



# NEWSLETTER

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## Latest News from the Director



Dear Colleagues:

As students across the mid-Atlantic region head back to school, here at the REL we're continuing to work with those responsible for their education to ensure that research evidence and data are used to make their schools the best they can be. Our partnerships have a wide range of projects underway, providing technical support and coaching,

conducting applied research, and disseminating research findings. Some of our current work is described in the highlights below, including new blog posts on trends in teacher professional development and uses of kindergarten entry assessments; a new video describing the work of our family engagement alliance in the District of Columbia Public Schools; and a recent webinar exploring challenges and solutions in financing high quality early education. Take a look at our newest infographic (highlighted below), which acknowledges a challenge that is too rarely recognized in discussions of data-driven decision making: so much data are coming from so many directions that they are easy to drown in! Our infographic tries to take this problem head-on, discussing ways to ensure that data are relevant and diagnostic—and therefore useful—rather than irrelevant or misleading. I hope you find it helpful!

**Brian Gill, Ph.D.**

Director, REL Mid-Atlantic

Senior Fellow, Mathematica Policy Research



## Highlights



### Data Driven, Not Data Drowning

[Our latest infographic](#) illustrates how education agencies can be driven by — rather than drowning in—data. It also provides examples of how to use data in meaningful decisions.

### Be in the Know: Follow Works in Progress

A [new resource page](#) offers a peek into the ongoing work of REL Mid-Atlantic. Read about research underway to address our partners' questions and promote the capacity of policymakers and educators to use data in decision making. The page is updated regularly as project proposals are approved, so check back for info on new projects!

### Training and Supporting Excellent Educators Alliance

Members of the Training and Supporting Excellent Educators Alliance met recently in Baltimore.



From left to right: Alex Bauer (Mathematica), Tiara Booker-Dwyer (MD Department of Education), Ed Mitzel (State of MD), Tina Chekan (Propel Schools), Brian Eyre (MD Department of Education), Tamara Durant (PGH Board of Education), Thelma Hinds (Wilmington University), Jill Constantine (Mathematica), and Amy Johnson (Mathematica).

### Miss a Conference? Check Out Video Highlights

Two new videos from the recent Maryland Connections Summit feature presentations on the vital role data play in education decision making.

Making Evidence Matter: <https://youtube/GVuvJVGv7wY>

Data Driven, Not Data Drowning: [https://youtube/ZsxPphs\\_COE](https://youtube/ZsxPphs_COE)

## Latest RELevant Blog Posts



### Effective Teacher Professional Development: What's Out, What's In, and What's Next?

Teacher professional development (PD) is perhaps the most thoroughly researched and tested intervention in education, and research shows that traditional PD programs often fall short. [But districts in the mid-Atlantic region are embracing a promising approach: individualized and technology-enhanced PD.](#)

### States and Districts Do More with Kindergarten Assessments to Measure and Support Learning

When scores on kindergarten entry assessments are valid and reliable, they can serve a variety of purposes. [This blog post](#) provides an overview of kindergarten entry assessments and discusses how the REL is supporting uses of assessments to shed light on students' achievement levels, support needed, and learning growth.



## What's New, What's Next



### New Video: Family Engagement Research Alliance

Check out our [latest video](#) that explores the mission and early home visiting activities of the [family engagement alliance](#) in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

### Webinar Highlights: Financing Quality Early Care and Education

Interested in improving the early childhood education workforce? A [recent webinar](#) focused on states' and cities' strategies to transform the system for preparing early childhood workers. Listen to panelists discuss the report "[Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education](#)," published in 2018 by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

### Ask A REL at Your Service

Do you have research questions about education policies, programs, and practices? [Ask A REL](#) is here to help with free resources. Simply complete [this form](#). To date, we have responded to more than 50 inquiries from stakeholders across our region. We look forward to hearing from you on how we can help.

## Connect with Us on Social Media

### Social Media Spotlight

Are you following @RELMidAtlantic on Twitter? Every week we post links to new, relevant, peer-reviewed work from REL researchers and others, plus a wide range of resources for educators.

REL Mid-Atlantic on Twitter is also the place to go for information about upcoming REL Mid-Atlantic events—and to see the photos, materials, and videos from our events and meetings.

We're using social media to not only disseminate our work, but to connect in real time with a wide world of education news.

Thanks for following @RELMidAtlantic. See you on Twitter!



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

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Please reach out anytime to [RELMidatlantic@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto: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.



[Follow us on Twitter for the latest updates.](#)

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