

# Rethinking Data for Improvement, Accountability, and Support Under COVID-19

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# Welcome and overview

Laura Shankland, Senior Technical Assistance Consultant,  
Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest

# Virtual meeting/conference recording notice

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# Meet the REL presenters



Brian Gill, PhD, JD

*Director,  
REL Mid-Atlantic*



Susan Bowles Therriault, EdD

*Managing Researcher,  
REL Northeast & Islands*



Victoria A. Schaefer, PhD

*Principal Education Researcher,  
REL Appalachia*

# Meet the presenters and facilitators



Erica Champagne

*Director,  
Office of Effective Practices  
in Turnaround,  
Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education*



Amanda D. Mote

*Attendance Director,  
Pleasants County Schools,  
West Virginia*



Laura Shankland

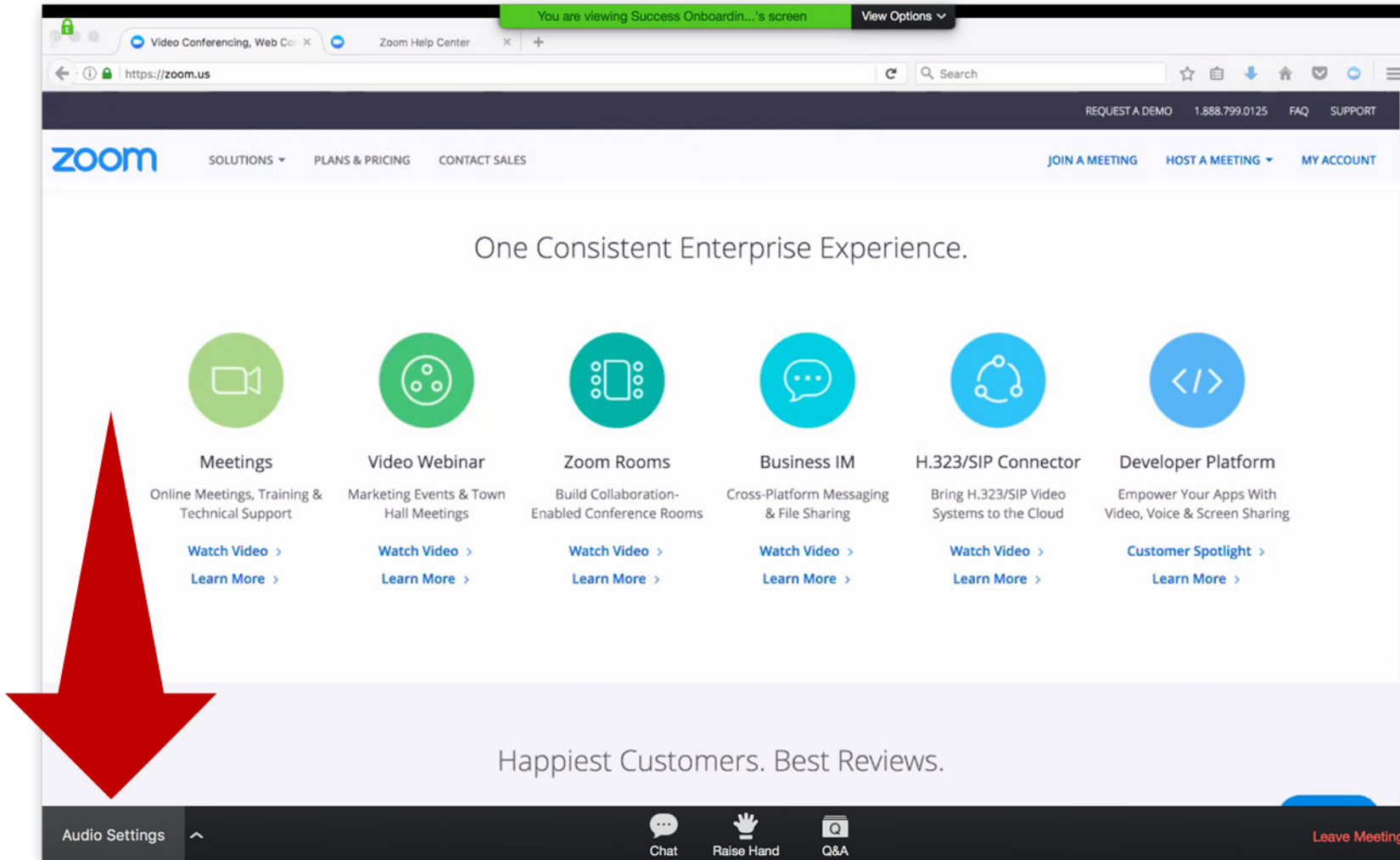
*Senior Technical Assistance Consultant,  
REL Southwest*



Cary Cuiccio

*Senior Director,  
REL Southwest*

# Audio Settings



The screenshot shows the Zoom website interface. At the top, a green notification bar states "You are viewing Success Onboardin... 's screen" with a "View Options" dropdown. The browser address bar shows "https://zoom.us". The Zoom logo is on the left, and navigation links for "SOLUTIONS", "PLANS & PRICING", "CONTACT SALES", "JOIN A MEETING", "HOST A MEETING", and "MY ACCOUNT" are on the right. The main content area features the heading "One Consistent Enterprise Experience." followed by six service tiles: Meetings, Video Webinar, Zoom Rooms, Business IM, H.323/SIP Connector, and Developer Platform. Each tile includes an icon, a title, a brief description, and links for "Watch Video" and "Learn More". A large red arrow points from the "Meetings" tile area down to the "Audio Settings" button in the meeting toolbar at the bottom. The toolbar also includes "Chat", "Raise Hand", "Q&A", and "Leave Meeting" buttons.

Zoom

SOLUTIONS PLANS & PRICING CONTACT SALES

JOIN A MEETING HOST A MEETING MY ACCOUNT

One Consistent Enterprise Experience.

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Happiest Customers. Best Reviews.

Audio Settings ^

Chat Raise Hand Q&A

Leave Meeting

# Raise/Lower Hand

The screenshot displays the Zoom website's homepage. At the top, a green notification bar reads "You are viewing Success Onboardin... 's screen". The browser address bar shows "https://zoom.us". The main navigation bar includes the Zoom logo, "SOLUTIONS", "PLANS & PRICING", "CONTACT SALES", "JOIN A MEETING", "HOST A MEETING", and "MY ACCOUNT". The central content area features the headline "One Consistent Enterprise Experience." followed by six service tiles: Meetings, Video Webinar, Zoom Rooms, Business IM, H.323/SIP Connector, and Developer Platform. Each tile includes an icon, a title, a brief description, and links to "Watch Video" and "Learn More". At the bottom of the main content area, it says "Happiest Customers. Best Reviews." An overlay at the bottom of the page shows a meeting interface with buttons for "Audio Settings", "Chat", "Raise Hand", "Q&A", and "Leave Meeting". A red circle highlights the "Chat", "Raise Hand", and "Q&A" buttons, and a large red arrow points from this circle towards the right.

zoom

SOLUTIONS PLANS & PRICING CONTACT SALES

JOIN A MEETING HOST A MEETING MY ACCOUNT

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Happiest Customers. Best Reviews.

Audio Settings ^

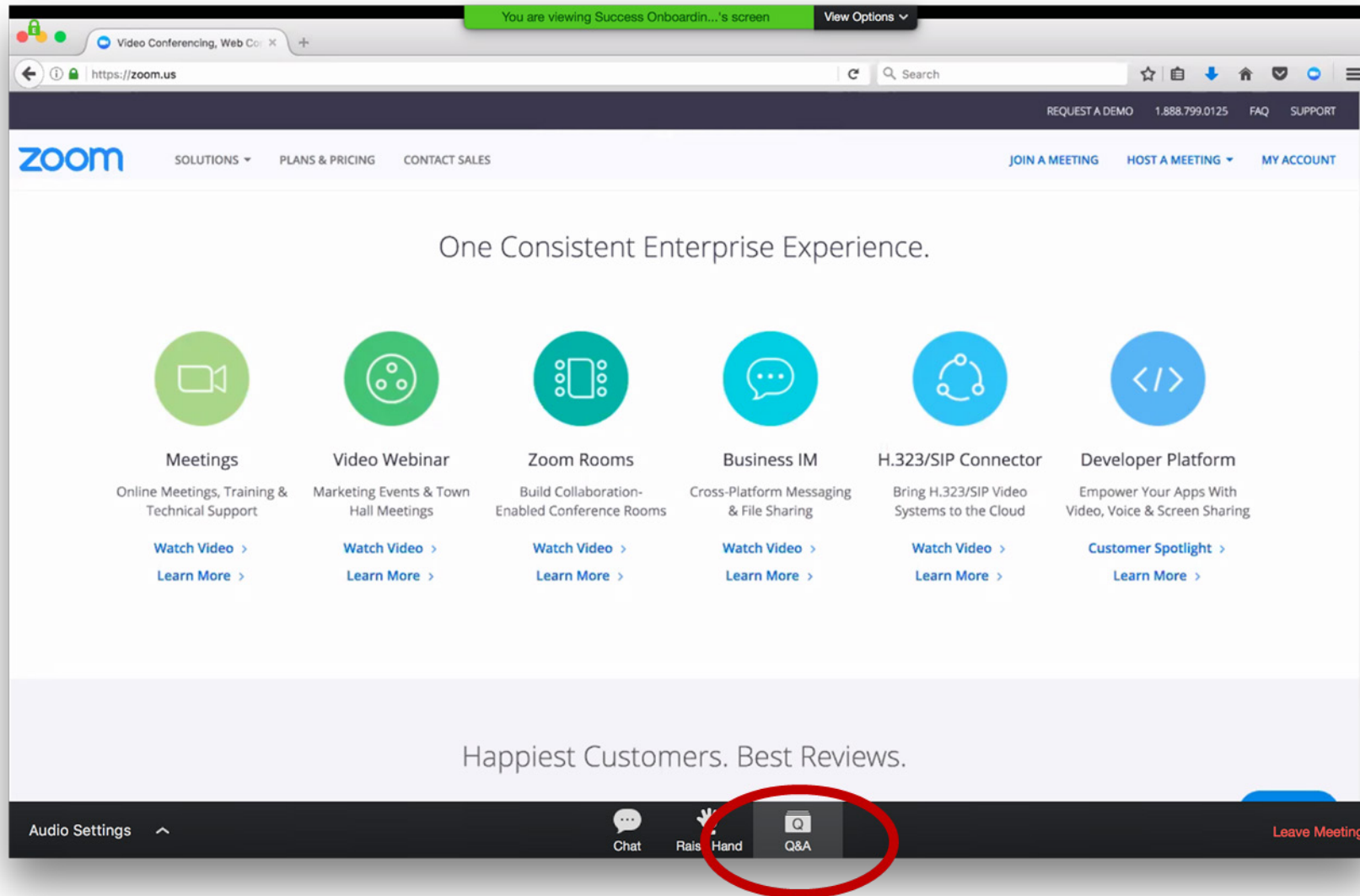
Chat Raise Hand Q&A

Leave Meeting

A horizontal bar containing three buttons: "Chat" with a speech bubble icon, "Lower Hand" with a green hand icon, and "Q&A" with a question mark icon.

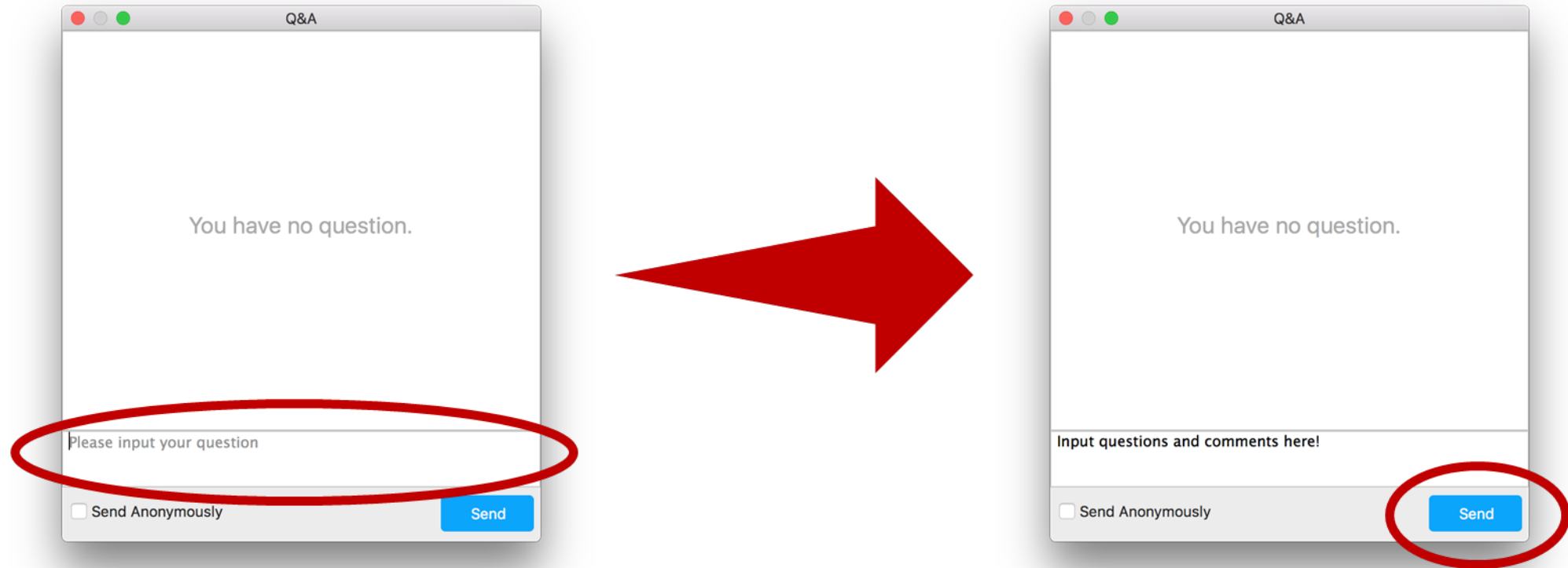
Chat Lower Hand Q&A

# Q&A

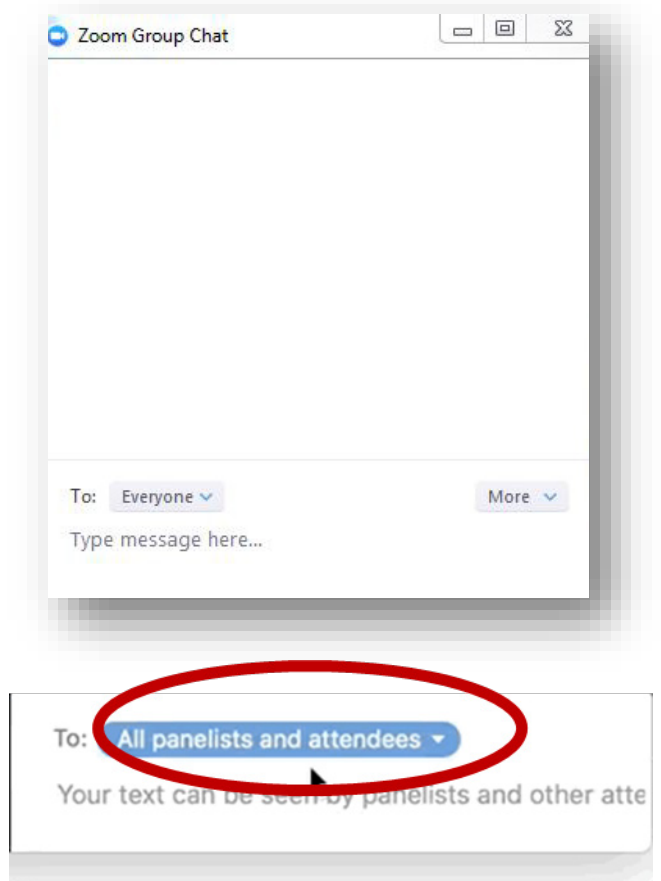
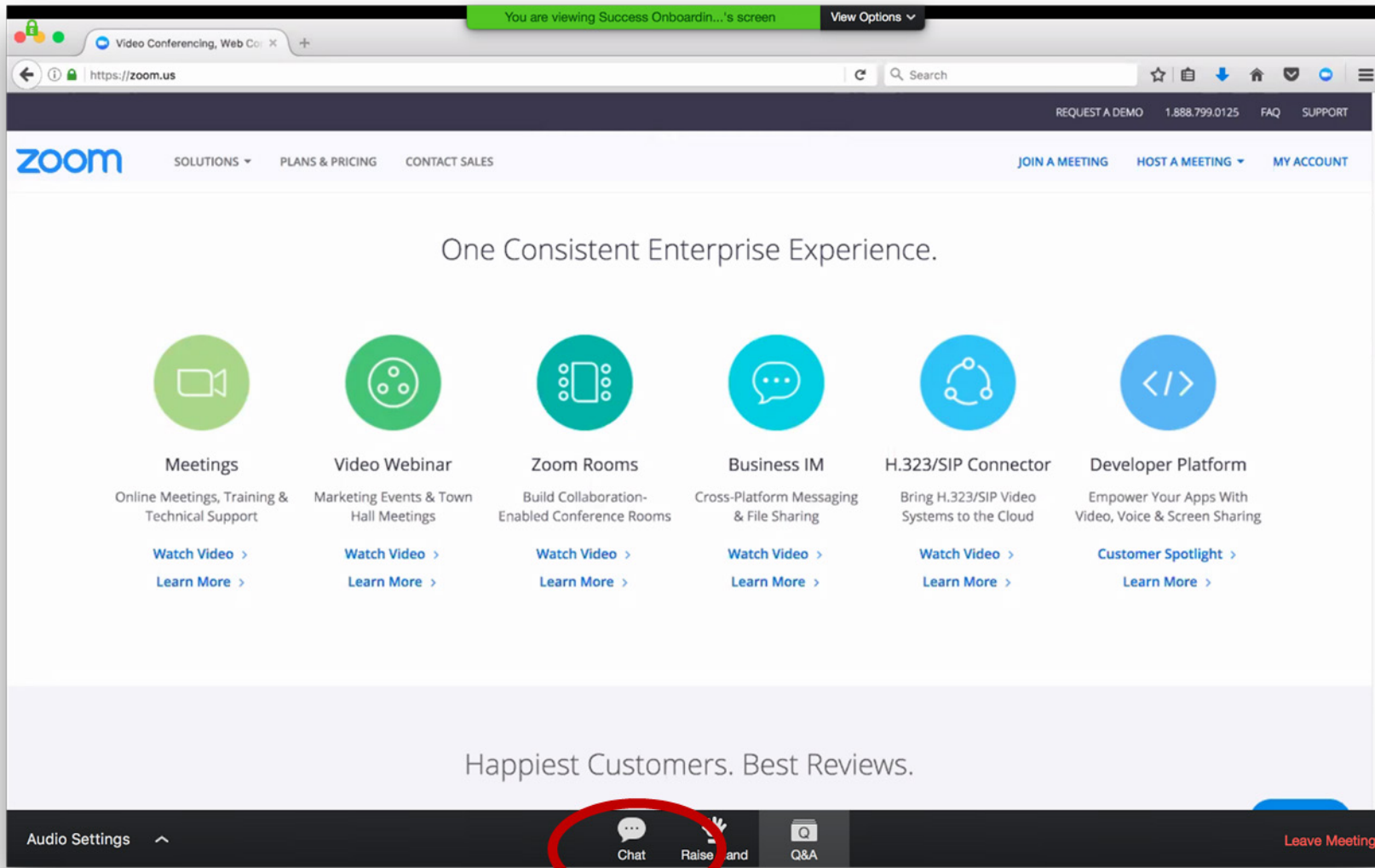




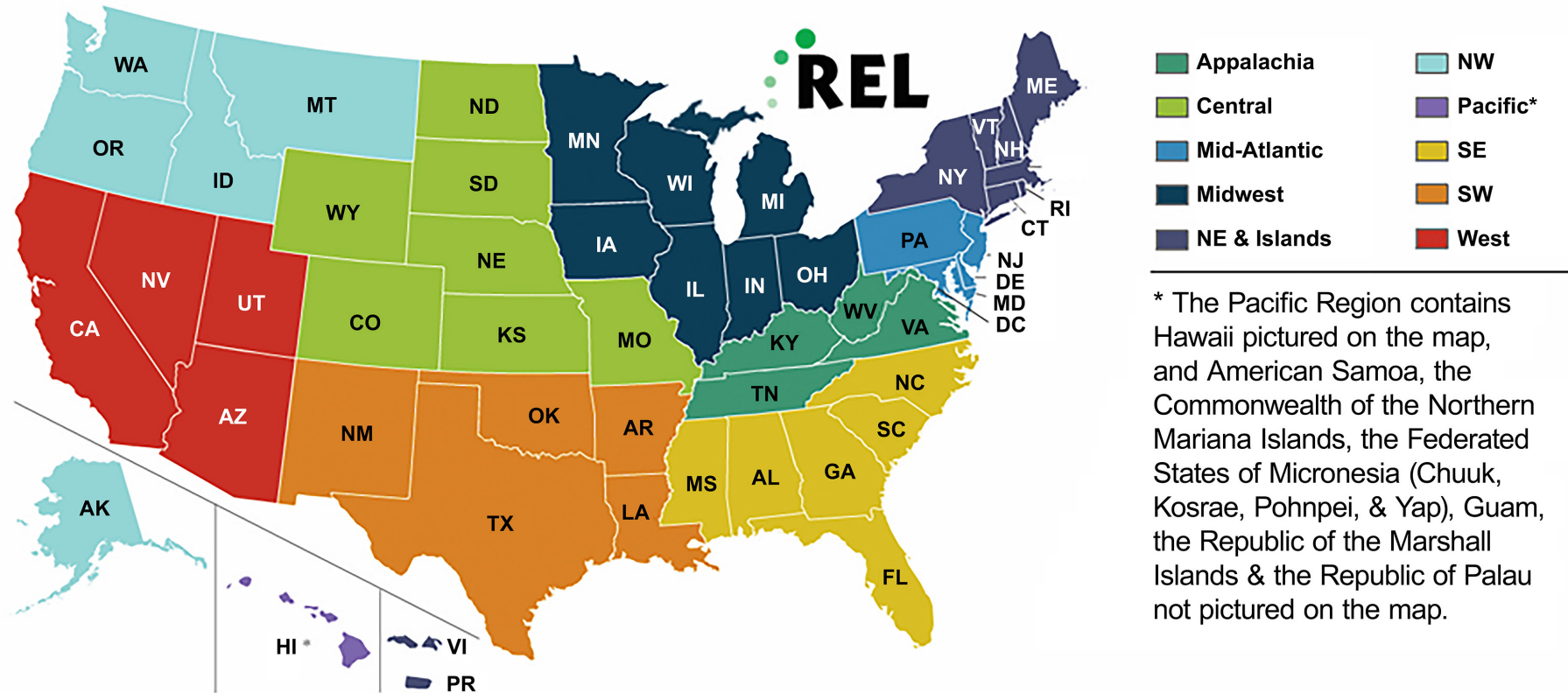
# Submit a Question



# Use Chat



# The Regional Educational Laboratories



The **10 RELs** work in partnership with stakeholders to **support a more evidence-based education system.**

Administered by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

Find us on the web! <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs//>

# How do the RELs do their work?

## Applied Research

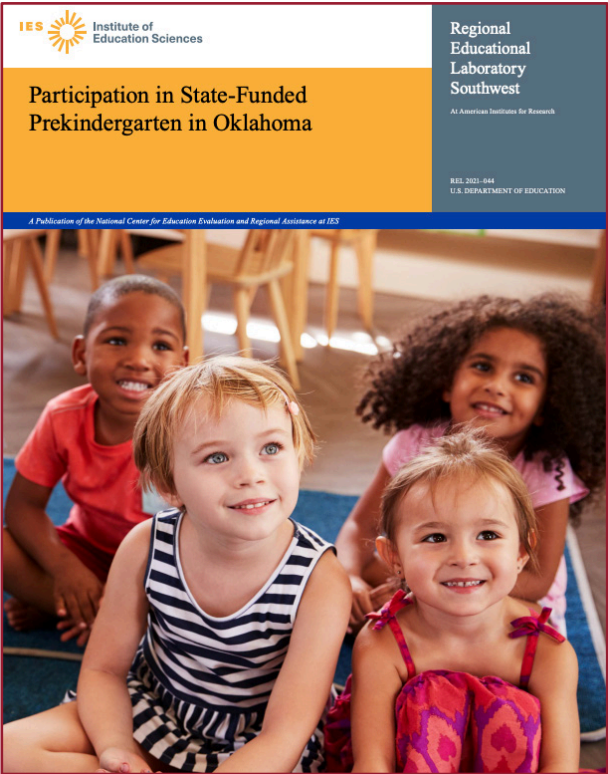


Image source: American Education, Images of Teachers and Students in Action

## Training, Coaching, and Technical Support



## Dissemination

 Institute of Education Sciences



### Theory of Change for a Successful School Improvement Partnership

A Publication From Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest

Developed by the District and School Improvement Cross-REL Working Group, this infographic outlines a theory of change for building an effective school improvement partnership. Such partnerships can thrive given three sets of favorable conditions that support successful engagement: six key qualities in the support provided, a set of shared beliefs and sense of collective efficacy across partners, and the presence of adequate resources and a supportive policy environment. Trust and shared accountability between partners are foundational elements that contribute to success, and are built over time under these conditions.



# Webinar outcomes

- Participants will be able to apply information about using alternate data sources in their work.
- Participants will have a better understanding of the practices, programs, and policies related to using alternate data sources for district and school accountability and support that are in place elsewhere.
- Participants will have a greater capacity to identify the next steps toward using alternate data sources for school improvement, accountability, and support.
- Participants will be able to share information that they learned from the webinar.

# Please respond to the poll.

## What is your role in education?

- State education agency staff
- District or local education agency staff
- Teacher or school leader
- Professional development provider
- Researcher or evaluator
- Other—just interested in the topic

# Using data to fill the accountability gap and promote improvement in the wake of the pandemic

Brian Gill, PhD, JD  
Director, REL Mid-Atlantic



# States are flying blind, but most districts have data available that can be used for multiple purposes.

- With no state test scores from 2020 and uncertainty about scope and timing of 2021 data, state accountability systems have been disrupted.
- Many districts, in contrast, have *more* data as a result of the pandemic.
  - Moving instruction online has created large troves of data in the digital platforms.
- Districts might use their digital data for two key purposes:
  1. Establishing low-stakes accountability through transparency
  2. Informing continuous improvement



# Transparency can promote accountability without stakes attached.

- Attaching consequences to student outcomes is only one of many ways to create accountability.
  - Transparency is used in many fields to create accountability.
- Remote instruction has enhanced accountability to parents by making instruction and assignments more transparent.

[Gill et al., 2016](#)

# Transparency can promote accountability without stakes attached.

- Districts and schools can hold themselves accountable by increasing transparency in their practices and their outcomes.
  - Has the district ensured that all students have devices and internet connections?
  - What are student attendance rates in remote instruction across the district and in each school?
  - Can the district report other indicators of student engagement?
  - What do formative and interim assessment results indicate about what students are learning?
- Additional transparency may be especially important when state test results are unavailable.

[Gill, n.d.](#)

# Data in digital platforms can also inform improvement efforts.

- Real-time data can be used to quickly identify needs.
  - Which individual students are disengaged?
  - Are students more likely to be absent or disengaged at particular schools that need attention?
- Real-time data can identify successes to replicate.
  - Have some schools done especially well at keeping students engaged remotely?
  - Have some teachers been especially successful at keeping students engaged?
  - If so, what are they doing to promote engagement?

# Using data for improvement, accountability, and support: Examples from the field

## *District metrics for quality remote and hybrid learning*

Susan Bowles Therriault, EdD,  
Managing Researcher, REL Northeast & Islands

Erica Champagne,  
Director, Office of Effective Practices in Turnaround,  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

## *Cross-state partnership on using data and evidence to facilitate action: Handle With Care*

Victoria A. Schaefer, PhD,  
Principal Education Researcher, REL Appalachia

Amanda D. Mote  
Attendance Director, Pleasants County Schools, West Virginia

# District metrics for quality remote and hybrid learning

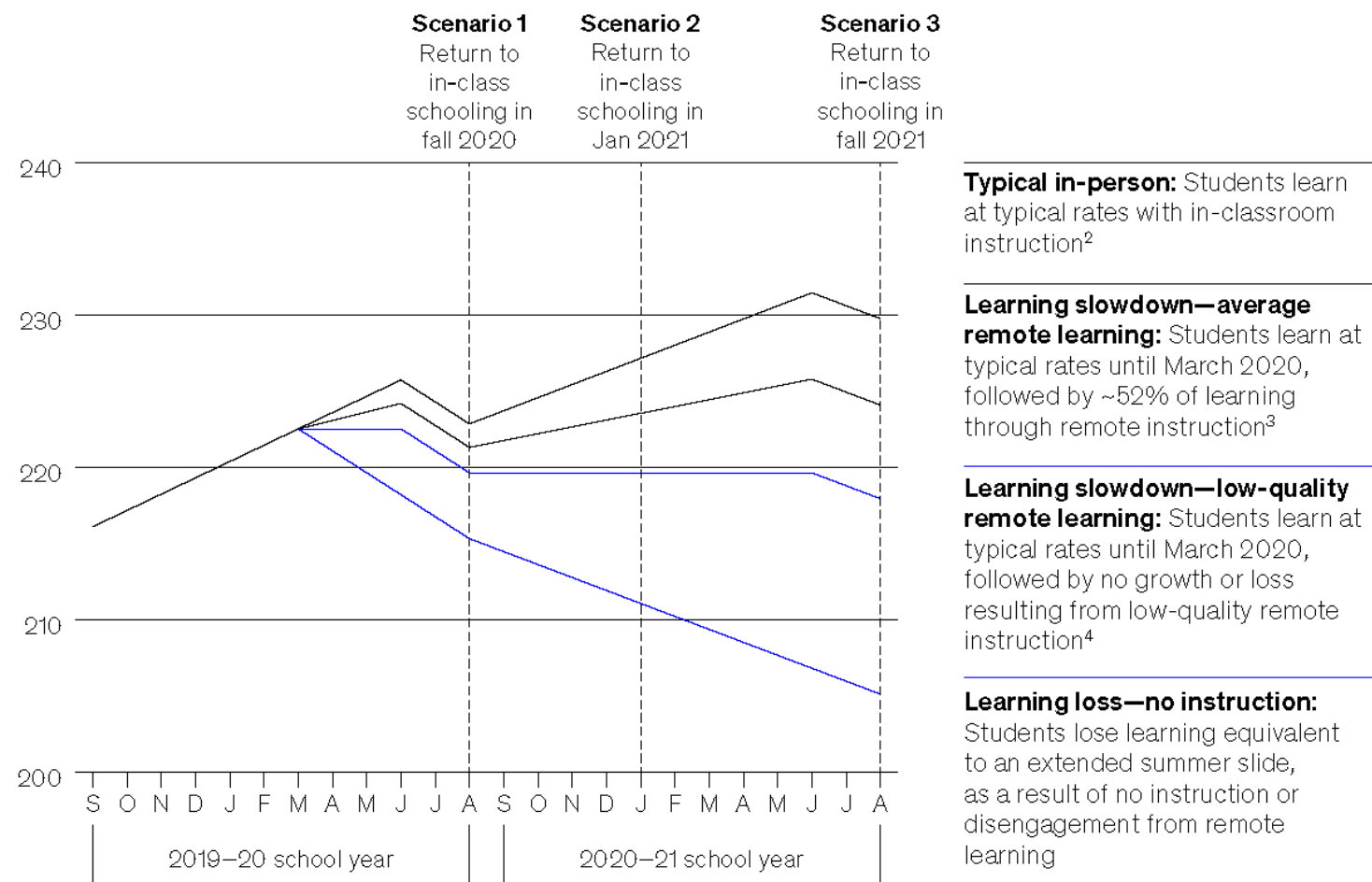
# Variation across schools and districts

- Preparedness
- Inputs
- Learning modes and time
- Quality
- Learning management systems



## In all three scenarios, students are at risk for significant learning loss.

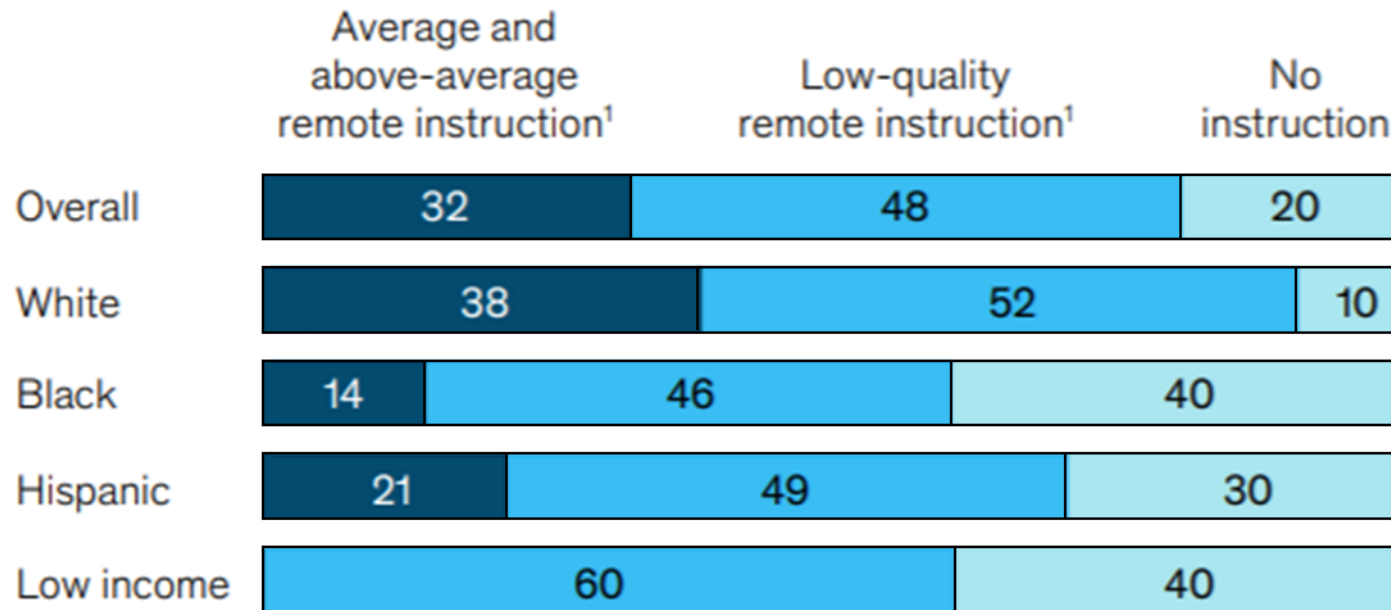
Projected 6th-grade math performance, example, NWEA<sup>1</sup> RIT Scores



Source: Dorn et al., 2020, p. 4

# Access to quality is not the same.

**Quality level of remote instruction, % of K–12 students**



Source: Dorn et al., 2020, p. 5



# The approach to remote instruction differed by whether a district used a learning management system before the pandemic.

**Percentage of districts in which physical learning materials (e.g., paper packets) were a primary part of the distance learning strategy (grades K–5)**

All districts 34%

Had LMS 21%

Did not have LMS 43%

Had 1:1 devices 28%

No 1:1 devices 38%

**Percentage of districts in which live virtual classes taught by the student's teacher were a primary part of the distance learning strategy (grades K–5)**

All districts 46%

Had LMS 57%

Did not have LMS 39%

Had 1:1 devices 52%

No 1:1 devices 43%

Source: Garet et al., 2020

# Metrics for quality remote and hybrid learning— a community of practice



# Community of practice purpose and approach

## Purpose

Develop a framework of measures that state, district, and school leaders can use to assess the quality of remote and hybrid learning.

Prioritize three topical areas schools and districts are most interested in:

- Student engagement
- Family engagement
- Teacher working conditions and well-being

## Approach

Explore current research and evidence-based practices on the three constructs and their effectiveness in supporting remote and hybrid learning.

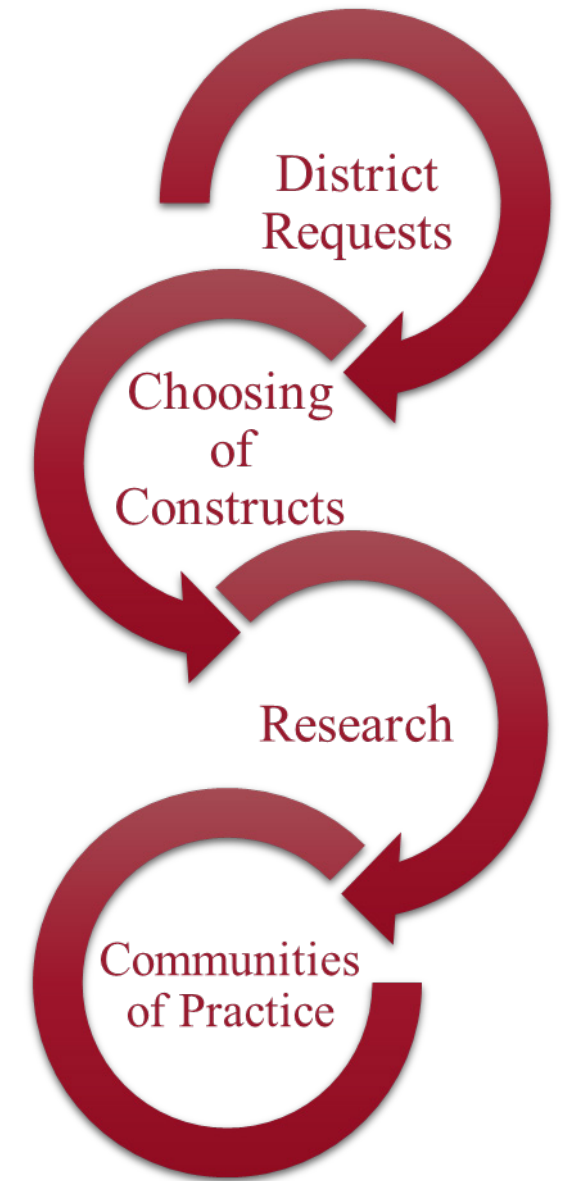
Identify data sources that assess key constructs within the topical areas.

Collect and revise the framework based on community of practice feedback.

Community of practice members pilot portion(s) of the framework for feasibility, comprehensiveness, and usefulness.

# Remote and hybrid learning metrics: How did we get here?

1. Student engagement
2. Family engagement
3. Teacher working conditions and well-being



# Massachusetts: New metrics and strategies



**Learning time**



**Mode**



**Monitoring  
CSI/TSI schools**

# Cross-state partnership on using data and evidence to facilitate action: Handle With Care

# Cross-state partnership's goal

To build capacity among local data users to access, understand, and use state data resources to facilitate action at the local level.

*...helping to address “data-rich,  
information-poor” (DRIP) syndrome*



# REL Appalachia intensive support in West Virginia





# Handle With Care (HWC)

HWC is a school–community partnership program founded in 2013 to ensure that children exposed to trauma in their home, school, or community receive appropriate support to help them achieve academically.

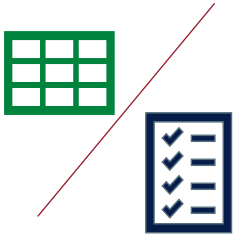


# HWC program improvement process supports: The Guide and workbooks



- **HWC Guide**

- Support that recommends processes for conducting program improvement
- Provides overview, instructions, protocols, and examples



- **HWC Counselor Workbook (or Word document)**

- Supports counselors to document and monitor interactions with students identified for HWC support
- Summarizes data to share with the HWC data lead



- **HWC Data Lead Workbook**

- Supports staff to document and monitor HWC implementation and student outcomes
- Customizes tables and graphs to visualize data

# HWC and COVID-19 shifts in implementation

COVID-19 implementation challenges	COVID-19 implementation strategies
District and school staff received fewer HWC referrals than expected.	District and school staff strengthened relationships with law enforcement and Emergency Management Service (EMS) agencies and reminded them about the HWC process.
Educators had limited time to review data.	Educators used coaching calls with REL Appalachia to reflect on data and brainstorm student support strategies.
Teachers had greater difficulty contacting and following up with students identified for HWC who needed additional support.	Teachers and counselors initiated additional efforts to contact nonresponsive students and families.
Counselors struggled to engage in virtual counseling sessions.	Members of the HWC team set up additional HWC trainings so that all school staff could better support students.

# Panel discussion

Cary Cuiccio,  
Senior Director, REL Southwest

What are some lessons learned from having to rethink your approach to data use under COVID-19?

Photo by Allison Shelley for American Education: Images of Teachers and Students in Action.







Photo by Allison Shelley for American Education: Images of Teachers and Students in Action.

Which of these new practices do you see continuing once the pandemic is past?

How has the experience of rethinking the use of data during COVID-19 changed your perspective on using data for transparency, accountability, and improvement?

Photo by Allison Shelley for American Education: Images of Teachers and Students in Action.



# Participant questions and answers

["Question 1"](#) by [Virtual EyeSee](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)





# Wrap-up and closing remarks

Laura Shankland

# Tell us what you thought!

Please complete the feedback survey  
(link in the chat box).

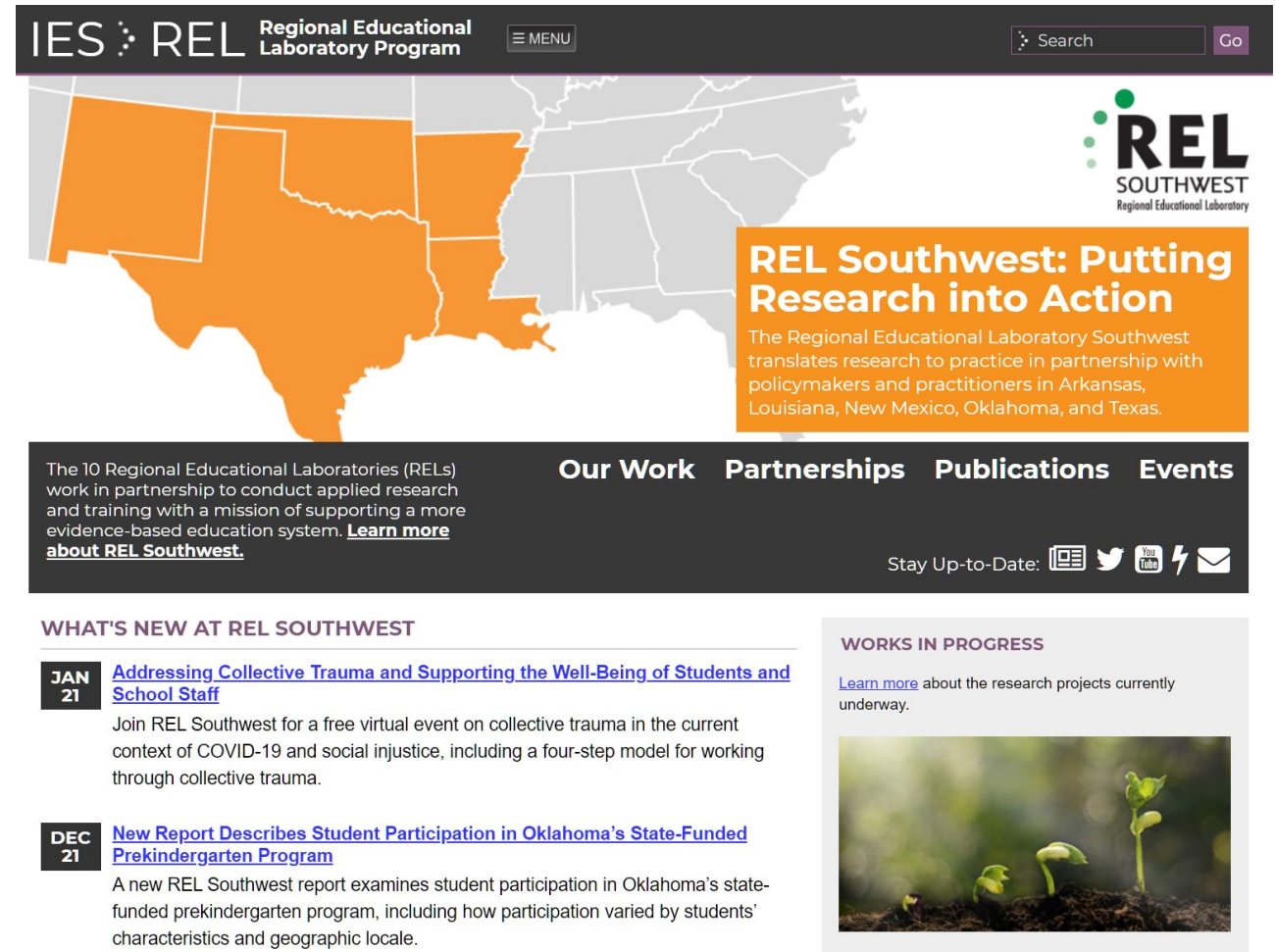


Source: Getty Images

# REL website

Please visit REL Southwest at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/default.aspx> and the REL program at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/>.

- Ask A REL resources
- Current and archived events, research, and training resources
- Infographics and videos
- Blog



The screenshot shows the REL Southwest website. The header includes the IES REL logo, the text 'Regional Educational Laboratory Program', a menu icon, a search bar, and a 'Go' button. Below the header is a map of the United States with the Southwest region (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma) highlighted in orange. To the right of the map is the REL Southwest logo and a banner that reads 'REL Southwest: Putting Research into Action' with a description of the organization's mission. Below the map is a section titled 'Our Work Partnerships Publications Events' with a 'Stay Up-to-Date' section featuring social media icons. The main content area is titled 'WHAT'S NEW AT REL SOUTHWEST' and features two articles: one dated JAN 21 titled 'Addressing Collective Trauma and Supporting the Well-Being of Students and School Staff' and another dated DEC 21 titled 'New Report Describes Student Participation in Oklahoma's State-Funded Prekindergarten Program'. To the right of these articles is a 'WORKS IN PROGRESS' section with a 'Learn more' link and a photo of a small green plant growing out of soil.

IES REL Regional Educational Laboratory Program

Search Go

REL SOUTHWEST Regional Educational Laboratory

**REL Southwest: Putting Research into Action**

The Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest translates research to practice in partnership with policymakers and practitioners in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) work in partnership to conduct applied research and training with a mission of supporting a more evidence-based education system. [Learn more about REL Southwest.](#)

Our Work Partnerships Publications Events

Stay Up-to-Date: [Calendar] [Twitter] [YouTube] [Lightning Bolt] [Email]

**WHAT'S NEW AT REL SOUTHWEST**

**JAN 21** [Addressing Collective Trauma and Supporting the Well-Being of Students and School Staff](#)


Join REL Southwest for a free virtual event on collective trauma in the current context of COVID-19 and social injustice, including a four-step model for working through collective trauma.

**DEC 21** [New Report Describes Student Participation in Oklahoma's State-Funded Prekindergarten Program](#)

A new REL Southwest report examines student participation in Oklahoma's state-funded prekindergarten program, including how participation varied by students' characteristics and geographic locale.

**WORKS IN PROGRESS**

[Learn more](#) about the research projects currently underway.



# Connect with us



## Email

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## Visit our website

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/index.asp>

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*Thank you!*