

Throughout her career, Susan Hayes has maintained a commitment to closing achievement gaps and helping build local and state education agency capacity to improve student outcomes. Hayes, a Senior Program Associate with WestEd's Learning Innovations Program, supports state education agencies and Part C lead agencies to address the needs of all children, particularly children with disabilities, through her work with federally-funded technical assistance centers including the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO), and the IDEA Data Center (IDC). Hayes works closely with state clients on a myriad of priority issues including the OSEP-required State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), assessment and accountability policies for students with disabilities, special education data quality and reporting, and improving general/special education collaboration.

Prior to joining WestEd, Hayes served as an assessment coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Education. In this role, Hayes was the lead researcher of the study, "Roots of Success: Effective Practices in Vermont Schools" which included a large-scale survey of teachers and school site visits to identify a set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices associated with student success. Before joining a state education agency, Hayes was a research associate for *Education Week* where she tracked and analyzed state and district education policies related to special education, teacher quality, and educational technology.

Hayes received bachelor's degrees in education and history from Swarthmore College, an MS in leadership and policy studies from Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education, and an EdD in education policy from the University of Vermont. She currently resides in rural VT with her husband and two young children.