



Carsey: Rural Students Lack Access To Advanced Math Courses

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DURHAM, N.H. – On the heels of the launch of President Obama’s campaign promoting math and science achievement, a new report finds that students in rural areas and small towns have less access to advanced math courses than their peers elsewhere. The report, from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire, finds that nearly half of high school students in rural areas and small towns – about 1.5 million students – attend schools that offer only one to three math courses beyond algebra II and geometry.

“Limited access to advanced math courses limits the number of qualified students filling the job pipelines in science, technology, engineering and mathematics – the STEM fields,” says report author Suzanne Graham, assistant professor of education at UNH. “What’s more, equal access to a high-level curriculum is the foundation on which our public education system is based.”

Only 10 percent of students attending rural schools have access to more than seven advanced math courses, compared to 58 percent of students in urban schools and 41 percent in suburban and large-town schools. Advanced math courses include trigonometry, analytic geometry, pre-calculus, calculus, probability and statistics, and advanced-placement math.

The brief, “Students in Rural Schools Have Limited Access to Advanced Mathematics Courses,” is available to download at <http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/IB-Graham-MathAccess.pdf>. Funding for this work was provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s initiative to strengthen rural families and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy and applied research on vulnerable families and on sustainable community development, giving policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources they need to effect change in their communities. Learn more at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/>.

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