

**Dear Colleagues,**

Greetings from the [Center for Applied Research in Postsecondary Education \(CARPE\)](#) at the [American Institutes for Research® \(AIR®\)](#). We hope you enjoyed your summer and are experiencing a smooth transition into the academic year. Check out these new postsecondary resources.

**[Report: Key Findings on Institutional Transformation from the Frontier Set](#)**

AIR served as a research and learning partner for the [Frontier Set network](#), a 6-year initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This initiative brought together a group of diverse colleges, universities, state systems, and supporting organizations that are committed to eliminating race, ethnicity, and income as predictors of student success by transforming how they operate. AIR's final [report](#) on the multiyear initiative presents key findings on what was learned about the use of transformation as a change process to create more equitable student outcomes.

**[In the News: Study Shows that FAFSA Verification Doesn't Lead to Lower Enrollment](#)**

This [article](#) in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* presents findings from a recent study that found that Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) verification did not lower the likelihood of college attendance in either the short term or the long term. The article quotes AIR's Alberto Guzman-Alvarez, who provided commentary on the paper's findings, which relate to his work on FAFSA verification.

**[Brief: More to the Retention Story: Second- to Third-Year Retention at 4-Year Institutions](#)**

In this [brief](#), AIR's McCall Pitcher and [Kelle Parsons](#) analyze data from the Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) to generate insights about retention at 17 four-year institutions. The authors note that, although higher education focuses on first- to second-year retention, during which institutions lose on average 23% of students, institutions consistently lose another 10% of students during the second- to third-year window. Black and Latino students and Pell Grant recipients are also slightly more likely to stop out during this window. The authors encourage institutions to explore their own second- to third-year retention data more deeply to identify who is leaving and begin the process of understanding why.

**[Brief: Postsecondary Competency-Based Education: A Primer for Policymakers](#)**

AIR worked with the Center for Higher Education Policy and Practice (CHEPP) on a new [brief](#) about competency-based education (CBE). The brief outlines what CBE is, how it works, the potential benefits to learners, and how institutional practice is driven by federal higher education policy. The goal of the brief is to provide policymakers with valuable information about CBE as they consider how institutions of higher education can meet the needs of more learners across the country.

**[Ascendium Resources: Building Evidence to Increase Rural Learning Success](#)**

AIR's [Courtney Tanenbaum](#) and [Daniel Frederking](#) worked with the Ascendium Education Group to build project profiles for the [Building Evidence to Increase Rural Learner Success initiative](#). The resource library includes links to the project profiles and other helpful resources related to advancing the understanding of rural learning and the postsecondary education and workforce pathways that best serve them.

**[Article: AP Calculus and Science Coursetaking and Choosing a STEM Major or Occupation](#)**

This research [article](#) written by AIR's [George Bohrnstedt](#), [Burhan Ogut](#), [Darrick Yee](#), and [Yifan Bai](#) presents findings from a study that explored whether there is a causal connection between Advanced Placement (AP) STEM coursetaking and the choice of a science, technology, engineering, and math college major and a STEM occupation. The article discusses how the study found that taking AP mathematics and AP science courses is significantly related to majoring in STEM and/or expecting to be in a STEM occupation at age 30—the sole exception being the taking of AP statistics.

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Sincerely,  
Alexandria



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