

Education

Ph.D. Educational Psychology, 2013

Georgia State University

M.S. Educational Research, 1991

Georgia State University

B.A. Psychology, 1986

University of Georgia

**Present
Position**

Managing Associate, edCount, LLC

2019 – present

Direct and lead management of projects and project teams. Provide corporate leadership within the firm. Add value to the work of project directors by contributing expertise and guidance regarding substantive work, client support, and contracts. Develop and maintain strong client relationships and identify contracting or partnering opportunities. Review work plans, deliverables, and proposals for technical quality and rigor. Manage teams to consistently produce deliverables on deadline that meet the standard of quality set by edCount and the client. Oversee and contribute to the preparation of high-quality reports and other outputs.

Projects

Education for the Deaf Act (EDA) Implementation Technical Assistance – the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center – Serve as the Project Director to support the Laurent Clerc Center’s efforts in curriculum and professional development and compliance with assessment and accountability regulations under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Education for the Deaf Act (EDA). Plan and conduct standard setting and research studies to explore the validity of standards and assessment at the Clerc Center. Support administration and faculty in the interpretation and implementation of state standards and appropriate assessment practices for the Clerc Center student population, including transitioning to the Common Core State Standards.

Assessment Alignment Evaluations – Serve as Project Director, providing oversight and coordination of project management meetings, leadership for development of project instruments, management of grants and contracts, and oversight of administration and partnerships throughout project duration. Evaluate evidence to measure the degree to which the assessment reached the appropriate population of students, as well as the rationale for the assessment. Collaborate with researchers to convey this information to stakeholders within the department of education. Oversee the development of final documentation. Current and previous alignment studies include:

North Carolina End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Assessments for Reading/ELA and Mathematics Alignment Evaluation

DC Science Assessments Alignment Evaluation

Indiana ILEARN and I AM Assessment Alignment Evaluation

Louisiana English Language Proficiency Alignment Evaluation

Professional Experience

Louisiana LEAP 2025 Alignment Evaluation

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) End of Course Assessments in Algebra I, English I, and Biology Alignment Evaluation

Consultant
2017 – 2019

Provided technical assistance and professional learning to schools, districts, states and other educational organizations.

Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, Georgia Department of Education

2014 – 2017

Responsible for the development and delivery of all Georgia assessment and accountability programs. Ensured programs met high standards for technical defensibility. Provided oversight for the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Assessments and the initial re-design of the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA 2.0). Led the conceptualization and initial development of Keenville, an award-winning innovative game-based formative assessment for first and second grade students.

Associate Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, Georgia Department of Education

2009 – 2014

Responsible for the development and delivery of all Georgia assessment and accountability programs. Ensured programs met high standards for technical defensibility. This included managing the redevelopment of all criterion-referenced assessments to comply with multiple state curriculum revisions. In addition, provided oversight for the Georgia Alternate Assessment (Portfolio), the Georgia High School Graduation as well as Benchmark and Formative Item Development.

Director of Assessment, Georgia Department of Education

2008 – 2009

Responsible for the development and delivery of all Georgia assessments. This included the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Test (CRCT), the Georgia End-of-Course Tests (EOCT), the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) and the Georgia Alternate Assessment.

Director of Assessment Research and Development, Georgia Department of Education

2007 – 2008

Assistant Director of Testing, Georgia Department of Education

2004 – 2007

Research Associate, Atlanta Public Schools

2002 – 2004

Educational Assessment Specialist, Georgia Department of Education

1997 – 2002

Educational/Research Consultant, University of Tennessee

1993 – 1997

Psychometrist, Georgia State University

1987 – 1993

**Professional
Affiliations &
Organizations**

Puerto Rico Technical Advisory Committee

National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) Stakeholder Group

National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO Technical Work Group

Florida Technical Advisory Committee (2013 – 2017)

**Publications
&
Presentations**

Publications

Englehard, G., Fincher, M., & Domaleski, C.S. (2011). Mathematics performance of students with and without disabilities under accommodated conditions using resource guides and calculators on high stakes tests. *Applied Measurement in Education*, 24(1), 22 – 38.

Fincher, M. & Flowers, C. (2009). Georgia alternate assessment: A portfolio approach. In W. D. Schafer and R. Lissitz (Ed.), *Technical Quality of Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Achievement Standards* (pp. 171-188). Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.

Perie M., Fincher, M., and Swaffield, S. (2013). Understanding low-performing students with disabilities and their barriers to success on traditional Assessments: A southern tale. In Thurlow, M. L., Lazarus, S. S., & Bechar, S. (Eds.). *Lessons Learned in Federally Funded Projects that can Improve the Instruction and Assessment of Low Performing Students with Disabilities*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, *National Center on Educational Outcomes*.

Presentations

Dunn, J. L., & Fincher, M. (March 2009). A Framework for Identifying and Evaluating Item Alterations Designed for Persistently Low Performing Students. *Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, San Diego, CA*.

Fincher, M. (2012). Detection and Analysis of Irregularities in Academic Testing. Testing Integrity Symposium: Issues and Recommendations for Best Practices. *National Center for Educational Statistics, Washington, DC*.

Marion, S., & Fincher, M. (2008). Validating a State's Alternate Assessment System. *2008 Reidy Interactive Lecture Series, Portsmouth, NH*.

Marion, S., Fincher, M., Stuck, J., Sims, R., Briggs, D., & Kearns, J. (2008). Putting the Pieces Together: Validity Evaluations of States' Alternate Assessment Systems. *38th Annual National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL*.

McDivitt, P. J., Felix, A., Fincher, M., Davis, C., & Quenemoen, R. (2008). Redesign of Alternate Assessments for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities:

National and State Perspectives. 38th *Annual National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL.*

Roach, A., Fincher, M., Varjas, K., & Chilungu, N. (April 2011). Exploring the Thought Processes Underlying the Scoring of Georgia's Alternate Assessment. *National Council on Measurement in Education Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.*