IRISCENTER™

The IRIS Center Quarterly Report

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Administrative Progress Report:

Year 1/Quarter 4

Submitted to:

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The IRIS Center produces these quarterly reports as both a narrative of our efforts and a detailed account of our work and progress. This document represents the very latest activities of the IRIS Center. Read on for more information about everything that took place over the last three months.

SPECIAL NOTICE, IRIS @ 2.4 MILLION: During 2018, there were **2,376,830** visits to the Website, a remarkable increase of **13.54%** compared to 2017. This number is all the more extraordinary when the brief traffic slowdown due to the implementation of the European Union's new GDPR data regulation legislation (see below) is taken into account. More detailed IRIS Website user data can be found in the **Evaluation** section below.

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

⇒ **Website Programming Updates & Improvements:** Many of the most significant improvements to the IRIS Website happen "behind the scenes" at the programming level and are therefore virtually invisible to our users and visitors. Whether 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 most significant recent activities follows.

❖ **GDPR-Compliant Data Alert:** Recent major changes to the European Union's online data privacy policies (General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR) have necessitated a significantly different approach to the way Websites like ours approach the issue of user privacy and data management, specifically the use of "cookies," small information files that help computers keep track of user visits and activities. Beginning this quarter, visitors to the IRIS Website will be presented with a pop-up window alerting them to the fact that the site uses cookies and informing them that continuing to use the IRIS Website constitutes their consent for us to do so. Once users have "opted in" by clicking a button, the pop-up window will not appear during subsequent visits.

❖ **Plugins, No More:** IRIS worked hard this quarter to eliminate our dependence on plugins to run audio and video elements on the IRIS site. This change, implemented during the winter break, reformatted all audio and video coding on the IRIS site to use Wordpress' core functions, drastically reducing user issues related to outdated or missing plugins. All captioning resources for our videos have likewise been reconfigured to function in this new environment.

❖ **jQuery Migration:** The migration of the IRIS javascript environment to the jQuery libraries is complete. All relative interactive features of the IRIS site are now implementing the native Wordpress jQuery installation.

❖ **An APP for That:** In coordination with Angelica Fulchini, the IRIS Technology Innovation Postdoctoral Scholar, we are in the information-collecting stage to identify mobile apps in conjunction with specific IRIS resources that might be of use to teachers. We will also develop user-friendly ways to alert our visitors to these outside apps, as well as explain how they might best put them to use in their own instruction. Finally, IRIS is still exploring the use of apps to help college students learn key vocabulary terms associated with IRIS resources or to help faculty quiz students over key module content.

⇒ **Data Privacy Policy:** Vanderbilt's increased requirements for Personal Credit Industry (PCI) compliance, require that WPEngine, the IRIS Website host, provide an Attestation of Compliance (AoC). Although all security standards are met via the Google cloud on which the site is hosted, WP Engine does not provide AoCs. As a result, IRIS is working to ensure that our Website meets PCI Compliance for now, and looking into options for our Certificates of Completion that do not require online credit card use.

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, CORE content units, 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.*

New Resources: A new project cycle brings with it new concepts for effective resources about evidence-based practices as IRIS works to meet the evolving needs of educators in today's classrooms.

⇒ **Fundamental Skill Sheets:** Practical and informative, our brand new fundamental skill sheets collections offer educators quick primers (or reminders) about discrete skills and practices indispensable to their role as effective classroom teachers. Based on our popular STAR Sheet template (which forms the foundation of IRIS Case Study Units),

fundamental skill sheets overview a practice or skill, break down research into that skill's effectiveness, include procedures and tips for implementation, and offer video examples *and* non-examples of implementation in classroom settings so that educators can see it all happen for themselves. Five fundamental skill sheets have been completed and posted to the IRIS Website:

- ❖ Behavior Specific Praise
- ❖ Proximity Control
- ❖ Wait-Time
- ❖ High-Probability Requests
- ❖ Choice Making

During this quarter, we oversaw the filming of elementary scenarios. In addition, we undertook the significant effort involved in producing and editing example and non-example videos in both elementary and high school classroom settings. Finally, IRIS showcased these resources at the 2018 conference of CEC's Teacher Education Division, during which we received invaluable feedback from participants that helped shape the final versions of these exciting new products.

⟹ **CORE Content Units (coming soon):** Created with the assistance of top instructional experts in their fields, the IRIS CORE (Comprehensive, Organized, Reliable, Engaging) Content Units will be "deep dives" into effective practices for students with disabilities. IRIS is currently editing several units for our upcoming CORE unit on effective mathematics instruction and will continue to do so in the coming quarter as more units are delivered to us.

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 cultural and linguistic diversity, to name but a few.

⟹ **IEP Module Series:** By special request from OSEP, our center is developing a set of modules about high-quality IEPs. The first of these overviews guidelines for the development of high-quality IEPs that align with the latest findings from *Endrew F.*, explaining their crucial role in the education of students with disabilities. A future module is specifically designed with administrators and school leaders in mind, going further than the legal context in which high-quality IEPs are required and offering guidance on how to support school personnel in the development of high-quality IEPs. Mitchell Yell wrote content for the first module. David Bateman will develop the content for the second module.

⟹ **Module Revision:** IRIS is currently revising a number of modules and module series with updated information and revised and expanded resources.

❖ **Accommodations:** A revision of our popular *Accommodations: Instructional and Testing Supports for Students with Disabilities* module has been posted to the IRIS Website. This substantially updated resource overviews instructional and testing accommodations for students with disabilities, explains how accommodations differ from other kinds of instructional adaptations, defines the four categories of accommodations, and describes how to implement accommodations and evaluate their effectiveness for individual students. This updated module will replace the previous version in our IRIS PD Options section during the new quarter.

❖ **Vision Series:** Our three-module "vision" series is undergoing significant revision. Brenda Naimy of California State University-Los Angeles has delivered revised content for *Accommodations to the Physical Environment: Setting Up a Classroom for Students with Visual Disabilities, Instructional Accommodations: Making the Learning Environment Accessible to Students with Visual Disabilities*, and *Serving Students with Visual Disabilities: The Importance of Collaboration*. As part of this process, IRIS will also update the overall look of the modules to match our current standards, reformatting individual elements as well as replacing existing illustrations with photographs. A photo shoot for these photographs will occur in the spring. We plan to post the modules in May following the end of the academic semester.

❖ **Assessment Series:** Our two-module series on classroom assessment—*Classroom Assessment (Part 1): An Introduction To Monitoring Academic Achievement in the Classroom* and *Classroom Assessment (Part 2): Evaluating Reading Progress*—are currently undergoing revision by Erica Lembke of the University of Missouri and Robert Alexander Smith of the University of Southern Mississippi. We expect content for these resources to be delivered to IRIS during the new quarter.

❖ **Collaborating with Families:** A new version of this resource on the importance of working with the families of students with special needs is currently in the early phase of development. IRIS has asked Sharman Barrett, Director of the PACER Center, to evaluate the module's current version to identify information that might require revision or updating.

⟹ **Module Answer Keys in Spanish:** Assessment answer keys for each of our modules available in Spanish are in development and will be posted on the IRIS Website in the new quarter.

⟹ **IRIS "Quizlets":** Under the direction of Angelica Fulchini, the IRIS Technology Innovation Postdoctoral Scholar, we are exploring the possibility of developing interactive quizzes designed to help users better understand and recall key terminology and definitions IRIS Modules.

⇒ **New IRIS Format Templates:** With the unveiling of the new IRIS Website, we have reformatted our answer keys and module outlines to conform to our current design standards. In response to user feedback, module outlines now include interactive "windows" below each major module section that allow users to take notes and record answers to the Initial Thoughts questions.

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.

⇒ **Room Arrangement:** We will undertake a substantial revision of our "Effective Room Arrangement: Elementary" case study in the new quarter.

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, disability related language in federal law, and many others.

⇒ **Course/PD Activities Update:** IRIS is currently reviewing and editing our course/PD activities collection (110 in all), which will undergo revision to change or remove outdated terminology and information, as well as to update the resources' format and design to match our current standards. We hope to complete this task in the coming quarter.

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

⇒ **IRIS Alignment Tools:** State and district personnel, faculty, and school personnel often find it difficult to locate reliable, effective resources that translate the latest research on evidence-based practices into practical information that educators can use to improve learning and behavior outcomes for all children. In response, our new IRIS alignment tools are a user-friendly way to learn more about which of the IRIS resources align with high-leverage practices (HLPs), state-identified measurable results (SiMRs) topics, and the evidence-based practices highlighted in the CEEDAR innovation configurations (ICs). Located on a single page for the convenience of our users, the IRIS Alignment Tools can be found under the main "Resources" tab on our Website.

⇒ **EBP Summaries:** IRIS is currently updating our collection of evidence-based practice summaries. These research summaries covering instructional strategies and interventions offer information that includes level of effectiveness as well as the age groups for which a given strategy or intervention is designed. Links to the original

reports are also provided for those who might wish to explore further. We will complete the update in the new quarter.

⇒ **IRIS Glossary:** This searchable glossary of definitions for the disability related terms covered in many of our resources is currently being updated and expanded. This process will be completed in the new quarter.

Video Vignettes Update: These annotations of and links to videos about individuals with disabilities, their families, advocates, teachers, and service providers includes videos about the history of disabilities, as well as depictions of the application of evidence-based practices in educational settings.

⇒ **Collection Update:** IRIS has added a pair of video vignettes about accommodations for students with disabilities. The videos are:

❖ Accommodations and Modifications for Students with Disabilities
❖ Discussing Common Misperceptions about Accommodations

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 interventions.

⇒ **Collection Update:** Part of an ongoing process, IRIS is currently taking a look at our current collection of 338 information briefs with an eye toward removing older or outdated resources and, if possible, replacing them with newer versions. This effort will be completed in Year 2. Meanwhile, this resource has been updated with information briefs matched to our revised accommodations module.

For Faculty/For PD: Specially created with faculty members and professional development providers in mind, these sections of the IRIS Website offer a wide variety of tools and information for use in college coursework and PD training events.

⇒ **Formatting Update:** During this quarter, we reformatted both the coursework planning forms and PD planning forms collections, bringing them in line with our updated standards.

DISSEMINATION: *IRIS disseminates news of its resources through a wide variety of means, both universal, targeted, and individualized. The IRIS Website, 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.*

Infrastructure: 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.

⇒ **IRIS Stories:** IRIS resources are used throughout the United States and around the world. Now, for the first time, we're sharing the stories and experiences of our users in their own words. Whether told by college and university faculty, state or district personnel, school principals, or classroom teachers, every IRIS story teaches us something new. New IRIS stories as told by Mary Little, Professor of Education at the University of Central Florida, and a pair of her students have been posted to the IRIS Website.

⇒ **The IRIS Newsletter:** A new element of our dissemination efforts, a periodic IRIS newsletter will be made available to members of our email listserv, some 10,000 IRIS users. The newsletter will contain updates on IRIS and our resources, features about the center itself, information about conference presentations and appearances, and relevant information about the work of our partners. The first newsletter will be published in January of the new year.

⇒ **IRIS Summary:** The IRIS Data Summary is an annual publication designed to highlight information about the center, its users, and our most popular resources. A new summary to reflect our 2018 data will be created in the new quarter and submitted to OSEP for comment and approval, after which it will be posted on the IRIS Website.

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.

⇒ **Ambassador's Tool Kit:** IRIS has developed a tool kit for our IRIS Ambassadors, which currently includes five handouts and a general overview PowerPoint presentation. More handouts—including revised versions of our top tips for professional development providers and top tips for faculty—were completed this quarter and added to the tool kit.

⇒ **Administrator & School District Handout:** IRIS created this printable handout specifically to target school and district administrators such as those we spoke to at this year's meeting of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in

Nashville (see below).

⇒ **Christ the King School:** In early October, the IRIS Center presented on our resources related to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at Christ the King School, a private K-8 Catholic school in Nashville, Tennessee. Although the center does not normally provide in-service training, this presentation, to a school a few blocks from our offices, was part of our initiative to expand IRIS resources into the Catholic school system. Because of the increased inclusion of students with disabilities in the Catholic schools, and a lack of funding for professional development for school staff, administrators are looking for free resources to help improve their teachers' knowledge and skills. As the word about IRIS resources continues to spread, this group of educators has become a source of new users.

⇒ **Tennessee CEC Conference:** In October, IRIS hosted a presentation at the 2018 Tennessee Council for Exceptional Children Conference in Franklin, Tennessee, where we highlighted our resources on effective mathematics instruction.

⇒ **LEAD:** In October, IRIS was present at the Tennessee Department of Education's annual LEAD Conference in Nashville, where we hosted a booth to highlight the IRIS Website, resources, and professional development options.

⇒ **OSEP IEP SYMPOSIUM:** On October 15, 2018, IRIS presented at the third, and final, virtual event in the series: Effective Strategies to Enhance High-Quality Implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Naomi Tyler highlighted the types of resources and professional development options that can increase the capacity of school leaders and teachers to utilize evidence-based and high-leverage practices and improve the implementation of high-quality IEPs in their schools.

⇒ **California CEC Conference:** In October, IRIS Ambassadors Cammy Purper and Victoria Graf presented on the IRIS resources at the annual meeting of the California Council for Exceptional Children in Burlingame, California.

⇒ **Florida CEC Conference:** In October, IRIS Ambassador Mary Little presented on the IRIS resources at the 2018 conference of the Florida Council for Exceptional Children in Ponte Vedra, Florida.

⇒ **Teacher Education Division Conference:** In November, IRIS made a pair of presentations at the annual meeting of the Teacher Education Division (TED) in Las Vegas, Nevada. Our *IRIS 101* presentation covered the basics of our center and our resources for those who are currently unfamiliar with both, whereas *IRIS Advanced* offered a more in-depth look for long-time users.

⇒ **ASCD:** In November, IRIS hosted an exhibit booth at the annual Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, where IRIS Ambassador Nick French was on hand to dispense information about our center, resources, and professional development options to school and district leaders in attendance.

⇒ **Smith County:** In November, IRIS hosted a booth at the Smith County teacher in-service day in Carthage, Tennessee. Some 75 special educators from the county were present to take part.

⇒ **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC):** A trio of presentations about IRIS resources has been accepted for inclusion in the CEC 2019 Convention and Expo, to be held January 29-February 2 in Indianapolis, Indiana. We will present on our new MTSS/RTI: Mathematics module, new types of resources, and professional development options. IRIS will also host a booth in the exhibition hall.

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.*

⇒ **Top Tips for Faculty/Top Tips for PD Providers:** Located in our "For Faculty" and "For PD Providers" sections, these pages offer visitors tips and pointers on how to use IRIS resources in their college coursework or professional development trainings, covering everything from IRIS Modules, to online tools, to tech tips for a smoother online experience. Abridged versions of each top tips are also available for our visitors to download in PDF format and for IRIS to print and distribute during conference appearances.

⇒ **Micro-Credentials:** In collaboration with Digital Promise, IRIS offers a "stack" of micro-credentials (MCs) on accommodations for students with disabilities. These focused PD units allow educators to learn and gain mastery of discrete instructional practices.

❖ **MC Scorers:** Having finished developing comprehensive grading guidelines for each of the four micro-credentials in our stack, we began training scorers by allowing them to practice with micro-credentials submitted through Digital Promise's online platform.

❖ **IRIS & Bloomboard:** With the separation of the Digital Promise and Bloomboard platforms, Bloomboard is moving in a different direction and revising the format of their MCs. In late December, Vanderbilt approved initial contract proceedings with Bloomboard. As the process moves forward, IRIS will work within the new

template so that different versions of the IRIS MC stacks—each with its own focus and audience—can be offered on both platforms.

⟹ **Navigation Videos:** An updated and revised Website requires updated navigation videos. These brief video tutorials will help our visitors to use the IRIS Resource Locator, navigate our modules, and explore our various professional development options. We plan to complete and post these videos in the new year.

⟹ **The IRIS Strategic Plan:** IRIS is currently developing an action plan to increase the use of our School & District Platform and PD certificates of completion for teachers. The center is also working with Nick French (see below), an IRIS Ambassador with extensive educational leadership experience, to develop this plan. Updates will follow in subsequent quarterly reports.

⟹ **School & District Platform:** This quarter, IRIS Ambassador Nick French identified district and special education cooperatives in Tennessee and Washington State that have failed to meet the ESSA indicators of student achievement and school quality. Once these districts and special education cooperatives were identified, Nick compiled data identifying schools within the district or cooperative, their contact information, and area of identified need. These data will be used to share the IRIS PD Hours School & District Platform and allow school and district leaders to custom tailor, organize, and track their teachers' ongoing PD activities related to the identified areas of academic need.

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.*

⟹ **Project Outcomes:** IRIS has begun to collect data related to the project outcomes outlined in our logic model: increased awareness and knowledge of evidence-based practices and IRIS resources. Survey data related to these outcomes were collected at several IRIS presentations this quarter.

⟹ **Establishing Baselines:** One of the tasks outlined in our evaluation plan is to establish baseline levels of awareness of IRIS resources by various groups (e.g., state departments of education). That work was underway this quarter as we began to analyze our Website visitor data.

⟹ **The IRIS Master List:** IRIS has developed a list of state-approved teacher preparation programs throughout the United States. This list will be used to collect data about the number and percentage of programs in which IRIS resources are used. Deb Smith, formerly of IRIS@CGU, is coordinating this effort. We have gathered information about which programs have visited the IRIS Website during the period from January 1, 2018 through November 30, 2018. We will conduct the last phase of data collection for 2018

in January 2019. The number and percentage of programs using IRIS resources will be updated and appear in the 2018 IRIS Summary.

⇒ **Evaluation Projects:** Kristin Sayeski and Bethany Hamilton-Jones at the University of Georgia created the first draft of the Impact Survey for the first IRIS evaluation project. They piloted the survey at TED and received a great deal of helpful feedback. Drs. Sayeski and Hamilton-Jones are currently revising the questions and hope to have a second-generation survey ready to be tested at the beginning of January 2019. Dr. Sayeski is planning to launch it in January 2019 at the CEC conference.

⇒ **Fundamental Skill Sheets @ TED:** During the 2018 meeting of the Teacher Education Division in Las Vegas, Nevada, IRIS showcased our new fundamental skill sheets and conducted a focus group from which we gained valuable insight and opinion about the formatting and design of these new resources that proved indispensable in creating the final posted versions.

Module Feedback: The IRIS Module Feedback Form, an online survey, asks respondents to rate our modules' quality, relevance, and usefulness on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest rating). This quarter there were 1,121 respondents to this survey. **Table 1** (below) summarizes descriptive information about the respondents. **Table 2** presents the respondents' overall mean ratings of the IRIS Modules for quality, relevance, and usefulness. **Table 3** summarizes the respondents' area of work or study. Of particular note is the high number of professionals in general education that provided feedback.

Table 1

Respondents	Number
College Student	308
Graduate Student	279
Experienced Teacher	206
New Teacher	169
Other (e.g., parent)	96
School Leader	42
College Faculty	10
PD Provider	6
Data missing	5
Total	1,121

Table 2

	Mean Ratings
Quality	4.4
Relevance	4.5
Usefulness	4.4

Table 3

Response	Number
General education	384
Special education	356
Other	182
Early childhood education	140
Early childhood special education	31
Early intervention services	15
Data missing	13
Total	**1,121**

Website User Data: There were 700,390 visits to the Website this quarter, an increase of 20% compared to the same quarter last year. During 2018, there were **2,376,830** visits to the Website, an increase of 13.54% compared to 2017. As mentioned at the beginning of this report, this number is in spite of the brief traffic slowdown in the summer due to the implementation of the European Union's new GDPR standards.

Visits to IRIS Website by Month
(Google Analytics Data Only)
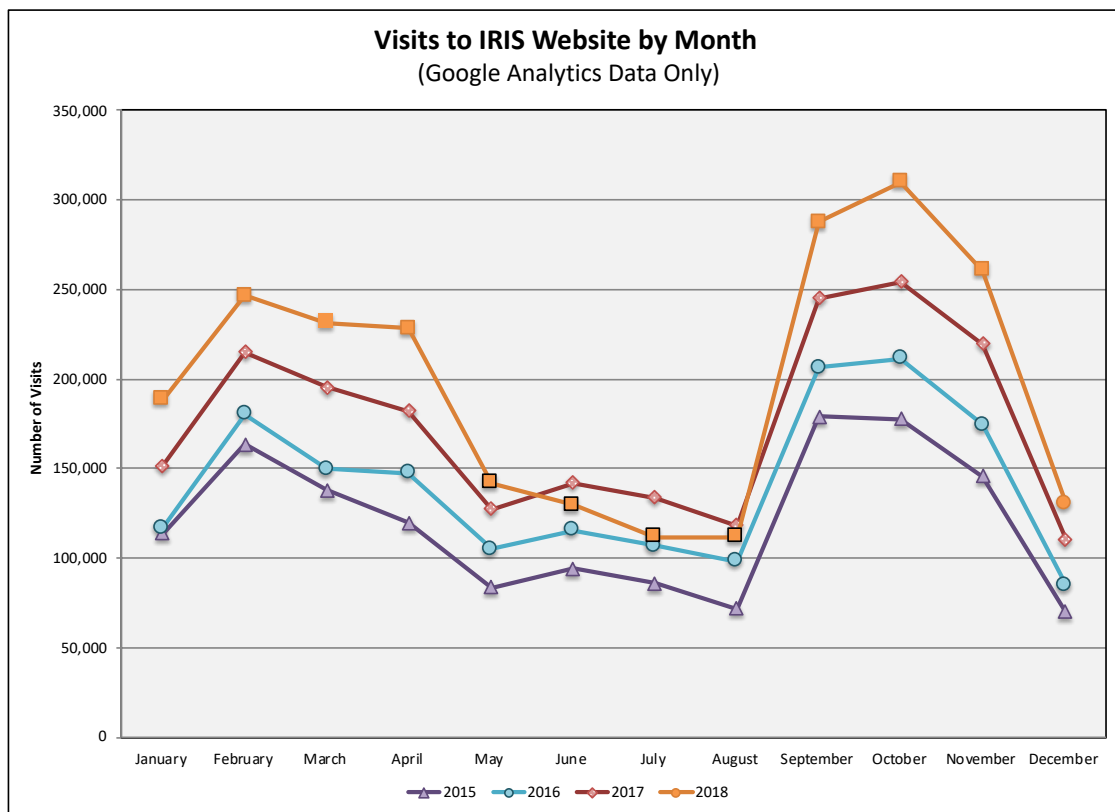
COLLABORATION & WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES: *IRIS works in collaboration with other national centers, nationally recognized education experts, and our own IRIS Ambassadors and Workgroups to improve our ability to develop resources, disseminate information about all things IRIS, and offer technical assistance and training.*

⇒ **National Center for Leadership in Intensive Intervention (NCLII):** IRIS continues to collaborate with NCLII. Through a proposed partnership, NCLII doctoral students will develop and pilot courses about intensive interventions. In turn, IRIS will post the syllabi from those courses on our Website as part of our Sample Syllabi collection. Three syllabi are currently available: Classroom and Behavior Management for Students with Disabilities, Intensifying Behavioral Interventions Using Data-Based Decision Making, and Intensive Interventions in Reading.

⇒ **National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII):** IRIS continues to collaborate with NCII on a number of fronts, information about which can be found below.

❖ **NCII & the IRIS Glossary:** NCII has requested permission to use our IRIS Glossary of disability related terms rather than engaging in duplicative effort to develop their own version.

❖ **NCII Course on Explicit Instruction:** IRIS began collaborations with NCII to disseminate information on their online course on explicit instruction, developed in cooperation with the University of Connecticut. Additional conversations focused on ways in which IRIS modules could be used to delve deeper into course content.

❖ **NCII and Intensive Intervention:** In October, IRIS attended an NCII meeting. The overall purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways that NCII can develop products to help teachers and district personnel understand and implement the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensification. Potential updates to the IRIS DBI Modules and possible future IRIS resources were also considered and will be discussed in the future.

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

⇒ **Student Worker:** Darryl Bond joined IRIS as a student worker assisting with tasks across the various inter-office teams.

⇒ **TA Coordinator Update:** With IRIS since June, 2018, Tanya Collins has assumed the duties of the center's Technical Assistance lead.