



March and April mark spring break for many in the Appalachia region, a time to recharge a bit before the final stretch of the school year. Over this year you’ve built relationships, learned strategies to sharpen your practice, and ideally begun to see the fruits of your labor.

We especially acknowledge the ongoing work of instructional coaches and leaders supporting teachers around the region. Coaching is more important than ever, as schools look for ways to accelerate learning, meet diverse student needs, and retain excellent teachers.

This newsletter features a resource to help coaches build on the momentum they’ve generated and reflect on their practice moving forward. We also share other recent resources from REL Appalachia on a variety of topics.

Featured Resource: Coaching Conversation Observation Rubric



Instructional coaches are often responsible for observing teachers and providing actionable feedback. Yet coaches themselves can also benefit from tailored feedback to help improve their practice. REL Appalachia partnered with the Kentucky Department of Education and coaching experts to develop an observation rubric to assess the quality of conversations between coaches and the teachers they support. While the rubric was designed for math coaches, it can easily be modified and applied in other contexts as well.

Learn more about this tool and ways it might be adapted, as well as other instructional coaching resources, in this blog post: [“Measuring What Matters: Using an Observation Rubric to Strengthen Instructional Coaching.”](#)
The full [observation rubric](#) is also available.

Other New Resources

Kinship Caregivers and Grandfamilies

- Read a [new blog post](#) on ways to engage kinship caregivers and grandfamilies in school communities.
- Learn how to conduct empathy interviews with kinship caregivers and grandfamilies in [materials from our recent community of practice meeting](#).
- Also check out a [new infographic](#) with strategies for using inclusive language with kinship caregivers and grandfamilies.



Chronic Absenteeism

- Another set of [community of practice meeting materials](#) outlines ways to combat chronic absenteeism.
- A new [REL Corner](#) collects resources on chronic absenteeism.

Teacher Workforce

- A [new infographic](#) collaboratively produced by all 10 RELs illustrates promising practices for diversifying the teacher workforce.



In Case You Missed It...



Check out our [December 2023 newsletter](#), and please [subscribe](#) if you’re not already on our distribution list.

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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