



About the Office of Research

Our **mission** is to provide scientifically rigorous, independent, and objective research and program evaluation services to state education policy makers and the West Virginia Department of Education. The WVDE Office of Research adheres to the **American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators**, including systematic inquiry, competence, integrity/honesty, respect for people, and responsibilities for general and public welfare.

We believe program staff understand the contexts and challenges of their work better than any outsider. That's why we subscribe to a **participatory evaluation philosophy**, which engages these individuals as active partners throughout the entire research/evaluation process. This approach ensures our program evaluations and research studies are targeted toward meeting program needs and yield actionable recommendations that program staff will value and use to improve outcomes.

Our **goals** include the following:

1. Support the implementation of the WVDE data governance and data access and use policies, and protect human subjects involved in WVDE research.
2. Build and apply knowledge, skills, and competencies related to effective use of education evaluation practice in program development and policy making in West Virginia.
3. Provide targeted research, evaluation, and data support services to the WVDE and partners as they relate to conditions that influence student learning.

The **Office of Research** provides a range of **services** including the following:

- Oversight of all human subjects research projects undertaken by WVDE staff and support for data governance
- Focused reviews of the research literature
- Theory of action and logic modelling consultation
- Needs assessment
- Demographic, student achievement, and other trends analyses
- Formative and summative evaluations

Our expert **staff** is trained and experienced in conducting state-of-the-art qualitative and quantitative social science and assessment methodologies.

Steven A. "Andy" Whisman, PhD, *Assistant Director*
Patricia Cahape Hammer, MA, *Coordinator*
Chad Morrison, MA, *Coordinator*
Jason E. Perdue, MA, *Technical & Online Assessment Coordinator*
Amber D. Stohr, MA, *Coordinator*

We are supported by two staff associates:

Jennifer Kozak, *Secretary II*
TBA, *Secretary II*

CURRENT PROJECTS One Voice, One Focus Priorities

Students with exceptionalities

Priorities 1 - 3 and 5

- Evaluate WVDE Office of Special Programs professional development academies
- Evaluate the Special Education Technology Integration Specialists program
- Support federal reporting requirements, including the State Systemic Improvement Plan
- Develop annual accommodations reports
- Respond to ongoing Office of Special Programs data requests

Assessment and accountability

Priorities 2 and 9

- Assist the WVDE Office of Assessment with its Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) program
- Provide statistical and analytical support to the Office of Legal Services & Accountability
- Conduct targeted research and analysis of assessment and accountability programs
- Provide growth data preparation and analyses

School climate, student health and wellbeing

Priority 5

- Conduct and report the annual WV School Climate Survey
- Conduct and report the annual WV School Climate Index
- Analyze and annually report student discipline data
- Analyze and annually report school bullying, intimidation, and harassment data
- Coordinate state participation in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention School Health Profiles (SHP) and Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
- Develop SHP and YRBS dissemination products
- Collaborate with WVDE offices and external partners in using SHP and YRBS data for needs assessment and program planning

Professional learning

Priority 7

- Annually evaluate the West Virginia Board of Education's Master Plan for Statewide Professional Development
- Evaluate the Learning Schools project as the first stage of the Board's Transforming Professional Learning initiative

Afterschool

Priority 10

- Annually evaluate the state's participation in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program

Others tasks as assigned by WVDE leadership