



# The Meadows Center

FOR PREVENTING EDUCATIONAL RISK



## 2010–2012 REPORT

# MISSION

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk is dedicated to generating, disseminating, and supporting the implementation of empirically validated practices to influence educators, researchers, policymakers, families, and other stakeholders who strive to improve academic, behavioral, and social outcomes for all learners.





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## The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk

In the fall of 2008, the Meadows Foundation launched The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER) with a 5-year, \$1.5 million grant. Part of the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), MCPER assembled a unique, interdisciplinary, intercollegiate group of experts from the fields of psychology, special education, sociology, and speech and language. Their mission: to provide educators with the knowledge and tools to diagnose, intervene, and alter the trajectory of students at risk for educational failure.

Focusing activities in the areas of academic instructional practices, social environments, knowledge attainment, college and life preparation, and engagement of underrepresented youth, MCPER undertakes rigorous new research to understand the factors affecting at-risk students. Additionally, MCPER translates evidence-based findings into real-world practice and supports needed policy changes to create educational settings that foster success.

Thanks to its outstanding directors and research partners, MCPER surpassed its most ambitious initial goals and has continued this trend of excellence.

## The Meadows Foundation

Algur H. and Virginia Meadows established the Meadows Foundation to help the people and institutions of Texas improve the quality and circumstances of their lives and those of future generations. The Meadows Foundation strives to exemplify its founder's principles of addressing basic human needs by working toward eliminating ignorance, hopelessness, and suffering; protecting the environment; providing cultural enrichment; encouraging excellence; and promoting understanding and cooperation.

Since it was founded in 1948, the Meadows Foundation has contributed more than \$6 million to UT Austin for programs in the College of Education, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Blanton Museum of Art, Harry Ransom Center, and School of Architecture.







ABOUT US





## STRATEGIC GOALS

MCPER was initially funded with the following strategic goals. As noted in the 2009–2010 report, MCPER has already exceeded all of these goals by a wide margin.

**Goal 1:** To engage a minimum of five full-time researchers across multiple disciplines in risk-related research

**Goal 2:** To directly, positively affect more than 20 school districts, 200 teachers, and 20,000 students through professional development, research, and consulting

**Goal 3:** To procure state and federal grants to sustain and increase MCPER research

**Goal 4:** To increase MCPER's externally funded budget (in contrast to the core operating budget) from \$650,000 to \$4 million within 12 months and then to \$12 million by 2013



This icon, used throughout this report, denotes institutes, projects, products personnel, or role changes that began or took place at MCPER during the 2010–2012 academic years.

# EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

# A WORD FROM EXECUTIVE



**Pictured at the MCPER opening ceremony in 2008, from left: UT Austin College of Education Dean Manuel J. Justiz, Meadows Foundation President and CEO Linda Perryman Evans, MCPER Executive Director Sharon Vaughn, UT Austin President William Powers Jr.**



# DIRECTOR SHARON VAUGHN



“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

— Aristotle

To truly do something well, you must do it well every time, with your eyes on the larger purpose. And by “doing it well,” we mean excellence. That is the underlying purpose at MCPER, which derives from our belief that we can educationally advantage traditionally underrepresented children and their families through our commitment and respect for them and those who support us.

This report comes at a period of transition for us, as we are near completion of the first 5 years of work under the auspices of MCPER. As we approach this crossroads and contemplate how we have achieved and will continue to strive toward excellence, we recognize that we cannot accomplish our goals alone. The University of Texas at Austin and its College of Education join us in recognizing the influential work of MCPER to date, and we have to thank our many colleagues who partner with us, serve as institute fellows, and support our work.

As we refocus our initiatives, we are energized about the next 5 years (and beyond). We are launching new programs and initiatives, and we plan to extend our collaborations and partnerships. We have been fortunate to work with the foremost researchers and research centers in our field, and their input is essential to our continued growth and productivity.

We have also been afforded the opportunity to work with many institute fellows, who have enthusiastically contributed to our knowledge and expertise. During the next 5 years, we look forward not only to enhancing the number of fellows, but also to furthering the multidisciplinary aspects of these associations.

Of course, none of this would have come to fruition without the generous support of the Meadows Foundation. The foundation continues to be instrumental in our efforts to empower often-voiceless students through research and translation of knowledge into evidence-based practice. Alongside the Meadows Foundation, we have also received extraordinary support from the College of Education, especially Dean Manuel J. Justiz and Senior Associate Dean Marilyn C. Kameen.

We look forward to continuing our work, with excellence as our goal in making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sharon Vaughn'.



## Grants

**47** ongoing  
**18** new

## Funding

**\$14 million** received in 2010–2011  
**\$13 million** received in 2011–2012  
**\$18 million** confirmed for 2012 and beyond



## Researchers Engaged in Risk-Related Research

### Goals

**20** by August 31, 2010  
**40** by August 31, 2011

### Current Numbers

**104** staff members  
**27** students  
**97** degrees  
**45** master's degrees  
**25** doctoral degrees



## Publications

**12** books  
**41** book chapters  
**134** articles specifically  
mentioning MCPER  
**142** presentations  
**112** articles in press  
**73** articles in review



## Impact

**66** Texas school districts  
**26** elementary schools  
**69** middle schools  
**63** high schools  
**6** Texas Youth Commission institutions

## Online Presence

**12 million** hits  
**8** MCPER websites\*  
**350** products online  
**100** reading resources  
**20** mathematics resources  
**> 1 million** resource downloads  
**625,000** downloads of a single resource



## Partnerships

**15** years of excellence from the Vaughn Gross Center  
**25** external institute fellows  
**19** universities and centers  
**5** UT departments and centers



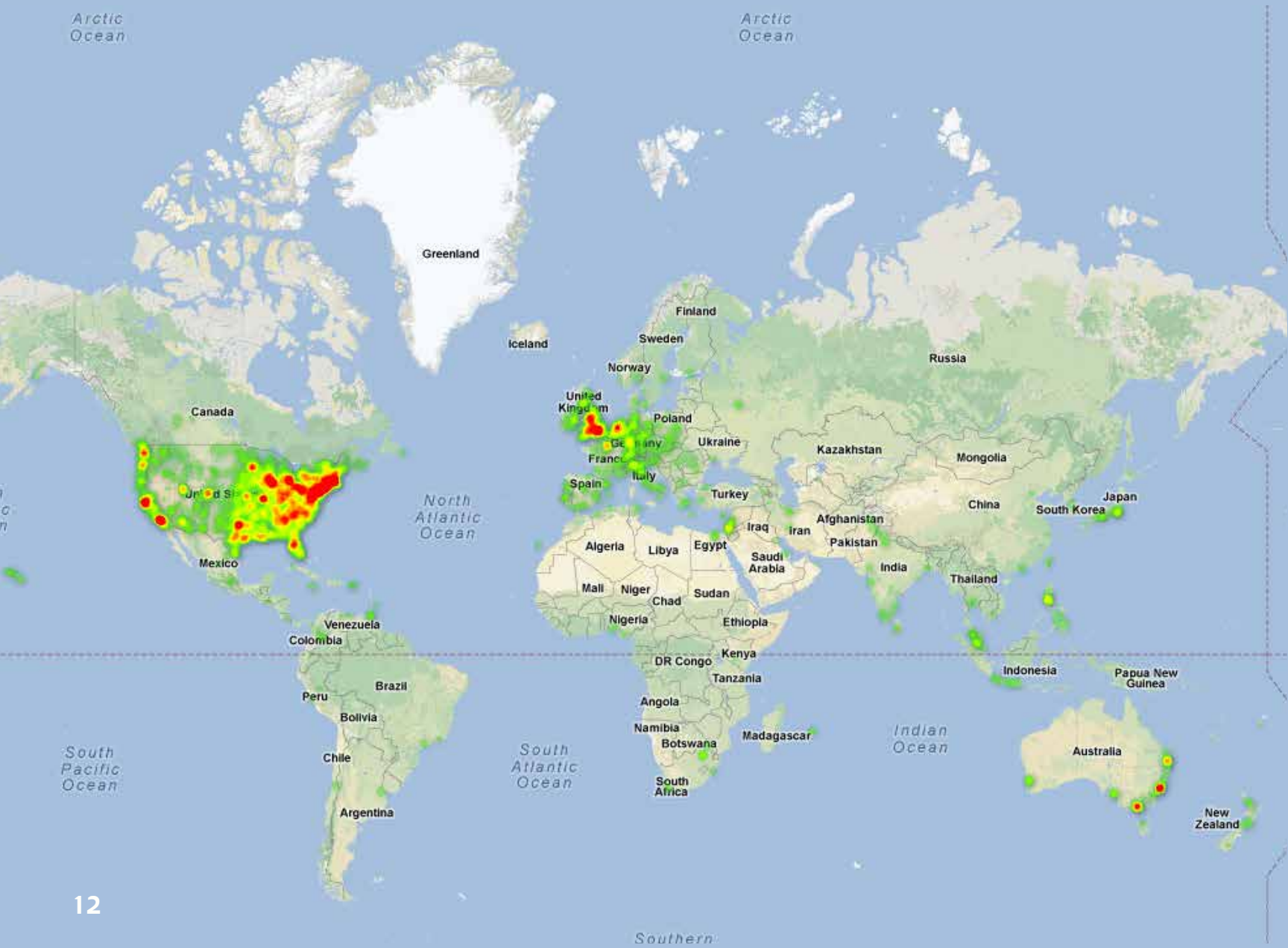
\*[meadowscenter.org](http://meadowscenter.org)  
[searchlight.utexas.org](http://searchlight.utexas.org)  
[buildingrti.utexas.org](http://buildingrti.utexas.org)  
[earlymathintervention.org](http://earlymathintervention.org)  
[3tiermathmodel.org](http://3tiermathmodel.org)  
[texasldcenter.org](http://texasldcenter.org)  
[rtictrl.org](http://rtictrl.org)  
[texasreading.org/otala](http://texasreading.org/otala)

# BY THE NUMBERS, 2010–2012



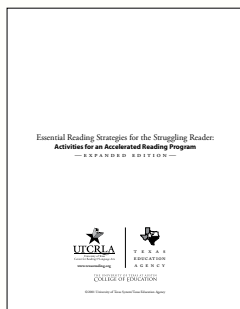
# WEBSITE USE

This map shows the geographic distribution of hits to the MCPER website (<http://meadowscenter.org>) from August 2008, when it went live, through May 2012. Areas shaded red show the highest concentration of hits (1,763,425 in Austin, TX); areas shaded green show lower concentrations (1 in several cities, including Ndola, Zambia). Overall, our websites received more than 10 million hits from September 2010 through August 2012.



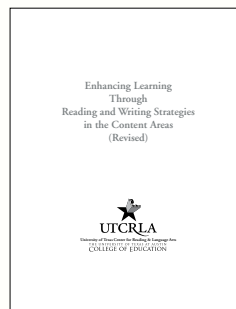
# TOP DOWNLOADS FROM MCPER WEBSITES

The following download totals are for the 2010–2012 academic years.



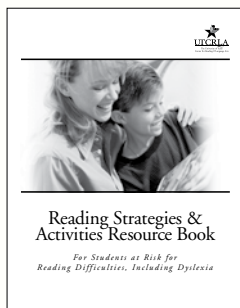
## Essential Reading Strategies for the Struggling Reader: Activities for an Accelerated Reading Program

625,001 downloads



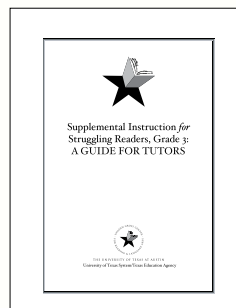
## Enhancing Learning Through Reading and Writing Strategies in the Content Areas (Revised)

74,464 downloads



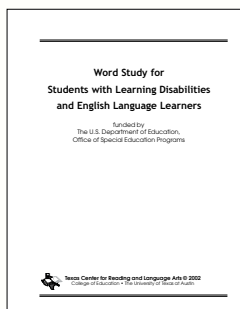
## Reading Strategies and Activities Resource Book for Students at Risk for Reading Difficulties, Including Dyslexia

274,558 downloads



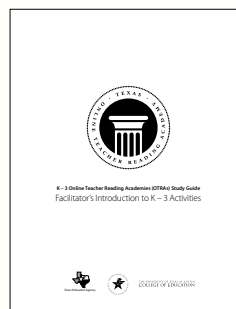
## Supplemental Instruction for Struggling Readers, Grade 3: A Guide for Tutors

58,340 downloads



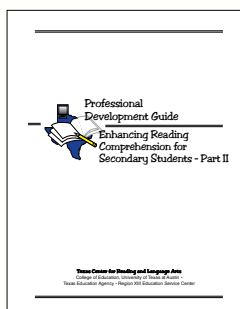
## Word Study for Students With Learning Disabilities and English Language Learners

113,550 downloads



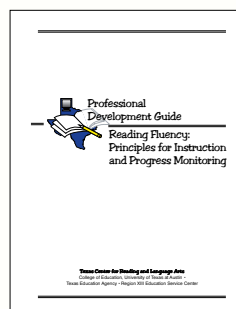
## K-3 Online Teacher Reading Academies Study Guides

47,709 downloads



## Professional Development Guide: Enhancing Reading Comprehension for Secondary Students – Part II

77,084 downloads



## Professional Development Guide: Reading Fluency – Principles for Instruction and Progress Monitoring

43,199 downloads

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors provides the strategic direction and intellectual dynamism for MCPER's research and work. Detailed bios of each board member and institute director can be found on the website ([www.meadowscenter.org/people](http://www.meadowscenter.org/people)).

Pictured, from left: Dr. Mark O'Reilly, Dr. Kevin Stark, Dr. Sharon Jackson, Dr. Daniel Robinson (see update on following page), Dr. Sharon Vaughn, Dr. Greg Roberts, Dr. Diane Pedrotty Bryant, Dr. Pamela Bell. New members pictured on the following page: Dr. James Patton, Dr. S. Natasha Beretvas.



MCPER Board of Directors



## Welcome

James Patton and S. Natasha Beretvas joined the MCPER Board of Directors.



### **James Patton, Ed.D.**

Dr. Patton is an independent consultant and adjunct associate professor at UT Austin. Patton has taught students with special needs at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels in both public and private settings. He was formerly on the faculty at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. His primary areas of professional activity are transition assessment and planning, differentiating instruction for students with special needs in inclusive settings, study skills instruction, needs of college students

with learning-related challenges, and issues associated with individuals with disabilities who encounter the criminal justice system. He currently works with other professionals internationally and serves as an intellectual disabilities forensics specialist in death penalty cases throughout the country. He grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, where he attended St. Louis University High School. He earned his B.S. from the University of Notre Dame and his M.Ed. and Ed.D. from the University of Virginia.

### **S. Natasha Beretvas, Ph.D.**

Dr. Beretvas is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology. Her research focuses on meta-analytic procedures, and statistical, psychometric, hierarchical linear, and multilevel modeling.

Among her many professional association affiliations, Beretvas is a member of the American Educational Research Association, the National Council on Measurement in Education, the American Psychological Association, and the Southwest Educational Research Association.



## Goodbye



### **Daniel Robinson, Ph.D.**

Dr. Robinson moved to Colorado to join Colorado State University. He continues his partnership with MCPER as a fellow with the Dropout Prevention Institute.

## Congratulations



### **Herbert Rieth, Ed.D.**

Dr. Rieth, a former MCPER director, retired.

# CENTER LEADERSHIP

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## **Sharon Vaughn, Ph.D.**

*Executive Director, MCPER*

*Director Emeritus, Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts (VGC)*

Among Dr. Vaughn's many professional accolades are the numerous awards she has won for her groundbreaking work in intervention research for students with learning problems and disabilities. She has authored numerous books on the subject and continues to serve as principal investigator for projects funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, and the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.



## **Greg Roberts, Ph.D.**

*Associate Director, MCPER*

*Director, VGC*

Within MCPER, Dr. Roberts is the director of program evaluation and a director of the Translational Research Institute. He is principal investigator of the English Learner Institute for Teaching and Excellence (Project ELITE) and the Service Core of the Texas Center for Learning Disabilities. A trained educational psychologist, his expertise is in quantitative methods, measurement, and program evaluation.



## **Sarojani S. Mohammed, Ph.D.**

*Assistant Director, MCPER and VGC*

As a director of the Translational Research Institute (new this year) and assistant director of MCPER and VGC, Dr. Mohammed develops and disseminates web-based content and program evaluations. An expert in technical assistance, dissemination, and external evaluation on large-scale projects, she manages data and co-leads centerwide and project-specific data management, analysis, and measurement teams.



## **Glenda Taylor**

*Manager of Administrative Services, MCPER and VGC*

Ms. Taylor plans, coordinates, and directs business management and administrative services for MCPER and VGC. In addition to managing the fiscal operations, budgetary affairs, personnel matters, and departmental liaison activities, she develops and administers both centers' grant budgets.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Pictured, from left: Debbie Van Loan, Jacqueline Linley, Glenda Taylor, Eric Bramblett, Jessica Weingartner, Kim Shumake, Kamela Syed.



## PRODUCTION SERVICES



**Matthew Slater**  
*Manager and Editor*



**Carlos Treviño**  
*Senior Graphic Designer*



**Karen Chan**  
*Graphic Designer*



**Hans Rhodes**  
*Web Programmer*



# INSTITUTES



# AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS INSTITUTE

Dedicated to researching best practices to educate and support students with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs)



**Institute Director**  
**Mark O'Reilly, Ph.D.**

Dr. O'Reilly joined the UT Austin Department of Special Education in 2002 and now coordinates the graduate training programs in autism and developmental disability. His research focus is on the design, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based and culturally sensitive services for students with ASDs and their families.

## Institute Fellows

The institute welcomed three new institute fellows, Dr. Tonya Davis, Dr. Russell Lang, and Dr. Mandy Rispoli. They extend the reach of the institute statewide as assistant professors at Texas universities: Baylor, Texas State, and Texas A&M. The institute fellows conduct research in diverse areas related to ASDs and developmental disabilities, including assessment and treatment of problematic and challenging behaviors, function-based antecedent interventions, communication intervention, and variables that may alter a child's motivation to engage in challenging behaviors during behavioral assessments and interventions.



**Greg Allen, Ph.D.**



**Tonya Davis,  
Ph.D., BCBA-D**



**Terry S. Falcomata,  
Ph.D., BCBA-D**



**Russell Lang,  
Ph.D., BCBA-D**



**Ann Levine, Ph.D., Psy.D.**



**Amanda Little,  
Ph.D., BCBA-D**



**Mandy Rispoli,  
Ph.D., BCBA-D**



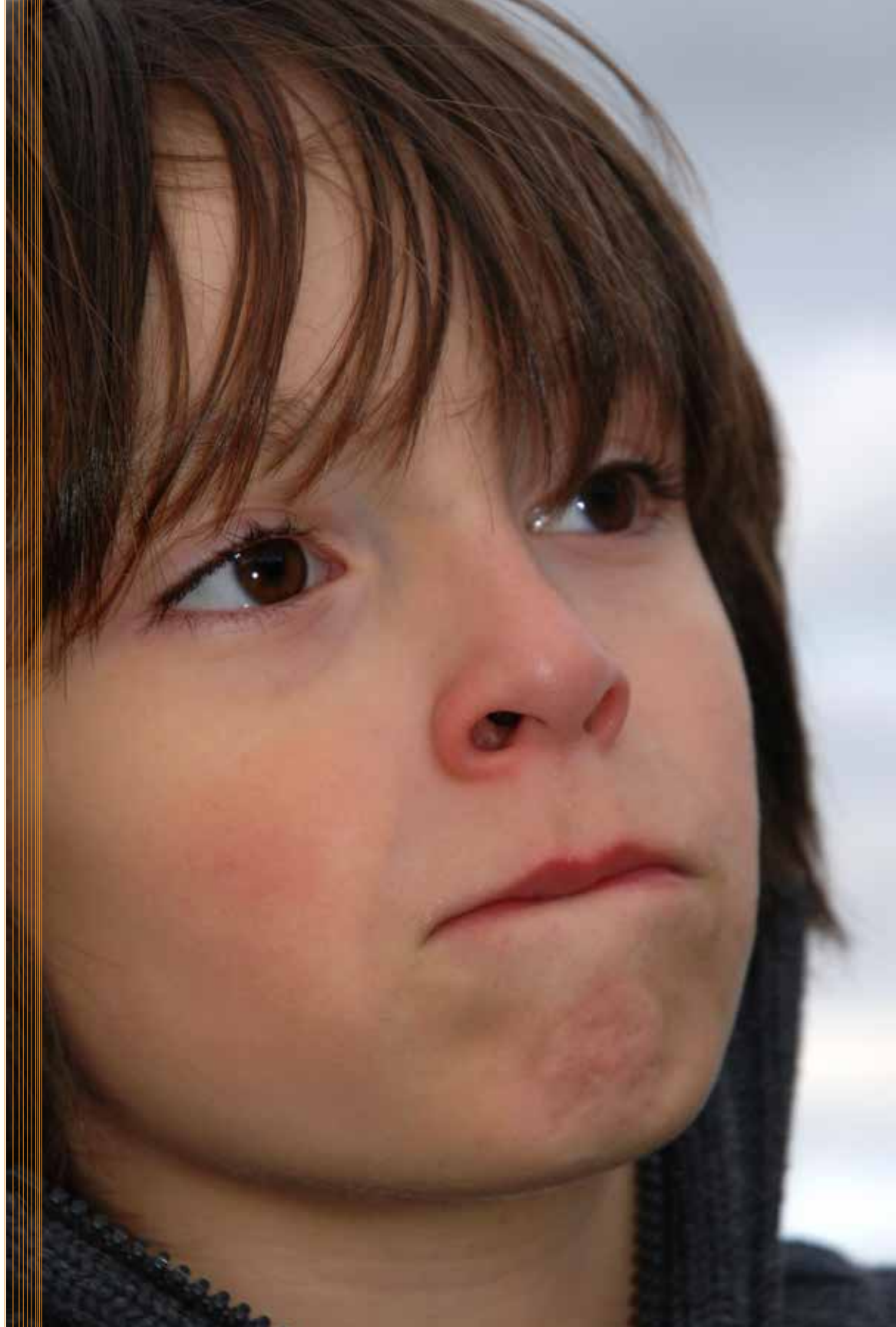
**Nina Zuna, Ph.D.**

## Work in Action

Starting in January 2011, MCPER collaborated with Austin Independent School District and the Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic at the University of Houston on a pilot program to support transitions, community integration, and employment for individuals with significant intellectual disabilities.

The pilot program worked with the family of a 22-year-old with significant autism. Beginning with group action planning, the collaborators met with the 22-year-old, his family, key people in their life, and relevant professionals, and together created a plan for the transition from high school to the adult world, focusing on vocational, recreational, and leisure activities.

The school district provided a job coach, and MCPER hired an employment coordinator who specializes in individuals with disabilities. Based on the 22-year-old's interests, he now has several jobs: at a gym, a bowling alley, the YMCA in downtown Austin, and a local behavioral clinic. Given the success of the program, MCPER is expanding the project.



## **New Projects**



### **Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities**

This center is a collaborative, multidisciplinary initiative between UT Austin and Dell Children's Hospital. The center offers clinical and diagnostic services individualized to the unique needs of each family.

### **Seton Healthcare Autism Research and Evaluation (SHARE)**

SHARE provides diagnostic evaluations for children and young adults thought to have autism. An interdisciplinary team of experts uses these evaluations to form developmental recommendations to families.

## **New Partners**



### **Austin Travis County Integral Care**

This pilot initiative focuses on early intervention for autism. The project, coordinated by Jeannie Aguilar, funds three doctoral students and five master's students from UT Austin's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Program.

### **Center on Disability and Development**

This center at Texas A&M University, part of a network of similar centers across the country, supports the self-determination, community integration, and quality of life of people with disabilities and their families.

### **International Scholars**

The institute has established international links with outstanding developmental disability scholars from institutions such as Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and the University of Bari in Italy.

### **Texas Child Study Center**

The brainchild of MCPER board member Dr. Kevin Stark and the Dell Children's Medical Center chief of psychiatry, Dr. William Streusand, the Texas Child Study Center (an outpatient clinic) offers children's mental health services; training and research opportunities for mental health professionals, faculty members, and students; and intervention services for families.





## DROPOUT PREVENTION INSTITUTE

Dedicated to understanding the causes of school dropout, implementing interventions that prevent dropout, and increasing school engagement



**Institute Director**  
**Brandy R. Maynard, Ph.D.**



Dr. Maynard received the 2011 MCPER Postdoctoral Fellowship on Reading Disabilities and Response to Intervention. She is a licensed master social worker with 16 years of post-master's clinical and administrative experience implementing and monitoring the fidelity of evidence-based interventions in child welfare, juvenile justice, school social work, and mental health. Her research interests include interventions with at-risk students, implementation and fidelity of evidence-based interventions, use and quality of research in education and social work, and systematic review and meta-analytic methods. She holds a Ph.D. in social work from Loyola University in Chicago.



**Institute Director**  
**Greg Roberts, Ph.D.**

Dr. Roberts is the associate director of MCPER, director of program evaluation, and director of VGC.



**Institute Director**  
**Sharon Vaughn, Ph.D.**

Dr. Vaughn is the executive director of MCPER, H.E. Hartfelder/Southland Corp. Regents Chair in Human Development, and director emeritus of VGC.

## Institute Fellows

The Dropout Prevention Institute welcomed five new institute fellows, Dr. Mark Dynarski, Dr. Cynthia Franklin, Dr. Nicole Pyle, Dr. Daniel Robinson, and Dr. Jade Wexler. In addition to UT Austin, the new fellows represent Mathematica's Center for Improving Research Evidence, Utah State University, Colorado State University, and the University of Maryland, College Park. The institute fellows conduct research in diverse areas related to dropout prevention, including social work, adolescent literacy, technology to enhance learning, team-based learning, special education, school and family contexts, behavioral disorders, and public health.



**Mark Dynarski, Ph.D.**



**Anna-Mari Fall, Ph.D.**



**Andrea Flower, Ph.D.**



**Cynthia Franklin, Ph.D.**



**Nicole Pyle, Ph.D.**



**Daniel H. Robinson,  
Ph.D.**



**Michael G. Vaughn,  
Ph.D.**



**Jade Wexler, Ph.D.**

## Highlights

Ninth-grade students participating in Project GOAL visited Austin Community College, exposing them to a variety of postsecondary programs available upon completion of high school.

Jacob Williams of Project GOAL presented at the Dropout Prevention Institute/School Attendance Symposium in Orlando, Florida. Williams outlined the first year of the project, which develops, implements, and evaluates the effectiveness of a dropout prevention program that begins with students in eighth grade.

Dropout prevention advisor Ericka Scovill won the Pflugerville Independent School District's Jean Pass Award, recognizing her positive intervention and support to students at risk of dropping out of school.

Dr. Daniel Robinson delivered a series of talks in New Zealand and Australia on publishing in education journals and the lack of experimental support for published prescriptive statements.

## Success Stories

### Rashad

Before eighth grade, Rashad had many office referrals and failed some core classes. A Project GOAL advisor focused on Rashad's strengths as an athlete and used his goal to become a professional football player to motivate him to succeed in school. In eighth grade, Rashad's advisor helped Rashad practice controlling his impulses and focusing on his goals. Rashad learned from his advisor how to ask for help in his most difficult class.

Now, as a ninth-grader, Rashad is passing all his classes and is a dedicated member of his high school football team. Rashad learned from his advisor the steps to becoming a professional football player as well as other careers that he can pursue while playing football, such as a teacher, coach, or athletic trainer. Rashad attends tutorials for his algebra class with the long-term goal of earning a degree in kinesiology.

### Jacob

Jacob is a gifted and talented student who failed almost every class in middle school. He could do the work, but he was unmotivated and said he could not focus when he was not interested.

His Project GOAL advisor felt strongly about Jacob's potential, and she recommended that Jacob apply to an alternative high school in the district, one that would better match Jacob's learning style. He now works on a computer, does research, works on collaborative projects, and leads presentations. Jacob is much happier at school and is passing all of his classes.

### Kayla

In early middle school, Kayla would become distracted by her friends and get into trouble with her teachers. Although she did not fail classes, she had many tardies and her grades were barely average. She said that going to college "wasn't something that people in my family did." Her Project GOAL advisor taught Kayla about the opportunities a college degree would provide. She focused more in school and learned how to balance her social and academic lives.

Now in high school, Kayla's GPA is over 3.0, and she strives to go to college. She wants to become a nurse and knows that hard work and focus will get her there.

## New Project



## Communities in Schools

Funded by the Texas Education Agency, this project has two main activities. The project conducts a survey with 680 stakeholders from 28 Communities in Schools affiliates to assess their satisfaction with Communities in Schools services and the Texas Education Agency's role. Also, the project provides coaching and support to Communities in Schools affiliate staff members in 10 schools across Texas to implement Project GOAL, a school engagement and dropout prevention intervention.





## LANGUAGE FOR LEARNING INSTITUTE



Dedicated to providing teachers with resources and professional development to ensure that English language learners receive quality instruction and increase their academic achievement



**Institute Director**  
**Leticia Martinez, Ph.D.**

Dr. Martinez is director of the Texas Institute for the Acquisition of Language for Learning. She has taught at the elementary, secondary, and university levels, and for the last 7 years has worked closely with schools and teachers to coordinate federally funded research, focusing on supporting English language learners in schools. She earned her doctorate in curriculum and instruction, with an emphasis on language and literacy studies, from UT Austin in 2006.

### Institute Fellows

The institute added three new fellows, Dr. David Francis, Dr. Elfrieda Hiebert, and Dr. Deborah Short. All three are nationally recognized scholars. The institute fellows conduct research in many areas, including reading disabilities; attention problems; developmental consequences of brain injuries and birth defects; adolescent alcohol abuse; how to foster fluency, vocabulary, and knowledge through appropriate texts; accessible texts for beginning and struggling readers; the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology model for sheltered instruction; and English language learners.



**David Francis, Ph.D.**



**Elfrieda Hiebert, Ph.D.**



**Deborah Short, Ph.D.**





## Highlights

Project ELITE (see below) received funding. Dr. Leticia Grimaldo leads the new project.

Dr. Genise Henry was featured in a *Texas Monthly* magazine story about the Texas State University doctoral program in school improvement.

Dr. Colleen Reutebuch, Dr. Leticia Martinez, Dr. Leticia Grimaldo, and Dr. Genise Henry presented the results of the Texas Institute for the Acquisition of Language for Learning (see below) at the International Reading Association's 56th Annual Convention, in Orlando, Florida.

*Education Week's* "Spotlight on ELLs in the Classroom" featured a story on the CREATE project's instructional intervention. Read the article here (subscription required): [www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/10/21/08ell.h29.html](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/10/21/08ell.h29.html).

## New Projects



### English in a Flash

Renaissance Learning, a student education and assessment software company, has commissioned the Language for Learning Institute to study the efficacy of English in a Flash, an English-language-learning program.

### English Learner Institute for Teaching and Excellence (Project ELITE)

This project implements, iteratively evaluates, and refines a response to intervention model designed to ensure that all students, including English language learners, become proficient readers and users of English during the primary grades.

### Scale-Up Evaluation of Reading Intervention for First-Grade English Learners

This project determines the effectiveness of the Proactiva/Proactive curriculum—a fully developed first-grade literacy and oracy intervention in Spanish and English—when school personnel implement it directly across various settings and populations and assesses factors at the student and school levels that affect intervention effectiveness.



## MATHEMATICS INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES AND DIFFICULTIES

Dedicated to understanding mathematics learning disabilities and to validating evidence-based assessments and interventions to prevent and remediate learning problems



**Institute Director**  
**Diane Pedrotty Bryant, Ph.D.**

Dr. Bryant is a professor of learning disabilities at UT Austin, a fellow in the Cissy McDaniel Parker fellowship, and principal investigator for several major mathematics intervention projects. She has taught students with learning disabilities and served as an administrator in the Albuquerque, New Mexico, public schools. Most recently, she has developed assessment measures and validated early mathematics interventions for struggling primary-grade students.

## Institute Fellows

The Mathematics Institute added two new fellows, Dr. Barbara J. Dougherty of the University of Missouri and Dr. Helen Taylor Martin of UT Austin. Research interests for institute fellows include struggling learners, algebra assessment, intellectual disabilities, assistive technology, basic numeracy skills, progress monitoring, and gender equity in mathematics instruction.



**Brian R. Bryant, Ph.D.**



**David Chard, Ph.D.**



**Barbara J. Dougherty,  
Ph.D.**



**Anne Foegen, Ph.D.**



**Leanne Ketterlin Geller,  
Ph.D.**



**Russell Gersten, Ph.D.**



**Karen Karp, Ed.D.**



**Helen Taylor Martin,  
Ph.D.**

## Highlights

Dr. Diane Pedrotty Bryant presented at Teaching Mathematics to Students Within the RtI Process: Building a Research Community, a conference in Arlington, Virginia. She discussed the process of building a community to engage in research and professional development.

The Validation of Early Mathematics Interventions project has been a resounding success. Students receiving the intervention outperformed nonintervention students in three out of five areas measured: total score, place value, and addition/subtraction facts. The project is now in its fourth and final year.

Assessment scores of students receiving intervention as part of the 3-Tier Mathematics Model project increased. All materials, including the assessments, are available free to Texas educators at [www.3tiermathmodel.org](http://www.3tiermathmodel.org).



## New Projects



### **Algebra I Supplemental Instruction for Students With Learning Disabilities at the High School Level: Observations and Intervention**

This project develops and tests lessons in both a high school resource class and an algebra I inclusion classroom. The lessons support students with learning disabilities by addressing weaknesses and providing evidence-based instruction in algebra readiness for greater success in mathematics.

### **Middle School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (MSTAR)**

MSTAR implements research-informed strategies the National Mathematics Advisory Panel recommended to prepare middle schoolers for success in algebra I, as measured by the end-of-course test.

### **Secondary Special Education Observation Study**

This project observes the instructional and behavioral practices of special education teachers in algebra I and English I who provide support to students in inclusive high school classrooms. The teachers implement a brief, 3-week intervention in the spring for English I or algebra I and report on the feasibility of those interventions.

### **Tier II Mathematics Intervention to Support Learning of Students in Special Education: Grades 3 and 4 Lesson Scaffolds**

This project uses lessons and progress-monitoring tools from the Tier II Supplemental Mathematics Intervention: Grades 3 and 4 project (see below). Special educators implement the lessons and determine scaffolds and appropriate accommodations for special education students in grades 3 and 4 who have individualized education program goals in mathematics. This modified-design experiment allows educators to collaborate with the research staff in identifying the types of scaffolds to maintain mathematical precision and rigor.

### **Tier II Supplemental Mathematics Intervention: Grades 3 and 4**

This project develops, implements, and evaluates the effectiveness of a mathematics intervention for students in grades 3 and 4 who are identified as being at risk (tier II) for mathematics difficulties that could affect long-term success in mathematics. As an additional component of validating the lessons, mathematics specialists, education service center representatives, and classroom educators and interventionists throughout Texas review the lessons.

## New Partner



### **Research to Improve Mathematics Achievement**

Institute fellow Dr. Leanne Ketterlin Geller directs this research and outreach unit of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development at Southern Methodist University. Institute Director Dr. Diane Pedrotty Bryant and fellow Dr. David Chard are key researchers in this initiative, which features MSTAR (see above) among its key projects.



## READING INSTITUTE

Dedicated to understanding reading difficulties for students at all grade levels and validating evidence-based practices to prevent and remediate reading problems



**Institute Director**  
**Colleen Reutebuch, Ph.D.**



Dr. Reutebuch has coordinated state- and federally funded professional development and technical assistance projects in early and secondary reading. Reutebuch was an assistant professor of special education at Texas Tech University and an adjunct in reading education at Texas State University, UT Austin, and Our Lady of the Lake University. Currently, she directs projects to improve academics through interventions targeting English language learners. Her research interests include academic and reading interventions, reading difficulties and disabilities, and effective instructional practices to support all learners.



**Institute Director**  
**Sharon Vaughn, Ph.D.**

Dr. Vaughn is the executive director of MCPER, H.E. Hartfelder/Southland Corp. Regents Chair in Human Development, and director emeritus of VGC.

## Highlights

Thanks to the work of Theresa Clarke on the Texas Literacy Initiative (see below), Texas was one of six states to earn competitive federal grants from the U.S. Department of Education for a state literacy plan.

MCPER received \$20 million from the Institute of Education Sciences, the UT Austin College of Education's largest-ever grant, for the Reading for Understanding/Promoting Adolescents' Comprehension of Text project (see below). One of five grants awarded nationwide, the project researches new ways to improve reading comprehension in grades 7–12.

A Reading Institute article, "Response to Intervention for Middle School Students With Reading Difficulties: Effects of a Primary and Secondary Intervention," won the National Association for School Psychologists Best Article Award for 2010.

Dr. Deborah Reed received the Council for Learning Disabilities 2010 Outstanding Researcher Award for her dissertation, "The Contribution of Retell to the Identification of Struggling Adolescent Readers."

**"You and your colleagues have done a phenomenal job of creating, structuring, and uploading this course. These online courses look clean and crisp and do a good job of stepping the participants through the learning experience."**

**— Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies user**

## New Projects



### Reading for Understanding/Promoting Adolescents' Comprehension of Text

The College of Education's largest-ever grant (\$20 million) funds this project to research new ways to improve reading comprehension in grades 7–12. The project is a collaborative effort among six universities.

### Texas Center for Learning Disabilities

This collaborative and multidisciplinary research center addresses the definition, measurement, prevention, and remediation of learning disabilities. The first 5 years of funding ended 2011. The project was refunded through 2016 with a slightly different research focus: response to intervention models, a revamped website, and different grade levels (fourth and fifth grades).

### Texas Literacy Initiative

Texas was one of six states to receive a competitive grant as part of the U.S. Department of Education Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy plan. This project works to ensure that every Texas student is prepared for the literacy demands of college and/or a career by high school graduation.



# RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION INSTITUTE

Dedicated to conducting research and providing technical assistance to build capacity for implementing response to intervention in Texas and the nation



**Institute Director  
Pamela Bell, Ph.D.**

Dr. Bell's academic background is in communication disorders, specifically the education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Her areas of expertise include translating research findings into professional development to improve classroom instructional practices and providing technical assistance for school improvement through response to intervention. One of her areas of special interest is the use of technology to enhance the knowledge and skills of school leaders and educators.

## New Products



### **A Conversation With Dr. Sharon Vaughn, Part One**

<http://buildingrti.utexas.org/CAP/SRVQ1/SRVQ1.swf>

### **A Resource for Student Evaluation Personnel in Schools Implementing Response to Intervention**

<http://buildingrti.utexas.org/PDF/StudentEval.pdf>

### **Closing the Achievement Gap: Collaborating to Support Student Success**

<http://buildingrti.utexas.org/rti-presentations/collaboration>

### **Using Data to Differentiate Intervention Instruction: A Middle School Example**

[http://buildingrti.utexas.org/CAP/Using\\_Data/Using\\_Data.swf](http://buildingrti.utexas.org/CAP/Using_Data/Using_Data.swf)

### **Reading Support for Spanish-Speaking Students in Elementary Classrooms**

<http://buildingrti.utexas.org/CAP/ELLsupport/ELLsupport.swf>

### **Co-Teaching, A How To Guide: Guidelines for Co-Teaching in Texas – An Overview**

<http://buildingrti.utexas.org/CAP/Co-teaching/Co-teaching.swf>

### **Conversations With Practitioners: Supporting State-Level Collaboration Among General and Special Educators**

[www.centeroninstruction.org/conversations-with-practitioners-supporting-state-level-collaboration-among-general-and-special-educators](http://www.centeroninstruction.org/conversations-with-practitioners-supporting-state-level-collaboration-among-general-and-special-educators)



## Highlights

The website of the Building Capacity for Response to Intervention project, <http://buildingrti.org>, surpassed 1 million hits for the 2011–2012 project year alone.

The Building Capacity for Response to Intervention project webcast “Connecting Elementary and Secondary Campuses With Online Resources to Support Implementation of Response to Intervention” included 299 participants. The day of the webcast, the project website had more than 12,000 hits. In the days leading up to the webcast, website hits topped 15,000. The week following the webcast, website hits surpassed 20,000.

Desirée Pallais of the Building Capacity for Response to Intervention project presented at the 11th Latin American Congress of Reading and Writing and 2nd National Congress in Managua, Nicaragua. Of the 11 works in the conference archive, two are Pallais’ presentations and five are model lessons she created for the conference. Due to her successful participation in the conference, Pallais has been asked to be a regular contributor to a new Spanish-language educational publication.

Greg Roberts and Meghan Coleman, both with the Center on Instruction – Special Education Strand, presented at the PLC-RTI: Making the Connection Conference in Richland, Washington. Their presentation, “The Promise of RTI for Secondary Schools,” addressed building conceptual understanding and providing strategies for response to intervention implementation at the secondary level.

Institute Director Dr. Pamela Bell delivered a presentation titled “Implementing Response to Intervention: Challenges for Secondary Campuses” at the College and Career Readiness Initiative seminar Preparing Teachers for 21st Century Teaching. MCPER, one of four university partners in the initiative, is responsible for disseminating the latest information and resources relevant to the English/Language Arts portion of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards.

Dedicated to applying research-validated instructional practices in the field, conducting external program evaluations, providing technical assistance, and creating and delivering professional development to teachers nationwide



**Institute Director  
Ellie Hanlon, Ph.D.**

Dr. Hanlon's research focuses on self-regulated learning, language and literacy development in adults learning a foreign language, and the impact of professional development on the self-efficacy of teachers. She has experience evaluating programs for educational initiatives, providing data analysis for secondary schools, and creating professional development materials for teachers.



**Institute Director  
Sarojani S. Mohammed, Ph.D.**

Dr. Mohammed is an expert in large-scale technical assistance, dissemination, and external evaluation. Also the assistant director of MCPER and VGC, she manages data and co-leads centerwide and project-specific data management, analysis, and measurement teams.



**Institute Director  
Greg Roberts, Ph.D.**

Dr. Roberts is the associate director of MCPER, director of program evaluation, and director of VGC.





## New Projects



### **Advancing Learning Outcomes in a Community of Excellence (ALICE)**

MCPER assists the six elementary schools of Alice Independent School District in South Texas by building capacity among district and campus personnel to implement evidence-based and sustainable literacy practices. The goal is to provide a targeted, prescriptive approach to reading instruction that ensures that students leave elementary school reading at commended levels.

### **Building the Evidence Base for Physically Active Academic Games**

Funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, MCPER provides data analysis for this multiyear investigation of Texas I-CAN!—an intervention that combines physical activity with academic material in mathematics and language arts. This project extends preliminary studies that found that Texas I-CAN increased physical activity, time focused on academic tasks, and academic performance. In addition, the study addresses whether academic outcomes result from physical activity alone or from teaching the academic content through physical activity.

### **External Evaluation of ACE: A Community for Education**

This project evaluates the implementation of the ACE: A Community of Education 2011–2012 bilingual reading intervention program in Austin Independent School District. ACE, housed within the Charles A. Dana Center at UT Austin, works to ensure that all children develop a strong foundation in early literacy skills during their first years in school.

### **External Evaluation of the Research–Validated Approach to Instruction for Secondary Excellence in Texas (RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas)**

This project documents the extent to which implementation of the Strategic Instruction Model and Content Literacy Continuum in eight Central Texas schools in six school districts improves literacy outcomes. RAISE<sup>up</sup> Texas is a collaborative effort of the schools to implement the instruction as a schoolwide model.

### **STAAR Professional Development for English I, II, and III**

This project creates professional development experiences for teachers of English I, II, and III to promote student success on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Topics include reading and writing across the genres, using rubrics, editing, and revising. Participants attend face-to-face workshops and enroll in online courses to receive follow-up support as they implement the workshop activities in the classroom.

## Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies

This project creates professional development materials that prepare middle school teachers to design appropriate instruction for all students, including those who struggle with reading due to limited English proficiency, learning disabilities, dyslexia, or other risk factors for reading difficulties. The professional development consists of three separate academies: the English Language Arts Academy (for English language arts and reading teachers), the Content Area Academy (for mathematics, science, and social studies teachers), and the Professional Development to Support Academic Writing Academy (also for English language arts and reading teachers).

## New Partners



### ACE: A Community for Education

ACE, housed within the Charles A. Dana Center at UT Austin, works to ensure that all children develop a strong foundation in early literacy skills during their first years in school. Dana Center Director Dr. Philip Uri Treisman founded ACE in 1994. Dr. Mary Ellen Issacs is the director.

### Kinesiology and Health Education Department, UT Austin

This department provides students seeking careers in sports, fitness, and wellness education with diverse experiences and training in physiology, health education, sports management, teacher preparation, and the psychological and historical aspects of sports and exercise. In addition, the department houses and/or administers various programs promoting fitness, sports, physical culture, and physical activity.



**“I’ve thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I wasn’t always comfortable, but neither were the students. Reality checks are always good things in my world. I think that in itself will help me to reshape my expectations.”**

**— Participant in STAAR Professional Development for English I, II, and III**











# EVENTS

2010–2011

September	October	November	December
	<b>20</b> Beverly Weiser, MCPER <b>26</b> Brandy Maynard, MCPER <b>27</b> Greg Allen, UT Austin		<b>1</b> Pamela Bell, MCPER <b>8–10</b> Tasha Beretvas, MCPER
January	February	March	April
<b>27</b> Jim Ysseldyke, University of Minnesota		<b>1</b> Jack Fletcher, University of Houston; Sharon Vaughn, Daniel Robinson, and S. Natasha Beretvas, MCPER; Lynn Fuchs, Vanderbilt; Gregg Schraw, University of Nevada-Las Vegas; Gene Glass, University of Colorado; Larry Hedges, Northwestern; Joel Levin, University of Arizona; Erika Patall, UT Austin; Russell Whitehurst, Brookings Institution  <b>1</b> Russell Whitehurst, Brookings Institution <b>2</b> Gregg Schraw, University of Nevada-Las Vegas <b>9</b> William C. Streusand, Texas Child Study Center, Dell Children's Medical Center <b>24</b> Elfrieda Hiebert, University of California, Berkley <b>29</b> Deborah Speece, University of Maryland	<b>28</b> David Richman, Texas Tech University
May	June	July	August
<b>25</b> Meghan Coleman and Audrey Leroux, MCPER	<b>15</b> Sarojani Mohammed and Myriam Lopez, MCPER	<b>13</b> Sarojani Mohammed, MCPER <b>20</b> Liz Aebersold, UT Austin <b>27</b> Georgia Harper, UT Austin	<b>3</b> Ryan Baldwin, UT Austin <b>10</b> Theresa Clarke, MCPER <b>17</b> Dropout Prevention staff, MCPER



## KEY

	Brown Bag Luncheon		Distinguished Lecture Series		Mollie Villeret Davis Lecture
	Workshop		Symposium		Summer Technology Series

## 2011–2012

September	October	November	December
<b>23</b> Martin Lubetsky, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh	<b>18</b> David Cordray, Vanderbilt; David Houchins, Georgia State	<b>4</b> Michael Mott, University of Mississippi	<b>2</b> Gary Hornby, University of Canterbury (New Zealand)
	<b>20</b> Akiko Kaizu, National Institute for Special Needs Education (Japan)		<b>6</b> S. Natasha Beretvas, MCPER
	<b>21</b> Mike Wehmeyer, University of Kansas		<b>6</b> Brandy Maynard and Daniel Robinson, MCPER
			<b>7</b> Bill Tunmer, Massey (New Zealand)
			<b>20</b> Gareth Morgan, MCPER
January	February	March	April
<b>17</b> Eric Oslund, MCPER	<b>15</b> Steve Yussen, Institute of Child Development		<b>11</b> Elliot M. Tucker-Drob, UT Austin
	<b>23</b> Art C. Graesser, University of Memphis		<b>25</b> Larry Price, Texas State
			<b>26</b> Charles Mace, Nova Southeastern
May	June	July	August
<b>2</b> Mijke Rhemtulla, University of Kansas		<b>17</b> Sarojani Mohammed, MCPER	<b>7</b> Cesar Navarette and Michelle Read, UT Austin; Robert Scordino, MCPER
		<b>24</b> Sharon Jackson, MCPER	<b>14</b> Pamela Bell, MCPER
		<b>31</b> Robert Scordino, MCPER	<b>21</b> Hans Rhodes and Stephen Tidmore, MCPER



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Personnel photos by Spencer Selvidge, [www.spencerselvidge.com](http://www.spencerselvidge.com)

# The Meadows Center

FOR PREVENTING EDUCATIONAL RISK

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