

THE IRIS CENTER  
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT CFDA 84.325E  
(PR/Award Number: H325E120002)



Administrative Progress Report  
for  
Year 3, Quarter 2

Submitted to:

Sarah Allen  
Tracie Dickson  
Research to Practice Division  
Office of Special Education Programs  
Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services  
United States Department of Education

10 July 2015

Naomi Tyler  
Deborah Deutsch Smith

## The IRIS Center Quarterly Report/April–June 2015 [Year 3, Quarter 2]

---

The IRIS Center produces these Quarterly Reports as both a narrative of our effort and a detailed account of our work and progress. This Second Quarter of Year Three found the Center busy creating new instructional resources and materials, updating others, hosting trainings, and taking part in presentations and conferences. Read on to learn all the latest from the IRIS Center.

---

### IRIS BOARD MEETING

Planning for the Year 3 IRIS Board Meeting, to be held on July 23, 2015, is currently underway. The meeting will be held virtually.

---

### BUILD PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE

*See this section for brief descriptions of those items having to do with our ongoing infrastructure development and enhancement.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **The IRIS Professional Development Hours Shop:** This new feature will allow IRIS users to work through any of a variety of *STAR Legacy* Modules and to receive a certificate of completion and verification of effort that they can in turn and apply toward professional development hours. During this quarter, we conducted field-tests on the shop's interface and received feedback and advice on how it could be improved. The Professional Development Hours Shop will go live in July.
- 

### MAINTAIN PROJECT BUDGET

The co-directors and budget managers at both locations carefully monitor expenditures and encumbrances. Costs for events and activities are under close scrutiny to ensure that no over-expenditures occur in Year 3.

## DEVELOP

*The Center develops teaching and learning tools, and content and training Modules reflecting evidence-based instructional and intervention practices. These tools are designed for use by IHE faculty, professional development providers, and practicing educators, and are high quality, useful, relevant, and non-duplicative.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **STAR Legacy Modules:**
  - A Module on autism spectrum disorders, with content developed by expert Ilene Schwartz of the University of Washington, is nearing completion. Currently, the Module content is out for expert review, and the resource should be posted in the coming quarter. The Module is being reviewed by Phil Strain, director of the PELE Center; Evelyn Shaw, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA); Wendy Stone, the University of Washington Autism Center; Lisa Ruble (who was recommended to us by Steven Brock, National Association of School Psychologists [NASP]), Center for Autism Spectrum Evaluation, Service, and Research; and Kara Hume, the Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.
  - A pair of Modules about data-based individualization (DBI)—one on intensifying intervention and one on collecting data to make decisions—is nearing completion. We are creating the resources in collaboration with CEEDAR and the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Our experts for these resources are Rebecca Zumeta and Sarah Arden from AIR. The resources are ready to go out for expert review.
  - A Module about setting up early childhood environments is currently in the works. Ilene Schwartz of the University of Washington College of Education is creating content for the resource, which we expect to be delivered in late July.
  - Another *STAR Legacy* Module—this one having to do with early childhood dual-language learners—is currently being developed with content from Rosa Milagros Santos of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. We expect that content to be delivered in early July.

- **Activities:**
  - Two new Activities—“Early Childhood Behavior Management: Teaching and Reinforcing Rules” and “Early Childhood Behavior Management: Rule Reminders”—have now been posted to our Website.
- **Sample Professional Development (PD) Activity Collection:** Our newly posted Sample Professional Development (PD) Activity Collection is designed to serve as a resource to PD providers creating training events both for practicing educators and beginning teachers engaged in induction experiences. In it, users will find examples of the ways in which information about evidence-based practices, delivered through IRIS resources, can be integrated into PD activities about all children and students, especially those with disabilities. Silvia DeRuvo, Susan Courey, and Inge Poole have been essential in providing content. Currently available are PD activities related to our *Classroom Management (Part 1): Learning the Components of a Comprehensive Behavior Management Plan* and *Differentiated Instruction: Maximizing the Learning of All Students* Modules. For those who wish to create their own PD event, a generic Facilitator’s Guide—developed by Deborah Reed—is also available. Another PD Activity is also currently in the works and will be posted sometime during the coming quarter.
- **Curriculum Matrices:** In partnership with California State University, Dominguez Hills, we are currently developing new pre- and post-curriculum matrices for the new licensure program being developed through an OSEP-funded personnel preparation project.
- **Sample Syllabi Collection:** This collection—designed to provide examples of the ways in which information about evidence-based practices, including IRIS resources on those topics, can be integrated into coursework about all children and students, especially those with disabilities—has been updated to reflect new standards. The revised syllabi are now available on our Website.
- **Module Answer Keys:** Designed to support faculty grading in college coursework and PD providers during trainings, these new resources detail possible responses to a given *STAR Legacy* Module’s Assessment questions. Answer Keys for every Module are now available to our visitors.
- **Wrap-Around Concept Maps:** These diagrams are designed to help instructors—both college faculty and professional development providers, as well as independent learners—extend and deepen the information included in our Modules and Case Study Units through the use of supporting materials available on the IRIS Website, such as Activities and

videos. The entire collection of Concept Maps has been upgraded to include hot links to the aforementioned related resources. This interactivity makes them far easier and more convenient for IRIS users to access.

- **Top Tips for PD Providers and Top Tips for Faculty:** These two handy resources include many suggestions about how to use IRIS resources and online tools. Both of these Top Tips handouts were revised and have been posted to the Website.
- **Web Resource Directory:** This list of other federally funded sites and centers has now been updated and will be posted next quarter.
- **Film: Portrayals of People with Disabilities:** This resource, which represents an attempt to catalogue the representation of people with disabilities in motion pictures, has been updated with information about recent feature films and documentaries.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **STAR Legacy Modules:**
  - **Post-Secondary Transition: Inter-Agency Collaboration:** We are in the very early stages of developing a Module having to do with collaborations between agencies for young adults with disabilities (ages 18–21). Mary Morningstar of the University of Kansas Department of Special Education is providing content for this resource, which we expect to complete sometime early in Year 4.
  - **Student-Centered Transition Planning:** Another resource about students and young adults ages 18–21, this one about student-centered transition planning, is also in the very early stages of development and is expected to be completed during the first part of Year 4. Erik Carter of Vanderbilt University will provide expert content.
  - **Autism:** We are currently reviewing content for a second Module on autism for development sometime during Year 4. This content, developed by Ilene Schwartz, focuses on evidence-based practices.

- **Case Study Units:** A Case Study Unit dealing with early childhood behavior management is in the works and will serve as a companion to our Module on that same topic. Jessica Hardy, a Research Associate at Vanderbilt University, is providing content for this early childhood resource. Two additional Case Study Units have been proposed; they delve deeper into error analysis in reading and mathematics and can be used as accompaniment to our Modules on data-based individualization.
- 

## DISSEMINATE

*The Center will build IHE faculty and PD providers' awareness and knowledge regarding the infusion of IRIS and other federally funded products into their courses, program curricula, and PD trainings through multiple dissemination efforts.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **Presentations and Outreach Efforts:** Throughout the year, the IRIS Center attends regional and national conferences to present on our training and instructional resources and to keep audiences up-to-date on everything that is new with IRIS. Information about presentations is below.
  - **IDEA Data Center:** We made a trio of presentations on our new Modules about evidence-based practices and our online Evidence-Based Practice Summary tool at the IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP. In addition, we helped State personnel to identify IRIS resources that align with their SSIPs during the SSIP and Data Tools Marketplace. The IDC Institutes were held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in April and in Jacksonville, Florida, and Chicago, Illinois, in May.
  - **CEC:** On April 8–11, we took part in the Council for Exceptional Children's national convention and expo in San Diego, California. We led a demonstration about our latest resources and presented a pair of poster sessions on the topics of behavior intervention and reading/literacy. During the conference, the Council for Exceptional Children's Teacher Education Division (TED) presented IRIS' own Deb Smith with the 2015 TED/Pearson Excellence in Teacher Education Award at the council's annual convention. TED and Pearson Publishing presented the Excellence in Teacher Education Award at a reception in honor of an individual who has demonstrated an exemplary commitment to special education teacher education, preparation of future leaders, or leadership in scholarly work and legislative advocacy.

- **Leveraging Resources:** In May, we participated in the Leveraging Resources meeting in Washington, DC. IRIS was also on hand for a supplemental meeting on collaboration between centers for OSEP-selected center directors.
- **OSEP Project Directors' Meeting:** In April, IRIS staff attended this virtual conference and presented a poster session to introduce the latest IRIS resources.
- **TACC Webinar:** Hosted by the Technical Assistance Coordination Center (TACC), this Webinar highlighted our recent Module on early childhood behavior management. Presenters Mary Louise Hemmeter, Professor in the Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University; Jessica Hardy, Research Associate at Vanderbilt University; and Amy Harris, Program Manager and Module developer at the IRIS Center guided participants through the resource and addressed questions. The Webinar was held on April 14 and is now archived on the IRIS Website.
- **TN Disability MegaConference:** In May, we sent informational brochures about IRIS and our resources to the annual meeting of the TN Disability MegaConference in Nashville.
- **Social Equity Leadership Conference:** On June 3–5, we presented on the merits of online resource dissemination to level the educational playing field at the Social Equity Leadership Conference, held at Tennessee State University in Nashville.
- **NAEYC:** On June 7–10, we had a booth in the exhibit hall of the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development's (NAEYC) National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development in New Orleans, Louisiana, where we provided information about our Website and resources to attendees.

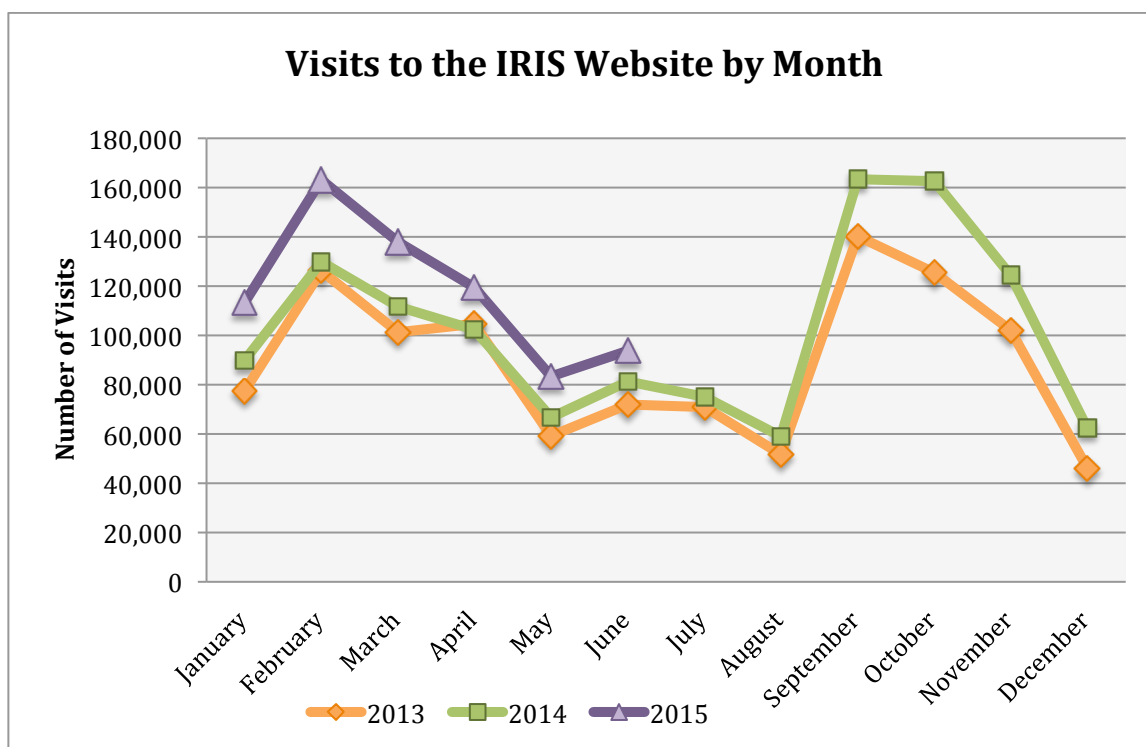
*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **CLD:** On October 1–2, we will attend the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, where we will host a pair of poster sessions and take part in a panel presentation.
- **DCDT:** On November 5–7, we will present on our *Secondary Transition: Helping Students with Disabilities Plan for Post-High School Settings* Module at the meeting of the Division for Career Development and Transition in Portland, Oregon.

- **Upcoming Articles:** The Center often publishes information about our work and our Center in various educational journals and newsletters. Among our upcoming efforts:
  - An article by Cammy Purper, IRIS Project Assistant for EI/EC, titled "Right at Your Fingertips: Important Web-Based Resources for Understanding Evidence-Based Practices," has been accepted for publication in *Early Childhood Education Journal*. The article features information about the IRIS Center and our resources.
  - A manuscript is currently being developed and will be submitted in August to the journal *Preventing School Failure* on the topic of the prevention of juvenile delinquency through academic success. The paper is being prepared by Taryn Vanderpyl, Sara Werner Juarez, and Cammy Purper.

## WEBSITE VISITOR DATA

The monthly visits to the IRIS Center Website continue to follow the same pattern as that of past years even as they increase in number. There were 18% more visits (an increase of over 46,000 visits) to the Website during the Second Quarter of 2015 compared to the same period last year.





The IRIS Center field-tested four Modules this semester: *Evidence-Based Practices Parts 1 through 3* and *Secondary Reading Instruction (Part 2)*. A total of 11 faculty and 435 students worked through these Modules and offered specific feedback as well as overall ratings of each Module's quality, relevance, and usefulness. The student ratings are summarized in the table below.

Module	No. of students	Average quality rating*	Average relevance rating*	Average usefulness rating*
Evidence-Based Practices (Part 1): Identifying and Selecting a Practice or Program	130	3.83	3.80	3.74
Evidence-Based Practices (Part 2): Implementing a Practice or Program with Fidelity	69	3.84	3.83	3.72
Evidence-Based Practices (Part 3): Evaluating Learner Outcomes and Fidelity	107	3.80	3.92	3.77
Secondary Reading Instruction (Part 2): Deepening Middle School Content-Area Learning with Vocabulary and Comprehension Strategies	129	3.94	3.66	3.60

\*5-point scale

A voluntary IRIS online survey asks respondents to rate our Modules' usefulness, relevance, and quality on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest rating). This quarter, there were 591 respondents to the survey. The first table (below) summarizes descriptive information about the respondents.

Respondents	Number
Graduate Student	195
Experienced Teacher	144
College Student	131
New Teacher	70
Other (e.g., parent)	21
College Faculty	14
School Leader	11
PD Provider	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>591</b>

The next table (below) presents this quarter's survey respondents' overall ratings of the IRIS Modules for quality, relevance, and usefulness.

	Mean Ratings
<b>Quality</b>	4.14
<b>Relevance</b>	4.12
<b>Usefulness</b>	4.12

Respondents were also asked to describe the area they worked or studied in. The table below summarizes the responses we received to this question this quarter.

Response	Number
General education	201
Special education	184
Other	93
Early childhood education	82
Early childhood special education	26
Early intervention services	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>591</b>

## TA/TRAINING

*The Center will raise IHE faculty and PD providers' awareness and knowledge regarding the infusion of IRIS and other federally funded products into their courses, program curricula, and PD trainings through a targeted and intensive system of technical assistance and training; and the development of high quality, useful, relevant and non-duplicative products and services.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **PD Hours:** A new section of our Website that offers Modules available for professional development tracking is in the final stages of development. Through this feature, practitioners (e.g., teachers) can take a pre-test, work through our resources—and after completing a post-test—receive a certificate verifying Module completion. The certificate will include the number of hours it typically takes users to work through the Module; the practitioner can then apply those hours toward their professional development hours. This new section will be available early in the coming quarter.

- **Faculty Seminars:** These events focus on improving faculty knowledge and skills about evidence-based practices, using our Website and instructional resources, embedding IRIS resources into course-management systems, and revising course syllabi.
  - On April 23–25, we held a Faculty Seminar in Baltimore, Maryland. Twenty-two faculty members and PD providers from area IHEs including Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and Washington, DC, took part in the event. Evaluation scores were high, with 94% of attendees reporting increased awareness, 88% reporting increased knowledge, and 100% reporting increased capacity. As a follow-up activity to this Seminar, a new PD activity matrix, developed by attendees from Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland, is being reviewed by staff for posting on the IRIS Website.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **Faculty Seminars:**
    - We are currently pending confirmation by Ohio for an intensive Faculty Seminar, a PD Seminar in the state, or both. By April we'll shift our attention toward other states that have requested technical assistance, including Oklahoma, Illinois, Indiana, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.
    - We are currently planning a Faculty Seminar for the Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC) to take place on November 12–13 in Bozeman (though the site has yet to be confirmed). We anticipate that some 30–40 faculty will take part in the day-and-half event.
    - We have developed and submitted for approval a proposal for concentrated training efforts in California, where we have had many requests for our services. We anticipate beginning this agenda in Fall 2015 and continuing with additional seminars throughout Year 4. We are in communication with the CEEDAR Center, which may be able to offer assistance in our statewide efforts.
  - **PD Seminars:**
    - A specially designed PD Seminar is being offered to the leadership in the Wyoming State Department on July 17 in Cheyenne. This is potentially the first in a series of Seminars that will center on IRIS resources and literacy.
-

## DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING

*The Center will implement a process for making decisions about development, technical assistance and training services, and dissemination efforts that align with developments in the field, reflect evidence-based instructional and intervention practices, and are responsive to the needs of IHE faculty, professional development providers, and practicing educators.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- Content for our forthcoming Module on autism spectrum disorders has been sent to five expert reviewers. We await their feedback to make data-based decisions to guide the development of this resource. We expect this resource to post sometime in the coming quarter.
- 

## COLLABORATE

*The Center will support development, technical assistance and training services, and dissemination efforts through collaborative processes to ensure that products and services align with developments in the field.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **IDEA Data Center:** As was mentioned above, we made a trio of presentations on our new Modules about evidence-based practices and our online Evidence-Based Practice Summary Tool at the IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP. In addition, we helped state personnel to identify IRIS resources that align with their SSIPs during the SSIP and Data Tools Marketplace. The IDC Institutes were held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in April and in Jacksonville, Florida, and Chicago, Illinois, in May.
- **Dialogue Guides:** We are planning a collaboration with the IDEA Partnership, which is creating dialogue guides for our recently posted Modules on evidence-based practices and programs.
- **Module Development:** Two Modules on the topic of data-based individualization are under development in collaboration with AIR and CEEDAR, with content provided by Rebecca Zumeta and Sarah Arden of AIR.

- **CSU-Dominguez Hills:** As we mentioned earlier in the report, we are working with California State University, Dominguez Hills to develop new curriculum matrices, reflecting a new licensure program being developed through the OSEP personnel preparation project. One of the purposes of that effort is to integrate IRIS resources about response-to-intervention (RTI) throughout coursework for a newly funded credential pathway, the Secondary Special Education Teacher Interventionist.
- **Early Childhood Collaboration:** The Center coordinates monthly calls with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), the Early Childhood Parenting Center (ECPC), and the Center for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy).
- **Wyoming SEA and State Personnel Development Grant:** We are currently developing a PD Seminar with the state of Wyoming. Key leadership team members will work with an IRIS trainer to develop a plan for future training events with coaches and facilitators statewide that will focus on SSIP literacy goals.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **CEEDAR Webinar:** As was mentioned earlier in the report, we are currently working with the CEEDAR Center to host a joint Webinar sometime in the near future.
- **ECTA:** We are working with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, which is assisting with our forthcoming Modules on autism spectrum disorders.
- **NASP:** Likewise, we are working with the National Association of School Psychologists, who has made recommendations regarding outside reviewers for our forthcoming autism Modules.

---

## EVALUATE

- **Follow-Up Surveys:**
  - A six-month follow-up survey went out to Utah PD Seminar participants. Fourteen evaluations were returned, for a 93% response rate. IRIS online resources were rated on quality (4.25 out of 5), relevance (4.33 out of 5), and usefulness (4.33 out of possible 5), with 100% of participants indicating they would recommend IRIS to their colleagues.

- A six-month follow-up survey went out to participants of the IRIS Faculty Seminar in Omaha, Nebraska. Fourteen evaluations were returned, for a 74% response rate. The quality, relevance, and usefulness of IRIS resources were all rated at 4.36 (out of possible 5), with 100% of participants indicating they would recommend IRIS to their colleagues.

## PERSONNEL

*See this space for notes and information on new or outgoing IRIS personnel.*

- The IRIS Center bids a fond farewell to Sara Werner Juarez, one of our IRIS@CGU Project Assistants, who has accepted a tenure-track position in special education at Fresno State University.