Our Moonshot Community: Learners Inspiring Learners

This book is dedicated to the school and community leaders who have joined the Moonshot Moment Journey and to the social venture philanthropy that has allowed us to create our collective voice.

**With one voice**, we defined our common values, mindset, and commitment to innovation and learning.

**With one voice**, we created a Moonshot Leadership Development Program and built the capacity of community leaders to work as an unstoppable team.

**With one voice**, we invested in our teachers’ and students’ collective journey to excellence through extended learning opportunities after school and summer.

We thank all those who have joined the journey and look forward to the day when every parent, child, and community member add their voice to this powerful symphony.
A special thank you to Ray and Jean Oglethorpe for their enduring leadership, which shows us all what it means to be literate, compassionate, creative citizens who improve our world.
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The Learning Alliance (TLA) can best be described as a story of hope and determination that is unfolding daily in the lives of teachers, students, and the community.

It is the story of people driven by a complex mix of passion for a purpose higher than themselves and the power of a transformational vision propelling a community to take action.

It is a story of the personal hardships of the founding parents who saw the daily suffering in their children's eyes as they struggled in school. It is the story of a philanthropist, the former president of AOL, who knew he would still be in the coal mines if it were not for his public school education.

It is the story of an innovative Superintendent and a determined Director of Curriculum who had battled the literacy issue for ten years.

These seed stories have sprouted into the Moonshot Moment goal of 90% literacy by third grade.

To translate this goal into a reality requires broad community ownership, innovation, and collaboration that will push us over traditional boundaries and barriers.

To date our Moonshot Community consists of the School District of Indian River County, over 100 community partners, and over 150 volunteers, all focusing on leadership, Kindergarten readiness, stopping the summer slide, closing the gap through after-school programs and teacher professional development. We are creating an unstoppable team that is leading the way and taking a stand for our youngest citizens.
“Transforming lives through literacy.” These four words capture the essence of TLA’s mission. They are the driving force behind the people and passion of the Moonshot Movement, a movement recognized nationally as a model for community transformation. Our community’s Moonshot Goal has inspired a united commitment amongst over 100 partners to take a stand for our youngest citizens. This commitment has empowered all of us to understand what is getting in the way and give voice to the truth about why we are struggling as a nation to educate our youth. We are a community in action. The community has embraced this challenge with incredible humility, courage, and generosity. We now understand the profound impact of families experiencing poverty. We now understand the importance of building social emotional wellness, creativity, and grit to solve problems. Some have called these soft skills, but we now know they are power skills. Importantly, this year will be remembered for the relaunch of our Literacy Leaders into a Moonshot Community Action Network (MCAN). Through MCAN we have transferred the emergent learning values and Moonshot mindset from The Learning Alliance to a broad base of community leaders. We have created an unstoppable team that leads the way, and inspires and unites around our children. The Moonshot Movement has transformed us as a community forever; our 90% goal requires 100% participation. There is more work to be done. Thank you for joining the journey. Let us carry on!

“Moonshot is inspiring national and global attention. Your Moonshot Community story has been shared by 4th Quadrant Partners and is now being downloaded all over the world. You aren’t becoming a literacy capital, you are a literacy capital. This work is at the heart and soul of what makes this country great. I am so proud of you. Happy to have a front row seat. You should be so proud.”

– Heidi Guber, 4th Quadrant Partners
March 2nd, 2017 Johns Island Breakfast
Leadership Messages

A commitment to our children …

“A” School, “F” School, FSA, SAT 10, E.D. or NON-E.D. - behind every statistic, grade, and acronym is a child, a teacher, a parent. They are the reason we do this work. We are working to ensure that EVERY child can grow into the literate, compassionate and creative citizen that our world so desperately needs. This transformation is not measured with test scores and ratings alone, and the problem is not solved with more mandates. True transformation requires a compassionate community that stands for its youngest members and won’t give up on them.

This year will come and go, as we cannot stop the passing of time. Nor will we stop working for our children. We made a commitment and there is no expiration date on a commitment. Rather than focus on a number, a grade or a date, let’s celebrate all we have accomplished on our journey. In 2010 we launched the first teacher training initiative, introduced a common literacy curriculum in schools and galvanized community leaders to support the Moonshot Moment goal. Now, in 2017, we have award winning Moonshot Academy after-school programs on six campuses, Moonshot Institutes, model summer camps such as STEP into Kindergarten, Literacy on the Lagoon and Literacy in Motion, a mobile literacy lab, hundreds of teachers trained in strategies to reach ALL children, and over 100 community partners co-creating innovative solutions starting at birth. We continue to receive awards and national recognition for the work happening here, but in the end, the real winners are our children.

While the headwinds of rising poverty, increasing standards, and attendant teacher skills have opened our eyes to the complexity of the work before us, the enormous progress our community has made is cause for celebration. Together with our community partners, we are taking a stand for our youngest citizens. This is OUR Moonshot Commitment. Thank you for your continued support!

As an educator, I know that literacy is the most essential skill for educational success. But, it is a skill that has to be learned. We are fortunate to live in a community committed to providing the resources for our students and training for our teachers that will ensure that 90% of our 3rd grade students will be reading on grade level, the crucial dividing line in reading development.

We should be very excited about what has already been accomplished in this unique partnership, and even more excited about the promise of the future.

But our success has required and will continue to require everyone to contribute and work together.
Founders

David and Barbara Baldwin
“The advancement that The Learning Alliance has made in a relatively short period of time is truly remarkable. A hardy congratulations to you and others involved that have made this a reality. We applaud your success!”

Jayne and Paul Becker
“The greatest gift we can give a child is a good education. The gateway to learning is reading. The Learning Alliance is offering best-practice skills to our children and their teachers. We believe everyone benefits from that, including our communities. We are happy to be a part of that process.”

Kenna and Chris Clifford
“By unifying the key leaders of this community, TLA has created a rare opportunity to make a huge difference in the lives of our children and families. This capacity to unify us around solving complex problems is special and worth investing in.”

Tom and Carol Corr
“When a child fails to learn to read by 3rd grade, only one in seven succeeds thereafter. As a child growing up, I was that one in seven that made it. I want to make sure that The Learning Alliance provides this opportunity to all kids.”

Susan and John Dobbs
“Nothing is more important than giving our children a quality education. We are very happy to support The Learning Alliance in its goal to have 90% of 3rd graders reading at grade level. As we have heard Ray, Barbara and Liz say so often, we learn to read so we can read to learn. The Learning Alliance is a model that will inspire the rest of the country by showing that cooperation between a school district and private partnerships can bring results that neither can achieve on its own.”
Founders

Barbara Hurley
“I think that the lock that enables children to read in this country has rusted. The Learning Alliance has not only lubricated that lock, but they have found the key to it, and I'm so excited to be a part of it.”

Richard and Rosemary Haverland
“Reading has always been one of my greatest pleasures and I have enjoyed volunteering with kindergarten children, helping them master the very first steps and begin to read. Dick and I have been so impressed with the impact of the Learning Alliance on young lives in our community.”

Jim and Jean Kelly
“The Learning Alliance is helping build better futures for our children. Reading proficiency by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success. Our kids will not be successful if they can’t read at grade level. The work The Learning Alliance is doing is critical for the future of our kids and our country.”

Betty and Whitney MacMillan
“As a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, education is certainly a focus for us, and The Learning Alliance is showing us that you CAN teach children to read – and we're all for that”! - Betty
“I learned in my commercial life that projects work when people are committed, and we certainly have that with the partnership between The Learning Alliance, teachers, volunteers, and students.” - Whitney

Ray and Jean Oglethorpe
“When everyone is pulling in the same direction toward an aggressive, agreed upon goal, there is tremendous power. With the help of philanthropists, community leaders, teachers, volunteers, and The Learning Alliance education team all coming together in partnership, we will make our 90% goal and then share our successes around the country.”
Founders

Don and Patsy Riefler
“Niall Ferguson issued a wake up call for America stating that our country’s working class with a high school education or less cannot survive economically in the competitive world that is evolving. The Learning Alliance’s research shows that unless reading proficiency is developed in early years, our children have little chance to acquire the skills necessary to compete in the modern world.”

Art and Pat Ryan
“Learning to read is the most important skill we ensure our children acquire at an early age. We increase the probability of success when everyone in the community shares this goal for all of our children. Let’s make it happen!”

Warren and Virginia Schwerin
“We are so impressed with the leadership of The Learning Alliance and its scientific approach to reading. It’s exciting to be part of it.”

Marlynn and Bill Scully
“It’s vitally important for these children to advance their basic reading skills by third grade in order to give them the opportunity to participate successfully in future academic challenges. The Learning Alliance team has created an opportunity for those who struggle to read to reach heights never imagined just a few years ago. We are so proud of your team.”

Dace and King Stubbs
“We’ve experienced the benefit of having best practice education, and we want to give access to that education to all children. We’re so happy to see the smiling, engaged faces and the pride of these students who are experiencing, first-hand, the programs of The Learning Alliance.”
Founders

Donald and Janet Tribus
“The Learning Alliance touched me deeply. Not only do I have a young granddaughter who struggles in school, but I have always had trouble with reading comprehension. When I was in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade, I had to miss 60% of school due to health issues. I know how important those years are. The Learning Alliance is really doing something very special to help children.”

Pat and Carol Welsh
“We have been deeply involved in programs that provide academic support for struggling children. Every child deserves an opportunity to fulfill his or her potential. By enabling students to achieve literacy by third grade, The Learning Alliance will ensure that the more than 4,000 children that it serves each year will have the basic skills for educational success.”

IMPACT 100
“The women of Impact 100 are proud to have selected The Learning Alliance as a winner of two of our transformational Impact 100 grants. We are aligned with their mission to improve education in Indian River County and are honored to have them as one of our Community Partners.”
– Suzanne Bertman, President

Indian River Community Foundation
“Our donors and our board believe that education is a transformational issue for our community. We are investing in The Learning Alliance. By doing so, we are helping trusted community leaders using evidence based approaches make a difference.”
– Jeffrey (Jeff) R. Pickering, President and CEO, Indian River Community Foundation

John’s Island Community Service League
“We value the impact that TLA has had with teacher training, their after school programs and melding the community together through MCAN. We whole heartedly support TLA.”
– Hope Woodhouse

What does it take to become a TLA Founder? Our Founders provide the basis for our social venture capital model. They provide a deep and sustained commitment that fuels our learning journey.
Our Vision

- 90% of 3rd graders read at grade level.
- Our community owns the Moonshot Moment goal.
- Indian River County is a hub for teacher training.
- Legislators support our district.
- 90% of children arrive ready for kindergarten.
- Literacy-rich summer and after school programs proliferate.
- Indian River County is recognized as a national literacy capital.
- Individual success and community prosperity abound.
- Community capacity to solve collective problems beyond 3rd grade reading is flourishing.
The Problem

Unfortunately, 64% of ALL children in 4th grade in the U. S. are failing to meet proficient reading standards. (NAEP, 2015)

- Only 1 in 6 students who are behind will catch up after 3rd grade.
- 40% arrive not ready for kindergarten.
- When a child arrives behind, they stay behind, requiring extra time after school or during the summer to catch up.
- Children experiencing poverty hear 30 million fewer words than children from higher-income families.
- Children experiencing poverty are at a greater risk of social and emotional trauma.
- Unlike the recent past where 2 out of 10 jobs needed high levels of literacy, today it is 9 out of 10 jobs.
- There is a mismatch between the skills teachers have and what they need to create a classroom where students acquire the skills to succeed in today’s economy.
The Consequences

Early Warning! Why reading by the end of third grade matters.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation

The psychological and economic fall-out for the child, family and society is devastating.

- Some states determine how many prison cells to build based on third grade reading scores. (Whitehurst interview, Children of the Code, www.childrenofthecode.org)

- More than 75% of those on welfare, 85% of unwed mothers, 68% of those arrested, and 60% of America’s prison inmates are illiterate.

- Fourth graders who cannot read at grade level today are all too likely to become our nation’s lowest income, least skilled, least productive, and most costly citizens.
“Literacy is the #1 predictor of individual success and community prosperity.”
- Annie E. Casey Foundation

“You learn to read by third grade, so that you can read to learn thereafter. It matters little what else they learn in elementary school if they do not learn to read at grade level.”
- Fielding, Kerr & Rosier

“The Moonshot Moment recognizes that third grade is the leverage point. If a community can come together to solve third grade reading, it will unlock everything.”
- Heidi Sparkes Guber
  Founding Partner, Fourth Quadrant Partners
The Solution

The Moonshot Moment journey empowers community leaders, parents, and front line educators with the literacy tools, knowledge, and support necessary to enable children to read by third grade.

- Leadership Transformation: Leadership at all levels, holding the tension between the vision and current reality and resolving roadblocks that allow for progress toward the vision.

- Teacher Journey: Building the technical skills and knowledge specific to the art and science of instruction, as well as social and emotional development.

- School Journey: Redesigning the school’s capacity to ensure students develop the literacy skills, compassion, and creativity necessary to be successful.

- Schools can’t do it alone: Learning starts at birth, requiring unprecedented collaboration between schools, parents, and community partners.
The Learning Alliance’s Role

As an emergent learning organization, TLA builds the collaborative capacity of our community and schools through our Moonshot Transformation Process. The discipline of learning through innovation, reflecting on our innovations, and adapting practices accordingly is at the center of our work.

TLA Core Values:

• Collaborative learning

• Community empowerment to create local solutions

• Literacy and social-emotional skills to transform individuals and communities

• Sustainable investment to support learning

• Creativity and customization of individualized solutions

• Celebration of our partnerships and our learning

www.TheLearningAlliance.org
Community Highlights: Award Winning Programs

IN SCHOOL AND AFTER SCHOOL

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Moonshot Academy helped win the Pacesetter Award due to its continued impact on student growth.

SUMMER

Literacy on The Lagoon helped win the Pacesetter Award due to students going from 30% below their peers to 6.5% ahead.

Literacy in Motion students went from 26% below their peers to 12.5% ahead.

INDIAN RIVER ACADEMY

There was a 84% decrease in office referrals among economically disadvantaged students and 75% decrease among non-economically disadvantaged because of their commitment to conscious discipline.

IRA’s improvement was recognized by Governor Rick Scott as one of the top 15 out of 1,796 schools in the state.

K-READINESS

The Education Foundation and SDIRC helped win the Pacesetter Award through their STEP Program where students achieved 53% and 154% increases in social emotional and academic readiness.

Big Brothers, Big Sister’s Passport to Literacy summer program helped us win the Pacesetter Award due to an increase of 72% in foundational literacy skills, and over 250% increase in print knowledge.
Summer Programs

The “Summer Slide” typically claims a 25% learning loss over the summer, and that can add up to two years by fifth grade! In 2016, Indian River County was again recognized by the Campaign for Grade Level Reading as a Pacesetter for our work to “stop the summer slide.”

For the past 3 summers, the Environmental Learning Center and SDIRC have offered “Literacy on the Lagoon,” a program to stop the summer slide, and increase math, science and literacy skills.

During the summer, the Education Foundation and SDIRC “Step into Kindergarten” Program increases kindergarten readiness for struggling students before they start school.

Literacy in Motion
The Vero Beach Museum of Art partnered with TLA and SDIRC to offer outgoing 1st graders a “Literacy in Motion” summer camp/summer school program.
Summer Programs

The Vero Beach Museum of Art incorporated the “Bucket List” concept of “Sneaky Reading.”

Dr. Chris Ryall trained two dozen summer camp providers on how to use “bucket lists” to incorporate “Sneaky Reading” into their summer camps.

TLA entertained over 150 people at our annual National Summer Learning Day family pizza party which included actors from the Indian River Charter High School Drama Troupe acting out stories read by community VIPs.

Students received books and Moon Pies on Summer Learning Day.
The Literacy Leaders relaunched as MCAN, and created a powerful Professional Development Series focused on our twelve month question: “What does it take to create a high performance team, that leads the way, is stronger together, inspired and unstoppable?”
Outreach: MCAN
Outreach: John’s Island Breakfast

TLA’s January 26th Breakfast featured inspiring stories of transformation within the schools and extended learning programs. Celebrations included Indian River Academy, Moonshot After School Academies and our summer programs.

Barbara Hammond, TLA CEO ties it all together.

Kindergarten teacher Luanne Lewis and 11th grade teacher Andy Lewis brought tears of hope and inspiration.

Tracey Pierce from the State DOE says Moonshot is a model.

Professional Development experts Liz Woody and Megan Kendrick wow the crowd.

Kurt Wootton, Arts Literacy Expert
Diane Fannon, Principal IRA
Tiffany Justice, School Board Representative

Mark Rendell, Superintendent SDIRC shares breakthrough stories.

Founder, Marlynn Scully, and Board Member, Carol Price, celebrating with Ray Oglethorpe, whose passion is contagious.
Outreach: Community Summit

The Moonshot Moment 2016 Community Summit was held in June with over 250 local and state representatives. The full-day event was an opportunity to onboard the community, as we know it takes 100% participation to reach the 90% goal.

Over 250 community leaders met to celebrate the success of the Moonshot Moment and to brainstorm on how to continue and improve our progress.

The Moonshot Moment Outreach group brainstormed what it would take to actively engage, reach and support all of our county’s residents.

Representatives from several Florida Campaign for Grade Level Reading organizations participated in our Moonshot Community Summit.

Inspired by the children’s book Stone Soup, Nate Bruckner declared his moonshot commitment.
Outreach: Day of Service

November 14th marked our Third Annual Day of Service. The Campaign for Grade Level Reading Awarded our community with our third Pacesetter Award having been selected as one of only seven communities to receive their highest level of recognition.
Outreach: Moonshot Rocket
Mobile Literacy Lab

Thanks to the support of the Children’s Services Advisory Council and the County Commissioners, our five year dream became a reality as the Moonshot Rocket launched October 2016.

The Moonshot Rocket Mobile Literacy Lab travels throughout Indian River County providing arts and literacy, and social-emotional engagements for children and families of all ages.

Students engage with literature to make learning meaningful and fun.

Students build vocabulary by creating artwork to reflect what they read.

Social-emotional workshops teach breathing strategies to young children. In this photo, children are breathing like a “balloon.”
Outreach: Moonshot Moment Bookmobile

Due to research supporting the importance of books at home, The Moonshot Moment Bookmobile launched in June 2016, to give away free books to low income families.

The Moonshot Moment Bookmobile saw an average of 475 people each week through the 7 regular sites from Oslo to Gifford to Fellsmere. The Learning Alliance ran the program with the support of community volunteers, including AmeriCorps and retired and current educators.

Thanks to donations from Chief Touchberry’s FACT Initiative and John’s Island Foundation, we were able to operate all summer long.

Fellsmere Police Chaplain Combs and officers partnered with the Moonshot Moment Bookmobile each week.

The Moonshot Moment Bookmobile volunteer staff included retired and current educators, as well as Americorps volunteers, giving free books to over 475 people each week.

Children (and adults) were grateful for the opportunity to select a book to enjoy during the summer months!
Outreach: Kid2Kid

Kid2Kid is a Moonshot Moment program started by local high schoolers to support struggling children in our community. Through fundraising, book drives and other initiatives, this group of Indian River County teens is making a difference by cultivating literate, creative, compassionate citizens who will improve our world.

Parker Hammond, Patrick Ricci and Will Bahl presented teachers with engaging books with funds they raised to support the Moonshot Moment.

Two students read *Star Stuff* which was donated by the Kid2Kid program.
Outreach: Read Across the Field

The third annual READ ACROSS THE FIELD event reached over 600 elementary school students and their families. They worked to break last year's record to have the most number of readers line up on the football field in the shape of the Moonshot Moment Rocket.

Outreach: Million Pages

In the spring, the Moonshot Million Pages Campaign launched. This online program was a huge success, with over 600 people participating to reach our million page goal within one month. The campaign culminated with a family party featuring a space movie and a free tour of the NASA Space Exhibit at the Vero Beach Museum of Art.
The Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative (KRC) is taking a stand for our children by working with over 70 partners to develop a high quality, family centered early childhood system.

The Indian River Main Library hosted an 8-week class for children going into kindergarten and their parents. This collaborative partnership included KRC, TLA’s Learn to Play/Play to Learn, Big Brothers Big Sisters/AmeriCorps, and Suncoast Mental Health. Agencies shared resources to provide curriculum, supplies, volunteers for child care, attendance incentives, and guest speakers.

“KRC gives me the information, tools and connections to integrate language nutrition in each of the programs at Healthy Start. In everything we do, we make K-readiness a consideration and a priority. We take our role in this community process seriously.”
– Andrea Berry

Childcare Resources is providing Saturday workshops and professional coaching to improve the quality of early childhood education.
VBMA’s Artful Story Time makes the story Brown Bear, Brown Bear come alive.

KRC is helping The Buggy Bunch build early childhood readiness milestones into their programming.

Vero Beach Museum of Art (VBMA) launched Florida’s first partnership with Carnegie Hall’s Lullaby Project.

Shanti Sanchez from VBMA and Bridget Lyons from TLA co-created custom lullabies with moms.

The Buggy Bunch is a grassroots organization supporting moms and families.

VBMA Artful Story Time provides fun, engaging, hands-on story projects.
Our Smart Baby Programs evolved into Learn to Play, Play to Learn parent child classes. These classes were redesigned to incorporate hands-on activities for parents and children to develop together and take home.

The classes target kindergarten readiness skills and are designed around recycled items or things that can be purchased at the dollar store.

Tatianna Charles enjoys playing a name recognition game with her mom, while her dad looks on with an encouraging smile. We have found that parents and children learn more when they are engaged together during the classes.

Susan Roberts, coordinator of the classes, assists Angela Torres and her son Michael, as they play a name recognition game. Classes have been offered in Gifford, Fellsmere and at the Brackett Library.
Kindergarten-Readiness Summit

The Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative (KRC) holds annual summits to empower our community partners to take a collective stand for early education and the success of our children.
Pre-K Party and Kindergarten Round Up

February 25th marked KRC’s second annual Kindergarten Round Up at the Vero Beach Mall. Over 227 children registered for kindergarten and 67 for the Education Foundation’s STEP Program. KRC thanks The Indian River Community Foundation which helped make this event possible.
The Moonshot Moment continues to draw national attention from leading experts in educational reform efforts. Foundations seeking to identify best practice efforts and consultants who co-create with front line educators are inspired by our work.

Susanne Bell from the Campaign for Grade Level Reading and Jenn Faber of the Florida CGLR present the national Pacesetter Award for our Moonshot Moment work.

Share Fair Nation teams up with Team TLA in Denver to discuss models to scale our work.

Share Fair Nation enjoys a custom arts-integrated literacy experience to showcase the power of our Rocket Mobile Literacy Lab.

Dean Michael Feuer and Tom Dart from George Washington University come to Vero to continue their support of the Moonshot Moment.
Leaders in the field of educational reform are drawn to the work of the Moonshot Moment. We have a learning lab where experts interact with front line educators to change classroom practice.

"In all our current research, every conference we’ve attended, every conversation we’ve had with colleagues, articles we’ve read and written… This Moonshot Commitment, and all the rigorous work have become for many a talisman, a validation of what’s wanted and needed. This is the power of a community taking a stand.

Our recently published paper on emergence in The Foundation Review, which features the Moonshot Moment as a center story, continues to be the largest download since 2015. Requests have come from all around the world. We believe it’s because of you, this community and the stand you have taken.”

– Heidi Guber

Heidi Guber
Partner, 4th Quadrant Partners
School Highlights

Debra Smith (far right), Director of Program Evaluation and Research Group at Endicott College, heads a year long research study to examine our work.

Moonshot Academy expands to six schools, now including Citrus Elementary.

Community members join educators at Moonshot Institute Weekend Workshops.

Teachers participate in FOLI, Fundamentals of Literacy Instruction, with Team TLA.

The team that led the first annual Moonshot Summer Teacher Institute, launched in the summer of 2016 with the support of Impact 100.
Volunteers

Thank you to the 150 community volunteers who support students, teachers and literacy initiatives in Indian River County.

A Sebastian Elementary Kindergartener is proud of the progress she has made with the help of her volunteer, Connie Harvey.

Big Brothers Big Sisters’ AmeriCorp workers help kids at IRA excel.

Indian River Club volunteer, Joe Martini, is one of 60 volunteers working at Indian River Academy.

Vero Beach Elementary Volunteer, Jennifer Croom, plays a matching game to help her student practice identifying sight words.

TLA Volunteer Coordinator, Pat Shaw, helps new volunteers Dorie Moore and Dolores Penn practice the Fundations handwriting activity at the February 9, 2017 training.

A Sebastian Elementary Kindergartener is proud of the progress she has made with the help of her volunteer, Connie Harvey.
Moonshot Summer Teacher Institute

In the summer of 2016, TLA launched the first annual week-long teacher training institute. This week was designed to provide an immersive, meaningful, hands-on professional development experience that brought rigorous standards-based instruction alive through arts-integrated strategies. Thank you Impact 100.

Wanda Lincoln kicks off the week with a powerful message, “Children learn what they live and they live in our classrooms.”

Gian Cetrulo from Saint Helen’s Catholic School adds to the ongoing Inquiry Wall to make participant thinking and learning visible.

Mary Strickler and Pam Reeves from Sebastian Elementary discuss insights from the book *Star Stuff*. 
Moonshot Summer Teacher Institute

Held at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, the Summer Institute became a collaborative space for creating and designing the modern Moonshot Classroom. The museum’s summer exhibition, “Art Out Of This World: The Art and Artists of NASA” inspired and encouraged us all to remember to look up in wonder.

Carla Cundiff from Fellsmere Elementary poses with art in the gallery exhibit.

Gowri Savoor, visiting visual artist, helped shaped the week with incredible arts experiences that brought the literature to life.

The week culminated in a showcase of the work.
Moonshot Academy

Moonshot Academy’s goal is to provide customized after school learning opportunities for teachers and students. This sixty three day program provides an engaging two hour arts integrated literacy experience to catch students up with their grade level peers. It also provides a risk free space for teachers to learn and practice new literacy strategies. Thanks to continued and deep support, The Indian River Community Foundation grant allowed us to expand into Beachland Elementary, Vero Beach Elementary and Citrus Elementary.

A Moonshot Academy tutor conducts an interactive read aloud to reinforce the concepts her students are learning in their Sunday lessons.

Beachland Moonshot Academy students learn the visual arts concept of perspective, while also learning the literary skill of point of view.
Citrus Elementary families come out to support their Moonshot Academy students at their performance of understanding.

A proud Citrus dad displays the rhyming couplet his son wrote during Moonshot Academy.

A Citrus Elementary tutor uses the Sonday System intervention during the skill based instruction time.

Citrus MSA students act out a phrase from the text Ada Twist, Scientist.
Moonshot Academy Beachland Elementary

Principal: Caroline Barker
Assistant Principal Susan DelTufo
Site Coordinators: Deborah Dillon, Jennifer Gabbard

A Beachland first grade student practices making closed syllable words with cheese crackers.

First grade students from Beachland recite poems they composed about how they will make their mark on the world.

Families watch on as third grade students share the connections they made to the text *Sky Color*, by Peter Reynolds.

Beachland and Vero Beach Elementary tutors engage in a professional development experience with community volunteers.
IRA Moonshot Academy students log data from their experiments.

Moonshot Academy scientists at IRA research their data.

Indian River Academy tutors lead their students in yoga poses based on the text, Ada Twist, Scientist.

Moonshot students at IRA work on an arts integrated activities based on the text, Spike the Mixed Up Monster, by Susan Hood.
Moonshot Academy Rosewood Magnet School

Principal: Casandra Flores
Assistant Principal: Jennifer Norris
Site Coordinator: Lisa Ross

Rosewood Moonshot Academy students proudly display the literacy activities they completed in the fall session.

Third graders at Rosewood Moonshot Academy make their learning visible on a cordel in their classroom.

Families watch as Rosewood Moonshot Academy students demonstrate what they have learned about the effects of beach erosion and some solutions they have generated to combat the problem.

Rosewood Moonshot Academy third graders engage in a community building activity with their families.
Moonshot Academy Treasure Coast Elementary

Principal: Kelly Baysura
Assistant Principal: Robyn Bethel
Site Coordinator: Karin Hammler

Moonshot Academy students at Treasure Coast Elementary learn the skill of marking up text.

Treasure Coast Moonshot tutors work on targeted skill based literacy interventions.

A TCE Moonshot tutor works on an arts integrated literacy project with her students.

TCE Moonshot students use accountable talk to discuss questions centered around their text.
A Vero Beach Elementary Moonshot Academy student puts the finishing touches on his published poetry piece.

Second grade Moonshot Academy students share poetry and dance based on activities from their anchor text, *Harlem’s Little Blackbird*.

Vero Beach Elementary families relax in a coffee shop atmosphere while they listen to their Moonshot Academy students recite poems they authored.

Tutors from Beachland, Citrus, and Vero Beach Elementary came together for collaborative professional development and unit planning sessions.
Moonshot Institute Weekend Workshop Series

Moonshot Institute Workshops feature internationally renowned educators and local teacher leaders that share innovative approaches to improve instructional practice. The topics go deep into creating social and emotional cultures and design thinking climates that support a Moonshot Classroom.

Community members and educators connected through stories and shared ideas for action.

Sebastian Elementary School prepared to share original poems in a public placemaking project.

Participants learned strategies to bring poetry to life with their students. This year’s series of workshops provided strategies to create balanced, rigorous and engaging classrooms.
Thirteen dedicated educators come together once a month to collaborate, learn and deepen their instructional practices. In their learning journey, they are able to have closer access to renowned experts such as Tina Blythe and Kurt Wootton, extra support from The Learning Alliance’s Impact Team, and resources to impact instruction.

Mary Chavers
1st Grade Teacher,
Rosewood Magnet

Jennifer Riddick
Behavior Specialist,
Vero Beach Elementary

Mary Strickler
4th Grade Teacher,
Sebastian Elementary

Betty Barth
1st Grade Teacher,
Sebastian Elementary

Joanne McCarty
Special Education Teacher,
Sebastian Elementary

Debbie Smith
5th Grade Teacher,
Sebastian Elementary

Julie Carroll
5th Grade Teacher,
Rosewood Magnet

Pamela Reeves
5th Grade Teacher,
Sebastian Elementary

Megan Stranzin
1st Grade Teacher,
Rosewood Magnet

Luanne Lewis
Kindergarten Teacher,
Rosewood Magnet

Lisa Ross
Literacy Coach,
Rosewood Magnet

Robyn Tuck
Kindergarten Teacher,
Vero Beach Elementary

Crystal Whitney
Special Education Teacher,
Fellsmere Elementary

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Collaborative Classrooms

“Last week’s session on documentation was great! It opened my eyes to how easy documenting can be if you just put it into your plan as a natural part of a unit. I also learned how to make documentation more meaningful.”

“I LOVE being able to collaborate with people who are passionate about learning!” -CC Educator

“I learned a different way to look at student work that can give me a different perspective.” -CC Educator

“Now I will take more risks and collect much more student work/documentation.” -CC Educator
Conscious Discipline

Indian River Academy has become a model Conscious Discipline school thanks to the on-going commitment of the Indian River Community Foundation’s Enrichment Fund. Students, parents and teachers are learning how to build community and social emotional resiliency.

Moonshot Resource Library

Thanks to John’s Island Foundation, TLA was able to set up a shared book library in seven schools and at our Moonshot Institute. Teachers sign out class sets ensuring that every student has engaging, challenging text to use in the classroom.
Embedded Residency Konshens’ Kids

Hip Hop Teaching Artist and Grammy Museum Educator Tarik “Konshens the MC” Davis led a week long residency in two classes at Vero Beach and Beachland Elementary Schools. He also spent time with students in Moonshot Academy and performed at a Family Night at VBE. He has continued to work with groups of students to develop a book of original poetry to be published at the end of the year.

“The entire classroom culture transformed as a result of Konshens coming in and encouraging the students to share their stories with their teacher and each other.”

- Cynthia Emerson, Principal at Vero Beach Elementary
Our focus on Foundational Literacy launched a powerful FOLI training program for Literacy Coaches. Knowledgeable coaches who can support classroom teachers is critical for building a self sustaining literacy culture. John’s Island Foundation allowed us to expand our foundational literacy program into Pre-K classrooms so that students get an earlier start.

Thirty one educators attended a powerful three day training on Fundamentals of Literacy Instruction (FOLI). Eighteen became FOLI certified trainers, enabling them to build district knowledge by training other teachers.

VPK student, Emily, is practicing her vowel sounds thanks to John’s Island Foundation who provided Fundations kits for PK classrooms.

Connie Law is one of nine classroom teachers selected to serve as a model Fundations classroom.
The Unit Planning (UP) Campaign was an opportunity for educators to collaboratively plan and implement dynamic units. Throughout this series of workshops and planning sessions, teams had access to national and local education experts who provided support.

In January, UP participants continued developing unit plans through the lens of 21st century skills.

Kurt Wootton, from the ArtsLiteracy Project at Brown University, leads a training about the Performance Cycle.

Tina Blythe, of Harvard’s Project Zero, shares thinking routines and reflection protocols with UP participants.

UP participants do a gallery walk to examine their culminating project during September's workshop.
UP IN ACTION: Participants in the UP Campaign took strategies from the workshops back to their classrooms and inspired powerful learning with their students.

“Thank you for making teaching and learning fun. My students are happy and love coming to school.” - Mary Chavers

An essential question from a kindergarten class.

First graders in Mary Chaver’s class at Rosewood Magnet create paper cutouts to show story details.

Julie Dossanto reads with her first grade students at Glendale Elementary.

A fifth grade student at Osceola Magnet creatively marks up text to demonstrate comprehension.

Julie Dossanto reads with her first grade students at Glendale Elementary.
Team SDIRC

The School District of Indian River County and The Learning Alliance have a partnership that is unprecedented. The Moonshot Moment would not be possible without the leadership, innovation and energy of the dedicated District Staff.

Superintendent of SDIRC, Mark Rendell with the Curriculum and Instruction Staff led by Pam Dampier, Assistant Superintendent.
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A special thank you to our Founders, whose ongoing support has allowed us to move fast and aim high.

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