

Sarah Ruth Morris

211 Graduate Education Building
Department of Education Reform
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, AR 72701

Email: srm041@uark.edu
Office: 479-575-3172
Cell: 423-963-8487
Twitter: [@SarahRuth_Morris](https://twitter.com/SarahRuth_Morris)

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Education Policy, expected May 2025

Doctoral Academy Fellow
University of Arkansas, Department of Education Reform, Fayetteville, AR
Advisor: Dr. Sarah McKenzie

Master of Education, May 2019

East Tennessee State University, Clemmer College, Johnson City, TN
Advanced Secondary Education

Bachelor of Science, May 2016

King University, School of Education, Bristol, TN
Major: Mathematics
Minor: Secondary Education (Grades 7-12)

CURRENT RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Can Offering More Grade Control Improve Middle School Students' Motivation?

[Co-author](#) of a study conducted in an 8th grade rural classroom setting to explore non-traditional grading methods and their effects upon middle grade students. Accepted manuscript published in The Clearing House in March 2022.

Examining Arkansas' Freshman GPA's and Long-Term Outcomes

[Co-author](#) of a descriptive study of nearly 200,000 Arkansas students to find associations between freshman GPAs and high school graduation and college enrollment. Final Arkansas Education Report, Policy Brief, and OEP Blog published in December 2021.

Arkansas High School Freshmen Course Failures

[Co-author](#) of a descriptive study examining the relationship between freshman year course failures and student demographic and programmatic groups. Final Arkansas Education Report, Policy Brief, and OEP Blog published in May 2022.

Teen Mothers Forgotten: The Gap Between High School and Higher Education

[Author](#) of a study examining the educational and financial outcomes differences between mothers who had their children in high school and mothers who did not. Accepted manuscript published in the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Leadership Studies in June 2023.

A Glimpse into Arkansas Teachers' Grading Practices

[Co-author](#) of a case study examining the current grading practices of Arkansas teachers from a 2022 teachers survey and 2023 interviews with practitioners. Final Arkansas Education Report, Policy Brief, and OEP Blog published in April 2023.

Freshman Course Credit and Unexcused Absences: An Arkansas Policy Analysis

[Co-author](#) of a policy analysis studying the variability of a course failure and absence policy. Final Arkansas Education Report, Policy Brief, and OEP Blog published in August 2023.

OP-ED WRITING

WeAreTeachers

[Author](#) of 21 blog posts designed for teacher consumption since February, 2023. WeAreTeachers has a reader base of over 3 million users. My most viewed blog posts are [Fairer Grading Practices](#) and [Tired of “Backed by Research”](#)

Freshman Success Reports

[Co-author](#) of a blog post reporting the custom Freshman Success Analyses for Arkansas’ districts published in July 2022.

For Fairer Grades

[Co-author](#) of an Op-Ed arguing for more equitable grading practices in Arkansas published in November 2022.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

OEP/NWAESC Graduate Student Liaison

- Conduct research for and with NWAESC schools

Fayetteville, AR

Sept. 2023--Present

Graduate Assistant

University of Arkansas—Fayetteville, Department of Education Reform

- Conduct research for the Office for Education Policy

Fayetteville, AR

Aug. 2021—Present

Grade 8 Math Teacher

T.A. Dugger Junior High School—Elizabethton City Schools

- Level 5 Teacher all five years
- Math students led in achievement scores for East Tennessee two of five years
- School’s designated Math Tutor
- Mathletes Coordinator and Sponsor
- Volleyball Coach

Elizabethton, TN

May 2016—May 2021

RESEARCH PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE

NWAESC Grading Practice Presentation

- April 2023

Fayetteville, AR

Effects of Grading Practices Study

- Overseeing 550 student data, 11 teacher data, 2 school data
- Presenting 6-hour teacher PD credit
- June 2023-January 2024

Arkansas

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Morris, S. & Barton, A. (2021). Can offering more grade control improve middle school students' motivation? Eastern Education Research Association Conference, Tampa, FL, February 2022.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2021). Examining Arkansas' freshman gpa's and long-term outcomes. The Association for Education Finance and Policy, Denver, CO, March 2022.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2022). Freshmen Success Reports. Arkansas Department of Education Summit, Hot Springs, AR, July 2022.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2022). Arkansas Freshmen Course Failures. Mid-South Educational Research Association, Little Rock, AR, November, 2022.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2022). Arkansas Freshmen Success Reports. Eastern Education Research Association Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC, February 2023.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2022). Arkansas Freshmen Course Failures and Success Reports. The Association for Education Finance and Policy, Denver, CO, March 2023.
- Morris, S., Maranto, R., & McKenzie, S. (2022). Arkansas Teachers' Political Ideologies, Personal Responsibility, and Grading Practices. Mid-West Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2023.
- Shakeel, D., Wolf, P., Johnson, A., Harris, M., & Morris, S. (2022). Schools, Societies, and Opportunities. Mid-West Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2023
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2023). Your Grading Practices: Are They Equitable and Why Does it Matter? Office of Innovation and Education, Rogers, AR, June 2023.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2023). Freshman Course Credit and Unexcused Absences: A Policy Analysis. Mid-South Educational Research Association, Pensacola, FL, November 2023.
- Morris, S. & McKenzie, S. (2023). Course Credit and Attendance Policy Variations across Districts and Students' Likelihood of Failure. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Atlanta, GA, November 2023.
- Shakeel, D., Wolf, P., Johnson, A., Harris, M., & Morris, S. (2022). Schools, Societies, and Opportunities. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Atlanta, GA, November 2023.

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

- Doctoral Academy Fellow, University of Arkansas, 2021—Present
- Highest Achievement Scores District-Wide, 2021, Elizabethton City Schools
- Distinguished Project-Based Learning Middle Grades Instructor, 2019, Elizabethton City Schools
- Full Academic and Athletic Scholarship, King University, 2013-2016