



Your Quarterly News & Updates

From the small cities in the Shenandoah Valley to rural towns in eastern Kentucky and all across Appalachia, educators, family members, and leaders are tackling the barriers between students and college and career success. The Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia (REL AP) translates research to practice in partnership with policymakers and practitioners in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Read on for project updates to keep you connected and let us know how we can be a resource for you via the REL AP [website](#), [Ask A REL](#) service, [Twitter](#), or at relappalachia@sri.com.

Visit our Website

Featured Stories

Upcoming Events

REL AP has spring training events in Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia.

You won't want to miss [these events](#) on postsecondary transition for rural students, the role of families in college and career readiness, and more!



Spotlight on College and Career Readiness and Postsecondary Transition



Many factors contribute to a student's likelihood of enrolling and succeeding in college, from academic achievement to social and financial supports. REL AP partners with state and local education agencies to promote the success of traditionally underserved students in accessing and attaining postsecondary education and careers. Included below are resources that support efforts to encourage and support students' successful transition from high school to postsecondary education programs and careers.

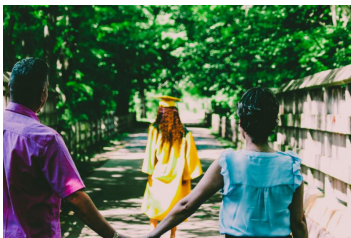
Stakeholders from across the region are asking questions about college and career readiness and postsecondary transitions.

[View our responses to recent questions](#) from the region or [submit your own question](#).



- [What strategies have state policymakers and other state agency staff implemented to improve college access and success?](#)
- [What are strategies for successfully engaging families in postsecondary planning and transitions?](#)
- [From parents' perspectives, what are the key barriers to college application, enrollment, and persistence for their children?](#)

Blog Posts



The REL AP [blog](#) shares stories from our work in the region.

- [Leveraging the Rural Context to Build Family Engagement.](#) Families can play a critical role in helping students overcome barriers to postsecondary education by encouraging their academic achievement and supporting their aspirations.
- [Mining for Skills: Connecting Rural Students with Programs That Facilitate Career Success.](#) Secondary and postsecondary educators can work together to ensure that students transition from high school to college and from college to careers with the academic, financial, logistical, and social-emotional preparation to succeed.
- [Parent Perspectives on Barriers to Postsecondary Education.](#) Despite the known benefits of postsecondary education parents experience many barriers to their children enrolling, persisting, and completing a postsecondary credential or degree.

Publications

REL AP publishes research studies that explore critical education questions from our stakeholders. Learn more about what REL AP is working on [here](#).



- [Dual Enrollment Courses in Kentucky: High School Students' Participation and Completion Rates.](#) What are the characteristics of students participating in and completing dual enrollment courses? How do participation and course completion rates differ based on student, school, and postsecondary characteristics?
- [Developmental education and college readiness](#) (REL Northwest). What proportion of students are considered academically underprepared for college and how do placement rates for developmental education vary for different groups of students? Are high school grades, rather than exam performance, a better predictor of success in college-level courses?

Additional REL AP Resources

Looking to assess the strength of evidence for your



postsecondary transition practices? Check out REL AP's presentation and materials from the Virginia College Access Network conference, [Assessing the ESSA Evidence Levels for Postsecondary Supports](#). This set of resources can help educators and program leaders enhance their understanding of ESSA evidence levels and learn to apply the ESSA evidence framework to postsecondary transitions practices. Still have questions? [Contact REL AP](#).

REL Resource Blast

REL Program Resources

The ten Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) conduct applied research and trainings with a mission of supporting a more evidence-based education system. Find additional college and career readiness resources from across the REL program [here](#).



Staff Spotlight



Meet Carmen Araoz! Carmen is the partnership liaison for the [Virginia Student Success in Mathematics partnership](#) and project manager for the Implementing High-Quality Performance Assessments in Science project. Carmen provides teachers and schools with local support, coordinates research logistics, and assists with data collection. She is passionate about partnering with educators in STEM and addressing issues of equity and access that make a difference in the lives of students.

REL Appalachia

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Independent, unbiased research support for your state's education priorities

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