Department of Education Reform Goals and Accomplishments
1/1/2020-5/31/2021
Consolidated by the EDRE Faculty

This document summarizes and lists the Department of Education Reform (EDRE) accomplishments relative to its seven organizational goals for the period of January 1st, 2020 to May 31st, 2021. All but two of these months took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and two EDRE faculty members submitted COVID-19 impact statements at their annual evaluations. These factors should be taken into account when evaluating the productivity of the department during this unusual and difficult time.

The EDRE department includes 10 faculty members (7 of them in tenured or tenure-track positions), and 15 current doctoral students.

The overarching goal of the department is to produce data-driven high quality research that will directly inform policy makers, scholars, parents, teachers, administrators and the general public to advance education and economic development by focusing on the improvement of academic achievement in K-12 education and beyond. To this purpose, the EDRE department hosts the following research initiatives (https://edre.uark.edu/research-initiatives.php):

- Arkansas Teacher Corps (ATC)
- Charassein: The Character Assessment Initiative
- Choice Regulation Watch
- National Endowment for the Arts Research Lab
- Office for Education Policy (OEP)
- School Choice Demonstration Project

The mission of the EDRE department is achieved through the pursuit of the following seven goals. A detailed list of accomplishments since January 1st, 2020 corresponding to each of the goals can be found below. Here is a summary of our current strategies to satisfy these goals:

**Goal 1: Improve the quality of education provided to Arkansas children.**
EDRE faculty and their students improve the quality of education provided to Arkansas children through multiple avenues, including advising stakeholders, conducting research, serving in key positions, and creating solutions. Concerning stakeholders, we advise Arkansas Secretary of Education Johnny Key, members of the Arkansas Legislature, and educators. In terms of research we achieve this goal through three avenues:

- OEP-initiated work that often also involves students and/or faculty at the department
- Faculty-initiated work often involving several faculty members and students
- Student-initiated work supervised by a faculty member.

We also develop solutions to getting a quality teacher in as many Arkansas classrooms as possible. These solutions include:

- ARteachers.org, a common application site for Arkansas public instruction openings
- An Assessment Tool which measures intellectual, relational, introspective, service, and other virtues in students.
Goal 2: Develop & implement demonstration projects in public schools. EDRE faculty, staff, and students develop & implement field evaluations in public schools. For example, since January 1st, 2020 we have continued our work on the experimental evaluation the effects of college campus visits during eighth grade on students’ interest in and preparation for college (https://news.uark.edu/articles/56021/new-study-suggests-campus-visits-inspire-eighth-graders-to-prepare-for-college). For this purpose, we partnered with public middle schools in the area and worked with nearly 1,500 students. The campus visits evaluation involved several faculty and students in the department as well as collaborations with several department and resource offices across the University. Other public school demonstration projects we are planning or implementing involve research to evaluate the effect of:

- Art field trips, arts integration, and art programs
- The Hope Academy, a trauma-informed public charter school in Arkansas
- Holocaust education programs
- The Pea Ridge School District STEM curriculum.

Most of these projects require in-person data collection and interactions and therefore have been paused during much or all of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goal 3: Enhance a positive perception of education quality in Arkansas. EDRE graduates have moved into many positions that enhance the visibility and demonstrate the quality of education in Arkansas. For example, 2015 graduate Sarah Burks Moore served as the Education Policy Advisor to Governor Asa Hutchinson before being appointed to the Arkansas State Board of Education and 2018 graduate Alexandra Boyd served as Director of School Performance and Evaluation at the Arkansas Department of Education before recently being hired to lead a major public charter school network in New Mexico. Moreover, EDRE faculty are recognized for their expertise. This year the Association for Public Policy and Management awarded Robert Costrell the Steven D. Gold Award for contributions to public financial management in the field of intergovernmental relations and state and local finance, and Patrick Wolf was co-recipient of the Best Paper Award of the Association of Private Enterprise Education.

Goal 4: Conduct a comprehensive and coordinated program of research within five priority areas: School Choice, Education Policy, Teacher Quality, Leadership, and Accountability and Transparency. EDRE faculty, staff, and students conduct a range of research within each of the priority areas, as evidenced through 49 journal articles, 16 book chapters, and 51 working papers published since the start of 2020.

Goal 5: Translate research findings into informational resources useful to school practitioners, policymakers and other interested parties. EDRE faculty, staff, and students leverage a variety of channels to translate research findings into informational resources useful to school practitioners, policymakers, and other interested parties, including op-eds, blog posts, data visualizations, and videos.
Goal 6: Serve as a state and national information source for public education in order to provide knowledge generated by research to a broad audience.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students serve as a state and national information source through invited presentations, expert panels, and policy briefings.

Goal 7: Facilitate the scholarly exchange of views about education reform.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students facilitate scholarly exchanges by presenting academic papers, attending conferences, and serving on editorial and review boards.

EDRE Mission-Related Accomplishments- 1/1/2020 – 5/24/2021
Detailed List

EDRE Goal 1: Improve the quality of education provided to Arkansas children
EDRE faculty and their students improve the quality of education provided to Arkansas children through many avenues, including advising stakeholders, conducting research, holding service positions, and developing solutions.

Advising stakeholders:
- On August 19, 2020, Arkansas Secretary of Education Johnny Key reached out to Patrick Wolf asking if there were any reliable public health studies that supported the desirability of re-opening public schools for in-person instruction. Wolf provided links to studies that Secretary Key used to persuade Governor Asa Hutchinson to order all public schools in the state to offer in-person instruction to students whose parents requested it. Initial research suggests that re-opening public schools for the entire 2020-21 academic year was a highly effective educational policy that has greatly benefitted Arkansas children.
- EDRE Ph.D. in education policy program alumna Sarah Burks Moore was appointed by Gov. Hutchinson to the Arkansas State Board of Education in 2018 and is serving through 2025.
- Costrell is well-known as a national information resource on teacher pension policy, and is regularly contacted by such media as the New York Times, Education Week, Hechinger Report, etc. for insights into these issues.
- Costrell is periodically contacted by the Arkansas legislature for expert opinion on the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System.
- Maranto advised LISA Academy, assisting plans for building productive relationships with NWA area school districts.
- Cheng provides advisement and research partnerships with schools: Anthem Classical Academy, Fayetteville (new school scheduled to open Fall 2021); Ozark Catholic Academy, Tontitown, AR; St. Joseph Catholic School, Fayetteville, AR; St. Vincent Catholic School, Rogers, AR; Saeger Classical Academy, Siloam Springs, AR. Wolf serves on the Governing Board of Ozark Classical Academy.
- McKenzie served on a panel of experts at the Arkansas virtual town hall in celebration of National School Choice Week.
- McKenzie provides advisement and research partnerships with Academic Plus and LISA academy regarding Merit Pay programs.
• McKenzie conducted analysis of eSTEM student performance for school finance leaders at the request of Kathy Smith 2/2021.
• McKenzie, though OEP, conducted a re-analysis of the effect of school waivers at the request of Secretary Johnny Key 2/2021.
• McKenzie partnered with DESE’s Office for Family Engagement to administer a survey to parents across the state, receiving over 18,000 responses. 11/2020

Conducting research:
• College visits: RCT study to determine whether visits to a college campus during eighth grade affect students’ interest in and preparation for college. (Zamarro, Mills, Greene, and students)
• Arkansas’s Academic Challenge Scholarship: Examination of the effect on student outcomes of changes to the timing of disbursements. (McGee, Mills, and students)
• Arkansas’s district consolidation policy. Examination of the effect of Arkansas Act 60, passed in 2004, which requires the consolidation of all districts with enrollment of less than 350 students for two consecutive years, on student and financial outcomes. (McGee, Mills, and students)
• Arkansas’ Gifted and Talented program: Examination of the identification processes and longer-term academic outcomes for high achieving students identified as G/T. (Wai, McKenzie, and students)
• PreK Outcomes: Examination of the longer-term academic outcomes for students who enroll in state-sponsored Pre-Kindergarten programs (McKenzie and students)
• PreK Outcomes for English Learners: Examination of the longer-term academic and language proficiency outcomes for ELL students who enroll in state-sponsored Pre-Kindergarten programs (McKenzie and students)
• School Discipline: Ongoing analysis of discipline prevalence and disparities throughout the state. (McKenzie and students)
• K-5 discipline policy: Examining the effect of Arkansas Act 1059, which limited out of school suspension for K-5 students, on the demographic gaps in exclusionary discipline. (McKenzie)
• Corporal punishment in Arkansas and how it is used varies by student and district characteristics. (Students supervised by EDRE faculty)
• Arkansas’ English Learners: Examining academic growth by linguistic sub-group (McGee and student)
• Arkansas’ Marshallese student achievement and school experiences (Students supervised by EDRE faculty)
• Arkansas’ School Based Health Centers: An examination of the association between school-based health centers and student attendance and academic achievement. (McKenzie and student)
• Inequities in the funding of public charter schools including those in Little Rock. (Wolf and student)
• Computer Science: Conducted a survey of Computer Science teachers throughout the state. (McGee and McKenzie)
• Research on the relationship between Advanced Placement Course Taking and ACT Outcomes in Arkansas. (McKenzie and student)
Mobility patterns between traditional and charter schools in NWA. (McKenzie and student)

Arkansas’ high school graduation rate and associations with school characteristics. (McKenzie and student)

Teacher burnout: Collaborate with Arkansas Teacher Corps to study concepts of place attachment to enhance commitment to teaching in high-needs areas of the state and to alleviate the threat of teacher burnout. (Cheng and student)

Service positions:

- McGee appointed Chief Data Officer for the State of Arkansas; a large part of his work in that role is bringing together workforce and education data to build more and stronger pathways between the two.
- McGee is a Member of the Arkansas K-12 Computer Science Standards Review Committee, 2020.
- McGee and McKenzie served on the Computer Science and Cyber Security Task Force and co-authored the report.
- McGee serves on an ad hoc panel for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine titled “A Vision and Roadmap for Education Statistics in 2030 and Beyond”, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, 2021-present.
- McKenzie serves as a Governing Board Member for the U.S. Department of Education’s Regional Education Lab (REL) Southwest.
- Wolf serves on the Technical Working Group for the REL Southwest, providing quality control reviews of Lab studies focused on improving public schools in Arkansas.
- McKenzie served as Subject Matter Expert for USDOE Network Report Card Learning communities, which included Arkansas as a participating state.
- McKenzie serves on Arkansas’ ESSA Steering Committee, providing insight and technical advice on the state accountability system.
- Maranto served on the Fayetteville School Board through March 2020, including crafting the strategic plan that set goals regarding reducing achievement gaps and preserving FPS’s leading AP program in Arkansas.

Developing solutions:

- Through Arkansas Teacher Corps, McKenzie places teachers in classrooms in Arkansas districts that have the most difficulty recruiting educators.
- McKenzie continues to develop and promote ARteachers.org, a common application site for teachers, which reduces hiring barriers for teachers and districts.
- Cheng developed the PFS Assessment Tool: A new measurement tool for teachers and administrators to use to measure intellectual, relational, introspective, service, and other virtues in students.
- McKenzie advises charter schools regarding lotteries and conducted 5 enrollment lotteries for open-enrollment charter schools since January 2020.

EDRE Goal 2. Develop & implement demonstration projects in public schools.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students develop & implement a variety of field evaluations in public schools that link research findings to classroom practice.
• **Campus Visits**: EDRE faculty, staff, and graduate students partnered with middle schools within a 2-hour radius of the University of Arkansas to conduct an RCT to study whether visits to a college campus during eighth grade affect students’ interest in and preparation for college. The campus visits intervention involved collaborations with several departments across the University of Arkansas Fayetteville Campus, along with several campus resource offices including the Center for Multicultural and Diversity Education, the Volunteer Action Center, University Recreation, and University Housing. We have currently published short-run impact findings and are in the process of collecting additional data for a long-run impact analysis.

• **“Educar Par Ser”**: Zamarro worked to develop this SEL curriculum that is in place in more than 60 schools in Spain, Argentina, and the U.S.

• **Arts**: Greene and students have conducted research on the effect of art field trips and arts integration. McKenzie is working with LRSD and A+ Arkansas to evaluate an after school arts program.

• **PreK**: McKenzie, McGee, and students are working on a multiyear evaluation of Arkansas’ PreKindergarten access, assessment, and efficacy.

• **Hope Academy**: McKenzie is examining the policy considerations and evaluating academic outcomes of Hope Academy, a trauma-informed charter school in Arkansas. In addition, Wolf helped a pair of doctoral students develop a research plan for an evaluation of the Hope Academy.

• **SNAP**: McGee is working on a project to investigate how the state might serve its SNAP population better.

• **Ready For Life**: McGee is actively participating in the Governor’s Ready For Life initiative which is a demonstration project to better connect dislocated workers with training and employment opportunities.

• **Arkansas Teacher Corps**: McKenzie works with staff to place approximately 60 teachers annually in classrooms throughout the state.

• **Holocaust Education** Project by Jay Greene and students was awarded a Chancellor's Humanities and Arts grant.

• Pea Ridge School District STEM curriculum evaluation.

**EDRE Goal 3: Enhance a positive perception of education quality in Arkansas.**

EDRE faculty, staff, and students enhance a positive perception of education quality in Arkansas thus contributing to the ability of the state to attract new business and a highly qualified workforce.

• The Office for Education Policy annually distributes “OEP Awards” to districts and schools with high academic growth.

• Pre-K research identified positive academic outcomes associated with student participation in state-funded Pre-K programs.

• EDRE Faculty have been granted many awards including:
  - Costrell: Association for Public Policy and Management, Steven D. Gold Award, for contributions to public financial management in the field of intergovernmental relations and state and local finance, 2020.
  - Wai: University of Arkansas COEHP Rising Star Award, 2021.
• Wolf and DeAngelis: Best Article Award of the Association for Private Enterprise Education, 2020.
• This year, the International School Choice and Reform Conference co-chairs named the conference’s award “The Patrick J. Wolf Best Paper Prize” in appreciation for Wolf’s many years of work launching and growing the conference.
• EDRE student and Wai advisee Bich Tran won First Place in the 4th Annual Graduate-Professional Student Congress Research Colloquium, University of Arkansas, 2021, for the OEP reports she led on improving identification and programming for gifted students in Arkansas.
• EDRE graduates have moved into many positions that enhance the visibility and demonstrate the quality of education in Arkansas. See Appendix for a full list of positions for our graduates. Here are the positions of our graduates since January 1st 2020:
  - Lina Anaya ('21) Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Bradford, UK
  - Molly Beck ('20) Research Associate and Data Fellow, PRiME Center at Saint Louis University
  - Dillon Fuchman ('20) Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Sinquefield Center for Applied Economic Research, Saint Louis University
  - Ian Kingsbury ('20) Director of Academic Research, Stride K12
  - Katherine Kopotic ('20) Manager of External Reporting, Saint Louis University Office of Institutional Research

EDRE Goal 4: Conduct a comprehensive and coordinated program of research within five priority areas: School Choice, Education Policy, Teacher Quality, Leadership, and Accountability and Transparency.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students conduct a wide range of research within each of the priority areas, as evidenced through books, journal articles, book chapters, and working papers.

School Choice:
Book:

Journal Articles:


Book Chapters:


Policy Reports and Working Papers:


• Wolf, P.J. (2020). *Private school choice programs: What do we know about their effects on outcomes for disadvantaged students?* A background paper for the Hoover Education Success Initiative, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA.


• Beck, D., Clark, T., Tran, B., & Maranto, R. Student-Teacher Interaction, Student-Peer interaction, and achievement in cyber schools. *Computers and Education,* (submitted June 2021).


**Education Policy:**

Journal Articles:


• Wai, J., & Lakin, J. M. (2020). Finding the missing Einsteins: Expanding the breadth of cognitive and noncognitive measures used in academic services. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 63, 101920.


Book Chapters:


Policy Reports and Working Papers:

Teacher Quality/ Labor Markets:
Journal Articles:
• Nichols, M., Zamarro Rodriguez, G., & Trivitt, J. College Readiness, Student Expectations and Success: The Role of Non-Cognitive Skills. Learning and Individual Differences. Revise and Resubmit
• Fuchsman, D., Sass, T., & Zamarro Rodriguez, G. Testing, Teacher Turnover and the Distribution of Teachers Across Grades and Schools. Education Finance and Policy. Revise and Resubmit
• Anaya, L. M., Zamarro Rodriguez, G., & Stafford, F. P. Gender Gaps in Math Performance, Perceived Mathematical Ability and College STEM Education: The Role of Parental Occupation. *Education Economics*. Conditionally Accepted

Book Chapters:

Policy Reports and Working Papers:

Leadership
Journal Articles

Book Chapter:

Policy Reports and Working Papers:

Accountability and Transparency:
Journal Articles:


Book Chapter:

Policy Reports and Working Papers:


In addition to these core areas, we have developed several projects to inform policy during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Journal Articles:

Policy Reports and Working Papers:

EDRE Goal 5: Translate research findings into informational resources useful to school practitioners, policymakers and other interested parties.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students leverage a variety of channels to translate research findings into informational resources useful to school practitioners, policymakers, and other interested parties, including op-eds, blog posts, data visualizations, and videos.

• Wolf advised editors at The Wall Street Journal who translated the results of research he led into a desk editorial about the Social and Emotional Learning effects of school choice on August 30, 2020.
• Wolf and Greene advised editors at The Wall Street Journal who translated the results of research they led into a desk editorial on the positive effect of school choice on student achievement in public schools on March 26, 2021.
• Wolf serves on the Advisory Board of Choice Media, a non-profit organization that translates research findings into informational resources for interested parties.
• Costrell is periodically contacted by the Arkansas legislature for expert opinion on the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System. Most recently: “Arkansas Teacher Retirement Plan: Risks, Redistribution & Remedies,” Testimony to Arkansas Legislature, Joint Committee on Public Retirement, September 11, 2018. (video, slides)

Op-Eds:


Blog posts:


• Wolf, P. J. (2021). *The data bears it out: Educational freedom means higher educational achievement*, *Project Forever Free*, March 25


https://www.educationnext.org/charter-school-regulations-harm-minority-school-operators/

**Podcasts:**
• Cheng, A. (2020, June 3). *Interview with Albert Cheng on assessing faith formation* [Podcast interview]. In D. Smith (moderator), Faith in Teaching Podcast, June 3.

**Videos:**
• Wolf recorded two videos for state legislator trainings around the country, one titled “The Academic Effects of School Choice” and another titled “The Civic Effects of School Choice”.
• Wolf released a series of seven informational videos on school choice with a focus on Arkansas:
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 1: A Primer on School Choice
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 2: Public Charter Schools
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 3: Choosing Public Schools Within and Across Districts
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 4: Private School Choice
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 5a: Homeschooling by the Numbers
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 5b: The Reality of Homeschooling
  o Wolf’s Words Episode 6: Parent Empowerment in School Choice
  Webinars:
  • Cheng is the Host/Chair of the Global Home Education Exchange Research Working Group Webinar Series on Homeschooling Research
  • Wolf, P.J. (2021, April 14). Doing school choice research. Webinar, AFC Fellowship Program, virtual.
  Data Visualizations:
  Public Scholarship:
  • Zamarro’s work on the effects of COVID has been mentioned in the media 58 times at this moment. 8 paper presentations in (AEFP, APPAM); 1 poster presentation SREE.
  • Zamarro worked with R-Street that wrote an article featuring Charassein work on Social-Emotional Education
  • Costrell and McGee have written a book chapter cited above, on “Recent Research on Teacher Pension Funding, Benefits, and Policy Debates,” which is specifically “meant to
serve professionals like school district administrators and education policy practitioners,” and to specifically serve as a “bridge” between journal articles and the audience mentioned, to quote from the invitation to me to submit.

- Costrell’s forthcoming Educational Researcher paper cited above, “The Three R’s of Teacher Pension Funding: Redistribution, Return, and Risk,” was solicited specifically to “target an audience that will be generally unfamiliar with pension language.” Educational Researcher is read by the widest audience of those with an interest in what education research has to say about policy. To quote from the goals and rationale for the special issue on pension reform in which this paper will appear, “The implications of pension reforms are of general significance to the education research community and the teaching community… Educational Researcher is the ideal place for this special issue, given its broad audience…”


Other Activities:

- Wolf organized a University of Arkansas public viewing on February 19, 2020, of the Hollywood movie Miss Virginia. The movie is about the successful struggle for school choice in Washington, DC. The event was co-sponsored by the Arkansas Alumni Association. Wolf moderated a roundtable discussion afterwards with Little Rock native Virginia Walden Ford, the inspiration for the movie, director R. J. “Dan” Hanna,
undergraduate alum of the University of Arkansas, and Dr. Malachi Nichols, alum of the Department of Education Reform.

- OEP entered into a research practice partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**EDRE Goal 6: Serve as a state and national information source for public education in order to provide knowledge generated by research to a broad audience.**

EDRE faculty, staff, and students serve as a state and national information source to share expertise with a broad audience.

- Wolf’s research was cited during Arkansas House of Representatives floor debate that culminated in the passage of SB680, *To Create the Philanthropic Investment in Arkansas Kids Program Act* on April 21, 2021.
- At the request of the Committee Chair, Wolf provided *The Scholarly Research Regarding Private School Choice Programs: Written Testimony Submitted to the Minnesota Senate E-12 Committee*, (March 2, 2021).
- McKenzie provided Individualized assistance on State Report Card development to Bureau of Indian Education for USDOE.
- McKenzie and Wai were Keynote speakers at the Texas Association for Gifted and Talented Education to present research from McKenzie, S., Seaton, D., & Wai, J. (March 2021). *Keynote: Who Is Missing From G/T Classrooms? How a Research-Practice Partnership and Leveraging Data Can Increase Equity in G/T Identification*. Texas Association of Gifted and Talented Leadership Conference (virtual). TX, United States.

**Invited Presentations:**

- McKenzie, S., Seaton, D., Wai, J. & Tran, B. (2021, March). DeQueen Education Service Cooperative GT Research Update. NAESC GT Coordinator Meeting. DeQueen, AR.
- Wolf, P.J. (2021, April 23). *Three empirical studies on school choice and student outcomes*. Challey Institute, College of Business, North Dakota State University, virtual.
• Wolf, P.J. (2020, March 3). What does the evidence say about parental school choice? The Not So Great Society. Goldwater Institute, Scottsdale, AZ.

Panels:
• Zamarro served as part of the expert panel committee for IES National Institute of Education Statistics resulting in the report: SETTING PRIORITIES FOR FEDERAL DATA ACCESS TO EXPAND THE CONTEXT FOR EDUCATION DATA

EDRE Goal 7: Facilitate the scholarly exchange of views about education reform.
EDRE faculty, staff, and students present papers, attend conferences, and serve on editorial boards.

Papers at peer-reviewed international academic conferences:


Papers at peer-reviewed national academic conferences:


• Erickson, H.H., Mills, J.N. & Wolf, P.J. (2020, April). Effect of the Louisiana Scholarship Program on Student Achievement and College Entrance After Four Years [Roundtable Session]. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA (Conference Canceled).


**Editorial Boards:**

- Maranto, Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of School Choice*
- Zamarro serves as Associate Editor at *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* (EEPA)
- Wolf, Consulting Editor, *Journal of School Choice*
- Maranto, Member of the Editorial Board, *International Journal of Education Law and Policy*
- Maranto, Member of the Editorial Board, *Public Voices*.
- Wolf, Member of the Editorial Board, *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*
- Greene, Contributing Editor, *Education Next*.
- Wolf, Member of the Scientific Committee, *Dirigenti Scuola* (Journal of School Leaders)
- Cheng serves as an editor on the peer-reviewed journal "The International Journal of Christianity and Education" which publishes articles on teaching and learning in faith-based schools with an aim for broader application in other educational sectors and education reform.
- Wai serves on four editorial boards: *Gifted Child Quarterly, Journal for the Education of the Gifted, Journal of Expertise, and Intelligence*. Wai is on the Board of directors for an international academic society and serves as chair on two committees. Wai is member at large for the AERA gifted SIG and chair of a committee.

**Other Activities:**

- Cheng created the Education Practice and Policy Program in Israel (took teachers to consider the innovations and challenges of education in a diverse and pluralistic society like Israel and their implications for education in the United States).
• The Department of Education was a Silver Sponsor of the 2021 and 2020 International School Choice and Reform Conference (ISRC). The ISRC is the premier annual gathering for the scholarly exchange of views about education reform.
• Cheng is a Senior Fellow at Cardus which develops international networks of Independent school practitioners, leaders, and researchers
• Cheng is Research Fellow to the Global Home Education Exchange, an international network of homeschooling practitioners and scholars
• McGee is a Director at the Equable Institute, New York, NY
• McGee is a Director at MDRC, New York, NY
• Mills serves as non-resident Research Fellow, Education Research Alliance for New Orleans, Tulane University
• McGee was a Director at EdBuild, Jersey City, NJ, 2015-2020
• McGee served as Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, 2015-2020
• Maranto serves on the Achievement House Charter School Board.
• Wolf serves on the Governing Board for Ozark Catholic Academy

Grants Activity:

Funded Projects:


McGee, J. B. (Primary Investigator), Zamarro Rodriguez, G. (Co-Principal Investigator), "Teachers Knowledge, Preparation, and Preferences Regarding Retirement," Sponsored by Equable. ($10,000)


McKenzie, S. (Co-Primary Investigator) “Meet them where they AR: Equipping schools to accommodate children who have experienced trauma.” Partnered with UofA Counseling Department and Hope Academy. Sponsored by: COEHP Dean’s Pilot Research Funds. ($ 9,341) Award period covered: 2020-2021


Unfunded Projects:


Appendix: Current positions of EDRE graduates

- Lina Anaya ('21) Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Bradford, UK
- Kaitlin Anderson ('17) Assistant Professor, Lehigh University
- Jennifer Ash ('15) Director of the National Center for Rural Education Research Networks, Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research
- Joshua Barnett ('07) Chief Learning Officer, National Institute for Excellence in Teaching
- Molly Beck ('20) Research Associate and Data Fellow, PRiME Center at Saint Louis University
- Charlie Ruiz-Belin ('18) Science Department Chair, Arlington Independent School District, TX
- Daniel Bowen ('13) Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University
- Alexandra Boyd ('18) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), ASK Academy in New Mexico
- Benton Brown ('18) Assistant Dean, School of Education, Utah Valley University
- Stuart Buck ('12) Vice President of Research Integrity, Laura and John Arnold Foundation
- Matthew Carr ('09) Strategy, Learning & Evaluation Director, Walton Family Foundation
- Albert Cheng ('16) Assistant Professor, University of Arkansas
- Jeffrey Dean ('15) Senior Strategy, Learning, and Evaluation Officer, Walton Family Foundation
- Corey DeAngelis ('18) Director of School Choice, Reason Foundation
- Anna Egalite ('14) Associate Professor, North Carolina State University
- Leesa Foreman ('18) Elementary Special Education Teacher, Portland Public Schools
- Nathan Gray ('09) Chair, Business and Public Policy Department, Young Harris College
- Collin Hitt ('16) Assistant Professor, Southern Illinois University
- Marc Holley ('09) Vice President of Strategy and Programs, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Heidi Holmes Erickson ('19) Assistant Professor in Educational Leadership, Brigham Young University
- Dillon Fuchsman ('20) Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Sinquefield Center for Applied Economic Research, Saint Louis University
- Katherine Kopotic ('20) Manager of External Reporting, Saint Louis University Office of Institutional Research
- Nate Jensen ('12) Senior Research Scientist, North West Evaluation Association (NWEA)
- Ian Kingsbury ('19) Director of Academic Research, Stride K12
- Brian Kisida ('15) Assistant Professor, University of Missouri
- Matthew Lee ('21) Director of Research, The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
- Martin Lueken ('14) Director of Fiscal Policy and Analysis, EdChoice (formerly the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice)
- Joshua McGee ('11) Research Assistant Professor, University of Arkansas and Chief Data Officer, State of Arkansas
- Michael McShane ('13) Director of National Research, EdChoice (formerly the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice)
- Jonathan Mills ('15) Senior Research Associate, University of Arkansas
- Sarah Burks Moore ('15) Member, Arkansas State Board of Education
• Malachi Nichols (’18) Director of Evaluation and Data Quality, ForwARd Arkansas
• Evan Rhinesmith (’17) Director of Research and Evaluation, Prime Center, St. Louis University
• Caleb Rose (’13) Senior Researcher for Institutional Effectiveness, Frederick Community College
• M. Danish Shakeel (’18) Director of Centre for Educational Entrepreneurship, University of Buckingham, UK
• James Shuls (’13) Dean, College of Education, Southeastern University
• Yujie (Beth) Sude (’18) Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Arkansas
• Elise Swanson (’19) Senior Research Manager, Center for Economic and Policy Research
• Sivan Tuchman (’17) Senior Research Analyst, Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), University of Washington
• Angela Watson (’19) Assistant Research Professor, Johns Hopkins University
• Marcus Winters (’08) Department Chair for Educational Leadership & Policy Studies and Faculty Director, Wheelock Educational Policy Center, Boston University
• James (Lynn) Woodworth (’13) Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education