

\$16.4 million

ED Funding at Vanderbilt in FY 2017

Peabody College of education and human development is one of the nation's foremost colleges of education. It has been consistently ranked among the top five graduate schools of education by U.S. News & World Report.

The Institute of Education Sciences

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES), part of ED, provides rigorous and relevant evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and shares this information broadly. Researchers from Peabody often depend on funds from IES to conduct breakthrough research on critical local, state, and federal education policies.

Peabody's national research centers

IES supports national R&D centers that are intended to contribute significantly to solving education problems in the United States by engaging in research, development, evaluations, and national leadership activities aimed at improving the education system and, ultimately, student achievement. Each center conducts supplemental research within its broad topic area and provides national leadership in advancing evidence-based practice and policy within its topic area. Peabody currently is home to one such IES center highlighted below. Prior National Research Centers located at Peabody include the National Center on Performance Incentives, which was awarded a five-year, \$10.8 million grant in 2006; the National Center on School Choice, which was awarded a five-year, \$9.9 million grant in 2004; and the National Center on Scaling Up Effective Schools, which was awarded a seven-year, \$13.6 million grant in 2010.

Accelerated Academic Achievement (A3) Research Center

With a \$10 million award from the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER, a part of IES), a team of Peabody professors (pictured) is developing instructional programs to improve the academic achievement of children with serious learning disabilities in grades 3, 4, and 5. The five-year grant, awarded in 2013, established the National Center on Accelerating the Academic Achievement of Students with Learning Disabilities, which has enabled the Peabody researchers to develop and rigorously evaluate intensive reading and mathematics programs for teachers to use in classrooms. The reading program focuses on reading comprehension skills in informational (e.g., social studies and science) texts. The

mathematics program addresses fractions, algebra, and decimals. This research is helping educators define what is meant by “intensive” intervention and what instruction is necessary to ensure the academic success of students with serious learning problems.



Doug Fuchs, Lynn Fuchs, Donald Compton, Melanie Schuele and Mark Lipsey. Fellow team member Kristopher Preacher was not available for the photo. (Photo: Vanderbilt University)

New tools for educators to help monitor and improve classroom behavior

IES funding is helping Vanderbilt researchers develop tools for educators to help understand and modify problem behavior in classrooms. An app called MoBeGo (Monitoring Behavior on the Go) designed by Vanderbilt professors will now help students in K-12 schools in districts in Nashville self-monitor and modify their own problem behavior. The app will collect data to determine a student's responsiveness to behavioral intervention and help teachers decide what further interventions would be best. IES is funding the three-year, nearly \$1.2 million study. Over time, MoBeGo will collect multiple data points and generate a line graph with a goal line that teacher and student can use to evaluate progress.

In addition, a four-year \$400,000 early career grant from IES is helping a Peabody professor develop a tool to help educators better understand what's causing problem behaviors in elementary school students who have disabilities—and implement individualized interventions. For students with disabilities, challenging behavior is one of the most significant barriers to receiving an effective education. Practitioners use Functional Behavior Assessments to address problem behavior by identifying the reasons behind them (their functions) and tailoring interventions to address these functions. The research is examining different ways to test hypotheses of when and why a student engages in problem behavior and develop a framework for matching these strategies to behavioral profiles and instructional settings. There will also be an accompanying training manual for educators, followed by a pilot study to evaluate the effects of the final framework on student outcomes.

National Center for Special Education Research

Vanderbilt is a top recipient of funding from NCSER. Highlights of NCSER-funded research at Vanderbilt include:

- With a four-year, \$3.5 million grant from NCSER, a Peabody professor is evaluating the efficacy of an early social-communication and language intervention on toddlers with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Social communication skills are particularly important for this population because a deficit in this area constitutes a core characteristic of ASD.
- A Peabody professor is leading an intervention trial at Tennessee sites as part of a four-year, \$3.5 million grant from NCSER to examine and compare two variations of the Tools for Teachers intervention and discover how well teachers sustain their use of embedded instruction practices.
- With a four-year, \$3.5 million grant from NCSER, a Peabody professor is evaluating the efficacy of the Voyager Passport reading program for improving reading outcomes for students with reading difficulties or disabilities.
- With support from NCSER, a Peabody professor is developing and evaluating the Pyramid Model, a positive behavior support approach for developing young children's social-emotional competence in the classroom to prevent problem behavior, and corresponding expulsions of young children.

The IRIS Center

Funded by ED's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and headquartered at Peabody, the IRIS Center creates online resources about evidence-based practices to help improve the learning and behavior outcome of all students, particularly struggling learners and those with disabilities. These resources have been used in 233 countries and territories over the last five years. IRIS has also provided a wide range of tiered services to help college faculty and professional development providers integrate information about evidence-based practices into their courses and training activities, and help practicing educators who are working independently to upgrade their knowledge and skills.



Current free online resources available from the IRIS Center (Photo/graphic: IRIS 2017 Data Summary PDF)

National Center for Leadership in Intensive Intervention

The Nation Center for Leadership in Intensive Intervention, a consortium, which includes Vanderbilt, funded by OSEP, prepares special education leaders to become experts in research on intensive intervention for students with disabilities who have persistent and severe academic (e.g., reading and math) and behavioral difficulties. The project provides generous support, including tuition, stipend, and research funding for 28 doctoral scholars at partner institutions. Scholars participate in a core curriculum focused on intensive intervention and contribute to the Intensive Intervention Network website to advance research on and implementation of intensive intervention. The project provides opportunities for scholars to participate in cross-institutional research activities.



Vanderbilt, State of Tennessee launch partnership to improve education

Vanderbilt University and the Tennessee Department of Education have formed a new alliance that will produce a series of rigorous research studies to inform the state's school improvement efforts. The Tennessee Education Research Alliance, a joint effort of Peabody and the state Department of Education, will carry out and direct research with clear, practical implications for the state's key education strategies and, in doing so, contribute to the national conversation on education policy and practice. This new partnership will place a premium on timely and accessible findings that help policymakers and education leaders make researched-based decisions about how to address significant educational challenges. The research alliance has prioritized four areas of focus: improving early reading; re-imagining state support for professional learning; driving improvement in low-performing schools; and strengthening Tennessee's education labor market.



For more information, please contact Vanderbilt's Office of Federal Relations:
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