



It's September and the sounds of school are back in the air. In the spirit of the back-to-school season, this edition of the REL Appalachia newsletter offers a variety of resources to help you engage students and families and improve outcomes for all learners in the region.

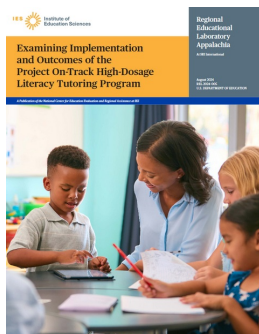
You'll also find a special invitation for school districts to participate in a new network devoted to increasing student attendance and engagement. And check out some additional guides and toolkits for supporting data literacy, multilingual learners, and immigrant students.

New Attendance Solutions Network for School Districts

The U.S. Department of Education is inviting districts to join the Student Attendance and Engagement Solutions Network (Attendance Solutions Network). Part of the National Partnership for Student Success (NPSS) — a partnership among the U.S. Department of Education, AmeriCorps, and the Johns Hopkins University Everyone Graduates Center — the Attendance Solutions Network has been created to support districts to reduce chronic absence, increase student engagement, and build on prevention strategies for the 2024/25 academic year and beyond. The network is designed to provide technical assistance, research, and support to districts at no cost. Districts can express interest in joining by completing [this brief form](#). Please share this opportunity with districts, and reach out to REL Appalachia if you have questions.

Resources to engage students and families

[A new infographic](#) introduces a training and coaching series to help educators understand and use evidence-based strategies to **create trauma-sensitive schools**. This [blog post](#) provides an overview of the four areas addressed in the training series. The full set of training materials is available [on this resource page](#).



[A new research study](#) that describes how districts in Tennessee implemented Project On-Track, a **high-dosage literacy tutoring** program, as well as the characteristics of students who received tutoring and how variation in implementation is associated with improvement in student literacy scores at the end of the school year.



These [presentation materials](#), from a Work-Based Learning Conference hosted by the **Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**, share research-based instructional strategies to **teach students employability skills** and include two handouts on the skills and strategies.



A new [REL Corner](#) on **family engagement** features resources for both educators and families, listed by academic content area and grade level.



[This blog post](#) discusses ways to **engage kinship caregivers and grandfamilies** in school communities and includes links to materials from all our community of practice meetings so far. Also, [this infographic](#) offers tips on using inclusive language with kinship caregivers and grandfamilies. Stay tuned for another infographic to help schools navigate legal issues around educational decisions for students living with nonparental caregivers — ready in fall 2024!



The [Framework for Equitable Opportunities to Learn in STEM](#), developed by all 10 RELs, explores characteristics and entry points for providing students with **equitable opportunities and access to STEM learning experiences** that integrate STEM domains and affirm their identities, strengths, and cultures.

Additional non-REL resources

- This [Guide to Data Literacy](#) defines and discusses the **importance of data literacy** and presents **best practices** that education agencies are using to help different audiences understand and use data to inform decisions that affect students' educational experiences.
- The [English Learner Family Toolkit](#) was created to **help families choose education services that meet their children's needs**. The toolkit (available in Arabic, Chinese, English, and Spanish) has six chapters that explain family and student rights and includes questions for schools, tips, and resources.
- The [Newcomer Toolkit](#) is designed to help educators, elementary and secondary teachers, principals, and other school **staff who work directly with immigrant students** — including asylees and refugees — and their families. The toolkit (available in English) has five chapters with sample tools and resources.

In Case You Missed It...



- Check out our [June 2024 newsletter](#), and
- [Subscribe](#) if you're not already on our distribution list or if you received this newsletter as a forwarded email!

Out and about

We hope to connect with you at this upcoming event:



Grandfamilies presentation at the [National Forum to Advance Rural Education](#) (Oct. 31, Savannah, GA)

Learn more and connect with us!

REL Appalachia is deeply committed to supporting educators in our region. [Share this link with a friend so they can subscribe](#) to our quarterly newsletter. For the latest news, updates, and resources, [follow us on X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and tag us [@REL_Appalachia](#), and [visit our website](#). If you have stories, successes, challenges, or other feedback you'd like to share, [please reach out to us via email!](#) We'd love to hear from you!



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