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## MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

The end of 2018 is rapidly approaching and REL AP has enjoyed this year of working with partners throughout the region. This fall we connected with our partners at conferences in Tennessee, in Kentucky and Virginia for workshops, via our governing board meeting and the CTE Administrators Annual Fall Meeting in West Virginia, and with folks nationwide by way of an *Algebra for All* webinar. We look forward to connecting with more colleagues and partners in 2019!



As we carry out our partnership activities, keep in mind that we are here as a resource for you! If you have an education question that research can help answer, submit it to [Ask A REL](#) and we will get back to you with references, referrals, and brief responses in the form of citations. You can also visit our website at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/appalachia/index.asp> to learn about upcoming events, the various supports that REL AP offers, and updates on our collaborative partnerships. Please do not forget to follow us on [Twitter](#) or contact us directly at [relappalachia@sri.com](mailto:relappalachia@sri.com) to receive real-time updates from the region.

Thank you for a great 2018 - we look forward to continued collaboration in 2019!

Deborah Jonas, PhD  
Director, REL Appalachia

## PROJECT UPDATES

### Learn About Our Work and Partnership Events

REL Appalachia works in partnership with school districts, state departments of education, and other education stakeholders in the region to develop high-quality research and to use and disseminate the research findings to improve student outcomes. These partnerships combine rigorous research with responsive training, coaching, and technical support and practitioner-focused information sharing to ensure that evidence informs practice in a timely manner to benefit students.

## REL AP partnership events

REL AP staff hosted several events this fall on algebra readiness, postsecondary transitions, family engagement, and addressing the opioid epidemic in our school communities. We share our highlights and resources below.

The Student Success in Mathematics partnership hosted a national webinar on October 17, [Algebra for All: Focus on Visual Representations](#), which focused on the use of visual representations to support mathematics content learning for English learners and students who are struggling.

The Improving Postsecondary Transitions partnership led an interactive event as part of the Paving the Way series at Southwest Virginia Community College on October 22. The workshop emphasized the importance of [Nonacademic Supports for Successful Student Transitions](#).

REL AP held a governing board meeting on October 24 focused on the impact of the opioid epidemic on school communities. At the event, REL AP staff shared posters with information on current state initiatives that address the opioid epidemic in [Tennessee](#), [Virginia](#), [Kentucky](#), and [West Virginia](#).

The Rural College and Career Readiness partnership facilitated the first of a workshop series, [Building Bridges to College and Career: Family Engagement for Successful Student Transition](#) on November 7 at the Manchester Campus of Eastern Kentucky University.



Kori Hamilton Biagas facilitating small-group discussions using student scenarios.



Tali Klima moderating a panel discussion on how states are addressing the opioid epidemic in the region.

## Understanding data culture



A culture of data use results when an education organization commits to using data for continuous improvement at the school and classroom levels through emphasizing collaboration and empowering teachers and school leaders to make decisions. REL AP's Cross-State Partnership on Using Data and Evidence to Facilitate Action is working with education leaders in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia to strengthen data culture by identifying opportunities to build capacity among local data users. This [blog post](#) from the partnership provides a scan of data that are commonly used at the local level, as well as

resources to support data use.

## Supporting your child in developing math skills for future success

Why is it important for children to succeed in math, and how can families support success? Our latest infographic displays research on the importance of mathematics from elementary school to college and careers. It is intended to support family members in understanding how mathematics learning can influence their child's future and provide simple ways that family members can encourage positive attitudes toward mathematics and learning. Download the infographic [here](#).



## Parent perspectives on barriers to postsecondary education



Families who live in states REL AP supports often face challenges helping their children with the steps needed to enroll, persist, and complete a postsecondary credential or degree. Parents, especially those who did not attend college, often do not feel confident about their ability to be involved in their child's college-planning process. However, research suggests that parental involvement can have a positive impact on students' college-planning process and decisions. Interested in learning more about the role of families in promoting postsecondary education? Visit our [blog](#) to access more information

and resources.

## STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

### Meet a Member of the REL AP Team

#### Kerry Friedman, deputy director

Kerry Friedman provides leadership support across all REL AP projects, leads dissemination activities, and delivers training, coaching, and technical support (TCTS). She is passionate about developing events and products that engage a diverse audience in understanding and applying evidence in the education system. Friedman enjoys creating infographics to communicate research findings, such as [Supporting Your Child in Developing Math Skills for Future Success](#); engaging with regional stakeholders on [social media](#); and maintaining the [REL Appalachia website](#). She is currently partnering with elementary school educators in West Virginia to develop community math nights. As a former math educator, Friedman is excited to engage children, families, and community leaders in understanding the importance of mathematics and applying evidence-based strategies to support children in learning mathematics.



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Independent, Unbiased Research Support for  
Your State's Education Priorities



[ASK A REL](#)

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