



2020-2021 Catalyst for Change Project Review



Program Partners



School District Education
Foundation Matching
Grant Program



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Class of 1962



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About the Program

Catalyst for Change is a competitive grant program that awards teachers and schools with funding to support classroom projects that increase student engagement. Projects can be awarded \$2,000 to \$5,000 and must focus on at least one of the following subjects:

- Career/Technical Education
- STEM Education
- Literacy
- Low Performing Students
- Teaching Quality
- High School Graduation Rates

Program Funding

The Catalyst for Change grants are funded by the State of Florida's School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program. Each year, this program provides The Education Foundation with the opportunity to match private partner donations, including Florida Credit Union, with a \$1 for \$1 match that goes toward investing in eligible classroom initiatives.

2020-2021 Program Impact

In the 2020-2021 school year, The Education Foundation of Alachua County invested \$107,615 in 8 teacher and school grants across the Alachua County Public Schools district. These projects impacted 8,163 students, 1,190 teachers, reached grades K-12, and included 3 district-wide project initiatives. This report will detail the each of the project summaries and outcomes.

THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION
Supporting Alachua County Public Schools

CATALYST FOR CHANGE GRANT RECIPIENTS

Katie Robinson Shell Elementary - \$7,160	Dr. Carrie Wells Wiles Elementary - \$2,524.86
Melissa Pardue A. Quinn Jones - \$4,500	Delia Perez & Kevin Kelsey Gainesville High - \$4,600
Ricky Quintana Howard Bishop Middle - \$9,372	Sherry Scoville Stephen Foster - \$5,796
Nannette Dell Talbot Elementary - \$5,737	Carol Anthony Eastside High School - \$5,000

SUPPORTED BY:

- CONSORTIUM OF FLORIDA EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS
Advancing Quality & Local Impact, One Student at a Time
- School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program
- Florida Credit Union
- GHS Class of 1962

Shell Elementary School

Project Title: Shell Schoolwide Reading Initiative



Figure 1 Students at Shell Elementary School are participating in their 30 minutes of independent classroom reading.

Project Summary

This project looked to increase the percentage of students scoring a 3 or above on the iStation's Indicators of Progress Data (ISIP). Three of the five student cohorts made gains. The goal was addressed by utilizing the American Reading Company's Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) Framework to address gaps in reading skills and by purchasing high-interest books written at multiple reading levels. Teachers fueled a 30-minute independent reading time every day where every student read books at their reading level.

- Project led by: Katie Robinson and Isabel Carter
- Grade Levels Addressed: Kindergarten through 5th
- Priority Areas: Literacy, Low Performing Students, Teaching Quality, Improving Classroom Instruction
- Students Impacted: 382
- Teachers Impacted: 25

Outcomes for Students:

First grade students moved from 25% passing to 30% passing compared to their kindergarten year. Second grade students moved from 22% passing rate to a 43% passing rate compared to their first-grade year.

Third grade students moved from 35% passing rate to a 37% passing rate compared to their second-grade year.

Shell also had the goal to increase the achievement level on the English Language Arts FSA for its African-American students. Data showed that compared to the previous school year African-American student achievement increased 4%. The ISIP showed that 32% of these students will be proficient on the ELA FSA showing that Shell is working to close the achievement gap!

Outcomes for Teachers:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being significant change and 1 being no improvement, have you seen improvements in your students' reading ability and level of confidence when reading? Teachers responded with an average of 4.2 out of 5.

93% of teachers participating in this project said that students were more engaged in reading activities in their classroom compared to the beginning of the school year.

80% of respondents said they saw fewer behavior problems in their classrooms as the Shell Reading Initiative progressed.

Howard Bishop Middle School Project Title: Hawk Connect



Figure 2 HBMS students use TI Calculators and Temperature Probes to engage in hands-on learning opportunities.

Project Summary

This project allowed the 114 students in Mr. Quintana's science classes to use Texas Instruments (TI) TI-Nspire™ CX Navigator™ system, graphing calculators, and Vernier probes that allowed for collaboration and peer interaction between brick and mortar and digital academy students engaging them in STEM learning. Its goal was to reduce the achievement gap between black and white students by three percentage points from 55% to 52% in math and science testing scores. Preliminary indications show the project addressed this goal.

- Project led by: Ricardo Quintana
- Grade Levels Addressed: 8th
- Priority Areas: STEM and Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 114
- Teachers Impacted: 1

Outcomes for Students:

The 8th grade AIMS Science Assessment was administered twice before the calculators arrived in February. The results showed black students scored lower than the expected goal of 32% of students being proficient on the AIMS Science Assessment. After the calculator activities were introduced, the black students showed an increase of 8% in Q4 compared to quarter 1 in scoring level 3 or higher on the 8th grade AIMS Science Assessment.

Hawk Connect was successful in helping to narrow the achievement gap by 18% and helping to ensure all students perform at grade level in science.

Outcomes for Teachers:

Anecdotally, the students were more engaged in the learning of the new concepts using the technology. They were able to use the gas pressure sensors to learn Boyle's Law and the pH sensors to determine the acidity and basicity of common household products. The Hawk Connect project has shown indications that the students were affected positively with the use of the technology.

Wiles Elementary School

Project Title: Empowering Student Voices

Project Summary

This project fostered a positive learning environment that encouraged students of diverse backgrounds to become more dynamic readers and writers. Through exposure to standards-based instruction using books written by authors from different backgrounds the students were able to share stories – through spoken words, written words, and illustrations. Success was measured using computer-based reading assessments (ISIP), and quarterly district-wide reading assessments (AIMS). Test scores in the areas of reading and writing throughout the school year indicate tremendous growth amongst all students, particularly the lowest quartile.

- Project led by: Dr. Carrie Wells
- Grade Levels Addressed: 2nd
- Priority Areas: Literacy, STEM, Teaching Quality, Improving Classroom Instruction, Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 37
- Teachers Impacted: 2



Figure 3 2nd grade students read *Be A Maker* by Katey Howes and create hands on projects.

Outcomes for Students:

The class average on the Quarterly Writing Assessment was 6.3/10 for Q1 and in Q3 it was a 7/10 showing student improvement.

In September 2020, the class average for vocabulary was 234 and in June 2021 it was 264.

For Spelling in September 2020 was 227 and in June 2021 it was 246.

This project also helped to narrow the achievement gap and all the lowest quartile students in Dr. Wells' class saw significant student improvements on an individual bases in fluency, phonics, spelling, comprehension, and vocabulary, which has helped to also narrow the achievement gap between African-American and white students.

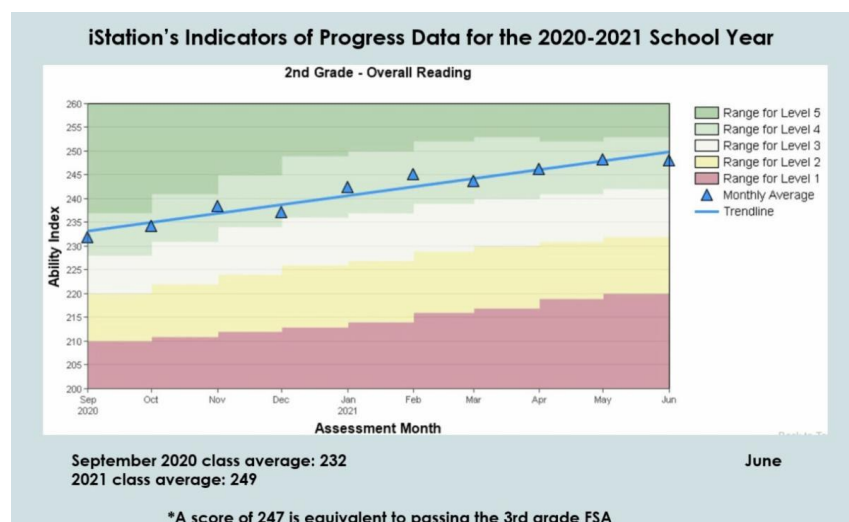


Figure 4 In the iStation's Indicators of Progress Data (ISIP) graph below, you can see a steady growth for the 2020-2021 School Year for all of the students 2nd Grade Reading Scores in September 2020 the class average was 232 and in June 2021 the average was 249.

Gainesville High School

Project Title: Bridging the Technology Gap for ESOL Students

Project Summary

This project's goal was to teach 12th grade English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students digital literacy. A high school and career pathways checklist was created to measure the students' success. Eight laptops were purchased by the ESOL department allowing 35 students to access programs like Canvas, Microsoft Office, and sites for the SAT and ACT. The students completed college, financial aid and job applications. All 35 seniors graduated.

- Project led by: Delia Perez and Kevin Kelsey
- Grade Levels Addressed: 12th
- Priority Areas: Career and Technical Education, Literacy, Graduation Rates, Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 68
- Teachers Impacted: 2



Figure 5 Gainesville High School students in Mr. Kelsey and Ms. Perez's classes say thank you for the 8 laptops provided by the funding from their Catalyst for Change grant from the Education Foundation and in partnership with the GHS class of 1962.

Outcomes for Students:

18 students applied for college admissions to Santa Fe, and these same students applied for financial aid by completing the FAFSA and FFAA. Three students were interviewed and hired by businesses in the community on a part-time basis after school.

7 students have enrolled at Santa Fe College.

21 of the 35 students established proficiency on the ACT to meet the high school graduation requirement for reading, which means they scored an 18 on the ACT or higher.

All 35 seniors are on track to graduate as long as they maintain a 2.0 GPA or higher and receive the class credits needed for graduation.

6 students showed a letter grade improvement between Q1 and Q4. Two students showed two-letter grade improvements between Q1 and Q4.

Outcomes for Teachers:

The teachers reported that the students displayed significant improvement in their English reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension skills.

The teachers reported that the best outcome from this project was the students' relief of not only having equipment to do their work outside of the classroom and having their teachers to help, but equity to compete with peers.

The technology provided them with knowledge on how to do online research on a browser like Google Chrome and complete their class and homework assignments through Canvas. This online platform was an adaptation by the School Board of Alachua County this school year.

The technology provided them with knowledge on how to complete college, financial aid and job applications. This also helped the students help their families, who were also not proficient at utilizing computer systems.

A Quinn Jones Center

Project Title: Inspiring Readers with Relatable Literature

Project Summary

This project aimed to update the A. Quinn Jones Center library, which had less than 4,000 titles, with inspiring and relevant literature. In 2019, 68% of A. Quinn Jones students scored a level one on the ELA FSA. The goals of this project is to improve student scores on the ELA FSA, to reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions for African American students, to improve attendance, and ultimately, keep students engaged through the use of inspiring and relevant literature.

The 500 books purchased with this grant included high-interest fiction that are relatable to the students at A. Quinn Jones, as well as non-fiction books of interest to the students. In both English/Reading and History, teachers utilized class sets to practice reading strategies and increase student engagement.

- Project led by: Melissa Pardue
- Grade Levels Addressed: 6th - 12th
- Priority Areas: Literacy and Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 75
- Teachers Impacted: 5

Outcomes for Students:

400 books were checked out by students from September 2020 to June 2021.

The school has a behavior improvement program. Positive referrals were up 152% this year. The number of discipline referrals also dropped significantly with 736 being written last school year, compared to 145 written this year.

Outcomes for Teachers:

One of the high school English teachers reported an increase of on-task behavior during the time the class worked on the book together. She did not have any discipline referrals during that time.

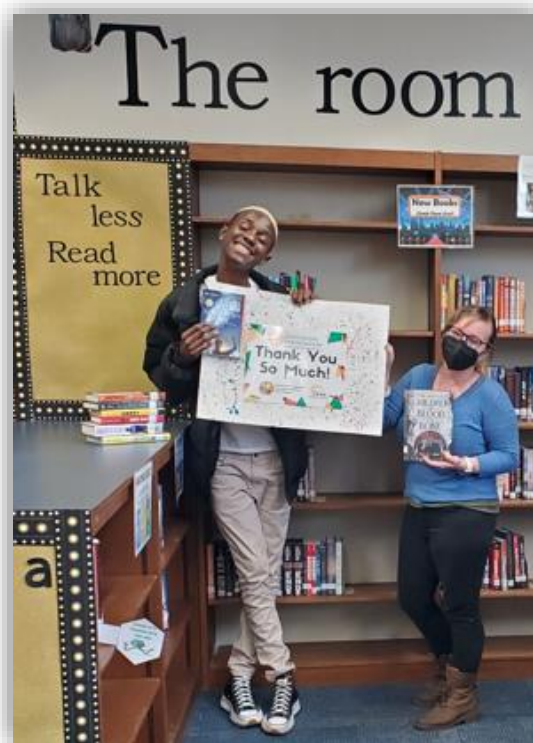


Figure 6 Melissa Pardue with A. Quinn Jones student in the library with a sign that says "Thank you so much!"

Stephen Foster Elementary School Project Title: Backpacking Over the Gap

Project Summary

Backpacking Over the Gap (BOTG) was designed to address the 41% of Stephen Foster's African American students who are performing below grade level on the ELA FSA. Third and fifth grade reading statistics showed the 83 students who participated in BOTG lacked prerequisite skills and knowledge with a limited vocabulary bank. New books were purchased based on the following criteria: grade level appropriateness, cultural awareness, students' interest, and recommendations of teachers and administration.

- Project led by: Sherry Scoville
- Grade Levels Addressed: 3rd through 5th
- Priority Areas: Literacy and Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 83
- Teachers Impacted: 4



Figure 7 Sherry Scoville presented with \$5,000 check for the Backpacking Over the Gap project.

Outcomes for Students:

253 books were checked out by the 83 students involved in the grant program for this year. This was more than the number of books checked out by the same cohort of students in the 2019-2020 school year when they checked out collectively 154 books

Out of the 83 students the highest number of books checked out was 17 and the lowest was 2. Some students only read the books purchased with grant funding.

One of the two top readers for the entire school this year was a BOTG student. This year he read 17 books as opposed to 6 the previous school year thanks to books borrowed from the BOTG grant.

Outcomes for Teachers:

Teachers reported that students were more focused when taking the FSA and that students were reading more in the classroom.

Talbot Elementary School Project Title: IXL Math

Project Summary

The IXL Math software has skill assessments aligned to the Math Florida Standards (MAFS), providing comprehensive coverage of math concepts and applications. It tracked students' progress and the teachers used the data to determine which skills each student was having difficulty mastering. The program was used to provide extra practice and determine who needed extra support from the teachers, as well as to provide enrichment for those students who needed acceleration.

- Project led by: Nannette Dell & Sarah Freedman
- Grade Levels Addressed: Kindergarten – 5th
- Priority Areas: Teaching Quality, Improving Classroom Instruction, and Low Performing Students
- Students Impacted: 576
- Teachers Impacted: 32

Outcomes for Students:

14 additional students received passing grades in the 4th quarter compared to the 1st quarter of the school year.

The students in kindergarten through 5th grade answered 395,358 math questions using the IXL Math program. The students practiced 13,620 skills and mastered a total of 7,769 skills.

Students spent time each month on IXL at school and extended their learning time by 20% by using the program at home as well.

Outcomes for Teachers:

"My 3rd and 4th grade students have reached excellence in over 450 math skills. My 5th grade students have been able to reach excellence in not only 5th grade level skills, but up to 8th grade! IXL provides acceleration for students who need a challenge, while at the same time it provides support and intervention for students who are struggling. From the students' perspective, they are highly motivated by seeing their smart score go up! We use class incentives to complete lessons and both my 3rd and 4th grade classes were completing 8 lessons a week to earn a lunch bunch together! Every student in the class completed the lessons! It is fun and rewarding for them! Parents also ask me for IXL lessons that coordinate with what we are learning in class, so their child can practice more at home if they need to! There is always an IXL lesson that correlates with the standard we are learning!" -3rd, 4th and 5th Grade Teacher.

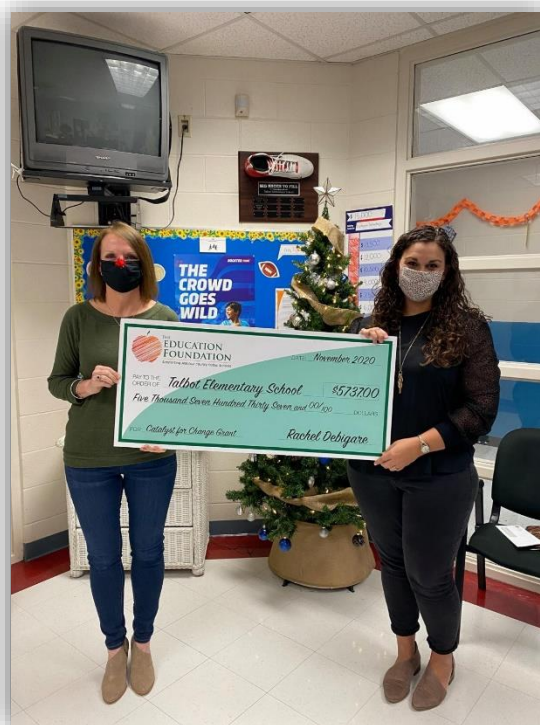


Figure 8 Talbot Elementary School Principal Nannette Dell is presented with a \$5,732 check for the IXL Math project.

Alachua County Public School's Professional Department

Project Title: Enhancing Distance Learning: Distance Learning Playbook Training

Project Summary

77 Educators participated in the Distance Learning Playbook Training facilitated throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Given the challenges of maximizing learning through multiple modalities/formats such as Digital Academy, Brick and Mortar with social distancing measures in effect, and hyflex teaching and learning, educators had many barriers. This training series helped increase the learning environment by focusing on the following topic areas:

- Teacher credibility and clarity at a distance
- Engaging tasks
- Planning instructional units and feedback, assessment, and grading
- These topics were covered by Corwin who facilitated four 90-minute modules.

- Project led by: Bessie Criscione
- Grade Levels Addressed: Kindergarten – 12th
- Priority Areas: Teaching Quality and Improving Classroom Instruction
- Students Impacted: 3,188
- Teachers Impacted: 77

Outcomes for Teachers:

93.6% of all participants indicated they were highly satisfied with the learning experience.

98.3% of participants indicated that the training provided clear examples of the topics and provided ample opportunities to check understanding throughout the sessions.

98.2% of participants indicated that the training topics/sessions provided content that challenged thinking and supported connections to key concepts in teaching/learning.

99.4% of participants indicated that the facilitator incorporated opportunities for thinking around concepts and purposefully used learning activities to deepen understanding/apply new knowledge.

"It is always helpful to understand what sorts of practices and interventions are most effective at reaching students. It's been very difficult to learn not only the new technology in a very short period of time, but also how best to use the technology. Working through the Distance Learning Playbook helped me adjust and focus my practice to better serve my DA and my Brick and Mortar students. There is so much more to adjust to and learn, but this training helped me a great deal with my digital practice. I thought that the exploration of the relationship between the teacher and student from a distance was most valuable." - *Participant Testimonial*

Alachua County Public School's Professional Department

Project Title: Measuring Racial Equity Professional Learning Session

Project Summary

A full day of training was provided to 27 teachers and administrators in the area of racial equality to support the school districts' equity efforts. Participants spent the morning in content and the afternoon in application of content specific to their classrooms/role. The training was held in partnership with Santa Fe College.

- Project led by: Bessie Criscione
- Grade Levels Addressed: Kindergarten – 12th
- Priority Areas: Teaching Quality and Improving Classroom Instruction
- Schools involved: District-wide, instructional coaches in attendance from the ACPS professional development, ESE and Curriculum departments, Alachua Elementary, Bishop Middle, Newberry High, Eastside High, Westwood Middle, Glen Springs Elementary, Foster Elementary, Duval Early Learning, Alachua eSchool, Buchholz High, Hawthorne Middle High, Idylwild Elementary, Oak View Middle, Santa Fe High School and Rawlings Elementary
- Students Impacted: 4,618
- Teachers Impacted: 27

Outcomes for Teachers:


65.4% of the 26 participants that completed the pre-workshop survey indicated that they had not previously attended any equity offerings by the ACPS.

100% of the 14 participants who completed the post-survey responded that felt more empowered to work with students do not look like or come from the same background as them.

92.9 % of the 14 participants who completed the post-survey responded that they do have the tools needed to address racial equity in their classrooms.

85.5% of the 14 participants who completed the post-survey responded with a 5 and said on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being extremely likely that they would participate in additional Racial Equity Workshop.

One person from each school was trained in how to access, use, and infuse the district's Exemplary Status African-American Studies curriculum. These trainers then went back to their school and act as exemplars and trainers within their school. Trainings were held on October 14th, January 25th and May 13th via zoom and utilizing the google suite for interactive activities. Additionally, the participants helped to create the districts African American Studies monthly newsletters and additional lesson plans/units for the district's African and African-American Studies curriculum.

- African American Experience Infusion Monthly Digest
- *****
- # African American Poetry
- March 2021
- 
- African American Literature Book Club 50 Favorite Authors of the 20th century found at <https://aabb.com/authors/top50african-american-poets>
- by Jon Rehm on April 1, 2021

Both quantitative and qualitative outcomes were measured. The first outcome was the accessing of the African and African American Curriculum. Of the district's approximately 2,000 classroom teachers, 373 teachers from the elementary, middle and high school level accessed the curriculum units and lessons due to the efforts of the training. Of the teachers who accessed the curriculum, almost all accessed the curriculum multiple times. About 1/3 of all views took place in the month of February or just prior to the month of February. Of the parts of the curriculum, the units of study and lesson plans were the most accessed. With the lesson plans being accessed on average 12 times each.

Figure 9 Example of one of the nine newsletters that were distributed to participants of the Exemplary Status African American trainings and teachers of participating schools.

These professional development trainings were one of the final items needed in order for the Alachua County Public Schools to receive exemplary status by the State Department of Education for their African and African-American curriculum. Alachua County is only one of ten counties to receive this status. <https://afroamfl.org/exemplary-school-districts/>.

2021-2022 Grant Cycle Information

Catalyst for Change continues to make an impact in classrooms across the Alachua County Public Schools District.

The grant cycle for the 2021-2022 school year is open now. Applications and resources are live on <https://edfoundationac.org/school-teacher-grants/>. Deadline to apply is October 4, 2021.

Teachers and administrators are invited to attend a grant writing workshop on September 1, 2021, from 4 to 5 p.m. on Zoom. The training will cover grant writing, project outcomes and expectations.

In partnership with the Alachua County Public Schools Grants, Acquisitions and Special Projects Department.

Thank you to our Catalyst for Change Program Partners:



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