



The Meadows Center
FOR PREVENTING EDUCATIONAL RISK



IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR ALL LEARNERS



helping **educators, researchers, and families**
enact **evidence-based practices** that lead to **student success**

OVERVIEW

Established in 2008, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER) is the largest organized research unit within the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. We are a collaboration of researchers from multiple disciplines and sites and have a large portfolio of research, technical assistance, and evaluation work in special and general education. MCPER also has a well-established dissemination network for sharing the latest research findings and information on proven practices.

Mission Statement

MCPER is dedicated to conducting research and disseminating information on educational practices with the strongest evidence of impact. We do this work to improve the academic, behavioral, and social outcomes of all students.

Leadership and Staff

MCPER is led by Dr. Sharon Vaughn, who serves as executive director. Dr. Vaughn is also a professor in the College of Education's Department of Special Education and the Manual J. Justiz Endowed Chair in Education. The MCPER Leadership Team also includes Dr. Greg Roberts, senior associate director; Dr. Sarah Powell, associate director; Dr. Jennifer Schnakenberg, chief operating officer; and Christy Murray, communications director.

In addition, MCPER comprises the following:

- A 21-member Board of Directors
- More than 100 research staff
- An Evaluation Team
- A Productions Services Team
- An Administrative Support Team

RESEARCH

MCPER is a leader in identifying innovative school-related practices and managing active programs of research to validate promising practices. We possess expertise in various research designs, including experimental, quasi-experimental, and single-case designs. Our studies typically meet Institute of Education Sciences What Works Clearinghouse standards. Research is currently conducted in the following areas:

- Autism
- Deaf individuals
- English language learners/emergent bilingual students
- Multitiered systems of support/response to intervention
- Reading and dyslexia
- Mathematics
- Science

Since its inception in 2008, MCPER has received more than \$285 million in funding. In 2025 alone, MCPER implemented 57 research studies with funding of approximately \$21 million from sources such as the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, and National Science Foundation. See <https://meadows-center.org/projects> for a full, sortable list of ongoing and past studies.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MCPER delivers high-quality professional development and technical assistance across the country each year. MCPER is an authorized provider of the Texas Reading Academies and LIFT/Strong Foundations projects, providing research-based support to more than 40 districts across Texas. MCPER also hosts the Tiered Interventions Using Evidence-Based Research (TIER) program, funded by Texas Education Agency, which develops and disseminates information about best practices with multitiered systems of support (MTSS). This project includes the Intervention Academies for both Reading and Mathematics that will be rolled out statewide per House Bill 2. In addition, the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes is housed within MCPER and shares information, networks, and strategies to improve continuing education and training for deaf people.

EVALUATION

EdEval, a division of MCPER, provides technical knowledge and expertise to support education-focused organizations and projects seeking research and program evaluation services. Led by Dr. Greg Roberts and staffed by experienced evaluators, EdEval provides both formative and summative qualitative and quantitative program evaluation services to educational systems in support of continuous improvement and improved outcomes. Services include ongoing consultations and support across all phases of an evaluation initiative, including design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The team brings more than 20 years of experience with clients in public and private settings and has conducted more than 50 school and state education agency evaluations.

DISSEMINATION

Dissemination is led by Christy Murray, communications director, and Matthew Slater, Productions Services Team manager. The Productions Services Team provides professional writing, editing, and graphic design to MCPER projects, resulting in high-quality products and publications designed to bridge the research-to-practice gap. The team also maintains the MCPER website and builds customized, project-specific websites as needed. In addition, the team develops targeted social media posts, ad campaigns, recruiting plans, and email blasts and maintains partnerships with other media outlets and community groups.

Types of Publications

- Videos
- Teacher guides and lesson plans
- Practice briefs
- Research summaries
- Journal articles
- Conference presentations

2025 Website Analytics

- More than 235,000 page views
- More than 50,000 downloads
- More than 200 free resources currently available online

2025 Social Media Analytics

- More than 33,000 followers across all social media accounts
- More than 500,000 social media 5-year reach
- More than 13,000 email listserv subscribers

FACILITIES

MCPER is in the College of Education's George I. Sánchez Building on The University of Texas at Austin campus. Recently renovated, the college includes departmental office suites, state-of-the-art classrooms equipped with the latest technology, multiple meeting spaces, and the Cissy Parker McDaniel Conference Room. The fifth floor serves as a hub for MCPER with professional office suites, huddle rooms, secure storage areas, and a work room with industrial copy machines and other supplies. The Sánchez Building also houses the Information Technology Office, which provides technology consultations, equipment maintenance, and information security services to all MCPER staff. Conveniently, the AT&T Hotel and Conference Center is one block from the Sánchez Building and includes two restaurants, hotel rooms, a ballroom, and breakout conference rooms, which allows MCPER to easily host world-class events.

College of Education's George I. Sánchez Building



MCPER's Fifth-Floor Hub



CONTACT

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