You are receiving this email because the Pennsylvania Department of Education is asking for your feedback on proposed research questions for a grant application, and your participation on an advisory group if the application is funded.

PDE previously partnered with Mathematica, Inc. on an Institute of Education Science (IES), National Center for Education Research (NCER) grant ([Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Recovery Policymaking Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 84.305S](https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2025_84305S.pdf)) that revealed that Pennsylvania’s math proficiency rates in grades 5-8 fell from 38 percent in 2019 to an estimated 25 percent in 2021, after adjusting for nonrepresentative test participation; and that remote learning appeared to contribute to achievement declines during the pandemic with more negative effects in math than in ELA, and larger in schools with higher levels of economic disadvantage. Pennsylvania is committed to helping all students recover from the pandemic, and particularly those most heavily impacted by it.

PDE, in partnership with Mathematica, is resubmitting an application to the same grant program in August. The research proposed will build on prior findings to inform recovery efforts, describe variation in student achievement, and examine the strategies that LEAs are using in math to help improve secondary and postsecondary achievement outcomes for student post COVID-19, especially historically disadvantaged groups. Currently, the following questions are being refined:

1. What strategies are Pennsylvania LEAs using to help students in the key learner groups recover from impacts of the pandemic on secondary math? To what extent do educators and students perceive these strategies are addressing the reasons for math struggles?
2. How have postsecondary education outcomes and their precursors changed for students in the key learner groups? How much have outcomes returned to pre-pandemic levels?
3. How has remote learning during the pandemic shaped LEAs’ math recovery strategies and students’ longer-term math and behavioral outcomes in the key learner groups?
4. Can increasing enrollment in more advanced math courses lead to improved secondary and postsecondary outcomes for students in the key learner groups?

These questions may change between now and our submission in August. We are sending this email to garner ***feedback on the proposed research questions*** and ask foryour***participation in an advisory group***. Your feedback will be used to refine our initial questions and the scope of the research. We would be deeply grateful if you could lend your voice to this important endeavor through being part of the project advisory group if the application is funded. The commitment would involve participating in about 4 remote meetings (~60 minutes in length) across the two-year grant period. A letter of agreement template is attached for you to review, tailor, and put on your letterhead if appropriate. You can electronically sign the letter and attach it to your email response.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me. We would like to receive your feedback and the letter of agreement by Friday, July 19th, if possible. Thank you sincerely for considering our request.

**Question 1:** If you could change anything about the four research questions currently being proposed, what would you change?

**Question 2:** Are you willing to be on our Advisory Group if this application is funded?

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