



LEARNING SYSTEMS INSTITUTE  
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

2023-24  
FISCAL YEAR

# ANNUAL REPORT



## Letter From the Director

It is a great pleasure to share our annual report with you as we mark the 55th anniversary of the Learning Systems Institute.

I am proud to say there has never been a more successful year at LSI than the one we just completed. It is an honor and privilege to manage a team that does such vital work and does it so well. This past year was full of milestones and successes, and we move forward with immense optimism for all we can accomplish.

Last year, our remarkable faculty and staff were involved in 34 projects including work in Egypt, Malawi, the Philippines, Rwanda, Uzbekistan, and Zambia. Our team also worked on joint projects with Lebanon, Mexico, South Africa, and Ukraine. Our staff at the Florida Center for Research in STEM (FCR-STEM) is playing an integral role in FSU's InSPIRE Project and our work continues ensuring Florida educators and students are at the forefront regarding learning and educational technology.

In 2023-24, LSI had \$25.63M in expenditures, the largest number in a decade growing by more than 31% from the previous year. It is the fifth consecutive year that LSI has increased expenditures, and since 2018-19, LSI's expenditures have grown by 282%. For the fourth year in a row LSI has reached a return on investment of greater than 10X with a nearly 14X ROI last fiscal year.

We look forward to the year ahead as LSI continues to grow, evolve, and innovate. We are extremely excited for our role in the Institute for Strategic Partnerships, Innovation, Research, and Education (InSPIRE). LSI will lead the workforce development component and STEM outreach in K-20 education to train teachers and provide industry certifications to participants. In January, Provost Jim Clark placed the university's Ukraine Task Force (UTF) under the purview of LSI. Since then, we have hired a new director and hosted 14 visitors from Ukraine in Tallahassee to build relationships and collaborations.

We are incredibly proud of our work and the impact LSI is making around the world. Our mission is to improve human performance and learning globally and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner. We owe our success to the hard work and dedication of our team, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions. Together, we are meeting this tremendous calling with enthusiasm and hope for bringing quality education to as many people as possible.



Rabieh Razzouk  
Director, Learning Systems Institute



## By the Numbers

### Financial Performance

*LSI is a research and development unit that is heavily dependent on competitive external contract and grant funding. This funding is critical to make the positive impact in teaching and learning around the world. Continued funding support is an excellent indicator of the high-quality work that the LSI team produces. LSI has amassed \$775 million in contract and grant funding since inception making it one the top producing institutes and centers in this area.*

**\$775M**

Contracts and grants generated by LSI since inception  
(Not adjusted for inflation)

**During fiscal year 23-24...**

LSI had \$25.8M in expenditures, which was a 31% increase from the previous year and the highest number in a decade

Expenditures increased for the fifth consecutive year and in that span total expenditures have increased by 282%

Our researchers managed 34 active awards with a value of \$69.5M

Won 12 new contracts and grants

### Return On Investment

An important metric for LSI's performance is generating a strong return on every state/university dollar invested in the institute. This ratio is measured by dividing total dollar expenditures on contracts and grants by total expenditures from state/university dollars. This year, LSI's ROI was nearly **14X (13.83)**, it is the **fourth** consecutive year where LSI's ROI has exceeded 10X.

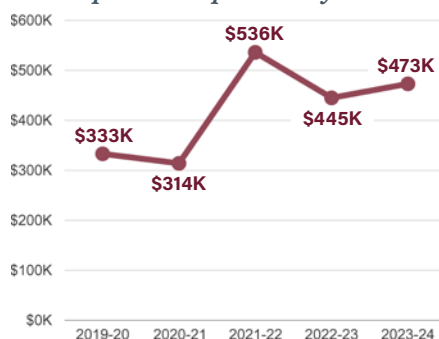
### Over 10X ROI



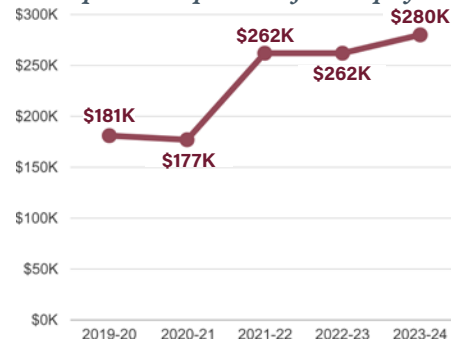
## Expenditures

While generating record levels of expenditures, the team demonstrated ingenuity, high productivity, and increased efficiency.

*Expenditures per Faculty FTE*



*Expenditures per FTE of All Employees*



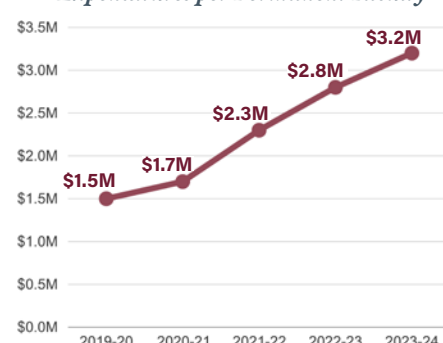
## R&D Expenditures

The overall expenditures during FY 23- 24 exceeded **\$25.7 million**. That is a **37% increase** over the prior year and an increase over each of the previous five fiscal years.

*LSI Total Expenditures*



*Expenditures per Permanent Faculty*



## LSI Team Update

The institute is making investments to continue to expand and deepen the expertise of the overall team. LSI added 28 new employees to our count during the year.

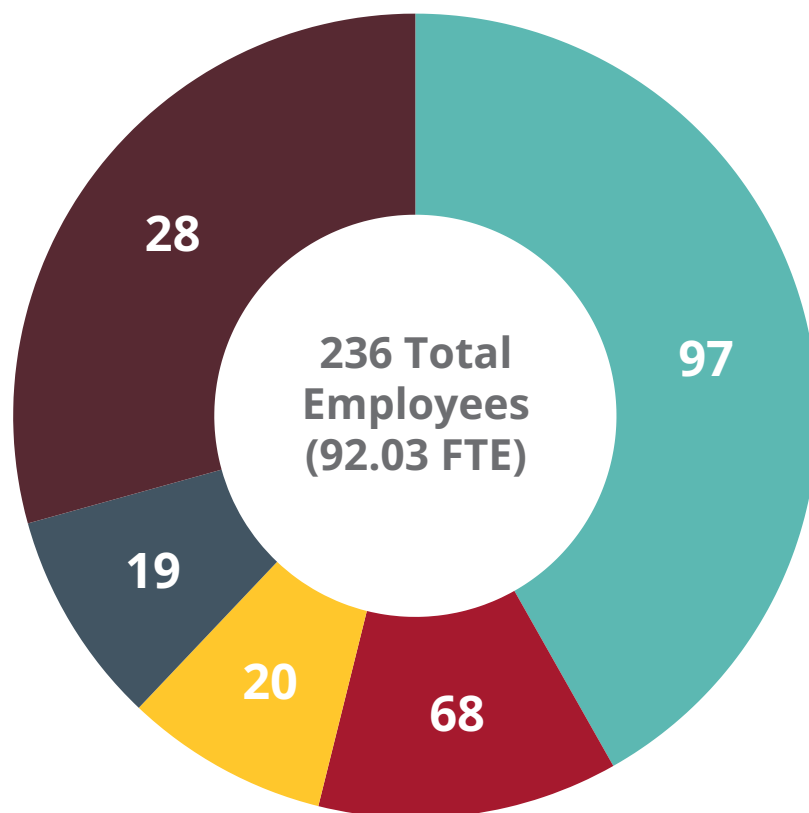
**97 Faculty Employees**  
(54.48 FTE)

**28 AP & USPS Employees**  
(15.09 FTE)

**19 OPS Grad Student Employees**  
(4.05 FTE)

**20 OPS Student Employees**  
(2.54 FTE)

**68 OPS Employees**  
(15.86 FTE)





# LSI International

LSI has worked on more than 1,000 projects and led dozens globally. Areas of activity include basic education (primary and secondary), higher education, vocational training, health, urban development, education technology, teacher training, reading/literacy instruction, rural communication, girls' education, instructional design, accommodations, and modifications for students with special needs; learning disabilities libraries; STEM (science, technology, engineering, math); expert performance improvement; learning technologies; sector assessments and evaluations.

LSI has provided technical assistance to developing countries, many funded directly or indirectly by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. State Department, UNICEF, and other international donors. Most of these international projects aim to improve primary, secondary, and tertiary education and support educational reforms that call for pre and in-service teacher education, curriculum, and materials development for all these levels, including technical and vocational training for workforce development.

## Transforming Teacher Education - Zambia

The Learning Systems Institute (LSI) at Florida State University is leading a five-year, \$15 million project sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development to improve pre-service teacher training in Zambia. Over the five-year period, the USAID Transforming Teacher Education Activity will give more than 60 Zambian teacher educators the skills to deliver effective instruction to 9,000 college and university students studying to become primary grade teachers.

During year four of the activity, LSI staff and its partners conducted a pedagogy training workshop for Literacy and Language Education (LLE) lecturers to enhance their uptake of pedagogical best practices for preparing student teachers to deliver quality instruction and to train vice principals and heads of language and literacy departments in coaching so that they continue supporting lecturers' pedagogical development. The latter is part of TTE's sustainability plans to ensure lecturers continue to grow professionally even after the TTE activity has ended. TTE then conducted follow up coaching to ensure lecturers were implementing what they learned in the pedagogy workshop. Coaches provided feedback and, in some cases, extra teaching resources to help the lecturers.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, four Zambian college of education lecturers completed semester-long residencies at FSU. At the University of Zambia, 21 TTE-participant lecturers completed the Special Master's of



Education Program in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics, earning their master's degrees in only one year and at a reduced cost.

Additionally, TTE facilitated demonstration school lessons learned and planning meetings between demonstration school leadership, COE leadership, and MOE provincial and district officials to share views on how implementation of demonstration school engagement worked in 2023 and how to enhance collaboration in 2024.

One of the most significant achievements of TTE to date is the institutionalization of the new school experience model developed by TTE and key stakeholders. In January 2024, the MOE issued a circular to public COEs on institutionalization of the updated SE approach. The circular issuance ensures the updated SE approach is now policy and it will continue to be implemented even after TTE ends. The updated SE approach is designed to ensure student teachers are equipped with the skills needed to teach primary schools learners how to read.





## Teacher Excellence Initiative – Egypt

The Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI) is a five-year project sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and led by the Education Development Center (EDC). LSI is collaborating with FSU's School of Teacher Education (STE) to provide technical expertise in strengthening education systems in Egypt. The Teacher Excellence Initiative project focuses on improving the quality and relevance of teacher preparation in Egyptian public universities, ensuring that teachers possess the necessary skills to support student learning in K-12 schools across the country.

In February 2024, FSU hosted a study tour, which brought Egyptian government officials, university deans, and faculty members from five selected universities to the FSU campus in Tallahassee. The objective was to highlight how a public university collaborates with the state to provide high-quality, standards-based teacher education, with a focus on elementary education, educational technology, and innovation. Additional focus areas included the topics of practicum, credit hours, and research.

Over the last year, LSI faculty led and participated in TEI working groups and research activities focused on universal design for learning and educational and instructional technologies. Additionally, FSU established a visiting fellows program, allowing Faculties of Education faculty members to engage with counterparts at LSI and the FSU School of Teacher Education. The first cohort of four faculty fellows was selected for arrival in August 2024.



## National Reading Program Implementation and Expansion – Malawi

USAID contracted Florida State University (prime) and School-To-School to implement the National Reading Program Implementation and Expansion Activity (NRPIE). The objectives of this activity include engaging with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and key stakeholders and curricular experts in Malawi to provide technical assistance across several curriculum-related activities.

During the past year, LSI provided intensive capacity development to the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) through workshops and virtual sessions in this USAID-funded project. Together, we have developed new teacher guides and learner books for English and Chichewa language arts classes for grades seven and eight to be used in all primary schools across Malawi. Through this process, our team improved the capacity of 10 MIE staff and approximately 100 other professionals (teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum writers) in literacy education, curriculum development, and monitoring and evaluation.

## Strengthening Teacher Education Practice – Malawi

In 2022, the Learning Systems Institute at Florida State University was chosen to lead a U.S. Agency for International Development sponsored project to improve teacher training in Malawi. The Strengthening Teacher Education and Practice (STEP) Activity aims to strengthen the higher education system that trains primary school teachers in the country as well as the professional development practices that support teachers through their careers.

Now in its third year, the STEP Malawi Activity is continuing to meet expectations and making successful strides to impact the entire primary education system. On a recent visit to the southern region of Malawi, the USAID team got a firsthand look at how the STEP project is faring. In the ensuing report, the team listed six significant successes that have been achieved.

They reported that Foundational Literacy Course (FLC) materials have strengthened the Teacher Training College (TTC) language curriculum. The team also wrote that improved instruction in the TTC classrooms have led to language departments performing well among TTC departments and the performance (grades) of student teachers have improved.

The report cites a culture of collaboration that has been established and is producing results. According



to the team, most TTC teacher educators are sharing notes on innovations they learn. This collaboration has facilitated the orientation of instructors from other disciplines within the college to FLC approaches. They also noted that Participatory Action Research (PAR) is becoming a dominant practice in the pre-service teacher education programs.

One of the STEP team's other significant accomplishments has been their ability to discover innovative ways to compensate for shortages in teaching materials due to a lack of resources. To acquire the teaching and learning materials they need, teachers must create them out of locally available resources under a process and approach popularly known as teaching and learning using locally available resources (TALULAR). For example, the STEP team collected thousands of bottle caps to teach phonological awareness and phonics lessons via Elkonin boxes.

## Education for Excellence Program – Uzbekistan

To support the Ministry of Public Education in achieving its reform agenda, USAID initiated the four-year, \$29.5 million Uzbekistan Education for Excellence Program, which concluded in 2023. The LSI team provided training, facilitation, and guidance on the development of new curriculum standards for math, Uzbek language arts, and English as a foreign language. In addition, the LSI team helped the ministry in evaluating, choosing, and customizing textbooks for teaching English as a second language.

LSI also led the development of a digital platform that houses all the curriculum standards and curricular



materials, including textbooks and supplemental resources, and can be used by all 300,000 teachers in Uzbekistan.



## ABC+: Advancing Basic Education – Philippines

The USAID ABC+: Advancing Basic Education in the Philippines project worked with DepEd, local governments, and the private sector to address factors that contribute to low learning outcomes in Bicol (Region V) and Western Visayas (Region VI) and implemented a smaller set of interventions in select School Divisions in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The project also focused on fostering a more equitable, inclusive, and nurturing climate for learning in the early grades as part of its social and emotional learning (SEL) focus.

As part of their partnership with USAID ABC+, LSI worked with Bicol University and West Visayas State University to develop modules for university courses on early literacy development and enhance their capacity to use these modules to strengthen the pre-service preparation of future teachers in the context of DepEd's Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program. The LSI team trained BU and WSU faculty on delivering the Literacy Development course and Teaching Beginning Reading course using modules jointly developed with the Filipino teaching faculty. Over 300 undergraduate students enrolled in the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Bachelor of Elementary Education took the courses and reported that, in contrast to other courses, these were more rigorous but



provided multiple opportunities for pedagogical practice, increasing their teaching capacity and confidence.

In addition, LSI built the research capacity of BU and WVSU teaching faculty and DepEd stakeholders, with a particular focus on early literacy, by engaging them in participatory action research experiences. For five months, 32 participants met with the LSI faculty in person and remotely to develop their research skills and engage in rigorous education research. In addition to learning about research methods, the participants designed research studies to produce contextually relevant evidence useful for early literacy instruction at schools and in pre-service training. These studies have been presented at local and regional professional conferences, participants are working on manuscripts for publication, and BU and WVSU faculty are integrating their newly acquired skills into their courses and master's and doctoral supervisory roles.

## Lebanon Higher Education Capacity Development Program

LSI continued its partnership with the USAID/ Lebanon Higher Education Capacity Development Program by welcoming two groups to Tallahassee in December. Both groups were comprised of nine Lebanese administrators representing each of the nine HECD partner universities. One study tour focused on employer engagement and the other focused on alumni tracking. This was the fifth year of the partnership and dozens of administrators and faculty from Lebanese universities have been trained by LSI and FSU's Career Center.





## Tunozé Gusoma Schools and Systems – Rwanda

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Tunozé Gusoma (Schools and Systems) Activity supports the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) in ensuring that the Kinyarwanda literacy environment for all pre-primary and lower primary schools and classrooms is high-quality, inclusive, and utilizes best practices in teaching and learning foundational literacy skills.

In December of 2023, the team finished piloting a new model for School Attachment (SA) at Teacher Training College (TTC) Bicumbi, TTC Mbuga, and TTC Mururu. This pilot aimed to strengthen the capacity of student teachers (STs) to transition into full-time teaching, deliver a Competence-Based Curriculum, and perform effectively in the classroom.

The work has continued in 2024. In January, the pre-service team engaged 32 tutors from all 16 TTCs, one REB staff, two NESA staff and one MINEDUC staff in a pedagogical training focused on pre-primary literacy education. The training was led by LSI's Dr. Marion Fesmire and Dr. Ana H. Marty, who conducted the



activity to build the capacity of tutors of the pre-primary (ECE) literacy teaching methods so that they can make their lessons more practical by using evidence-based practices for emergent literacy instruction.

Tunozé Gusoma held a Certificate Awarding Ceremony for 42 TTC tutors who participated in the Foundational Literacy Professional Development Course offered by Florida State University. The ceremony was held in February in Kigali. A Certificate of Completion with Distinction was awarded to 34 tutors who attended all professional development sessions and completed all course assignments, achieving a score of 80 points or higher.

## Community College Administrator Program

The Community College Administrator Program (CCAP) is a six-week study program for higher education administrators from post-secondary vocational and technical institutions. Funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by the Learning Systems Institute (LSI) at Florida State University (FSU) in partnership with Santa Fe College, this people-to-people exchange program aims to enhance international understanding of U.S. community college systems while fostering positive and collaborative relations between the United States and other countries. LSI has implemented 15 CCAPs for 15 countries in the last 10 years.

The CCAP highlights stackable credentials, public-private partnerships, and diversified sources of funding to support workforce needs. The projects have had a transformative impact abroad. Members from the Egyptian cohort helped



pass legislation to create new technological universities that enable students' mobility in acquiring Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees. Additionally, the second cohort from Ukraine succeeded in proposing legislation passed and signed by President Zelensky while LSI and SFC faculty were in Kyiv for the program's final week.

With over 300 CCAP alumni worldwide, the project's influence will continue to reverberate throughout educational systems for years to come.

## Primary Teaching Residency Program – Rwanda

Funded by the U.S.-based Rainwater Charitable Foundation and initiated by the Rwanda Ministry of Education, the Primary Teaching Residency Program (PTRP) aims to ensure that prospective teachers have ample opportunities to enhance their understanding of technical content and increased hands-on practice in primary classrooms combined with coaching and mentoring. These experiences will better prepare preservice teachers to implement the competence-based curriculum by developing the appropriate knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to lead the teaching and learning process.

The project is showing encouraging results after just two terms. During term two, more than 80 teacher residents (TRs) and 100 participants representing the 16 Teacher Training Colleges in Rwanda used targeted instructional strategies and received a performance rating of "meets" or "exceeds" expectations in all three observed lessons in the term. The TRs' knowledge, skills and attitudes in literacy, math and science continued to grow and the TRs continued increasing their engagement with online Canvas and in-person academic programming.

Among the additional achievements reported were TRs being more confident in teaching, continuing



to demonstrate growth in their ability to teach in different subjects, integrating the targeted pedagogical strategies in their lesson plans and teaching, reporting increased confidence and ability in English literacy and demonstrating increased speed and ease with ICT. The TRs expressed how having extended opportunities to practice instruction in the reality of the primary classroom impacted their confidence and agency as beginning teachers. There was also a 0% attrition rate during the first and second terms.

The PTRP is one of the significant milestones in the country's commitment to advancing education. It exemplifies Rwanda's dedication to excellence in education by taking a bold step toward improving teacher competence, skills and qualifications and creating a conducive environment for both teachers and students in the pursuit of quality education in the country.

---

## FSU Ukraine Task Force

Florida State University's Ukraine Task Force (UTF) was created in 2022 by Provost James Clark to support Ukrainian colleges and universities, explore areas of possible research or grant collaboration, educate students about Ukraine, and serve the community. Provost Clark recently reaffirmed FSU's commitment to the task force by placing it under the purview of Learning Systems Institute (LSI) at FSU and appointing Dr. Vilma Fuentes as full-time program director.

The UTF has facilitated numerous collaborations with FSU faculty and staff and Ukrainians both on-line and in-person. The UTF has hosted 14 Ukrainian university and technical college representatives in 2024. Four were fellows from the BridgeUSA Ukrainian Academic Fellows Program. FSU was the first university in the United States to host fellows through the program.



Faculty and staff from all areas of the FSU campus have been working with the UTF in its mission by proposing creative endeavors, teaching, research, and service opportunities related to Ukraine. There have been multiple opportunities for FSU's student body to discuss the conflict in Ukraine with the Ukrainian guests and dozens of relationships established for future collaboration.



# FCR-STEM

The Florida Center for Research in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (FCR-STEM) was created by the Florida Legislature and competitively awarded to Florida State University in 2007. It is another highly respected center operated by LSI faculty and staff.

The mission of FCR-STEM is to help the State of Florida improve STEM teaching and learning in grades K-12 and prepare students for higher education and STEM careers in the 21st century. Through research conducted at FCR-STEM, our staff works to answer the question, "How can we improve STEM integration and teaching and learning for all students?" These broad goals are addressed primarily through high-quality research, teacher professional development, and the development of innovative resources and tools to support instruction aligned with curriculum standards.



## CPALMS

CPALMS is a unique platform developed by LSI to support K-12 education in Florida and used by millions from all around the globe. More than 260,000 K-12 Florida educators and approximately three million Florida students actively use CPALMS to access educational resources, information to help them teach and learn, and software applications to support them throughout. CPALMS is the State of Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions. It provides access to thousands of standards-aligned, high-quality instructional and educational resources designed specifically to support standards-based instruction.

CPALMS.org is home to 500+ Perspectives Videos which are standards-aligned short (~5-min.) video resources highlighting experiences and ideas from experts, teachers, professionals, and skilled enthusiasts. This year CPALMS provided math teaching perspective videos that support teachers professional learning with teaching ideas, common misconceptions, and hands-on approaches to teaching math standards.

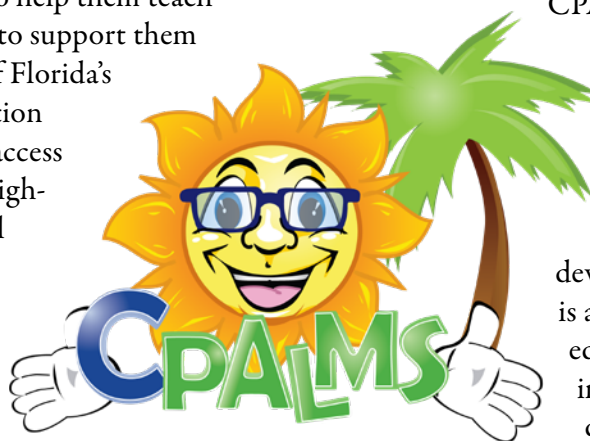
CPALMS also offers more than 13,000 high-quality educational resources developed by FSU faculty and K-12 educators. CPALMS features unique resources like 500+ Model Eliciting Activities (MEA) that

allow students to apply their knowledge in real-life applications where problem-solving and critical thinking take the lead. Since CPALMS started offering educational resources, more than one billion resource views/downloads have been delivered. During the last year, CPALMS had more than 70 million resources delivered to Florida's educators and students.

CPALMS also features over 1,300 Original Student Tutorials which are interactive online lessons for students to explore math, science, English language arts, and social studies content. The development of these tutorials is a collaboration between K-12 educators, subject specialists, instructional designers, graphic designers, narrators, and others who collectively spend 200-400 labor hours to create each tutorial. During the last year, several tutorials crossed a million views.

To meet the needs of teachers and students, CPALMS continues to innovate and provide new

types of resources. The newest resources are Interactive Research Pages which support K-5 students' development of independently using digital tools to research a variety of grade appropriate interdisciplinary topics that showcase a variety of literacy skills like using text features, building vocabulary and scaffolded notetaking.



OVER  
**ONE BILLION**  
RESOURCE VIEWS/DOWNLOADS



## InSPIRE

Florida State University's Institute for Strategic Partnerships, Innovation, Research, and Education (InSPIRE) project is a 10-year \$400M initiative led by the President, VP of Research, and the Office of the Provost, in partnership with FSU Office of Research, College of Engineering, and Learning Systems Institute (LSI). The project aims to diversify the economic development of the panhandle's Gulf Coast counties through building infrastructure and educational opportunities focused on advanced manufacturing and aerospace engineering.

The InSPIRE workforce and educational development team is being led by the CPALMS team. InSPIRE will strengthen and grow the skilled and diverse workforce required to support and staff a thriving aerospace and advanced manufacturing ecosystem headquartered in Northwest Florida. The institute will ensure that workforce development efforts align with industry needs and requirements. The CPALMS team will be providing educational support and workforce development in high-tech industries and engaging in STEM outreach activities to inspire and educate the next generation of innovators and leaders.

The launch of the pilot course "Engaging Elementary Students Using AI-powered Storytelling" included 30 elementary teachers from Florida's Gulf Coast and



introduced the teachers to the foundations and applications of generative AI and prompt engineering. The teachers learned how to use AI-driven tools to create and enhance e-readers to include narratives and informational texts with an aerospace theme for their students. They also explored the natural language processing and machine learning features embedded in generative AI, as well as the ethical and social implications of AI. The course included visits to FSU's High-Performance Materials Institute (HPMI) and the Florida Center for Advanced Aero-Propulsion (FCAAP), as well as interactions with engineers from GE Vernova and Lockheed Martin, and partners from Microsoft. The teachers earned an industry certification in Microsoft Office and a 35-hour AI Educator professional learning certificate and badge from Microsoft and FSU. They also gained access to curriculum and resources designed for use with students on exploring AI foundations and aerospace innovations and joined a network of "InSPIRED" teachers who serve as agents of change within their schools and communities.

## CPALMS Initiative for Career and Technical Education

CPALMS has expanded its support to include Career and Technical Education (CTE). In partnership with and funding support from the Florida Department of Education, the CPALMS team is designing and migrating a complex process and a massive data set to modern, efficient, and usable tools and resources for all educators. By the end of the project, CPALMS will have a CTE application to help the state manage all the programs, courses, and standards data, along with software tools and educational resources for teachers across the state. This project will lay the foundation to build support for students to explore CTE programs, careers, college degrees, and much more. At the same time, it will create a



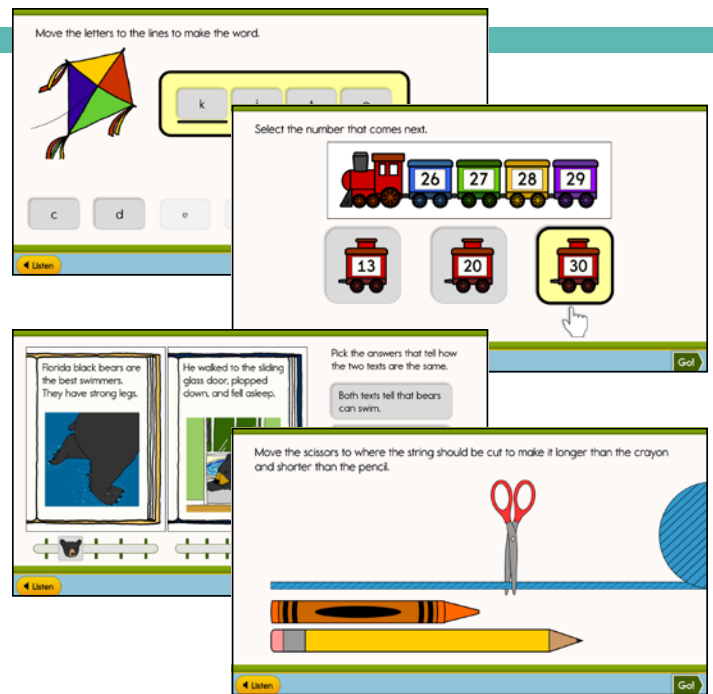
one-stop-shop for CTE teachers across the state to access resources for teaching and learning.

The CPALMS staff trained over 165 educators to create more than 450 resources that will be the first of many CTE resources featured on the new CPALMS CTE application. The resources are grounded in research-based integration and engaging pedagogy to support Florida CTE teachers who reach over 460,000 students preparing for future work.

## PreK-2 Assessment

LSI is leading the creation of PreK-2 English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessment items that will be on the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), a progress monitoring assessment administered across the state, in which over 800,000 students participate three times per year. LSI has trained over 150 PreK-2 practitioners from across Florida to create over 5,000 ELA and math test items. LSI guided item review teams to edit and vet each item, ensuring they are standards-aligned, reflect classroom-based pedagogy, and are appropriate for the unique needs of these early-grade learners.

Based on LSI's expertise and innovation, the team is pioneering a new interactive assessment format and system for PreK-2 learners that utilizes LSI's capabilities to help teachers adapt their instruction based on instantaneous and informative data while providing a playful computer-based formative assessment. This platform was named one of 16 learning engineering tools finalists in the Tools Competition, a multi-million-dollar



global prize challenge in EdTech. With this initial success, LSI will continue to refine the platform by embedding AI technologies to assist teachers with data reporting and instructional implications for their classrooms.

## CPALMS Civics Platform and Educational Resources

The CPALMS team leads the development of educational resources for civics, including integrated resources that can be used in math, science, English language arts (ELA), computer science/coding, social studies, and fine and performing arts. Over 1,600 instructional resources, such as lesson plans, student tutorials, and videos, were created and distributed on CPALMS for over 260,000 Florida teachers and 3 million Florida K-12 students. CPALMS recently debuted a new type of K-2 student resource, Interactive Research Pages, that will allow students to independently research and learn about civics while using ELA skills and concepts. Civics family guides were created to help families better understand the civics initiative and civics topics covered in each grade, along with ideas on how families can continue learning at home.

CPALMS was chosen to be the platform for the Florida civics portal. Our team created the platform to deliver civics education instructional resources to all K-12 educators across the state. The portal features thousands of educational resources the CPALMS team guided



during the development process to support teachers as they implement civics education, provide innovative ways to teach civics, and integrate civics into other content areas. The portal provides students and parents with resources that will enhance home-based support of civics education. While building this vast support system for the entire state, LSI vetted submissions from over 500 K-12 teachers and worked with collaborators from other Florida universities and organizations.



## GP-IN: Bridging the Gap into Geosciences for Underrepresented Pre-college Populations through Experiential Learning Opportunities

Starting in the summer of 2024 and continuing into the summer of 2025, Principal Investigator Amanda Tazaz, Ph.D., will lead a partnership of geoscience agencies in the state and several departments at FSU and Florida A&M University to develop four geoscience summer camp modules that will be implemented with pre-college students attending summer camp at the Boys and Girls Club of the Big Bend. The primary objective of this initiative is to lower the barriers to geoscience fields for traditionally underrepresented student groups by providing early exposure to the field.

Key to the project's success will be the contribution of geoscience professionals from an array of local institutions, including the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve, Coastal Plains Institute, Florida Geological Survey, Central Panhandle Aquatic Preserves, FSU's Coastal and Marine Laboratory, FSU's Department of Earth, Ocean, Atmospheric Science,



FSU's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Institute and FAMU's School of the Environment. The experts will mentor and support camp participants as they learn about the geosciences and engage with real-life geoscience data collection and research activities.

## The Florida Inclusion Network

The Florida Inclusion Network collaborates with all districts, schools, and IDEA funded state projects to provide customized services and supports to ensure all students with disabilities have the same educational, social, and future opportunities as their peers. In 2023-24:

- The Florida Inclusion Network promoted Collaborative Teaching Partnerships, an independent course for teachers who team teach or provide inclusion teaching. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, **279** individuals completed the 15-hour independent course.
- The Florida Inclusion Network promoted Building Inclusive Schools, an independent course for district and school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders to learn about information about best practices for creating and supporting an inclusive school culture. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, **758** individuals completed the 10-hour independent course.

- The Peers as Partners in Learning (PPL) program is provided through two service-oriented elective Florida courses, designed to provide peer supports for students with disabilities at the middle and high school levels. Students with and without disabilities who are partners comprise the PPL program at their specific school. In 2023-24, **878** middle school students in **14** districts participated in the middle school course, and **2,501** high school students in **29** districts participated in the high school course.
- In accordance with Section 1003.57, since July 2013, FIN has facilitated the district BPIE assessment process with all school districts, including **41** completed in 2023-2024. Additionally, over the last ten years, FIN has provided support in the completion of more than **11,000** school BPIE assessments, with **165** completed in 2023-2024.





## The Successful Start: Cognitively Guided Instruction

The Successful Start project is a partnership between LSI, The Children's Board of Hillsborough County, and Hillsborough County Public Schools. The project team provides early elementary school teachers with 8-days of mathematics teacher professional development based on Cognitively Guided Instruction.

In the 2023-2024 school year, 150 teachers from 20 elementary schools joined the CGI teacher training program. These teachers received training, coaching, and support from LSI's team of CGI experts. The project also collected and analyzed data on how the program affected teachers and students, such as teacher knowledge, beliefs, and practices, and student achievement, attitudes, and involvement in math. Results from the first year of the project were very good.



## CPALMS Professional Development

The CPALMS staff hosts professional development (PD) workshops in Tallahassee and around the state. Each workshop is rooted in research based best practices to expand participants' content knowledge and pedagogical repertoire. The PDs cover financial literacy, civics integration, career and technical education, and coding with Scratch. Almost 700 Florida educators participated in over 20 workshops in 2023.

## Math Lions

This was the second year of the Math Lions project, funded by the National Science Foundation. The aims of this project are to 1) develop materials for a math anxiety intervention for children, 2) test the intervention's effect on math anxiety in a cluster randomized trial in schools, and 3) see whether there are subsequent effects on working memory, math avoidance, and then math achievement.

During this past year, we engaged in an iterative development and testing process for intervention materials including facilitator training materials, a child journal and a facilitator guide. We tested the intervention with 13 individual children in the lab and 7 children in groups. We then revised the materials based on what we learned, and recruited and implemented the intervention within 4 public elementary schools in a cluster randomized trial.



## Professional Learning Platform

CPALMS supported the Department of Education's Civics Excellence Initiative by building an interactive online learning system featuring a 55-hour teacher professional development course. The system was created from the ground up in the CPALMS platform and was launched in just months. It includes the development of advanced and AI tools, as well as a built-in support system. More than 18,500 Florida teachers completed this online course during the eight months period. We are expecting to open the course again this coming year to support thousands more.



## Awards & Recognition

**Dr. Robert Schoen** was awarded the Robert M. Gagné prize from the FSU College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences for outstanding faculty research. His research study titled "Impact of an Inquiry-Oriented Intervention on Teaching and Learning of Seventh-grade Statistics" used a randomized controlled trial research design to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention designed to improve teaching and learning of statistics and data literacy, offering valuable insights for educators seeking to improve these critically important skills.



The Gulf Research Program (GRP) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine selected LSI's

**Dr. Amanda Tazaz** as one of five early-career research fellows. Dr. Tazaz, a Senior Research Associate, is among the 2023-2025 cohort for the Education Research track. The Gulf Research Program's Early-Career Research Fellowship helps researchers during the critical phase of their careers. Dr. Tazaz will join other fellows in the Education Research track who are working toward the advancement of STEM and environmental education in the Gulf of Mexico region by considering the impacts of establishing sense-of-place in formal or informal learning environments.



**Kate Schell** was accepted to the 2024 David L. Clark Graduate Seminar in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies. The David L. Clark National Graduate Student Research Seminar in Educational Administration & Policy brings emerging educational administration and policy scholars and noted researchers together for presentations, generative discussion, and professional growth.







**LEARNING SYSTEMS INSTITUTE**  
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY