

# NEWSLETTER

[Director Updates](#) | [New Products](#) | [From the U.S. Department of Education](#) | [Across the RELs](#) | [Connect with Us](#)

## Director Updates



Greetings from REL Mid-Atlantic! In our half-dozen intensive partnerships around the region, we've been working to address state and local analytic needs; we have much to share. The final version of our [full report](#) on stabilizing school performance measures for student subgroups was released in February (details below), and we're very excited about its implications for helping state and local agencies pursue equity in student outcomes without sacrificing the accuracy of the measures. Indeed, we think stabilizing subgroup scores can dramatically improve states' capacity to realize [Secretary Cardona's vision](#) of using test scores as a flashlight rather than a hammer. Stabilization can help identify which schools and subgroups need the most support, even for subgroups as small as 10 students—breaking states out of the tough trade-off between

equity and accuracy that they have always faced in considering small subgroups. We enjoyed the opportunity to share our findings not only with the original partner (the Pennsylvania Department of Education) but also with staff at the U.S. Department of Education who are responsible for reviewing and approving state accountability plans. We are now looking for opportunities to make the approach more widely available to agencies across the country.

Our blog has remained active (details below), with contributions not only from REL staff but from our partners in the region. My own latest post describes a comprehensive framework for measuring school performance, informed by various projects we've conducted in the region over the past several years; I hope you'll find it thought-provoking. And a new post from our partners at the New Jersey Department of Education describes an initiative that harnesses the power of art to support students and promote healing in the wake of the losses of the pandemic. The post is a lovely complement to an [earlier post](#) by a Maryland partner on how principals can maintain their own resilience and sanity through uniquely challenging times.

Meanwhile, we've started new work in Maryland in support of the state's effort to create Expert Review Teams. These teams will conduct school inspections aimed at providing a rigorous outside perspective to provide information to support school improvement. And we're working on developing a new partnership in Maryland—stay tuned for more details in our next newsletter.

**Happy spring to all!**

**Brian Gill**  
**Director, REL Mid-Atlantic**

## New Products



### [Measurement for School Improvement: The Peril and The Promise](#)

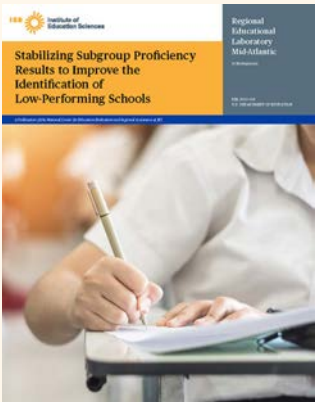
Why schools should take a closer look at their performance measures, and how a three-pronged framework focused on outcomes, impacts, and processes can help.



### [The Healing Power of Art to Build Resilience and Social-Emotional Learning](#)

The New Jersey Department of Education found a way to help students across the state get through the tough times of the pandemic by sharing their artwork and hopes for the future.

Image credit: J.O., Swedesboro-Woolwich School District



### [Stabilizing Subgroup Proficiency Results to Improve the Identification of Low-Performing Schools](#)

Learn how Bayesian methods can help increase the accuracy of school accountability metrics. This final report shares results from a study that used Bayesian stabilization and data provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to improve the reliability of subgroup proficiency measures used to designate schools for Targeted or Additional Support and Improvement.

## From the U.S. Department of Education

### [Raise the Bar: Lead the World](#)

On January 24, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona delivered a major address laying out the department's 2023 vision.

View the [remarks](#) and [video](#).

---

***“We need to recognize once and for all that standardized tests work best when they serve as a flashlight on what works and what needs our attention—not as hammers to drive the outcomes we want in education from the top down, often pointing fingers to those with greater needs and less resources.”***

Secretary Cardona

---

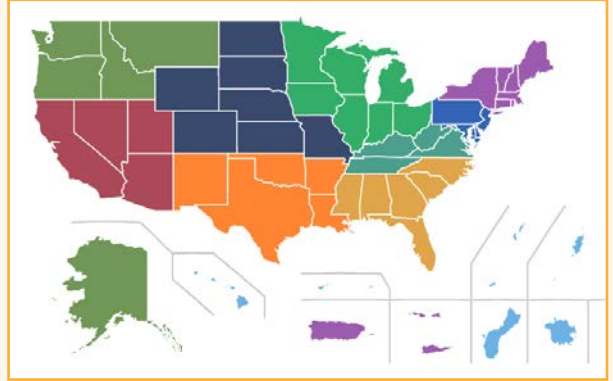
### [Family Engagement Learning Series](#)

A six-month webinar series hosted in partnership from the U.S. Department of Education, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and Overdeck Family Foundation focused on how family engagement can support math and literacy, attendance and student engagement, student and school safety, student mental health and well-being, kindergarten readiness, and college readiness.

## Across the RELs

REL Central's [new fact sheet](#) from its Standing Rock partnership shares best practices in culture-based math instruction and the professional learning supports that can help with implementation.

REL Midwest produced a documentary with Detroit Public Television, [Supporting Michigan Learners Toward Excellence in Reading](#), focused on strategies to accelerate reading growth.



## Connect with Us

Please reach out anytime at [RELmidatlantic@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:RELmidatlantic@mathematica-mpr.com) to share your ideas about important issues REL Mid-Atlantic could address, request free technical assistance, or ask questions about how we can help you in your work.



For more frequent updates from us and our nine REL partners across the country and to receive the latest research updates from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, please follow us on Twitter [@RELMidAtlantic!](#)