WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Samuel Workman, Director
Institute for Policy Research and Public Affairs
West Virginia University
PO Box 6286
Morgantown, WV 26506

📞 +01 (304) 293-9306
✉ policyresearch@mail.wvu.edu
🐦 @WVUPolicyRes
in wvu-policy-research
🌐 policyresearch.wvu.edu

IDEA Data Reporting in West Virginia
Challenges and Opportunities

Topic

- West Virginia's IDEA Data
- Data quality, delivery, and uptake in scientific communities.

Key Findings

- The primary mode of delivery is a set of fragmented spreadsheets, which fully meet the requirements for reporting under federal statutes.
- The mode of delivery in spreadsheets is limiting for informing the broader public; spreadsheets generally are the medium of experts.
- Within the spreadsheets, the organization and curation of data do not meet agreed-upon standards for social scientific data.

Recommendations

This set of recommendations is low-hanging fruit and would greatly improve the usability of the data for the broader public and scientific, non-profit, and private-sector communities.

- The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) should, at a minimum, structure the spreadsheet data to be consistent with standard practices in the social sciences.
- **General Public:** Data tables for delivery to the general public should be in HTML, text, or PDF format, eliminating the need for navigating spreadsheets by the public, the non-profit sector, and private sector firms working on service delivery for these families. Tables embedded in the website for current years would be optimal.
- **Scientific/Expert Community:** Ideally, a master CSV or other text-compatible file would correct the fragmentation for delivery to scientific and other expert communities.

Building Data Infrastructure

These recommendations require more input and consultation but would revolutionize the IDEA data for uptake in relevant communities. The recommendations above are prerequisites for those that follow.

- **General Public:** IPRPA recommends that WVDE develop and embed a simple dashboard for the public on its IDEA landing page. In this era, the public is well-versed in navigating dashboards for various governmental interactions (e.g., property taxes). Currently, the WV State Auditor's Office provides a great example with its local spending data.
- **Scientific/Expert Community:** IPRPA recommends that WVDE commission an {\color{rproj} \faRProject}-package that bundles the data with an API for delivery to the scientific community and promotes uptake among researchers and analysts in the public and private sectors.

IPRPA Partnerships

Please contact the *Institute for Policy Research and Public Affairs* (IPRPA) for questions and technical assistance in pursuing any recommendations outlined here.

Education, Data, Health