HECSE Winter Summit
Update from the National Center for Special Education Research (NSCER)

Joan McLaughlin
Commissioner
February 12, 2021

Transformative events

- Transition to the Biden administration

- Covid-19

  (1) Addressing the issues faced by our grantees

  (2) Researchers pulled together resources to support teachers and families

  (3) Operation Reverse the Loss

  https://ies.ed.gov/director/remarks/12-9-2020.asp
  https://ies.ed.gov/director/remarks/10-26-2020.asp

- U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey
- NCES Commissioner's Remarks on the National Assessment of Education Programs (NAEP)
- Coronavirus Pandemic Information and Resources from NCES

- How America's Schools Responded to the COVID Crises
- Using Student Achievement Data to Monitor Progress and Performance: Methodological Challenges Presented by COVID-19
- Implementation of Key Federal Policies in the Wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic
- The Impact of the COVID Crisis on the Educational Attainment of Economically-Disadvantaged Undergraduates: A Longitudinal Study
- An Educational Intervention to Combat Whole Number Bias in Risk Perceptions in an Ambiguous Health Context: COVID-19

- Supporting Your Child's Reading at Home
- Teaching Math to Young Children for Families and Caregivers
- Other Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program COVID-19 resources
- Back to School During COVID19: Developers and Researchers Continue to Respond to Support In-Class and Remote Teaching and Learning

COVID-19 NEWS

DEC 16

Addressing COVID-19's Disruption of Student Assessment

Under an IES grant, the RAND Corporation, in collaboration with NWEA, is developing strategies for schools and districts to address the impacts of COVID-19 disruptions on student assessment programs. The goal is to provide empirical evidence of the strengths

Spotlight

In addition to IES, offices across the Department of Education have developed resources for policymakers, educators, and families. We'd encourage you to explore the

https://ies.ed.gov/topics/covid19.asp

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NSCER Numbers
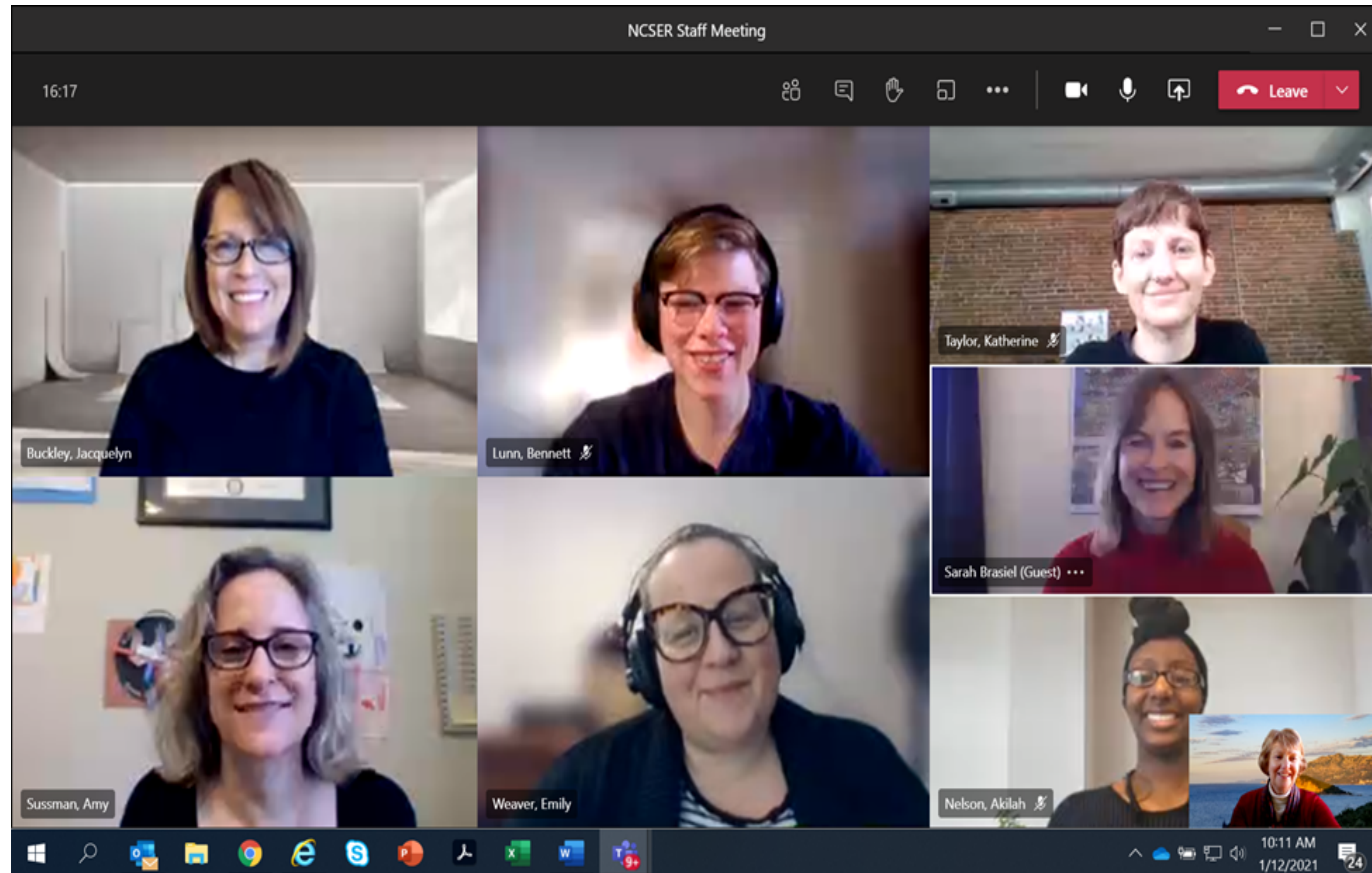
NCSER Funding FY 2009-2021

Funding Available for New Awards

Bar chart showing Budget for New Awards in millions of dollars:
- 2009: $64
- 2010: $66
- 2011: $45
- 2012: $28
- 2013: $10
- 2014: $0
- 2015: $18
- 2016: $21
- 2017: $10
- 2018: $15
- 2019: $16
- 2020: $23

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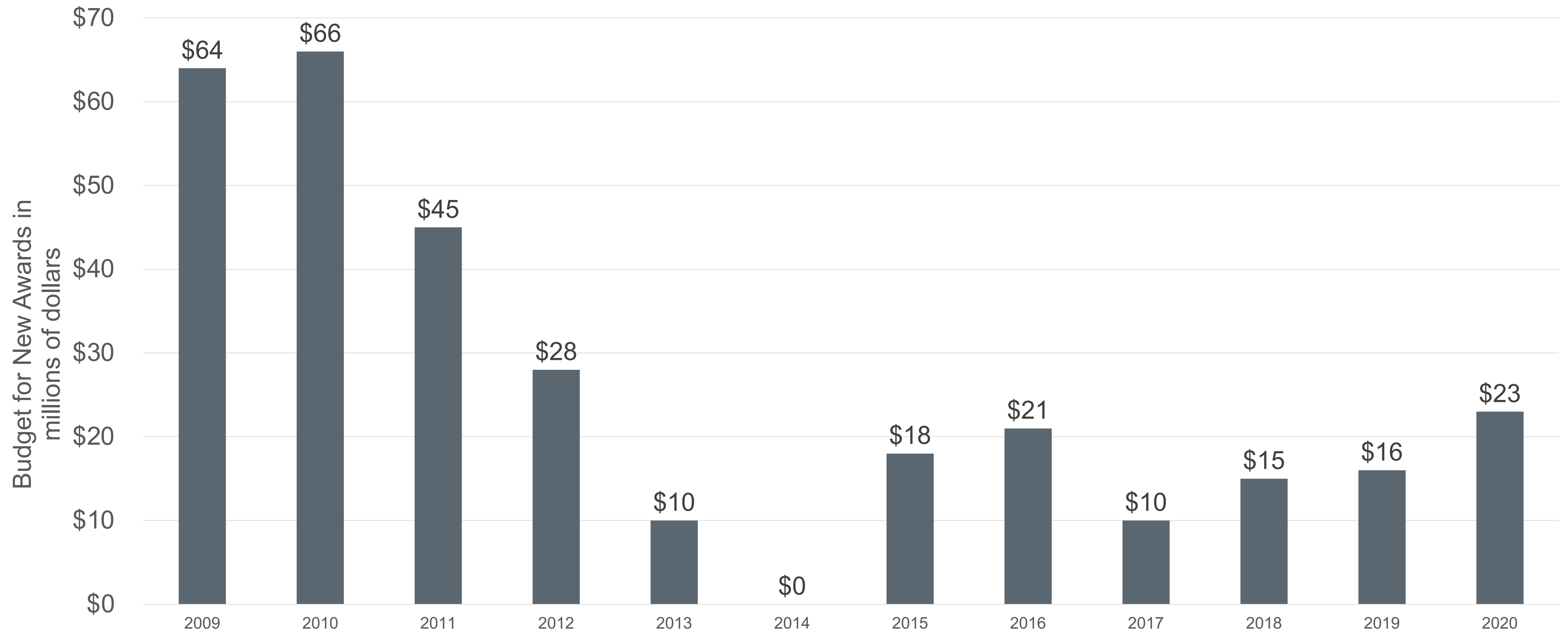
NCSER FY2020 Competitions

- Special Education Research Grants
  - Special Topics (CTE, English Learners, Systems-Involved Youth)
  - Post-secondary for students with disabilities

- Research Training Programs in Special Education
  - Postdoctoral; Early Career; and Methods Training in SCD

- Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication in Special Education

84.324A Standard Research Program – FY2020 Awards

Topic Area	Total Award Amount	Number of Awards
Autism Spectrum Disorders	$9,399,374.00	4
Cognition and Student Learning in Special Education	$4,699,491.00	2
Early Intervention and Early Learning in Special Education	$12,190,036.00	6
Professional Development for Educators and School-Based Service Providers	$4,199,755.00	3
Reading, Writing, and Language Development	$10,563,023.00	5
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education	$3,289,913.00	1
Social and Behavioral Outcomes to Support Learning	$8,597,819.00	4
Special Education Policy, Finance, and Systems	$600,000.00	1
Special Topic - Career and Technical Education for Students with Disabilities	$2,773,319.00	2
Subtotal	$56,312,730.00	28

84.324B Training Programs in Special Education – FY2020 Awards

Topic Area	Total Award Amount	Number of Awards
Early Career Development and Mentoring	$2,475,559.00	5
Methods Training Using Single-Case Designs	$700,000.00	1
Postdoctoral Research Training Program	$2,271,028.00	3
Subtotal	**$5,446,587.00**	**9**

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84.324R Systematic Replication – FY2020 Awards

Topic Area	Total Award Amount	Number of Awards
Systematic Replication in Special Education	$14,788,992.00	4
Subtotal	**$14,788,992.00**	**4**

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Recently Funded PD Projects

PD for Emergency-Certified Special Education Teachers

Kimber Wilkerson at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and her team are developing PD to improve the behavior management capabilities and self-efficacy of emergency-certified special educators working in rural school districts.

The PD will include (1) ongoing individualized coaching to enhance teachers' adoption of evidence-based practice and (2) an online community of practice that includes small groups of emergency certified teachers participating in the PD.

PD and Adaptive Coaching for Middle School Leaders & Teachers

- Jade Wexler at the University of Maryland and her team are developing an intervention to improve middle school teachers' literacy instruction for students with disabilities.

- The intervention package will include (1) an adaptive coaching model for supporting content-area middle school teachers' implementation of evidence-based Tier 1 literacy practices to improve reading outcomes for students with disabilities, and (2) PD to train instructional leaders on how to implement the coaching model effectively.

- Coaching will be tailored based on teachers' level of skill and motivation.

PD for Pre-Service Teachers

Michael Kennedy at the University of Virginia and his team are developing a multimedia intervention for use in teacher preparation coursework to improve candidates' class management practices.

The intervention will include (1) content acquisition podcasts with embedded modeling videos (CAP-TV) to promote knowledge of practices, (2) self-reflection based on data from an observational assessment of teaching, and (3) data-driven coaching.

The team will test the intervention's impact during candidates' final practicum.

FY 2021 Competitions

NCSER Competitions for FY 2021

- Four Requests for grant applications:
  - Special Education Research (84.324A)
  - Research Training Programs in Special Education (84.324B)
  - Research Grants Focused on NAEP Process Data for Learners with Disabilities (84.324P)
  - Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication (84.324R)

- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) competition focused on special education

New IES Investments and Activities

Review by the National Academies of Science

- Three tasks focused on recommendations for IES investments in the next decade

- **NCSER/National Center for Education Research (NCER)**
    - **The critical problems or issues on which new research is needed**
    - **New methods or approaches for conducting research that should be encouraged and why**
    - **New and different types of research training investments that are needed**

- Modernizing NAEP

- The future of NCES surveys

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"What We Have Learned in 20 Years of IES Randomized Trials"

- Grant to Northwestern; led by Larry Hedges and Beth Tipton

- Concern about the limited perception of causal studies

- Review of the influence of NCSER & NCER randomized trials on the:
  - direct and indirect contributions to practice
  - fundamental knowledge and understanding of education
  - human capital for education research
  - methodology

Working Group on Evidence Use in Teaching Reading

- IES Director Schneider asked David Chard, Boston University to form a group to help plan research on evidence use going forward, with reading as the focus

- Guiding questions:

  - How do we impact educator knowledge and practice in the teaching of reading?

  - What factors ensure that gains in educator knowledge affect implementation of evidence-based instructional practices and student achievement in reading including students with or at-risk for disabilities?

- The product will be a "blueprint" to guide research on evidence use in teaching reading

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Dissemination Activities – Practice Guides

- 3 WWC Practice Guides are in the late stages of development. The panel membership and the research being reviewed reflects NCSER's investment over the years.

  - *Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics: Intervention in the Elementary Grades*; Lynn Fuchs is the Chair

  - *Promoting Social and Behavioral Success for Learning in Elementary Grades*; Catherine Bradshaw is the Chair

  - *Assisting Students Struggling with Reading in Grades 4-8*; Sharon Vaughn is the Chair

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Dissemination Activities – CEC Webinars

- Collaboration with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) on webinars

- *How to Design and Deliver Effective Math Intervention* – Sarah Powell, Vanderbilt

- *An Equity-focused PBIS Approach for Increasing Racial Equity in School Discipline* – Kent McIntosh, U of Oregon

- https://exceptionalchildren.org/improving-your-practice/cec-ncser-partnership-webinars

Dissemination Activities – Local news reports

- NCSER/NCER Grant with Child Trends to put together short news reports highlighting IES research with specific recommendations and strategies for parents and teachers.

- Stories will broadcast throughout the country in local TV news to reach tens of millions of viewers.

- The videos will also be available for IES to use in other venues

- Similar work for the National Science Foundation https://positiveparentingnews.org/news-reports/
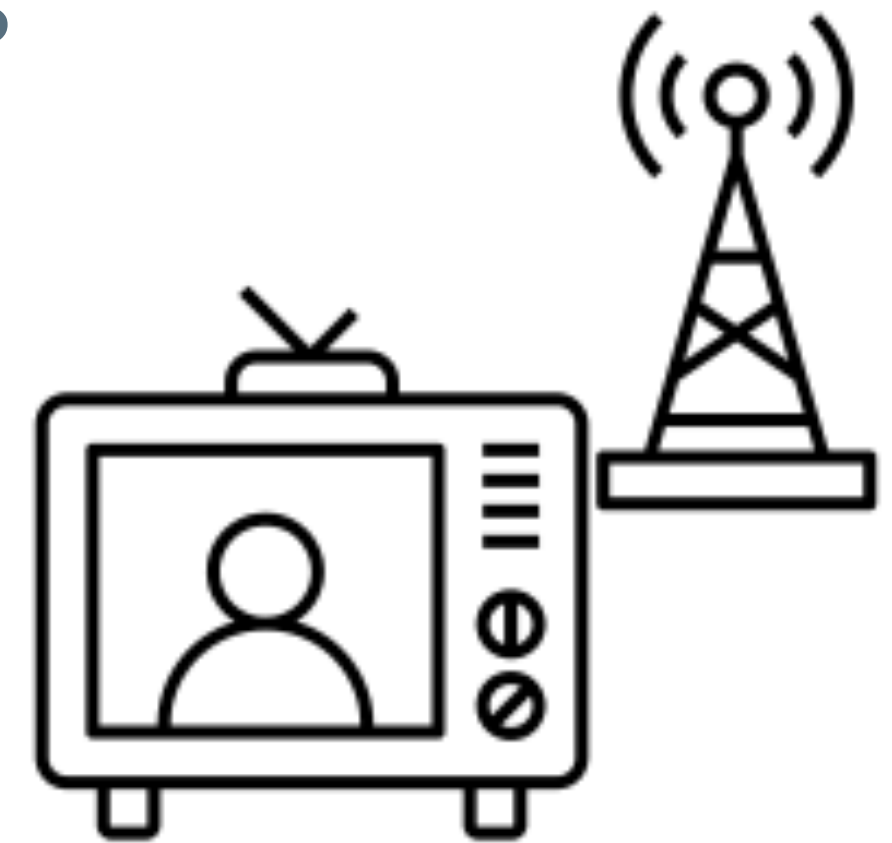
Technical Working Group on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- In December, the National Center for Education Research (NCER) hosted a group of experts to help us increase representation among institutions and individual researchers submitting applications and receiving awards across IES grant programs

- We have formed a cross-Center working group that includes NCER, NCSER and the IES Standards and Review Office to strategize how to implement recommendations in our grant programs specifically

- A larger IES-wide group will be addressing diversity, equity and inclusion across IES

- IES Diversity Statement

Standards for Excellence in Education Research

The SEER Principles encourage researchers to:

- Pre-register studies
- Make findings, methods, and data open
- Identify interventions' core components
- Document treatment implementation and contrast
- Analyze interventions' costs
- Focus on meaningful outcomes
- Facilitate generalization of study findings
- Support scaling of promising results

Resources available at https://ies.ed.gov/seer/index.asp

Grant Award to EDInstruments

- **EdInstruments** is an open-source library of education-relevant measurement tools

- **Grant** to Susanna Loeb and colleagues at Brown University

- NCSER and NCER are funding to expand and refine instruments in 6 domains

- Year 1 will focus on middle grades math, social skills, and early literacy

- Expert working group review instruments in each area

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Highlights from NCSER-Funded Research on Professional Development (PD) for Educators and School-Based Service Providers

Improving Literacy Instruction & Class Management
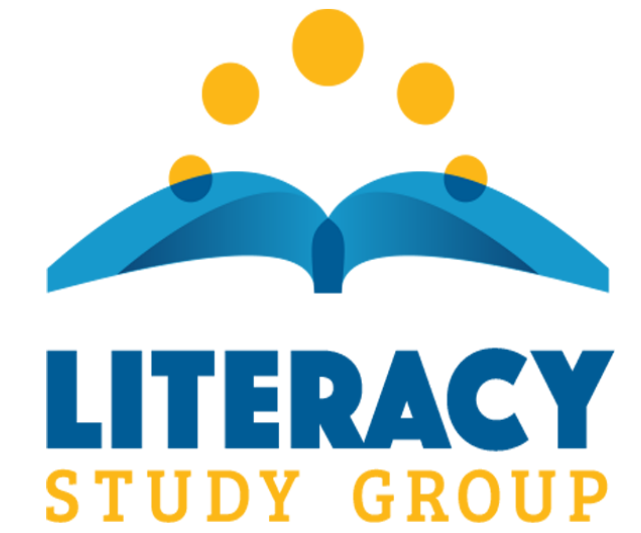
- Greg Benner at the University of Alabama Birmingham developed the Literacy Study Group to improve elementary school teachers' literacy instruction and behavioral strategies for students with emotional behavior disorders.

- The program includes 10 online modules that cover small group (Tier 2) reading routines and behavioral strategies and include video examples. Teachers also submit practice videos and receive feedback from peers.

- Results of a small randomized controlled trial showed that teachers made significant gains in self-efficacy. They also demonstrated improved knowledge of evidence-based reading and behavior practices and reduced burnout, though not statistically significantly. Students whose teachers participated in the intervention showed significantly higher academic competence.

- https://trifoia.com/literacy-study-group/

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Improving Educators' Implementation of Individualized Behavior Assessments

- Blair Lloyd at Vanderbilt developed a decision framework (FA Map) and training manual to support behavior specialists and teachers in implementing individualized behavior assessments (based on student and classroom characteristics) for students with persistent challenging behavior.

- FA Map guides behavior specialists' selection of assessment strategies to identify the function, antecedents, and/or reinforcers of certain behaviors and inform appropriate interventions.

- Results from usability testing indicated that, for the most part, educators rated the acceptability and feasibility of the FAP map highly. Pilot testing is currently underway.

- Videos of assessment methods included in the decision tool: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB0atBU9Oqk5XS7J3OGbC03A7m2wcBDhK

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Supporting Paraprofessionals Working with Students with Autism

- Samuel Odom and Ann Sam at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill developed STELAR to train paraprofessionals in evidence-based practices for students with autism.

- STELAR includes an introductory workshop, online modules that provide an overview of autism and 5 foundational practices, and opportunities for practice and feedback.

- Results of a single-case design study showed that across 4 elementary school classrooms, there were sharp increases in paraprofessionals' use of evidence-based practices with fidelity. Students also showed improved progress on individualized goals as a result of STELAR.

- https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules

AFIRM for Paraprofessionals: Simulated E-Learning

Reinforcement: Introduction & Practice
▾ Hide description
Reinforcement is used to increase the chances a learner with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) will use a target skill or behavior.

Time to complete:
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.

Select Module

Prompting: Introduction & Practice
▾ Hide description
Prompting is used to help the learner with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) successfully use a target skill or behavior.

Time to complete:
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.

Select Module

Time Delay: Introduction & Practice
▾ Hide description
Time delay is used to systematically fade the use of prompting for a target skill or behavior.

Time to complete:
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.

Select Module

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