

**RESULTS**



# Resiliency Through the Community Projects Analysis

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Final Report Presented to



**CONSORTIUM**  
OF FLORIDA EDUCATION  
FOUNDATIONS

*Statewide Reach. Local Impact. For Students.*

August 2024

# Resiliency Through the Community Overview

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has adopted a proactive approach to fostering student resiliency skills in alignment with the state's new health education standards and has called on the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations (Consortium) to help "Build Resiliency Through the Community." In recognition of the Consortium's high level of accountability and strong outcomes with the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program for more than 20 years, the FDOE entrusted the Consortium with \$21.3 million in December 2022 to infuse standards-aligned resources and build networks of local support for students statewide. Drawing upon their community knowledge, connections, and ability to take quick action, Florida's education foundations are convening key partners and working in consultation with district school safety specialists and mental health coordinators to develop and implement locally-driven initiatives in consultation with Consortium staff and in alignment with FDOE goals.

## Introduction

The Consortium engaged Results 1st to conduct a results verification to better understand the impact of eleven Local Education Foundations' (LEF) Resiliency Through the Community (RTC) projects. A results verification captures specific gains and changes made due to RTC funding. It offers a tool to capture results in a way that goes far deeper than survey responses. The approach focuses on verifying the gains LEFs made and answers the question of whether results would have been achieved if their program did not exist. The results verification was conducted through Zoom interviews with eleven LEFs.

The findings of the interviews are outlined in this report and will be presented by the Consortium and Results 1st at the 2024 Connected Conference. This final report includes information regarding what was achieved over a three-month period, May to July 2024. The project process included the following steps:

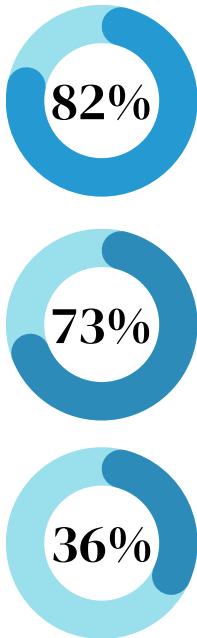
1. Results 1st guided a design session with the Consortium team to establish clearly defined targets for this project to be considered a success.
2. Results 1st conducted eleven interviews with LEFs to capture the information outlined in the Results section of this proposal. The interview questions were designed by Results 1st, with input from the Consortium.
3. Results 1st reviewed and provided feedback to the Consortium on the LEF projects.
4. Results 1st developed this report summarizing the interviews, along with observations and suggestions for sharing this information with LEFs and investors.

This report includes the following sections:

- Key Findings
- Observations and Opportunities
- Interview Results
- Next Steps
- Appendix

# Key Findings

## Core Impacts



### Community Engagement

82% (9 of 11) saw increased engagement from the community and an improvement in how the organization is perceived, which validated the LEF as a valuable partner both in and outside of the District.

### New Partnerships

73% (8 of 11) created new partnerships with various entities in the community.

### Student Achievement

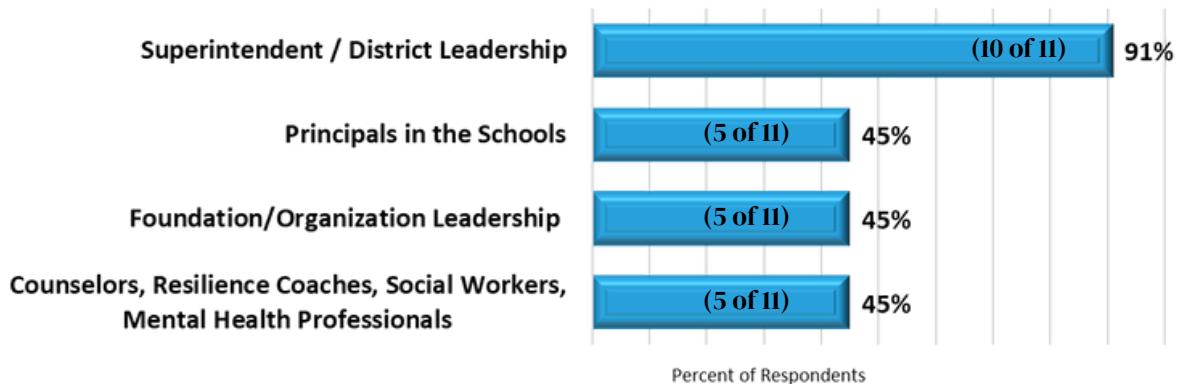
36% (4 of 11) saw improvement in student achievement, such as improved student discipline/behavior, grades/attendance, or graduation of at-risk students.

## Keys to Success

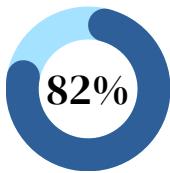


# Key Findings (continued)

## The Most Important Positions or Roles that Led to Success Were:



## LEFs will build on the success achieved with their RTC projects by:



82% (9 of 11) will seek additional grants/ funding for this program.



55% (6 of 11) will use data from the pilot project to secure additional funding.

## Key learnings to maximize future funding opportunities include:



45% (5 of 11) learned that it would be beneficial to get more people involved and use consultants for projects like this one.



36% (4 of 11) learned the value of community partnerships.

# Observations and Opportunities

**The LEFs interviewed expressed sincere gratitude to the Consortium for the funding.** The LEFs specifically mentioned that they felt the Learning Communities hosted by the Consortium were beneficial. Five of the LEFs stated the funding in itself allowed them to be seen as a more valuable partner to the District and community partners.

**There is a significant opportunity to help LEFs differentiate between activities and results.** When it came to knowing the results of their RTC projects as it related to students, only five defined success as an improvement in grades, behavior, or overall student achievement. Most defined success as participation or completion of a program, which in itself is not a result.

**The RTC funding activated innovation.** The short timeframe that LEFs had to design and launch their projects forced them to take quick action to prototype new approaches versus spending time on extensive planning. Organizations can spend extensive amounts of time analyzing data and still do not know the actual impact of their programs. More than half of the LEFs used data efficiently to learn of gaps and opportunities. Then they designed their projects to meet those needs.

**The LEFs who mentioned that their projects allowed them to build trust with a partner or certain community member did so because of the action they took, not because they engaged in extensive listening and planning.** In the nonprofit and education sectors, trust is often discussed as a barrier or a required condition to make change. Some feel that trust is a requirement to make change. However, change is a requirement to build trust.

## Interview Results

Eleven organizations were interviewed by Results 1st for this project. A complete list of these interviewees can be found in the Appendix. Below and on the following pages is a summary of the eight questions asked during the interview process.

1. ***How do you define success for your Resiliency Through the Community (RTC) project as it pertains to:***
  - ***Your organization?***
    - 55% (6 of 11) related success to the community: met needs, created more resilient community, received attention from the community, created growth in the community outside of the District, created an engaged community.
    - 55% (6 of 11) said strengthened relationship with a community partner.
    - 36% (4 of 11) defined success by a strengthened relationship with the District and supporting the superintendent's goals.

# Interview Results (continued)

- 36% (4 of 11) said provided education and training.
  - 27% (3 of 11) said provided support for teachers, including honorarium.
  - 27% (3 of 11) defined success as creating change.
- ***The client or program participant?***
    - 45% (5 of 11) measured success by improved behaviors of resilience.
    - 36% (4 of 11) said participants displayed resiliency characteristics.
    - 36% (4 of 11) measured success by improved grades, attendance, behavior, graduation rate, where applicable.
    - Additional comments included: *Building trust, funded mental health support, created safe, caring schools.*
2. ***What are the results of your RTC project thus far...***
- ***Organizationally?***
    - 82% (9 of 11) saw increased engagement from the community, and an improvement in how the organization is perceived, which validated the LEF as a valuable partner both in and outside of the District.
    - 73% (8 of 11) created new partnerships with various entities in the community.
    - 36% (4 of 11) strengthened relationships with District, Board members, and Principals.
  - ***Client or Program Participant?***
    - 36% (4 of 11) saw improvement in student achievement, such as improved student discipline/behavior, grades/attendance, or graduation of at-risk students.
    - 27% (3 of 11) demonstrated an increase in student resilience.
    - 27% (3 of 11) have partners who are hiring program graduates, and the graduates have new career opportunities out of high school.
    - 27% (3 of 11) saw improved connections between tutors/mentors and students, and between teachers and students.
    - 18% (2 of 11) stated that this program helped identify at-risk students and increase their visibility.
    - Additional comments: *Families received resiliency services; families' trust in the school system increased.*

# Interview Results (continued)

## 3. *Can you tell me what led to this success...*

- **Organizationally?**

- 55% (6 of 11) said using data to meet a need or fill a gap.
  - 55% (6 of 11) said having community partners and other agencies involved.
  - 45% (5 of 11) said having available funding.
  - 36% (4 of 11) received buy-in from the Mental Health department, focused on student mental health and challenges with high touch from guidance counselors.
  - Additional comments:
    - “The program was built with protective factors for the students.”
    - “The program provided post-secondary experiences.”

- **Client or Program Participant?**

- 36% (4 of 11) credit support from the community partner.
  - 36% (4 of 11) credit improved communication.
  - 36% (4 of 11) said teachers became advocates for the program within the schools.
  - 27% (3 of 11) credit the involvement of social workers and student services staff.
  - 27% (3 of 11) credit identifying specific organizations within the community to deliver the program, based on existing trust and relationship within the target community.
  - 27% (3 of 11) credit the use of donated space to house the program.

## 4. *Can you tell me who (position or role) played the most important role in the success you described?*

- 91% (10 of 11) Superintendent / District leadership
  - 45% (5 of 11) Foundation/Organization leadership
  - 45% (5 of 11) Principals in the schools
  - 45% (5 of 11) Counselors, Resilience coaches, social workers, mental health professionals
  - 27% (3 of 11) Teachers in the schools
  - 27% (3 of 11) Community Partner
  - 18% (2 of 11) Consultants who served as program facilitators

- **Why do you think they were so successful?**

- There was no pattern with this answer, but responses include: *The program was wanted, remained mission-focused, listened and responded to needs, received buy-in from leaders, offered stipends/credits to teachers, improved public safety and provided resources to families/parents.*

# Interview Results (continued)

## 5. *What were your key learnings?*

- 55% (6 of 11) said that community partner consistency and collaboration is key to success – and the community involvement was greater than anticipated.
- 45% (5 of 11) discovered that the program was more challenging and took longer than anticipated.
- 27% (3 of 11) said that more support is needed.
- 27% (3 of 11) said that there will be those who will always be resistant to change.
- 27% (3 of 11) said that success comes if roles are clearly defined.
- 27% (3 of 11) said it is crucial to receive support from the District/Superintendent from day one.
- 18% (2 of 11) said that funding is the key to opening doors and improving relationships.
- 18% (2 of 11) said that focus shifted more onto mental health of students.
- Additional comments: *It takes a village to get results, funding is temporary, but the need is not, success is measured in different ways; parents want to help their children they just don't know where to get information; prior to the program it was assumed that parents didn't care; participation was increased with personal invitations to families from the principal.*

## 6. *What would you change if you could go back to the beginning and do it over?*

- 55% (6 of 11) would begin earlier/sooner and dedicate more time to the program.
- 18% (2 of 11) would involve the Superintendent up front.
- 18% (2 of 11) would simplify outreach and communication by letting the school handle this aspect of the program.
- 18% (2 of 11) would use consultants instead of permanent staff.
- Additional responses: *Have a dedicated team member on the Foundation, fine tune the training workshop timing and planning sessions to be more accommodating to schedules, be strict with timelines and communicate about the program within the community as a collaboration, involve the Principal from the beginning, have the Principal make personal invitations to families to participate.*

## 7. *How do you plan to build on the results you have achieved thus far?*

- 82% (9 of 11) will seek additional grants/ funding for this program.
- 55% (6 of 11) will use data from the pilot project to secure funding.
- 27% (3 of 11) will continue ongoing training.
- 18% (2 of 11) will stay in the wellness/mental health space and engage mental health professionals in other areas.
- Additional plans: *Create case management for at-risk students, share all results with the Superintendent/District, incorporate this program module into other areas and with other subjects, nurture those relationships that were created, roll out resiliency program for incoming students.*

# Interview Results (continued)

## 8. *What did you learn that could help you maximize another large funding opportunity like this from the Consortium in some other program area?*

- 45% (5 of 11) learned that it would be beneficial to get more people involved and use consultants.
- 36% (4 of 11) learned the value of Community Partnership.
- 27% (3 of 11) learned that it is beneficial to have an advocate in the District; the District is more trusting and willing to support this type of program than originally thought.
- 18% (2 of 11) will be able to use data for grant applications and to track grant funds.
- 18% (2 of 11) said to THINK BIG and move quickly – big things can happen.
- Additional comments: *Let schools handle the distribution of funds, the planning process will apply to other projects, put more of the funding into support staff, course correct along the way, meet the parents and families where they are – give them the resources they need, the program brought families of all backgrounds together.*

## Next Steps

The key findings in this report will be presented at the ConnectEd Conference in September. The findings will be presented by Robyn Faucy of Results 1st and will highlight three of the LEF projects that were strong examples of results. Robyn Faucy will also facilitate two additional sessions at ConnectEd to equip participants with approaches to design high impact programs.

# Appendix: Interview List

Below is a list of the individuals and organizations interviewed for this project:

- **Baker County Education Foundation**– Allen Murphy, Executive Director and Superintendent; Michael Green, Director of Student Services/Exceptional Student Education
- **Bradford County Education Foundation** – Cheryl Canova, President and Volunteer
- **Brevard Schools Foundation** – Janice Kershaw, Executive Director
- **Citrus County Education Foundation**– Shaunda Burdette, Executive Director
- **Foundation for Leon County Schools** – Erik Clark, Executive Director
- **The Education Fund (Miami-Dade)** – Linda Lecht, President
- **Education Foundation of Okeechobee** – Alaina Barron, Executive Director
- **Education Foundation of Palm Beach County**– Jennifer Etheridge, M.Ed., Director of Programs and Grants
- **Investing in Kids (St. Johns County)** – Cathy Newman, Executive Director, Jim Wheeler, Director of Student Programs
- **St. Lucie County Education Foundation** – Jackie Wolfe, Office Manager
- **The Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools** – Jean Van Smith, Executive Director

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