

**NATIONAL BOARD FOR EDUCATION SCIENCES (NBES)  
BRIEFING MATERIAL FOR BOARD MEMBERS**

June 2012

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## **The Institute of Education Sciences (IES)**

### ***Mission***

IES is the primary research and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education. Authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA), the Institute’s mission is to expand fundamental knowledge and understanding of education and to provide education leaders and practitioners, parents and students, researchers, and the general public with unbiased, reliable, and useful information about the condition and progress of education in the United States; about education policies, programs, and practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to educational opportunities for all students; and about the effectiveness of federal and other education programs.

IES’s website states, “Our mission is to provide rigorous and relevant evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and share this information broadly. By identifying what works, what doesn’t, and why, we aim to improve educational outcomes for all students, particularly those at risk of failure. We are the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, and by law our activities must be free of partisan political influence.”<sup>1</sup>

### ***IES’s Research Priorities***

ESRA required the initial IES Director to propose research priorities for the Institute for the Board’s approval. In practice, the Director has been proposing updated research priorities every 6 years for the Board’s approval.

The current IES research priorities, approved in 2010 are:

#### ***IES Research Priorities***

*The overall mission of the Institute is to expand fundamental knowledge and understanding of education and to provide education leaders and practitioners, parents and students, researchers, and the general public with unbiased, reliable, and useful information about the condition and progress of education in the United States; about education policies, programs, and practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to educational opportunities for all students; and about the effectiveness of Federal and other education programs. The Institute seeks to understand causal linkages to the greatest extent possible by conducting or sponsoring rigorous studies that support such inferences.*

*The work of the Institute is also grounded in the principle that effective education research must address the interests and needs of education practitioners and policymakers, as well as students, parents and community members. To this end, the Institute will encourage researchers to develop partnerships with stakeholder groups to advance the relevance of the Institute’s work, the accessibility of its reports, and the usability of its findings for the day-to-day work of education practitioners and policymakers. Further, the Institute will seek to increase the capacity of education policymakers and practitioners to use the*

<sup>1</sup> <http://ies.ed.gov/aboutus/> Accessed on 6/11/12.

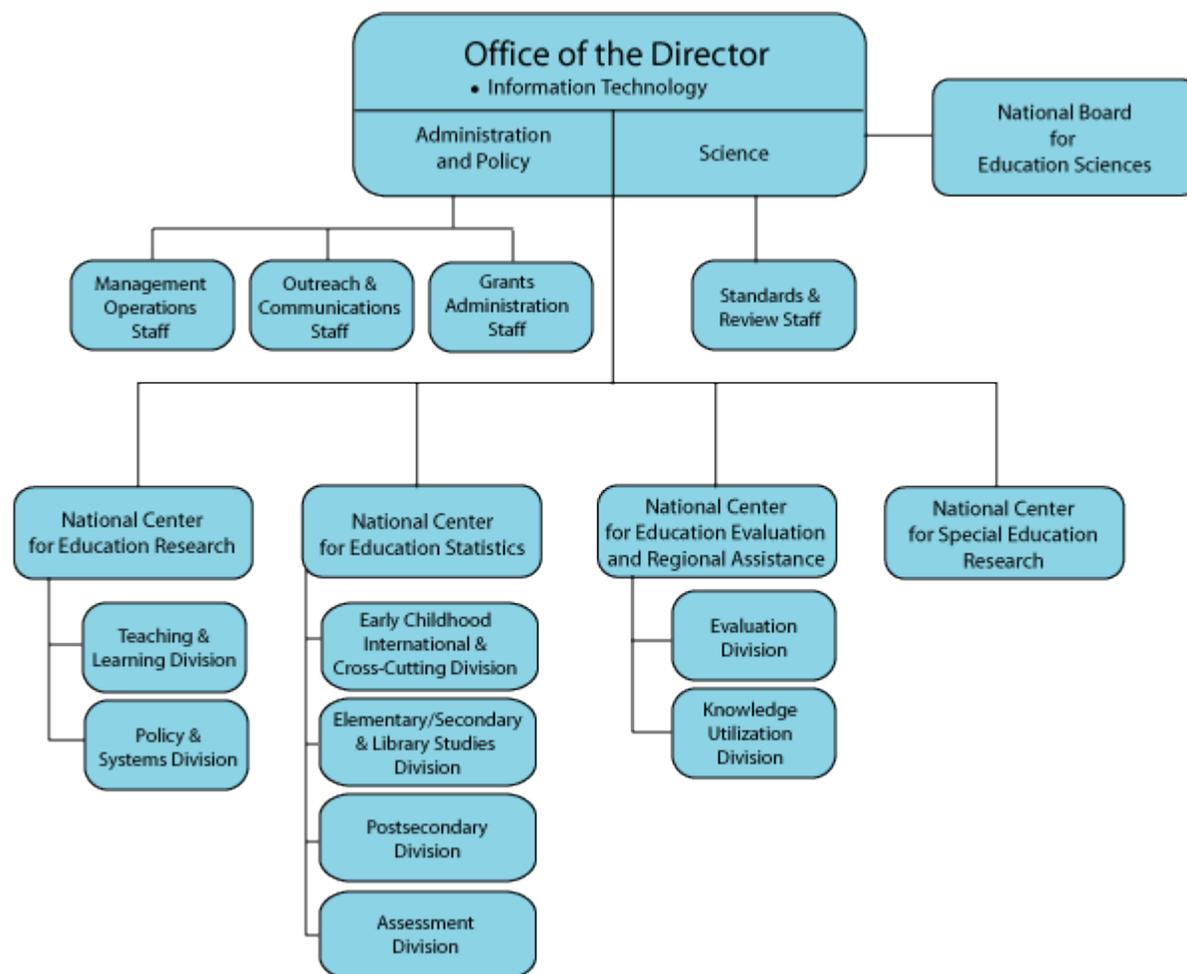
*knowledge generated from high quality data analysis, research, and evaluation through a wide variety of communication and outreach strategies.*

*The Institute's priorities address a broad range of education-related outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities. These outcomes include: developmental outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities; school readiness; learning, achievement and higher order thinking in reading and writing, mathematics, and the sciences from preschool through postsecondary schooling; behaviors, skills, and dispositions that support learning in school and later success in the workforce; and educational attainment in postsecondary, vocational, and adult education.*

*Within these areas, the work of the Institute is to compile statistics, support research, conduct evaluations, and promote and facilitate the use of scientific evidence. The Institute will sponsor work to: examine the state of education in the United States; develop and evaluate innovative approaches to improving education outcomes; understand the characteristics of high-quality teaching and how better to train current and prospective teachers and to recruit, support, and retain effective teachers; understand the processes of schooling through which education policies, programs, and practices affect student outcomes; and understand classroom, school, and other social contextual factors that moderate the effects of education practices and contribute to their successful implementation and sustainability. In doing so, the Institute will seek to identify education policies, programs, and practices that improve education outcomes, and to determine how, why, for whom, and under what conditions they are effective. The Institute will promote research to improve education outcomes for all students, and particularly for those students whose prospects have historically been hindered because of their socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, limited English proficiency, and/or residential or school mobility. Such research will generate knowledge to assist educators and policymakers in assessing and improving the equity of the education system. In addition to supporting new research, the Institute will promote the synthesis and dissemination of existing and ongoing research to construct coherent bodies of scientific knowledge about education.*

*The Institute will maintain rigorous scientific standards for the technical quality of its statistics, research, and evaluation activities, ensuring that the methods applied are appropriate to the questions asked and the results are valid and reliable. The work of the Institute will include a variety of research and statistical methods. The Institute will support the development and use of improved research methods to address a wide range of questions relevant to education; improved measures of a broad range of education processes, systems, and outcomes; and improved analytical approaches for designing and conducting education research particularly regarding classroom processes, and the enactment and implementation of programs. Where needed, the Institute will develop and publish rigorous technical standards for these methods. The Institute will ensure the quality and objectivity of its work by submitting all Institute products to rigorous scientific review. The Institute will build the capacity of the education research community by supporting post-doctoral and interdisciplinary doctoral training in the education sciences, providing training to equip education researchers with the skills to conduct rigorous research and effectively engage stakeholders in that research, and conducting training in research design and methods and in the use of longitudinal data.*

## Organizational Chart



## Major Funding Programs

The Institute of Education Sciences accepts applications twice each year for its research and research training grant programs — generally, the third Thursday in June and the third Thursday in September.

### Research Programs

- [Education Research Programs](#) (84.305A)
- [Special Education Research Programs](#) (84.324A)
- [Statistical and Research Methodology in Education](#) (84.305D)
- Special Education Initiative: [Accelerating the Academic Achievement of Students with Learning Disabilities Research Initiative](#) (84.324D)
- [Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies](#) (84.305E)

- [Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships in Education Research](#) (84.305H)

**Research Training Programs**

- Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (84.305B)
  - [Postdoctoral Research Training Program in the Education Sciences](#)
  - [Researcher and Policymaker Training Program in the Education Sciences](#)
- Research Training Program in Special Education (84.324B)
  - [Early Career Development and Mentoring Program](#)

**Other IES Funding Opportunities**

- [Grants for Statewide, Longitudinal Data Systems](#)
- [Unsolicited Grant Opportunities](#)

**Current, Past, and Proposed Budget**

<b>IES Budget in \$ (millions)</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013 Request</b>
Research, development and dissemination	\$199.8	\$189.8	\$202.3
Statistics	\$108.3	\$108.7	\$114.7
Regional Education Labs	\$57.5	\$57.4	\$57.4
Assessment (includes NAGB)	\$138.6	\$138.3	\$132.3
Research in special education	\$51.0	\$49.9	\$49.9
Statewide data systems	\$42.2	\$38.1	\$53.1
Special education studies and evaluations	\$11.4	\$11.4	\$11.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$608.8</b>	<b>\$593.6</b>	<b>\$621.1</b>

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)**

NCES is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. NCES’s existence predates IES. ESRA made NCES part of IES in 2002.

NCES fulfills a Congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report complete statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally.

**NCES Commissioner**

The NCES Commissioner is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a 6-year term. The current Commissioner, Dr. Jack Buckley, was confirmed on December 22, 2010 and his term runs through June 21, 2015.

## **Jack Buckley, Ph.D.**

### **Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics**

Sean P. "Jack" Buckley is Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics. He is currently on leave from New York University, where he is associate professor of applied statistics. He also served previously as Deputy Commissioner of NCEES from 2006 to 2008. Buckley is known for his research on school choice, particularly charter schools, and on statistical methods for public policy. He has taught statistics and education policy at Georgetown University, Boston College, and the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Buckley also spent five years in the U.S. Navy as a surface warfare officer and nuclear reactor engineer, and he also worked in the intelligence community as an analytic methodologist. He holds an A.B. in Government from Harvard and an M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from SUNY Stony Brook.

## ***NCEES Activities and Products***

### **National Assessment**

- **The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and the arts. NAEP has its own governing board -- the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) – whose members are appointed by the Secretary of Education.

### **International Assessments**

- The International Activities Program – NCEES coordinates the participation of U.S. adults, students, teachers, and schools in various international assessments and surveys, including, currently, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), both conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), both conducted by the OECD. TIMSS provides data on the mathematics and science achievement of U.S. 4th- and 8th-grade students compared to that of students in other countries. PIRLS studies the reading literacy of young students by measuring the reading achievement and reading behaviors and attitudes of fourth-grade students. PISA emphasizes functional skills that students have acquired as they near the end of compulsory schooling by measuring of 15-year-olds' capabilities in reading literacy, mathematics literacy, science literacy, and general or cross-curricular competencies such as problem solving. PIAAC measures relationships between individuals' educational background, workplace experiences and skills, occupational attainment, use of information and communications technology, and cognitive skills in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and problem solving. Through the International Activities Program, NCEES supports a variety of activities to provide

statistical data for cross-national comparisons of education. On behalf of the United States, NCES participates in the International Indicators of Education Systems (INES), a program of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an intergovernmental organization of 31 member countries.

## **Early Childhood Surveys**

- **Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS)** – The Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies program is sponsored primarily by NCES in collaboration with other federal agencies and organizations. The program consists of three longitudinal studies: the Birth Cohort of 2001 (ECLS-B), the Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K:1999), and the Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011). Combined, these studies provide detailed information on examine child health and development, early care, school readiness, and early school experiences. ECLS-B focuses on a representative cohort of children born in the U.S. in 2001 as they progressed from infancy through kindergarten entry. Direct assessments of children’s academic skills are included in ECLS-B starting with relatively general skills assessments at younger ages and progressing to early math and reading assessments in later assessments. ECLS-K:1999 started with approximately 20,000 kindergartners in the fall of 1998 and followed their development through the end of 8th grade. ECLS-K:2011 started with a similar sample of kindergartners in the fall of 2010 and will follow their development through the end of 5th grade. Both of the kindergarten studies have included direct measures of children’s math, reading, and science skills along with measures of physical and socioemotional development. All of the ECLS studies have collected data directly from the sampled children, their parents, teachers, and school administrators. Nonparental early education and care providers were also surveyed for the ECLS-B children prior to their kindergarten entry and for ECLS-K:2011 children for information about out-of-school educational opportunities.

## **Elementary and Secondary Surveys**

- **The Common Core of Data (CCD)** – CCD is the Department of Education's source for official statistics on fiscal and nonfiscal aspects of public elementary and secondary education in the United States. CCD is a comprehensive, annual, national statistical database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts, which contains data that are designed to be comparable across all states. CCD contains three categories of information: general descriptive information on schools and school districts, data on students and staff, and fiscal data. CCD is based on statistical information that is collected annually from approximately 100,000 public elementary and secondary schools and approximately 18,000 public school districts (including supervisory unions and regional education service agencies) in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Schools, and the outlying areas.
- **Private School Survey (PSS)** – PSS is a short survey that is completed by administrative personnel in private schools. Information collected includes: religious orientation; level of school; size of school; length of school year, length of school day; total enrollment (K-12); number of high school graduates, whether a school is single-sexed or coeducational

and enrollment by sex; number of teachers employed; program emphasis; existence and type of kindergarten program.

- **The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)** – SASS collects data on teacher demand and shortage, teacher and administrator characteristics, teacher compensation, district hiring practices, principals' and teachers' perceptions of school climate and problems in their schools, school programs, general conditions in schools and basic characteristics of the student population. SASS has four core components: the School Questionnaire, the Teacher Questionnaire, the Principal Questionnaire, and the School District Questionnaire, (renamed from the Teacher Demand and Shortage Questionnaire). The related Teacher Follow-up Study (TFS) is used to determine how many teachers remained at the same school, moved to another school, or left the profession in the year following the SASS administration. Similarly, the Principal Follow-up Study (PFS) provides attrition rates in the year following SASS for principals in K-12 schools and measures the percentage who retired or sought work in another occupational field among those who left the principalship.
- **High School Longitudinal Studies** – Once a decade since the 1970's NCES has conducted a longitudinal study of students in America's high schools. The current study is the High School Longitudinal Study (HSLs); earlier studies include the Education Longitudinal Study (ELS), the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), the High School and Beyond Study (HS&B), and the National Longitudinal Study (NLS). While the starting grade and emphasis has changed over time, these studies are designed to monitor the transition of a national sample of young people as they progressed through high school and on to postsecondary education and/or the world of work. These studies include surveys of students, their parents, math and science teachers, school administrators. Data are also collected from the high school transcripts of the sampled students. By surveying the same young people over time, it is possible to record the changes taking place in their lives and help to understand the associations between earlier achievements, aspirations, experiences, and these changes.
- **Fast Response Survey System (FRSS)** – FRSS collects issue-oriented data quickly with minimum response burden. The FRSS, whose surveys collect and report nationally representative data on key education issues at the elementary and secondary levels, was designed to meet the data needs of Department of Education analysts, policy planners, and decision makers when information could not be collected quickly through NCES's large recurring surveys. Findings from FRSS surveys have been included in congressional reports, testimony to congressional subcommittees, reports for other agencies, NCES reports, and other Department of Education reports. The findings are also often used by state and local education officials.
- **National Household Education Survey** – NHES provides descriptive data on the educational activities of the U.S. population and offers researchers, educators, and policymakers a variety of statistics on the condition of education in the United States. The NHES surveys have covered learning at all ages, early childhood to school age through adulthood. NHES was redesigned beginning in 2008 to address potential issues with data quality. With the NHES redesign, the study was shifted from one using primarily telephone interviews to one based primarily on self-administered mailed forms.

The 2007 and 2012 data collections both consist of two surveys: Parent and Family Involvement in Education (PFI) of children in kindergarten through grade 12 and School Readiness (SR) of children from birth through age 6 and not yet in kindergarten. Prior to 2007, NHES had several other modules that would rotate into the collection every few years including adult education and before-and-after school programs for students in grades K-8. The NHES includes surveys on adult education, parent and family involvement in education, before- and after-school programs and activities, civic involvement, early childhood program participation, household library use, school readiness, and school safety and discipline.

- **School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey** – SCS is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) that collects information from students ages 12 through 18 about victimization, crime, and safety at school. SCS asks about school-related topics such as alcohol and drug availability; fighting, bullying, and hate-related behaviors; fear and avoidance behaviors; gun and weapon carrying; and gangs at school.
- **Current Population Survey (CPS) October Supplement** – CPS is a monthly household survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics to provide information about employment, unemployment, and other characteristics of the civilian non-institutionalized population. The October Supplement routinely gathers data on school enrollment and educational attainment for elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. Related data are also collected about preschooling and the general adult population. In addition, NCES funds additional items on education-related topics such as language proficiency, disabilities, computer use and access, student mobility, and private school tuition. NCES has funded a supplement for the Current Population Survey since the late 1960s.

## **Postsecondary Surveys and Programs**

- **Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)** – As the core postsecondary education data collection program for NCES, IPEDS is a system of surveys designed to collect data from all primary providers of postsecondary education. IPEDS is a single, comprehensive system designed to encompass all institutions and educational organizations whose primary purpose is to provide postsecondary education. The IPEDS system is built around a series of interrelated surveys to collect institution-level data in such areas as enrollments, program completions, faculty, staff, finances, and academic libraries. As a result of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, IPEDS collects data to calculate the average net price at each institution for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who receive grant and scholarship aid; and for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who receive Title IV federal student aid. IPEDS Graduation rate data provide information on institutional productivity and help institutions comply with reporting requirements of the Student Right-to-Know Act. In addition, data collected on the race/ethnicity and gender of enrolled students, completers, and fall staff helps institutions comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- **National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)** – NPSAS provides student-level demographic and enrollment data, and data on financial aid provided to students by the federal government, the states, postsecondary institutions, employers, and private agencies. Data about family circumstances, demographics, education and work experiences, and student expectations are collected from students through a web-based multi-mode interview (self-administered and computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI)). Detailed data on participation in student financial aid programs are extracted from Department of Education databases and institutional records. NPSAS provides important contextual information for projects targeted at increasing postsecondary success. NPSAS is also an important source of information on the education of America's veteran population.
- **Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS)** – NPSAS data provide the base-year sample for the BPS Longitudinal Study. The BPS longitudinal cohort consists of students beginning their postsecondary education for the first time during the NPSAS year; BPS surveys follow these students over time to examine such issues as persistence and the effects of financial aid on subsequent enrollment. The study collects data on student persistence in, and completion of, postsecondary education programs. Questions about transitions to employment and changes in student goals, marital status, income, and debt are included in the surveys, along with questions about basic background and demographic characteristics. BPS tracks students' paths through postsecondary education and helps answer questions of policy interest, such as why students leave school, how financial aid influences persistence and completion, and what percentages of students complete various degree programs.
- **Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B)** – NPSAS also provides the base-year sample of students for the longitudinal study Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B). Students obtaining a baccalaureate degree during a NPSAS collection year are eligible for inclusion. The B&B surveys follow these students over time to examine issues such as the transition from college to work and access to graduate school. B&B examines students' education and work experiences after they complete a bachelor's degree, with a special emphasis on the experiences of new elementary and secondary teachers. Following several cohorts of students over time, B&B also looks at bachelor's degree recipients' income and debt repayment, and entry into and persistence through graduate school programs, among other indicators. It addresses several issues specifically related to teaching, including teacher preparation, entry into and persistence in the profession, and teacher career paths. B&B also gathers extensive information on bachelor's degree recipients' undergraduate experience, demographic backgrounds, and their expectations regarding graduate study and work.
- **Postsecondary Education Transcript Studies (PETS)** – PETS data provide researchers with an important analytic resource, creating opportunities to study course-taking patterns, credit transfer, student momentum and attrition, and the connection among course and major choices, occupations, and wages. Six NCES longitudinal studies have collected postsecondary transcripts, beginning with the high school National Longitudinal Study of 1972. The BPS:04/09 and the B&B:08 both include transcript studies. NCES anticipates that three additional longitudinal studies now underway, or planned, will also

collect and code transcript data. Other existing NCES studies with PETS data include NLS:72, HS&B:80, B&B:93/03, NELS:88, In addition, NCES expects to add postsecondary transcripts to ELS:2002, HSLs:09, and BPS:12/17.

- **Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS)** – NCES established PEQIS to collect timely data on focused issues needed for program planning and policy development with a minimum burden on respondents. In addition to obtaining information on emerging issues quickly, PEQIS surveys are also used to assess the feasibility of developing large-scale data collection efforts on a given topic or to supplement other NCES postsecondary surveys. PEQIS employs a standing sample (panel) of approximately 1,600 postsecondary education institutions at the 2-year and 4-year level. The nationally representative panel includes public and private colleges and universities that award associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. PEQIS can also conduct surveys of state higher education agencies.
- **Adult and Career Education (ACE)** – The ACE staff is responsible for leveraging existing data sources and for identifying potential new data collection opportunities to increase the nation's understanding of the role of occupational education and training in the preparation of an internationally competitive workforce. The ACE staff draws on data in existing NCES surveys, while coordinating interagency efforts to develop new measures of education, training, and credential attainment for out-of-school youth and adults. The ACE staff uses data from NCES high school transcript studies to provide information on occupationally-specific courses taken during the high school years and data from NCES' longitudinal studies of secondary and postsecondary students to track students through high school and into postsecondary education and the labor market. Work is underway to improve the collection of data on credential attainment and enrollment, participation and enrollment in traditional formal education and in other types of “non-regular” education, and adult education including adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English as a second language.

## **Data Systems and Data Use**

- **Common Education Data Standards (CEDs)** – The Common Education Data Standards (CEDs) are a national, collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common education data standards for a key subset of K-12 (e.g., demographics, program participation, course information) and K12-to-postsecondary education transition variables. Participants in the Initiative include representatives from states, districts, higher education organizations, and key non-profit organizations. The CEDs Initiative's goal is to identify a list of key K-12 and K12-to-postsecondary transition variables (expansion into PreK and the workforce will be considered in the future) and agree upon standard definitions, code sets, business rules, and technical specifications for those variables. This will increase data interoperability, portability, and comparability across states, districts, and higher education organizations.
- **Effective Practices Conferences** – The Effective Practices Conferences, including the Management Information Systems (MIS) Conferences, the STATS-DC Conferences, and the SLDS P-20 Best Practices Conferences, provide venues for state and district staff to share effective practices and lessons learned, and to engage with colleagues from across

state lines as well as representatives from the federal government and national non-profit organizations. These events play a key role in helping staff build relationships and cultivate a community around P-20 education data system design, development, implementation, and use.

- **National Forum on Education Statistics** – NCES has established the National Forum on Education Statistics to improve the collection, reporting, and use of elementary and secondary education statistics. The Forum deals with issues in education data policy; sponsors innovations in data collection and reporting; and provides technical assistance to improve state and local data systems.
- **Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grant Program** – IES awarded grants to 41 states and the District of Columbia to aid them in the design and implementation of statewide longitudinal data systems. These systems are intended to enhance the ability of states to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The data systems developed with funds from these grants should help states, districts, schools, and teachers make data-driven decisions to improve student learning, as well as facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps.

## **National Center for Education Research (NCER)**

NCER supports rigorous research that contributes to the solution of significant education problems in our country. Through its research programs and the national research and development centers, NCER 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. NCER also funds predoctoral and postdoctoral research training programs to invest in the training and development of the next generation of education researchers.

NCER research programs are designed to produce research that is scientifically rigorous and relevant to the needs of education practitioners and decisionmakers. NCER research programs address education programs, practices, and policies in reading and writing, mathematics and science education, teacher quality, education leadership, education policy and finance, cognition and student learning, high school reform, and postsecondary education. Within these programs of research, investigators are identifying existing education programs, practices, and policies that may impact student outcomes; developing new education interventions (e.g., curricula, teacher professional development programs); evaluating the efficacy of fully developed programs or practices; evaluating the effectiveness of specific interventions taken to scale; and developing and validating assessments. Through these activities, NCER is advancing understanding of teaching, learning, and education systems in order to improve the quality of education for all students.

## **NCER Commissioner**

The NCER Commissioner is appointed by the IES Director. Currently Dr. Elizabeth Albro is the Acting NCER Commissioner while the search for a permanent Commissioner is underway.

### **Dr. Elizabeth Albro**

#### **Acting NCER Commissioner**

Albro joined the U.S. Department of Education in 2002 as a Society for Research in Child Development/American Association for the Advancement of Science Policy Fellow at the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. She subsequently served as an education research analyst at the Institute of Education Sciences. In that role, she served as the program officer for multiple research grant topics, including Cognition and Student Learning, Reading and Writing Education, and Interventions for Struggling Adolescent and Adult Readers and Writers. In 2007, she was named Associate Commissioner for the Teaching and Learning Division of the National Center for Education Research. Prior to joining the Department, Albro served on the Psychology faculty at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. She has also served on the Child Development and Education faculty at Whittier College, and as lead preschool teacher at the Cochabamba Cooperative School in Bolivia. Albro served on review panels for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and reviewed for journals such as *Social Development*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, and *Narrative Inquiry*. Albro's research has focused on the development of young children's narrative understanding, a foundation of early reading comprehension. In addition, she has explored the ways in which preschool children's memory for interpersonal experiences contributes to their socio-emotional well-being. She has authored journal articles and chapters on both of these topics. Albro received her B.A. in behavioral sciences, her M.A. in the social sciences, and her Ph.D. in psychology with a focus on cognition and communication from the University of Chicago.

## **NCER Activities and Investments**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Awards, 2002-11</b>	<b>Investment (in millions) 2002-11</b>
Education Research	488	\$803.9
Reading for Understanding	6	\$113.4
Research & Development Centers	18	\$184.7
Evaluation of State & Local Programs and Policies	10	\$45.3
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)	51	\$50.2
Statistical and Research Methodology in Education	29	\$21.6
Predocctoral Research Training	26	\$121.8
Postdoctoral Research Training	32	\$20.0
Preschool Curriculum Evaluation Research	12	\$20.2
Social and Character Development Research	7	\$13.6
Unsolicited	7	\$44.9

## NCER Projects

Within the programs listed above, NCER supports a wide range of topic areas. Over the past decade, the titles of the topic areas have changed. In the list below, the 10 numbered topics are the current titles. Underneath the topic area titles are the previous titles that are encompassed in the current RFA.

### Research Programs

- Education Research
  1. Cognition and Student Learning (FY 2002)
  2. Early Learning Programs and Policies (FY 2008)
  3. Education Technology (FY 2008)
  4. Effective Teachers and Effective Teaching (FY 2012)
    - Teacher Quality: Mathematics and Science Education (FY 2003 to FY 2011)
    - Teacher Quality: Reading and Writing (FY 2003 to FY 2011)
  5. English Learners (FY 2010)
  6. Improving Education Systems: Policies, Organization, Management, and Leadership (FY 2011)
    - Education Leadership (FY 2004 to FY 2010)
    - Education, Policy, Finance, and Systems (FY 2004 to FY 2010)
    - Middle and High School Reform (FY 2006 to FY 2010)
  7. Mathematics and Science Education (FY 2003)
  8. Postsecondary and Adult Education (FY 2012)
    - Interventions for Struggling Adolescent and Adult Readers and Writers (FY 2007 to FY 2010)
    - Postsecondary Education (FY 2007 to FY 2012)
  9. Reading and Writing (FY 2002)
    - Interventions for Struggling Adolescent and Adult Readers and Writers (FY 2007 to FY 2010)
  10. Social and Behavioral Context for Academic Learning (FY 2008)
- National Research and Development Centers
- Statistical and Research Methodology in Education (FY 2009)
- Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies (FY 2009)
- Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships in Education Research (FY 2013)

### Research Training Programs

- Postdoctoral Research Training Program in the Education Sciences (FY 2005)
- Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (FY 2004, FY 2005; FY 2008, FY 2009)
- Researcher and Policymaker Training Program in the Education Sciences (FY 2013)

### Other Programs

- Small Business Innovation Research (FY 2002)
- Unsolicited (FY 2002)
- Preschool Curriculum and Evaluation Research (FY 2002 to FY 2003)
- Social and Character Development (FY 2003)

More detail is available on these projects at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/>.

## **The NCER Goal Structure**

Education research awards within both NCER and National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) utilize a 5-part goal structure. Applicants submit their proposals under one of the five goals.

The goal structure of the Education Research Grants program divides the research process into stages for both theoretical and practical purposes. Individually, the goals are intended to help focus the work of researchers while together they are intended to cover the range of research, development, and evaluation activities necessary for building a scientific enterprise that can provide solutions to the education problems in our nation. Under the Exploration goal, researchers generate hypotheses about the components and processes involved in learning and instruction and in the operation of education systems and develop models about how they think systems and processes function to bring about education outcomes. Practically, Exploration projects provide the empirical justification for developing or refining an intervention or assessment, or causally evaluating an existing intervention. Under Development and Innovation, investigators build on prior theoretical and empirical work to propose a theory of change for a specific intervention. The intervention, in essence, is an instantiation of the theory. Practically, researchers not only develop the intervention but also show its usability and its feasibility in a real-world education setting, and collect pilot data on its promise for improving student outcomes that may justify the intervention's evaluation. Efficacy and Replication projects evaluate the impact of specific interventions under ideal conditions. Effectiveness projects assess the impact of specific interventions when implemented under routine practice. Both Efficacy and Replication projects and Effectiveness projects constitute tests of the theory. Results from these studies should inform further theory development and refinement. Practically, evaluations identify which programs and policies actually produce positive effects on student outcomes, which need more work, and which should be discarded.

Education has always produced new ideas, new innovations, and new approaches but only appropriate empirical evaluation can identify those that are in fact improvements. Taken together, work across the various goals should not only yield information on the practical benefits about the effects of specific interventions on education outcomes but also contribute to the bigger picture of scientific knowledge and theory on learning, instruction, and education systems.

The 5 goals are:

- **Goal 1: Exploration.** Research supported under the Exploration goal identifies (1) malleable factors that are associated with education outcomes for students (student outcomes) and (2) factors and conditions that may mediate or moderate the relations between malleable factors and student outcomes. This identification is to be done through the analysis of data (collected by the project and/or using a secondary data set) or the meta-analysis of research studies. By malleable factors, the Institute means factors that can be changed by the education system such as children's behaviors and skills, teachers' practices, education programs and their components, school or district management practices, or education policies. Projects under the Exploration goal are to (a) generate hypotheses regarding the potential causal relations between malleable factors and education outcomes, (b) contribute to theories of change for education interventions, (c) contribute to the development of interventions that can improve student outcomes or to identify the conditions that are associated with better implementation of interventions, and (d) identify potentially beneficial interventions.
- **Goal 2: Development and Innovation.** Research supported under the Development and Innovation goal develops innovative education interventions and improves existing education interventions that are to produce beneficial impacts on student outcomes when implemented in authentic education delivery settings (e.g., classrooms, schools, districts). IES considers interventions to encompass curricula, instructional approaches, technology, education practices, programs, and policies. An iterative development process is expected to be used including a cycle of development, implementation, observation, and revision. The cycle is to continue until the interventions can be shown to be usable by the intended end users and feasible for use within the intended authentic delivery setting. A pilot study is done to determine if there is evidence of the promise of the intervention for achieving its intended student outcomes. IES expects that a finding of strong evidence of promise will lead to further research under the Efficacy and Replication goal.
- **Goal 3: Efficacy and Replication.** Research supported under the Efficacy and Replication goal determines whether or not fully developed interventions produce a beneficial impact on student outcomes (and the practical importance of that impact) relative to a counterfactual when implemented in authentic education delivery settings. Interventions can be implemented under ideal conditions which may include use of greater implementation support or a more homogeneous sample than would be expected under routine practice. The interventions tested under the Efficacy and Replication goal include newly developed interventions as well as long standing ones in widespread use. The vast majority of the education programs, practices, and policies implemented in U.S. schools have never been rigorously evaluated to determine if they are able to improve student outcomes relative to any other education intervention. Efficacy and Replication projects may provide the first evaluation of an intervention, may evaluate an already evaluated intervention but under a different set of conditions (these conditions can include a change in the sample, or a change in the intervention or how it is implemented), or may follow the longer-term impacts of a previous evaluation. Efficacy and Replication projects are to provide causal analysis, and randomized controlled trials are the favored

research design though strong quasi-experimental designs can also be used. Efficacy and Replication projects also examine the fidelity of implementation of the intervention both to determine how feasible the use of the intervention is and to identify the organizational supports, tools, and procedures that may be needed for sufficient implementation of the core components of the intervention. Interventions that are difficult to implement with fidelity under ideal conditions are unlikely to be implemented well when the intervention is implemented under conditions of routine practice.

- **Goal 4: Effectiveness.** Research supported under the Effectiveness goal (previously called “Scale-up Evaluation”) determines whether or not fully developed interventions with prior evidence of efficacy produce a beneficial impact on education outcomes for students (student outcomes) relative to a counterfactual when they are implemented under routine practice in authentic education delivery settings. “Routine practice” refers to the type of implementation that would occur if a school or district were to implement the intervention on its own without special support from the developer or research team. Effectiveness projects, like Efficacy and Replication projects, are to provide a causal evaluation of an intervention as well as examine the intervention’s fidelity of implementation. Before an Effectiveness project can be proposed, at least two evaluations of the intervention, that meet the requirements under the Efficacy and Replication goal, must show beneficial and practical impacts on student outcomes. In addition, the evaluation team must be independent from the developer/distributor of the intervention.
- **Goal 5: Measurement.** Research supported under the Measurement goal supports (1) the development of new assessments or refinement of existing assessments and the validation of these assessments or (2) the validation of existing assessments for specific purposes, contexts, and populations. Under refinement, IES includes changing existing assessments or changing the delivery of existing assessments in order to increase efficiency, improve measurement, improve accessibility, or provide accommodation for test takers. Proposed assessments must meet the specific content and sample requirements detailed under the topic to which the application is submitted. Measurement projects include assessments intended to assess students (e.g., for screening, progress monitoring, formative assessment, outcome assessment), education professionals (e.g., credentialing or evaluation of teachers, principals, and related service providers), and/or education systems (e.g., accountability standards). All assessments developed and/or validated must be either directly or indirectly related to measures of student academic outcomes.

### ***NCER Findings and Publications to Date***

A 10-page synopsis of findings from NCER for the period 2002-11 is available at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/pdf/Findings2011.pdf> .

There is also a 149-page list of publications emerging from NCER-funded research from 2002 through October 2011 at [http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/pdf/Publications\\_2011.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/pdf/Publications_2011.pdf).

## National Center for Special Education Research (NCSEER)

NCSEER sponsors a comprehensive program of special education research designed to expand the knowledge and understanding of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. NCSEER was created with the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004. NCSEER began operations in 2005, and made its first grant awards in 2006.

IDEA includes 18 statutory requirements that guide NCSEER's work as well as 13 disability categories specifically named in the legislation. For the purpose of NCSEER's programs, a student with a disability is defined as a child "(i) with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as 'emotional disturbance'), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and (ii) who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services" (Part A, Sec. 602). An infant or toddler with a disability is defined in IDEA as, "an individual under 3 years of age who needs early intervention services because the individual (i) is experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures in 1 or more of the areas of cognitive development, physical development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development; or (ii) has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay" (Part C, Sec. 632).

### **NCSEER Commissioner**

The NCSEER Commissioner is appointed by the IES Director. Dr. Deborah Speece became NCSEER Commissioner on August 23, 2011.

#### **Deborah Speece, Ph.D.**

##### **NCSEER Commissioner**

Deborah Speece is a national leader in special education research and response to intervention strategies who is known for her innovative studies of the classification and diagnosis of learning disabilities. For the past 27 years, Speece has served on the faculty in the College of Education at the University of Maryland where she is a professor in the Department of Special Education. The former co-editor of *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice* and Associate Editor of the *American Educational Research Journal*, Speece served on NCSEER's Technical Working Group for the Evaluation of Response to Intervention Strategies in Elementary Reading and on expert review panels for IES grant applications. A former educator in the Toledo, Ohio public schools, Speece has also taught children with learning and behavioral disabilities and she has served as the Coordinator of Early Childhood programs for the Children's Resource Center in Bowling Green, Ohio. Speece is the co-editor of two books, *Research on Classroom Ecologies: Implications for Inclusion of Children with Learning Disabilities and Developmental Perspectives on Children with High-Incidence Disabilities*. She served on the editorial board of eight scholarly research journals including *Exceptional Children*, *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, and *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. In 2003 she won the *School Psychology Review's* Outstanding Article of the Year Award. A Fellow of the International Academy of Research in Learning Disabilities, Speece received her B.S. and M.Ed.

in special education from Bowling Green State University and her Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### ***NCSER Activities and Investments***

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Awards, 2006-11</b>	<b>Investment (in millions) 2006-11</b>
Special Education Research	188	\$333.0
Research & Development Centers	4	\$40.0
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)	7	\$7.3
Postdoctoral Research Training	10	\$6.5
Unsolicited Awards	3	\$1.4

### **NCSER Research Grant Topics**

Within the Special Education Research program, NCSER funds a broad array of research in 11 topic areas.

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Cognition and Student Learning in Special Education
- Early Intervention and Early Learning in Special Education
- Families of Children with Disabilities
- Mathematics and Science Education
- Professional Development for Teachers and Related Services Providers
- Reading, Writing, and Language Development
- Social and Behavioral Outcomes to Support Learning
- Special Education Policy, Finance, and Systems
- Technology for Special Education
- Transition Outcomes for Secondary Students with Disabilities

### **The NCSER Goal Structure**

NCSER utilizes the same 5-part goal structure for its special education research awards that NCER uses. See above for details.

### **NCSER Research and Development Centers**

NCSER funds four Special Education Research and Development Centers (R&D) that target significant special education and early intervention problems in the United States by engaging in research, development, evaluation, and national leadership activities aimed at improving child outcomes through enhancements in the special education and early intervention systems. The four R&D Centers are focused on:

- Response to Intervention in Early Childhood;
- Serious Behavior Disorders at the Secondary Level;
- Improving Mathematics Instruction for Students with Mathematics Difficulties; and
- Assessment and Accountability for Special Education.

For the FY 2012 Special Education Research and Development Center competition, IES invited applications for four additional R&D Centers, focused on:

- School-Based Interventions for Secondary Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders;
- Reading Instruction for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students;
- Interventions for Families of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and
- Interventions for Families of Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.

### **NCSER Postdoctoral Research Training Grant Programs**

NCSER has funded 10 postdoctoral research training grant programs in special education over the past three years to increase the supply of scientists and researchers who are prepared to expand our knowledge of disabilities, conduct rigorous evaluation studies, develop new interventions that are grounded in a science of learning, and design and validate measurement instruments for students in special education.

### **NCSER's New Initiatives for FY 2013**

#### *Early Career Development and Mentoring Program in Special Education*

- IES has established the Research Training Program in Special Education: Early Career Development and Mentoring competition to address the need to support new investigators in special education and early intervention during their first years in institutions of higher education. To develop and maintain a strong cadre of researchers interested in addressing the needs of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities, and their families and teachers, it is essential to provide a structure to assist new investigators in developing their own line of independent research. The Early Career Development and Mentoring Program is designed to fill these needs by providing new investigators support to further develop the methodological, content, and grant writing expertise needed to develop a strong line of research that includes federal funding. An important aspect of this program is the requirement that the research and training be guided closely by a scientist experienced in the study of infants, toddlers, children, or youth with or at risk for disabilities, and/or their families or teachers. The program intends to provide new investigators with protected time in their faculty positions during which they can concentrate more intensively on developing research skills and their program of research.

#### *Accelerating the Academic Achievement of Children with Learning Disabilities*

- The Accelerating the Academic Achievement of Students with Learning Disabilities Research Initiative (A3 Initiative) is intended to support research to develop and evaluate interventions (e.g., instructional approaches, curricula, technology) to accelerate the academic achievement of students with or at risk for learning disabilities in grades 3 through 8. The A3 Initiative will take a comprehensive approach to the problem of improving the academic achievement in math and

reading of students with or at risk for learning disabilities who demonstrate the most intractable learning problems. The development and rigorous evaluation of interventions based on systematic experimentation and analysis of content and intervention features as well as implementation variables are required to build a science of intensive instruction to meet the academic needs of these students. In addition, IES plans for the A3 Initiative to change the way in which research on the achievement of students with disabilities is conducted, by creating a tightly linked network of researchers across a variety of disciplines who will work collaboratively to address the problem. IES intends to make awards for not more than three A3 Centers.

## **Standards and Review Office (SRO)**

The Standards and Review Office is responsible for two primary activities: the peer review of IES reports and the peer review process for the funding of IES grant applications. The Standards and Review Office developed, implemented, and refined the peer review procedures beginning shortly after the enactment of ESRA. In January 2006, the National Board for Education Sciences formally approved IES procedures for the peer review of reports and grant applications.

### ***Peer Review of Reports***

ESRA requires that "all research, statistics, and evaluation reports conducted by, or supported through, the Institute shall be subjected to rigorous peer review before being published or otherwise made available to the public." In addition, the Act requires that IES products be "objective, secular, neutral, and nonideological and are free of partisan political influence and racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias."

Locating the Standards and Review Office within the Office of the Deputy Director for Science, independent of any of IES's four operating Centers, allows Institute staff responsible for approval and scientific peer review of reports to keep an independent, objective point of view. Standards and Review Office action editors are senior staff members with several years of experience conducting research, publishing and doing scientific reviews.

The Standards and Review Office receives statistics, research, and evaluation reports generated by IES's four centers. Standards and Review staff conduct two types of reviews - external scientific reviews and internal scientific reviews. Reports that present new analyses of data are sent to external scientists for peer review, as are review and policy documents. Reports with limited descriptive data analyses are reviewed internally by Standards and Review staff. A report can be exempt from review only if it does not include analyses of data, and is not considered a statistics, research, or evaluation report.

Standards and Review Office action editors conduct their own review of each report (if external review, they do so simultaneously with the external reviewers), and then write a disposition memorandum synthesizing the action editor's review and those of the external reviewers (if external review). In their reviews, action editors focus on issues of technical quality, and are also responsible for making sure that the reports are neutral and objective, and do not contain discussions of policy implication or recommendations, or statements of advocacy for particular

positions, programs, or policies. The disposition memorandum indicates whether or not the report has been approved for publication, or is in need of revision.

IES's Procedures for Peer Review of Reports is available at:  
[http://ies.ed.gov/director/pdf/SRO\\_reports\\_peerreview.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/director/pdf/SRO_reports_peerreview.pdf)

### ***Peer Review of Grant Applications***

Under ESRA, IES activities that are carried out through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, at a minimum, shall be awarded on a competitive basis, and, when practical, through a process of peer review. Further, the Director is required to establish a peer review procedure (involving highly qualified individuals with an in-depth knowledge of the subject to be investigated) for reviewing and evaluating all applications for grants and cooperative agreements that exceed \$100,000.

The Standards and Review Office is responsible for implementing the scientific peer review of grant applications. As with the peer review of reports, a key provision of the grant application peer review system is intended to put distance between the program officers and administrators within IES who administer grant programs, work with grantees, and disseminate the results of research, and, those who are responsible for the peer review of applications for funding under those grant programs.

In FY 2002, IES established a new system for the scientific review of grant applications that is similar in many ways to the process of grant application peer review at the National Institutes of Health. Standards and Review Office staff identify and recruit highly qualified reviewers primarily on the basis of the quality of the research they have conducted and published in scientific peer-reviewed journals and the degree to which they are in-depth experts in the relevant research methods and subject matter.

In FY 2003, IES created an entirely electronic application submission and review process. This electronic system allows applicants to submit letters of intent and grant applications online. In addition, the electronic system also allows reviewers to access applications assigned to their panel, submit their reviews of applications, view preliminary scores and reviews submitted by other reviewers (after submitting their own reviews), and revise their own narrative comments during the panel review meeting. The electronic system allows IES staff to closely monitor the progress of the review process, and to quickly calculate preliminary scientific merit scores that are used to triage the top ranked applications for consideration by the full panels at the panel review meetings. The electronic system also allows for quick calculation of final scientific merit scores for use in funding considerations, and preparation of review feedback for applicants.

The Standards and Review Office uses a contractor to handle the review logistics, and manage the electronic system for grant application submission and review. The Deputy Director for Science and Standards and Review Office staff determine the number and type of review panels needed, select and recruit peer reviewers, assign grant applications to the appropriate review panels, assign primary reviewers to each application, conduct discrepancy analyses of initial

rating scores, conduct the triage of applications to be considered by the full panel, and work with the contractor to provide feedback to applicants and generate scores for applications that determine scientific merit for funding decisions.

IES's Procedures for Peer Review of Grant Applications is available at:

[http://ies.ed.gov/director/pdf/SRO\\_grant\\_peerreview.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/director/pdf/SRO_grant_peerreview.pdf)

## **National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE)**

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) conducts evaluations of education programs, policies, and practices supported through federal funds; provides research-focused technical assistance to educators and policymakers; supports synthesis and the wide spread dissemination of findings of impact studies through the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC); and promotes access to education information through the National Library of Education (NLE) and the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC).

The combined activities of NCEE are designed to expand the quantity and quality of evidence to support a more evidence-reliant education system and widely disseminate credible evidence on programs and practices that improve student achievement to state and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, Congress, parents, teachers, media, and the general public. NCEE provides quick and easy access to evidence-based information through online databases such as the What Works Clearinghouse and ERIC.

The Center includes two operational divisions. The Evaluation Division is responsible for studies related to federal education programs and policies, and the Knowledge Utilization Division is responsible for the Regional Educational Laboratory Program, the What Works Clearinghouse, and the National Library of Education, including ERIC.

### ***NCEE Evaluation Division (Associate Commissioner, Audrey Pendleton)***

NCEE's Evaluation Division is responsible for studies of federally funded programs, policies, and practices. A large share of its portfolio is large-scale, longitudinal evaluations of the impacts of interventions on critical educational outcomes, including students' academic achievement, education attainment, career and college readiness, and social and emotional well-being. Some impact evaluations focus on policies, such as charter schools or mandatory drug testing, but more commonly the focus is on education strategies or programs, such as Reading First, after-school programs, teacher professional development, or teacher compensation. The Evaluation Division also conducts studies to inform the development of effective policies and practices. For example, it is conducting implementation evaluations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, Investing in Innovation (I-3), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Race to the Top (RTT), and School Improvement Grants (SIG).

To date, NCEE has launched over 40 studies covering a wide range of topics and populations including early literacy, mathematics, teacher quality, school choice, English language learning, education technology, after-school programs, drug and violence prevention, adult education, and mentoring. More information on NCEE's evaluation projects is available at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/index.asp>

### ***NCEE's Knowledge Utilization Division (Associate Commissioner, Ruth Curran Neild)***

The Knowledge Utilization Division is responsible for four major initiatives within NCEE. These include the following:

- The **Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs)** work in partnership with school districts, state departments of education, and others to use data and research to improve academic outcomes for students. Fundamentally, the mission of the RELs is to provide support for a more evidence-reliant education system. In addition to conducting research (both descriptive and impact studies) and providing analytic technical assistance, the Regional Educational Laboratories share the latest findings from IES evaluations and reviews of "what works" to improve education outcomes. REL events are open to education practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. More information on the Regional Educational Laboratories can be found at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/>.
- The **What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)** was established by IES in 2002 to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. The WWC aims to promote informed education decision making through a set of easily accessible online databases and user-friendly reports on the effectiveness of replicable educational interventions (programs, products, practices, and policies) that are intended to improve student achievement. More information on the WWC can be found at <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>.
- The **National Library of Education** serves the information needs of the U.S. Department of Education, other government agencies, and the public. Its collection emphasizes federal education policy, education research and statistics, and current and historical programs, activities and publications of the U.S. Department of Education. In addition to on-site access, the Library's services are available by phone, internet, fax and mail. More information on the National Library of Education can be found at [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/nat\\_ed\\_library.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/nat_ed_library.asp).
- The **Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), within the NLE**, provides free public access to education research and information through an electronic database of over 1.2 million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials. The website also includes links to many full-text articles released since 1965. More information about ERIC can be found at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/eric.asp>.