

Human Subjects Research Report

Va. Code § 22.1-16.1





COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2120

RICHMOND 23218-2120

November 25, 2024

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Members of the General Assembly of Virginia
General Assembly Building
201 North 9th Street,
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Sirs and Madams:

I am pleased to submit this memorandum to meet the intent of § 22.1-16.1 of the *Code of Virginia* that requires the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to report annually on any research projects conducted or authorized by the agency that meet the definition of human subjects research and require review. The report contains a list of research studies initiated in calendar year 2024 that meet this reporting requirement.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Dr. Dave Myers, Deputy Superintendent and Chief Information Officer, at 804-923-0954 or dave.myers@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

Lisa Coons
Superintendent of Public Instruction

AUTHORITY FOR THE REPORT

Section 22.1-16.1 of the *Code of Virginia* requires the VDOE to report annually on any research projects conducted or authorized by the agency that meet the definition of human subjects research. See Appendix A for statutory language from the *Code of Virginia*.

OVERVIEW

VDOE follows a prescribed process, outlined in the agency’s administrative manual, for the approval of research involving human subjects. In brief, researchers are required to submit their research proposals for review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and provide documentation of the completed review and the IRB determination to agency staff before sensitive data are released or research subjects are contacted.

Many research studies authorized by the VDOE rely on administrative data from the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS). In addition to an IRB review, research projects using VLDS require additional review by VDOE’s Data Governance Committee. This committee is responsible for making sure the requested student-level data are used, transferred, and secured appropriately and consistent with state and federal data privacy and protection laws. Similarly, the non-VLDS data requests from researchers, i.e., requests for data from VDOE directly, also need to go through a rigorous review process. The research purpose, researchers’ credentials, specific data elements requested, data security plan, and the research project’s IRB status must be reviewed and approved by all of the following requesting VDOE division, the Office of Strategic Analysis and Research, Director of Data Standards and Governance, Director of Cybersecurity and Risk Management, data owner, and Deputy Superintendent/Chief Information Officer.

APPROVED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Table 1 provides the project title, lead researcher, affiliated organization, and IRB review status for all research projects that were initiated in calendar year 2024 under VDOE’s authorization.

Table 1. Research Projects Initiated in Calendar Year 2024

VDOE Contract Number/ Project Title	Lead Researcher	University/Organization	Institutional Review Board Determination
High-Quality English Language Arts and Math Instruction	Dr. David Steiner	Johns Hopkins University	Exempt

This study includes a survey that measures teacher perceptions of instructional materials; and therefore, this study was considered human-subject focused. All members of the VDOE committee approved the study.

APPENDIX A

§22.1-16.1 of the *Code of Virginia*

The Board shall promulgate regulations pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) to effectuate the provisions of Chapter 5.1 (§ 32.1-162.16 et seq.) of Title 32.1 for human research, as defined in § 32.1-162.16, to be conducted or authorized by the Department of Education or any public schools including the Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind or any proprietary schools certified by the Board. The regulations shall require the human research committee to submit to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee at least annually a report on the human research projects reviewed and approved by the committee and shall require the committee to report any significant deviations from the proposals as approved.