

Wesley T. Morris

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(910) 220-7683

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Education

May 2025

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Area: Policy, Leadership, & School Improvement

Dissertation: Essays on Understanding and Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline

Committee: Drs. Lauren Sartain (chair), Steve Hemelt, Ethan Hutt, Daniel Klasik, and Constance Lindsay

M.P.P., Education Policy

May 2020

Vanderbilt University

B.S., Mathematics

May 2016

Wake Forest University

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Research Assistant Professor

Oct 2026–Present

University of Memphis

Center for Research in Educational Policy

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Jun 2025–Sep 2026

University of Maryland – College Park

Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership

Research Affiliate

Jun 2025–Present

University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

North Carolina Education Futures Initiative

RESEARCH INTEREST

Teacher Labor Markets, Teacher Preparation and Licensure, Distribution of Teacher Quality, Rural Education, and the Economics of Education

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

School of Education

Research Assistant, Dr. Lauren Sartain

Aug 2020–May 2025

Research Assistant, NCEFI

Jun 2021–May 2025

Vanderbilt University

Tennessee Education Research Alliance

Graduate Assistant

Sep 2018–May 2020

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

EDUC 309: Foundations of Leadership

Instructor of Record

Spring 2025

Teaching Assistant

Spring & Fall 2024

EDUC 257: Inquiry and Data Applications

Teaching Assistant

Spring 2024

PUBLICATIONS

REFEREED PAPERS

Barrow, L., **Morris, W. T.**, & Sartain, L. (2024). The Expanding Landscape of Online Education: Who Engages and How They Fare. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 42:S1, S417-S443.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/728807>

Sartain, L., & **Morris, W. T.** (2024). Are Teachers Satisfied With Their Evaluations? The Importance of Teaching Context and Trends Over Time. *AERA Open*, 10.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584231221539>

REVISE & RESUBMIT

Dominguez-Mel, N., **Morris, W. T.**, Montana, S., & Blazar, D. (2026). Teacher Localness, Early-Career Effectiveness, and Retention. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. (EdWorkingPaper: 26-1501). Annenberg Institute at Brown University. <https://doi.org/10.26300/aks6-3197>

UNDER REVIEW

Morris, W. T. (2025). Financial Aid For Future Educators: Assessing a Federal Grant's Impact on Students' Postsecondary Decisions. (EdWorkingPaper: 25-1278). Annenberg Institute at Brown University. <https://doi.org/10.26300/tqkk-a126>

Klasik, D., **Morris, W. T.**, Hutt, E., Sartain, L., & Zahran, W. How Do Unexpected College Grades Shape Race and Gender Gaps in the Stem Pipeline?

Sartain, L., Zahran, W., Hutt, E., Klasik, D., & **Morris, W. T.** Grading The Pandemic: Student Use of University Pass/Fail Policies in Spring 2020

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Morris, W. T., Kearney, C., & Walsh, J. There's no such thing as a free lunch: Charter Schools participation in the National School Lunch Program and Impacts on Student Enrollment Patterns

Morris, W. T. & Blazar, D. Layered Reforms and the Structure of Teacher Pay: Descriptive Evidence from Maryland

Montana, S., **Morris, W. T.**, Dominguez-Mel, N., & Blazar, D. Aide-to-Teacher Pathways: Evidence from Maryland

Morris, W. T., Sartain, L., & Estrera, E. Emergency in the Classroom: Licensure and Beginning Teacher Outcomes

Morris, W. T. Now Hiring: Geographic Trends in K-12 Job Postings

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GENERAL AUDIENCE

Morris, W. T. (2025). "Financial Aid For Future Educators: Assessing A Federal Grant's Impact On Students' [Postsecondary Decisions](#)" [EdWorkingPapers Policy and Practice Series](#).

Barrow, L., **Morris, W. T.**, & Sartain, L. (2023). "The Expanding Landscape of Online Education: Who Engages and How They Fare, A Research Brief" [North Carolina Education Futures Initiative, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#).

Morris, W. T., Ronfeldt, M., Bardelli E., & Truwit M. (2020) "Learning from the Best: Promising Practices in Preparing Tennessee's Future Teachers" [Tennessee Education Research Alliance, Vanderbilt University](#).

Morris, W. T. (2019) "Teacher Perceptions of Evaluation Fairness and Burden" [Tennessee Education Research Alliance, Vanderbilt University](#).

MEDIA COVERAGE

["Research Notes: Local Teacher Hires Stay Longer, Are Less Effective, Study Finds."](#) FutureEd, August 2026.

["TEACH Grants Work, Just Not Alone."](#) National Council on Teacher Quality, February 2026.

["New Study Shows Online Learning Can Boost Equity in Higher Education."](#) School of Education, UNC Chapel Hill, December 2022.

["Hutchins Roundup: Technology Adoption, Online Education, and More."](#) Brookings Institution, November 2022.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Teacher Localness, Early-Career Effectiveness, and Retention. Presented to the Learning Policy Institute. (September, 2026)

Teacher Localness, Early-Career Effectiveness, and Retention. Presented at the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center Research Convening. (April, 2026)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Layered Reforms and the Structure of Teacher Pay: Descriptive Evidence from Maryland. Presented at the Association of Public Policy and Management. (November, 2026)

Financial Aid for Future Educators: Assessing a Federal Grant's Impact on Students' Postsecondary Decisions. Presented at the Annual

Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.
(April, 2026)

Teacher Salary Distribution and Sources of Variation: Pay Reforms Under Maryland's Blueprint Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2026)

Pairing for Success: Exploring Mentor-Teacher Pairings for Early Career Teacher Retention and Growth. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2025)

Now Hiring: Geographic Trends in K-12 Schools Job Postings in North Carolina. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2025)

Tell me what you want, what you really, really want: What can we learn about the demand for educational professionals from district job postings?. Presented at the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness. (September, 2024)

Financial Aid for Future Educators: Assessing a Federal Grant's Impact on Students' Postsecondary Decisions. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2024)

Where Do They Come from? Where Do They Go? The Geography of Teacher Labor Markets and Teacher Preparation Programs. Presented at the Association of Public Policy and Management. (November 2023)

How Do Unexpected College Grades Shape Race and Gender Gaps in the Stem Pipeline? Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2023)

The Expanding Landscape of Online Education: Who Engages and How They Fare. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2022)

Teacher Satisfaction with Teacher Evaluation: Factors that Explain the Variation. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2021)

Fairness and Burden in Tennessee's Statewide Teacher Evaluation System: How Educators Preparation and Information Systems Can Make a Difference. Presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy. (March, 2020)

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FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Dean Smith Opening Doors Fellowship (2024 – 2025) School of Education, UNC Chapel Hill

Roe L. Jones Student Travel Grant (2024) Association of Education Finance and Policy

Education Policy Academy (2023), American Enterprise Institute

Community Engagement Fellow (2022 - 2023), Center for Public Service, UNC Chapel Hill

William Self Endowment (2022 - 2023), School of Education, UNC Chapel Hill

SERVICE

Graduate Student Association	Chapel Hill, NC
<i>School of Education, UNC Chapel Hill</i>	
President	AY 2023-24
Vice President	AY 2022-23

Referee

Journals:

Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Educational Researcher, and The High School Journal

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association for Education Finance and Policy	2019 – Present
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management	2023 – Present
American Education Research Association	2023 – Present
Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness	2024 – Present