

Education Data Privacy in the Mountain State

2014 Annual Report from the West Virginia Department of Education

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) works to ensure quality in its educational data and security in data systems and processes. WVDE is pleased to report about its activities and achievements related to privacy during 2014.

Data Governance

The WVDE continues to support and expand its data governance efforts to ensure that education data in the Mountain State are high-quality, timely, useful, and secure.

- WVDE published [Data Access and Management Guidance](#), specifying procedures for requesting and receiving access to data and for protecting students' information.
- The Research Review Committee was fully implemented. The committee considered proposals and recommend approval or rejection based on merit and security assurances.
- The [Institutional Review Board](#) continued ensuring the protection of research subjects.
- Data governance committees and teams met regularly to address specific issues, offer advice and guidance, discuss data-related needs, and plan for the future.
 - Data Policy Committee meetings: February, June, and November
 - Data Governance Committee meetings: January, June, August, and October
 - Data Steward Task Team meetings: throughout the year as needed
- Data Stewards participated in [data ethics training](#) offered by the National Forum on Education Statistics.
- Data security agreements and assurances from staff and partners were routinely collected and reviewed.
- Two Data Governance Specialists were hired to help implement and expand data governance efforts.
- Two data governance team members made personal commitments to developing deeper privacy knowledge and skills by joining the [International Association of Privacy Professionals](#).



Promoting and Protecting Privacy

The security of students' data and the protection of their privacy are of the utmost importance at the WVDE, local districts, and schools across the state. In addition to continuing routine information security practices and protocols, 2014 saw data governance staff conducting an intensive review of all WVDE policies and other resources related to privacy and security as a first step in developing a privacy incident response plan. Staff also sought advice from the [West Virginia State Privacy Office](#) and researched privacy and security plans created by other agencies, both in West Virginia and beyond. As a result of those efforts, staff began the work of creating a formal privacy management and incident response process for WVDE and local education agencies. Data governance staff also recommended updates to [Policy 4350](#) to account for the new requirements and expectations of the Student DATA Act ([W. Va. Code §18-2-5h](#)).

Data governance staff conducted FERPA and data privacy training and awareness sessions for educators and administrators throughout the state as well as for colleagues within the WVDE. Of the staff that provided evaluations for these trainings, more than 9 in 10 rated the trainings as **good** or **very good**, and about 3 in 4 would **definitely recommend the training** to their colleagues.

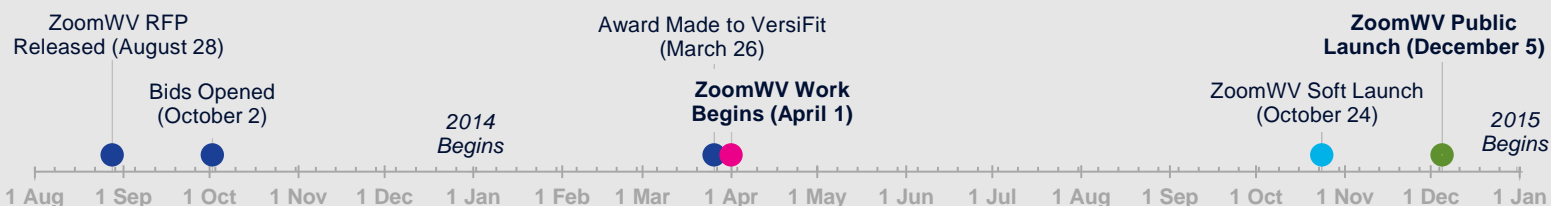
Zooming Ahead with ZoomWV

ZoomWV, the state's new reporting tool for pre-K through Grade 12 education data, officially launched in 2014. From a project start date of April 1 to the formal public launch on December 5, WVDE and its partner, VersiFit Technologies, have made tremendous progress to achieve the goal of making aggregate information more accessible and understandable for all West Virginians.



Privacy and security are foundational components of the ZoomWV system. WVDE and VersiFit have worked intentionally to build a secure reporting platform while ensuring usability for all stakeholders. For more information about ZoomWV and how it keeps the data secure, visit wvde.state.wv.us/zoomwv/.





In 8 months, VersiFit helped WVDE go from 0 to formal public launch for its data reporting tool: ZoomWV.

Privacy & Security Incidents

Five privacy and security incidents were reported to the WVDE data governance team during 2014.

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@WVDE

WVDE experienced no privacy incidents in 2014. There were no suspected or confirmed exposures of data from [WVEIS](#) or ZoomWV from external attacks, leaks, or as a result of WVDE staff actions.

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@Districts and Schools

- In two districts, county staff misplaced data CDs containing 2014 WESTELL data. WVDE advised the districts to contact families and provided a notification template for doing so.
- At a public meeting in one district, a principal inadvertently violated the embargo of information about school designations. County staff immediately addressed the issue.

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@Contractors and Partners

- The [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\)](#) team at the University of Kansas notified WVDE that three registered users of the Educator Portal system had broader access to information than their roles allowed. The DLM team took immediate steps to restrict those users' accounts to a lower access level; WVDE and DLM staff verified that the individual users did not pose security threats.
- Data files stored at the [Higher Education Policy Commission \(HEPC\)](#) were infected with CryptoWall 2 malware, encrypting the files and preventing access. The files contained student names and WVEIS numbers. WVNET technology staff took immediate steps to isolate the infection and remove the malware; they further confirmed that no files were transferred to other sites or accessed from outside parties. HEPC staff reported the incident to the Governor's office per protocol.

Looking Forward

WVDE looks forward to implementing, refining, and expanding its data privacy and security practices and protocols in 2015. WVDE will continue to promote and champion privacy in education, both internally within the state education system and externally to other agencies in West Virginia and across the nation.

In 2015, WVDE commits to:

- finalizing its privacy management and incident response process and providing outreach and training throughout the adoption process
- creating privacy toolkits with information and resources for districts and schools to use
- recommending updates and revisions to policies and practices to account for new processes and new developments in the field of privacy management
- exploring formal [privacy certification](#) for data governance staff
- serving as a [Data Privacy Day Champion](#) to demonstrate commitment to "respect privacy, safeguard data, and enable trust"



For more information, contact the WVDE Office of Legal Services and Accountability.