



# The IRIS Center Quarterly Report

Cooperative Agreement CFDA 84.325E  
(PR/Award Number: H325E170001)

Administrative Progress Report:

Year 4/Quarter 2

Submitted To:

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

Submitted 4/09/21

Naomi Tyler, Director



[iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu)  
[iriscenter.com](http://iriscenter.com)

Serving: Higher Education Faculty • PD Providers • Practicing Educators  
Supporting the preparation of effective educators with the knowledge and  
skills to use evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for all students,  
especially struggling learners and those with disabilities.



Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office  
of Special Education Programs (OSEP)

## Quarterly Report

### January – March 2021

### [Year 4/Quarter 2]

**Our Quarter At-A-Glance:** The IRIS Center presents these quarterly reports as a narrative of our efforts and a detailed account of our work and progress. Below are just a few highlights from the previous three months. We invite you to read on for further details of all this and so much more.

- IRIS produced and disseminated our official **2020 Data Summary**.
- IRIS hosted its first **virtual exhibit booth** at the National Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) Conference.
- IRIS hosted a **virtual exhibit booth and conducted two presentations** at the Council for Exceptional Children 2021 Convention/Expo.
- Our popular **newsletter's Spring Edition** hit the virtual newsstand.
- A trio of new **IRIS Stories** detail the experience of our users in Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Florida in their own words.

**PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE:** *IRIS is engaged in a continuous effort to improve and expand the quality and reach of our resources through ongoing infrastructure development and enhancement.*

⇒ **Year 4 Workplan:** Currently under review by our OSEP Project Officer, our Year 4 workplan will guide our efforts in the areas of development, dissemination, TA & training, collaboration, and evaluation.

⇒ **Website Programming Updates & Improvements:** Many significant improvements to the IRIS Website happen “behind the scenes” at the programming level and are therefore virtually invisible to our users. Immediately noticeable or not, however, these adjustments and fine tunings are indispensable to a smooth running, user-friendly online experience. A log of some of our recent activity follows.

- ❖ **Learning Management System:** Plans to replace our School & District Platform’s existing dashboard with a more sophisticated learning management system (LMS) are currently on hold, pending the hiring of an additional programmer. This updated LMS will facilitate a vastly more fluid interface for IRIS users, offering greater flexibility, more accurate data-tracking, improved customization of modules, and expanded options for assessments, among much else.

- ❖ **Website Maintenance:** Operating a Website as large and complex as ours requires close attention to detail and a constant search for ways to improve the overall experience of our guests. Here are two items of note from the quarter that was.
  - Because of the addition of resources and professional development accounts to the IRIS Website database, the maintenance of database tables is critical to optimal Website performance. As such, we have focused time and effort on this activity this past quarter.
  - The email programming associated with the import of subscribing school district accounts was renovated to fit in with the current email configuration that we established at the beginning of the pandemic.
- ❖ **Programmer:** IRIS continues our search for a new programmer. This active and ongoing process will see a new round of interviews with potential candidates in the coming quarter.

**PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:** *IRIS develops online resources about evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices to help improve the education outcomes of all students, particularly struggling learners and those with disabilities. Created with the assistance of many of the top experts in their fields, IRIS resources—whether modules, case studies, fundamental skill sheets, or many others—are innovative, interactive, and practical for use in college and university coursework, by PD providers, and by teachers in today’s classrooms.*

**Modules:** The signature resource of our center, IRIS Modules cover information about fundamental topics and evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices on a wide variety of topic areas, including classroom behavior management, MTSS/RTI, and high-quality IEPs, to name but a few.

⇒ **Module Revision:** IRIS is revising a number of our existing modules and module series with updated information and expanded resources.

- ❖ **Module Revisions Underway:** Updates and expansions of the following modules are in progress (as noted in their individual descriptions [see below]) and were scheduled to post in Year 4. However, many of these were put on hold as we responded to the needs of educators and parent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, some of these modules are reliant on in-class video shoots, which we will be unable to complete until such a time as health-and-safety guidelines allow for safe access to schools, classrooms, and students. As such, they will not be completed in Year 4.



- ❖ **Classroom Behavior Management:** Kathleen Lane, the original content expert for *Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors Parts 1 and 2*, has provided revisions for **Part 1** and is now working on the second module in the sequence. The development of these modules requires in-classroom video shoots, which we are unable to complete for the foreseeable future.
- ❖ **Classroom Management:** Mike Rosenberg and Lori Jackman, the original content experts for *Classroom Management Parts 1 and 2*, have agreed to revise the content for these modules. Currently, **Part 1** describes the components of a comprehensive behavior management plan while **Part 2** guides users through the steps of creating their own comprehensive behavior plan. During the revision process, the content of these modules will be reworked and enhanced, resulting in **three modules**: one offering foundational information and practices for equitable and culturally responsive classroom management, another focusing on classroom management at the elementary level, and a third targeting middle and high school. We hope to post at least two of these modules in August so that they are available to help prepare teachers for the fall semester.
- ❖ **Writing Performance:** During this quarter, Tanya Santangelo of Arcadia University, an expert recommended by Steve Graham, has been revising *Improving Writing Performance: A Strategy for Writing Persuasive Essays*. We anticipate receiving the revisions from the content expert during the next quarter and hope to complete the module during Year 5.
- ❖ **Self-Regulated Strategy Development:** Karen Harris (one of the original content experts) and Debra McKeown have reviewed and provided recommendations for revising *SRSD: Using Learning Strategies To Enhance Student Learning*. In the coming quarter, we will discuss with them how to move forward.
- ❖ **Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities:** IRIS will collaborate with the TIES Center, the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies, to develop a module that focuses on inclusive education for students with significant cognitive disabilities. More specifically, it will focus on collaborative planning by general and special education teachers to effectively include their students in general education classrooms. The TIES Center will develop the content and deliver to IRIS by the end of August. Our center will then “IRIS-ize” the content and host the module on our Website. We anticipate posting this module in Year 5.

**Case Studies:** These multi-part resources ask users to analyze and respond to a number of problem-based classroom issues and challenges—for example classroom norms and expectations, algebra instruction, or classroom arrangement—through increasing levels of complexity and detail.

- ⇒ **Encouraging Appropriate Behavior:** Christina Curran, the original content developer of *Encouraging Appropriate Behavior*, has completed a revision of that resource. This case study unit outlines positive behavior management techniques that can be employed with individual students who have behavioral concerns that are not effectively addressed by comprehensive classroom rules. We anticipate posting this case study in August, prior to the beginning of the fall semester.
- ⇒ **Collection Reformat:** IRIS is updating our entire collection of case study units with a newer, more scaffolded, and appealing format to match our improved product-quality standards. Although this work was put on hold to complete resources addressing COVID-19, it is now underway. Because they are revisions of current resources, we plan to post this collection at the end of the spring semester, so as not to interfere with use of the existing case study units in college and university courses.

**Course/PD Activities:** Handy, focused resources for use as independent assignments or to promote classroom discussion, IRIS Course/PD Activities cover a diverse range of topics, including behavior management, language disorders, and many others.

- ⇒ **Course/PD Activities Update:** IRIS is overhauling our course/PD activities collection (110 resources in all). Almost every activity will be revised, and a few outdated and/or unused resources will be removed from the IRIS Website entirely. We are also in the process of updating the resources' format and design to match our improved product-quality standards. Because they are revisions of current resources, we plan to post this collection at the end of the spring semester, once courses have ended.
- ⇒ **New Activities:** IRIS is currently developing a suite of new activities to complement our recently revised module on family engagement. These new resources will be available early in the coming quarter.

**Fundamental Skill Sheets:** Practical and informative, IRIS Fundamental Skill Sheets offer educators quick primers (or reminders!) about discrete skills and practices indispensable to their role as effective classroom teachers.

- ⇒ **FSS for Virtual Environments:** IRIS is currently collaborating with Kathleen Lane from the center for the Comprehensive, Integrated Three-Tiered Model of Prevention (Ci3T) to develop a set of fundamental skill sheets (FSS) that describe low-intensity strategies for virtual learning environments. IRIS is aligning this content with our current FSS and adding videos demonstrating both examples and non-examples of implementation at the elementary and secondary levels. The content for the first two, behavior-specific praise and

pre-correction, is in progress. Angelica Fulchini, an IRIS Technology Innovation Post-Doctoral Scholar, worked with a teacher and students from Unlocking Children's Potential (UCP) charter schools in Florida to complete the needed videos. We anticipate posting these first two FSS in the coming quarter.

**Parent Tip Sheets:** Short, user-friendly, and to-the-point, our tip sheets offer parents strategies, tips, and suggestions for supporting their children's learning they can put into practice right away.

⇒ **New Resource:** IRIS has developed a third tip sheet for parents to complement the *Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic* module. **"How can I support my teen while he learns online?"** is now available in the module, as well as in our newly created [COVID-19 resources section](#) and is also available in Spanish. In addition, the content for a fourth tip sheet on keeping teens engaged during online instruction has been developed and will be posted early next quarter.

**Information Briefs:** These online resources developed by other programs and centers are collected and curated by IRIS as supplemental materials. Information briefs cover everything from accommodations for students with disabilities to Universal Design for Learning and peer-assisted learning strategies.

⇒ **Collection Overhaul:** Our entire collection of info briefs is undergoing a significant overhaul. Spearheaded by Deb Smith and ShedeH Hajghassemali, this huge undertaking will examine our collection of more than 300 information briefs with an eye toward removing older or outdated resources and adding more recent and relevant briefs. To make the task more manageable, we identified six topic areas for initial review: Content Instruction, Differentiated Instruction, Disabilities, Learning Strategies, Reading, Early Childhood, plus a separate pull-out for Evidence-Based Practices. Reviews by a panel of experts has been completed for three topics (EC, EBPs, and Disability) and the recommended briefs were posted early this quarter. Additionally, work has begun on three additional topics: Learning Strategies, Content Instruction, and Reading. We anticipate sending briefs on these topics out for expert review in the upcoming quarter. Recommended briefs will be posted throughout the year.

⇒ **New Information Brief:** In response to consumer feedback following the removal of our now outdated module on effective school practices, during Year 4 IRIS will develop an information brief on collaboration between teachers and principals, among teachers, and between school personnel and parents.

**IRIS Online Tools:** From a glossary of terms related to disabilities to the IRIS Books and Films Tools to our Evidence-Based Practice Summaries, IRIS online tools are user-friendly, informative, and always growing.

⇒ **IRIS Glossary:** This searchable glossary of definitions for the disability-related terms covered in many of our resources is currently undergoing revision. We have created a master list of terms and begun the process of reviewing and updating them. Once complete, we will share this resource with the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), which we expect to do in Year 4. For more on this, see the **Collaboration** section below.

**DISSEMINATION:** *IRIS disseminates news of its resources through a wide variety of means, both universal, targeted, and individualized. The IRIS Website, awareness activities, conference presentations and exhibition appearances, and a multi-part social media presence, all are key components in our plan to reach and communicate with IRIS consumers.*

⇒ **Articles:** IRIS posts information about articles that either highlight or reference our center and our evidence-based instructional resources. Last quarter, this section of the Website was updated, an expansion that had the unfortunate effect of making the page somewhat unwieldy. In response, a reorganization was undertaken. We grouped articles by year ranges (2005–2014, 2015–2019, and 2020–Present) and hyperlinked to these ranges. Additionally:

- ❖ IRIS was noted as a well-researched, trustworthy source for instructional practices in the online article “[High-Leverage Practices: Teaching Students with Disabilities—and All Students Who Need a Learning Boost](#),” which appeared in the Winter 2020–2021 issue of *American Educator*, a publication of the American Federation of Teachers.
- ❖ Vanderbilt University [published an article](#) about the impact of the educational resources that IRIS developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⇒ **Handouts:** To prepare for dissemination about IRIS resources and services, IRIS updated a number of our promotional handouts. We also developed two new ones: one to cover our COVID-19 resources and another to highlight our updated module on assistive technology.

⇒ **Community College Database:** In early April, IRIS will meet with Lennon Audrain, who is currently developing the Community College Teacher Education Database as a tool that can be used to identify community colleges with education programs. Because IRIS gathered much of the same information in 2019 that is being collected for this database, we are hoping to collaborate on this project and to further our dissemination efforts with this target group.

**Awareness Activities:** Key to our center’s ongoing dissemination efforts is the development and expansion of multiple elements that, together, form the basis of our campaign to get the word out about IRIS and our resources. More about these can be found in the items below.

- ⇒ **Data Summary:** IRIS produced and disseminated our official **2020 Data Summary**. This expansive, highly detailed document contains information and graphics highlighting the global use of IRIS resources, annual Website visits, most-popular resources, and other fascinating tidbits. The Data Summary was transmitted to OSEP and has been used by IRIS as an all-purpose promotional tool. As in the past, the 2020 Data Summary is available on our Website under the newly redesigned “[IRIS Internal Reports](#)” tab.
- ⇒ **CASE Weekly Update Newsletter:** IRIS continued to be featured in the Sponsored Content section of the Council of Administrators of Special Education newsletter through the second quarter and will continue into the third quarter. The purpose of this sponsored content ad was to increase brand awareness among school administrators and to focus on supporting educators during COVID-19. The sponsored content ad provided links to four IRIS Modules as well as to the IRIS Professional Development Options page.
- ⇒ **AACC Digital Newsletter and Social Media:** In January, IRIS disseminated information through the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) to increase brand awareness with community college faculty. As in both September and December of 2020, information was disseminated through a social media package that included a Facebook post and tweets to the AACC Twitter account. In addition, an advertisement was placed in the AACC digital newsletter, *Community College Daily*, which provided a direct link to our module *Online Course Design for College and University Faculty*.
- ⇒ **Learning Forward Weekly News Brief:** During the past quarter and continuing into the third quarter, IRIS was featured in the Sponsored Content section of *Professional Learning News*, a new weekly publication of Learning Forward, a professional association devoted exclusively to those who work in educator professional development. The purpose of this ad was to increase brand awareness among members who work in this area. The sponsored content ad provided links to four IRIS Modules and our professional development page for educators.

**NACCTEP Conference Sponsorship:** IRIS is a silver-level sponsor of the National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs (NACCTEP) upcoming virtual conference series. This sponsorship allows us to disseminate information about IRIS to conference participants to increase awareness of IRIS resources among community college teacher educators. The sponsorship also provides the center with a limited number of “seats” at two virtual sessions, which we will give away to community college faculty who are on our mailing list or follow us on social media.



- ⇒ **The IRIS Standard:** The Spring edition of our biannual newsletter, the *IRIS Standard*, was disseminated to our listserv. It covered the latest IRIS resources, COVID-19 tools, upcoming information from the U.S. Department of Education regarding school re-openings, the work of our partner centers, and even a glimpse back at the year that was 2020. This edition, as well as past editions, [is available on our Website](#).
- ⇒ **CEC Professional Forum:** We continue to monitor and respond to questions posed on the CEC Forum to make educators aware of IRIS resources about evidence-based practices. We are always excited when educators cite IRIS as a source of professional development and as a reliable “go-to” center. When applicable we take the opportunity to follow-up on these comments to provide more specific information or to refer users to relevant IRIS resources.
- ⇒ **YouTube Channel Update:** In January, IRIS created a short promotional video about our most recently released module, *Assistive Technology: An Overview*, and posted it on our dedicated YouTube channel. In March, IRIS posted an additional video on how to use the HLP alignment tool.
- ⇒ **Social Media:** Our center’s social media following and number of engagements continue to grow at a rapid rate. As of this report, IRIS has 3,879 (compared to 3,600 last quarter) followers on Twitter. Our Twitter impressions for the quarter totaled more than 84,000, yet another sign of sustained and robust growth.
- ⇒ **Partnerships:** IRIS develops relationships with other organizations to disseminate information about our resources to broader and more diverse audiences. Read on to learn about our work in this area this quarter.
  - ❖ **NCSI:** To further our dissemination efforts through our partnership with the National Center for Systemic Improvement, we continued to submit our COVID-related resources for inclusion in their COVID-19 Resource Hub.
  - ❖ **Ci3T:** IRIS continued work on two new Fundamental Skills Sheets (FSS) that are being developed in collaboration with the center for Comprehensive, Integrated Three-Tiered Model of Prevention (Ci3T). These FSS will address foundational instructional practices for virtual environments. We hope to post the first two, *Behavior-Specific Praise* and *Precorrection*, in the next quarter. Ci3T will also link to these resources.
  - ❖ **Project WIN:** IRIS continued to identify resources that might benefit Project WIN (Wyoming Instructional Network, a project of the Wyoming Department of Education, Division of Special Education Programs). Upon review of their Website, which is funded by a State Personnel Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), we noticed that though they link to a number of IRIS resources, several of our resources that align with their topics are not listed. In the upcoming quarter, we plan to reach out to them with this information.

**Presentation & Outreach Efforts:** Throughout the year, IRIS attends local, 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 our recent presentations is below.

⇒ **Project Director's Meeting:** IRIS will submit a proposal for this year's virtual OSEP Project Director's Meeting, which will be held in July. The proposed session will be a collaborative effort with representatives from the PROGRESS Center and the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) and will feature the centers' resources on high-quality IEPs. IRIS, as with the other TA&D Centers, will also have a virtual exhibit booth at the meeting.

⇒ **Conference Participation:** IRIS participated in two virtual conferences this quarter. The shift from in-person to virtual was not only new to us but it was also a new platform for the event organizers themselves. Additionally, the platforms and apps utilized by each conference were different. Because of this, more planning, set-up time, and communication with organizers was required. Further, IRIS staff developed a reference guide to help the IRIS team, Ambassadors, and representatives navigate the virtual conference and features of the booths.

❖ **National ESEA Conference:** IRIS hosted its first virtual exhibit booth at the National Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) Conference on February 8–11, 2021. To more directly speak to the state- and district-level needs of the attendees, IRIS secured the assistance of Nick French, IRIS Ambassador and Ocosta School District Director of Teaching and Learning/Special Services in Washington; Kathy Strunk, former TN SPDG Director and current Education Program Specialist/TA Provider, National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO); and Tricia Bronger, Special Education Cooperative Director, Greater Louisville Education Cooperative in Kentucky. Visitors to the booth could download brochures, watch videos, and speak with IRIS staff and representatives via Zoom. They also had the opportunity to request information, and IRIS has followed up with all who did so. The ESEA booth will remain open through mid-April. As such, we will continue to monitor for and follow-up on requests for IRIS information.

❖ **CEC Conference:** IRIS hosted a virtual exhibit booth and conducted two presentations at the Council for Exceptional Children 2021 Convention/Expo. This event, referred to as CEC L.I.V.E (Learning Interactive Virtual Event), was held on March 8–13.

- **CEC Exhibit Booth:** The IRIS booth hosted almost 1,000 visits. Through the virtual booth, visitors could access a video developed specifically for the occasion, links to various sections of our Website, a raffle sign-up form, and downloadable IRIS handouts. In addition to IRIS team members, IRIS Ambassadors Darcie Peterson, Kimberly Snow, and Sally Barton-Arwood were available to engage with attendees via Zoom. Using the booth's live chat feature, many attendees expressed appreciation for IRIS resources and

specifically noted how our resources have sustained them and their students during the pandemic. Over 200 attendees entered the raffle, and in honor of our 20th birthday celebration this year, 20 winners were selected to receive a selection of IRIS promotional items like notepads, pens, and magnet clips. After the conference, IRIS followed-up with the 225 individuals who hit the “Connect” button. The booth will remain open through the end of June, so we will continue to monitor for and follow-up on requests for IRIS information.

- **CEC Presentations:** IRIS conducted two presentations, which were pre-recorded and posted on the conference’s Website. The first, *A Reliable Friend in a Time of Change: Free Professional Development from the IRIS Center*, served as an introduction to our growing PD options and featured interviews with IRIS users in Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Florida. The second, *An IRIS for Every Occasion: Everything New From Our OSEP-Funded Center*, overviewed new modules, COVID-19 resources, and upcoming products. More than 100 attendees signed up for each presentation, which will remain available through the end of June.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:** *IRIS works to increase the capacity of teacher preparation programs to expand the range of resources about evidence-based practices (EBPs) in their courses and program curricula, state and local education agencies as well as PD providers to deliver effective professional development, and independent learners to enhance their knowledge and skills regarding EBPs.*

⇒ **TA & Training:** IRIS works with schools and districts to increase the knowledge and use of IRIS Modules and other resources. Notes on our recent activities to this purpose can be found below.

- ❖ **Greater Louisville Education Cooperative (GLEC):** IRIS continues to collaborate with the GLEC as they develop trainings on progress monitoring for teachers in Kentucky. In January, IRIS reviewed and provided feedback on a plan GLEC created to support teachers as they access and earn credit for completing IRIS Modules.
- ❖ **Guam Department of Education:** After receiving 75 responses from educational assistants in Guam on our Online Module Feedback Form, IRIS reached out to a representative at the Guam Department of Education to learn more about their interest in our resources. They identified areas of need including:
  - Transition services
  - Blended learning
  - Recovery services for students, specifically focusing on learning loss
  - Math and reading remediation
  - IEP Development

- Pandemic related training modules for parents
- Additional resources for educational assistants

In February, IRIS identified resources to support the needs of the GDOE as they continue to explore opportunities to support educators, parents, and students.

- ❖ **Oklahoma State Department of Education:** IRIS also continues to collaborate with the Oklahoma State Department of Education as they create a High-Leverage Practice module for Oklahoma Boot Camps. In March, IRIS recorded a video for them, highlighting our [High-Leverage Practices](#) Alignment Tool and addressing why it was important and timely to create this tool. This video was also posted on the IRIS Website with other IRIS navigation videos, as well as on our YouTube channel.

- ⇒ **PD Certificates for Educators:** Flexible, user-friendly, and built around reliable and trustworthy resources, IRIS PD Certificates for Educators allow individual users to pursue certificates for professional development hours. The table below will give some sense of how much growth in use our PD options have seen over the past few months, as compared to the same months in 2019 and 2020.

	January	February	March	Total
<b>2019</b>	20	2,379	3,059	<b>5,458</b>
<b>2020</b>	6,510	4,435	23,442	<b>34,387</b>
<b>2021</b>	7,639	10,910	10,942	<b>29,491</b>

With the exception of March, PD sign-ups for 2021 continued to rise: a 17% increase for January and a 146% increase for February as compared to the same months of the previous year. As expected, sign-ups for March 2021 have decreased compared to March 2020, which proved to be an unprecedented period with a dramatic upsurge in the number of individuals signing up for PD certificates as districts responded to the pandemic-related needs of their educators. However, the numbers for March 2021 reveal an almost 100% increase in PD sign-ups compared to March 2019. We anticipate continued growth in the upcoming quarter.

- ⇒ **Improved Universal TA:** As the demand for IRIS PD Certificates has expanded, so too has the number of questions relating to the certificates. To streamline the process and shorten our response time, last quarter the IRIS team updated the following IRIS PD handouts:
  - *IRIS Professional Development At-a-Glance*
  - *IRIS Center Professional Development: Personalized Learning*



Further, we updated the PD section of our Website. Most notably, “PD Certificates for Teachers” was broadened to “PD Certificates for Educators.” Language was also added to inform users that IRIS PD Certificates are appropriate for all educators, including K-12 general and special education teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, substitutes, and other school support staff (e.g., bus drivers, hallway/cafeteria/playground monitors).

⇒ **Approved PD Provider Status:** IRIS continues to pursue status in every state as an approved PD provider. This quarter we reviewed requirements in California, Colorado, Hawaii, and Idaho.

⇒ **School & District Platform Expansion:** Our School & District Platform is a user-friendly and flexible online tool that can help school leaders to organize and track their teachers’ ongoing professional development activities. Recent items of note include:

❖ **Updating Accounts:** IRIS continues to update existing accounts in our School & District Platform, and to regularly contact schools and districts whose accounts have expired regarding possible renewal.

❖ **School & District Platform Inquiries:** The IRIS TA team has performed demonstrations of the School & District Platform or sent quotes to the following alternate route teacher programs, hospital schools, and school districts:

- Ball-Chatham School District, Chatham, IL
- Medford Lakes School District, Medford Lakes, NJ
- School City of Hammond, Hammond, IN
- Lamar Consolidated ISD, Rosenberg, TX
- Pine Valley and Bowling Green Schools, Division of State Operated Healthcare Facilities, Central Regional Hospital, Butner, NC
- Arise Teacher Academy, Dallas, TX

❖ **School City of Hammond:** IRIS enrolled district level staff in the Hammond, IN, school district, which is interested in offering professional development for its general and special education teachers.

⇒ **IRIS Stories:** IRIS stories are developed to share how our resources are used throughout the United States and around the world. This quarter, IRIS posted three new stories that share the experiences of our users in Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Florida:

❖ *IRIS In Kentucky: Hybrid Trainings on High-Quality IEPs*

- Latricia Bronger and her team at the Greater Louisville Educator Cooperative share their considerations for using IRIS resources, the results from the training on the quality of their IEPs, and how they plan to utilize IRIS resources in the future.

❖ *IRIS in Oklahoma: Boot Camps to Address Teacher Shortages*

- Jill Hilst at the Oklahoma State Department of Education explains the reason for creating Oklahoma Boot Camps and how IRIS resources play a key role in tackling the critical shortage of special education teachers in that state.

❖ *Using IRIS to Mentor First-Year Teachers*

- Angelica Fulchini Scruggs, an IRIS Technology Innovation Post-doctoral Scholar who is currently at the University of Central Florida, shares why she chose IRIS and how she used our resources to support UCP Charter Schools' 32 first-year teachers.

**EVALUATION:** *The IRIS evaluation plan is designed to yield information to guide project activities and to assess whether our goals, objectives, and outcomes have been achieved. Formative and summative data are used to monitor project implementation procedures.*

⇒ **Field-Testing:** Because of the many pandemic-related challenges that continue to be time-consuming for faculty, we have postponed field-testing until the fall when we plan to field-test *IEPs: How Administrators Can Support the Development and Implementation of High-Quality IEPs* (commenced last year but needs about 20 more students), *Family Engagement: Collaborating with Families of Students with Disabilities*, *Assistive Technology: An Overview*, and the revised *Classroom Management* modules.

⇒ **Evaluation Projects:** The IRIS evaluation projects are supported by a subcontract from Vanderbilt University to the University of Georgia (UGA). Drs. Sayeski and Hamilton-Jones of UGA coordinate, manage, and actively participate in the effort.

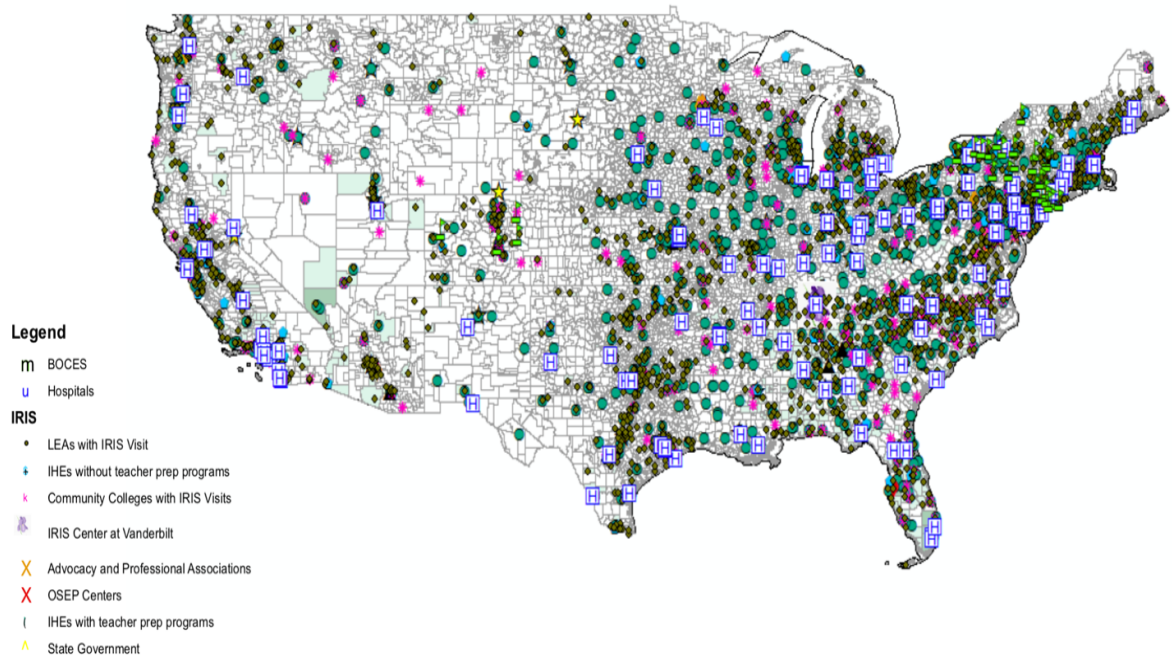
❖ **Project 2 (Phase 2), Impact of IRIS on Knowledge and Project Decision-Making**

**Replication:** As reported previously, the intent of Project 2 (Phase 2) was to replicate the fall 2019 evaluation project, conducted at UGA, about the impact of engagement with specific IRIS OERs on teachers' knowledge and ability to make instructional decisions. Two replication sites participated during the fall of 2020: University of Virginia (UVA) and California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA). The data analysis and write-up of Project 2 will occur in summer 2021.

❖ **Project 3, Fidelity of Implementation:** The purpose of Project 3 is to examine the effect of engagement with IRIS open-educational resources and the TeachLivE classroom simulation on special education teachers' implementation of evidence-based practices. Project 3 was launched in spring 2021. For the evaluation project, three special-education student teachers agreed to participate in the single-case evaluation of the impact of IRIS OER content combined with a TeachLivE intervention. During the first phase of the project, participants reviewed the IRIS Fundamental Skill Sheet on Behavior-Specific Praise and completed the IRIS Case Study, Encouraging Appropriate Behavior: Level B, Case 1. For the case study, the participants applied their knowledge of

behavior-specific praise to develop an intervention for the case-study student. After the case study activity, data were collected on participants' use of behavior-specific praise in their student teaching settings. For phase two of the study, the participants engaged in four 10-minute TeachLivE sessions during which they practiced using behavior-specific praise. After each 10-minute session, participants received feedback and coaching related to their use of behavior-specific praise. Then, data were collected on participants' use of behavior-specific praise in their student teaching settings. The project will conclude in late April. A write-up of this project will take place in summer 2021.

- ⇒ **Project Outcomes:** IRIS continues to collect data related to the project outcomes outlined in our logic model: increased awareness and knowledge of IRIS resources and, subsequently, of evidence-based practices. Normally, we would collect these data from participants at the conclusion of each IRIS conference or meeting presentation, which would take place in a face-to-face format. Although we posted surveys for our pair of virtual presentations at the Council for Exceptional Children 2021 Convention/Expo, few participants completed the surveys. Additionally, we continue to monitor the IRIS Website analytics (e.g., the number of visitors to our Website, number of sessions, length of time per visit, resource use) for both formative and summative purposes.
- ⇒ **External Evaluator:** IRIS has contracted with Compass Evaluation and Research for external evaluation activities; Sarah Heinemeier is the lead external evaluator. This quarter, Compass has been instrumental in gathering data for the 2020 IRIS Data Summary. In addition, Compass has been working on a density map to illustrate the use of IRIS resources across the nation by different user groups, including state agencies; OSEP partner centers, advocacy groups, and professional associations; IHEs with *and* without general and special education teacher preparation programs; community colleges with teacher education programs; LEAs; hospitals; and boards of cooperative educational services. Although this work is in progress, the map below illustrates preliminary data.



⇒ **Module Feedback:** The IRIS Module Feedback Form, an online survey, asks respondents to self-identify their current positions and to rate our modules' quality, relevance, and usefulness on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest rating). This quarter there were **3,171** respondents to this survey. The tables below contain a bit more information about those respondents. Similar to last quarter, the increase in use by paraprofessionals/educational assistants is substantial.

**Table 1. Current Positions**

Respondents	Number
College Student	894
Graduate Student	627
Experienced Teacher	624
Instructional Assistant/Paraprofessional	456
New Teacher	227
Other	160
School Leader	106
Missing	20
PD Provider	28
College Faculty	20
Parent	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,171</b>

**Table 2. Education Area**

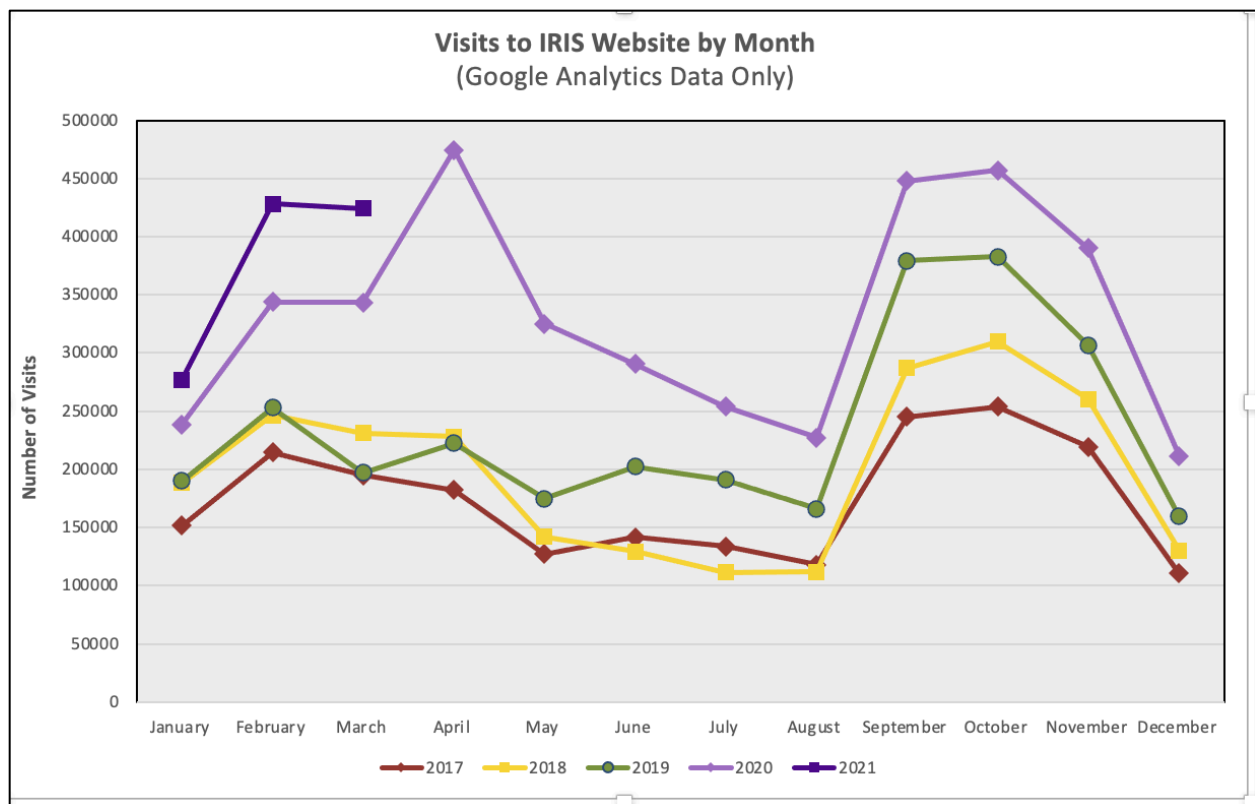
Response	Number
Special Education	1,241
General Education	832
Early Childhood Education	492
Other	346
Early Childhood Special Education	175
Missing	56
Early Intervention Services	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,171</b>



**Table 3. Module Ratings**

Mean Ratings	
Quality	4.6
Relevance	4.6
Usefulness	4.6

**Website Visitor Data:** During the second quarter, GoogleAnalytics data showed **1,129,425 visits** to the IRIS Website, an increase of **22% over the same period last year**.



**COLLABORATION & WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES:** *IRIS works in collaboration with other national centers, nationally recognized education experts, and our own IRIS Ambassadors and Workgroups to improve our ability to develop resources, disseminate information about all things IRIS, and offer technical assistance and training.*

⇒ **NCII:** The National Center on Intensive Intervention builds the capacity of state and local education agencies, universities, practitioners, and others to support implementation of intensive intervention in literacy, mathematics, and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning or behavioral needs. IRIS continues to collaborate with NCII on a number of fronts, information about which can be found below.

- ❖ **IRIS Glossary:** Once IRIS has completed revisions to our online glossary of disability related terms, NCII will host that resource on their own site, rather than develop their own, thus reducing a possible redundancy of effort between our two centers. We hope to complete this process in Year 4.
  - ❖ **Module Revisions:** Our collaboration to revise two modules previously developed in conjunction with NCII, ***Intensive Intervention (Part 1)*** and ***Intensive Intervention (Part 2)***, continues. We will revise content for Part 1 and Part 2 in Year 4. Revisions include adding information about the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity, which was developed after the original posting of these modules.
  - ❖ **Future Activities:** IRIS recently met with representatives from the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) and the PROGRESS Center to discuss potential future collaborations. Representatives from the three centers will meet monthly to stay abreast of each other's activities and discuss ways to collaborate.
- ⇒ **Ci3T:** The center for the Concentrated, Integrated Three-Tiered Model of Prevention assists schools in creating a comprehensive systems-oriented approach to support the academic, behavioral, and social competencies of all students; promote collaboration and teaming between all school and community stakeholders; and support educators' efficacy and well-being through data-informed professional learning, clear expectations for staff and students, and supportive, positive environments. As was mentioned above, IRIS is currently working with Kathleen Lane of Ci3T to develop a set of fundamental skill sheets that describe low-intensity strategies for virtual learning environments.

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

- ⇒ **Karen Hale:** The IRIS Center is thrilled to welcome Karen Hale, who will join our team as Administrative Manager on April 6; among other responsibilities, Karen will handle contracts and billing for consultants, vendors, and schools and districts; coordinate office needs; and meet with staff on a quarterly basis to evaluate needs and support career growth in alignment with Vanderbilt's new career and compensation framework.
- ⇒ **Joelle Azar:** Our current IRIS intern, Joelle is currently working on her masters in Peabody College's High-Incidence Special Education with Applied Behavior Analysis program; she is interning with us this semester and will continue to do so through the summer.