom, thereby improving student achievement.¹

¹See:
Joyce, B. R. & Showers, B. Student achievement through staff development (3rd ed.). (2002). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
Learning Forward. Standards for professional development (draft). (2011). <http://www.learningforward.org/standards/draftstandards2011.pdf>.

Professional DEVELOPMENT

SERC professional development encompasses comprehensive job-embedded technical assistance packages to schools and districts; information made available through our Library and through the expertise of our staff; and a variety of workshops, conferences, and more. We build much of our content around the latest professional learning standards and the recently adopted Common Core State Standards.

Our resources are open to all who have a stake in student achievement, including educators, representatives from community agencies and higher education, family members, and students themselves. In 2010-2011, we provided 1,068 separate training opportunities and technical assistance visits.

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TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED, 2010-2011

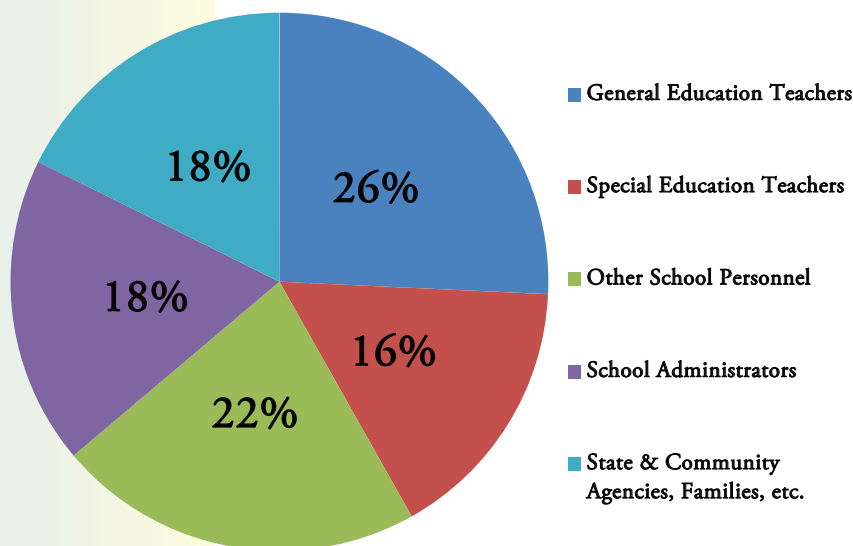
Total includes participants in professional development sessions, school/district staff assisted on-site, and library patrons.

STATEWIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provided by open invitation to individuals and teams from all cities and towns

Total Attendance = 15,903

Participants in statewide professional development by role





A Focus on **RESULTS**

SERC, mirroring the efforts of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), has used results-based accountability (RBA)² to drive decisions and priorities in its programming. The process ensures that professional development has an impact on student learning, measured by three impact questions:

- (1) What did we do?
- (2) How well did we do it?
- (3) Were educators, students, and/or family members better off because of it?

What did we do?

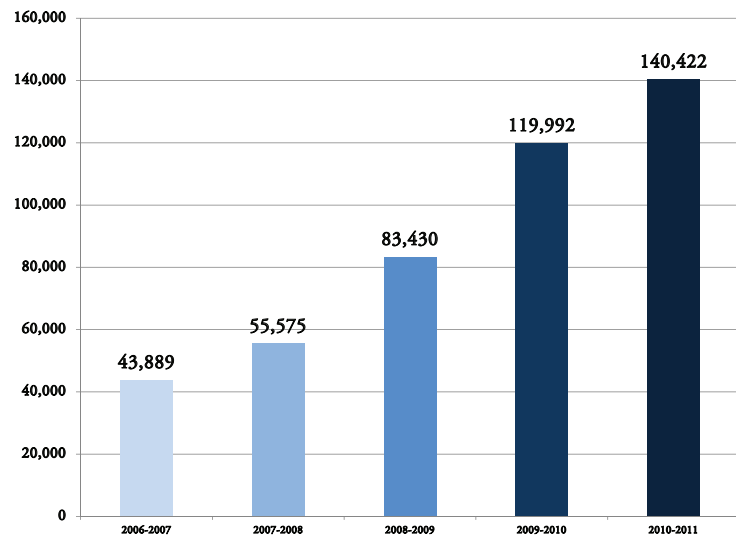
Our professional development reached the entire state. In 2010-2011, SERC served virtually all of Connecticut's 169 cities and towns through our technical assistance, workshops, and conferences. In addition, we disseminated more than 12,000 professional development catalogs statewide, as well as nearly 7,000 additional resources by request and thousands more at various meetings and events.

² See Friedman, M. (2005). *Trying hard is not good enough: How to produce measurable improvements for customers and communities*. Santa Fe, NM: FPSI Publishing.

We have made many more materials available online, reducing the number of requests for resources. Our commitment to “going green” is reflected in a steady increase in traffic to www.ctserc.org and affiliated Web sites, which provide resources in each of our initiatives and a paperless registration system for our statewide professional development activities.

In 2010-2011, SERC launched a Web site for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in Connecticut, www.ctserc.org/pbis. This includes downloadable materials for all schools participating in PBIS. For more on this initiative, see page 6.

Visits to ctserc.org



How well did we do it?

SERC uses a variety of mechanisms following professional development programs to determine how much knowledge and understanding is gained by participants. Overall there is a high satisfaction rate, averaging over 90 percent, for the entire range of professional development that SERC offers.

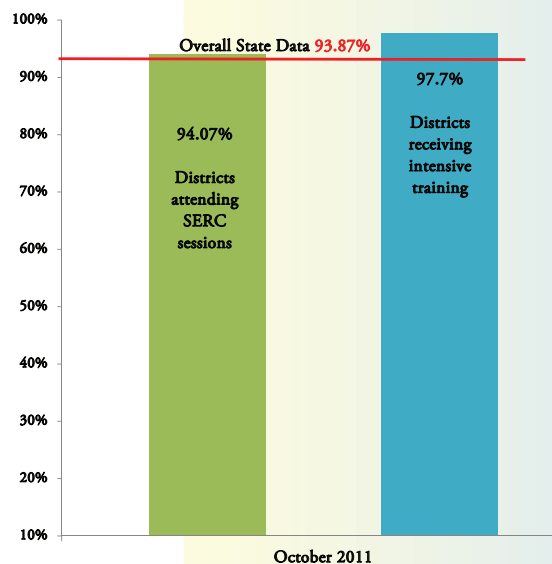
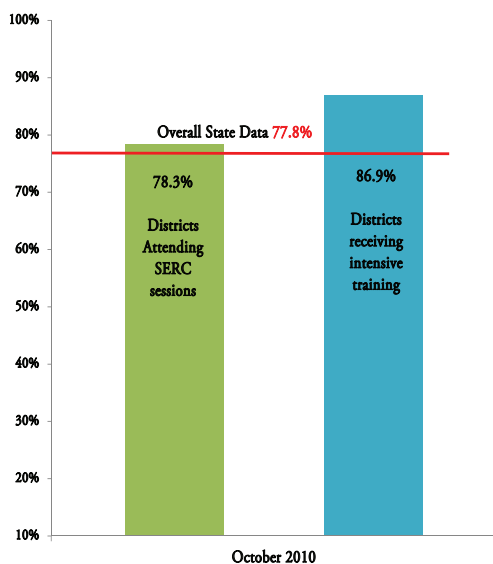


Were educators, students, and/or family members better off because of it?

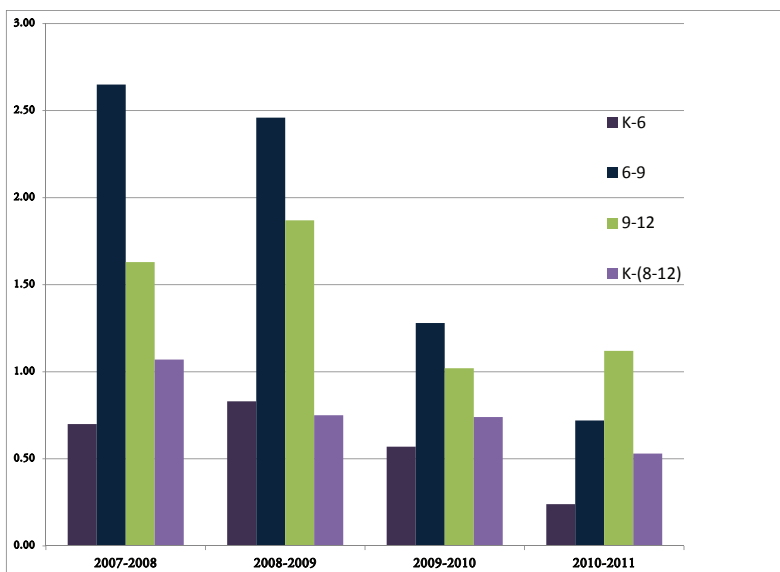
SERC's comprehensive theory/demonstration/practice/feedback/coaching model has been critical for achieving the most visible measures of success, such as a successful transition from high school to college or employment.

Indicator 13 of the Connecticut State Performance Plan (SPP) for special education is used to gauge the percent of youth, age 16 and older, with an individualized education program (IEP) that includes coordinated, measurable, annual goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet postsecondary goals. The goal for all districts in Connecticut is to reach a 100 percent compliance rate for Indicator 13, and districts that were given intensive SERC training showed a higher percentage of youth with IEPs that complied with Indicator 13 (see graph below). The in-district training allowed participants to learn content over time and build relationships with SERC consultants; conversely, SERC came away with a better understanding of district-specific capacities and needs.

Indicator 13 compliance



Office Discipline Referrals



As of 2010-2011, a collaborative program between SERC and the University of Connecticut's Center for Behavioral Education and Research has trained 227 of Connecticut's public schools in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

After PBIS training, office discipline referrals continued to drop dramatically in schools implementing PBIS with fidelity (see graph at left).

For additional data on the effect of PBIS implementation and comprehensive information for current and potential PBIS schools:
www.ctserc.org/pbis

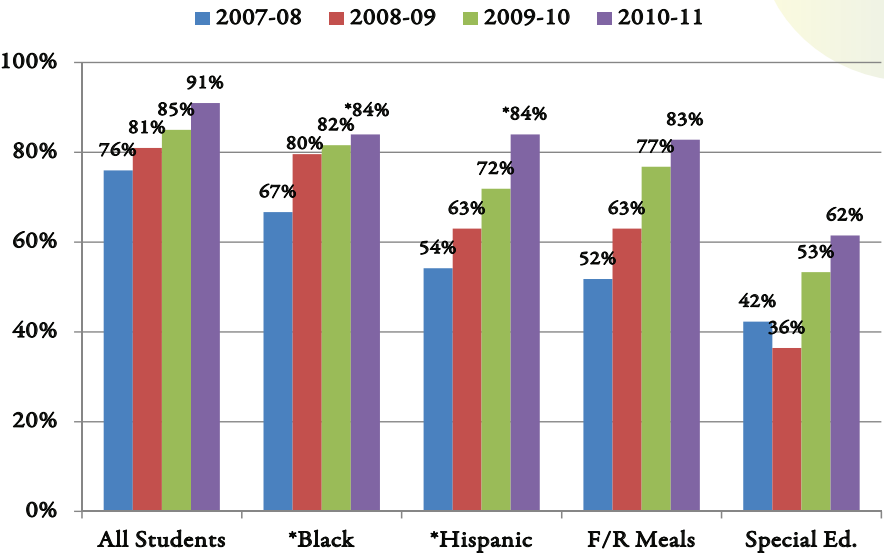


Improving teaching and learning for all students requires a systems approach to instruction, assessment, and decision making. Connecticut’s framework of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) unites the use of research-based practices with this systems approach—sustaining a comprehensive continuum of academic and behavioral supports reflective of students’ diverse strengths and needs. SERC was at the forefront of developing the vision for SRBI in Connecticut and has been a pioneer in providing professional development for Connecticut educators as they strive to implement SRBI effectively.

From 2007 to 2010, SERC provided targeted support to six schools from four districts that were part of a federal grant to model the implementation of effective prevention and early intervention practices that would be “scaled-up” across the state. The graph below highlights improvement in one of the schools’ reading scores on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), demonstrating significant progress over four years of students of color, students eligible for free and/or reduced lunch, and students with disabilities.

These data indicate that use of a systems approach to SRBI can improve performance of all students while reducing achievement gaps fairly dramatically. The results also suggest that in a short amount of time, with external support and strong building leadership, schools are able to establish the structures needed to improve instructional practices and, ultimately, student performance.

CMT Reading, % at/above proficiency, Grade 7



*Note: Changes in race/ethnicity coding in 2010 do not allow for valid comparison of data between 2010-11 and prior years.

Building Capacity

SERC, in collaboration with CSDE and the RESC Alliance, provided statewide training to nearly 2,000 educators representing nearly 100 districts from September 2009 to December 2010. As this training evolved from awareness of SRBI to modeling the use of Connecticut’s SRBI Framework, SERC collaborated with CSDE to develop and coordinate the implementation of an “anchor trainer” model.

This model used a lead trainer from SERC to co-train with staff from each regional educational service center (RESC) to expedite the replication of the new training and on-site support at the regional level. SERC continues to facilitate a learning community with other SRBI anchor trainers to help ensure consistency of information, fidelity of implementation, and the scaling-up of best practices in SRBI throughout the state.



The *SERC Library* (www.ctserc.org/library) has an extensive collection of research, reference, and instructional materials and resources related to education and social services. While our facility is centrally located at SERC headquarters in Middletown, the Library has

increasingly become an anywhere, anytime resource for educators and other members of the general public who access its information remotely.

In 2010-2011, patrons viewed Library databases remotely nearly 61,000 times, more than 10 times the number accessed within the Library. They remotely downloaded 13,326 articles and other materials, nearly 100 times the number downloaded within the Library.



Some of the free Web-based resources and services include:

- **federated searching**, which offers access to the full complement of Library resources, including journal articles from educational research databases;
- **educational guidelines** on best practices in education and social services;
- **“LibGuides,”** launched in 2010-2011, which provide electronic notices on current topics in education;
- **LISTSERV** and **RSS** feed subscriptions; and
- a SERC Library **blog**.

In addition to remote access, the Library hosted 6,132 visitors and welcomed 685 new members in 2010-2011. Patrons checked out or renewed a total of 7,902 resources. The Library also hosted webinars, family events, and formal overviews for college and university classes.



The *Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center* (CT PIRC, www.ctpirc.org) aims to strengthen parental involvement and decision making in education by improving access to information and resources through the coordination and integration of federal, state, and local programs. In 2010-2011, CT PIRC continued to operate at SERC under a federal grant that began in the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Highlights of 2010-2011 include:

- Approximately 35,278 family members received CT PIRC services, including 4,588 directly and 30,690 indirectly (through the dissemination of resources, etc.). CT PIRC reached 5,899 parents considered low-income and 6,555 considered Limited English Proficient.
- CT PIRC had a key role in coordinating the community forums and trainings for School Governance Councils, established in 2010 under Connecticut Public Act 10-111.
- CT PIRC further built on its well-established leadership in cultural and racial equity. The Connecticut Federation of Teachers requested that CT PIRC provide training for teachers in Hartford and New Haven Public Schools on culturally relevant pedagogy, and for families on establishing and sustaining stronger relationships with schools.

Like SERC, CT PIRC provides technical assistance and other professional development to schools and school districts.

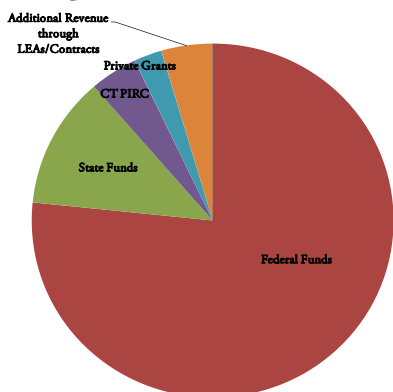
SERC *Financials*

	Year Ending June 30, 2011	Year Ending June 30, 2010	Year Ending June 30, 2009
Funding Sources			
*Federal Funds through CSDE	\$9,677,718	\$9,340,944	\$8,726,094
**State Funds	1,518,087	287,509	1,306,431
CT PIRC (Federal Funds directly from U.S. Dept. of Ed.)	539,558	688,529	709,362
Private Grants	315,784	53,862	157,678
Additional Revenue through LEAs/Contracts	578,348	496,446	92,129
Total Operating Support and Revenue	\$12,629,495	\$10,867,290	\$10,991,694
Expenses, Including 6.75% Indirect Costs to Fiscal Agent			
Personnel	\$6,024,506	\$5,654,601	\$5,114,505
Employee Benefits	1,534,808	1,488,311	1,336,880
Program/Inservice	2,155,263	1,487,311	2,777,826
Other Technical Services	967,812	180,612	21,677
Audit	20,000	20,000	25,353
Communications	77,324	87,809	106,891
Travel	11,816	14,330	20,554
Other Professional/Technical Services	226,212	363,742	783,874
Media Supplies	85,181	57,085	92,824
Administrative Supplies	11,481	6,835	15,620
Library	114,984	90,905	108,282
Equipment (Non-Capitalized)	135,594	101,939	140,066
Rent and Other Facility Expenses	108,583	102,521	116,909
Total Operating Expenses	\$11,473,564	\$9,656,001	\$10,661,261

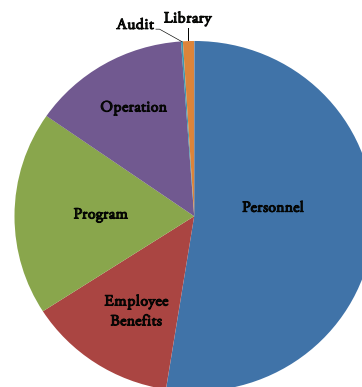
*Unexpended federal funding carries over to the next fiscal year.

**Unexpended state funding is returned to the state agency.

Funding Sources as of 6/30/11



Expenses as of 6/30/11





SERC EQUITY. EXCELLENCE. EDUCATION.



The SERC staff includes former teachers, principals, and other professionals serving children from preschool through high school and beyond. Our diverse backgrounds also range from psychology to business to health care to law, and our training and technical assistance spans teaching and learning, technology in education, special education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and positive behavioral interventions and supports, to name a few. SERC staff bring a wide variety of expertise and experience and are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse.



2010-2011 PRIMARY PARTNERS

include the **Connecticut State Department of Education** as well as:

America's Promise Alliance
Board of Education and Services for the Blind
Center for Applied Special Technology
Center for Behavioral Education and Research, University of Connecticut
Commission on the Deaf and the Hearing Impaired
Connecticut Association of Schools
Connecticut Center for School Change
Connecticut Commission on Children
Connecticut Department of Developmental Disabilities, Birth to Three Program
Connecticut Department of Public Health
Connecticut Department of Social Services, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services – Connect-Ability
Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center
Connecticut Parent Teacher Association
Connecticut Parents as Teachers
Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation
Infoline
OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
RESC Alliance
William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund

and...

Connecticut districts, schools, educators, family members, students, and faith and community leaders



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It is the policy of the State Education Resource Center (SERC) that no person shall be discriminated against or excluded from participation in any SERC programs or activities on the basis of race, color, language, religion, age, marital or civil union status, national origin, ancestry, sex/gender, intellectual disability, physical disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Inquiries regarding SERC's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to Al Bruno at bruno@ctserc.org.