



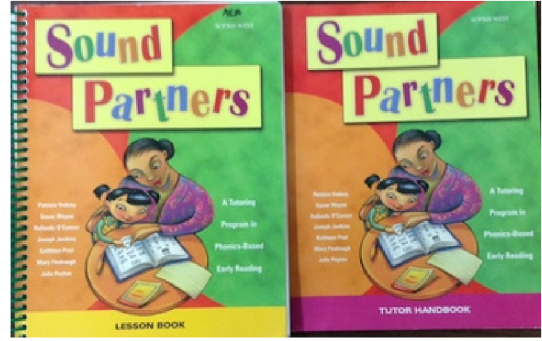
\$26.8M

ED Research Funding at Vanderbilt, FY2023

National Center for Special Education Research

Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of education and human development is a top recipient of funding from NCSER, part of the Institute of Education Sciences, which supports a comprehensive program of education research designed to expand knowledge and understanding of infants, toddlers and children with disabilities and those at risk for disabilities, including:

- A \$3.8 million grant to examine the effectiveness of Leveled Literacy Intervention Intermediate for third grade and fourth grade students with reading difficulties or disabilities. This study is novel in examining the interventions needed for students with or at risk for reading disabilities at the upper elementary level. Its findings will add to the limited research base on intensive interventions for intermediate grade students with significant reading difficulties or disabilities.
- A five-year, \$3.3 million grant to improve middle school students’ engagement, academic outcomes and socially appropriate behaviors while improving their teachers’ classroom management practices.
- A nearly \$700,000 Early Career Development and Mentoring award to develop and test the impact of peer network intervention for minimally verbal students with autism. This intervention has the potential to help educators improve students’ membership and belonging in their schools and with their peers.
- A \$500,000 grant to conduct a program of research focused on improving outcomes of students with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders while participating in mentoring and training activities to develop knowledge and skills related to the friendships and social experiences of socially vulnerable youth, longitudinal social network methods and analyses, and grant management. The project includes a longitudinal study of students with or at risk for EBD in grades K-3 to examine (1) friendship formation, stability and quality, (2) behavioral and academic outcomes linked to these friendships and (3) malleable peer and teacher factors that may influence these friendships.



Sound Partners is a research-based tutoring program that provides individual instruction in early reading skills. (Voyager Sopris Learning)

National Center for Education Research

The National Center for Education Research, part of IES, supports research activities to improve the quality of education and thereby increase student academic achievement, reduce the achievement gap between high-performing and low-performing students and increase access to and completion of postsecondary education.

- A \$2.6 million grant from NCER was awarded to a Vanderbilt researcher to conduct an efficacy study of implementing the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social-Emotional Competence in early childhood programs. The Pyramid model is a framework for promoting social-emotional competence and reducing challenging behavior in young children. The study aims to provide data on the intervention’s impact on program, teaching, and child outcomes as well as associated costs.
- A \$4 million grant over five years will be used by Vanderbilt researchers to assess the effectiveness of Sound Partners, a reading intervention using cross-age peer tutoring. The study will examine how socioeconomic status affects intervention outcomes on student reading. Early achievement gaps between high- and low-resource families still exist due to several reasons, and the pandemic has worsened learning loss for beginning readers, making it difficult for schools to address all student needs on their own.

Peabody College researchers to study efficacy of a reading intervention

The Institute of Education Sciences awarded a \$4 million grant to a research team at Vanderbilt Peabody College and the University of Texas at Austin to study the efficacy of Sound Partners, a reading intervention via cross-age peer tutoring. The study aims to provide educators with information to improve the reading achievement of students who are behind in reading and address early achievement gaps between children of different socioeconomic statuses. The study has the potential for a significant and broad impact across our nation to address reading gaps in early elementary grades, particularly following the school interruptions that occurred during the height of the pandemic.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W |
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| K | Levels A-E | | | | | LLI Orange System | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Levels A-K | | | | | | | | | | LLI Green System | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Levels C-N | | | | | | | | | | | | LLI Blue System | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | LLI Red System | | | | | | | | | | | | Levels L-Q | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4+ | LLI Gold System | | | | | | | | | | | | Levels O-T | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5+ | LLI Purple System | | | | | | | | | | | | Levels R-W | | | | | | | | | | |

The Leveled Literacy Intervention is an intervention that provides daily, intensive, small-group instruction, which supplements classroom literacy teaching. (Fountas & Pinnell)



“IRIS provides free training and resources that some districts would not have otherwise.”
 - Online feedback from a professional development provider in a rural school district

Vanderbilt and state of Tennessee partner to improve K-12 education

The Tennessee Education Research Alliance is a research-practice partnership between Vanderbilt University and the Tennessee Department of Education that conducts practical research to inform state-level policy and impact K-12 education practices in Tennessee districts. TERA enables scholars to conduct practical research that informs state-level policy, influences Tennessee's districts, and contributes to national K-12 education discussions. TERA conducts district-level research on topics such as summer learning, school leadership, and English learners' education experiences. Their work focuses on informing decision making by emphasizing policy and practice levers at both state and district levels.

TERA priorities include evaluating the state's AP Access for All initiative and working with the Southern Regional Education Board to explore issues related to improving the teacher workforce in SREB states. Issues include teacher recruitment and retention and how COVID-19 impacted entry into teaching.

Now seven years into the partnership with the TDOE, TERA is continuing to work closely with leaders at the department to launch new research projects that are aligned with current state priorities, including evaluating interventions related to pandemic recovery efforts and understanding local implementation and impacts of the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement.

ED Office of Special Education Programs training grants

A \$1.25 million grant, Interdisciplinary Nodes Specialized in Proactive, Iterative, and Research-based Education in person and from a Distance, at Peabody College will prepare 17 scholars to be board-certified behavior analysts fully qualified to serve students with high-intensity needs as school teachers or behavioral health specialists with expertise in child development. All scholars will receive rigorous training on:

- Evidence-based, data-driven, developmentally appropriate and trauma-informed interventions which promote high expectations, academic achievement, inclusive practices, successful transitions and a sense of belonging;
- Methods for cultivating and promoting interdisciplinary partnerships and collaboration; and
- Methods for developing and delivering instruction through distance-learning environments.

Vanderbilt's IRIS Center

With funding from the Office of Special Education Programs, the IRIS Center has produced free evidence-based behavioral and instructional online resources for over two decades. In 2022, the IRIS website received roughly 4 million visits from 229 countries and territories worldwide. This translated to a cost of approximately 31 cents per user—even less when factoring in offline users. Free certificates of completion are available for 40 of the most popular IRIS Modules (self-paced units of study on in-demand topics and strategies). Nearly 113,000 certificates were accessed last year, equaling \$4.9 million in free professional development for the nation's education workforce.

Because of their versatility, IRIS resources are embedded throughout every avenue and phase of the educator pipeline, including:

- Grow Your Own programs for high school students interested in becoming educators.
- Approximately 1,500 college, university and community college programs for the initial training and licensing of teachers, school leaders and paraeducators.
- District- and state-level alternative and emergency licensure programs that were developed to address the ongoing teacher shortages, particularly in special education.
- Induction and mentorship programs for early-career educators.
- Staff training on key topics (e.g., addressing challenging behaviors) for school personnel such as bus drivers and school resource officers.
- Professional and personalized learning plans through which educators learn strategies and interventions that allow for next-day implementation in their classes.

As society strives to develop increasingly inclusive environments for individuals with disabilities, IRIS resources are being integrated into trainings for people in public-facing roles at hospitals, museums, medical offices and more.



The IRIS Center provides models for educators to address behavioral challenges through online modules. (Vanderbilt University)