PUBLIC EDUCATION SNAPSHOT (SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021)

Students: 252,357
Schools: 685
Elementary Schools: 373
Middle Schools: 152
High Schools: 114
Career Technical Centers: 26
Multi-County Centers: 7
Alternative Schools: 13
Adult Learning Locations: 90
Professional Personnel (Teachers, Administrators, & Other Professionals): 23,729
Service Personnel: 13,535
Average West Virginia Teacher Salary: $50,261.25

SPENDING PER STUDENT (SCHOOL YEAR 2019-2020*)

State Aid per Pupil: $4,643.43
Per Pupil Expenditure: $12,640.06

*Most recent data available

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
POINTS OF PROGRESS

$2.1 MILLION statewide economic impact through SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience)

Expanded School Mental Health (ESMH)
25 COUNTIES
55 SCHOOLS
2021 funding will support ESMH expansion in 18 schools

Dual Credit has a 98% pass rate and is offered in ALL 55 COUNTIES

Imagination Library Program expanded to ALL 55 counties
44,327 total children enrolled

National Ranking
INCREASED TO 11th from 15th for the number of National Board Certified Teachers
15% IN the country for percentage of NBCTs

46,880,498 meals served by National School Lunch Program
Sponsors & Participating Non-Profits

Dual Credit has a 98% pass rate and is offered in ALL 55 COUNTIES

Imagination Library Program expanded to ALL 55 counties
44,327 total children enrolled

89.92% of all CTE completers in 2019-2020 were positively placed (continued education, employment or military)

National Board Certified Teachers
21 of 25 ACE Schools received national accreditation through the Council on Occupational Education

1,028 CTE students competed NATIONALLY WITH 10% PLACING IN THE TOP 10

9,121 Enrollments

197,000 books distributed to children entering 1st & 2nd grade

West Virginia ranked 1st in the NATION IN school breakfast participation

6TH for access to high-quality Universal Pre-K

Communities In Schools
OPERATING IN 23 COUNTIES
120 SCHOOLS

21 of 25 ACE Schools received national accreditation through the Council on Occupational Education

1,028 CTE students competed NATIONALLY WITH 10% PLACING IN THE TOP 10

9,121 Enrollments

197,000 books distributed to children entering 1st & 2nd grade

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
YEAR IN REVIEW 2020–2021
The Pandemic Pedagogy: A Year of School Like No Other

Public education in 2020 changed forever. When COVID-19 became a household name, West Virginia had little time to prepare to continue meeting the needs of the 252,357 children in its school system. In a matter of days, state leaders partnered with school personnel and community members to ensure three things: no child would go hungry, no child would lack instructional engagement, and most importantly, no child would lose connection to at least one caring adult.

In order to make these three things possible, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) worked with Governor Jim Justice, Coronavirus Czar Dr. Clay Marsh, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and Secretary Bill Crouch, the National Guard and Major General James Hoyer, and county boards of education to develop a Re-Entry Toolkit and Re-Entry website, which outlined best practices for a safe return to the classroom. A crucial piece of the online resource was what became known as the “Saturday Education Map,” a color-coded guide published every Saturday that depicted the level of COVID-19 infection and community spread, and as a result, set the level of in-person instruction. Because remote and virtual learning became the norm in 2020, the WVDE had to adapt to the needs of its children by launching initiatives such as the COVID-19 Hotline to offer information to the general public and the Kids Connect initiative to provide other WiFi access options to students across the state.

With little warning and no instructions, COVID-19 required a plan built from the ground up that would allow public schools to meet the basic and academic needs of West Virginia children. As time passed and vaccines became available, it became evident the WVDE needed to look toward recovery and focus on improvements to learning, safety, and infrastructure. In spring 2021, the WVDE developed the Roadmap to Recovery, which prioritized the social-emotional and mental health needs of students and emphasized important considerations for educator support and community collaboration.

Public education in West Virginia has had many obstacles in its path. Prior to the pandemic, West Virginia was in a state of crisis due to economic hardships and the lasting effects of the opioid epidemic. Because of this, the state had systems in place that focused on at-risk students and educating the whole child. With mounting concerns about learning loss and social-emotional trauma, the WVDE, WVBE, and school personnel throughout the state continue to step up and meet these ever-evolving challenges head on.

Now more than ever, it is critical we continue addressing our students’ greatest needs through open communication and transparency as well as through commitment to engagement and learning – no matter where or how it occurs. The future of West Virginia remains a priority, and the education community must be diligent in its pursuit of distinction and excellence.

To view a full timeline, visit wvde.us/covidtimeline/
WEST VIRGINIA’S SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE

From the opioid misuse crisis that devastated families and communities, to the layers of poverty and the declines in workforce population, West Virginians have stood in the trenches to build support structures around vulnerable populations. Educators saw the effects daily, but the pandemic revealed to the greater public the compounded vulnerabilities that lay just beneath the surface of everyday life for many. Life has been forever changed globally and in the Mountain State, and true recovery is a lift that must be shouldered by all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education spending as a percentage of total state appropriations</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State population*</td>
<td>46.19%</td>
<td>46.19%</td>
<td>46.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Participation</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children in Foster Care</td>
<td>4,097</td>
<td>6,970</td>
<td>6,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Related Mortality Rate (per 100,000 deaths)**</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Infants Born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (per 1,000 live births)***</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Homeless Students</td>
<td>9,320</td>
<td>10,417</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$42,777</td>
<td>$44,921</td>
<td>$46,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment by School Year</td>
<td>281,828</td>
<td>261,633</td>
<td>252,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Teachers</td>
<td>19,866</td>
<td>18,697</td>
<td>18,494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The American Community Survey by the U.S. Census released in September 2019
** WV Health Statistics Center, Vital Statistics System

PANDEMIC RELIEF FUNDING

West Virginia counties received more than $1.2 billion in federal pandemic funding to offset the impact of COVID-19. The federal government sent four rounds of relief dollars to states to meet a range of needs and challenges including continuity of operations, addressing pandemic learning loss activities, and supporting health and safety needs. With each round of funding, the WVDE passed its portion of the allocation through to the counties to enhance re-entry and recovery efforts. Summer and extended learning opportunities are among the initiatives supported with WVDE pass-through dollars.

| Amount Awarded | Element & Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Funds (ESSERF) 1 Allocation | $80,920,938.91 |
|----------------|Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)† Round 1 | $1,848,948.00 |
|                | WVDE Competitive Grant*** Allocation | $13,152,789.91 |
|                | Governor’s Extra-Curricular Equity Fund (ECEF) Allocations | $3,963,850.00 |
|                | ESSERF 2 Allocation | $305,128,886.00 |
|                | Summer SOLE Grant Program (ESSERF 2 Funds) | $33,029,979.60 |
|                | American Recovery Plan (ARP ESSERF) | $744,042,792.76 |
|                | Multi-County Vocational Centers (MCVC) Sanitation & COVID-19 Preparedness Allocations**** | $210,000.00 |
|                | MCVC Sanitation & COVID-19 Preparedness 2 Allocations**** | $700,000.00 |
|                | Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Allocations | $9,052,260.00 |
|                | American Recovery Plan (ARP EANS) | $9,763,999 |
| TOTAL ALLOCATED | $1,201,814,044.18 |

†Funds sent directly to County from U.S. Department of Education
***Competitive grants were funded from state and federal sources
****Funding available from state sources

For the full Pandemic Relief Funding Allocations, please visit wvde.us/covid19/care-act.
The challenges our students face in a typical academic year were only exacerbated by the pandemic. Providing support to our pre-k - 12 classrooms in 2020-2021 looked different than it had in the past. For 10 months, West Virginia students were not permitted to participate in in-person instruction. West Virginia’s education leaders had to come up with new, innovative ways of connecting with students and making certain they had the necessary resources to succeed inside and outside of the classroom. When the state returned to school in January 2021, it required state leaders to work in tandem with the education community to get children back in action and connected to at least one caring adult. From the development of new support offices to expanded services in child nutrition and mental health, the West Virginia Department of Education set a new standard for what it means to support West Virginia children.
EXPANDED SUPPORT FOR STUDENT WELL-BEING

Development of Office of Student Support & Well-Being

In June 2020, the Office of Student Support and Well-Being (OSSW) was established to coordinate services for the whole child. The new office ensures each student has at least one caring adult that keeps them connected to the school system. Additionally, the OSSW’s collaborative infrastructure harnesses resources, best practices, momentum, and expertise to prepare the whole child for post-secondary options, whether education, employment, or enlistment. The office brings together several initiatives including: Communities In Schools, Expanded School Mental Health, McKinney-Vento “Homeless” Education, Project AWARE, ReClaimWV, Student Opportunities for Learning and Engagement (SOLE) program, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, family engagement, and Technical Assistance Centers to the professional student support personnel employed in West Virginia schools.

Expansion of School Nutrition

As county boards of education paused in-person learning in the spring of 2020, county child nutrition teams sprang into action to continue to make meal service available to students. Within 48 hours of Governor Justice’s announcement to close schools as part of the pandemic response, more than 500 meal site locations were activated across the state. As the entity that administers federal child nutrition programs in West Virginia, the WVDE received a number of flexibilities from the USDA that ensured local program operators could extend nutritious meals to students during a public health crisis.

During the summer of 2020, there were a total of 353 operating summer meal locations, with 268 sites managed by county boards of education and 85 through local organizations. Between June and August, nearly 8 million meals were served to West Virginia children compared to 500,000 the previous summer. Under Governor Jim Justice’s direction and State Superintendent Burch’s leadership, all 55 county boards of education made meals available to children through the summer.

Meal Service During the School Year

A total of 46,880,498 meals were served by National School Lunch Program sponsors and participating non-profits between March 2020–March 2021

In a landmark moment in the National School Lunch Program, all students in West Virginia public schools were eligible for free breakfast and lunch in school year 2020-2021 due to special USDA waivers obtained by the WVDE. Schools worked diligently to provide meal service on and off-campus through classroom dining and meals for students learning remotely. Quickly adapting to a new way of providing meal service to students was a challenge, but schools responded to the charge.

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)

Families benefited from two rounds of federal Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT). The WVDE partnered with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources to provide supplemental nutrition support. The first round of P-EBT was distributed in March 2020 equaling $72 million to 231,000 children in the state. Round two benefits will continue through the summer 2021, valued at approximately $200 million in nutrition benefits to children.

The WVDE and DHHR continue to monitor and work closely with the USDA to expand opportunities for this program. For the latest information on WV P-EBT, please visit wvpebt.org.

Common Ground Partnership

The West Virginia Common Ground Partnership collaborates with schools across the state to advance the success of all students. As a part of this partnership, the Purple Star Award was established in spring 2021. It is a designation assigned to schools which demonstrate a special commitment to supporting military children and their families. Learn more by visiting wvde.us/commonground.

School Mental Health Initiative Continues to Grow

Expanded School Mental Health (ESMH) is a comprehensive framework of mental health services and programs established to provide a full continuum of prevention, early intervention, and treatment. The ESMH model emphasizes shared responsibility and the funding of services for all students, meaningful involvement of parents and youth, evidence-based programs, and continuous quality improvement. There are currently 55 schools implementing ESMH in 25 counties. New funding was awarded in 2021 to support the expansion of ESMH to 18 additional schools for the next school year.
Communities In Schools Program Expanded Again

Under First Lady Cathy Justice’s leadership, the Communities In Schools (CIS) program has expanded into eight more counties and 27 more schools following a $4.8 million supplemental appropriation from the state legislature in 2021. During the 2020-21 school year, the CIS program operated in a total of 23 counties and 120 schools statewide. The program recognizes that traditional education reform strategies fail to address the daily dilemmas that face children. These issues range from poverty to the need for adult mentors. CIS aims to:

- Forge community partnerships.
- Bring resources into schools to help remove barriers to student learning.
- Prevent students from dropping out of school.

The WVDE Technical Assistance Center for Accessibility and Transitions

The West Virginia Technical Assistance Center for Accessibility and Transitions was established by the WVDE in 2020-2021 as a statewide resource for students in need of Accessible Educational Materials and other specialized services to access educational programs and daily activities. This technical assistance center is located on the campus of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, West Virginia.

EXPANDED SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

The State Board of Education and the Department of Education remained committed to the health, safety, and well-being of the education community throughout the pandemic. Whether gauging COVID-19 indicators in the fall or supporting the statewide return to in-person instruction in January, the primary goal was to keep students safe, fed, and engaged.

It became evident after nine months of inconsistent and intermittent in-person learning, that children needed to be in school where they had full access to the social-emotional, academic, and stabilizing supports schools offered. As the fall semester of 2020 came to a close and the reality of vaccines took hold, the transition began to return students to the school building and the caring adults who kept them connected to the school system.

Partnering with the Governor’s Office, DHHR, state medical officers, and the West Virginia National Guard, the WVBE and the WVDE worked within the realm of available data and knowledge to comply with the Governor’s executive orders and offer families the best instructional options possible. Together they built robust guidance outlining protocols, procedures, and expectations. Additionally, the Superintendent and members of his executive staff participated in several county board meetings to answer questions and address concerns. It was undeniable that schools were the safest place for children, and the critical need to provide families with in-person learning and effective virtual learning options remained a top priority.

Kids Connect

In August 2020, Governor Jim Justice unveiled the West Virginia Kids Connect Initiative, which was designed to support the learning needs of children without access to the Internet at home. By installing the necessary equipment, all public schools, higher education institutions, county libraries, and state parks were converted into WiFi hotspots or had existing WiFi signals boosted for access from designated sites like parking lots. Eventually, Department of Motor Vehicle sites were added. Amidst some initial challenges, this initiative provided students Internet access to complete school assignments. Learn more at wvkidsconnect.net.

Virtual Schools/Virtual Learning

In 2020-2021, virtual learning programs grew statewide to meet the needs of families who sought virtual options for their children. Students in grades k-12 were provided virtual options through the West Virginia Virtual School (WVVS) as well as through county programs. The WVVS expanded its scope to meet the virtual needs of counties across the state by increasing its grade level and course offerings. This was made possible by a one-time, $8 million grant from the Governor’s Office. More than 17,000 k-12 students* participated in WVVS courses during the 2020-2021 school year. An additional 41,000 students* participated in local programs designed and housed at the county level. WVBE Policy 2510 requires counties to continue providing virtual learning for students in grades 6-12, while k-5 is optional.

*October 1, 2020 enrollment deadline data
### West Virginia’s Blue Ribbon Book Club

In June 2020, the WVDE launched the West Virginia Blue Ribbon Book Club, a partnership between the WVDE, the Marshall University June Harless Center, and The Hollywood Foundation. As part of the project, approximately 197,000 books were distributed over the summer to children entering first and second grade during the 2020-2021 school year. First and second grade educators also received copies of the books at their schools to build upon summer literacy activities when school resumed. The Blue Ribbon Book Club provided early learners with a small library of high-quality books.

Approximately 37,000 West Virginia children received a shipment of two books to their homes in mid-June and three additional books in mid-July. This project was developed to assist with summer and COVID-19 learning loss experienced by West Virginia children and will relaunch in summer 2021. Learn more at wvde.us/wv-blue-ribbon-book-club.

### West Virginia’s Imagination Library

**July 1, 2020:**
- Five new counties joined in July
- All 55 counties offered the program in some capacity
- 29.27% of eligible children enrolled (29,339 children)

**March 31, 2021:**
- 44.23% of eligible children enrolled (44,327 children)
- All 55 counties now offer the program

Growth of the program for School Year 2020-2021 = 14,968.

### Wellness Wednesdays

Virtual school students were able to remain active and take physical education classes during the pandemic with Wellness Wednesdays, an online interactive series hosted by WVDE Physical Education Coordinator Josh Grant. With assistance from the West Virginia Department of Commerce, Mr. Grant released weekly episodes that taught children to exercise in a safe and fun way. Wellness Wednesdays aired every Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. on the local WVPB Education Station and featured on the WVDE social media channels.

### Arts Alive!

This annual event is a snapshot of some of the most talented students in dance, music, theatre, and visual art from West Virginia schools. For the past two years, West Virginia Public Broadcasting (WVPB) partnered with the WVDE to broadcast and stream Arts Alive and showcase the 200-plus participating students. Now in its 15th year, this program remains committed to celebrating the work of young artists.

### Education Station

A partnership with West Virginia Public Broadcasting provided an opportunity for the WVDE Career Technical Education and Teaching and Learning offices to host, produce, and disseminate 49 Education Station episodes during the pandemic. This platform makes free educational content and learning activities available across all content areas created by West Virginia educators for children statewide. There was an average of 1,600 viewers per episode. Season four is slated for fall 2021.

### Student Access to Dual Credit Continues

Students continued to have access to rigorous college courses while in high school. During the 2020-2021 school year:
- All 55 counties offered dual credit options for students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously. Access to dual credit courses allow students to earn college credit at reduced prices and enter college with many required credits completed.
- Students passed 98% of the dual credit courses taken.

### WVDE and College Board Offer Fall Administrations of SAT for Seniors

Because of the suspension of statewide summative testing in spring 2020, students in grade 11 were unable to take the state-provided SAT School Day test. However, the WVDE worked with College Board to offer fall administrations of the exam. Several SAT School Day test dates were scheduled, and vouchers were provided to students to take the SAT for free on Saturday national testing dates. Based on College Board data, more than 7,100 seniors took the SAT in fall 2020. The WVDE and College Board also worked collaboratively to allow any senior who did not have an opportunity to test to take the SAT School Day in spring 2021 along with 11th grade students. More than 1,200 seniors took the SAT in spring 2021, bringing the total number to more than 8,300.

### HEPC Promise Scholarship Awareness Campaign

Superintendent Burch and West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission Chancellor Sarah Tucker worked together with state leaders to raise awareness regarding the Promise Scholarship and ACT testing opportunities. In March 2021, Governor Jim Justice announced a dedication of $341,000 in federal CARES Act funding to provide free ACT testing opportunities for high school seniors applying for the Promise Scholarship, making West Virginia the first state in the nation to cover these costs for students because of the COVID-19 emergency. Through this state-sponsored effort, students were able to take one free ACT exam administered on a college campus in West Virginia.

As of March 1, 2021, application numbers were down 30% compared to this time last year for Promise Scholarship submissions. As a result, the WVHEPC extended the application deadline, and seniors have until the end of August to earn qualifying ACT or SAT test scores to begin using the Promise Scholarship this fall.
EXPANDED SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL & ADULT EDUCATION

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, students in technical and adult education programs worked harder than ever to accomplish their goals. Likewise, the WVDE Office of Technical and Adult Education worked tirelessly to continue empowering West Virginia’s emerging workforce. Successes achieved over the past year include:

- Partnered with Second Launch to refurbish, repair, and distribute more than 700 donated technology items for use in pre-k - 12 classrooms.
- Teamed up with Marshall University, West Virginia University, Eastern CTC, and industry partners Solar Hollar and DT Solar to develop a “New Age Engineering” pathway focused on alternative energy sources.
- Built connections through the West Virginia Department of Commerce and local businesses, allowing more than 10% of CTE completers to participate in internships and work-based learning activities.
- Placed 89.2% of all CTE completers during the 2019-2020 school-year in one of the 3E’s – education, employment, enlistment.
- Had more than 8,800 high school CTE completers and more than 1,000 post-secondary Advanced Career Education completers.

Advanced Career Education (ACE)

- Nationally accredited through the Council on Occupational Education with programs offered at 25 schools across the state.
- 21 of 25 ACE schools received national accreditation through the Council on Occupational Education.
- Created an ACE entrepreneurial hub at the James Rumsey Career and Technical Center in Martinsburg for community members to grow their ideas.
- Launched the new ACE Advantage program. Similar to the WV Invests grant, this program provides free or low-cost tuition to students across the state.

Adult Education

- Class sites offered in all 55 counties.
- Served more than 9,000 Adult Learning students with 83% achieving their High School Equivalency.

Public Service Training

- Provided training for emergency responders throughout the state, offering nearly 4,000 training classes in EMT, fire, haz-mat, homeland security, and terrorism.
- Served more than 39,000 adults.

Entrepreneurs

The WVDE has made entrepreneurship a priority by creating a pathway for entrepreneurial-spirited students to gain the knowledge and skills needed to successfully launch future business ventures.

Emerging Entrepreneurs

Entreprenuership Educational Pathways

- Development of a formal entrepreneurship pathway. WVDE and The EdVenture Group have partnered to work with West Virginia CTE teachers, Marshall University, West Virginia University, and key stakeholders to create an entrepreneurship pathway for high school students.

Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE)

Experiential and work-based learning in school-based agricultural education allows local programs to extend beyond the classroom and into the community to develop an individual student’s entrepreneurial ideas. Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) is the methodology for delivering such high-quality experiential learning and is a required component of a total agricultural education program intended for every student. Through these entrepreneurial strategies, students learn how to apply what they are learning in the classroom as they prepare to transition into the world of college and career opportunities.

WVDE awarded eight EntreAG grants to agriculture programs across the state. The funding allows students to launch agriculture-focused entrepreneurial ventures at their schools. EntreAG gives Simulated Workplace students the opportunity to create a marketplace in their community for locally sourced, sustainable agricultural products and services.

EntreEMERGE

WVDE awarded 18 EntreEMERGE grants to Career Technical Education programs across the state. The funding allows students to launch startup entrepreneurial ventures at their schools. The student-centered micro-business will provide high school students, from multiple counties, the opportunity to creatively showcase the products and goods crafted within their Simulated Workplace Company.

2020 Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Highlights

- 3,095 SAE projects
- 57% of CTE students have an SAE
- 112,792 hours invested
- $2,092,092 economic impact statewide

EPIC

The Economic Projects Impacting Communities (EPIC) Competition gives Simulated Workplace students the opportunity to collaboratively showcase their creativity and technical skills by developing, designing, and constructing an innovative community impact project for public, private, commercial, or residential use. The goal of the EPIC competition is to enhance students’ technical skills and creativity while making an impact within their local community. Some of the more notable EPIC projects include Calhoun-Gilmer Career Center’s Star Gazing Cabin, the Moorefield High School Micro-Business Complex, and Putnam Career & Technical Center’s Eleanor Park’s Innovative Cabins.
Educators and school personnel at every level have gone above and beyond to provide continuity of learning while supporting student well-being this past year. Our school communities were tasked with implementing new systems and strategies to set students up for long-term success. In the midst of the pandemic, the West Virginia Department of Education provided support in the form of virtual trainings, access to leadership networks and a fresh perspective on educator preparation for the most valued members of our school communities: our teachers.
Leaders of Literacy Podcast

Initiated in early 2020, the Leaders of Literacy Podcast Series offers podcast episodes focusing on the state’s early literacy work. Episodes are geared toward West Virginia’s educators to highlight the importance of ensuring children have access to high-quality programs. Since the launch of the podcast in January 2020, the Department has released 35 episodes based on topics related to the components of the West Virginia Campaign for Grade-Level Reading: attendance, extended learning, high-quality instruction, school readiness, and family engagement. Learn more at wvde.us/leaders-of-literacy-podcasts.

County Teacher Leadership Frameworks

In 2020, the West Virginia Legislature passed HB 4804, which directs the WVDE to assist county boards with the design and implementation of a teacher leadership framework to accomplish the teacher induction and professional growth aspects of their comprehensive systems of support. Teacher leadership funding is provided through Step 7d for multiple leadership opportunities including leadership training and salary stipends for those roles.

math4life Educator Support

Through an initiative to support educators, the WVDE awarded $56,000 to mathematics educators as part of the math4life Classroom Educator Grant program. Approximately 60 educators in grades pre-k - 12 were provided with grants of up to $1,000. The program also supported 220 educators by providing a monthly professional learning group during the second semester of the 2020-2021 school year. In addition, through a generous grant by the WVDE, 152 educators obtained course credit from Stanford University’s Mathematical Mindsets course written by Dr. Jo Boaler. The WVDE provided free-of-charge Praxis modules and practice tests through the West Virginia Learns platform. More than 95% of educators were successful in gaining advanced certification. In the future, WVDE support will shift to include all core content to address subject-area learning losses.

math4life Virtual Summit: More than 1,000 educators attended the math4life Virtual Summit during the summer of 2020. The virtual summit offered over 40 unique sessions for educators to attend during the three-day event.

Virtual Summits/Trainings

Summer Professional Learning Forum: Held August 3-7, 2020, this virtual learning forum was designed for classroom educators, building administrators, academic coaches, Title I/Intervention Specialists, central office administrators, and school counselors. Celebrating the innovation and dedication of West Virginia educators, this event combined voices from diverse roles in education to further develop the implementation of best practices to successfully address the needs of all students. More than 3,600 participants attended the 100+ sessions offered. The Summer Professional Learning Forum: Moving Forward Together is scheduled for August 2-6, 2021. All sessions are being offered through the Microsoft Teams platform.

Evaluation Leadership Institute (ELI): The ELI assists new and potential principals and central office administrators in building the skills needed to evaluate professional staff. Required as part of the administrative certification process, it focuses on the evaluation of professional and service personnel and is based on West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. Virtual sessions facilitated by WVDE staff continued during the pandemic resulted in 245 participants completing the online module for a provisional administrative certificate, and 32 participants completing the virtual training for the initial administrative certification.

CareerTech TALK: This monthly webinar series featured important topics for CTE and Adult Education administrators. Topics addressed ranged from CTE finances, NOCTI preparation and Adult Education Distance Education.

Learning in a Virtual CTE Environment – Professional Development Workshop Series for West Virginia Educators: This workshop was co-hosted by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) for CTE educators with sessions offered twice during a two-week period. Topics included learning and classroom management in a virtual environment as well as instructional strategies to engage students in virtual learning among others.
Partnerships Assist COVID-19 Substitute Teacher Shortage

The ongoing shortage of substitute teachers in West Virginia schools was exacerbated by the pandemic. Quarantine requirements too often removed educators from the classroom, leaving counties to struggle for substitutes on a larger scale. Partnering with the HEPC, the WVDE developed a temporary program allowing college students finishing their education degrees to serve as substitute teachers, thus alleviating some of the need for substitutes.

West Virginia Residency Model

West Virginia is working toward the 2021 implementation of the residency model for teacher preparation. This model encompasses the entire teacher preparation program, beginning with building relationships between educational preparation providers and residency schools, communities, and districts. It culminates in a yearlong residency clinical experience where the resident teacher is paired with a master teacher and utilizes co-teaching methods to instruct residents on how to teach. WVBE Policy 5100 requires all Educator Preparation Programs to have a residency pathway in place by the fall of 2021.

Senate Bill 14: Optional Pathway to Teacher Certification

On March 10, 2021, Senate Bill 14 was approved by the Governor. This legislation created a third option for acquiring a Professional Teaching Certificate in §18A-3-2a. This option includes a requirement that individuals must successfully complete pedagogical training or pedagogical course(s) in substantive alignment with nationally recognized pedagogical standards or approved or established by the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE). On May 12, 2021, the WVBE initially designated the West Virginia Pedagogical Standards1, as set forth in Policy §5310, Performance Evaluation of School Personnel, §126-142-13. Teacher Evaluation Standards and Elements2, to satisfy this requirement. SB14 became effective May 27, 2021.

1 https://wvde.us/educator-development-and-support/teaching-standards/professional-teaching-standards/
2 http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/
Teaching and learning will always be a key component within our school districts. As a result of the pandemic, our schools needed expanded supports to ensure every child had at least one caring adult in their lives and social-emotional needs were met while keeping high-quality instruction at the forefront. The West Virginia Department of Education has emphasized the importance of building and maintaining relationships during the pandemic, including those between teachers and districts, teachers and students, and staff and parents. In order to forge those deep-level connections, the Department has provided supports to districts in the form of additional funding, open communication amongst stakeholders and partnerships that enhance the educational experience for everyone within our school communities.
County Visits

"During remote learning, one teacher always told the students at the end of zoom meetings, ‘Can’t wait to see you all. Love y’all.’"

Wyoming East High School Student, Wyoming County

"In the last year, I have told students and colleagues ‘We can do this!’ so many times, it’s become a mantra. Whatever lies ahead, we can do this."

West Virginia English Language Arts Teacher

It was never more important than in the year 2020 to remain committed to visiting our school communities across the state. Although the pandemic made in-person visits more challenging, State Superintendent W. Clayton Burch, members of the West Virginia Board of Education and WVDE staff traveled to 15 counties throughout the year to engage with administrators, educators and students. During these visits, they learned much about the obstacles facing our districts and gained valuable insight through candid discussions and observations. As this school year wraps up, State Superintendent Burch has plans to continue his county visits throughout the summer as districts roll out their Summer SOLE program offerings.

Extracurricular Equity Fund

The WVDE and the West Virginia Board of Education, in collaboration with Governor Jim Justice, created the Extracurricular Equity Fund (ECEF) that provided $4 million dollars to assist public and private high schools across the state that faced continued challenges throughout the school year. In addition to sports, ECEF supported programs such as band, choir, and a variety of student organizations.

Student Opportunity for Learning and Engagement (SOLE)

In February 2021, the WVDE launched the Summer SOLE grant program, which is dedicated to providing additional resources for summer learning and engagement for K-12 students. The Department allocated $34 million, its portion of the ESSERF 2 funding, to counties to support their SOLE programs. This will allow them to better address learning losses suffered during the pandemic.

Open and Continuous Communications

After the onset of the pandemic, WVDE leadership encouraged the review of county emergency preparedness plans for infectious outbreaks. As the pandemic response increased, Microsoft Teams calls were regularly held with county leaders. Approximately 35 superintendent calls have been conducted with WVDE leadership to offer guidance, answer questions, and to build the relationship between the Department and the counties. The creation of the COVID-19 website3, the Roadmap to Recovery4 the Re-Entry Toolkit and the Re-Entry Toolkit Guidance documents5 allowed for a shared vision to meet the unique needs of COVID-19.

In spring 2020, the WVDE launched its Keeping ConnectED video series to showcase a different aspect of the West Virginia education community every Friday. Since its creation, more than 50 videos have been broadcast publicly via the WVDE social media channels and to county leaders via the weekly Superintendent’s Update newsletter.

1 https://wvde.us/covid19/
2 https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/
3 https://wvde.us/covid19/guidance-documents/
School Leadership Network

Throughout this school year, the West Virginia State System of Support continued to partner with a targeted group of county school systems (7) to provide support in specific areas of need with a focus on student achievement, while also addressing specific needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the WVDE Office of Support and Accountability and the SREB partnered with several of these districts to plan and implement a continuous school improvement model. In line with these efforts, select counties have been designated for support for the 2021-2022 school year from Instructional Support Specialists as a result of WVDE collaboration with the Marshall University June Harless Center.

Special Circumstance Reviews

Special Circumstance Reviews were conducted in five school systems: Lincoln County, Berkeley County, Summers County, Jefferson County, and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. Between 2020-2021, the reviews were completed according to the unique circumstances in each school system as outlined in WVBE Policy 2322: West Virginia System of Support and Accountability. This extensive process provided each school system with an official report outlining strengths, findings, non-compliances, and recommendations for improvement. This process also included WVDE support and technical assistance following the review.

Joint Interagency Task Force

Created by Governor Jim Justice, the Joint Interagency Taskforce (JIATF) serves as the principal agency responsible for the coordination, direction, and management of COVID-19 vaccination preparedness and deployment. WVDE leadership partnered with the state’s National Guard, Division of Health and Human Resources, Division of Emergency Management, Higher Education Policy Commission, Hospital Association, Department of Agriculture, Health Care Association, and the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine to create and implement COVID-19 recovery strategies for the state. As a result of this agency, between 65-70% of West Virginia school personnel and students have received their COVID-19 vaccines.

Summative Assessment Resumes in Spring 2021

Despite the suspension of statewide summative testing in spring 2020 because of the pandemic, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) did not offer blanket waivers for testing in spring 2021. The USDE stressed the importance of understanding the impact COVID-19 has had on learning, identifying what resources and supports students need, and informing parents on how their children are doing. West Virginia was granted a waiver for school accountability and certain reporting requirements for spring 2021. As a result, assessment data will not be used for 2021 school accountability purposes. However, it will provide parents and teachers a snapshot of student achievement during the pandemic.

School Leadership Network

The Department's West Virginia School Leadership Network (SLN) builds the pipeline for administrative leadership at the county and school level. It provided support for beginning and experienced principals throughout the pandemic through its professional learning series that served approximately 2,000 participants over the course of one month. Additionally, the SLN for beginning principals continued with 75 new school administrators. Members of this cohort were paired with an experienced principal mentor and met monthly with mentors who provided one-on-one support and conducted larger whole-group sessions with members of the cohort.

West Virginia Public Education Equity Partnership

In February 2021, the West Virginia Board of Education, WVDE, and the Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs announced the West Virginia Public Education Equity Partnership. With leadership from Office of Minority Affairs Executive Director Jill Upson, the WVBE, and the state’s education leaders, this partnership was founded on the principle and understanding that disparities in student achievement are at odds with the belief that all students can learn. With that, this partnership provides supports and research-proven methods to all districts and schools to promote school environments that ensure no student is placed at a disadvantage, and all students have the opportunity to learn.
the WVBE and the WVDE have developed a six-year review cycle to ensure policies are updated on a regular basis with input from a variety of stakeholders. With sustained involvement of stakeholders, the review cycle enhances and strengthens the revision process and quality of the final policy by ensuring new or amended state and federal legislation, other policy implications, areas of concern, antiquated language, and formatting issues have all been thoroughly considered and addressed.

### West Virginia Board of Education/State Legislature Workgroup

The WVBE will host meetings throughout the year with members of the state legislature. The purpose of these meetings is to provide ongoing communication regarding issues that affect students and the broader education community prior to the start of the legislative session. By sharing insight, vision, and a common goal of providing the best education for West Virginia children, the meetings should lead to better efficiencies and effectiveness in developing legislation and policies.

### West Virginia Board of Education Changes Policy Review Process

The WVBE and the WVDE have been thoroughly considering formatting issues have all been addressed.

### State Waivers

There were 27 state waivers adopted during the 2020 legislative session, which were in direct response to the obstacles experienced during the pandemic. The three waivers highlighted below pertain to student support and well-being.

#### Policy 2340: West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress

For the 2019-2020 school year, the testing and reporting requirements relating to the West Virginia General Summative Assessment in grades 3-8, the SAT School Day in grade 11, the West Virginia Alternate Summative Assessment in grades 3-8 and 11, and ELPA21 were waived. This was consistent with the waiver of all federal testing, accountability, and reporting requirements that was obtained from the USDE on March 30, 2020.

#### WVBE Policy 2436.10: Participation in Extracurricular Activities

During this limited waiver period, students had the opportunity to re-establish eligibility for extracurricular activities by reconnecting with teachers, coaches, counselors, and their peers. Specifically, the 2.0 GPA requirement was waived for a limited time when schools re-opened. Students, who would otherwise be academically ineligible for participation second semester, were permitted to participate as though they were eligible until March 19, 2021. During this time, teachers, coaches, and counselors provided supports to help students transition back to school and assist them to meet their academic goals.

#### WVBE Policy 2444.4: Issuance of the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma and Option Pathway

For students graduating in the 2020-2021 school year, section 8.1 limiting the High School Equivalency Assessment (HSEA) Credit Recovery option to only one content area was expanded to all major content areas. This expansion was limited to recover credit deficiencies for courses taken by students during the spring semester of 2020, the fall semester of 2020, and the spring semester of 2021. This expansion did not limit, however, students from utilizing this option in one content area to recover credit deficiencies for a course taken during a semester not designated above. Districts had the option of whether to make this expanded HSEA Credit Recovery option available to students and were responsible for determining the logistical arrangements for doing so. This waiver did not alter any NCAA or HEPC rule regarding credits received through a HSEA Credit Recovery option. Students utilizing this waiver did not have to participate or otherwise pass an approved HSEA practice test as provided in section 3.1 of this policy.

“Every student needs that ‘one caring adult’ to succeed, and this limited waiver will provide flexibility and time to ensure that the necessary academic and social supports are in place to form the connections needed for student success.”

– W. Clayton Burch, State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

It’s been said that you don’t know where you’re going if you don’t know where you’ve been. This holds true when looking to the future of West Virginia’s public education system. We have many challenges ahead, but state leaders are working diligently to develop innovative solutions to our most pressing problems. Through the expansion of support services, enhanced partnerships to support the three E’s — Education, Employment, and Enlistment — and the creation of the West Virginia Superintendent’s Education Advisory Team (WV SEAT), the West Virginia Department of Education has set a clear and reliable path forward to recovery and success.
Expanstion of Technical Assistance Centers
The WVDE Technical Assistance Centers (TACs) will expand to four centers to build capacity among early and elementary learning providers, special education, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) providers, as well as those offering behavior and mental health support. Partners include Marshall University, West Virginia University, and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

College- and Career-Readiness: The Three E's (Education, Employment, and Enlistment)
The WVDE continues to support post-secondary preparedness through the three E’s – education, employment, and enlistment. These three pathways cover the expanse of options available to our students and are more inclusive than the previous approach, which focused primarily on education and employment. The growing need to employ skilled workers, the high rate of military enlistments and the traditional path of higher education require the education system to continuously evaluate and address how it prepares students for their next steps in life.

College- and career-readiness support is also available to non-traditional students wanting or needing to increase or retool their skillsets to be viable in the current and emerging workforce. The WVDE Adult Education and Advanced Career Education programs are designed to meet these needs. To learn more, visit WVAdultEd.com and wvace.us.

#GotVaxxedWV Campaign
As a response to the declining rate of individuals receiving vaccinations statewide, the WVDE launched its #GotVaxxedWV campaign to encourage students 12 and older to get their COVID-19 vaccine. The campaign includes a series of videos with testimonials from school personnel and students who share why they chose to get their vaccine. Social media graphics were also created which spotlight a student and their personal reasons for getting vaccinated. The campaign will continue through the fall 2021 semester to educate students and their families about the benefits of getting vaccinated in hopes of having a typical school year with in-person instruction.

WV SEAT
The West Virginia Superintendent’s Education Advisory Team (WV SEAT) was formed in spring 2021 to address seven key areas of concern regarding education in West Virginia. The following topics will be the focus of state education leaders in the upcoming year and beyond:
- Well-being and healing (social-emotional, mental, and physical)
- Teacher recruitment, retention and development
- Parent/family/community engagement and support
- Learning and opportunity losses or gaps
- Funding/resources
- Legislation/regulation
- Pandemic recovery, re-entry, and re-engagement

Revitalization of Public School/Private School Coalition
A coalition aimed at improving the collaboration between the state’s public and private school systems was re-established in spring 2021 to address pandemic recovery going forward. Public and private school leaders from across the state will meet quarterly to address ways to strengthen partnerships and increase visibility for the educational services offered to all West Virginia students.

New Accountability
Teachers, students, and families have withstood the education earthquake caused by the pandemic and the ensuing aftershocks. School closures, in-person instruction disruptions, and the chilling effects of COVID-19 on the stabilizing support our schools provide children will impact teaching and learning for years to come. As a result, the WVBE will review and revise the previous accountability performance and progress standards to reflect the new trajectory of expectations. These changes are necessary because:
- Virtual learning, although not suitable for all learners, was expanded to all grades to provide families with greater options. This resulted a 2800% increase in virtual learning.
- Thousands of children moved to remote learning in March 2020 and have not returned to the classroom since then. They will return to in-person learning for the first time in 17 months in August 2021 and the transition may affect their academic, social-emotional, and developmental progress.
- The pandemic is a centennial event of the magnitude never experienced previously. Addressing the short and long-term effects on learning and child development will require adjustments at many levels.
- Vulnerable student subgroups, previously adversely affected by societal challenges, have been exceptionally hard hit by the pandemic, suffering greater academic developmental losses.