



NEWS

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NEWSLETTER

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Latest News from the Director



Reducing racial/ethnic gaps in student achievement has been and remains a major goal of schools across the mid-Atlantic region and across the country. Recent research has suggested that what happens in classrooms can either expand achievement gaps or help to reduce them. As you can see in some of the activities described below, REL Mid-Atlantic is supporting state and district efforts to improve the achievement of minority students by updating educators about research on culturally responsive instructional practices. We are also sharing information with state and district leaders and educator preparation programs about ways to enhance the diversity of the teaching force so it better reflects the demographics of students in the classroom; research has suggested a more diverse teaching force can help reduce achievement gaps. We hope you'll take advantage of these free resources, including an upcoming webinar series on culturally responsive pedagogy. And we've got lots more going on in addition to our work to assist schools in reducing achievement gaps. School, district, and state leaders may be interested in our work on school climate and social-emotional learning as richer measures of school performance and student outcomes. And there's still time to sign up for our in-person training on the Rapid-Cycle Evaluation Coach, a free, user-friendly tool designed to help educators assess whether any program you're implementing in your schools is working. Check out all of these opportunities and more below.

Highlights

Stay Tuned: Upcoming Four-Part Series on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Be on the lookout for information about our free upcoming webinar series on culturally responsive instruction as a strategy for improving education outcomes. The New Jersey Department of Education and Delaware Department of Education are taking steps to ensure their districts and educator preparation programs train and support teachers and school leaders to become more culturally responsive in their day-to-day work. The series, which will launch this fall, will cover the following:

- Understanding educational equity, defining culturally responsive pedagogy, and describing how culturally responsive pedagogy can be embedded in broader efforts

- A brief review of the research on culturally responsive pedagogy and how to implement it
- Initiatives to include culturally responsive pedagogy in pre-service training programs for teachers and administrators
- Ongoing efforts to implement culturally responsive pedagogy in schools

A More Diverse Teaching Force May Improve Educational Outcomes



As states work to close achievement gaps for minority students, emerging research demonstrates that a diverse teaching force could improve educational outcomes. A [new infographic](#) highlights research that suggests how increasing teacher diversity might help. You can also check out [our webinar on four teacher preparation programs and initiatives](#) that offer insights into policies and strategies to improve diversity.

Measuring Social and Emotional Learning

REL Mid-Atlantic worked with DC Public Schools to develop and validate measures of socio-emotional learning. [Learn more](#) about how we helped the district use the results from a survey to inform policy and produce a public report on the percentage of the district’s students who are “Loved, Challenged, and Prepared.”

How Principal Evaluations Are Changing: Using Teacher Feedback in School Leader Evaluations

School districts have started looking at how they can change the process of evaluating school leaders. Watch [this webinar](#) recording to learn more about teacher survey instruments that districts and states use as an input for evaluating school leaders. A [related infographic](#) details how teachers can provide valuable input for the leader evaluation process.

What Our Stakeholders Are Saying

Hear our partners speak to how we’re helping them improve their education programs.



Dara Shaw of the Maryland State Department of Education [talks about identifying schools](#) with disproportionate rates of discipline.



Ted Dwyer of Pittsburgh Public Schools [speaks about predicting which students are at risk](#) for academic problems.



Mary Kay Babyak of the Consortium for Public Education [discusses preparing students](#) for the workforce.

What's New, What's Next?

Interactive Workshop on a Free Tool to Assess the Effectiveness of Programs in Your Schools

In Pittsburgh on June 25, REL Mid-Atlantic will host an [interactive workshop](#) on the [Rapid-Cycle Evaluation Coach](#) at the SWPA Personalized Learning Network's second annual conference, "Transforming Classroom Instruction with Personal and Student-Centered Practices." Learn about key components of rapid-cycle evaluation and how to apply the user-friendly Coach tool to evaluate interventions in your district, using a hands-on case study. Also attend the [main conference session](#) on June 26, "Strategies for Implementing Personalized Learning While Evidence and Resources Are Underdeveloped," to hear more.

Developing Effective School Leaders

Given their central importance to school leadership, it's important to ask, "*What makes for an effective principal?*" A [new fact sheet](#) highlights characteristics of effective principals. This resource also identifies opportunities to address the challenges current and prospective principals face.

New Infographic: Using School Climate Data for School Improvement

Although climate surveys are an effective way for educators and parents to tell whether a school has a positive environment, they are capable of identifying much more. A [new resource](#) highlights some of the ways school districts are tailoring their climate surveys and capturing data to identify areas of improvement and enhance student outcomes.



Seeking Your Feedback on Our Program

IES is [seeking your feedback](#) about what is working well in the current REL program, what can be improved, and the kinds of resources and services related to evidence-based practice and data use that are most needed by educators and policymakers to improve student outcomes. Please take a moment to help us make our services more useful to you and your networks.

Connect with Us on Social Media



Are you following us on Twitter? [@RELMidAtlantic](#) is where you can plug into not only our work, but also news from our 9 REL partners across the country and the latest research from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. We built our Twitter feed to be helpful, informative, and fun to scroll through. In partnership with our alliances throughout the REL Mid-Atlantic states, we use it every day to bring you the news and information most relevant to educators in our region. That includes videos, blogs, event coverage, and a wide range of expert (and user-friendly) advice. Thanks for following us [@RELMidAtlantic!](#)



Interested in **joining us** or **learning more**? **Contact us.**

Please reach out anytime to RELMidatlantic@mathematica-mpr.com to share your ideas about important issues the REL Mid-Atlantic could address; request free training, coaching, or technical support; or ask questions about how we can help you in your work.



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