The IRIS Center Quarterly Report

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

Administrative Progress Report:

Year 5/Quarter 4

Submitted To:

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Office of Special Education Programs
Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services
United States Department of Education

Submitted 10/10/22

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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.

- **Three IRIS modules** were posted to the IRIS Website—two on addressing challenging behavior at the elementary level and one on the inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- **Two IRIS modules** on addressing challenging behavior at the secondary level are nearing completion.
- IRIS disseminated information at the **OSEP Leadership and Project Director's Conference** through a virtual booth, a pre-recorded presentation, and pre-recorded poster session.
- IRIS completed a **four-week virtual workshop** with doctoral scholars and doctoral candidates.

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.*

⇒ **Learning Management System:** Efforts are underway to replace our School & District Platform's dashboard with a more sophisticated and efficient learning management system (LMS). IRIS will implement the LearnDash PD platform, facilitating a more fluid interface for our users and offering greater flexibility, more accurate data tracking, improved customization of modules, and expanded options for assessments, among much else. The LearnDash platform is being configured to work seamlessly with IRIS's main WordPress site and to display the information needed by school and district administrators. We anticipate this will be completed in October, at which time we will begin beta testing.

⇒ **Personnel Changes:** We bid farewell to Sally Bresnahan, our dissemination coordinator. We wish her the best in her future endeavors.

⇒ **Careers at IRIS:** We have revised and reposted the position for the Communication Coordinator to highlight the focus on editorial work. We also posted a part-time, temporary position for a Graphic Designer to assist with graphics and other visual elements. Additionally, we are revising the notice for a Senior Programmer (Web Developer) position. Due to the nature of the work, we are looking to hire someone with advanced programming

qualifications and hope to locate an applicant meeting these needs. We hope to fill all positions soon.

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.

⇒ **Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities:** IRIS collaborated with the TIES Center, the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies, to develop a module focusing on the inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities in general education classrooms. This module, *Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Supports in the General Education Classroom,* was posted on the Website in mid-September. A link to the module will also be posted on the TIES Website.

⇒ **Classroom Behavior Management:** Kathleen Lane, the original content expert for *Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors Parts 1* and *2,* provided revisions for both modules. In late July, IRIS posted both modules with revised titles: Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 1): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle and Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 2): Behavioral Strategies. As part of the revision process, we not only updated and enhanced the content, but we also incorporated more videos—something that constituents have requested. These modules now include two sets of videos: the first demonstrates the acting-out cycle with one student (Nora) and the second provides practice opportunities with a different student (Kai) related to the acting-out cycle. Although the video shoot had been delayed due to COVID and school hallway renovations, the elementary versions were finally completed in July. To develop these videos, we collaborated with Dr. Johanna Staubitz, a Vanderbilt University faculty member and director of VU's applied behavior analysis (ABA) program, and two Vanderbilt graduate students to develop the video scripts. To increase the instructional effectiveness of the demonstration videos, we added commentary from Johanna Staubitz to the end of each video to point out salient student and teacher actions.

During the development process, we decided to expand this series. In addition to the two elementary versions, we are also developing a pair of modules for secondary-level educators. Although the content for these modules is complete, we are still in the process of scheduling the videos. We hope to complete the filming and post these two modules

during the next quarter.

⇒ **Spanish Translations:** This quarter, we posted one module that was translated into Spanish: *La tecnología de asistencia: Un resumen* (August 8, 2022). Another module is partially translated and will be completed and posted next 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, and many others.

⇒ **Activity Revisions:** Although the majority of our Course/PD Activities were revised during the previous year, revisions to the rest of the collection (approximately twenty activities) were put on hold so as to focus on the development of other resources. Work on the remaining activities resumed this quarter, and we hope to post many of these during the upcoming quarter.

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

⇒ **FSS:** To enhance the content for the module, *Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 2): Behavioral Strategies,* several of the pages contain links to Fundamental Skill Sheets to demonstrate how to implement each strategy with fidelity. Although we had FSS for many of these strategies, we are currently in the process of developing FSS for active supervision and opportunities to respond to complete the set. Although the content for these two FSS has been completed, we still need to film the videos. We anticipate posting these FSS next quarter if filming goes according to schedule.

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 more than 300 information briefs is undergoing a significant overhaul, which includes removing older or outdated resources and adding more recent and relevant briefs. To make the task more manageable, we have categorized briefs under topic areas for review by expert panels. Six topic areas (Disability; Evidence-Based Practices; Early Childhood; Learning Strategies; Content Instruction; and Reading, Literacy, and Language Arts) have already been reviewed. This quarter, we have been identifying new briefs for other topic areas. These remaining topics will be prepared and sent to expert reviewers in the coming quarter.

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. Once complete, we will share this resource with the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), which we expect to do in the upcoming quarter.

⇒ **Web Resource Directory:** This list of other federally sponsored projects and centers that provide resources and information useful for educational professionals was updated this quarter.

⇒ **High-Leverage Practices Alignment Tool:** This tool allows users to identify which IRIS Modules and Case Studies align with high-leverage practices in special education. This quarter, we sent a list of five modules to Angela Patti, an expert on high-leverage practices who was recommended by the CEEDAR Center, for review. We anticipate updating this tool next quarter with the content that Dr. Patti provides.

⇒ **IRIS Book Tool:** This tool, which contains information and synopses of children's and young adult literature about or having to do with people with disabilities, is currently being updated by Mary Anne Prater-Doty. We anticipate posting many new books to this tool early in the next quarter.

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.*

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.

⇒ **IRIS Prep Talks:** Due to the overwhelming positive response to last spring's Prep Talk series, we have decided to host a three-part webinar series this fall. Although we originally planned to feature the TIES Center last spring, we decided to postpone their session to this fall to follow the release of the collaboratively developed module, *Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Supports in the General Education Classroom* (see the Development section for more information). The webinar with TIES is scheduled for October 14. Early next quarter, IRIS will schedule two other centers to complete the series.

⇒ **National Resource Center for Paraeducators, Related Services Providers, and Interveners (NRCP):** NRCP has been curating a collection of quality resources for related service providers and reached out to IRIS about linking to one of our modules. In response, we

shared that we had other modules that provide information for or about related service providers. They plan to link to the six IRIS Modules that we recommended. Through this activity, we hope to increase the awareness and use of IRIS resources among related service providers.

⇒ **National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs (NACCTEP) Educational Partnership:** IRIS continues to collaborate with NACCTEP to increase knowledge and awareness of IRIS resources among community college teacher preparation faculty. As an Educational Partnership Member of NACCTEP, IRIS is featured as a partner on NACCTEP's Website and promoted on their social media platforms. Although IRIS was planning to present at an upcoming NACCTEP Coffee Chat and to submit an article for the next quarterly newsletter, changes in NACCTEP's dissemination strategies have slightly altered these plans. Instead, IRIS will record a podcast and submit a blog post about our resources and services that will be shared with their members.

⇒ **Council for Exceptional Children**

❖ **Partner Directory:** IRIS is one of four CEC Partner Directory Showcase Partners. As such, IRIS is featured at the top of the Partners Solution Directory and will be highlighted in an upcoming e-blast. This activity allows us to expand our reach among special educators.

❖ **Member Forums:** IRIS posts information on new releases in CEC's all-member forum (over 13,000 members) and the Teacher Education Division (TED) forum (over 2,000 members). These postings are targeted to each audience's needs (e.g., PD for the all-member forum, college coursework for the TED forum) and expand the reach of IRIS' communication network.

⇒ **Listserv Notices:** Our current contacts list, through which we disseminate our newsletters as well as occasional e-blasts (e.g., announcements about new or revised modules, field-testing opportunities), continues to increase at an outstanding rate, increasing to over 42,000 enrollees this quarter.

⇒ **Social Media:** Our center's social media following and number of engagements continue to grow at a steady pace. As of this report, IRIS has 4,725 followers on Twitter, 2,792 on Facebook, and 1,538 on LinkedIn.

Presentation & Outreach Efforts: Throughout the year, IRIS attends local, regional, and national conferences to keep target audiences up to date on new and revised IRIS resources. Information about upcoming presentations is below.

⇒ **Conference Proposals, Presentations, and Booths:** Our dissemination plan is designed to reach an ever-increasing number of diverse user groups.

- ❖ **OSEP Leadership and Project Director's Conference:** This quarter, IRIS participated in the OSEP Leadership and Project Director's Conference, which was held virtually July 18–21, 2022. In addition to a virtual booth, which featured our recently revised classroom behavior management modules, our Professional Development Certificates for Educators, and more, the Center also shared information about IRIS resources through two previously recorded presentations:

  - The first, a five-minute poster session, highlighted new and updated IRIS resources related to classroom behavior management.
  - The second, a presentation titled "Using IRIS Center Resources to Support Educators in Alabama," featured Gwen Preston and Elizabeth Greene of the Alabama State Department of Education, Office of Special Education Services, who shared how they have been using IRIS in their state. One highlight of the presentation was a demonstration of how 16 IRIS Modules and other resources are embedded into Alabama's new pathway to certification, a temporary special educator certificate.

- ❖ **OESE All TA Center Webinar:** In September, IRIS facilitated a breakout session during the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) All TA Center Call, which focused on educator workforce support and retention. The webinar was attended by approximately 100 participants from across the TA Centers. OESE leadership explicitly shared that IRIS Modules and PD resources can support states as they address the teacher shortage.

- ❖ **TED Conference:** IRIS will conduct a presentation and a workshop at the TED Conference, which will be held November 8-11, 2022 in Richmond, Virginia. The presentation titled, "What's New @IRIS? All the Latest Resources and Online Tools," will feature new and revised resources that faculty can embed in their teacher preparation courses. The workshop, "Course Planning Using IRIS Resources" — a condensed version of the doctoral scholars' workshop—is designed to help doctoral candidates plan their courses and identify and utilize IRIS resources effectively in those courses.

- ❖ **CEC Conference:** IRIS will be participating in the CEC conference, which will be held March 1-4, 2023 in Louisville, Kentucky. In addition to an exhibit booth, the following IRIS presentations will be included in next year's offerings:

  - "High-Quality IEPs: Using Online Resources to Support Hybrid Professional Development"
  - "Using IRIS Resources for Flexible Professional Development in High-Need Topics"
  - "Supporting Early Career Educators with IRIS Center Resource Learning Pathways"

- Note: A fourth presentation, "Web-based Resources to Help Prevent and Address Disruptive Student Behaviors," has been waitlisted.

❖ **ESEA Conference:** IRIS will host a booth at the 2023 Elementary and Secondary Education Act Network (ESEA) Conference (Indianapolis, IN, February 1-4, 2023). Additionally, the IRIS proposal for a presentation titled, *Free Online Professional Development Materials on Evidence Based Practices,* has been selected as a recorded presentation that will be available to virtual and in-person attendees.

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 resources. Notes on our recent activities to this purpose can be found below.

❖ **IRIS Virtual Workshop for Doctoral Scholars:** IRIS completed a four-week virtual workshop in June and July with seven doctoral scholars from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Louisville, University of South Florida, and Utah State University. The goal was to increase their knowledge of IRIS and how to use the free online resources to deliver content about evidence-based practices in their future courses. More specifically, participants:

- Identified resources that support their courses' core content
- Selected wrap-around and supporting materials to add breadth or depth to key topics
- Learned how the resources can be effectively used in face-to-face, hybrid, and online instruction
- Explored other course planning resources

Participant Feedback
• *I liked spending time navigating the resource locator with guidance. It was helpful to see the breadth of resources available and how to use the search feature effectively. I also appreciate time to connect in small groups.*
• *Time to talk with colleagues and instructors about our course and developing plans was most helpful.*
• *I will FOR certain be utilizing the case study feature as well as the wrap around [content] maps and the fundamental skill sheets!*
• *The asynchronous content was easy to follow and well-designed. I appreciated the structure!*

This workshop, incorporated a blended-delivery system. While participating in each synchronous session, participants engaged with IRIS ambassadors—Jordan Lukins, Kimberly Snow, and Darcie Peterson—who discussed the range and depth of IRIS resources and shared how IRIS resources can support course instruction. Throughout

the sessions, participants were grouped together by the type of courses or professional development activities they were planning for the Fall 2022 semester (e.g., behavior management, foundations, methods). At the end of each session, the small groups met to discuss and identify IRIS resources for their individual course planning needs. Feedback on weekly exit tickets and a post-workshop survey indicated that the workshop was a success.

- ❖ **LEAP Back to School Virtual Training for Teachers:** In August, IRIS provided a training for the Michigan Local Education Agency Partnership (LEAP) highlighting how educators can use our flexible, user-friendly resources to take their professional development to the next level. More specifically, this training, attended by 131 teachers, offered a brief overview of the IRIS Center, demonstrated how to navigate the IRIS Website, and provided step-by-step directions on how to access the PD Certificates for Educators portion of the site, set up an account, and add and work through modules. The session also included a brief walkthrough of an IRIS Module, which teachers were expected to complete and submit their certificates to LEAP. Throughout September, IRIS provided technical assistance to LEAP as they developed a series of targeted and comprehensive professional development offerings to improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers and leaders. In addition to resources from other sources, LEAP plans to use numerous IRIS Modules to promote continuous improvement and effectiveness among the following: Grow Your Own-Teachers, New Teacher Induction, Teachers in Progress, Teacher Leaders, Aspiring Leaders, and Grow Your Own-Leaders. To facilitate this PD, LEAP will utilize the IRIS School & District Platform.

- ❖ **Lee County Schools District Training:** In September, IRIS provided a training to Central Office staff of Lee County Schools in Alabama. IRIS highlighted newly released modules, resources for PD providers, and the new and improved School & District Platform that will be available in the spring. In addition to Alabama's basic requirement that new teachers complete the IRIS behavior modules, Lee County will require new teachers who did not compete in-person internships during the pandemic to complete additional IRIS Modules.

- ❖ **IRIS Stories:** IRIS Stories share 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.

    - ▪ **LEAP:** IRIS is working with LEAP personnel to develop an IRIS story highlighting how they are using IRIS Modules in the development of career pathway options and requirements for educators in the Detroit Metro Area.
    - ▪ **Stamford, CT:** IRIS is working with Special Education Administrators in Stamford, CT to develop an IRIS story about how they are currently field-testing IRIS Modules to use as required professional development for their paraprofessional staff.

⇒ **Approved PD Provider Status:** IRIS continues to pursue approved provider status in states that have an approved provider list. This quarter, IRIS was added to the approved lists for six states: California, Nevada, Kentucky, Texas, Massachusetts, and Arkansas. Additionally, IRIS submitted applications for Washington and Montana, which are currently under review. Although IRIS determined that twenty-one states and Washington, D.C. do not have approved provider lists, we will continue to research the remaining states.

⇒ **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, as well as to regularly contact schools and districts whose accounts have expired regarding possible renewal.

❖ **Platform Queries:** This quarter, IRIS received inquiries from school districts in Plano, TX and Jasper, TN.

❖ **Caney Public Schools:** In August, IRIS enrolled eight paraeducators in the Caney, Oklahoma school district.

❖ **Wynnewood Public Schools:** In August, IRIS enrolled seven paraeducators in the Wynnewood, Oklahoma school district.

⇒ **PD Certificates for Educators:** IRIS PD Certificates for Educators allow individual users to pursue certificates for professional development hours.

❖ **New Certificates Available:** This quarter, we made available three new certificates:

▪ Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 1, Elementary): Understanding the Acting Out Cycle
▪ Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 2, Elementary): Behavioral Strategies
▪ Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Supports in the General Education Classroom

❖ **PD Certificate Data:** IRIS keeps careful tabs on which of our resources are the most popular, and our PD offerings are no different. This quarter 26,972 PD Certificates were accessed. The top-five certificates accessed this quarter are noted below. As mentioned in the previous report, historically the modules *Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors (Part 1): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle* and *Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors (Part 2): Behavioral Interventions* are quite often in the top five. Although posted at the very end of July (only two months of the current quarter), the revised *Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 1, Elementary): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle* is now once again in the top five.

Module Title	Certificates Accessed
Classroom Behavior Management (Part 1): Key Concepts and Foundational Practices	2,070
Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 1, Elementary): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle	1,572
Classroom Diversity: An Introduction to Student Differences	1,378
Autism Spectrum Disorder (Part 1): An Overview for Educators	1,273
Accommodations: Instructional and Testing Supports for Students with Disabilities	1,207

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**: In late August/early September, we recruited four faculty members teaching undergraduate or graduate courses to field-test four modules: *Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 1, Elementary): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle*, *Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Part 2, Elementary): Behavioral Strategies*, *Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Supports in the General Education Classroom*, and *IEPs: How Administrators Can Support the Development and Implementation of High-Quality IEPs* (partially field-tested in 2019 and Spring 2022). Data from field-testing will be reported in future quarterly reports.

⇒ **External Evaluator:** Sarah Heinemeier of Compass Evaluation and Research continues to analyze data accessed through GoogleAnalytics, which helps the IRIS team make development and dissemination decisions. Her full analysis of our quarterly data is included in the attached report, which includes information on Website visits, visitors, user acquisitions, pages viewed per session, page depth, session duration, and more. Remaining consistent across quarters is our outbound traffic data (see pp. 10-11)—where IRIS users go after leaving the IRIS site, often via recommended materials or embedded links in IRIS resources. Once again, the top outbound site is ies.ed.gov (Institute for Education Sciences); other OSEP-and ED-funded centers are frequent destinations as well (e.g., CPIR, CEEDAR, NCII, Center on Instruction, the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder).

⇒ **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 3,304 respondents to this survey. The tables below contain a bit more information about those respondents.

Table 1. Current Positions

Respondents	Number
Instructional Assistant/Paraprofessional	819
Experienced Teacher	693
College Student	673
Graduate Student	569
New Teacher	306
Other	93
School Leader	67
Missing	26
PD Provider	24
College Faculty	23
Parent	11
Total	**3,304**

Table 2. Education Areas

Response	Number
Special Education	1,368
General Education	918
Early Childhood Education	466
Early Childhood Special Education	225
Other	212
Missing	80
Early Intervention Services	35
Total	**3,304**

Table 3. Module Ratings

	Mean Ratings
Quality	4.5
Relevance	4.6
Usefulness	4.6

⇒ **Website Visitor Data**: During this quarter, GoogleAnalytics data showed 915,707 visits to the IRIS Website, an increase of 1.4% over the same period in 2021. As depicted in the graph below, this year's monthly data reflect the typical "IRIS spider" pattern (monthly use increases at the beginning of the spring semester—January and February—and subsequently decreases throughout the rest of the spring semester and summer, increasing again at the beginning of the fall semester in September). We hypothesize that we are seeing a slight decline in the pandemic-related boost of 2020 and continue to work on strategic communications plans for the rest of 2022 to build on that early boost.

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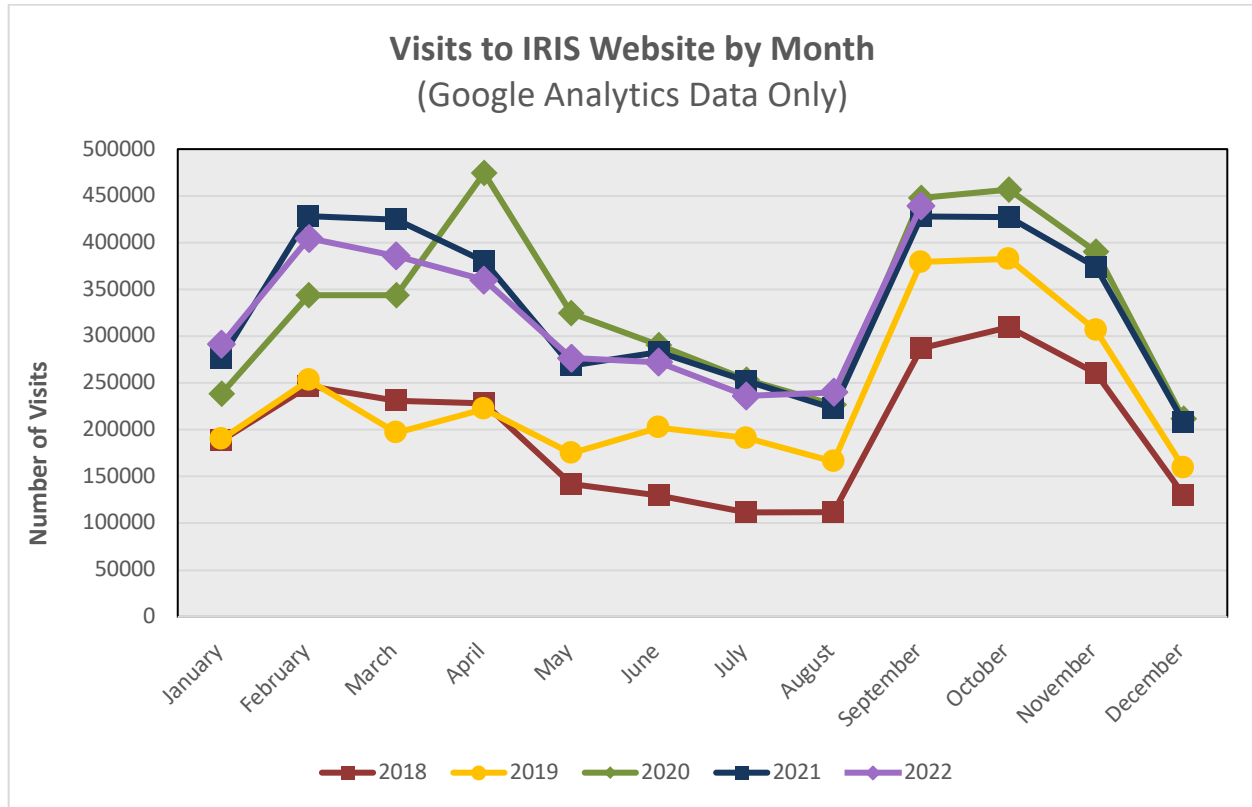
COLLABORATION & WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES: *IRIS works in collaboration with other national centers, nationally recognized education experts, and our own IRIS Ambassadors and Workgroups to improve our ability to develop resources, disseminate information about all things IRIS, and offer technical assistance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

⇒ **Partnerships:** IRIS develops partnerships with other organizations to develop and disseminate information about our resources. Read on to learn about our work in this area this quarter.

❖ **University of Central Florida, DebriefScape Stepping-up Grant:** IRIS' work with UCF and DebriefScape ended in August. IRIS open access educational resources were identified that aligned with Debriefscape categories (e.g., HLPs and teacher skill areas) and linked from the platform to help support special education teachers in the critical areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Dr. Angelica Fulchini Scruggs, the IRIS liaison for DebriefScape, has moved into the project coordinator position for the Center for Innovation, Design, and Digital Learning (CIDDL) at the University of Kansas and we look forward to new collaborative possibilities.

❖ **TIES Center:** As mentioned above, IRIS collaborated with the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies, to develop the module, *Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Supports in the General Education Classroom* (see the Development section above).

- ❖ **NCII and PROGRESS Center:** Representatives from IRIS, the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), and the PROGRESS Center continue to meet monthly (as needed) to share ideas and to discuss possible collaborative efforts.