School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program

CONSORTIUM OF FLORIDA EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS

2025-2026 School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Reports









October 2026

School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program

A Proven Strategy for Increasing Private-Sector Investment and Involvement in Florida's Public Schools

Contributions are matched dollar-for-dollar to fund locally developed initiatives in one or more of the eligible programmatic areas:

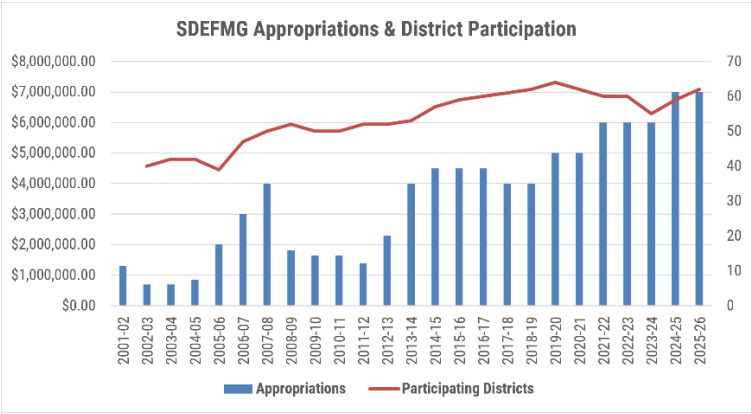
- Career/Technical Education
- Increasing Graduation Rates
- Literacy
- Struggling Students
- STEM Education
- Teacher Quality
- Student Resiliency

The School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program, adopted by the Florida Legislature in 2000, is a cornerstone of the success of Florida's local education foundations. It is an integral component of our strategy to increase private-sector interest, involvement and investment in advancing student achievement in our schools.

Current legislation specifically states that the funds "are provided as challenge grants to public school district education foundations for programs that serve low-performing students, technical career education, literacy initiatives, Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Education initiatives, increased teacher quality, resiliency, and/or increased graduation rates. The amount of each grant shall be equal to the private contribution made to a qualifying public school district education foundation."

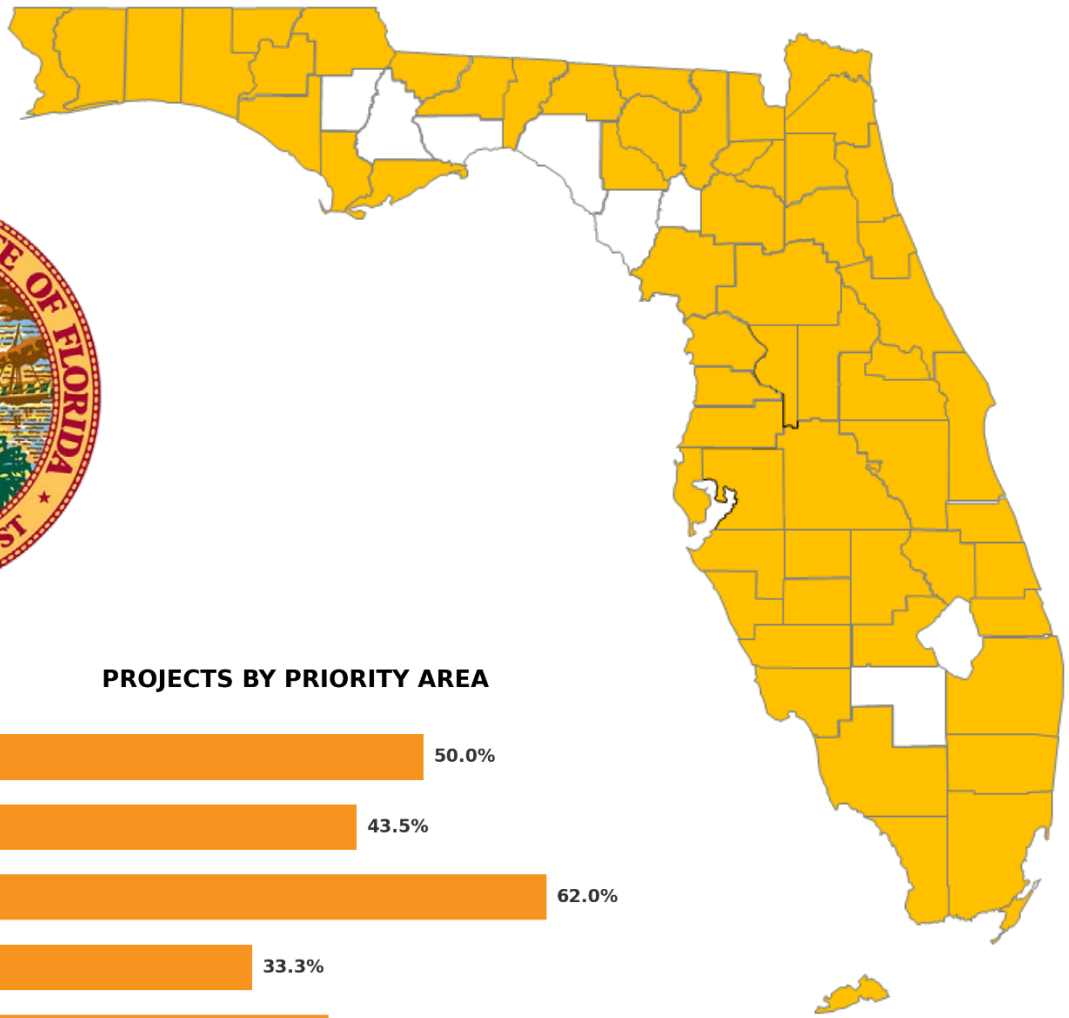
Through the 2025-26 school year, the State of Florida has appropriated nearly $89 million, which was leveraged with private-sector contributions to total more than $198 million for eligible local projects since the program started in 2000.

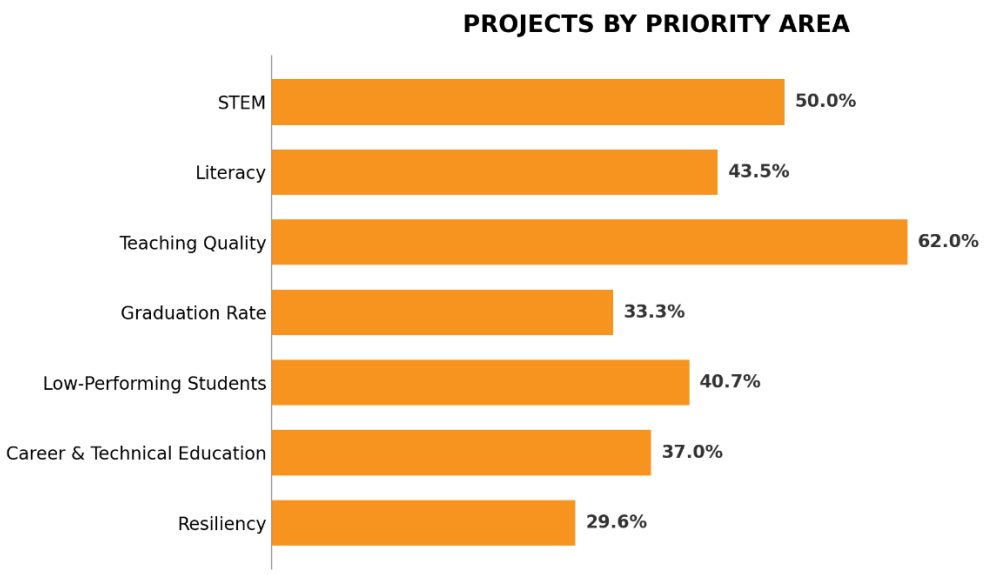
Historical SDEF Matching Grant Funding



In 2025-2026, the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program:

- ✓ Saw an investment total of $18.37 million
- ✓ $7 million in State allocation was matched with more than $11.4 million in private-sector investment
- ✓ 914,163 total students and 63,551teachers directly impacted
- ✓ Participating education foundations serve 99% of Florida's K-12 public school students





Leveraging Business, Community and Individual Contributions for Florida's Students and Teachers

The following pages contain acknowledgement of the significant private investment match across the state, as well as example projects for each of the program's key priority areas.

Abiding Hope Church; Addition Financial; AFD Fence; Aligned CPA; Altamont Capital Partners; Altobello Family Foundation; Altrusa International; Amgen Foundation; Ancient City Baptist Church; Anderson Columbia; The Ann Pace Sutton Charity Fund; Anne and Charles Reynolds Foundation; Archer/Milton; Arthrex, Inc.; Arts Alive; Asofsky Family Foundation; Assurant; AT&T; B & I Contractors; Bailey Family Foundation; The Bailey Group; BAM; Bank of America; Baptist Health; Barben Fruit Co., Inc.; Batchelor Foundation; Battelle; Bay County Audubon Society; Beacon Fisheries, Inc. dba Ancient City Gamefish Association; Beaver Toyota; Becker Family Foundation; Big Lots Foundation; Bill Fenwick Plumbing; Blackstone; Boca West Children's Foundation; The Boeing Company; Brennan Eye Care; BrightStar Credit Union; Brijbag Law Firm; Broward Teachers Union; Cancer Care; Capital City Bank Foundation; Carl A. DeSantis Foundation; Carl Reynolds Law; Cattlewomen's Association; CBS12 Stuff the Bus Campaign; CDM; CDT; Central Florida Electric Co-Op; Certified Roofing Specialists; Chad Ward Timber; Charities Aid; Children's Healthcare Charity; City of Hollywood; City of Orlando; City of Pompano Beach; Clark-Partington, Attorneys at Law; Clay Electric; Clearwater for Youth; Comcast; Community Credit Union; Community First Cares Foundation; Community First Credit Union; Community Foundation of Tampa Bay; Cox; CPS Investment Advisors; Crowe Foundation; Curriculum Associates; Cyber Viera Company; DAG; David Weekley Homes; Delta Kappa Gamma Sorority; Deutsche Bank; Disney Universal Education Foundation; Dollar General; Dollar General Literacy Foundation; Dollar Tree Distribution Center; Douglas & Douglas; Douglas Law Firm; Duke Energy; Edison National Bank; Education First; Edward Jones; Empower Polk; ERC Alliance; Escambia County Retired Educators Association; Evalyn Sadlier Jones Foundation; Everglades Foundation; Fairwinds Credit Union; Family Dentistry of Okeechobee; Felburn Foundation; FFSB; FineMark National Bank & Trust; First Federal Bank; First Port City Bank; First United Methodist Church; Fishbein; Fleet Advantage; Florida Blue; Florida Credit Union; Florida Gas Transmission Company; Florida Lottery; Florida Power & Light; Florida Public Utilities; Fred & Jean Allegretti Foundation; Fred Sivia and Beverly Cannon Memorial Fund; Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation; Frost Innovations; FSCJ; Furr, Wegman & Banks, P.A.; Garber Automall; Georgia Pacific; Georgianna Methodist Church; Gettel Automotive; GFWC Viera Women's Club; GHS Class of 1962; GiveWell Community Foundation; Glades Electric Cooperative; Golden Bell Foundation; Granite State Dairy; Great Charity Challenge; Green Baya Pharmacy; Greenhut Construction; Gulfpoint Construction Company; H. E. Hill Foundation; HCA Healthcare Foundation; HCA Ocala; Helios Education Foundation; Hernando County Arts Council; HG Engineers; High School High Tech (Able Trust); Hillandale; Hobo Tractor; Holly Electric; Humana Foundation; Industrial Development Authority; Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA) Foundation, Inc.; International Paper; J. P. Wiseman Construction; Jack Chester Foundation; Jean M. MacSwain Charitable Fund; Johnson & Johnson; Johnston Family Fund; Jordane Spitze Harden Realty; Junior League of Greater Winter Haven; Junior League of Panama City; The Kahle Foundation, Inc.; Kids Hope Alliance; The Kirk Foundation; Kiwanis Club; Kiwanis Club of St. Petersburg; KUA; Lake City Nutrition Company; Laredos of Lake Butler; Lee County Electric Cooperative; Lee Health; Life Time Foundation; Lockheed Martin; Louis and Gloria Flanzer Philanthropic Trust; Luther Family Foundation; Mabel & Ellsworth Simmons Foundation; Macy's; Manatee Memorial Foundation; Members First Credit Union; Memorial Healthcare; Merritt Island Rotary; Miami Bayside Foundation; Middleburg Black Creek Lions Club; Mildred and Bernard Doyle Charitable Trust; Minnesota Twins; Minot Title; Mobius Institute of North America; Moe's; The Mosaic Company; Mountain Lake Community Service; MSLPJ Foundation; Napa; National Space Club; Navy Federal Credit Union; NDC Construction; NextEra; Nina B. Hollis Institute for Educational Reform; Norris Family Fund; North Lakeland Lions Club; Northeast Pensacola Sertoma Club; The Northern Trust Company; Northrop Grumman; NTA Life; Ocean Bank; Odom Moses & Co; Office Depot; Okeechobee Battlefield Friends; Oliver Foundation; Orlando Health; Orlando Magic Youth Foundation; Ormond Beach Chamber Leadership Class XXI; Parrish Family Foundation; Pathways Elementary PTA; Paul B. Hunter and Constance D. Hunter Charitable Foundation, Inc.; Paula Dockery Charitable Fund; Pen Air Credit Union; Pensacola Association of Realtors; Perret and Associates, Inc.; Phish Tales; Pilot Club; Pittsburgh Pirates; PL Dodge Foundation; PNC Bank; PNC Foundation; Print City; Pritchett Trucking; Publix Charities; Publix Super Markets; Quail Valley Charities, Inc.; Quantum Foundation; Rayonier; Rays Baseball Foundation; Raytheon Collins RTX; Reading Pals; Regions Bank; Renasant; Reworld; The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation; Richard O. Jacobson Foundation; Robert Kornahrens Family Foundation; Robert Russell Memorial Foundation; The Roberts Companies; Rotary of Lake City; RSM US Foundation; RYAM; Sandy Sansing Automotive Group; Sanford Porchfest; Sanibel Captiva Community Bank; Saunders Foundation; Seacoast; Seacoast Bank; SeaWorld Orlando; SECO; Seminole County Sheriff's Office; Serenity Enterprises; Shadd Trucking; Signature Brands; Skate World; Smallwood Foundation; Sondra Andrews Realty; Southland Wood & Steel; SouthState Bank; Southwest Family Dentistry; Space Coast Credit Union; Spurlino Foundation; St. Catherine's Guild; St. Joe Community Foundation; State Farm Insurance; Sumner Engineering; Suncoast Credit Union; Sunset Automotive Group; Sweetwater Elementary PTA; Swift Family Foundation; Swift Lube; Synergy Integration; Tampa General Hospital; TD Bank; TECO; T-Mobile; Tomoka Elementary PTA; Transamerica; Tyndall Federal Credit Union; UKG; United States Sugar Corporation; United Way; United Way of Northwest Florida; Universal Foundation; Universal Orlando Foundation; University of Florida IFAS Extension; University of West Florida; Utilities Structures, Inc.; Valley Bank; Ventus Charitable Foundation; Verizon Foundation; VoLo Foundation; Volusia Manufacturing Association; VyStar Credit Union; Walmart; Walt Disney Parks and Resorts; Walt Disney World Company; Waste Connections; Waste Not Want Not; Watford Engineering; Waukesha Way; WD Andrews Farms; WEAR Channel 3; Wells Fargo; West Florida Electric; Wharton-Smith Construction Group; Wilson Heating and Air; Winter Park Health Foundation; World Equestrian Center; and WOW Fiber Optics.

Increasing Graduation Rates

Charlotte - Providing Life-Changing Opportunities - 90% of seniors were accepted to postsecondary institutions with a clear career plan, up from a 30% baseline.

Osceola - Workforce Development: Career Pipelines - 92% of graduates completed a documented postsecondary plan before leaving high school.

Sumter - Charting the Course: From High School to Higher Education - 12th graders maintained 100% on-time graduation and 100% postsecondary enrollment.

Manatee - Expanding PreK-12 Community Impact - Countywide FAFSA completion among seniors rose from 37.5% to 44.3%, a 6.7-point increase.

Pinellas - Success Beyond School: College and Career Readiness for All - District FAFSA completion reached 59.9%, 8 points above the state average.



In Manatee County, grant funding helped relaunch REACH Manatee, the county's Local College Access Network, bringing community partners together to strengthen support for students approaching graduation and postsecondary education. During the year, FAFSA completion among seniors increased from 37.5% to 44.3%, while the district's overall graduation rate rose from 85.7% to 90%, the highest in its history.







Career/Technical Education

Clay - Future Ready Clay - Students earned a record 3,291 industry certifications through CTE programs, and FAFSA completion rose 8% countywide.

Franklin - Tango Flight - All enrolled students earned 150 clock hours toward an Aviation Technology certificate through the Haney Technical College partnership.

Putnam - Economic Job Growth: Putnam County Prepared for Take Off - The Aerospace Technology program doubled student access to flight lessons, growing participation to 242 students districtwide.

Orange - Junior Achievement 3DE Schools - 3DE students achieved a 100% graduation rate, outperforming the 96% baseline among non-3DE peers.

Lake - Future Forward: Transforming Choices Into Change - CTE acceleration grew culinary participation to 3,732 students, producing 580 ServSafe certifications countywide.



In Pasco County, College and Career Compass paired individualized coaching with hands-on career and technical education to help students prepare for graduation and life after high school. Pathways Coaches provided about 300 one-on-one sessions across 17 high schools, while CTE investments supported programs ranging from fire science and robotics to aeronautical engineering and criminal justice. Among participating students, 99% remained on track for promotion or graduation, while CTE industry certification pass rates rose from 75% to 78.89% across 5,969 certification attempts.





Literacy

Orange - Read2Succeed - K-5 reading proficiency rose from 4% to 33%, a 29-point gain, through evidence-based small-group tutoring.

St. Johns - Five Learning Years (FLY) - Literacy tutoring cut the pre-kindergarten literacy achievement gap from 56% to 0% districtwide.

Hillsborough - Transforming Early Literacy Initiative - Coaching and intervention lifted Pre-K literacy proficiency from 38% to 57%, a 19-point gain.

Osceola - Readers to Leaders: Bookmark Buddies - One-on-one mentoring helped 98% of struggling third-graders, once 18 months behind, improve their reading skills.

Martin - Book Vending Machine Initiative - Reading-reward vending machines supported efforts to boost FAST Reading proficiency districtwide, with 7th grade.



In Polk County, 459 K–3 students reading at least a grade level behind received individualized tutoring three times a week through AmeriCorps Polk Reads. Among students completing all three assessments, 88% made significant reading gains, including 92% of second graders and 91% of third graders.







Struggling Students

Jefferson - Destination Graduation - Programs for high-risk students raised 8th grade math proficiency from 10% to 57%, a 47-point gain.

Osceola - Readers to Leaders: Bookmark Buddies - Mentoring lifted struggling third-graders, once 18 months behind, to 98% demonstrating improved reading proficiency.

St. Lucie - Working Together for Success: Teachers First Grants - 47 teacher grants targeting underperforming students supported the increase of 5th grade ELA proficiency from 48% to 58%.

In Baker County, Destination Graduation targeted 248 middle and high school students at risk of academic failure, including students one or more grade levels behind and those needing additional intervention to stay on track for graduation. Using Edmentum Courseware, students worked at their own pace while teachers provided individualized support across multiple grade levels and subjects. Students attempted 1,077 half-credit courses and successfully completed 977, achieving a 90.7% pass rate and helping more struggling students recover credits and move closer to graduation.







STEM

Alachua - Elevate Education Grants - STEM projects funded by teacher grants; science fair participation grew from 34 to 90 projects, a 165% increase.

DeSoto - #OneDeSoto: Fueling Innovation in Education - A hands-on STEM science project lifted 4th grade proficiency from 46% to 78%.

Marion - Grants for Great Ideas - Hands-on STEM projects lifted 4th grade math proficiency from 13% to 44% at Level 3 or above.

Miami-Dade - Food Forests for Schools (FFS) - Outdoor STEM lessons supported an increase in science proficiency from 26% to 48% among 721 students who participated in pre and post testing.

Glades - Enhancing Science/STEM Education and College and Career Readiness - Grade 8 science proficiency rose from 29% to 46% through hands-on STEM instruction.

Palm Beach - Rocket Powered Robotics - 100% of student participants said the robotics program increased their interest in pursuing a STEM career.



In Clay County, Navy veteran and science teacher Mr. Nelson used a Grants 4 Great Ideas award to keep his junior high robotics team competing after funding cuts threatened the program. With new equipment, students designed and programmed robots while building problem-solving, teamwork, and engineering skills. The project is one example of how teacher-driven STEM grants give educators the resources to create hands-on learning tied to real-world careers. Across STEM and literacy projects, 40 grants reached 32 teachers at 22 schools and impacted nearly 8,000 students.





Teaching Quality

Columbia - Educators Emporium - 90.4% of teachers reported reduced personal out-of-pocket spending on classroom supplies.

Duval - Educator Leadership Development + Future Ready Students - 87.5% of participating educators reported becoming more effective, more sustainable teachers through leadership coaching.

Miami-Dade - Ideas with IMPACT - 100% of Idea EXPO teachers reported improved attitudes and increased knowledge of effective teaching practices.

Hillsborough - Teaching Tools Resource Center - Teacher access to free classroom supplies grew 8%, reaching 3,684 educators districtwide.

In Indian River County, students, parents, teachers, and school leaders helped redesign what learning could look like before new programs were ever put in place. Through InnovatED, all ten middle and K-8 schools used design thinking, surveys, community forums, coaching, and site-based grants to identify new ways to make learning more relevant and future-focused. The result was expanded offerings in robotics, coding, STEM, and the arts, along with stronger leadership and assessment practices. Middle school achievement reached 66% Level 3+ in ELA, Math, and Science and 82% in Social Studies, exceeding targets in every subject.







CONSORTIUM OF FLORIDA EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS

School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program

Program Implementation Details

History

Local education foundations came into existence with the help of Florida Commissioner of Education Betty Castor who, in 1984, came forward with legislation allowing the establishment of one direct support, nonprofit organization (DSO) to be aligned with each of Florida's 67 county-wide public school districts. Governor Bob Martinez signed the bill into law (FSS 1001.453). Today there are 62 local education foundations served by the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations (Consortium), some structured as DSOs and others with more autonomous governance, but all dedicated to supporting students, teachers and schools in their local school district.

The Consortium maximizes the individual and collective strength of Florida local education foundations to support local partners and schools. Consortium's member foundations serve 99% of Florida's 3 million K-12 student population and are led by 1,100 business and community board members who collectively raise $124 million annually for initiatives to innovate learning and support students and teachers, beyond what school budgets provide. The Consortium serves as the primary link between local education foundations and regional, statewide and national partners. The Consortium leverages those relationships and creates partnerships with businesses and foundations that impact students and strengthens cooperation between the private-sector and Florida's public schools.

Background and Program Summary

The Consortium directly administers the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program (SDEFMG) on an annual basis, from July 1 through June 30 of each grant cycle. The SDEFMG Program is designed to increase private-sector investment in Florida's K-12 public education. After raising funds from business, individual, civic organization and foundation contributions, each local education foundation aligned with Florida's 67 county-wide school districts is invited to access the matching funds annually through the Consortium for the following eligible programmatic areas: literacy, support for struggling students, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education, career/technical education, increasing graduation rates, teaching quality, and resiliency.

The following pages provide details for the individual projects completed by local education foundations (LEFs). Some LEFs choose to use all of their funding resources for one large project, others choose to implement multiple programs.

Each program is described individually, with the number of students and teachers served by that program. Results are reported by the local education foundations and have not been independently verified by the Consortium. Matching grant funds work continuously alongside and in coordination with other public and private investments as well as talented teachers and administrators. Results cited should be read as associated and supported with the matching grant program rather than caused by it alone.

The Education Foundation of Alachua County

Elevate Education Grants

Total Teacher Impacted:258
Total Student Impacted: 4,475



At High Springs Community School, one sixth grader had grown disengaged from math and often struggled with behavior and classroom interactions — to the point that he told his teacher he didn't think he'd amount to anything. That changed when his MATH3D teacher introduced him to Tinkercad. He threw himself into it immediately, designing an airplane, printing it, and then redesigning it on his own when the sizing didn't work. His teacher reported that he became noticeably more focused in class and that his grades improved dramatically — for the first time, he had found something that felt like a real option for his future.

The Education Foundation of Alachua County created Elevate Education Grants to put resources and professional development directly in the hands of teachers across all 40 Alachua County Public Schools. The program combined direct teacher grants with district-wide initiatives — including the Teacher Leadership Council, ElevatEd, and the Empowering Teachers Roundtable — built to give teachers both funding and community around their professional growth.

Beyond the classroom grants, more than 100 teachers attended the ElevatEd professional learning conference, where 15 teacher-led sessions shared strategies and best practices for the coming school year, and the Teacher Leadership Council hosted an Empowering Teachers Roundtable featuring four expert panelists. Together, these components paired hands-on classroom funding with ongoing professional learning and peer collaboration.

Across these projects, students and teachers showed measurable gains in engagement, skill development, and confidence, from science fair participation to classroom assessment scores and teacher-reported effectiveness.

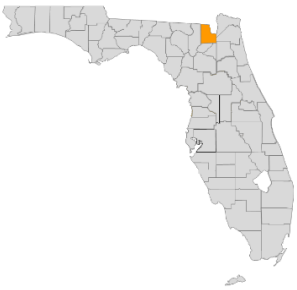
Results

- Districtwide science fair participation grew from 34 to 90 projects, a 165% increase.
- At High Springs Community School, MATH3D lifted lowest-quartile students' understanding of 3D shapes and surface area from a 24% to a 46% pre- to post-test average, a 22-point gain.
- Gainesville High School students reporting high interest in a STEM career rose from 4% to 8.91% after the Environmental Education project.
- 82.4% of Catalyst for Change grant teachers said the program made them a more effective educator.
- 88.2% of teachers indicated they would apply for another grant or continue their project next year.
- Of teachers surveyed after ElevatEd, 98.7% felt confident they could implement what they learned in their classrooms.

Baker County Education Foundation

Destination Graduation

Total Teacher Impact: 5
Total Student Impact: 248



At one Baker County school, a single teacher covers high school, middle school, and elementary students within the same class of fifteen to twenty students, a mix of ages and grade levels that made traditional whole-class instruction impractical. The Edmentum program let the teacher meet each student where they were, with students working through their own subject area while the teacher circulated the room providing one-on-one support. “The program’s lessons are well presented, allowing the students to start working on their individual subject areas, while I answer questions and assist the students all working on different subjects,” said teacher Scott Register.

Baker County School District’s strategic goal of increasing academic achievement led the district to focus additional support on middle and high school students at risk of academic failure, particularly those who were one or more grade levels behind or ages 15 and 16 in need of added intervention. The Destination Graduation project was designed to keep these students on track toward promotion and graduation.

Through the grant, the district offered credit recovery at both Baker County Middle School and Baker County High School, along with focused remediation to strengthen performance on FAST assessments and End of Course exams. The Edmentum Courseware program gave students access to individualized, self-paced coursework, and the district reviewed and updated course offerings to align with graduation requirements and career pathways. Instructional technology was integrated throughout to increase engagement and give students more flexible paths to success, and ongoing evaluation allowed staff to monitor progress and adjust interventions across the year.

As a result, the number of students identified as academically at-risk fell across every school level served by the project, moving significantly more students back on track for promotion and graduation.

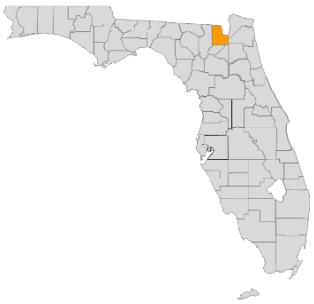
Results

- Middle School at-risk students decreased from 42 to 19, a 55% reduction, as 23 students earned the credits needed for promotion.
- High School at-risk students decreased from 75 to 35, a 53% reduction, as 40 students earned the credits needed for promotion.
- Alternative School at-risk students decreased from 131 to 109, a 17% reduction, as 22 students earned the credits needed for promotion or graduation.
- 248 students attempted 1,077 half-credit courses through the Edmentum Courseware program.
- Students completed 977 of those courses, a 90.7% pass rate.

Baker County Education Foundation

Education Enhancement Mini Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 25
Total Student Impact: 2,261



In one Baker County classroom, students learning to read began seeing their progress in a new way. Mirrors became part of daily UFLI phonics practice, allowing students to watch how their mouths formed each sound as they worked through unfamiliar words. That small change helped make reading more visible and concrete. Teachers saw stronger articulation, sharper phonemic awareness, and greater confidence as students took more risks sounding out new words.

The Education Enhancement Mini Grants program gave teachers across Baker County the opportunity to reflect on what their students needed most and put resources directly into classrooms. Grants supported literacy, STEM education, special education, agricultural science, and teaching quality, with projects designed around the specific needs of local students.

Funding brought hands-on STEM investigations to life through volcano and roller coaster engineering, solar and electric car design, and 3D printing. It expanded classroom libraries and placed UFLI phonics mirrors in the hands of developing readers. Grants also provided adaptive and sensory-based materials for special education and early childhood classrooms and gave middle school students new opportunities to explore plant science and greenhouse agriculture.

Across grade levels, students showed marked gains in reading proficiency on FAST assessments following the year's grant-funded literacy and instructional support work. Like the mirrors used during phonics instruction, these investments helped students see what they were capable of and gave teachers new tools to move that potential toward stronger academic outcomes.

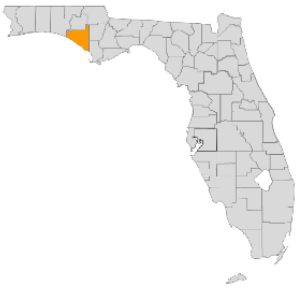
Results

- Kindergarten FAST STAR Early Literacy proficiency rose 55 percentage points, from a 6% baseline.
- First grade FAST ELA proficiency rose 50 percentage points, from a 12% baseline.
- Second grade FAST ELA proficiency rose 32 percentage points, from a 22% baseline.
- Third grade FAST ELA proficiency rose 28 percentage points, from a 33% baseline.
- Fourth and fifth grade students posted additional gains, up 25 and 18 percentage points respectively.
- Students logged more than 900 hours on IXL, mastering 3,277 academic skills.

Bay Education Foundation

Grants for Great Ideas

Total Teacher Impact: 646
Total Student Impact: 10,137



Several students with previously identified learning challenges stood confidently before a panel of adult judges to present their team's solutions, a moment that captured the impact of the First Lego League Club at West Bay Elementary. Students who had once been hesitant to speak in class became leaders, collaborating with peers and networking with students from other districts. Over fourteen weeks, sixteen fourth and fifth grade students with no prior robotics or engineering exposure progressed to competing in the District Qualifier Event, opening doors to STEM experiences that many of these Title I students would not otherwise have had.

Bay District Schools sought to expand access to innovative classroom and school-based projects that would enhance student engagement and academic achievement, particularly in literacy and STEM, in ways not possible through traditional funding sources.

Through Grants for Great Ideas, the Foundation funded 108 grant projects across 30 schools spanning STEM and robotics, literacy and reading enrichment, environmental education, hands-on science, arts integration, and technology-enhanced instruction. Grant funds supported classroom supplies, robotics materials, literacy resources, technology devices, and science equipment, with several projects extending into field experiences and school-wide events. Teachers evaluated impact using pre- and post-assessments, performance tasks, observational data, and standardized assessment measures, with community and business partnerships strengthening many projects through added expertise and materials.

Across participating schools, the program drove measurable gains in academic proficiency alongside notable shifts in student engagement, confidence, and educator effectiveness.

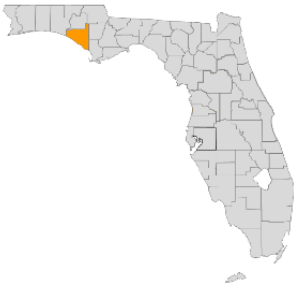
Results

- Mathematics proficiency (Level 3 or above, grades 3-8) rose from a baseline of 57% in 2025 to 62% in 2026.
- ELA proficiency (Level 3 or above, grades 3-10) rose from a baseline of 56% in 2025 to 61% in 2026.
- 1,245 elementary students in grant-funded literacy and STEM initiatives increased proficiency from 48% to 67%, a 19-percentage-point gain.
- 108 grant projects implemented directly serving 30 schools across the district.
- Teachers reported increased motivation to remain in the district as a result of program support.

Bay Education Foundation

Greener Grass

Total Teacher Impact: 112
Total Student Impact: 901



The grass is greener where you water it. In Bay County, that means investing in the educators already serving students and giving them opportunities to grow, strengthen their practice, and build long-term careers in the district.

Bay Education Foundation's Greener Grass Professional Development Program supports Bay District Schools employees in completing professional certifications and advanced learning designed to strengthen instructional practice and leadership skills. The effort responds to an ongoing challenge: recruiting and retaining qualified educators in a competitive staffing environment.

During the grant period, the Foundation supported 46 participants completing coursework and professional learning through institutions including Florida State University, the University of West Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Grand Canyon University, Chipola College, Northwest Florida State College, and Beacon Educator programs. All participants completed their enrolled courses, with progress verified through institutional records.

For one participant in Florida State University's Educational Leadership Program, the professional development translated directly into daily practice through stronger curriculum planning, instructional strategies, and mentoring of colleagues. Similar benefits extended across the program.

In all, the 46 participating educators reported reaching more than 670 students and at least 110 fellow educators through strengthened instructional practice. By investing in educators' continued growth, Greener Grass is helping Bay District Schools build instructional capacity while creating another reason for talented educators to stay, grow, and lead within the district.

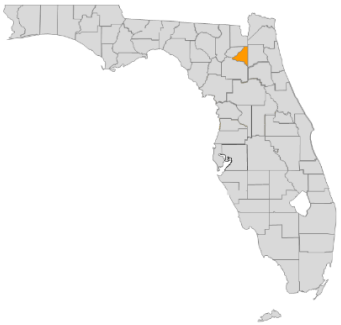
Results

- 46 participants awarded tuition assistance.
- 100% of participants completed their enrolled coursework.
- 10 of 11 survey respondents (90.9%) reported the program made teaching feel more sustainable.
- 10 of 11 survey respondents (90.9%) reported the program made them more effective educators.
- Program impact reported to reach more than 670 students and at least 110 educators through improved instructional practice and mentoring.

Bradford County Education Foundation

Growing in Bradford

Total Teacher Impact: 148
Total Student Impact: 2,504



"I believe in myself and my abilities more than I did before." That is how one eleventh grade student described the impact of Empower U, a program that gave Bradford County students tools for managing their emotions and building confidence. A fourth-grade student echoed that growth in their own words, sharing that the program "taught me that I can go for a walk to process my emotions and help me calm down" and that they "learned to ask for help." Across elementary and high school classrooms alike, Empower U met students where they were and helped them grow.

Bradford County Education Foundation set out to support students across literacy, STEM, and resiliency, three priority areas identified for the district. The Foundation aimed to put books directly in students' hands, bring hands on science learning into the classroom, and give students practical tools for emotional well-being.

Growing in Bradford brought together three distinct initiatives under one grant. The Scholastic Book Fair gave every elementary student a gift certificate toward a book, building reading engagement alongside participation in the Accelerated Reader Program. A continuing partnership with the Cade Museum paired on-site visits from Cade staff with student field trips to the museum, bringing science to life in the classroom. Empower U, delivered through a software program, gave students across grade levels practical tools for emotional regulation and resilience, as a means to reduce referral rates and increase attendance.

Reading proficiency climbed across every tested grade, science scores rose at participating elementary schools, and the large majority of teachers reported positive change in students who engaged with Empower U.

Results

- Reading proficiency increased across grades 3-5, with gains ranging from 21 to 43 percentage points.
- 5th grade science proficiency rose from 31% to 62% at Bradford Elementary and from 38% to 56% at Lawtey Elementary.
- 117 out of 123 teachers (95%) saw positive change in students who engaged with Empower U.
- 75% of students who used Empower U (1,524 of 2,032) found the program helpful to their well being.
- 1,425 elementary students received a book through the Scholastic Book Fair, and 1,415 students visited the Cade Museum.

Brevard Schools Foundation

Teacher Quality Initiatives

Total Teacher Impact: 756



At one Brevard classroom, a student known at home for designing and selling his own 3D printed creations took on an unexpected role: teacher. Through the Bright Ideas Classroom Grant funded Future Makers project, the student worked side by side with his own teacher, walking her through setting up and operating a 3D printer. He beamed with pride sharing his expertise with classmates and helping an adult learn something new, while the teacher, working through the printer's inevitable technical hiccups in front of the class, modeled for students what it looks like to embrace productive struggle in real time.

Brevard Schools Foundation set two goals for the year: improving teacher satisfaction and strengthening teacher retention, with teaching quality identified as the guiding priority area. Keeping experienced, satisfied educators in Brevard classrooms was central to the Foundation's plan for the year.

The Foundation pursued four coordinated strategies to support teachers this year. Bright Ideas Classroom Grants funded 64 grants directly to teachers, including the Future Makers 3D printing project. TLC Fellowships brought together 22 participating teachers for professional growth, while Teacher of the Year and Summit programming drew 75 attendees. Supply Zone for Teachers, run with the Kids In Need Foundation, welcomed 1,189 teacher shopping visits and distributed $794,842 worth of classroom supplies.

By the close of the year, participating educators reported strong satisfaction and a continued intent to remain in the district, reflecting the value of investing directly in Brevard's teachers.

Results

- 92.6% of educators reported that teaching felt more sustainable, matching the prior year's baseline, while 89.2% reported increased effectiveness as educators, up from an 88.7% baseline.
- 73.4% reported a desire to remain in the district, holding steady with 2025 levels, and 89.6% plan to continue participating in Foundation programs beyond the funding period, up from 88.3%.
- District reported teacher vacancies fell from around 100 in 2025 to 56 this year.
- TLC Fellowship participation exceeded its goal, by one teacher directly and by seven when counting teachers who helped lead the program.

Brevard Schools Foundation

Discovering Brevard Study Trips

Total Student Impact: 14,737



For one Destination Space student, a trip built around rocket launches turned into something more personal: a picture of themselves in a NASA or SpaceX control center, doing the math and science they had always loved. Another student looked past the astronauts altogether, imagining a future spent designing the spacesuits and oxygen tanks that keep them alive in orbit. Neither left Kennedy Space Center as a spectator. Both left seeing a place for themselves in the work.

Discovering Brevard Study Trips set out to give Brevard Public Schools students standards aligned, experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom, connecting instruction in grades 5, 6, and 8 to real world settings across the county. The program placed particular emphasis on reaching students, especially those at economically disadvantaged schools, who might not otherwise have access to these cultural, historical, and STEM experiences.

The program delivered three districtwide study trips tied to grade level standards. Destination Space brought 6th graders to Kennedy Space Center for classroom lessons, student research, STEM career exploration, and rocket launch simulations. The Brevard Symphony Orchestra's Great Orchestra Experiment paired curriculum based instruction with a live professional concert for 5th graders, connecting music to science, social studies, and the arts. Moore Memorial Park and Museum brought 8th grade civics classes into the field, deepening students' understanding of Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore's civil rights legacy through experiential history instruction.

Across all three trips, students showed measurable gains in the subject areas each program targeted, with every stated outcome met or exceeded for the year.

Results

- 6th grade STEM career interest rose 5% among non Title I students and 6% among Title I students, and engineering interest rose 4% and 5% respectively, all exceeding Destination Space's 3% goal.
- Technology interest among Title I students increased 3%.
- 5th grade music concept knowledge grew across all five measured survey questions, with gains from 5.4% to 16.5%, exceeding the Brevard Symphony Orchestra's 5% goal.
- 8th grade civil rights knowledge pass rates rose from 56% to 75%, a 19-point gain that exceeded the Moore Memorial Park and Museum goal, and teacher feedback confirmed all three trips strengthened instructional effectiveness through real world classroom connections.

Broward Education Foundation

Innovative Teaching Program

Total Teacher Impact: 642
Total Student Impact: 12,245



Dona Maggio had an idea for her classroom at Coral Springs High School: turn engineering theory into something students could build with their hands. An Innovative Teacher Grant made it real, funding a hands-on bridge-building and makerspace unit where students designed, tested, and rebuilt their creations while learning 3D printing and robotics along the way. Maggio watched her students grow more confident and collaborative with each challenge, and the project's reach kept multiplying. Teachers in other grade levels took notice and adapted it for their own classrooms.

The Broward Education Foundation's Innovative Teacher Grant Program was created to give teachers and school-based administrators the opportunity to implement creative, high-impact initiatives that enhance student learning. The program aims to connect outstanding educators, strengthen classroom instruction, and support teacher retention across Broward County Public Schools. For the 2025-2026 cycle, the Foundation invited keynote speaker KiKi Prottsman to encourage educators to integrate emerging technologies and computational thinking into their classrooms.

The Foundation awarded two types of Innovative Teacher Grants: Adapter Grants, which let educators bring proven classroom projects into their own rooms, and Disseminator Grants, which supported teachers whose original projects could be shared and replicated across the district. Recipients showcased their work at the Innovative Teacher IDEA EXPO, where educators explored project displays and accessed shared lesson plans and classroom resources. The Foundation later celebrated grant recipients, principals, and community partners at an honors event recognizing the year's work.

Through this program, the Broward Education Foundation strengthened instructional practices and expanded opportunities for professional collaboration among teachers across Broward County Public Schools, with a ripple effect reaching thousands of students throughout the district.

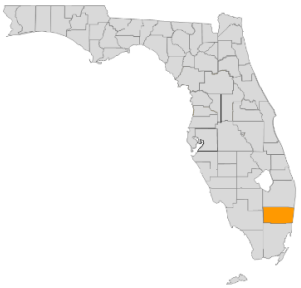
Results

- 282 teachers awarded $209,063.39 in grant funding, directly impacting 24,490 students.
- 99% of participating teachers reported improved ability to teach as a result of the program.
- 100% of participating teachers reported increased enjoyment of teaching.
- More than 330 educators attended the Innovative IDEA EXPO to share strategies and celebrate classroom innovations.
- Partnerships with the City of Hollywood Education Advisory Committee and FPL's EmPOWERing STEM Educators Grant provided more than $30,000 in additional funding to 40 teachers, to leverage the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant program for even greater return on investment for Florida students.

Broward Education Foundation

Fueling Futures: Empowering Teachers and Enriching Student Achievement

Total Teacher Impact: 4,199
Total Student Impact: 104,975



Each morning, students across Broward County arrive at school carrying hopes and challenges, and some arrive without even a pencil or a notebook. Through the School Supply Center, those needs are met: a child who once sat empty-handed can now open a new notebook, color with fresh crayons, and join classroom activities with confidence. For teachers, the Center serves as a lifeline, helping ensure every student has the tools needed to learn, belong, and succeed. What might seem like a simple supply becomes, for many students, a sign that someone cares.

The Broward Education Foundation's School Supply Center exists to reduce barriers to learning for students across Broward County's Title I schools by supplying essential materials many families cannot otherwise provide. The program also eases the financial strain on teachers, who often purchase classroom supplies out of pocket to make sure their students have what they need.

Through the School Supply Center, the Foundation restocked classrooms across Broward County's Title I schools with everything from basic supplies to essential learning tools. Teachers visited the Center throughout the year to gather what they needed, directly reducing out-of-pocket spending and helping students arrive ready to learn. All distribution was tracked through inventory reports, teacher sign-ins, and distribution logs.

The School Supply Center's reach extended across the district, helping ensure that cost was not a barrier to a strong start to the school year for thousands of students and the teachers who serve them.

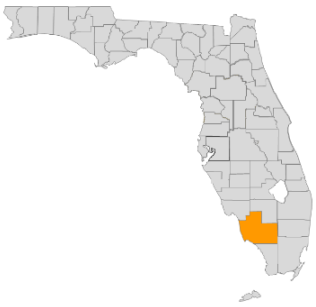
Results

- Distributed more than $1.88 million in school supplies to over 4,199 teachers across 220+ Title I schools.
- Supplies reached approximately 104,975 students throughout Broward County.
- 99% of teachers said access to free supplies from the Center is important to their personal budgets.
- 97% of teachers said additional supplies from the Center help them do a better job in the classroom.
- Loss of a major funding source and the closure of several in-kind donor retailers limited the Center's capacity to fully meet teacher demand this year. So this funding served as a critical stabilization for program continuity.

Champions for Learning (Collier)

Champions For Learning's College and Career Preparation Program

Total Student Impact: 306



Maria Deisy had a clear goal: become the first in her family to attend college and turn her passion for science into a career in environmental research. Champions for Learning connected her with the QuestBridge Scholarship Match program and provided hands-on support throughout the application process. Her hard work paid off. Maria was named a QuestBridge Finalist and ultimately matched with Johns Hopkins University. “Without Champions For Learning, this path would not have been as accessible or within reach for our family,” she said.

For students like Maria, navigating the path from high school to college can be especially challenging when they are the first in their families to do so. At the same time, helping more students successfully reach postsecondary education is increasingly important to Florida’s economy. Forty-three percent of the Florida Chamber of Commerce’s Top 30 High Demand Careers require a bachelor’s degree, underscoring the need for a strong pipeline of college-educated talent in fields such as healthcare, cybersecurity, manufacturing, and advanced technology.

Champions for Learning is helping build that pipeline in Collier County. Through its College and Career Preparation Program, College Success Coaches worked with students in grades 9 through 12 through individualized planning, one-on-one meetings, and grade-specific workshops focused on FAFSA completion, scholarships, personal statements, and career exploration. Students also toured colleges including the University of Florida, University of South Florida, and Florida Gulf Coast University and participated in ACT and SAT preparation.

Demand for this kind of structured guidance continues to grow. Workshop and lab attendance increased from 71% in 2024-2025 to 76% in 2025-2026, and Champions for Learning is now expanding its College and Career Prep Programs to reach approximately twice as many students.

Results

- 306 students in grades 8 through 12 served through the College and Career Preparation Program
- Attendance in college and career readiness workshops and lab sessions rose from 71% (2024-2025) to 76% (2025-2026)
- One ACT Prep Course and one SAT Prep Course delivered, alongside six career exploration sessions and eight campus visits
- 35 workshops held across all grade levels
- 353 additional students reached through Community Based Programs, expanding college and career access county wide

Charlotte Local Education Foundation

Providing Life-Changing Opportunities

Total Student Impact: 241



When it came time to weigh his college options, one senior in the program found himself doing the kind of math that stops a lot of students cold. Facing a private university price tag of $57,000 a year, roughly $78,000 in total debt, he had assumed the number was simply the cost of working hard toward a degree, manageable if he pushed through it. Working alongside his College Readiness Coach, he broke down the actual costs, compared his options against a Florida state university, and worked through a real budget sheet line by line. Armed with a clearer picture of what he was signing up for, he advocated for himself and secured additional financial aid at a state school, a far more sound path forward.

Charlotte County Public Schools set out to keep graduation and post-secondary enrollment rates climbing for at-risk students while closing a gap in financial literacy. Seniors were making major financial decisions about college, debt, and their futures without a strong grasp of how savings, budgeting, and financial aid actually worked. The district's strategic plan calls for every student to graduate ready for enrollment, enlistment, or employment, and this program was built to help at-risk students get there with their finances, not just their diplomas, in order.

The foundation paired every senior in the program with a College Readiness Coach for one-on-one mentoring, FAFSA support, and financial aid guidance, and layered in the Hands on Banking curriculum through in-person sessions and Zoom events covering savings accounts, budgeting, and goal setting. An informational Zoom session reached 26 students and 31 parents directly, while a two-hour workshop brought the same financial literacy curriculum to more than 200 eighth graders. Students also received coaching and encouragement to attend college fairs and campus visits organized through their high schools. Progress was tracked throughout the year with pre- and post-program surveys.

By the end of the year, seniors in the program were not just accepted to post-secondary institutions in far greater numbers than before, they were also walking in with a real understanding of how to pay for it.

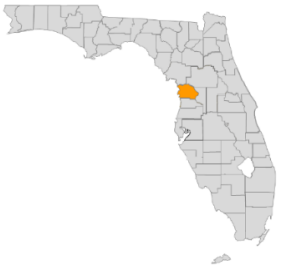
Results

- 90% of program seniors were accepted to a post-secondary institution with a clear career plan, up from a 30% baseline.
- 90% of program seniors completed the FAFSA.
- 100% of program seniors attended FAFSA webinars.
- 100% of program seniors received academic and social/emotional support through mentoring, College Success coaching, and financial literacy workshops.
- 100% of seniors graduated and applied for FAFSA, continuing a prior-year rate (one exception: a student enlisting in active military did not need FAFSA for career goals).

Citrus County Education Foundation

Foundation For Success Mini Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 694
Total Student Impact: 16,517



Knee-deep in a local waterway, a group of Citrus County students dipped testing kits into the water, checking pH levels and searching for signs of pollution they had only read about in textbooks. The equipment came from a Citrus County Education Foundation Mini-Grant, and for teacher Ciera Markey, it turned an abstract science lesson into something her students could see, touch, and question for themselves. As they interpreted their own data and reported what they found, students built critical thinking and literacy skills alongside a real stake in the health of the waters running through their own community. What started as a classroom project became, in Markey's words, 'a lesson in stewardship that reached far beyond the walls of AES'.

The Citrus County Education Foundation (CCEF) created the Foundation for Success Mini-Grant Program to give every educator in the district a way to strengthen student achievement in mathematics, literacy, science, and social studies.

Through the Mini-Grant Program, CCEF funded classroom projects spanning Pre-K through 12th grade, giving educators across the district new supplies and instructional resources to bring their ideas to life. Each teacher built in a measurable way to track student growth, drawing on tools like iReady, FAST, Study Island, report cards, and classroom surveys. The investment reached students directly in funded classrooms, while also strengthening shared resources and instruction schoolwide.

Teachers reported greater student engagement and creativity in the classroom as a result of the grants, and those gains showed up in measurable reading, writing, and STEAM outcomes tracked across the district throughout the year.

Results

- 96 mini-grants totaling $58,219.04 awarded for classroom supplies and instructional resources across Pre-K through 12th grade.
- 694 teachers equipped to design and implement creative, standards-aligned classroom projects.
- 16,517 students directly impacted by funded projects, with an additional 13,163 students benefiting indirectly through improved classroom resources.
- 88% of students in Ms. Markey's water-quality study reported improved attitudes toward STEM; 57% said they would consider a STEM career, a 5% increase from pre- to post-project surveys.
- 50% (380 of 759) students participating in new ELA lessons developed by Lecanto Middle School teachers improved their literacy scores based on iReady data.

Clay Education Foundation

Tools 4 Clay Schools

Total Teacher Impact: 792



One Clay County elementary school teacher kept two backpacks on hand this year, and both ended up mattering more than she expected. One went to a student who didn't have a bag at all. The other went to a student whose backpack was infested with bugs, day after day. Neither situation was something a teacher should have to solve alone, and neither would have been possible to fix without a resource like Tools 4 Clay Schools. “This simple support helped them come to school better prepared and with a greater sense of belonging,” she said. “Tools for Schools not only supplies materials, it also helps create an equitable and supportive learning environment for all students.”

Each August, hundreds of Clay County students begin the school year without the supplies they need, and teachers often cover the gap out of their own pockets. Tools for Schools was built to remove that burden so every child starts the year prepared and confident, and so teachers can direct their energy toward instruction rather than restocking their classrooms.

The program operates a free teacher supply store, with a satellite location in Keystone Heights so teachers in that more rural part of the county aren't facing an hour-long drive to shop. Supplies are funded through community and business donations, bulk purchasing, and the state matching grant program, and the store has grown into a countywide event that brings companies and organizations together to give back. This year the program also introduced New Teacher Boxes, pre-packed supply kits for teachers hired mid-year.

Beyond the supplies themselves, the program has become a meaningful factor in whether Clay County teachers want to stay in the district, directly supporting the district's talent retention goals.

Results

- 1,274 teacher shops completed by 792 teachers, just under the anticipated 1,300.
- $177,662.59 in supplies distributed, a 9% increase over the previous year.
- Average value per shop reached $139.45, up about $10 from the prior year.
- 17 New Teacher Boxes distributed to teachers hired mid-year.
- Teachers from every school in Clay County visited the store.
- 100% of teachers said the program made them want to stay in the district next year at least as much as before; the share saying “more” or “much more” rose by 5%.

Clay Education Foundation

Grants 4 Great Ideas

Total Teacher Impact: 32
Total Student Impact: 7,998



Mr. Nelson teaches science at Oakleaf Junior High School and sponsors the school's robotics club. A Navy veteran and a finalist for Rookie Teacher of the Year, he watched funding cuts put the future of his robotics team in doubt. A Grants 4 Great Ideas award changed that, equipping his students with the tools they needed to compete. Along the way, designing and programming their robots pushed them to think critically and solve problems together, and competing as a team taught them what real collaboration looks like.

The Clay Education Foundation created Grants 4 Great Ideas to fund the kind of classroom innovation that helps close the achievement gap and improve student outcomes. Any teacher can apply, though the Foundation prioritizes projects in STEM and literacy, and every proposal is teacher-driven, board-approved, and vetted by district staff to keep it aligned with standards and policy.

Teachers submit ideas through a competitive process scored against a rubric, and approved projects are funded through DonorsChoose. The model gives teachers direct access to materials, supplies, and experiences that let them build hands-on, standards-aligned lessons they couldn't otherwise afford, putting the creative decisions in their hands rather than a top-down program.

For teachers like Mr. Nelson, the grants did more than fund a single project. They made the work of teaching feel more sustainable, a result that lines up with the district's broader effort to keep good teachers in Clay County classrooms.

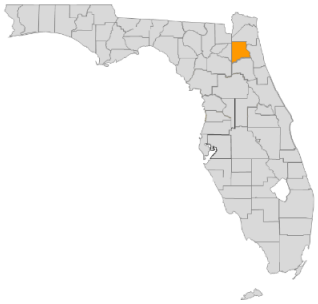
Results

- 40 grants awarded across STEM and literacy projects.
- 32 teachers reached across 22 Clay County schools.
- 7,998 students impacted by funded projects.
- 92% of responding teachers said the grants made teaching feel more sustainable.

Clay Education Foundation

Future Ready Clay

Total Student Impact: 3,600



At a Reality Fair, one student stared down at a freshly completed monthly budget, sighed, and laughed, "Adulting is the worst." Behind the humor was the kind of practical financial awareness the Reality Fair was created to build. Many students in the room had never had to think about what it actually costs to keep a roof overhead, get to work, or buy groceries. By the time the exercise was over, that same student wasn't just laughing anymore. They were asking real questions about saving, career choices, and how to plan for a financial future they'd never had to picture before.

Future Ready Clay exists to connect students and families, especially first-generation and low-income students who might not otherwise have access, with practical resources for college, career, and financial planning. The Foundation built the program in partnership with Clay County District Schools, local colleges, employers, financial institutions, and community organizations to close that access gap.

Students engaged with the program through Reality Fairs and Financial Literacy Fairs, College and Career Fairs, Freshman Expos, and FAFSA completion events, all built around hands-on decision-making rather than lectures. The Foundation backed these events with a Student Success Guide covering Bright Futures scholarship planning, an ongoing Future Ready Clay website, and transportation support so students could attend school-day career events regardless of their circumstances.

Across these efforts, the program moved the needle on how Clay County students understand and prepare for life after high school, from financial confidence to FAFSA completion to industry credentials, while building a college-going culture that starts before students even reach high school.

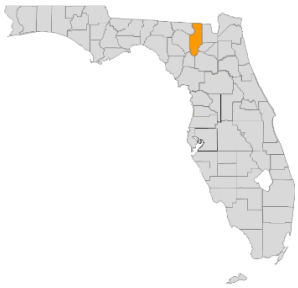
Results

- FAFSA completion rates increased by 8% in Clay County.
- Students earned a record 3,291 industry certifications through CTE programs in 2025-26.
- 100% of financial literacy participants reported increased knowledge of budgeting and personal finance.
- More than 585 students completed budgeting activities and showed increased financial confidence.
- The countywide College and Career Fair served more than 1,500 students and families, with a spring Career Fair reaching every graduating senior.
- 20 seniors completed college applications to St. Johns River State College with application fees waived.

Columbia Public Schools Foundation

Educators Emporium

Total Teacher Impacted: 600
Total Student Impacted: 30



Every year, more students arrived in Columbia County classrooms without the pencils, paper, and basic materials they needed to start the day ready to learn. Teachers grew used to reaching into their own pockets to close the gap, quietly covering the cost so no one would notice who had come unprepared. The Educators Emporium changed that. One teacher described finally being able to send a student back to their desk with everything they needed, at no personal cost, while another noted that students no longer felt singled out when they asked for a pencil, because the classroom simply kept enough on hand for everyone. What once required a private fix now happened in the open, consistently, and with dignity.

The Educators Emporium grant was designed to remove barriers to learning for students and reduce the financial burden teachers carried when covering classroom and student supply needs out of their own pockets. Columbia County identified teaching quality as its priority area, aiming to ensure educators had the materials necessary to support daily instruction across every grade level and subject.

Using grant and private match funds, the Educators Emporium purchased and distributed a wide range of classroom and student supplies at no cost to teachers, including writing and art materials, notebooks and organizational supplies, instructional resources, and hygiene items. The program served as a centralized shopping resource where Columbia County teachers could gather what they needed for their classrooms throughout the school year.

Teachers overwhelmingly reported that the program eased personal spending on classroom supplies and freed up more time for instruction, while giving students more consistent access to the materials they needed to participate fully in class.

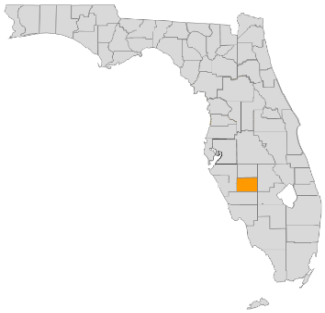
Results

- 90.4% of surveyed teachers (321 of 355) reported decreased personal spending on classroom supplies.
- 99.7% of surveyed teachers (354 of 355) reported that adequate supplies allowed them to spend more time teaching.
- 99.4% of surveyed teachers (353 of 355) reported that readily available supplies positively impacted classroom projects.
- 99.7% of surveyed teachers (354 of 355) believed student academic performance improves when supplies are adequate.

DeSoto County Education Foundation

#OneDeSoto: Fueling Innovation in Education

Total Teacher Impact: 284
Total Student Impact: 5,084



Worms became the star students of one DeSoto County classroom this year. Assigned to build and maintain classroom worm farms, fourth graders dug into ecosystems, life cycles, and the quiet work decomposers do to keep an environment healthy. What started as curiosity turned into real understanding, with student assessment scores climbing from 52 percent to 95 percent by the end of the unit. Teacher Marisa Warchol said she wasn't sure who benefited more from the project, her or her students, and called the experience amazing. One of her students put it simply: "I think worms are amazing because they give nutrients to the soil and help the environment be cleaner."

Across DeSoto County Schools, the DeSoto County Education Foundation set out to strengthen student achievement by investing directly in the people closest to the classroom: teachers. Through the Fueling Innovation Educator Grant Program, educators were empowered to design creative, student-centered projects addressing the district's priorities in literacy, STEM education, support for struggling students, and teaching quality.

The program drew a record wave of applications from teachers eager to bring new ideas into their classrooms, and the resulting grants reached students across the district. Awards provided instructional materials, STEM equipment, literacy resources, classroom technology, and hands on and career exploration experiences that extended learning well beyond what standard classroom budgets could cover. Beyond the students and teachers served directly, an estimated 2,848 additional students and 139 additional teachers benefited indirectly as schools shared resources and expanded successful projects schoolwide.

Across the district, these projects translated into stronger academic performance and a more confident, committed teaching workforce. The results below reflect gains reported across multiple grant funded projects and educator surveys.

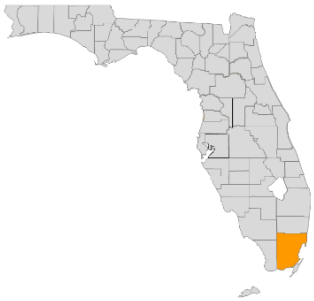
Results

- 46 applications received during the 2025-2026 cycle, a program record, resulting in 29 funded educator projects totaling $44,964.66.
- Second grade reading proficiency rose from 13% to 58% for students involved in the "Unlocking Learning with Versatiles" project.
- Third through fifth grade math proficiency increased from 25% to 57% under the "Rooted in Learning" project, based on FAST PM2 and PM3 data.
- Fourth grade science proficiency climbed from 46% to 78% through the "Hands-On Science" project.
- 100% of surveyed grant recipients (28 of 28) said the program makes teaching feel more sustainable, and 93% (26 of 28) reported becoming more effective and more likely to continue teaching in the district.

The Education Fund (Miami-Dade)

Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials

Total Teacher Impact: 3,848



At Bent Tree Elementary, an art and math teacher walked into the Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials and found more than she expected. Surrounded by donated supplies she rarely had access to, she started sketching out entirely new classroom projects on the spot, including ways to reach the students on the autism spectrum she was always eager to serve better. "The supplies I've seen today are so original and different from what I'm used to working with; it's created an explosion of ideas that I will bring to new life in my classroom," said Monica Sante, a K-5 art and math teacher at Bent Tree Elementary.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools teachers routinely spend their own money to stock classrooms with basic supplies and instructional materials, a burden that falls hardest in schools facing poverty and limited access to resources. The Education Fund built the Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials to close that gap, giving teachers a place to obtain donated, high-quality classroom materials at no cost.

During the 2025-2026 grant period, the Center operated year-round out of its main warehouse and two satellite locations, distributing free educational materials, books, instructional resources, and hands-on learning tools. All donated inventory was tracked through established management procedures, including quarterly counts and annual audits, while teacher participation was logged through registration and shopping records at each site. Post-visit surveys captured how teachers put the materials to use in their classrooms.

The results significantly outpaced the Center's original projections and translated into a measurable shift in how teachers described their classrooms and their profession.

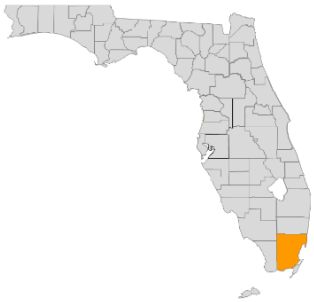
Results

- 3,848 teachers served, more than double the original goal of 1,750.
- More than $3 million in educational materials distributed, twice the projected $1.5 million.
- Approximately 318,000 students indirectly benefited, more than triple the original goal of 100,000.
- 87.8% of surveyed teachers reported improved classroom instruction.
- 96% reported the program positively impacted students' literacy.
- 99% reported a positive overall experience.

The Education Fund (Miami-Dade)

Food Forests for Schools (FFS)

Total Teacher Impact: 1,141
Total Student Impact: 24,425



A rare cold front swept through Miami and knocked leaves off the breadfruit trees growing in one school's outdoor food forest, and just like that, a lesson plan changed on the spot. Students turned the sudden mess into a hands-on composting project, working together to turn fallen leaves into rich soil for the next planting season, all while looking forward to harvesting breadfruit for tostones. "Because of their continued support, our students are able to grow food, serve their community, and connect classroom learning to meaningful real-world experiences in our school garden," said Dr. Sam Wims, a Food Forest teacher at Kelsey L. Pharr Elementary School for more than a decade.

Across Miami-Dade County Public Schools, The Education Fund set out to give students a different way into STEM, one rooted in real soil rather than worksheets. Food Forests for Schools was designed as a first-in-the-nation, large-scale initiative pairing outdoor forest-based classrooms with hands-on science and math instruction, aiming to build academic skills and healthier habits together.

Environmental educators partnered with classroom teachers to deliver more than 1,563 hands-on STEM lessons across 51 schools, visiting campuses 811 times over the year to support garden maintenance and lesson delivery. In outdoor eco-labs installed at each school, students built stick towers to explore geometry and volume, modeled erosion with soil and water, and observed photosynthesis using plant pigments. Program staff also trained teachers directly in the Food Forest methodology, building their confidence in leading inquiry-based outdoor instruction.

The program's outdoor classrooms translated into measurable academic gains and a real shift in how students engaged with science and math, exceeding the goals The Education Fund set for the year.

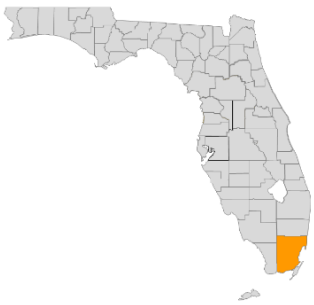
Results

- 24,425 students across 51 schools participated, surpassing the goal of 20,000.
- Science proficiency for grades 2-5 rose from 26% to 48%, an 82.2% increase.
- Math proficiency for grades 2-5 rose from 33% to 62%, an 88.1% increase.
- 418 teachers received Food Forest training, more than four times the goal of 100.
- 99% of teachers reported increased student interest in science, exceeding the 70% goal.

The Education Fund (Miami-Dade)

Ideas with IMPACT

Total Teacher Impact: 824
Total Student Impact: 28,050



Across Miami-Dade County Public Schools, individual teachers were already solving classroom challenges in inventive ways, but those ideas often stayed in a single classroom instead of reaching colleagues who could use them. Ideas with IMPACT, one of The Education Fund's signature programs, was built as a districtwide professional learning network so educators could share classroom-tested strategies with their peers.

Through the Ideas with IMPACT Catalog and app, Idea Packets, the annual Idea EXPO Teacher Conference, and a system of teacher grants and stipends, the program gave educators practical, standards-based resources they could put to use right away. A digital catalog of best practices reached educators across the district, while the Idea EXPO brought teachers together to learn strategies directly from their peers. Grant-writing workshops, webinars, and one-to-one consultations helped teachers apply for Innovator Grants, Adapter Grants, and Disseminator Stipends that funded and spread effective classroom practices.

Teachers who took part described real shifts in how effective, supported, and likely to stay in the classroom they felt, a sign the network was doing more than just distributing resources.

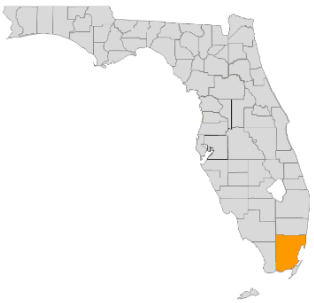
Results

- Digital best-practice catalog reached approximately 20,000 educators across the district.
- 391 teachers attended the Idea EXPO Teacher Conference, exceeding the goal of 250.
- 126 grants and stipends awarded, including 25 Innovator Grants, 56 Adapter Grants, and 45 Disseminator Stipends.
- 92% of surveyed teachers said the program made them more effective educators.
- 86% reported the program made teaching feel more sustainable.
- 83% said they intended to continue teaching in Miami-Dade County Public Schools the following year.

The Education Fund (Miami-Dade)

Teach-A-Thon

Total Teacher Impact: 122
Total Student Impact: 3,538



Compound interest is not a typical topic for nine-year-olds, but at Ben Sheppard Elementary, a class of fourth graders spent an afternoon learning exactly that. When a local business volunteer, Mr. Borges, visited their classroom, he started simple, walking students through the difference between a need and a want, a distinction that immediately changed how they thought about spending their own money. Then he went further, introducing them to saving and to the idea that money left alone can grow on its own over time. "By the end of the lesson, our students weren't just learning vocabulary, they were developing a foundation for financial literacy, realizing that smart spending and saving today can lead to significant opportunities tomorrow," said Vanessa Mejia, a 4th grade teacher at Ben Sheppard Elementary.

The Education Fund set out to make STEM and financial literacy feel relevant to Miami-Dade County Public Schools students by connecting them directly with the professionals who use those skills every day. Teach-A-Thon was designed to strengthen ties between public schools and the local business community while giving students a clearer view of how classroom concepts show up in real careers.

The program opened with an in-person kickoff event where teachers and business professionals met to plan lessons together, followed by a series of Teaching Days between October and January during which volunteers delivered hands-on lessons connecting academic concepts to real careers. It closed with Taste of Education, where culinary students applied chemistry, math, engineering, and technology through hands-on culinary competitions. Community members, including chefs, food industry professionals, and business executives, extended the program's reach by mentoring students and giving feedback on their projects.

The direct exposure to business professionals left a clear mark on how students viewed STEM and financial literacy, one teachers said carried on in their classrooms long after the volunteers left.

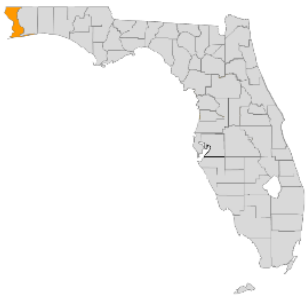
Results

- 122 business professionals participated, surpassing the goal of 75 volunteers.
- 63 volunteers taught STEM lessons that reached 1,827 students, exceeding the goal of 1,125.
- 100% of participating teachers reported increased student interest and motivation to learn STEM subjects.
- 100% of participating teachers observed gains in student knowledge following the lessons.
- An additional 147 students took part in a STEM-focused career series tied to Taste of Education.

Escambia County Public Schools Foundation

Escambia Supports Students and Teachers

Total Student Impacted: 30,000
Total Teacher Impacted: 1,722



When the curtain rose on the Pensacola Opera's production of Cinderella, nobody expected it to spark problem-solving skills necessary for future workforce readiness. But that's exactly what happened after Escambia's fourth graders watched the performance through the OPERA-tunity program. One student became fixated on Cinderella's tear-away costume transformation and told her teacher she was going to learn how to do it herself. Others focused on writing their own opera, and finding the perfect rhyme. Research links drama-based learning to stronger literacy and problem-solving skills, helping students build abilities that support academic success and long-term career preparation. The excitement was contagious enough that one teacher partnered with a local high school to get her class complimentary tickets to the spring musical, hoping to plant the seed that they might be on that stage themselves one day.

The Escambia County Public Schools Foundation built two programs to put resources directly into classrooms: Grants for Excellence, competitive funding for educator-designed projects, and Tools for Teachers, a free supply resource so teachers would not have to spend their own money on classroom basics.

The OPERA-tunity is one example of the 19 educator-designed grants awarded this year. Other grants focused on career certifications, student self-regulation to reduce referrals, and literacy. Tools for Teachers ran at a larger scale, with about 1,500 educators placing orders that warehouse staff and 200+ community volunteers packed and delivered, moving more than 28,000 items into classrooms districtwide. Across both programs, Escambia classrooms saw shifts in behavior, literacy, and career readiness that the Foundation tracked through a mix of standardized testing, observation logs, and program-specific data.

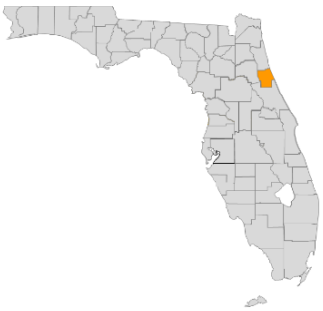
Results

- 683% increase in student Carpentry Certifications (94 vs. 12 the prior year) through expansion of the Electrathon team.
- 53% decrease in elementary school referrals (95 vs. 203) following implementation of a Calm Down Room.
- 12% decrease in Middle School suspensions (302 in fall vs. 267 in spring) through a dedicated Calm Down Room.
- Kindergarteners showed nearly two years of literacy growth in a single year, per STAR Early Literacy testing, through a new Literacy Mentorship program.
- ESOL students who felt they could effectively communicate with teachers and peers rose from 27% to 65% with the introduction of TimeKettle translation devices.

Flagler County Education Foundation

Beaver Toyota Fund-A-Project Teacher Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 54
Total Student Impact: 8,114



Picture two teams that rarely shared the same gym: students in exceptional education classrooms on one side, general education students on the other. Friendships took hold almost immediately, built one pass, one high-five, and one shared win at a time. By May, nobody was keeping track of who counted as an "athlete" and who counted as a "partner"; they were simply teammates. A grant-funded Unified Special Olympics class made it possible, handing out oversized balls and adaptive nets and letting the games do the rest. Teachers described the shift as a culture change that moved the campus from passive separation to enthusiastic, lasting inclusion. In the classroom, ESE teachers also noted fewer behavioral interruptions.

The Flagler County Education Foundation designed the Beaver Toyota Fund-A-Project Teacher Grants program to close persistent gaps in core academic performance, where district testing showed only 62% of standard students and 46% of historically underserved subgroups performing on grade level. The initiative gave classroom teachers across several priority areas the freedom to design instructional solutions suited to their own students.

Classroom innovation grants equipped Pre-K through 12th grade classrooms across the district with resources chosen entirely by teachers, from STEM and literacy tools to multi-sensory learning kits for ESE students and workforce simulation equipment for career and technical programs. The funding removed common financial barriers, putting hands-on, specialized tools directly into classrooms.

Across every priority area, teachers reported renewed student engagement and a shift toward confident, hands-on learning. The program's full reach and impact are reflected below.

Results

- 54 classroom innovation grants funded across Pre-K through 12th grade, totaling $76,000 in supply value.
- 5,230 additional students reached indirectly through shared classroom materials and equipment.
- targeted high-risk, ESE, literacy, and STEM students across Flagler County experienced an increase in standard academic proficiency, task completion, and communication goal mastery to 78.6%, compared to an initial baseline of 37.1% (832 out of 2,248 students meeting proficiency).
- 100% of participating teachers completed program evaluations, with 90.7% awarding the program a perfect 5 out of 5 sustainability rating (4.91 average)

Florida Virtual School Foundation

Florida Virtual School Program Support

Total Teacher Impact: 118
Total Student Impact: 730

Aiden first walked into FLVS Foundation's STARBASE STEM Summer Camp as a middle school student who didn't yet know how much he loved science and technology. Years later, he came back, this time as a Near Peer Mentor, watching a new group of students hit that same moment of discovery, the instant when building and problem-solving turn into "wait, that's actually cool." Guiding campers alongside faculty and fellow mentors, Aiden sharpened his own leadership, teamwork, and communication skills, the same ones he now passes on to the next student standing exactly where he once stood.

Florida Virtual School Foundation set out to widen the paths connecting classroom learning to real careers, from early STEM exploration in the middle grades to hands-on workforce experience in high school. The Foundation recognized that students benefit from direct exposure to STEM careers, structured opportunities to build workplace skills, and teachers equipped to bring career-connected instruction into their own classrooms. For students in Florida Scholars Academy, who complete coursework while residing in residential commitment centers, the Foundation also sought to build confidence and connection through creative expression.

The Foundation ran STEM camps at STARBASE Orlando and Patrick Space Force Base in Brevard County for students in grades 5 through 8, pairing hands-on projects with direct exposure to STEM careers. A competitive pipeline connected students to paid internships with Lockheed Martin, where participants built professional communication skills and learned the basics of financial literacy, from paychecks to budgeting to setting their own savings goals. Grants for Great Ideas funded FLVS educators pursuing innovative STEM and workforce-connected lessons, while a partnership with the National Center for Simulation and STARBASE Orlando trained teachers through the Advancing STEM Workforce Readiness Cohort. Florida Scholars Academy students took part in arts and enrichment programming designed to build confidence and communication skills.

Across STEM camps, internships, teacher training, and enrichment programming, the initiative reached students and educators at multiple sites statewide and measurably deepened interest in STEM careers and workforce readiness.

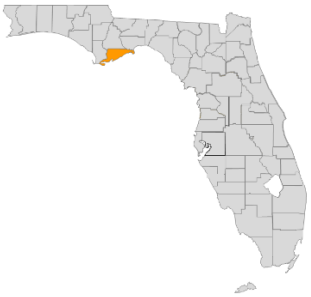
Results

- More than 75% of participating students showed increased understanding of STEM career and education pathways, with an average knowledge gain of 5.76 points from pre- to post-assessment.
- More than 70% of students expressed interest in pursuing a future STEM career.
- 7 students were selected for paid Lockheed Martin internships after nearly 50 applicants advanced through a competitive process.
- 23 teachers completed the Advancing STEM Workforce Readiness Cohort.
- Course completions rose to 16,278 for the school year, up from 10,138 the year prior.
- 50 Florida Scholars Academy students participated in arts and enrichment programming.

Franklin Education Foundation Inc.

Tango Flight

Total Teacher Impact: 13
Total Student Impact: 8



In a lab space in Franklin County, a small team of high school students spent the year doing something most teenagers never get to try: building a real airplane, piece by piece, alongside a team of adult mentors who volunteer their time. Eight students signed on for the intensive Tango Flight program this year. One student, Harley Mattingly, started his senior year without a clear direction and found one waiting at the workbench. “This program has taught me the things I need to be successful as an airplane mechanic,” he said. “I wasn’t for sure what I wanted to do, but being in this program helped me make the decision.” Harley will enroll in Haney Technical College’s Aviation Mechanics program in Apalachicola this fall.

Tango Flight exists to give Franklin County students a direct, hands-on path into aviation careers while they are still in high school, addressing the district’s priority of strengthening career and technical, and STEM, education. Rather than treating aviation as a distant career option, the program lets students train the way working aircraft mechanics do, working through real blueprints and documentation with support from Haney Technical College’s satellite program at the Apalachicola Airport.

Twice a week in the classroom, students studied blueprints, safety procedures, and FAA bulletins before heading to the lab three days a week to put that knowledge to use, cleaning parts and assembling the aircraft’s structure under the guidance of their mentors. Representatives from Haney Technical College visited throughout the year to connect students with the college’s satellite aviation program. The pace of the work showed up in how students carried themselves, too, with mentors noting improved communication and a new seriousness about checking tools, parts, and safety before every session.

That discipline in the lab carried over into measurable gains for the 6 students who saw the year through, both academically and toward their aviation credentials.

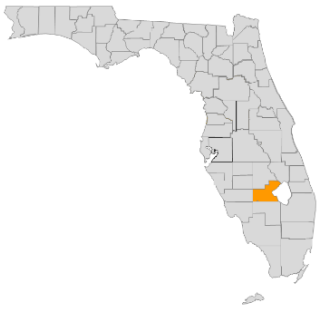
Results

- 67% of students advanced one math proficiency level; 50% advanced one science level.
- 100% of the completing students earned all 150 clock hours toward the Aviation Technology certificate (of 900 total).
- 12 mentors logged 192 of a possible 216 scheduled clock hours working with students this year.
- Students progressed from the rear section to the middle section of the airplane build this year.

Glades Education Foundation

Enhancing Science/STEM Education and College and Career Readiness

Total Teacher Impact: 15
Total Student Impact: 473



At West Glades School, eighth graders opened their science notebooks for more than note-taking. Using interactive notebooks funded by the STEM Education grant, students tracked their own pre- and post-assessment scores, watching their progress take shape over the course of the year, while grant-funded lab supplies turned lessons into hands-on investigations instead of pages to read. Teacher Edny Martinez said the effort "created a learning environment where students were excited to ask questions, solve problems, and think like scientists."

For students in rural Glades County, stronger academic achievement and stronger postsecondary pathways are closely connected. The Glades Education Foundation used School District Education Foundation Matching Grant program funds to strengthen that continuum, helping younger students build the science skills and confidence they need while giving older students greater science and career exposure, to take their next step after graduation.

Teachers used the new STEM materials and science resources to deliver engaging, standards-based instruction that increased student participation and understanding of scientific concepts. Students took part in hands-on labs and science enrichment activities throughout the year, alongside FAFSA completion support for seniors. The Foundation also funded a technical school visit, giving students direct exposure to career and technical training pathways beyond high school. Outputs were tracked through purchase records, attendance logs, participation records, district assessment reports, and FAFSA completion data.

Together, these investments addressed two points along the same student pathway: building the academic foundation students need to succeed and helping them connect that learning to college, technical training and future careers. The result was significant growth in science proficiency alongside increased engagement in postsecondary planning.

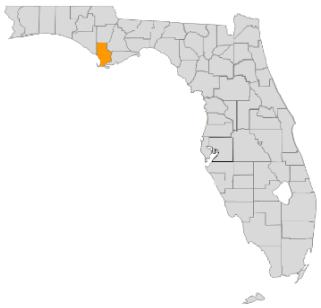
Results

- Grant funds equipped classrooms with STEM instructional materials and science intervention resources for nearly 25% of the district's students.
- Grade 5 Science proficiency increased from 61% to 68%.
- Grade 8 Science proficiency increased from 29% to 46%.
- Biology proficiency increased from 51% to 69%.
- FAFSA completion rose from 39.5% (32 of 81 seniors) to 42.4% (28 of 66 seniors) year over year.

The Education Foundation of Gulf County

Anchored in Excellence: Empowering Educators for Student Success

Total Teacher Impact: 154
Total Student Impact: 1610



This year, other educators started showing up in Joni's classroom, not to visit, but to learn. She had embraced the Florida Formula for Success and the Roadmap to Mastering Reading Comprehension, turning her English language arts classroom into a demonstration of standards-aligned instruction and real academic discourse, one that colleagues came to observe during districtwide learning walks. She mentored others through Professional Learning Communities and peer observations. Her experience echoed across Gulf District Schools: "I enjoyed teaching ELA more this year than in years past," one teacher said, while another shared that the training "helped me develop question prompts that support learning and deepen comprehension."

Gulf District Schools had mapped out a clear vision for strengthening Tier 1 instruction through its Strategic Plan and Reading Plan (CERP), but lacked the financial resources to provide the districtwide professional learning, expert trainers, instructional resources, and classroom materials that vision required. Literacy, support for low-performing students, and teaching quality stood out as the priority areas most in need of investment.

The Education Foundation of Gulf County stepped in as a strategic partner through its Anchored in Excellence initiative, funding a yearlong professional learning cycle for approximately 154 PreK-12 educators built around the Florida Formula for Success. Grant funds brought in nationally recognized trainers, including UnComplicated Ed speaker Gerry Brooks, and equipped K-5 teachers with the Roadmap to Mastering Reading Comprehension while district instructional leaders extended the work into grades 6-12. The initiative combined districtwide training with instructional coaching, Professional Learning Communities, classroom learning walks, and peer observations, and it identified teacher leaders who modeled these practices for colleagues across all four district schools.

This shared instructional framework across Gulf District Schools translated into measurable gains in classroom practice and student literacy performance on this year's FAST assessments across many grade levels.

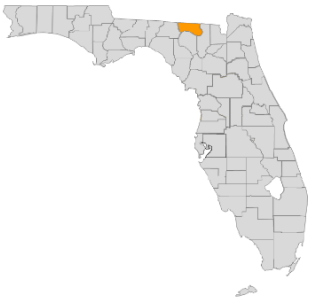
Results

- Fourth-grade ELA proficiency rose from 39% to 56% (44 of 114 students to 74 of 134 students).
- Sixth-grade ELA proficiency rose from 44% to 59% (55 of 124 students to 91 of 155 students).
- Second-grade ELA proficiency rose from 47% to 54%, while the number of students at Level 1 comprehension dropped from 32 to 21.
- 78 of 90 surveyed educators reported becoming more effective teachers.

Hamilton County Public Schools Foundation

Level Up Learning Initiative

Total Teacher Impact: 50
Total Student Impact: 990



At the start of the year, one fourth grade student rarely spoke up in math class, sitting well below grade level and hesitant to take part. With hands on manipulatives, math games, and small group materials funded through the Level Up Learning Initiative, a fourth-grade teacher gave that student room to explore concepts instead of memorizing procedures. By spring, the same student was raising a hand to solve problems in front of the class, one of many who found new confidence as the year progressed.

Hamilton County created the Level Up Learning Initiative to put research based instructional strategies and hands-on learning opportunities directly into the hands of classroom teachers. The goal was to equip teachers to reach students at every level, from those needing extra support to those ready for more of a challenge, through differentiated instruction and small group learning built around each classroom's needs.

The initiative put funding directly into the hands of classroom teachers through competitive grant applications. Teachers used funds where needed most: to bring new manipulatives, literacy resources, science materials, and technology into daily instruction. Rather than simply adding supplies to a shelf, these tools reshaped how lessons were taught, giving teachers room to build in more hands-on activities, small group work, and instruction tailored to where each student stood. Teachers grounded this work in research based instructional strategies, aiming for standards aligned lessons rather than one-off enrichment.

Those investments produced some of the strongest academic gains the district has documented, with math and science proficiency both climbing well beyond the program's original targets.

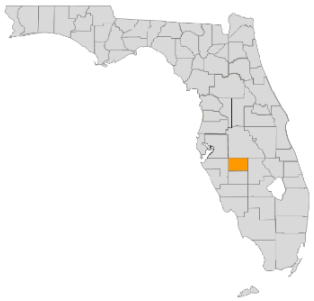
Results

- Fourth grade math proficiency rose from 12% to 67% between FAST Progress Monitoring 1 and Progress Monitoring 3.
- Fifth grade science proficiency increased 32 percentage points, from 20% to 52%, the highest level the school has reached to date.
- 83 teacher grants awarded, supporting approximately 50 teachers and an estimated 900 students across multiple grade levels and instructional programs.
- The project exceeded its goal of at least a 5% proficiency increase in ELA, math, and science.

Hardee Education Foundation

Love of Literacy, Science Expo, & Hardee Grow Innovation Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 100
Total Student Impact: 1,450



A crime lab van rolled into a local park, and for one day, a junior high classroom became a simulated crime scene. A STEM and gifted forensics unit, funded through the foundation's grant program, brought a science teacher's students into a hands-on collaboration with the local sheriff's office and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, rotating through fingerprinting, a drone demonstration, and an encounter with patrol K-9 units. Students were enthusiastic and engaged throughout, and the experience helped carry the teacher's own path forward: next year, they move up to teach forensics at the high school level.

Hardee Education Foundation used its matching grant this year to back three distinct efforts across the district, ranging from teacher and school-wide innovation grants to literacy programming and science fair participation. Each was aimed at a different part of the academic year, from classroom curriculum to reading proficiency to hands-on STEM competition, giving schools support across several fronts at once.

Through the Hardee Grow Innovation Grant Program, the foundation funded teacher, department, and school-wide grants drawn from the matching grant and district reserve funds. Recipients ranged from a sensory hall experience at Wauchula Elementary to a junior high concert led by a guest conductor, and all were showcased at the foundation's Innovation Expo. The Love of Literacy project supplied Sunshine State Young Reader books to every school across the K-2 and 3-5 grade bands, culminating in Battle of the Books competitions and, for the youngest students, Book Skirmishes. A third effort covered Regional Science Fair registration for junior and senior high students.

Each grant recipient set goals tied to their own subject area standards. The results below reflect that range, spanning literacy competitions, a science fair, and individualized classroom projects across the district.

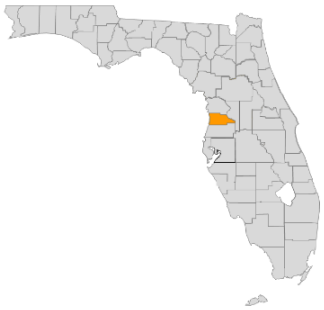
Results

- 11 grants awarded across teacher, department, and school-wide levels, totaling $41,000.
- Over 1,500 students impacted, from Wauchula Elementary's sensory hall to a junior high concert with a guest conductor.
- Sunshine State Young Reader books were distributed to every school for grades K-2 and 3-5, with every school fielding a Battle of the Books team and K-2 students also taking part in Book Skirmishes.
- Regional Science Fair registration funded for junior and senior high students.
- 90.9% of teachers surveyed said the program made teaching feel more sustainable, and the large majority reported that the grant support made them more effective educators.

Hernando County Education Foundation

Making an Impact through Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 950
Total Student Impact: 21,256



At the student run coffee shop inside a Hernando County classroom, one student who once needed constant support learned to run a register, take orders, and greet customers entirely on his own. He was one of several transition aged students with disabilities using the real-world business as a training ground for the workplace ahead of them. Watching him find his voice, one teacher recalled, “We watched students who were once hesitant to speak with others begin confidently greeting customers, taking orders, and managing daily tasks. Their pride and self-confidence grew with every shift.”

Hernando County Education Foundation set out to expand learning opportunities across the district, targeting priorities from literacy and STEM to career readiness, arts education, and support for students with disabilities. The program aimed to give teachers the resources to design innovative, hands-on classroom experiences that build real world skills and prepare students for graduation and beyond.

The classroom and school-based grants supported students exploring coding, robotics, forensic science, and cybersecurity, while literacy initiatives like Battle of the Books and a schoolwide Book Vending Machine program put more books directly into students’ hands. Career readiness grants connected students to college visits, industry exposure, and competitions, and inclusive education grants funded vocational training and student run businesses that built independence and workplace skills. Arts programs added theatre, music, and film opportunities that let students perform in front of real audiences to build the soft skills of confidence and public speaking needed for life after high school.

Across dozens of funded projects, the program reached thousands of students and teachers throughout Hernando County and translated into measurable gains in reading and math proficiency districtwide.

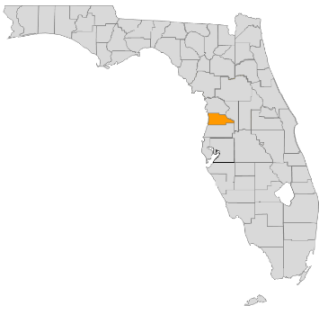
Results

- 59 classroom and school based grants awarded, supporting about 950 teachers and reaching more than 21,256 students.
- Reading proficiency for students in grades 3 to 10 rose from 53% to 57% on FAST assessments, a 4 percentage point gain.
- Math proficiency rose from 49.7% to 58%, an 8.3 percentage point gain.
- The Book Vending Machine Project alone distributed more than 500 books.
- Vocational and hands on learning programs increased student independence, communication skills, and confidence.

Hernando County Education Foundation

Tools 4 Schools

Total Teacher Impact: 783
Total Student Impact: 5,576



More than a year after hurricanes devastated Hernando County, George's family was still rebuilding their lives from almost nothing, and even basic school supplies felt out of reach. When George prepared to return to school, the Tools 4 Schools program gave him a new backpack stocked with supplies and hygiene items his family could not provide. For George, it meant walking into class prepared, confident, and feeling like he belonged among his classmates.

Across Hernando County, more than 60 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals, and teachers routinely spent their own money to keep classrooms stocked with basic supplies. The Hernando County Education Foundation set out to ease that burden and keep teachers focused on instruction rather than personal spending, in support of the district's priorities around teaching quality and graduation rates.

Through its Tools 4 Schools Store and Mobile Bus, the Foundation gave teachers from public and charter schools free access to classroom supplies and instructional materials at monthly shopping events and mobile distribution stops across the district. Teachers redirected the money and energy they once spent restocking their own rooms back into instruction. When a planned move to a larger facility temporarily closed the store, the Foundation leaned on mobile outreach to keep supplies flowing to classrooms without interruption.

Teacher surveys captured across the district showed the program's impact reached far beyond the supplies themselves, shaping how teachers felt about their jobs and their future in Hernando County classrooms.

Results

- More than $350,000 worth of free classroom supplies distributed to teachers throughout Hernando County.
- 573 teachers surveyed said the program made teaching feel more sustainable, with 570 (99%) reporting it felt "much more" sustainable.
- All 573 respondents said the program made them a more effective educator, with 525 (92%) reporting "much more" effective.
- 465 of 573 teachers (81%) said they plan to continue teaching in Hernando County Schools next year.
- The program directly served 783 teachers and impacted an estimated 5,576 students across the district.

Highlands County Education Foundation

Classroom Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 41
Total Student Impact: 3,514



After 32 years in the classroom, one Highlands County teacher called this one of the most exciting years of her career. Grant funding let her purchase books and materials on Ancient Civilizations, and her students were quickly "turned on to learning," eager to dig deeper into each civilization and ask questions she sometimes had to look up herself. "It has been exciting to see my students get 'turned on' to learning about Ancient Civilizations... We have been learning together," said Kara Williams, thanking the foundation for what she called one of the most exciting years of teaching in three decades.

Highlands County Education Foundation created the Classroom Grants program to give teachers funding for innovative instructional programs and practices that engage students and strengthen learning, with a focus on literacy. The program specifically addressed needs that existing school budgets and programs could not meet, giving teachers a way to bring ideas into their classrooms that would not otherwise have been possible.

The foundation awarded 55 classroom grants to teachers across the county, funding materials and instructional practices that reached approximately 3,514 elementary students and 1,165 secondary students. Much of the material purchased through the grants can be reused in future school years, extending the value of the investment well beyond a single semester. Student growth was tracked using the FAST assessment at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Across elementary and secondary classrooms, the grant funded projects translated into measurable gains on FAST assessment scores, with the large majority of participating students meeting some or all of their expected literacy goals.

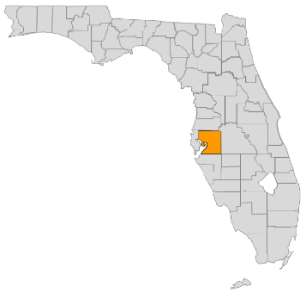
Results

- 74.5% of elementary students met all expected grant goals and outcomes on the FAST assessment.
- 68% of secondary students met all expected grant goals and outcomes on the FAST assessment.
- 18.5% of elementary students met some of the expected goals and outcomes.
- 23.5% of secondary students met some of the expected goals and outcomes.
- Reusable materials purchased through the grants extend their value into future school years.

Hillsborough Education Foundation

School & Classroom Enrichment Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 239
Total Student Impact: 36,060



At Randall Middle School, students once kept their distance from soil and worms. A hands-on teaching garden project changed that, giving them ownership of class worm bins and their own Florida native "plant pets." "Because of your investment, students who had never touched dirt or a worm, are now excited environmental stewards," said teacher Brittany Andrews. Across Hillsborough County Public Schools, classroom resources often fall short of what teachers need to bring creative, hands-on lessons to life. The School & Classroom Enrichment Grants program was built to close that gap, giving educators direct funding to design projects that might not otherwise be possible and to expose students to learning experiences beyond the standard curriculum.

Hillsborough Education Foundation funded classroom and school-based projects that put resources directly into educators' hands, prioritizing hands-on, inquiry-based learning across subject areas. Grant-supported experiences included Chladni plate sound vibration experiments, gem mining geology lessons, Museum of Science & Industry field trips, pollinator gardens for observing monarch butterfly life cycles, and classroom aquariums.

At Bing Elementary, teacher Kayla Dorfeuille used grant funding to turn production of the school yearbook into a student-led literacy and media project. Students practiced purposeful writing, research, collaboration, and visual design while creating a product for their school community. Participation in extended writing and media-based tasks grew from about 55–60% before the project to approximately 85% of participating students meeting or showing improvement toward project goals. Teachers also observed stronger classroom participation, confidence, accountability, and pride as students saw their own work published.

The investment reached classrooms across the district, sparking new curiosity in students and renewed confidence in the teachers guiding them.

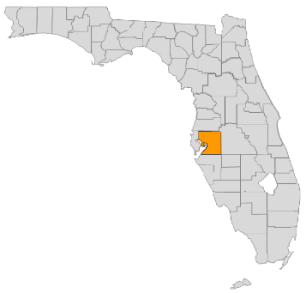
Results

- 250 classroom and school-based grants funded across 115 schools
- 97% of responding teachers (234 of 242) reported improved instructional effectiveness, exceeding the 90% program goal
- Grants reached schools serving diverse populations, including Title I campuses

Hillsborough Education Foundation

Transforming Early Literacy Initiative

Total Teacher Impact: 84
Total Student Impact: 1,435



After twelve years in the classroom, Transforming Early Literacy Initiative (TELI) coach Elaine Sanders found a new way approach to improving literacy: raising lifelong readers. Coaching alongside teachers across the district, she helped turn research-based literacy practice into daily routines for the youngest learners. "I love that we get to pour into our early learners and help bridge the gap to ensure they're ready to excel throughout their academic journey," she said.

Early literacy sets the foundation for a child's entire academic career, and Hillsborough County Public Schools made strengthening it a top priority for its youngest learners. The Transforming Early Literacy Initiative was created to bring evidence-based, Science of Reading-aligned instruction directly into Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms, building educator capacity so more students enter elementary school ready to read.

TELI coaches provided biweekly, job-embedded literacy coaching alongside monthly professional learning communities, collaborative planning sessions, and data chats built around Science of Reading-aligned practices. Students and their families also received quarterly literacy bags stocked with books and take-home activities to extend reading habits beyond the classroom. Progress was tracked through coaching logs, PLC attendance, classroom walkthroughs, and Star Early Literacy Assessment data.

Across the initiative's participating schools, young readers made striking early gains, and teachers grew more confident using data to guide their instruction throughout the year.

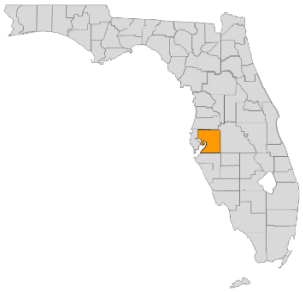
Results

- TELI expanded from 12 to 16 elementary schools, meeting its annual expansion goal
- Served 1,435 students and 84 teachers through coaching, PLCs, and classroom support
- Kindergarten students gained roughly one year and three months of literacy growth on Star Early Literacy assessments
- Pre-K Head Start and Pre-K ESE literacy proficiency rose from 38% to 57%, a 19-point gain
- Kindergarten literacy proficiency rose from 40% to 57%, a 17-point gain
- Black students in Head Start, Pre-K ESE, and Kindergarten increased proficiency from 43% to 60%

Hillsborough Education Foundation

Teaching Tools Resource Center 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 3,684



Every morning before school, a fourth-grade teacher gathers her students for math practice, using notebooks and pencils that arrived through the Teaching Tools Resource Center. Freed from worrying about basic supplies, her students show up ready to work. "These resources are used daily and help ensure students come prepared, stay engaged, and have the materials they need to practice and strengthen essential math concepts," said Lisa Lawson.

Teachers across Hillsborough County routinely dip into their own pockets to stock classrooms with basic supplies. The Teaching Tools Resource Center was built to remove that barrier, giving educators free access to classroom materials so they could redirect their time and money toward instruction instead of shopping trips.

Through the Teaching Tools Resource Center, Hillsborough Education Foundation stocked shelves with free classroom supplies and instructional materials, then opened them to educators for browsing and pickup. The foundation also expanded delivery service directly to schools, reducing the trips teachers needed to make to restock their classrooms. Program use was tracked through the Applebase point-of-sale system, which logged teacher visits, participating schools, and the value of resources distributed.

The resource center became a dependable stop for teachers throughout the school year, easing a financial pressure point that had followed many of them for years.

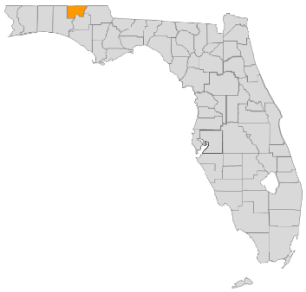
Results

- 3,684 unique teachers served across Hillsborough County Public Schools, surpassing the 3,500-teacher annual goal
- More than $3.3 million in school supplies and instructional resources distributed
- Delivery service expanded to 61 schools, beyond the goal of 60
- Program reached 241 of 253 eligible schools, 95% participation
- Teacher access increased 8% over the previous year's baseline of 3,395 teachers

Holmes County Education Foundation

Igniting Innovation: Classroom Mini-Grants for STEM, Literacy, and Workforce Readiness

Total Teacher Impact: 18
Total Student Impact: 374



In one Holmes County classroom, good behavior became its own currency. Students earned classroom "money" for showing responsibility, kindness, and perseverance, then put those earnings to work, counting, adding, subtracting, and budgeting at a classroom store built entirely around their own good choices. What started as a way to manage the room turned into a hands-on math lesson, with students growing more motivated, more accountable, and more confident handling real financial concepts along the way.

Holmes County teachers wanted the freedom to bring fresh, hands-on ideas into their classrooms, ideas that could strengthen literacy, spark STEM curiosity, and prepare students for future careers, but doing so meant finding the resources to make those ideas real. The Classroom Mini-Grant Program was built to close that gap, giving teachers a direct path to fund the projects they envisioned, targeting literacy, STEM education, career and technical readiness, and support for low-performing students in step with the district's push to raise graduation rates and strengthen teaching quality.

The program put mini-grants directly into teachers' hands, funding classroom libraries, science equipment, literacy manipulatives, technology, and financial literacy resources tailored to what each classroom needed. At Ponce de Leon Elementary, one grant funded a Poetry Night where students read their work aloud to family and classmates, paired with a school book fair, New Worlds Reading resources, and Kindle giveaways that turned a single evening into a celebration of literacy for the whole community. Other funded projects extended learning through family engagement events and educational field experiences that reached beyond the traditional classroom.

Across every funded classroom, teachers reported the same shift: students more willing to engage, take risks, and participate, paired with measurable gains in academic performance following implementation. The materials these grants purchased are built to outlast the school year, continuing to serve Holmes County students for years to come.

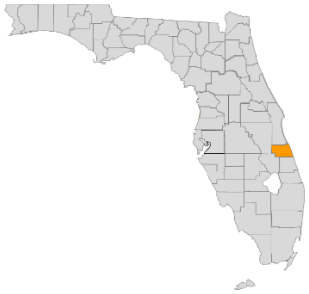
Results

- 18 classroom mini-grants awarded to teachers across multiple grade levels and subject areas
- Students showed measurable gains in engagement and academic performance compared to pre-project baseline measures
- Family literacy events, including a school-wide Poetry Night, connected home and school around reading
- All 18 funded projects were fully implemented, exceeding participation goals, with purchased materials, from classroom libraries to STEM equipment, set to benefit students in future school years
- 100% of teachers surveyed said this program has made teaching feel “Much More” sustainable.

The Indian River Education Fund

Future-Ready Leaders, Future-Ready Classrooms

Total Teacher Impact: 35
Total Student Impact: 7,433



When Rosewood Magnet School prepared to transform into a K-8 campus, students, staff, and families faced a question that could have unsettled the whole community: how do you build something new without losing who you are? Through design-thinking sessions, community forums, and student surveys, the Rosewood community shaped its own transition, choosing electives ranging from robotics to the arts while voting to keep the Rosewood name and Stingray identity intact. "This initiative demonstrated that meaningful change happens when students, staff, and families work together to create a future where every learner can thrive," said Jennifer Lomascolo, Assistant Principal at Rosewood Magnet School.

Indian River County set out to move its middle schools, and the elementary schools converting to K-8s, beyond incremental change entirely. Anchored in the district's STEM education and teaching quality priorities, the InnovatED initiative aimed to build classrooms that were more personalized and connected to students' real interests and future paths, while giving school and teacher leaders the capacity to sustain that shift going forward.

The Fund's InnovatED initiative combined design thinking, stakeholder engagement, and site-based innovation grants to help all ten district middle and K-8 schools reshape their programming. School teams piloted facility and course changes, including new elective pathways in robotics, coding, STEM, and the arts, while district leaders convened a Leadership Institute cohort and paired individual school leaders with coaching support. In parallel, an Assessment Cohort worked to refine standards-aligned common assessments in Algebra 1 and Geometry, aligning classroom measurement with Florida's B.E.S.T. Standards and strengthening data-informed instruction districtwide.

Across the district's middle schools, the initiative translated into measurable gains in student achievement and expanded professional learning opportunities for teachers. The following results reflect the scope of that progress from the past school year.

Results

- Grade 6-8: Innovation enhancements rose from 5 to 12, exceeding the target of 10 classroom educational strategies
- Middle school achievement climbed across subjects, with ELA, Math, and Science each reaching 66% Level 3+ and Social Studies reaching 82% Level 3+, exceeding targets in every area.
- Refined Algebra and Geometry assessments supported 61% and 58% Level 3+ achievement, respectively.
- Five Strategic Innovation Grants funded new school-site projects, six new K-8 course offerings were added, and five school leaders received individualized coaching through Leadership Institute Year 2.

Investing in Kids (St. Johns)

Tools 4 Schools

Total Teacher Impact: 946



At Mill Creek Academy, a world history class recently spent an afternoon building mosaics inspired by ancient Rome, cutting and gluing with construction paper, scissors, and glue that arrived through Tools 4 Schools. Down the road at Gamble Rogers Middle School, a teacher put it plainly: without the program, many of her Title I students simply wouldn't have the basic supplies to do what the class was doing. Scenes like these play out in classrooms across St. Johns County, where Investing in Kids' Tools 4 Schools program has spent more than 15 years making sure a shortage of supplies never gets in the way of a lesson.

For over 15 years, Investing in Kids has worked to close a gap familiar to teachers across St. Johns County: covering classroom supplies out of their own pockets. Without reliable access to materials, teachers often limit hands-on activities or spend personal money just to keep their classrooms running. Tools 4 Schools was built to remove that burden entirely, giving every teacher in the district a way to get what their students need at no personal cost.

The program kept its online supply store stocked through Applebase, letting teachers order what their classrooms needed and have it delivered directly to their schools. Tools 4 Schools also set up at district professional development events, including new teacher induction and the Title I teacher conference, so newly hired staff could stock up on essentials from day one. Students with disabilities from the district's Life Work Program joined the effort each month, helping pack and deliver orders alongside program staff and building real workplace skills along the way. Community donations and a steady corps of volunteers helped the program keep pace with rising demand as the district continues to grow.

Teacher feedback collected at the end of the year points to a program doing exactly what it set out to do: lightening the load on classroom budgets and helping St. Johns County hold onto the teachers it works hard to recruit.

Results

- 2,620 supply orders delivered to all 50 public and public charter schools in the district.
- 946 teachers ordered classroom supplies directly through the program, with another 510 picking up supplies at district professional development events.
- 89% of surveyed teachers said the program increased their students' access to essential classroom supplies.
- 85% said the program made teaching more sustainable and 69% said it strengthened their desire to keep teaching in the district, a five-percentage-point increase over the prior year.
- More than $143,000 in supplies were distributed, supplemented by roughly $92,000 in donated materials.

Investing in Kids (St. Johns)

Five Learning Years (FLY)

Total Student Impact: 334



When first grader Thea started working with her FLY tutor, Ms. Mary, she was still finding her footing with phonics and basic reading. By the end of the year, her teacher, Mrs. Angela Mandara at Wards Creek Elementary, described a student transformed: more confident, more engaged, and reading with real skill. Thea's turnaround is exactly the kind of change the Five Learning Years program set out to create as Investing in Kids expanded it to 15 sites across St. Johns County.

St. Johns County's youngest learners need strong foundational literacy skills to set them up for lifelong academic success, but some pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first-grade students enter the school year already behind their peers. The Five Learning Years program was built to close that gap early, through targeted, evidence-based literacy intervention for students identified as performing below grade level.

Fifteen trained literacy tutors met twice weekly with pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first-grade students identified through district screening data and teacher referrals. Sessions combined small-group and one-on-one instruction built on evidence-based literacy curricula, with progress tracked through baseline, mid-year, and end-of-year assessments. Classroom teachers stayed connected throughout the year, feeding in referrals and receiving updates on their students' growth as the year progressed.

Across every grade level served, students closed literacy gaps that had put them behind their peers at the start of the year, and their classroom teachers noticed the difference well beyond test scores.

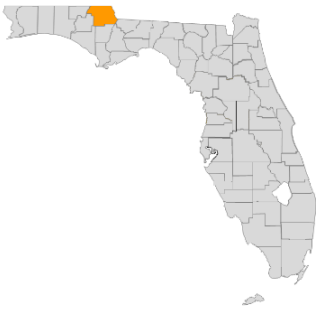
Results

- Pre-kindergarten students closed their literacy gap between participating students and their grade-level peers, from 56% to 0%.
- Kindergarten students cut gaps from 114% to 6% in letter identification, 280% to 4% in letter sounds, and 68% to 7% in phonological awareness.
- First-grade students reading at or above grade level rose from 18% (19 of 104) to 85% (88 of 104).
- First-grade students advanced an average of four independent reading levels over the year.
- 100% of the 54 teachers who completed the year-end survey said FLY benefited their students.
- 16 of 104 first graders remained below grade level at year's end, mostly those who entered with the deepest literacy gaps.

Jackson County Education Foundation

Enhancing Education 2026

Total Teacher Impact: 58
Total Student Impact: 4,522



Some of the best teaching in this classroom did not come from the teacher; it came from the students. Higher performing students stepped into peer-teaching roles, guiding classmates through STAR Math and reading tasks while the teacher circulated to support students who needed more help, a shift sparked by a program called the Fidget Game, which paired hands-on manipulatives with classroom iPads and turned practice into fun. "The Fidget Game program was a tremendous success in our classroom because students felt like they were playing a game rather than completing academic work," said teacher Lauren Pike.

Across Jackson County, teachers needed more than one kind of support: some wanted field trips that would bring lessons to life, others needed software to help students catch up or move ahead, and still others needed equipment to help students manage behavior and build social and emotional skills. Rather than fund a single program, the Jackson County Education Foundation used the State of Florida Matching Grant Program to meet each of these needs individually, giving educators from PreK through 12th grade a way to bring the specific tools their classrooms needed most within reach.

The Foundation awarded 37 grants, 27 classroom grants, five collaborative grants, four school grants, and one district-wide grant, distributing funding to 12 schools spanning PreK through 12th grade. Recipients used the funds for learning stations, STEM and agricultural materials, science lab supplies, classroom libraries, and out-of-classroom experiences, including art supplies for an inspirational student mural completed with low-performing students.

Across the county, the program's first round reached 4,522 students and 58 teachers and administrators in the 2024-2025 school year, with participating classrooms reporting gains in proficiency, graduation readiness, and reading and math growth throughout PreK-12 grade levels.

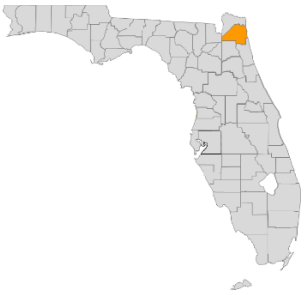
Results

- 100% of students in one classroom increased proficiency on STAR Math.
- Science proficiency in another classroom rose from a 52% baseline to 89%.
- 96% (228 of 237) students improved on a literacy post-test for one grant program award.
- All 150 seniors in one classroom earned a standard diploma, enhancing graduation rates.
- A grant for struggling students saw 1,378 students gain mastery of Algebra 1 topics, and eight students in another passed the concordant test needed to graduate with their class.

Jacksonville Public Education Fund

Teacher Leadership Initiative

Total Teacher Impact: 9,083
Total Student Impact: 51,763



Every teacher develops instincts about what's really going on in their classroom. Maria sized up a challenge and responded based on her best guess about the cause. The Teacher Leadership Initiative asked her to set that instinct aside and follow the data instead. What she found changed both her results and her sense of herself as a leader.

The Teacher Leadership Initiative was built to grow exactly that kind of capacity across Duval County Public Schools. The Jacksonville Public Education Fund designed the program to strengthen educator leadership, innovation, and problem-solving skills as a direct path to better outcomes for students, reflecting the Fund's broader mission of empowering teachers as leaders and change agents. Educators across the district stepped forward to take on a wide range of challenges, from reading proficiency and math achievement to workforce readiness, digital citizenship, and family engagement.

Participating educators worked through a two-phase model that paired Design Thinking for Educators training with individualized coaching. In the first phase, they observed their classrooms and gathered data to uncover the real causes behind the challenges they saw. In the second, they used that evidence to design, test, and refine targeted interventions, supported throughout by coaches and peer collaboration.

The work educators did in their own classrooms rippled outward to students across grade levels and subject areas, reinforcing the initiative's core premise that stronger teacher leadership drives stronger student outcomes. Because each educator used data to identify and address a different challenge in their own classroom or school, the results span multiple student outcomes, reflecting the initiative's broader goal of building teachers' capacity to diagnose problems, test solutions, and lead improvement.

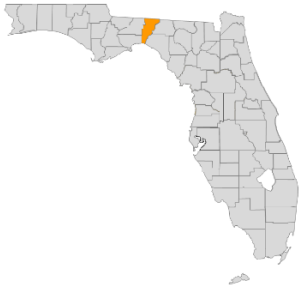
Results

- More than 250 educators applied or expressed interest in the Teacher Leadership Initiative.
- 8 educators completed the full Design Thinking for Educators curriculum and implementation process, attending up to 6 curriculum sessions along with individualized coaching.
- 87.5% of participants reported becoming more effective educators as a result of the program.
- One second grade classroom reduced behavior referrals to only two in April, and in the same class18 of 20 students made measurable progress toward grade level math mastery.
- A workforce readiness project engaged 146 high school students, with 19 completing internship applications and interviews.

Jefferson County Educational Foundation

Destination Graduation

Total Teacher Impact: 12
Total Student Impact: 458



For one Jefferson County fourth grader, multiplication and division facts stopped feeling like homework and started feeling like game night. Issac P. was among the students who traded worksheets for BAMBingo, a math game funded through the Math Matters mini-grant, and he said he was able to review the facts while having fun. Attendance and engagement rose alongside proficiency, which climbed from 31 percent to 63 percent by the end of the year, and Issac's teacher said the grant made her a far more effective educator.

Jefferson County Schools set out to reach the students who were struggling the most, in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms throughout the district. The Jefferson County Educational Foundation's Destination Graduation program put mini-grants directly into teachers' hands, giving them the flexibility to design classroom-level interventions for those students specifically.

Teachers used mini-grants to design targeted interventions for their classrooms, from Math Matters and Super Science Stars to a third-grade ELA whole-class book study, Learning Resources for Pre-Algebra, and a classroom rug used during read-alouds and literacy instruction. District-wide, the Foundation also equipped classrooms with wired headphones to support focused, distraction-free testing. Each mini-grant tracked progress using baseline PM1 scores against PM3 outcomes, alongside student reflections on engagement.

By the end of the year, students across multiple grade levels and content areas showed measurable gains in literacy, math, and science achievement, reflecting the reach of Destination Graduation's classroom-level approach.

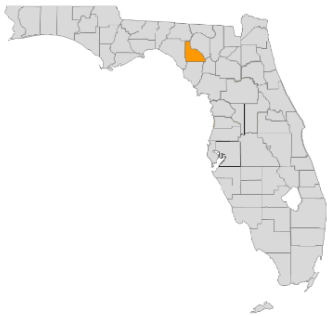
Results

- 458 students served through mini-grants awarded to 12 teachers.
- Third-grade FAST ELA proficiency rose from 0 of 16 students in September 2025 to 7 of 16 by May 2026.
- Eighth-grade math proficiency increased from 10% to 57%, a 47-point gain, from PM1 to PM3.
- Fourth-grade science proficiency rose from 15 of 48 students on the pretest to 40 of 48 on the IXL post-test, a 52% gain.
- Kindergarten Early Literacy proficiency increased from 0% to 79% on the Star Early Literacy State Assessment.

Lafayette County School District

Farm to Plate Learning

Total Teacher Impact: 2
Total Student Impact: 30



xA sixth-grade student who had never grown a plant before stood over a tray of marigold seedlings, watched the tiny sprouts break through the soil, and said something that stayed with the whole class: "I didn't think I could actually grow something from a tiny seed." That student went on to volunteer for every task in the greenhouse, checking soil moisture, recording growth, and helping classmates keep their own seedlings alive, turning a science lesson into a hands-on lesson in patience and responsibility.

Sixth grade Agriscience students had studied plant anatomy, growth, photosynthesis, and the environmental conditions plants need, but the Farm to Plate Learning project set out to put that classroom knowledge to a real test: could students take what they had learned and actually grow something themselves? The project aligned with Career and Technical Education and STEM priorities, moving plant science off the page and into a working greenhouse.

Working in small groups, students planted seed-starting trays of flowering seedlings using potting mix and identification labels purchased through the grant, then spent several weeks monitoring germination, watering, and sunlight needs. An additional group of seventh grade students took part indirectly, visiting the greenhouse during land lab activities to observe plant growth and connect it to classroom discussions. Progress was tracked through participation records, seedling development, and a pre and post assessment of student knowledge.

By the end of the project, both grade levels came away with a clearer, more confident grasp of plant science, gained not from a textbook but from watching something they planted actually grow.

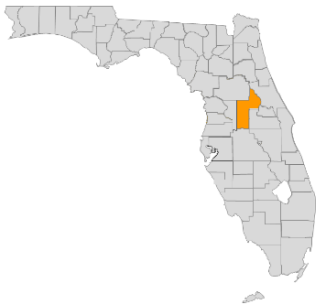
Results

- 30 sixth-grade Agriscience students directly planted, labeled, and cared for marigold, petunia, and zinnia seedlings.
- Average assessment scores rose from 73% to 91%, an 18-point gain in plant science knowledge.
- 30 additional seventh-grade students engaged indirectly through greenhouse observation visits during land lab activities.
- 60 students total benefited from the four-week greenhouse project.
- All seedlings reached healthy, transplant-ready condition by the project's end.

Education Foundation of Lake County

Future Forward: Transforming Choices Into Change

Total Teacher Impact: 967
Total Student Impact: 5,740



For an all-girl robotics team at East Ridge Middle School, qualifying for the VEX World Championship was the reward of countless late nights spent coding, building, and troubleshooting through setbacks. A bill they hadn't planned for, registration fees for two teams to compete in St. Louis, threatened to end the journey before it started. A $3,600 grant from the Education Foundation of Lake County cleared that hurdle, sending both teams to the world stage and connecting them with female leaders at GirlPowered STEM events. “This wasn’t just a competition; for me, it was an event that opened doors,” one student said. “It gave me confidence and made me feel like I could achieve so much more.”

Lake County Schools faced mounting workforce demands, a 13 percent teacher attrition rate, and equity gaps that touched career readiness, graduation rates, and basic classroom resources. Teachers were spending an average of $500 out of pocket to supply their own classrooms, while 68 percent of students in the district qualified for free or reduced lunch. The Education Foundation of Lake County set out to invest in students and educators at the same time, aligning new resources with the district’s strategic goals for student success, recruitment, and retention.

The resulting Future Forward initiative built hands-on career pipelines in construction, culinary arts, and STEM, partnering with Habitat for Humanity, the Renaissance Faire, and local drone and robotics programs to move students toward industry certifications. The High School High Tech program gave students with disabilities post-secondary readiness training and foundational life skills, while the Apple Mart and Red for Ed initiatives supplied backpacks and classroom materials districtwide. On the educator side, veteran mentors supported new teachers, a New Teacher Apprenticeship Program with Lake-Sumter State College placed apprentices in vacant elementary classrooms, and Teacher Impact Grants funded original classroom projects.

Across these efforts, the initiative reached thousands of students and teachers, translating into measurable shifts in classroom practice, career readiness, and educator retention districtwide.

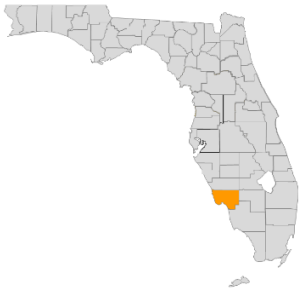
Results

- Culinary program participation grew to 3,732 students, producing 580 ServSafe certifications, up from 494 the previous year.
- Construction credentials increased 45 percent, rising from 134 to 195 across 870 participating students.
- Teacher retention climbed from 83.6 percent to 85.2 percent, lowering the separation rate to 11.7 percent.
- The LSSC teacher apprentice pipeline expanded from 3 to 17 contracted apprentices, a 90 percent sign-on rate.
- 76 percent of teachers who shopped at Apple Mart reported saving money on classroom supplies.

The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools

College & Career Initiatives

Total Teacher Impacted: 17
Total Student Impacted: 2,735



Some school programs blend into the background. STEM@Work is not one of them. After years chaperoning trips for clubs, sports teams, and other activities at Fort Myers High, one longtime volunteer had seen a lot of student programs come and go, but none left an impression like this. The program pulled students out of the classroom and into real workplaces, where they watched professionals in action, asked questions, and started to picture themselves in careers they had only read about. What stayed with her most was how the experience built more than knowledge, it built confidence, curiosity, and the kind of connections that outlast a single field trip.

Lee County's 2030 Goals call for every student to leave school prepared for college or a career, but classroom lessons alone could not show students what a STEM career actually looks like day to day. Local high schools offered courses that introduced career pathways, though nothing could match watching professionals perform their jobs firsthand and hearing directly from people already working in the field.

Through STEM@Work, students visited local businesses and industry sites for monthly hands-on experiences with real professionals, while a companion series of workshops covered financial literacy, wellness, resume writing, interview skills, and FAFSA completion. Each year, the initiative culminated in

STEMtastic, a community-wide Day of Discovery that brought colleges, employers, and nonprofits together for interactive exhibits open to students and families. Additional college and career prep sessions helped students navigate standardized testing and financial aid ahead of graduation.
Across STEM exploration, career workshops, and college prep support, students left with stronger knowledge of career pathways, better financial literacy, and greater confidence navigating their next steps after high school.

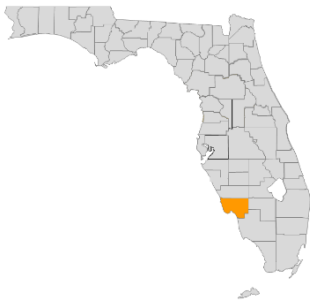
Results

- 1,066 students participated in 41 monthly STEM@Work experiences.
- Student confidence networking with peers and future employers increased 56%.
- Student awareness of college and career readiness resources increased 42%.
- Student understanding of how credit affects financial options increased 50%.
- Over 3,500 students, families, and educators attended STEMtastic, featuring 85 business and community exhibits.

The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools

Classroom, School & District Grants

Total Teacher Impacted: 45
Total Student Impacted: 2,735



An essay became a “patient” in need of surgery at Diplomat Middle School, where English teacher Quinn Schnabel transformed revision and editing into a team-based exercise to fix an “ill” sentence. Students diagnosed problems with essay structure, evidence, citations and elaboration before presenting their revised work to the “attending physician.” From the first to third quarter, average essay scores increased from **6 to 7 points on a 12-point scale**.

At Gulf Elementary, Carmen Andres used her literacy grant to build a bilingual library that strengthened connections between students’ home languages and English. **Eighty-five percent of English learners demonstrated at least 50 new high-frequency words, 80% increased oral reading fluency, and 70% of bilingual students showed measurable improvement in writing and vocabulary by March 2026.**

At Varsity Lakes Middle, Traci Pavel used an arts grant to provide band and chorus students with headphones, microphones and clip-on tuners. The equipment allowed students to hear and correct themselves independently, strengthening pitch accuracy, tone quality, music literacy and rehearsal habits while giving the teacher more instructional time for higher-level musical development.
That kind of teacher-created solution is at the heart of the Foundation for Lee County Public Schools’ Classroom, School & District Grants. The program gives educators resources to test approaches that fall outside traditional classroom budgets while advancing literacy, STEM, the arts and other student learning priorities.

Together, these projects show how relatively small investments can give teachers the flexibility to address very different student needs with practical, measurable classroom solutions.

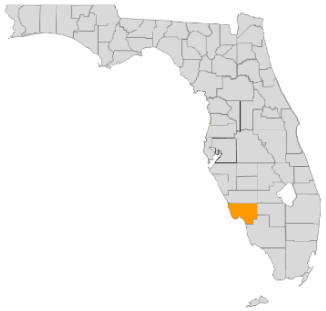
Results

- 17 STEM grants, 18 literacy grants, and 8 arts grants awarded.
- 76% of teachers reported meeting 100% of their project's academic goals; another 24% reported near-full achievement.
- 38 teachers and administrators attended in-person workshops, with 218 more viewing the virtual option.
- Funded projects reached more than 16,000 students district-wide, per teacher-submitted final reports.

The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools

Collegium for the Advancement of Education

Total Student Impacted: 2,735
Total Teacher Impacted: 24



A renewed confidence in herself led one teacher to reapply to finish her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership, a goal she had set aside after becoming a mother, thanks to the 2026 Collegium for the Advancement of Education. Immersed in William Glasser's Choice Theory and the Baldrige/Sterling Framework alongside some of the most passionate educators she had met, she found the training deeply practical, but it was the community that made the week unforgettable. "I credit the community I met at Collegium for helping me take that step, and I am incredibly grateful to everyone who makes this possible," said Brittany Garrett, a teacher at Tice Elementary.

As part of its goal to become a Model of Continuous Improvement Organization, the Lee County School District looked for ways to deepen teachers' skills in classroom management and student motivation. The Collegium for the Advancement of Education was designed to give educators the psychological grounding behind why students behave as they do, paired with practical tools to improve communication, productivity, and effectiveness in the classroom.

Over the course of a week-long training, 24 educators worked through 40 hours of professional development covering the Sterling Quality Teaching Tools and Glasser's Reality Therapy Questioning Process, led by former district Continuous Improvement Director Cindy McClung. Participants took pre- and post-tests to track their learning, earned in-service points toward recertification, and closed the training with presentations of what they had learned to their peers. Two district administrators also took part, adding their own perspective as guest presenters.

Educators left the training with a dramatically stronger grasp of the Glasser Reality Therapy Questioning Process, and survey data from prior Collegium cohorts shows that what they learn continues to shape their classrooms well after the training ends.

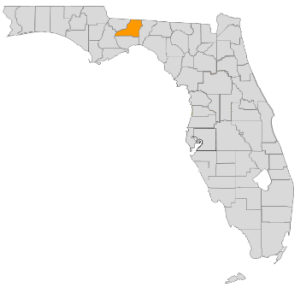
Results

- Teacher knowledge of the Glasser Reality Therapy Questioning Process rose from a baseline of 15.75% to 98.88%.
- 24 educators completed 40 hours of professional development and earned in-service recertification points.
- Prior-year alumni reported using mission statements, data folders, and regular check-ins to sustain what they learned.

Foundation for Leon County Schools

Innovative Teacher Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 195
Total Student Impact: 16,000



At Sabal Palm Elementary School, a Title 1 campus where 95 percent of the students served by the grant are considered at-risk, a boy named Prince had been waiting for graphic novel editions of the I Survived series, and when they finally landed on the shelf, he jumped in the air. Down the same aisle, a girl named Giselle had stalled out partway through Cleopatra in Space until new titles gave her a reason to keep reading, and even students who normally struggled found themselves pulled in by The Bad Guys. “Alan Katz and Josh Funk are two of the many authors I wanted to showcase with this grant,” said Cheryl Frazier, media specialist at Sabal Palm Elementary. “We were able to buy all of their other titles to fill our shelves for author studies.”

The Foundation for Leon County Schools built the Innovative Teacher Grants program around a simple idea: let the teachers closest to students decide where funding is needed most, rather than directing it from a central office. Twenty grants of up to $10,000 gave classroom teachers the flexibility to pursue ideas they otherwise couldn't afford to try, and this year more than half of that funding reached Title 1 schools, covering projects that would have gone unfunded without it.

Twenty Innovative Teacher Grants of up to $10,000 each funded a wide range of classroom initiatives across the district, from a digital production program at Griffin Middle School to a Sensory Regulation Space for neurodivergent students at Canopy Oaks Elementary. Other grants built a STEAM Enrichment Library at Chaires Elementary, launched a student-run coffee shop at Lincoln High School to build financial literacy and social skills, funded a Robotics Curriculum at SAIL, and supported a schoolwide agriculture and science initiative at Woodville K-8. Teachers also used grant funds to expand digital reading access through MyOn at Pineview Elementary, take Bond Elementary students on hands-on STEM field trips, and equip a student-led enterprise for the Leon County Transition program.

Beyond the 20 classrooms that received funding directly, the projects extended their reach across elementary, middle, high school, and exceptional student education programs districtwide, with teachers reporting strong outcomes in literacy, career readiness, and student behavior.

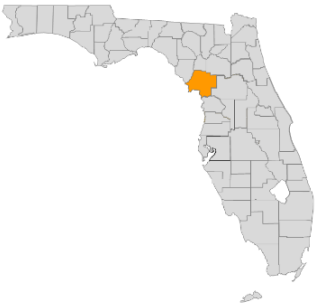
Results

- 18 ESE students in Lincoln High School's Trojan Brew program grew financial literacy proficiency from 53.9% to 88.6%.
- 100% of Agriculture Associate testing participants at Woodville K-8 achieved industry certification.
- Canopy Oaks Elementary saw a 78% drop in behavioral referrals, from 50 to 11, after opening its Sensory Regulation Space,
- STEAM Enrichment Library helped 100% of Kindergartners and 2nd graders, and 97% of 1st graders, score 80% or higher on a post-skills test.
- 59 students took part in the LCS Transition program's 3D printing enterprise project, with 95% demonstrating mastery against an 80% goal.

Levy County Schools Foundation

The Transforming Transit Rolls On....

Total Teacher Impact: 89
Total Student Impact: 2,831



Faces light up the moment students step aboard the LCSF Book Bus and realize the brand new book in their hands is theirs to keep. For many rural, low-income students in Levy County, it is a rare chance to choose something of their own off a shelf, an experience third grade teacher Tara Bailey calls one of the highlights of the school year. “The Book Bus doesn’t just deliver books,” Bailey said. “It delivers joy, dignity, and opportunity for every child who walks through its doors.”

Students in rural Levy County often have limited access to books at home, and teachers have frequently covered the cost of classroom supplies out of their own pockets. The Levy County Schools Foundation focused its Literacy and Teaching Quality priorities on closing both gaps, putting books directly into students' hands and easing the financial burden on educators.

The Book Bus distributed 2,831 books directly to students and anchored five school-wide literacy events across the district. Through the Foundation's free teacher resource store, educators filled 89 supply requests and pulled 7,843 classroom supply items at no cost. The store put everyday essentials within easy reach, freeing teachers from paying for classroom materials out of their own pockets.

Together, the Book Bus and teacher resource store reached students and educators across Levy County's rural schools, strengthening reading habits at home and easing the load on classroom teachers. The results below reflect gains in both access and literacy outcomes.

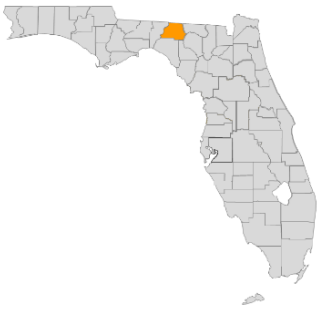
Results

- 100% of enrolled students received a book from the Book Bus, holding steady at the program's baseline goal.
- Teacher supply requests rose 25%, up from a 75% baseline.
- 5th grade students tested posted a 3% increase in grade-level reading on FAST scores.
- 5 school-wide literacy events held across the district.

Madison County Foundation for Excellence in Education

Supporting Literacy Through STEM Education

Total Teacher Impact: 28
Total Student Impact: 923



A student walked into class expecting the same coding assignments as always, lines of text on a screen, the kind of programming language Amazon uses in its warehouses. But this year, the code did not stay on the screen. A grant-funded 3-D printer let the class turn what they typed into objects they could hold, use, and even sell to fund next year's projects. "I didn't know science was so cool! I love it!" one student said.

That kind of hands-on discovery was exactly what the Madison County Foundation for Excellence in Education set out to fund. Rather than a one-size curriculum, its mini-grants gave classroom teachers room to design their own lessons in reading, math, and science, built around tools students could touch and build with rather than just read about. Literacy and STEM were the two priorities the foundation asked teachers to address.

Across the district, those mini-grants funded a wide range of hands-on projects shaped by individual teachers. Alongside the 3D printing and coding work, students blended math and art to cut three-dimensional pieces of their own design, while other grants stocked classrooms with manipulatives and classroom libraries. One group of students capped their project with a field trip to tour a college campus and meet the professors in its CTE program as a means to sustain goals of graduation and success after high school.

The mini-grants reached students across grade levels throughout the district, translating into measurable literacy and science gains on statewide assessments this year.

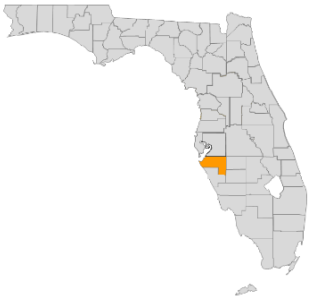
Results

- Districtwide literacy proficiency (grades PK-8) increased 3% on FAST assessments.
- Science proficiency rose from 30% to 40% districtwide.
- Students in the 3-D printing STEM class averaged a 10% learning gain in science and 5% in math.
- 70% of students in that STEM class reached proficiency in science.
- Madison County Central School, which had absorbed students from a persistently low-performing school, came within one point of earning a B grade, its best testing results in years.

Manatee Education Foundation

Expanding PreK-12 Community Impact

Total Teacher Impact: 150
Total Student Impact: 8,855



After one visit to the Soar Lab, a parent realized something for the first time: she was her child's first and most important teacher. She left with concrete ways to build vocabulary and early math into everyday moments at home, and learned that Soar in 4 is the county's early learning initiative that prepares children ages 0 to 7 for kindergarten. For years, the program existed only as a pop-up, a folding table at a community event one week, a Wednesday evening at the Bishop Museum the next, so families never had a place to come back to. That changed in September 2025, when the Soar Lab opened its doors as a permanent home just minutes from five Title I schools.

Manatee County has faced two urgent, connected needs: getting young children ready to read and getting high school seniors across the finish line to graduation, in a county where more than 41 percent of families are ALICE, asset limited, income constrained, and employed. Coordinating both efforts required more capacity than any single partner could carry alone.

The grant funded both priorities at once. On the literacy side, the position helped move Soar in 4 from occasional pop-up events into the permanent Soar Lab, expanded programming into evenings, weekends, and summer, launched a Soar Advocacy Team of parent representatives from each surrounding Title I school, and connected every School District of Manatee County early-learning classroom to district-funded field trips at the Lab. On the graduation side, the same position supported the relaunch of REACH Manatee, the county's Local College Access Network, hiring a new community liaison and reconvening a Vision Council built around five partners: the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, Manatee Community Foundation, Manatee Education Foundation, Unidos Now, and the school district.

Together, these efforts built a connected PreK through 12 pipeline: a lasting early-literacy home for the county's youngest learners and a reenergized network steering seniors toward graduation and beyond.

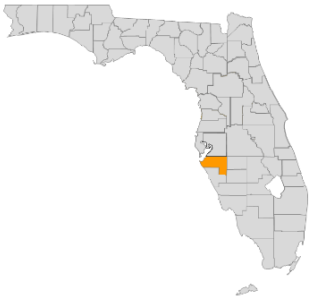
Results

- 100% of families on Soar Lab field trips reported learning new strategies to support learning at home.
- Star Early Literacy average proficiency at nearby Title I schools increased from 19.2% of students meeting readiness benchmarks in Fall of 2024 to 25.2% in the Fall of 2025, an increase of 6% combined for Daughtrey, Abel, Oneco, Samoset, and Bayshore Elementaries.
- FAFSA completion rose from 37.5% to 44.3%, a 6.2 percentage-point increase, among Manatee County seniors.
- Overall graduation rate jumped from 85.7% to 90% over the past school year in the School District of Manatee County, the highest graduation rate of all time!

Manatee Education Foundation

Teacher IMPACT Grants 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 787
Total Student Impact: 37,872



One student in an eighth-grade social studies class had struggled all year to stay engaged and put ideas into writing. During an Oculus VR lesson, something shifted: the student asked questions, made sharp observations, and for the first time turned in a detailed written reflection connecting historical context, cause and effect, and personal meaning. The student then spoke up in class discussion with a confidence the teacher had never seen before. “This experience highlighted how immersive technology can remove barriers to learning and allow students to demonstrate knowledge in meaningful, authentic ways,” said Mrs. Jillian Cucci, whose class at Mona Jain Middle School experienced the lesson.

The Manatee Education Foundation's Teacher IMPACT Grant Program exists to put competitive classroom grants directly into the hands of teachers across Manatee County, empowering them to design and implement innovative, standards-aligned projects that improve student achievement, engagement, and well-being. Grant-funded projects were built to reach every level from elementary through high school and address needs spanning literacy, STEM, career and technical education, and student resiliency.

The Foundation funded the large majority of applications received this cycle, extending its reach to more schools than the year before. Grants funded classroom supplies, instructional technology, STEM materials, literacy resources, and student enrichment experiences across the district. For the first time, funding also reached resiliency, and classrooms put it to use in daily Community Circle instruction, STEM bridge-building challenges, immersive Oculus VR field trips, and college-readiness programming for high schoolers. Several grants also helped stock brand-new or newly renovated classrooms with libraries, STEM stations, and essential instructional materials.

For many teachers, the grant changed how sustainable and effective they felt in the classroom, and the projects it funded reached learners at every grade level across the district.

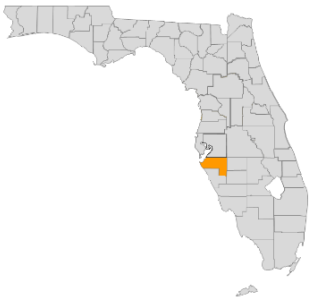
Results

- 95% of teachers said the grant made teaching feel more sustainable.
- 96% reported feeling more effective as educators as a result of the grant.
- 7,291 students with special needs and 14,184 low-performing students reached.
- 93% of teachers said they are likely to continue their project beyond this grant year.

Manatee Education Foundation

Increasing Student Achievement & Community Engagement

Total Teacher Impact: 700
Total Student Impact: 35,000



Foster care students, some of the most vulnerable in Manatee County's schools, had to navigate school transitions, placement changes, and academic challenges without a single, consistent advocate in their corner. That changed when the Director of Educational Programs helped establish a Foster Care Liaison position built entirely around helping these students thrive. In April 2026, that work culminated in a Foster Care Summit that brought together more than 70 people from 25 foster care agencies across the county and state, all asking the same question: how do we help these children succeed in school and in life?

Manatee County's students move through a long and varied journey, from early literacy and classroom instruction to resiliency, health, graduation, and family engagement, and the Manatee Education Foundation's growing portfolio of programs needed a single, accountable leader to keep all of it moving in the same direction. The Director of Educational Programs position exists to provide exactly that oversight, ensuring the Foundation's initiatives are implemented with fidelity and continuously improved across the school district.

Two new grant programs launched this year: the FPL emPOWERing STEM Educators Grant, which brings teachers together to strengthen STEM instruction, and the Able Trust Futures in Focus Grant, which gives ESE students hands-on career exploration. The Director also oversaw the creation and hiring of the new Foster Care Liaison position and organized the countywide Foster Care Summit, convening agencies from across Manatee County and the state.

Together, these changes positioned the Foundation as a more strategic partner to the school district, laying the groundwork for sustained impact on student achievement and community engagement in the years ahead.

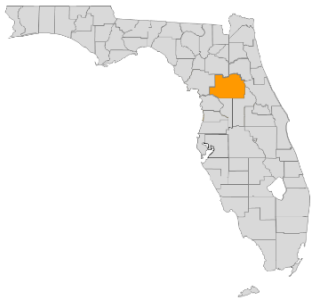
Results

- FPL emPOWERing STEM Educators Grant launched to strengthen collaborative STEM instruction with 9 teacher leads impacting more than 1,000 STEM students.
- Able Trust Futures in Focus Grant launched to give ESE students career exploration opportunities.
- A new Foster Care Liaison position created and filled to directly support foster care students districtwide.
- Baseline set for year-end comparison: Grade 3 reading proficiency and overall reading achievement was 52% and rose to 56%.

Public Education Foundation of Marion County

Grants for Great Ideas

Total Teacher Impact: 419
Total Student Impact: 5,792



For one ESOL student in Marion County, addition problems weren't hard because of the math, they were hard because of the words. "Equal" was just a sound she couldn't picture, no matter how many times a teacher explained it. Then a set of blocks and a tipping scale changed that. Using the Monster Math Balance Scale, she watched numbers physically balance in front of her, and something that had only ever been abstract suddenly made sense. She started raising her hand more. She started solving problems on her own.

Across Marion County, teachers were looking for ways to reach students, including those in Exceptional Student Education programs and other at-risk learners, who struggled with traditional instruction or with managing behavior and sensory needs in the classroom. The Grants for Great Ideas program set out to meet that need directly, putting hands-on tools and structured supports in the hands of teachers across grade levels.

Across dozens of schools, the grant funded a wide range of hands-on classroom initiatives. Sensory rooms, calm-down spaces, and SEL resources gave students, especially those in Exceptional Student Education programs, structured ways to manage emotions and reduce behavioral referrals, while PE stations, STEM Night activities, and outdoor learning stations made academic content more interactive. Vocational programs, including a student-run snack cart, a PAES lab, and culinary classes, let students practice real workplace skills, and media production equipment such as DSLR cameras and laptops gave them access to industry standard tools. Teachers also received professional development in visible thinking strategies to help students engage more deeply with their own learning.

The initiatives reached students in nearly every school across the district, from early childhood through high school, and produced consistent gains in academic performance, behavior, and engagement among general education, ESE, and at-risk learners alike.

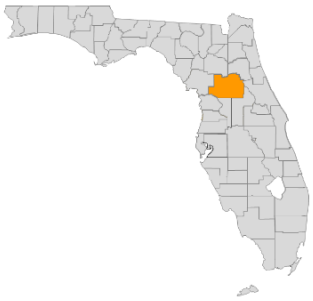
Results

- 4th grade math proficiency (Level 3 or higher) rose from 13% to 44%, while Level 1 fell from 63% to 28%.
- 44 teachers completed professional development in visible thinking strategies, and VPK students showed literacy gains on the FAST Star Early Literacy assessment.
- Media production equipment supported more than 120 students and 40+ competition participants.

Public Education Foundation of Marion County

Tools 4 Teaching

Total Teacher Impact: 817



Being an inclusion teacher came with plenty of challenges, but paying for classroom supplies wasn't supposed to be one of them, at least not until Tools 4 Teaching stepped in. Free to stop worrying about covering costs out of pocket, one Marion County teacher could finally focus on building lessons instead of budgeting for them. The impact of that shift reached further than her classroom. In February, a parent pulled her aside and said, "As someone struggling financially, I'm grateful my child can have the same full learning experience without missing out because of our circumstances." It was a small comment that captured exactly what the program was built to do.

Marion County teachers routinely spent their own money to stock classrooms with the supplies their students needed, from basic materials to learning manipulatives. The Public Education Foundation of Marion County created Tools 4 Teaching to close that gap, giving every full-time teacher in the district a place to shop for free classroom supplies each month.

Each month, teachers visited the Tools 4 Teaching store to select materials suited to their classrooms, from basic school supplies and educational manipulatives to art materials and organizational tools, all tracked through a software system that monitored inventory and participation. Community donations and school partnerships helped keep the store stocked, reinforcing a shared commitment to supporting public education. The result was a steady, no-cost supply source that let teachers spend their energy on planning lessons rather than budgeting for pencils and folders.

Teacher surveys showed the program had become an essential part of how Marion County classrooms operate, easing financial strain and reshaping how teachers plan for their students.

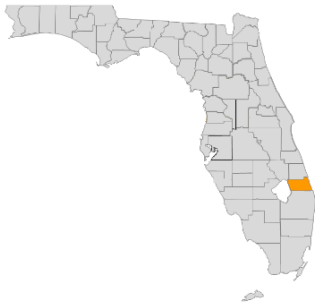
Results

- 817 teachers completed 3,387 shopping visits at the Tools 4 Teaching store.
- Teachers received more than $500,000 in free classroom supplies, up from $161,245.96 the year before.
- 99% of teachers said the program was very or critically important to meeting student needs.
- 92.2% said it let them focus on student learning rather than purchasing supplies.
- 90.2% reported an increase in the variety and scope of student projects.
- 98% said the program helped create a more equitable learning environment.

Education Foundation of Martin County

Innovative Project Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 105
Total Student Impact: 2,018



"Before this trip, I didn't think college was something I could do." Those words came from a student who, like many of his classmates, had never set foot on a college campus until an AVID field trip funded through an Innovative Project Grant. Talking with current college students and learning about scholarships changed how he saw his own future, and he wasn't alone: 90 percent of participating students said the visit left them more motivated to pursue college, and 94 percent said they could now picture themselves on a campus.

Martin County teachers regularly see opportunities to deepen student learning through innovation, hands-on experience, technology, literacy support, career exploration, and science enrichment, but traditional school budgets do not stretch to cover them all. The Innovative Project Grant Program exists to close that gap, putting funding directly behind teacher-led ideas that would not otherwise be possible.

This year, the program funded 17 teacher-led projects across Martin County schools, ranging from virtual reality experiences and STEM activities to literacy interventions, environmental education, student news production, and career-readiness trips like the AVID campus visit. Teachers used the funding to purchase instructional materials, classroom technology, and media equipment, and to organize field experiences and science activities tailored to their students. Each project was tracked through participation counts, attendance records, assessment results, and final reports from grant recipients.

Across the 17 funded projects, students and teachers reported gains in academic performance, confidence, and classroom engagement, with measurable improvement showing up in multiple grade levels and subject areas.

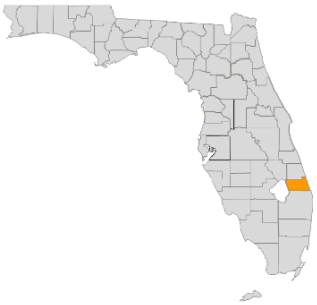
Results

- 17 teacher-led projects reached 2,018 students and 105 teachers across the district.
- Second grade reading proficiency rose from 49% to 67% for students in grant-funded classrooms.
- Second grade math proficiency rose from 49% to 72%.
- Fifth grade science proficiency rose from 68% to 81%.
- Life Science proficiency rose from 48% to 72%.
- Student understanding of college admissions rose from 58% to 87%.

Education Foundation of Martin County

Book Vending Machine Initiative

Total Teacher Impact: 467
Total Student Impact: 6,436



Dr. McCoy's third graders started the year reading as few as seven words correctly per minute. Tracking their growth with easyCBM assessments from December through March, she watched every one of them improve. The reason: a new book from the Book Vending Machine, waiting for anyone who met their reading goal, was enough to turn practice into something students wanted to do rather than something they had to do, and her class alone read 446,689 words through the Accelerated Reader program along the way.

For many students, reading can feel like an assignment rather than something to look forward to. The Education Foundation of Martin County's *For the Love of Reading Book Vending Machine Initiative* set out to change that relationship, turning reading into an experience students wanted to pursue on their own.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the initiative reached 21 campuses, including every traditional elementary, middle, and high school along with The Hope Center for Autism. Students earned gold tokens for meeting reading goals and exchanged them for books of their choice from school-based vending machines, building personal home libraries out of titles that matched their own interests. In total, 20,687 books were distributed to students through the program.

District-wide, that momentum showed up in reading proficiency scores and educator feedback across nearly every grade level the initiative served.

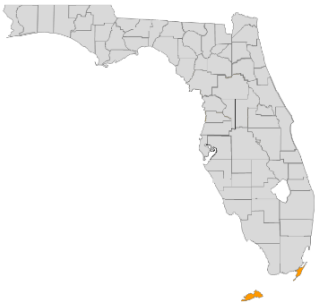
Results

- 178,835+ books read and 763,100,370+ words read by elementary students in 2025-26.
- 95% of educators reported increased student engagement and reading time.
- Seventh grade FAST Reading proficiency rose from 52% to 62%, the largest gain in the district.
- Fifth grade proficiency rose from 55% to 61%.
- Third grade proficiency rose from 56% to 59%, and fourth grade from 54% to 57%.
- Tenth grade proficiency rose from 57% to 61%, and eighth grade from 50% to 52%.

Monroe County Education Foundation

Keys to College and Career

Total Student Impact: 399



One graduating senior in the program had already lived through what most students only fear: homelessness, a mother's incarceration, and a GED that once looked like his fastest way out. He had dropped out of high school as a sophomore, believing it was the quickest path to independence and stability. When his best friend's family took him in and gave him a safe, stable home, he returned to school and enrolled in Keys to College and Career, determined to prove he was capable of more. He graduated with a 4.0 GPA and is headed to Valencia College to pursue biology on a pre-med track.

Across Monroe County, many students in the program are navigating economic hardship, multigenerational or single-parent households, and English language learning, often alongside academic challenges. Many are on track to become the first in their families to attend college, yet have had little exposure to the college preparation process or the resources it takes to navigate it. The Monroe County Education Foundation created Keys to College and Career to guide these students toward graduation and give them a clear, supported path to college and career.

The project delivered 19 college and career readiness workshops across middle and high school and organized four campus tours to Florida universities, where students met current undergraduates to learn firsthand about the transition to college life. Sophomores received online career assessment tools, while rising seniors worked through a college admission handbook alongside a dedicated workshop walking them through every step of the application process. Throughout the year, students met one-on-one with coaches, including targeted support for those working toward a passing score on the ELA FAST exam. All 69 seniors in the program completed their coursework and mentorship in May.

That support translated into real academic momentum for participants and a clear, direct path from high school into higher education for this year's graduating class.

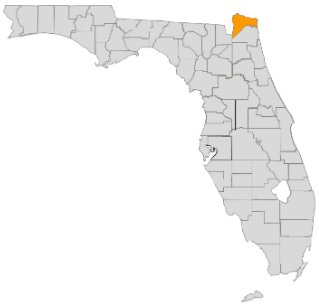
Results

- ELA FAST pass rates among 9th and 10th grade participants rose 18%, from 58 of 102 students to 106 of 141.
- Participant GPA held nearly steady at 3.72, down just 0.03 from 3.75, even as more students took on rigorous honors and AP coursework.
- 60% of graduating seniors enrolled directly in a four-year university, and 40% enrolled in a state college.
- 100% of graduating seniors earned a high school diploma and moved forward on a postsecondary pathway.

Nassau Education Foundation

Leveraging Excellence District Wide Classroom Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 99
Total Student Impact: 12,000



One fifth grader dreaded coding class. Every time his robot's programmed path veered off course, he assumed he had failed and shut down completely. Instead of handing him the answer, his teacher asked him to investigate the variables: angle, speed, timing, one at a time. Slowly, something clicked. He stopped saying “I’m bad at this” and started asking “what went wrong?” By year’s end, he was solving complex challenges on his own, and helping classmates work through their own glitches too.

Nassau Education Foundation set out to reach every school in the district, ensuring every campus had access to funding that let teachers strengthen the areas where they saw the greatest need, from building stronger readers to sharpening students' technical and scientific skills. The Leveraging Excellence program saw expectation of measurable gains in language, math, science, behavior, and the arts across 95 classroom grants. .

The funding placed new resources in the hands of 99 teachers, introduced two new software programs into classrooms, and supported six teachers in attending professional development to sharpen their practice. Grant recipients used the funding to design projects spanning language arts, math, science, behavior support, and the arts.

The grants translated into measurable academic and behavioral gains across subject areas districtwide, reaching students from kindergarten through high school.

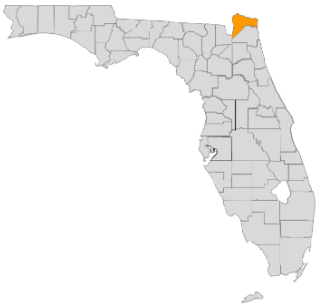
Results:

- ELA proficiency climbed from 20% to 84%.
- FAST Reading proficiency increased from 58.4% to 79.2%.
- Coding proficiency jumped from 0% to 100% (from 0 to 20 students).
- Aggressive behavior referrals decreased from 20% to 15%.

Nassau Education Foundation

Shark Tank Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 25
Total Student Impact: 2,655



On Resiliency Day at Yulee High School, one student, Michael, was moved to tears by the motivational speaker's message. When asked why, he opened up: his family had struggled financially for years. In that moment, something shifted. For the first time, he could picture a future different from the one he'd always known, and start to believe he could be the one to change it.

Modeled after the popular television series, Nassau Education Foundation's Shark Tank Grants take the traditional teacher grant to a larger scale, inviting educators to pitch ambitious ideas designed to reach more students and deliver greater impact. Two $10,000 projects, Resiliency Day at Yulee High School and the Reef Ball initiative, were selected as standout proposals with the potential to generate a strong return on investment for students through broad reach, meaningful learning experiences, and measurable outcomes.

At Yulee High School, Resiliency Day brought in a motivational speaker to reach 243 students and sent each of them home with a resiliency kit. Alongside it, the Reef Ball project engaged 272 students in constructing five reef balls (artificial reef structures for marine life), connecting hands-on marine restoration work to Florida Science Standards on ecosystem change, biodiversity loss, and human environmental impact. Together, the two initiatives paired emotional preparation with applied environmental science.

Early results were knowledge based, with the foundation expecting deeper behavioral change to show up in data collected over the coming school year.

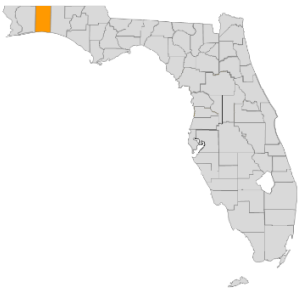
Results

- Resiliency knowledge rose from 91% to 100% among the 243 students surveyed.
- Students able to name three coping strategies increased from 83% to 99%.
- For the Reef project, confidence in constructing reef balls rose 2 points on a 5-point scale.
- Agreement that "the environment is too far gone to help" fell by 1.7 points.
- Belief that hands-on environmental stewardship makes a positive impact rose 35%.
- Ability to interpret ecological data and apply evidence-based reasoning increased 35%.

Okaloosa Public Schools Foundation

Student Success and Readiness Initiative

Total Teacher Impact: 40
Total Student Impact: 2,000



At Pryor Middle School, every student in Ms. Kickhoefer's math class passed the End-of-Course exam, a perfect pass rate she credits directly to the End Of Course (EOC) Bootcamp. The bootcamp let her target specific skill gaps in the weeks before testing, and her students' growth outpaced the district average right alongside their scores. “Not only did all students pass, but their academic growth also exceeded district averages,” she said.

The Student Success and Readiness Initiative was built to accelerate academic recovery and expand career exploration across Okaloosa County, with an eye toward strengthening postsecondary readiness for students preparing for life after graduation. Rooted in the district's Career/Technical Education, Struggling Student and STEM priorities, the initiative builds on programs funded in previous years while introducing two new efforts aimed at critical student needs.

The EOC Bootcamp paired targeted math and ELA instruction with hands-on practice of essential skills, letting students apply concepts in meaningful, concrete ways. Students received individualized, one-on-one support in the specific areas where they needed it most, and worked through practice test questions on the same technology-based platforms used for state assessments.

The bootcamp's blend of targeted instruction and hands-on practice produced measurable gains in both math and English Language Arts achievement and growth at Pryor Middle School.

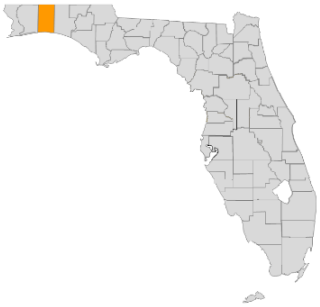
Results

- Advanced 7th grade math students achieved 100% proficiency, exceeding district averages.
- One advanced math subgroup posted 100% growth, with every student meeting or exceeding their target.
- A second advanced group achieved 96% growth, well above the district average.
- ELA proficiency rose 8 percentage points over the previous year.
- The school exceeded district averages for student growth across all ELA categories.

Okaloosa Public Schools Foundation

Instructional Impact: Tools, Training, and Transformation

Total Teacher Impact: 50
Total Student Impact: 250



For teacher Tia Mitchell, this is the second year a mini grant has let her fill her classroom with books, and she sees the impact of it every day. Students who once resisted reading now light up talking about the characters and stories they've found, often falling back in love with reading altogether. “So many students just need to find ‘the story’ that they like,” she said. “That is what is important to me: lifelong learners.”

Okaloosa County School District set out to strengthen instruction on three fronts:

- giving teachers direct access to funding for classroom tools,
- aligning science instruction to state standards,
- and helping newly hired teachers start strong.

The effort reflects the district's ongoing focus on STEM education and teaching quality, including support for teachers stepping into a classroom for the first time under a Temporary Certificate.

Through classroom mini-grants, teachers secured funding for tools and materials with direct student impact, including one grant that built a schoolwide SOAR ticket incentive system, classroom sensory supports, and staff training in behavioral regulation strategies. Grade 5 and 8 science teachers used a separate track of funding to build hands-on review activities aligned to state standards and FAST benchmarks. Newly hired Temporary Certificate teachers each received a copy of The First Days of School by Harry and Rosemary Wong to support classroom management and instructional routines during their first weeks.

The mini-grant-funded SOAR ticket program drove clear gains in student behavior and engagement, while academic proficiency held steady across math and ELA at multiple grade bands.

Results

- Office discipline referrals dropped from 1,255 to 930, a 25.9% reduction, exceeding the project's 20% goal.
- SOAR ticket distribution logs showed consistent, schoolwide implementation throughout the year.
- Grades 3-8 Math proficiency reached 69%; K-2 Math reached 68%.
- Grades 3-8 ELA proficiency reached 74%; K-2 ELA reached 68%.
- Increased participation in incentive and recognition activities reflected improved student engagement and school climate.

The Education Foundation of Okeechobee

Teacher Innovation Grants

Total Teacher Impacted: 45
Total Student Impacted: 1,200



“Seeing that spark of confidence, where a student goes from 'I can't' to 'Why not?,' has been the ultimate highlight of my year.” That was how one teacher described what happened when a Classroom Mini-Grant turned a theater production into a hands-on lesson in confidence. Students who once hesitated to participate learned set construction, painting, lighting, and stage management, and found themselves stepping into leadership roles backstage they never expected to hold.

The Education Foundation of Okeechobee created the Classroom Mini-Grant Program to move students from watching to doing, turning literacy, STEM, career exploration, and creative subjects into hands on experiences that traditional classroom budgets could not otherwise support. The program was designed to strengthen both student learning and teaching quality across Okeechobee County Schools by putting funding directly into teachers' hands.

Forty-five teachers designed and led 58 classroom projects that reached more than 1,200 students from kindergarten through 10th grade, covering subjects from agriculture and music to engineering and technology. Students tested engineering designs, published their own books, performed on stage, ran science experiments, and built new technology skills through direct, hands-on work. Each project was tracked through formal reporting so the Foundation could measure what students gained.

Beyond the classroom, the program's impact carried over into how teachers felt about their work and their commitment to staying in Okeechobee County, alongside measurable learning gains captured in the Foundation's final reporting.

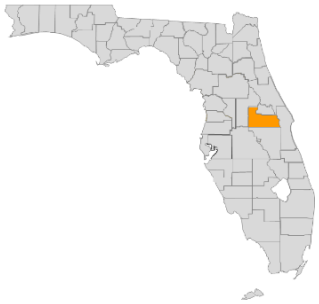
Results

- 31 of 45 final reports (69%) documented measurable student growth using pre/post assessments or other baseline to outcome measures.
- 98% of participating teachers said they want to continue teaching in Okeechobee County.
- 96% of teachers agreed they have the tools and resources needed to be effective educators.
- Teachers reported increased student confidence, greater willingness to take academic risks, and stronger classroom collaboration.
- Families reported pride as they watched their children participate and succeed in grant funded projects.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

Teacher Impact Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 40
Total Student Impact: 9,000



A teacher watched a student who never spoke in class find his voice in the middle of a STEM garden. The student, who was nonverbal and often struggled to engage in group activities, had spent weeks helping classmates plant and observe the garden's progress. Then, during one group activity, he spoke aloud for the first time, a moment his teacher still describes as a breakthrough that went far beyond the day's lesson plan.

The Teacher Impact Grants program put funding directly in the hands of K-12 educators to design hands-on, project-based STEM lessons, from renewable energy to robotics to applied mathematics. It exists to let teachers bring real-world STEM applications into their classrooms rather than relying on traditional instruction alone.

Forty classroom grants were awarded to K-12 educators through a competitive application and review process, funding the materials, equipment, and technology behind projects like solar-powered race cars, aquaculture systems, robotics challenges, and advanced lab experiments. The grants reached roughly 9,000 students and 40 teachers across elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, and pre- and post-assessments showed students gaining real ground in STEM knowledge and proficiency as a result. Teachers documented implementation through mid-year and final reports, itemized budgets, and classroom observations.

Students moved from passive learners to active problem-solvers, and teachers reported feeling more equipped and confident delivering hands-on, experiential lessons.

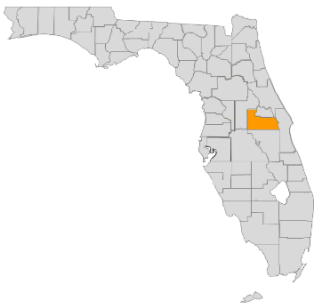
Results

- A representative STEM project's assessment scores rose from 55% to 95%, a 40 percentage point gain in mastery.
- 40 classroom grants funded materials, equipment, and technology for K-12 STEM instruction.
- Approximately 9,000 students and 40 teachers were reached through funded classroom projects.
- Of the 40 participating teachers, 13 completed end-of-year surveys reporting increased confidence in experiential instruction.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

Junior Achievement - 3DE Schools

Total Teacher Impact: 26
Total Student Impact: 1,981



When Keilla first enrolled in 3DE at Oak Ridge High School as a ninth grader, she wasn't sure the program was for her. "I was really quiet, and I didn't like presenting to a group," she said. By working through real-world business case challenges alongside industry professionals, her confidence grew, and by senior year she was pitching complex ideas with poise and preparing to pursue a career in healthcare.

The 3DE model was built to connect academic content to career pathways, integrating real-world business case challenges and direct engagement with industry professionals into the high school experience across seven Orange County schools.

Students worked with more than a dozen business partners on case challenges, field experiences, and senior capstone consultancies, supported by roughly 300 community volunteers serving as coaches and judges. The model was delivered across 58 classes, giving students sustained, structured exposure to workplace expectations alongside their coursework. Students who completed the program also earned pre-employment and applied career credentials along the way.

Participating seniors graduated at a notably higher rate than their non-3DE peers, alongside gains in attendance, communication, and postsecondary readiness.

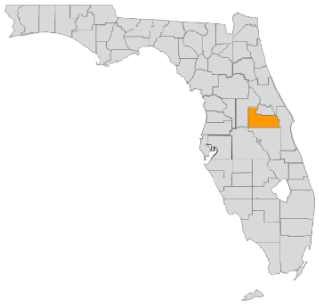
Results

- All 200 eligible 3DE seniors graduated (100%), a 4-percentage point increase over the 96% non-3DE peer baseline.
- 179 students earned pre-employment or applied career credentials.
- Students logged approximately 17,400 instructional hours of 3DE curriculum across seven high schools.
- 3DE students posted higher attendance and postsecondary enrollment rates than their non-3DE peers.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

City Year

Total Teacher Impact: 3
Total Student Impact: 80



Showing up was the hard part. One Walker Middle School student often felt disconnected from school and unsure he could succeed, and it showed in his attendance. Daily encouragement and one-on-one check-ins from a City Year team member began to change that, and by year's end he was attending consistently, speaking up in class, and building real relationships with peers and adults. "Every day is a chance to make a positive impact on a student's life, and seeing that growth over time is what makes this work so meaningful," his team member said.

The Whole School, Whole Child model placed trained student success coaches inside Walker Middle School to work directly with students identified through early warning indicators for attendance, behavior, and course performance.

Coaches delivered daily, targeted interventions, including one-on-one mentoring, small-group tutoring, and attendance coaching, alongside broader schoolwide engagement programming. In total, 232 students received direct support, with 80 identified for sustained, focus-list interventions. The added classroom presence also freed teachers to focus more on instruction while collaborating with coaches on student needs.

Students on the focus list showed measurable movement in attendance, English language arts, and math over the course of the year.

Results

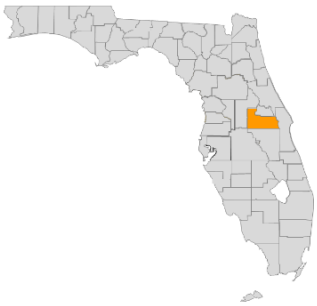
- 23 of 80 focus list students (29%) improved or maintained their attendance.
- 30 of 80 (37%) improved their ELA grades.
- 51 of 80 (64%) improved their math grades.
- 232 students received direct support, including 80 receiving sustained, targeted intervention.
- Coaches delivered more than 4,000 hours of intervention time and over 12,600 individual student interventions.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

FOUNDATION FOR ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Investing in Success

Read2Succeed

Total Teacher Impact: 135
Total Student Impact: 4,478



At the start of the year, one first grader dreaded reading time, hesitant to join in and quick to give up. Through consistent small-group sessions focused on phonics, vocabulary, and fluency, he began sounding out words and reading simple texts on his own. By spring, he was volunteering to read aloud in class and sharing books with classmates and family.

Read2Succeed was built to reach K-5 students performing below benchmark in reading, particularly in grades K-3, with structured literacy support aligned to district reading standards.

The program paired paid tutors with more than 160 volunteer tutors to deliver small-group and individualized instruction built around SIPPS foundational reading, first-grade vocabulary development, and second-grade fluency and comprehension work. Students were identified using FAST and DIBELS assessment data, and 135 teachers partnered with tutors across participating schools to keep instruction aligned with classroom goals. Progress was tracked continuously through district assessments and program-based monitoring tools.

Participating students posted substantial gains in reading proficiency, alongside noticeable improvements in confidence and classroom participation.

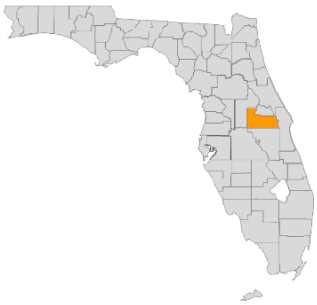
Results

- Tutors delivered 154,048 instructional sessions over the school year.
- Students scoring at or above Level 3 on FAST assessments rose from 4% (113 of 2,905 students) to 33% (947 of 2,905), a 29 percentage point gain.
- 65.8% of students met or exceeded the state's median reading growth benchmark.
- More than 160 volunteer tutors supported instruction alongside paid staff.
- 135 teachers partnered with the program across participating schools.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

EcoClub

Total Teacher Impact: 10
Total Student Impact: 200



Dirt on his hands and a harvest basket at his feet, one EcoClub student who once hung back from science activities found himself leading the very group discussions he used to avoid. Weekly sessions tending hydroponic gardens and pollinator habitats slowly built his confidence, and the Farm to Table initiative, where he grew, harvested, and cooked produce he had raised himself, became the turning point that changed how he saw science.

EcoClub was designed to widen access to hands-on STEM and environmental learning for elementary students in underserved communities across three campuses.

Students in grades 3 through 5 took part in weekly sessions on hydroponic gardening, pollinator habitats, wildlife care, and climate-focused projects, including the Farm to Table initiative connecting garden work to nutrition and cooking. Community partnerships with organizations including UF IFAS Extension, SeaWorld Orlando, and the Everglades Foundation added field-based environmental learning and mentorship. Beyond the hands-on programming, students posted strong gains in reading and math proficiency, outperforming school averages in ELA, math, and science.

That growth in confidence carried well beyond the garden, as more EcoClub students stepped into leadership roles within their classrooms and school communities.

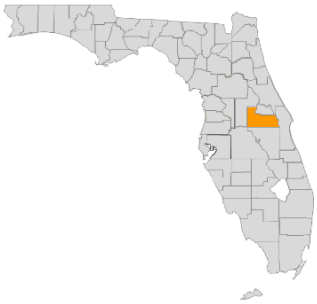
Results

- Direct participation more than doubled, from 87 students the prior year to over 200 in 2025-2026.
- Grade 3 ELA proficiency rose from 30% to 70%.
- Grade 4 math proficiency rose from 10% to 79%.
- Schoolwide sustainability initiatives reached more than 2,100 additional students and 100 educators.
- Students partnered with UF IFAS Extension, SeaWorld Orlando, and the Everglades Foundation for field-based learning.

Foundation for Orange County Public Schools

CHILL Program

Total Student Impact: 203



A student who once struggled to find the words to describe what he was feeling is now preparing college applications and mapping out a path to graduation. He first walked through CHILL's doors in middle school, unsure how to manage emotions that made even an ordinary school day feel unmanageable. Years of steady counseling helped him build the coping skills and confidence he needed, turning a rocky start into a story of the kind of growth that could not be rushed.

For 27 years, CHILL has served as a school-based resource for early intervention and family engagement, supporting students in grades 4 through 12 across five Orange County schools. **CHILL (Community Health and Intervention in Life's Lessons) Program** is a school-based mental health initiative that provides free counseling services to students in grades 6–12 across Orange County Public Schools.

Counselors delivered individual, peer, and group counseling sessions alongside crisis intervention services, including safety contracts and welfare checks, and connected students and families to community-based resources. The program also hosted educational sessions for parents and families focused on emotional wellness and support services. Counselors tracked engagement through referral records, service logs, and documented interventions across the school year.

Students who came through CHILL showed real movement toward stronger coping skills, communication, and resilience, both in school and at home.

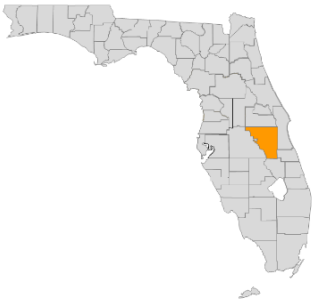
Results

- 203 student referrals were received, and 156 students were admitted for services.
- Counselors delivered 2,256 individual, peer, and group counseling sessions.
- 127 crisis interventions were conducted, including safety contracts and welfare checks.
- Four educational sessions were held for parents and families.

Education Foundation for Osceola County

Supplies for Success: A Gift for Teaching

Total Teacher Impact: 4,000
Total Student Impact: 70,890



"I really appreciate having this free teacher store here in Osceola County. It makes it so much easier to know that I can get some extra supplies and materials every month that are much needed in the classroom," says Raquel Capelozza, a teacher at Flora Ridge Elementary. Her relief was shared by teachers across the district, who no longer had to choose between spending their own money on supplies or stretching what little they had to make a lesson work.

More than three quarters of Osceola County students come from low to moderate income households, and many families struggle to provide even basic school supplies. Teachers felt that gap directly, often filling it themselves, spending their own time and money to keep classrooms stocked and functional.

A Gift for Teaching tackled the shortage from several directions at once. A free teacher supply store let educators shop for what they needed each month, the Pencil Boy Express delivered supply boxes directly to classrooms, and large scale distributions brought materials straight to schools. An annual School Supply Drive, a Payroll Deduction Campaign, and community fundraising kept donated materials and funding flowing throughout the year, and altogether the program moved more than $2.7 million in supplies through the district, including 3,200 individual supply boxes and over $141,000 delivered through large scale distributions.

Freed from constantly patching supply gaps, teachers across Osceola County redirected their time and energy toward instruction, and students noticed the difference.

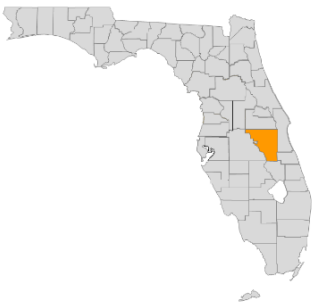
Results

- 93% of teachers reported being better able to meet students' educational needs by year's end.
- 96% said the program helped create a more equitable learning environment.
- 80% observed increased student interest in learning and greater student self-esteem.
- Teachers reported spending less time addressing supply shortages and more time on instruction and student engagement.
- Community engagement grew through the annual School Supply Drive and Payroll Deduction Campaign, bringing in new donors and businesses.

Education Foundation for Osceola County

Readers to Leaders: Bookmark Buddies

Total Student Impact: 200



"The young men and women that came every week to read with their third-grade buddies were so positive, hardworking, and dedicated," staff at Pleasant Hill Elementary said, describing the Osceola High School Air Force JROTC cadets who volunteered as reading mentors through Bookmark Buddies. The relationships built over weekly sessions helped a group of struggling readers gain confidence and rediscover that reading could be fun, with 89% of the school's Bookmark Buddies climbing at least one reading level between assessments.

Third grade readers across Osceola County who were struggling to keep pace, some performing as much as 18 months below grade level, needed more than a classroom lesson plan to catch up. Fluency, vocabulary, and confidence gaps threatened to follow these students well past the year they were meant to master reading.

Bookmark Buddies paired struggling readers with trained community volunteers, including JROTC cadets, business partners, and neighbors, for weekly one on one mentoring sessions built around evidence based, Florida standards aligned materials. Mentors worked with students on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension while helping them build home libraries with books earned along the way. Progress was tracked through PM1 to PM3 assessments and mentor session logs, giving the program a clear read on how far each child had come.

By year's end, the program had grown into one of the district's most reliable literacy interventions, reaching far more classrooms than when it started.

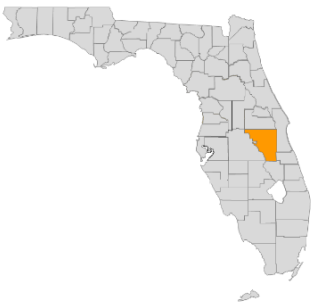
Results

- Grew from a baseline of 185 students at 16 schools to 230 students at 19 schools.
- 150 trained volunteer mentors delivered 2,376 one on one reading sessions.
- 98% of participating students demonstrated measurable reading growth.
- 92.6% passed the State Level Reading Assessment.
- Participants maintained at least 80% proficiency on state reading assessments

Education Foundation for Osceola County

Workforce Development: Career Pipelines

Total Student Impact: 13,000



For one Osceola County student, it was a field trip to a local water utility that changed everything. Learning about the careers available right there in the community opened her eyes to opportunities she never knew existed so close to home.

The Career Pipeline Program set out to close the distance between Osceola County classrooms and the high wage, high demand careers of the region, giving students in grades 3 through 12 real exposure to industries and pathways many had never considered.

Through partnerships with more than 80 employers and organizations, including Valencia College and the University of Central Florida, the program connected students to career pathways in healthcare, construction, hospitality, education, first response, energy, water management, technology, and advanced manufacturing. Signature experiences included industry field trips, career and college fairs, a speakers' bureau, JA Inspire, the ACE mentoring program, ACT summer apprenticeships, and the Health Leaders Summer Academy, giving students direct contact with professionals and workplaces across the county.

The program's reach extended across grade levels and industries, strengthening how Osceola County students plan for life after graduation.

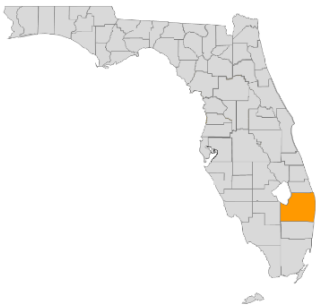
Results

- Over 13,000 students took part in program activities, including 9,367 in career focused field trips.
- 1,553 students attended career and college fairs, and 2,750 engaged through the Speakers' Bureau.
- 100 students combined took part in ACE Mentoring, ACT Summer Apprenticeships, and the Health Leaders Summer Academy.
- 87% of students reported increased awareness of career opportunities, postsecondary pathways, and financial aid resources.
- Preliminary figures show 92% of graduates completed a postsecondary plan and 67% completed FAFSA—a critical indicator of access to college financial aid.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Educate, Affirm, Inspire with S.P.I.R.E. 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 57
Total Student Impact: 272



"The results from the program speak for themselves." That's how one Boca Raton elementary teacher describes what happened after she began using S.P.I.R.E. with her most struggling readers this year. She watched their phonics abilities take off, and just as important, saw that progress carry over directly into their independent reading. "I've seen tremendous growth in my students' phonics abilities, and more importantly, that progress is transferring directly into their independent reading skills," said Dr. Sara Kosches, Blue Lake Elementary School.

S.P.I.R.E. is an intensive reading program that helps struggling students build core reading strategies like sounding out words, reading fluency, and comprehension. Across 13 Palm Beach County elementary schools, the program targeted struggling readers to improve their literacy skills.

Students used S.P.I.R.E. for 30 to 60 minutes a day, five days a week, in small groups of no more than six per teacher. Those not yet ready for S.P.I.R.E. began with Sounds Sensible, following the same small-group model. Fifty-seven teachers received professional development and ongoing coaching to ensure fidelity to the program, and schools used the grant to build capacity over several years, adding SPIRE kits, phonogram cards, and manipulative boards. Progress was tracked using the S.P.I.R.E. pre- and post-test alongside FAST Progress Monitoring measures administered in August 2025 and May 2026.

By the spring assessment window, students across every SPIRE intervention level showed measurable movement toward grade-level reading proficiency, with the largest gains concentrated among students who started furthest behind.

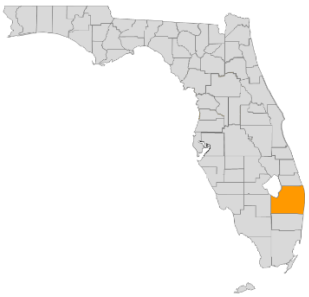
Results

- 30% (9 of 31) of K-1 Early Literacy students advanced to STAR Reading by PM3, part of an overall 58.9% improvement in that group.
- Students at the lowest performance level dropped by 50.7%.
- SPIRE Level 1 students reading at or above grade level rose from 0.9% to 20.8%.
- SPIRE Level 2 Grade 3 students reached 84% reading at or above grade level.
- SPIRE Level 3 students grew from 0% to 85.7% reading at or above grade level.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

GoTeach! Classroom Grants 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 554
Total Student Impact: 13,295



A student started the school year reading at a kindergarten level, caught in a cycle of frustration that had left his teacher and mother convinced he was headed for third-grade retention. A hands-on STEAM project funded by a GoTeach! grant gave him a reason to engage, turning reading into the blueprint for building a 3D animal enclosure. By year's end, he had climbed from the lowest possible score on his state reading assessment to full proficiency. "He is a scientist, an author, a resilient learner, and a role model," said his teacher, Ivania Fullerton, The Conservatory School in North Palm Beach.

Teachers across Palm Beach County said they often paid out of pocket for innovative lesson ideas to engage students. GoTeach! Classroom Grants exists to remove that barrier, funding creative, teacher-designed projects across literacy, STEM, career readiness, graduation support, and financial literacy.

Teachers applied for one of several grant tiers, from individual classroom grants to larger STEM and financial literacy innovation awards, through the RhythmQ platform. During 2025-2026, the Foundation awarded 89 grants across 55 schools, funding projects as varied as calming sensory spaces for students with autism, civics exam preparation, entrepreneurship simulations, and a school garden that introduced fresh vegetables for the first time. Recipients also joined an online Professional Learning Community for training and peer learning throughout the year.

By the end of the year, teachers who received a GoTeach! grant reported stronger job satisfaction and a renewed commitment to the classroom, while most participating students showed academic growth tied to their teacher's funded project.

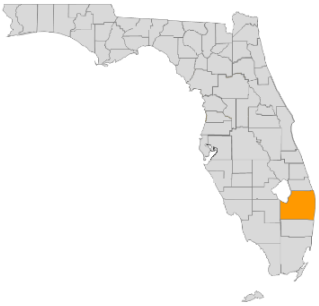
Results

- 84% of students (11,125 of 13,295) showed academic improvement, learning gains, or other positive outcomes.
- 92% of teachers (81 of 88) reported improved pedagogy, 99% (87 of 88) felt like a more effective educator, and 95% planned to share their project's success with colleagues.
- At Eagles Landing Middle School, 75% of participating students on the spectrum (33 of 44) showed progress in self-regulation, communication, and independence through calming sensory spaces.
- At Jeaga Middle School, a civics-focused project drove an 85% increase in civic proficiency on the state EOC exam, and at South Olive Elementary, 4th-grade students achieved 66% FAST ELA proficiency with 84% learning gains overall (83% among the lowest 25% of students).

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Building Oral Language & Vocabulary in VPK 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 254
Total Student Impact: 2,140



A field trip became a published book this year, thanks to one VPK classroom's new favorite tool. Using Book Creator, a Pahokee Elementary teacher's youngest students recorded their voices, illustrated their own ideas, and shared the finished story with classmates and family, transforming a single outing into a lesson in narrative, vocabulary, and pride of authorship. "Being able to see their confidence grow reminded me of why I love teaching Pre-K," said a VPK teacher at Pahokee Elementary School.

Grounded in the Science of Reading, the Building Oral Language and Vocabulary in VPK program recognized that oral language, vocabulary, and background knowledge are essential building blocks for reading comprehension and kindergarten readiness. Many children in Title I communities lacked access to the enriching experiences and high-quality literacy resources needed to build that foundation before entering kindergarten.

The program served 2,140 students and 254 educators across 57 schools and 104 classrooms, anchored by a Pilot Professional Learning Collaborative that paired self-paced training with coaching and collaborative workshops for 28 teaching assistants, early childhood professionals, and paraprofessionals across nine Title I schools. Grant funding equipped all 104 VPK classrooms with Book Creator licenses, letting students record, illustrate, and publish their own electronic books tied to classroom lessons. More than 200 prekindergarten students at those Title I schools also took curriculum-aligned field trips designed to build background knowledge and vocabulary, with teachers extending that learning back into the classroom through discussion, storytelling, and writing.

Participating prekindergarten students made significant gains in kindergarten readiness on the state's STAR Early Literacy assessment, and teachers reported feeling more effective and more committed to staying in the classroom as a result of the program's support.

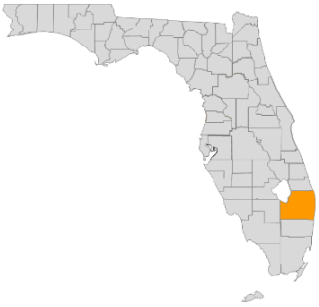
Results

- Students' average STAR Early Literacy scale score rose 136 points, from 628 to 764, surpassing the state's 707 kindergarten readiness benchmark.
- 99% of students in the Professional Learning Collaborative pilot classrooms who completed baseline and year-end assessments showed score gains.
- 99% of teacher survey respondents (87 of 88) reported improved pedagogy from the program.
- 95% of teachers (84 of 88) said the program made them want to continue teaching in the district next year.
- Classrooms produced 337 more Book Creator books than the prior year.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Red Apple Supplies

Total Teacher Impact: 3,531
Total Student Impact: 30,543



"It reduces the amount of money teachers spend out of pocket and helps ensure students have the materials they need to succeed." That's how one Barton Elementary teacher describes what free classroom supplies meant for her students this year. Instead of budgeting for basic materials out of her own pocket, she could spend her energy on planning stronger lessons. "The program also allows me to focus more on teaching and creating engaging lessons for my students, rather than on how I'm going to pay for supplies," said Bianca Tita Bernas, Barton Elementary School.

Teachers in Palm Beach County's highest-need Title I schools often spent their own money to keep classrooms stocked, a cost that fell hardest on students who could least afford to make up the difference. Red Apple Supplies, the Education Foundation's free teacher resource store, exists to close that gap by putting essential school supplies directly into classrooms.

Now in its ninth year, Red Apple Supplies partnered with nine additional schools this year, bringing its total to 105 Title I schools with free and reduced lunch rates of 73% or higher. Teachers accessed supplies through in-store shopping, online ordering for schools in the Glades region, and five pop-up shop locations set up around the county for added convenience. For a second year, the program partnered with the district's Department of Teaching and Learning to distribute summer school supplies to teachers serving prekindergarten through eighth grade. The store's inventory expanded to include health and wellness items, STEM kits, arts and crafts materials, and an expanded literacy section spanning prekindergarten through high school.

Teacher surveys showed the program strengthened both classroom instruction and educators' commitment to staying in the profession, while students benefited from more supplies, better resources, and a more equitable learning environment.

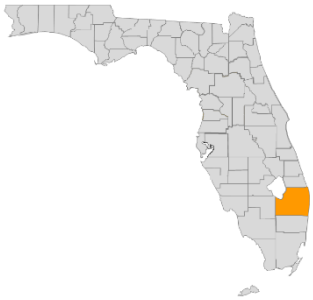
Results

- $1,617,381.61 in free supplies distributed through 3,521 teacher shops, up from $1,061,920.12 the prior year.
- 30,543 fully stocked student backpacks distributed in August 2025, up from 27,420 in August 2024.
- 97% of teachers (1,305 of 1,351) reported improved teaching quality, and 88% said they're more likely to remain in the district.
- 78% of teachers said free supplies made learning fun and inspiring, and 66% linked available resources to improved student performance.
- 82% of teachers said free supplies helped create a more equitable classroom environment.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Finance Academy 2025-2026

Total Student Impact: 50



A career pathway that doesn't officially open until fall 2026 already has fifty students signed up, more than a year of momentum ahead of its first class. Outreach events at feeder middle schools introduced hundreds of students to the idea of a Finance Academy before Santaluces Community High School had even finished outfitting its classroom. That early enthusiasm gave organizers confidence that a year spent planning would translate directly into a strong launch.

The Finance Academy exists to prepare high school students for postsecondary education and entry-level careers in business and finance, building financial literacy and industry-aligned skills along the way. The 2025-2026 school year marked a planning year for the program's expansion to Santaluces Community High School, a Title I school in Lantana that had not previously offered the academy.

During the planning year, the Foundation hired a new lead teacher, finalized a course sequence aligned with state CAPE funding requirements, and began outreach to five middle schools that feed into Santaluces. A needs assessment guided the purchase of furniture, laptops, and equipment to outfit a full classroom ahead of the 2026-2027 launch, and the school began the process of joining the National Academy Foundation network and building a Business Professionals of America chapter.

With no prior year of data to compare against, early enrollment and outreach numbers offered the clearest signal that the academy is off to a strong start heading into its first full year.

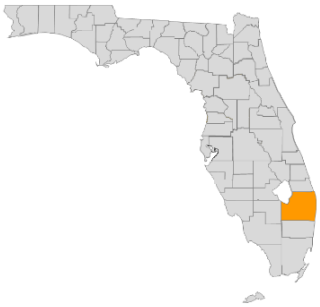
Results

- 50 students enrolled for the Finance Academy's 2026-2027 launch, enough to fill two sections of 25.
- Outreach and career awareness reached over 500 students across six schools through open houses and community events.
- 16 planning meetings held between the school, district, and Foundation to prepare for launch.
- Two school administrators completed training ahead of the opening year.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

School District of Palm Beach County's Healthcare Career Pathway 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 92
Total Student Impact: 7,065



"This program has reinforced my passion for helping others and confirmed my desire to pursue a career in healthcare." That's how one Park Vista Community High School junior describes what a year in the Medical Academy program did for her. Hands-on learning and real healthcare environments taught her more than anatomy and terminology, they showed her what it means to serve others with compassion and professionalism. "Their investment is not only shaping my future, but also preparing the next generation of compassionate and capable healthcare professionals," said Christine Finkel, 11th grade, Park Vista Community High School.

The Healthcare Career Pathway exists to prepare students for clinical experience, industry certification, and college readiness across the district's medical academies. This year, the program expanded to three additional schools, one high school and two middle schools, to reach more students earlier in their academic careers.

Students used grant-funded lab equipment, classroom simulators, and protective equipment to prepare for clinical experiences and certification exams across twelve healthcare pathways. Beyond coursework, students completed off-site clinicals at hospitals, pharmacies, and fire departments, gained hands-on experience in a university cadaver lab and simulation center, and some earned employment as pharmacy technicians while still in high school. Funding also supported travel to Health Occupations Students of America competitions and guest speakers who connected students to healthcare professionals in the field. The program also invested in its 92 medical academy instructors, covering CPR certification and curriculum development.

Year-end surveys of more than 1,200 participating students showed strong, sustained interest in healthcare careers, while instructors reported the program strengthened their own teaching effectiveness.

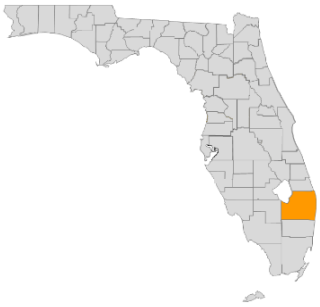
Results

- 94% of students (1,163 of 1,235) reported increased interest in a healthcare career, and 92% in pursuing a related postsecondary degree.
- 98% of students reported increased knowledge of healthcare careers as a result of the program.
- 1,850 healthcare-related industry certifications were earned, up from 1,470 the year before, an increase of nearly 26%.
- 1,788 students earned program completion certifications.
- 95% of teachers (40 of 44) reported improved instructional effectiveness.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Stepping Up STEM in Pahokee 2025-2026

Total Teacher Impact: 5
Total Student Impact: 351



Ten years ago, students at Pahokee Middle Senior High School believed football was their only path to a better future. Today, one sophomore credits an afterschool robotics club with uncovering a passion he didn't know he had. "This program has not only built my technical skills but also my confidence, showing me that students from Pahokee can thrive in computer science and STEM fields," said Zackary, 10th grade, Pahokee Middle Senior High School.

A decade ago, the school's graduation rate stood at just 33%. Stepping Up STEM in Pahokee set out to open a different path for students, building a STEM pipeline of computer programming and robotics courses for grades 6 through 12.

Students progressed from foundational coding through hands-on robotics platforms like LEGO EV3, Spike Prime, and VEX, to Python in middle school and Java-based robot programming in high school, alongside web development in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. The program also offers an International Baccalaureate Computer Science course for eleventh and twelfth graders, an option available for the past three years. This year, students earned 132 industry certifications in areas such as Python, HTML and CSS, and IT device configuration, and two robotics teams advanced to the FIRST Tech Challenge Florida State Championship, with the senior team earning third place for the Inspire Award.

The program's reach now extends well beyond the STEM classroom: the school's graduation rate has climbed to 99-100%, and for the third year in a row, the school's valedictorian has come through the Stepping Up STEM program and its robotics club.

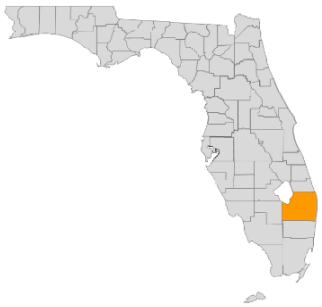
Results

- 97% of students (340 of 351) earned a final grade of C or higher, up from 96% (311 of 323) the year before.
- 74% of students (259 of 351) scored 75% or higher on post-assessments, a lower rate but a higher count than the prior year's 118 students.
- 74% of students in grades 8 through 11 earned an industry certification in Python or HTML and CSS, up from 70% the prior year.
- 100% (5 of 5) of eligible IB Computer Science students sat for the exam and met all course requirements, up from 63% the year before.

Education Foundation of Palm Beach County

Rocket Powered Robotics

Total Teacher Impact: 4
Total Student Impact: 100



"For many of our students, participating in robotics competitions is the first time they see themselves as engineers, programmers, and problem-solvers." That's how one robotics coach at a Title I school describes the impact of this year's grant. Competition-grade equipment, replacement parts, and tools the school budget couldn't otherwise cover let students design, build, code, and compete at levels that rival schools reach. "This grant significantly shaped my experience as an educator and strengthened my commitment to remain in this profession," said C. Taylor, Robotics Coach.

Students at Rocket Powered Robotics' partner schools, many in Title I communities, have limited access to enrichment opportunities in STEM fields. The program set out to close that gap by funding robotics teams that let students apply science, technology, engineering, and math skills to real design challenges.

Grant funds covered curriculum, supplies, competition registration, and travel for seven robotics teams across nine schools, supporting participation in Junior LEGO League, FIRST LEGO League, FIRST Robotics, and the FIRST Tech Challenge. Students followed competition rules, worked within limited resources, and designed and programmed robots to compete against other teams, an experience organizers describe as close to real-world engineering as a middle or high schooler can get. This year, the Mega Awesome Robotics Systems team won its first-ever Blue Banner Award at the FIRST Robotics regional competition, and Pahokee students competed in both FIRST LEGO League and FIRST Tech Challenge events.

Compared with the prior year, more students said the program strengthened their interest in STEM careers, and coaches observed continued growth in students' technical and problem-solving skills.

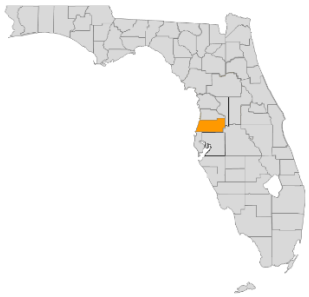
Results

- 75% of students (47 of 63 respondents) expressed increased interest in postsecondary STEM education, up from 56% the year before.
- 100% of students said the program increased their interest in a STEM career, up from 98.5% the prior year.
- 100% of students showed an increase in transferable skills, based on coach observations.
- Teams competed in 12 in-person FTC, FLL, and FRC events during the 2025-2026 season.

Pasco Education Foundation

Ignite Achievement

Total Teacher Impact: 3,334
Total Student Impact: 68,021



By the end of the year, ELA proficiency in one Pasco classroom climbed to 85 percent and math to 80 percent, the payoff of an Innovative Classroom Project grant that let a teacher rebuild her instruction around differentiated literacy and math learning centers aligned to Florida BEST Standards. The grant gave her new tools for differentiated learning and targeted intervention, letting her reach each student individually rather than teaching to the whole class at once. She said the resources' impact would outlast the grant year itself, continuing to benefit future kindergarten learners for years to come.

The Pasco Education Foundation built Ignite Achievement to support literacy, STEM, teaching quality, and student resiliency across Pasco County Schools, aligning directly with the district's pillars of Excellence in Student Achievement and Employee Success. The program channeled funding through three connected initiatives: Innovative Classroom Projects, school and district wide programs under Project L.E.A.D., and professional development for educators.

The Foundation awarded 102 Innovative Classroom Projects, spanning STEAM, literacy, arts, exceptional student education, career readiness, and resiliency, exceeding its goal of 80. Through Project L.E.A.D., it also funded district wide initiatives, including a Principal Fellowship Program for eight school leaders, and the STEM Lab at Lake Myrtle. Professional development support gave educators access to training, conferences, and coursework designed to strengthen their classroom skills and effectiveness.

Across all three initiatives, students grew their skills in STEAM, literacy, arts, and resiliency, while participating principals and teachers reported meaningful gains in confidence and effectiveness.

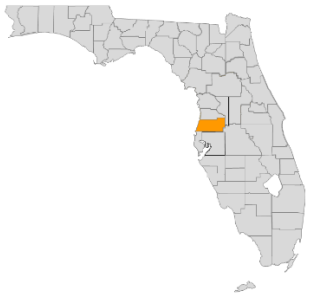
Results

- 87% average student growth rate across Innovative Classroom Project grants, compared to a baseline of about 80%.
- 95% of professional development participants rated the training as relevant and motivating, up from a baseline of about 85%.
- 5 of 8 schools in the Principal Fellowship Program raised their school letter grade, and the remaining school held its grade while increasing overall points, and all 8 participating principals rated their confidence in leading school improvement at 4 to 5 out of 5
- A Trailblazers Newspaper project at Trinity Elementary lifted FAST Reading proficiency from 52% to 81%, and Seven Springs Middle's use of interactive Gizmos simulations grew 8th grade NWEA science proficiency by 68%.

Pasco Education Foundation

College and Career Compass

Total Teacher Impact: 128
Total Student Impact: 13,946



A Pasco County senior once doubted college was financially possible for her family. Working one-on-one with a Pathways Coach starting her junior year, she learned to navigate the financial aid (FAFSA) process, identified scholarships, and connected with a mentor who had walked the same path before her. By senior year she had applied to three colleges and secured enough financial aid to attend her first-choice school, crediting her coach with showing her that college was possible after all.

College and Career Compass exists to help Pasco County high school students build confidence and a clear path toward graduation and life after high school. The program combines two components, Pathways Coaches and support for Career, Technical, and Adult Education (CTAE) programs, giving students both individualized guidance and hands on career training across the district's high schools.

Pathways Coaches made roughly 95 visits across all 17 high schools and select middle schools, holding about 300 one-on-one coaching sessions covering academic progress, testing preparation, scholarships, and college exploration. The Foundation also hosted workshops throughout the year, including a Back to School Bash, a FAFSA Workshop, a Financial Literacy Workshop, a College Exploration Workshop, and a Senior Check In. On the CTAE side, funding supported equipment and programs such as a Fireground Simulation Training Container at Fivay High School's Fire Academy, the Royal Robotics and Redshift Robotics teams, aeronautical engineering, and the Criminal Justice program, along with the district's Communicating the Vision broadcast series and Get On the Bus podcast studio.

Together, these efforts helped students across Pasco County's high schools graduate with greater confidence and stronger plans for what comes next, while CTAE programs saw rising student interest and success in certification pathways.

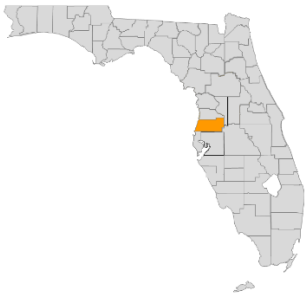
Results

- 96% senior on-time graduation rate among students working with Pathways Coaches, just under the program's near-100% goal.
- 99% of participating students remained on track for grade promotion or on-time graduation, up from a baseline of about 90%.
- 97% of juniors and seniors surveyed reported feeling prepared for graduation and beyond, exceeding the 95% goal.
- CTAE industry certification pass rates rose to 78.89%, up from a 75% baseline, across 5,969 certification attempts.
- CTAE program applications climbed to 5,595 for the year, while the district's podcast studio and broadcast series drew more than 10.5 million Facebook views and 570,000 video views.

Pasco Education Foundation

Wise Supplies

Total Teacher Impact: 1,875



“Wise Supplies has helped my classroom by providing free materials for students, which reduces barriers and helps everyone come prepared to learn,” said Rachelle Ann Valdez, a teacher at Cypress Creek High School. She added that the store's current selection already supports her students well and consistently meets her classroom's needs. Her experience reflects what teachers across the district found this year in a program built to close gaps that family and school budgets cannot always cover.

Now in its fifth year, Wise Supplies is the Pasco Education Foundation's free teacher resource store, created to support teacher effectiveness and student readiness across all 105 schools in the district, including 41 Title I campuses. The program gives Pasco County educators ongoing access to free school supplies and classroom materials throughout the year.

This year, Wise Supplies distributed $285,000 in school supplies to 1,875 teachers across 99 schools, exceeding both its $250,000 supply goal and its target of 800 teachers served. A full time Wise Supplies Manager oversaw every part of the operation, from inventory and procurement to merchandising, volunteer coordination, online order fulfillment, and community engagement. Community volunteers now support the store on a weekly, year round basis, and the annual Summer Supply Drive expanded from May through September to draw in more corporate and community donors.

Teacher survey responses confirmed the program's impact on classroom readiness and educator retention across the district.

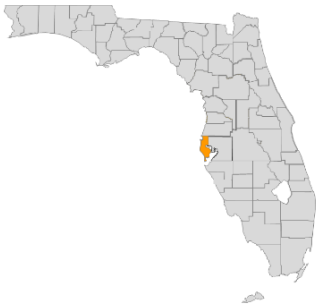
Results

- 99.8% of surveyed teachers said Wise Supplies resources support classroom student success.
- 99.7% reported the store helped students complete classroom and homework assignments, a 2.7 percentage point gain over the program's 97% baseline goal.
- 98.9% said Wise Supplies makes teaching feel more sustainable.
- 96.4% reported feeling more effective as an educator.
- 94.5% said the program inspired them to continue teaching in Pasco County Schools.
- Survey results were drawn from 1,144 teacher responses collected throughout the year.

Pinellas Education Foundation

Building Readers - Our Commitment to Early Literacy

Total Teacher Impacted: 314



Before her coach arrived, one Pinellas literacy teacher's lessons ran more on instinct than on evidence. After a year of coaching built around new classroom observation tools, her teaching changed shape: sharper pacing, more deliberate modeling, and small groups built directly from what the assessment data showed her students needed. “My instruction is clearer, more systematic, and better aligned to evidence-based practices,” said Michelle, who has taught for four years.

Pinellas Education Foundation set out to strengthen literacy instruction for the district's youngest learners by improving how PreK-2 teachers were coached and supported. Coaches needed a shared understanding of what strong early literacy instruction looks like, spanning child development, evidence-based reading practices, and classroom-tested coaching strategies, so that guidance felt consistent no matter which school or grade a teacher worked in.

Literacy coaches completed a book study of Visible Learning in Early Childhood and adopted new walkthrough tools, including the UFLI protocol and a foundation-developed Flamingo Small Group observation tool, to bring a common language to classroom coaching. A tiered coaching model let the foundation direct support where schools needed it most, while a new pool of backup PELI coaches kept coaching consistent through midyear staffing changes. In all, coaches logged 3,612 hours of professional development across 13 offerings, reaching 314 teachers across 44 schools, plus six family engagement activities that extended the work beyond the classroom.

Systemwide, the work translated into measurable literacy gains for Pinellas students in kindergarten through third grade, with proficiency trending upward at nearly every grade level served.

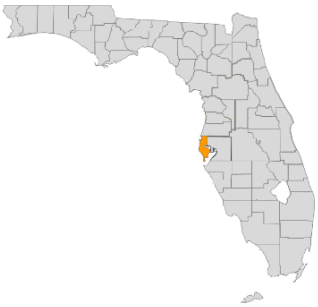
Results

- 5,052 students received early literacy instruction across 44 Pinellas schools.
- Districtwide ELA proficiency for participating students rose 3.5% over the previous year.
- 1st grade ELA proficiency increased 5%, ending at 58% proficient.
- 2nd grade ELA proficiency increased 6%, ending at 49% proficient.
- 3rd grade ELA proficiency increased 4%, ending at 57% proficient.
- Kindergarten ELA proficiency dipped 1% to 60% proficient, prompting school-by-school analysis to target support next year.

Pinellas Education Foundation

Success Beyond School: College and Career Readiness for All

Total Student Impacted: 5,697



For Ava, a senior at Osceola Fundamental High School, filling out financial aid forms meant facing something no one at home could help her with. Her school's College and Career Center coordinator walked her through the FAFSA process step by step, filling that gap. “Neither of my parents went to college, so they've never been in this situation,” Ava said. “So, I'm the first one, and they really have no idea what they're doing. So, this is so helpful, because I have no idea what I'm doing.”

Pinellas County Schools created College and Career Centers to put targeted resources, individualized coaching, and specialized test preparation directly in the hands of students who might not otherwise have access to them, particularly underserved and at-risk populations working toward college and career readiness. The goal was to break down the many steps standing between a Pinellas high schooler and a completed financial aid application, opening the door to grants, work-study, scholarships, and loans that make college possible.

The College and Career Centers logged 24,237 total visits from 5,697 unique students, while the Elevating Excellence initiative, serving high-performing students from low-income households, recorded 10,034 visits from 1,880 unique students, including 1,142 who returned for repeat coaching. Grant funding also doubled the district's capacity for summer college tours, busing students to eight state university system campuses over four days and bringing 65 to 85 students to a college campus for the first time each day, prioritized through a tiered registration system for free-and-reduced-lunch high achievers. Academic preparation ramped up as well, with students engaging in live SAT prep sessions, diagnostic testing through Chalk Talk's extended learning program, and a Spring SAT Bootcamp.

These shifts drove historic financial aid outcomes this year, positioning Pinellas County Schools among the top-performing districts in Florida for FAFSA completion.

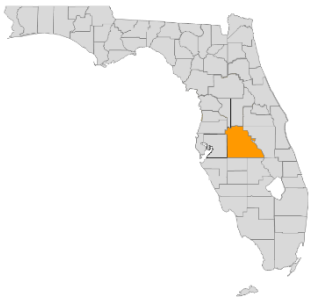
Results

- District FAFSA completion reached 59.9%, 8 percentage points above the state average of 51.8%, a 7.2% increase over last year.
- Pinellas ranked in the top 3 Florida districts for FAFSA completion and earned FCAN's Large District MVP recognition.
- 13 of 17 traditional high schools grew FAFSA completion by 5% or more, including 6 schools that grew over 10%.
- 272 students took part in live-streamed and in-person fall SAT prep.
- 271 students completed Chalk Talk's diagnostic testing and eight-week extended learning program.
- 126 students attended the Spring SAT Bootcamp.

Polk Education Foundation

Community Grants: Working Together for Greater Impact

Total Teacher Impacted: 155
Total Student Impacted: 3,413



Logan, a third grader, used to steer clear of anything more challenging than the books he already knew by heart. But after posting his highest reading assessment score yet, he earned a title from a series he had long admired, and something shifted. He started reading at home every night, working through hard passages instead of avoiding them, and setting his own goals for improvement. He has not become a proficient reader overnight, but his confidence has grown alongside his skills: today he volunteers to read aloud in class and encourages his classmates to pick up new books.

Across Polk County, teachers regularly identify projects that could deepen literacy, expand STEM learning, or build career readiness, but many need additional funding to bring those ideas into their classrooms. The Community Supported Grant Program was created to close that gap, giving teachers the resources to design learning experiences in career and technical education, literacy, STEM, and teaching quality wherever the need existed within their own schools.

The program awarded 36 grants ranging from $1,000 to $9,000, to fund projects across the district. One high school used its funding to reestablish a DECA chapter, giving students the chance to build leadership and career-ready skills in finance, hospitality, marketing, and management. Elementary schools put grant dollars toward the district's adaptive reading program, arming teachers with data to target instruction, while Innovation Station STEM engaged K-5 students in hands-on engineering and design challenges that blended STEM, literacy, and real-world problem solving.

Beyond the numbers, teachers noted a real shift in how students showed up in class: more willing to take on challenges, more confident voicing ideas, and more invested in their own progress.

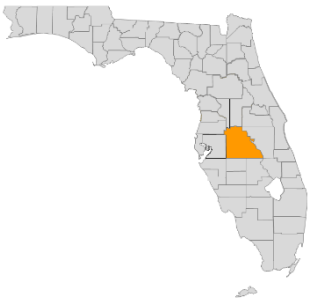
Results

- 56% (44 of 78) of participating DECA students qualified to advance to the State DECA Conference.
- 58% (438 of 760) of participating students improved their reading grade from the first to third nine weeks.
- Participating K-5 students raised their average Accelerated Reader quiz scores by 5%.
- 57% (705 of 1,011) of participating K-5 students improved their math or science grade over the same period.
- 57% (571 of 1,000) of participating K-12 students increased their science scores from pre-test to post-test.

Polk Education Foundation

School Matching Grants

Total Teacher Impacted: 357
Total Student Impacted: 12,679



When one of Polk County's kindergarten teachers began working with a shy student who could not yet verbalize letters or sounds, progress felt far off. But through daily small-group sessions built around her specific needs, the student grew steadily more comfortable engaging in alphabetic activities, working independently, and eventually naming letters and sounds on her own. Her teacher watched her confidence build alongside her skills, a shift that speaks to what happens when instruction is tailored to just one student at a time.

Polk County schools continually look for ways to stretch classroom resources further, and the School Matching Grant Program was built to do exactly that, pairing teacher-designed projects with community support through a dollar-for-dollar match. The program prioritized literacy and STEM instruction, along with additional support for students working below grade level, giving schools a way to reach the students who needed it most.

Grant funding reached students directly through hands-on projects: a physical science STEM field trip drew 6,363 K-12 students, and third graders at 41 schools received literacy instruction paired with personal dictionaries to build vocabulary and comprehension. At Berkley Elementary, twice-weekly small-group tutoring helped students reading well below grade level move out of the substantially deficient range, while a marine biology project had students testing water quality for baby coral, studying pollution's effects on ecosystems, and touring a local aquarium. Six science teachers also attended the Florida Association of Science Teachers Conference to sharpen their own STEM instruction.

Teachers came away with more confidence delivering hands-on, inquiry-based lessons, and students showed greater persistence and ownership of their own learning, gains that extended well beyond the classroom projects themselves.

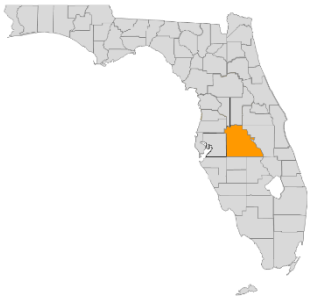
Results

- 59% of participating K-5 students increased reading proficiency by at least two grade levels, moving out of the substantially deficient range.
- 22% of participating K-5 students improved their math score on FAST assessments.
- Fifth graders raised proficiency on the district's quarterly science assessment from 51% to 67%.
- Fourth graders raised proficiency on the same assessment from 54% to 56%.
- 65% of participating 9th-12th grade marine biology students improved their grade from the first to last nine weeks.

Polk Education Foundation

Free Teacher Market

Total Teacher Impacted: 3,148



"The variety of resources available is amazing," says Maricelis Carrero, a Polk County teacher who has shopped the Free Teacher Market on multiple occasions. She credits the program with helping her perform more efficiently in her classroom and making sure her students have what they need to succeed, a sentiment echoed by educators across the district who rely on the market to stretch their own paychecks further.

Teachers across Polk County routinely pay out of pocket to keep their classrooms stocked, and the district's sprawling geography makes it difficult to get supplies to everyone equally. Educators on the eastern side of the county, in particular, face long drives that put regular access to shared resources out of reach.

The Free Teacher Market opened its doors 27 times between August and April, giving teachers free access to donated classroom and student supplies all year long. To reach educators who could not easily make the trip, volunteers packed tote bags with paper, pencils, folders, crayons, and notebooks for pop-up drive-thru distributions in the far east, north, and southwest corners of the county. The market also became a touchpoint for early-career teacher support, with 444 participants in the district's Teacher Induction Program relying on it this year, a nearly 20 percent increase over the year before.

Collectively, the program reached teachers across every experience level and grade band, easing a financial burden that follows educators well beyond their first paycheck.

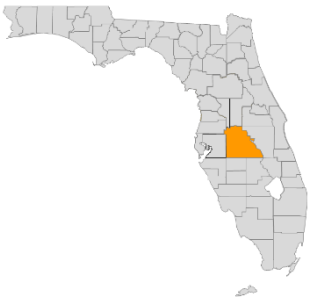
Results

- Teachers collectively received about $200,000 in donated school supplies and teaching tools, up from roughly $75,000 the year before.
- 3,148 teachers and paraeducators received shopping appointments, a 6% increase over the prior year's 2,963.
- Participating teachers indicated they support more than 65,000 students combined.
- Teachers reported spending an average of $415 out of pocket each year, a cost the market helps offset.
- Approximately $425,000 in supplies were distributed to teachers.
- Six pop-up drive-thru locations gave teachers living more than 30 minutes away an alternative way to shop.

Polk Education Foundation

AmeriCorps Polk Reads

Total Teacher Impacted: 75
Total Student Impacted: 459



In first grade, one student could not recognize the letter A. Every attempt to read left him in tears, embarrassed in front of his classmates and unsure he would ever catch up. Two years later, that same student reads independently and calls it his favorite subject. His STAR reading score climbed from 615 to 911, moving him from the 1st to the 43rd percentile, a turnaround his tutor still gets emotional describing. He still has ground to cover, but he has gotten back something he had lost: his confidence.

Hundreds of Polk County's youngest readers, in kindergarten through third grade, were reading at least a full grade level behind where they needed to be, without the one-on-one time it takes to catch up during a typical school day. AmeriCorps Polk Reads was designed to give these struggling readers dedicated, individualized instruction built around their specific gaps, without pulling them from their core reading blocks.

The program trained 50 tutors in the Rigby curriculum, who met with each of the 459 students three times a week during their reading blocks and reassessed progress every four to five weeks. Instruction was tailored by grade: kindergartners built foundational reading-readiness skills, first graders worked on high-frequency word recognition, and second and third graders aimed to climb four Rigby reading levels. Tutors also wove weekly themed readings, journaling, and interactive activities into sessions to build perseverance and a positive attitude toward learning alongside literacy skills.

Beyond the reading gains, teachers noted students showing up more engaged, more willing to push through difficult material, and more confident raising their hands to try independent reading on their own.

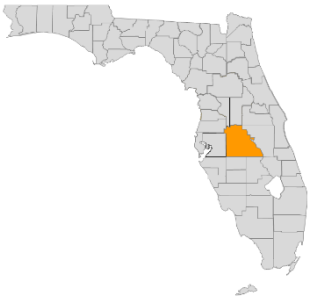
Results

- 88% of the 400 students who completed all three assessment periods showed significant reading gains.
- Second graders posted the strongest growth, with 92% showing measurable improvement, followed by third graders at 91%.
- First graders improved at a rate of 86%, and kindergartners at 73%.
- Even counting the full, more mobile cohort, 76% of all 459 students showed measurable improvement in reading skills.

Polk Education Foundation

Teacher to Teacher Connection

Total Teacher Impacted: 217
Total Student Impacted: 5,789



One student came into the program with strong basic math skills but froze whenever a problem required several steps, often rushing through work just to be done with it. Through targeted small-group intervention, he learned to slow down, break problems apart, and check his own thinking before turning in an answer. His grade moved from a Level 1 to a Level 4, but the bigger shift, his teacher noted, was in how he saw himself: as someone capable of working through a hard problem instead of giving up on it.

Effective classroom strategies often stay contained in a single teacher's room, even when they could help students district-wide. The Teacher-to-Teacher Connection was created to change that, giving prekindergarten through eighth-grade teachers a structured way to document, share, and replicate practices that were already working, particularly in literacy, STEM, and support for struggling students.

Teachers with proven classroom practices served as Developers, documenting their strategies in the IDEA Catalog of Excellence and presenting them at two annual IDEA Expo events, where peers could then apply for Adapter Grants to bring those same ideas into their own rooms. Battle of the Books used team-based reading challenges to build comprehension and confidence among struggling readers, while Buzzing Through Math with BeeBots paired coin-counting and time-telling practice with coding, sending students to program small robots after solving each task. Across the grant cycle, dozens of these grants funded projects spanning literacy, STEM, and support for struggling students in classrooms throughout the district.

The ripple effects reached well beyond the funded classrooms, as teachers reported growing more confident in their own practice and more willing to try what a colleague down the hall had already proven could work.

Results

- K-8 students posted an average 58% increase in reading learning gains from pretest to post-test.
- Students identified as struggling readers averaged a 28% increase in reading learning gains over the same period.
- 27% of participating students improved their science grade from the first to third nine weeks.
- 100% of participating teachers reported increased confidence as an educator.
- 96% of participating teachers reported an increase in completed student assignments as a result of grant funding.

The Education Foundation of Putnam County

THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION OF PUTNAM COUNTY, INC.

Economic Job Growth - Putnam County Prepared for Take Off

Total Teacher Impact: 6
Total Student Impact: 242



For a growing number of Putnam County students, a career in aviation starts in the cockpit instead of the classroom. Through discovery flights and flight lessons, students took to the skies while still in high school, and a few earned a private pilot license before graduating.

The Putnam County School District set out to give every secondary student fair access to high-demand career pathways in aviation, engineering, and advanced manufacturing. The program aimed to build technical skills that lead to higher-paying jobs, stronger college readiness, and a more capable regional workforce. It also targeted Career/Technical Education, STEM, graduation rates, and teaching quality.

The district offered Aerospace Technology courses at all of its secondary schools, with a curriculum built around hands-on, real-world applications. Students applied what they learned in practical settings, which strengthened their skills and supported industry certification. The district also trained teachers in best practices and aligned the curriculum with state and industry standards, so educators could deliver high-quality instruction even without prior aviation experience. The training created new professional opportunities for teachers while advancing student outcomes.

The program opened the flight portion of Aerospace Technology to far more students than ever before, and the results show growth in participation, certifications, and graduation.

Results

- 242 students participated in Aerospace Technology district wide by year end.
- Enrollment included 145 students in Aerospace Tech I, 77 in Aerospace Tech II, and 20 in Aerospace Tech III.
- 115 students took part in discovery flights or flight lessons, a 100% increase in students able to join the flight portion of the program.
- 100 students completed discovery flights, and 15 students flew in flight lessons.
- 3 students earned their private pilot license.
- The district graduation rate reached 96.6%.

Santa Rosa Education Foundation

Continuing Critical Support for Critical Initiatives

Total Teacher Impacted: 1,251
Total Student Impacted: 10,555



For one Santa Rosa County teacher, a Teacher Grant meant the difference between a static lesson and a classroom full of engaged learners. With funding for hands-on literacy materials, the teacher was able to give students direct access to resources that built their confidence and strengthened their foundational reading skills. What had once felt like a gap in classroom resources became, through the grant, a source of real academic growth for every student in the room.

Across Santa Rosa County District Schools, teachers often shoulder the personal financial burden of stocking their own classrooms, a cost that adds up over a career and can wear down even experienced educators. The Santa Rosa Education Foundation set out to ease that load while also investing directly in the people doing the work, funding classroom projects in literacy, STEM, career and technical education, and the arts. The goal was as much about resiliency as about resources: keeping teachers supported so they could keep giving their best in the classroom.

The Teacher Grants program funded creative, standards-based classroom projects in literacy, STEM, career and technical education, and the arts. Students measured pH levels, used Versatiles and other critical supplies for hands-on learning. The reopened Little Red School House Teacher Supply Depot gave teachers free classroom supplies at both north and south end locations, reducing the personal cost of outfitting a classroom.

Across these programs, the Santa Rosa Education Foundation reached educators and students throughout the district this year, with survey data pointing to strong satisfaction and sustained impact among participating teachers.

Results

- 81.9% of teachers surveyed said their program encouraged them to continue teaching in the district.
- 99% of Teacher Grant participants showed positive impact, compared to a baseline of 85.76%.
- Teacher Grant participation and awards increased by 10.8% this year.
- More than 700 teachers were served at the Little Red School House Teacher Supply Depot, which distributed 40,000 supplies.
- In one grant, 312 of 316 students (99%) earned an industry certification.

Education Foundation of Sarasota County

Preparing Sarasota County Students for Postsecondary Success

Total Student Impacted: 572



Jaiyda started the school year with a GPA well below the 2.0 she needed to graduate, and she still had to pass her ELA assessment. She finished her course recovery work just in time, passed her assessment the Friday before graduation, and crossed the stage with her class. Her Resiliency Coach had shown up for her all year, not just at school but at her front door, and when Jaiyda's grandmother answered one of those visits she told the coach, "I know who you are. Thank you for what you have done for these girls."

Some Sarasota County students arrive at high school already at risk of not graduating, navigating failing grades, chronic absenteeism, housing instability, and other significant personal barriers. Without sustained, one-on-one support, these students would not have had the consistent guidance needed to meet graduation requirements or begin planning for what comes next.

The Education Foundation of Sarasota County paired 348 students across nine high schools with individualized coaching through two connected programs. Resiliency Success Coaches built sustained one-on-one relationships with 101 students most at risk of not graduating at North Port High School and Riverview High School, while the Future-Ready Scholars Program moved students through structured postsecondary planning, career exploration, mentoring, and workshops sequenced to where each student stood in that process. Coaches also drove FAFSA completion countywide, piloting new school-day open houses embedded into the lunch period that outperformed the traditional evening events they replaced by removing access barriers.

That sustained coaching translated into stronger graduation outcomes, greater postsecondary readiness, and higher FAFSA completion across the county's senior class.

Results

- 95.2% graduation rate among Resiliency Success Coaching students, up from a 94.3% baseline, including 100% at North Port High School.
- 54 students stabilized enough to move from Resiliency Coaching into the Future-Ready Scholars Program with a documented postsecondary plan.
- 88% of Future-Ready Scholars Program seniors graduated with a documented postsecondary plan, up from a 63% national benchmark, and 99% of those students are headed to college, a certification program, or military service.
- Sarasota County reached a 55.5% FAFSA completion rate, 1,796 completed applications, up from a 52.3% baseline.

Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools

Grants for Great Ideas

Total Teacher Impact: 56
Total Student Impact: 15,966



For Ms. Melendez's sixth graders, a cell stopped being a picture in a textbook and became something they could design, print, and hold in their own hands. Her Grants for Great Ideas project, Safe Science in 3D, was one of dozens of STEM, ELA, Arts, and Character Development projects the Foundation funded this year, turning a typically passive science lesson into an interactive one. Ms. Melendez said the 3D printing technology gave her students a glimpse of careers and tools they might not otherwise encounter. The excitement didn't stay in the classroom, as students went home eager to tell their families what they had built.

Grants for Great Ideas gives Seminole County teachers funding for classroom, grade level, or school wide projects in ELA, STEM, Arts, and Character Development, priority areas the Foundation has identified for ongoing investment. Grants range from $1,000 to $2,500, letting teachers pursue projects that go beyond what a typical classroom budget would allow.

Teachers submitted their own proposals, which a committee of community volunteers, Foundation board members, and district staff scored for academic relevance, a sound implementation plan, and a formal evaluation process.

Results

- STEM projects: 84% of students maintained or improved their grade or score (1,992 of 2,365), and 59% grew more interested in STEM careers (1,461 of 2,996).
- ELA projects: 88% of students maintained or improved their grade or score, and 76% increased time spent reading outside school (632 of 833).
- Character Development projects: 91% of students earned a passing grade on their project (2,136 of 2,346), while students with 15+ absences fell by an average of 2.56% at participating elementary schools.
- Arts projects: 96% of students maintained or improved their grade or score (2,077 of 2,160), and 87% maintained or increased their interest in pursuing art.

Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools

Seminole Resilient Community Project

Total Teacher Impact: 91



As many as 40% of new teachers leave the profession within their first five years, a reality the Seminole Resilient Community Project set out to change this year by turning its attention to educators with zero to three years in the classroom. One participant said the discussions on recognizing burnout and prioritizing self-care, paired with strategies for supporting students while protecting their own well-being, were the most valuable parts of the training, giving them tools they could use in daily teaching right away. That focus meant reaching new teachers before the pressures of the job could push them out the door, at a moment when support could matter most.

Most professional development available to Seminole County educators focuses on curriculum and instructional practice, leaving little that addresses resilience or wellbeing directly. The Seminole Resilient Community Project was created to close that gap, giving teachers access to professional learning built specifically around building resiliency in themselves and their students.

The Foundation ran a three-part professional development series for new teachers called Empowering Educators, held from fall through January and attended by an average of 40 teachers per session. The series built a positive classroom climate around empathy, honesty, and emotional intelligence, giving teachers tools like restorative practices for handling difficult situations with compassion. A companion Wellness Practices workshop, offered in partnership with the nonprofit GO! Mental Health Initiative, extended similar support to educators across the district, and the two programs together reached 91 teachers this year.

Post workshop surveys captured how participants rated their own growth and effectiveness as a result of the training, both immediately after each session and looking back over the full series.

Results

- 98% of 125 survey responses across the three part series agreed or strongly agreed they were better equipped to make a difference with students, up from an 85% baseline.
- Of the 63 teachers who responded post series, 98% agreed the program improved their effectiveness as a teacher.
- Participants highlighted strategies for recognizing burnout and prioritizing self-care as the most useful new skills gained.
- Teachers described applying the series' 13 core principles of respect and community building in both their classrooms and personal lives.

Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools

Mud Walk to Environmental Education

Total Teacher Impact: 0
Total Student Impact: 9,519



One of the most disengaged students in her class came alive the moment her feet hit the marsh, according to a teacher who watched the transformation during the Mud Walk. “This program doesn’t just teach environmental science, it changes how our students view learning,” the teacher said, describing how the student began leading the group and asking insightful questions about the ecosystem in real time. A fifth grader who expected the worst put it more simply: “At first I thought the Mud Walk was going to be super gross, but it turned out to be the best field trip ever.” Moments like these have played out for over three decades at the Environmental Studies Center, which welcomed 9,519 students this year for wetlands exploration, animal adaptation studies, and hands-on recycling lessons.

Research shows students learn best when they are actively engaged in inquiry, the scientific process, and hands-on problem solving, rather than passively absorbing material in a classroom. The Environmental Studies Center was built around that model, giving students a research based, experiential way to connect what they learn in class to real-world environmental issues.

Field trip facilitators guide 3rd and 5th grade classes through age-appropriate experiences, from identifying native plants and animals to a full day Mud Walk through the wetlands and a dry day study of animal adaptations. Students also complete a recycling program at the Center designed to show them their own impact on the environment. The model is built so students and teachers work together in the field, an approach the Center says produces deeper insight than classroom instruction alone.

Post trip surveys and teacher observation rubrics tracked how well students absorbed key concepts across each grade level and experience type.

Results

- 92% of 670 third graders were able to identify native plants and animals, exceeding the 90% baseline (614 of 670).
- 94% of 8,849 fifth graders who attended the Mud Walk demonstrated increased knowledge of wetlands and conservation (8,353 of 8,849).
- 89% of 8,846 fifth graders who attended the dry day field trip demonstrated increased knowledge of animal adaptations, just under the 90% baseline (7,866 of 8,846).
- 92% of all 9,519 participating students demonstrated increased knowledge of their environmental impact through the Center's recycling program (8,729 of 9,519).

Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools

The FOUNDATION For Seminole County Public Schools

Tools 4 Seminole Schools (T4SS)

Total Teacher Impact: 689
Total Student Impact: 3,500



Many of the students in one teacher's classroom show up with pencils that have no eraser or are falling apart, so she tells them they can always take one of hers. "They love when I sharpen brand new pencils," said the teacher, a shopper at a Title I school who fills a treasure box of incentives with T4SS donations to reward her students for the smallest things. Multiply that scene across the 61 schools and 689 teachers T4SS served this year, and it becomes clear why the program has quietly kept classrooms stocked since 2010.

With roughly 48 percent of Seminole County students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, and inflation continuing to squeeze family budgets, many teachers found themselves buying basic supplies like pencils, paper, and folders out of pocket just so their students had what they needed. Tools 4 Seminole Schools exists to take that cost off educators' shoulders.

Schools where more than half of students qualify for free or reduced lunch let every classroom teacher shop once a month, while other schools rely on designated shoppers who gather supplies for their colleagues. The program also gave more than 120 new teachers welcome kits to help set up their classrooms and distributed 3,500 backpacks of school supplies for schools to hand out discreetly to students in need. A small staff of one full time and two part-time employees, backed by volunteers who logged over 1,700 hours this year, kept the store running for 2,774 shopping trips.

Teacher surveys captured how access to the store affected morale, financial stress, and the likelihood that educators stay in the classroom.

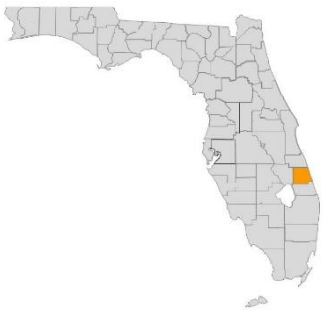
Results

- Of the 171 teachers who responded, 98% said programs like T4SS improve job satisfaction and make teaching feel more sustainable, up from 97% last year.
- Of the 177 shoppers who responded, 98% reported a positive overall experience with the store.
- 98% of shoppers agreed T4SS lets them spend less of their own money on classroom supplies, consistent with 97% last year.
- Since the 2021-2022 school year, T4SS has grown the number of unique teachers served by 46%, unique schools served by 15%, and total shops by 17%.

St. Lucie County Education Foundation

Working Together for Success – Teachers First Grants

Total Teacher Impact: 1,962
Total Student Impact: 26,380



In a second-grade classroom at Palm Pointe K-8, a small STEM grant turned an ordinary math and science unit into something students still talk about. "It allowed my students to think like mathematicians and scientists, collaborate like engineers, and experience STEM in a way that felt joyful, accessible, and empowering," said teacher Kristina Barrett, whose classroom was one of many across the district to receive funding through the Teachers First Grants program.

St. Lucie Public Schools span every grade level and a wide range of subject areas, from literacy and STEM to career and technical education, and district leaders wanted to strengthen classroom instruction while giving direct support to struggling students. Teachers needed the flexibility to bring targeted, hands-on strategies into their own classrooms, from project-based learning to new approaches for reaching students who needed extra support.

Across 29 schools and every grade from Pre-K through 12, the Teachers First Grants program funded 47 classroom and districtwide projects. Educators used the funding to purchase 2,231 books for One School, One Book programs at three schools, along with classroom equipment, flexible seating, and other hands-on instructional materials. At four schools, teachers restructured math instruction around Building Thinking Classrooms, using vertical whiteboards to spark collaborative problem-solving, while White City Elementary's Light & Shadow Explorers project engaged students in interdisciplinary STEM investigations.

By the end of the school year, academic achievement had climbed across every core subject area compared to the previous year's baseline, with gains reaching nearly every school in the district.

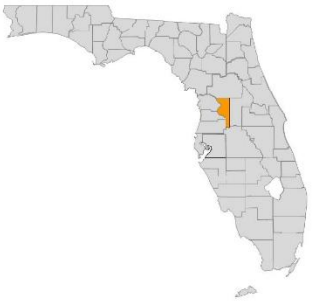
Results

- ELA proficiency rose from 48% to 58% in grade 5 and from 54% to 63% in grade 7.
- Math proficiency increased from 51% to 59% in grade 5 and from 62% to 65% in grade 8.
- Science proficiency grew from 49% to 53% in grade 8.
- Civics proficiency rose from 69% to 78%, and U.S. History proficiency rose from 67% to 73%.
- The district's overall state accountability score rose to 87, reflecting continued improvement across all assessed subject areas.

Sumter Schools Enhancement Foundation

Charting the Course: From High School to Higher Education

Total Teacher Impacted: 112
Total Student Impacted: 6,028



For one student in Sumter County's mentoring program, years of meetings with a mentor built academic, career, and life skills the student calls invaluable, and they describe the experience as “an incredible privilege.” Now heading to college, that same student points to something as practical as a laptop as the thing that will let them focus on coursework instead of worrying about how to afford a computer.

Sumter County high school students needed a structured bridge between classroom instruction and the realities of life after graduation, whether that meant college, military service, or the workforce. Local leaders identified career and technical readiness, graduation rates, and student resilience as priority areas, aiming to close achievement gaps that could otherwise limit students' options once they left high school.

The Sumter Schools Enhancement Foundation's Charting the Course program paired students with mentors for sustained academic and personal guidance, then layered in career-readiness workshops covering topics like personal finance, stress management, job searching, and financial aid navigation. Students explored postsecondary paths firsthand through campus tours of the University of South Florida, Lake Technical College, and Lake-Sumter State College, and practiced professional networking with local employers at a dedicated student hiring fair.

Together, these efforts reached students across every grade level in Sumter County and translated into tangible gains in graduation readiness, academic performance, and career preparedness.

Results

- 100% of 12th grade mentoring participants graduated on time and enrolled in postsecondary education.
- Workshop completion among 9th–12th graders rose to 78.6%, up from 75%.
- Knowledge of postsecondary programs and available resources nearly quadrupled among 9th–11th graders, from 12% to 45% and 9% to 70% respectively.
- Mentoring participants maintained a cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.39.
- STEM-specific industry certifications increased 19.7%, from 122 to 146.

Suwannee Education Foundation

Leaders 4 Today

Total Teacher Impacted: 56
Total Student Impacted: 1,886



At the start of the school year, only 14 percent of students in one Suwannee County first-grade classroom could read proficiently, and just 6 percent could handle grade-level math. By spring, those numbers had climbed to 63 percent and 74 percent. Two students earned top scores in reading, two more topped out in math, and one posted the highest math score of any first grader in the district. Their teacher credited grant-funded reusable learning stations and hands-on materials for the turnaround. She said the resources sparked a renewed love of reading and mathematical thinking among her students.

The Suwannee Education Foundation created Leaders 4 Today to strengthen educator capacity and raise student achievement in literacy, STEM, and financial literacy, while supporting struggling students and reinforcing quality teaching across the district. The initiative works to put innovative, hands-on classroom resources directly in teachers' hands so they can design engaging, student-centered lessons without added cost to their schools.

The Foundation's STEM Initiative delivered hands-on materials to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, opening up more opportunities for inquiry-based, experiential learning. Grant funds also supported literacy resources at Suwannee Opportunity School and financial literacy programming that introduced students to investing, market volatility, and personal finance concepts. Teacher survey responses showed overwhelmingly positive impacts on educator sustainability, effectiveness, and retention. The Foundation will continue expanding opportunities for innovative classroom projects, hands-on STEM experiences, and collaborative learning environments while further strengthening educator support systems and student-centered instructional practices throughout the district.

Across the district, participating classrooms saw measurable gains in academic performance, student engagement, and instructional effectiveness throughout the year.

Results

- Approximately 1,886 students and more than 50 educators were served through the Teacher Mini Grant Program and STEM Initiative.
- A fifth-grade social studies classroom rose from 41% proficiency on FAST PM2 to 68% on FAST PM3.
- Students identified as at risk for reading deficiencies at Suwannee Opportunity School showed continued literacy gains and increased engagement.
- Teacher survey results showed positive impacts on educator effectiveness, sustainability, and retention districtwide, reinforced by the Suwannee County Teacher of the Year Banquet.

Taylor County Education Foundation

Being our Bulldog Best

Total Teacher Impacted: 22
Total Student Impacted: 450



When veteran teachers at Taylor County Elementary School sat down for a new reading strategies training, many weren't expecting much. They had been through plenty of trainings before. But according to Principal Rachel Popell, several teachers called it the best training they had ever attended, largely because the presenter was a current classroom teacher who understood exactly what they faced every day.

Across Taylor County Schools, too many students were falling behind in core literacy, math, and science skills, and teachers needed stronger tools to reach struggling students while sharpening their own instructional practice. The foundation named literacy and teaching quality as urgent priorities, recognizing that better equipped teachers were essential to turning around stubbornly low proficiency rates in early reading, math, and science.

The grant funded "Uncomplicated Ed Roadmaps to Reading Benchmarks" training for teachers, paired with dedicated time working alongside a math and reading consultant to strengthen curriculum maps and lesson plans. At Taylor County Middle School, funding also expanded hands on science instruction, increasing both the number of students visiting the science lab and the number of hands on learning experiences offered.

The investment led to a district wide shift in classroom instruction and measurable gains in student proficiency across reading, math, and science by year's end.

Results

- 2nd grade reading proficiency rose from 37% to 40%.
- 4th grade math proficiency rose from 46% to 54%.
- 8th grade science proficiency rose from 27% to 56%.
- Classroom instruction evaluations improved following consultant support.
- Taylor County Middle School saw increased student participation in hands on science lab activities.

Union County Education Foundation

Union County Free Teacher Supply Store Initiative

Total Teacher Impacted: 142
Total Student Impacted: 1,881



When a Union County student showed up to class one morning without the basic supplies she needed, her teacher didn't have to choose between spending her own money or letting the child feel left out. She simply walked down the hall to her school's H.E.A.R.T. Closet, gathered what was needed, and returned to class without missing a beat. No personal expense, no delay in the lesson, and no student singled out for arriving empty handed.

The Union County Education Foundation created the H.E.A.R.T. Closet initiative to make sure every educator in Union County Public Schools could get essential classroom supplies without dipping into their own pockets. The effort was designed to support teaching quality and resiliency across the district, addressing a need educators had long absorbed quietly and largely on their own.

Through the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations Matching Grant and local matching funds, H.E.A.R.T. Closets were stocked in every public school in the district with a wide range of instructional and student supplies, from writing utensils and paper products to art materials and hygiene items. Educators could visit their school's closet at no cost throughout the year, restocking their classrooms as needs arose. Inventory was tracked and replenished based on what teachers actually used, and every dollar of grant funding went toward approved classroom supplies.

A follow-up survey of participating educators found that the impact of the H.E.A.R.T. Closet extended well beyond restocked shelves, shaping how teachers felt about their work and their future in the classroom.

Results

- Of 89 educators surveyed, 94.4% said the H.E.A.R.T. Closet made teaching feel more sustainable.
- 75.3% reported it made them more effective educators.
- 76.4% said the program positively influenced their desire to continue teaching in Union County.
- 86.5% said they would continue utilizing the H.E.A.R.T. Closet if it remained available.
- All grant funds were expended on approved classroom supplies, with no funds left unused.

FUTURES Foundation for Volusia County Schools

Foundations for the Future: Increasing Access, Achievement, and Instructional Excellence

Total Teacher Impacted: 2,384
Total Student Impacted: 4,871



For Michael, a student at Spruce Creek High School in Port Orange, the district's entrepreneurship program built more than business skills. "I would not have the same level of confidence in presenting today," he said. Using NFTE curriculum funded through the matching grant, Michael developed a business pitch around his own invention, the ThunderTag, a weather-tracking device for outdoor workers, and earned third place in the district Pitch Competition.

Michael's story is one of several student breakthroughs funded across multiple subjects. Across Volusia County Schools, students needed additional pathways to reach grade level proficiency in reading, math, and science, while teachers needed sustained professional support to keep pace with the district's goal of engaging every student in high levels of learning every day. The need spanned career and technical training, literacy instruction, STEM coursework, and the everyday classroom supplies that let teachers focus on instruction rather than gaps in materials.

The grant funded 17 projects spanning both student learning and teacher support. Online learning platforms including Everglades Math, IXL, MobyMax, Magnetic Reading, and Penda Science gave students targeted practice outside the school day, while schools such as Ormond Beach Middle and Pathways Elementary used the funding for small group instruction, tutoring, and benchmark aligned digital resources. On the teacher side, the grant supported New Teacher Academy, Volusia LEADS!, and Volusia MENTORS!, along with stipends for professional learning in science instruction and collaborative planning. FUTURES also expanded its Teacher Resource Store, providing classroom supplies so teachers could focus on instruction rather than sourcing materials on their own.

Together, these efforts reached thousands of students and teachers across Volusia County Schools, with measurable gains in reading and math proficiency showing up at multiple school sites.

Results

- 19 of 28 DaVinci Club students (68%) at Citrus Grove Elementary made a learning gain on the ELA FAST test.
- Pathways Elementary math learning gains reached 70%, a 15 point increase over the previous year.
- New Teacher Academy achieved a 98% completion rate, and Volusia MENTORS participants rated the program's impact on their professional practice 4.6 out of 5.
- FUTURES funded 17 projects districtwide, including 601 hours of tutoring and 10,160 hours of supplemental online learning.

Walton Education Foundation

2025 Classroom Grant Program

Total Teacher Impacted: 138
Total Student Impacted: 6,880



One Freeport High School agriculture class spent the year tackling a real-world problem with no set answer, building and testing solutions and adapting when they didn't work. The teacher credited the Classroom Grant Program with making that project possible, and by year's end, 45% more students in the class had earned their Tractor Safety Certification than the year before.

The Classroom Grant Program exists to close the gap between what Walton County teachers want to do in their classrooms and what school budgets can actually fund. Eligible across all 19 campuses in the district, the program is built to reach students in STEM, literacy, teaching quality, and support for struggling students, giving every teacher a path to request funding aligned to their school's own goals rather than a one-size-fits-all model.

In 2025, the Foundation awarded 58 grants to encourage school-wide and grade-level collaboration. Teachers used the funding on tools directly tied to their classroom goals, from computers, headphones, and an inflatable planetarium to a pottery wheel, a tower garden, and more than 600 BEST books, all tracked and reported through the Find It Fund It platform.

The program's reach extended across grade levels and priority areas, from elementary literacy classrooms to high school agriculture programs, with teachers citing measurable gains in engagement, skill-building, and academic proficiency tied directly to their funded projects.

Results

- 58 grants awarded across 15 school campuses, reaching 6,880 students in grades Pre-K through 12.
- Tractor Safety Certifications rose 45% among 60 high school agriculture students.
- A third-grade literacy grant lifted BEST Book proficiency to 79% by PM2, surpassing its year-end goal of 69%.
- 100% of students in one classroom used a pottery wheel, up from 95% who had never tried it before.
- ELA FAST proficiency for one group of elementary students climbed from 33% at PM1 to 62% by PM3, alongside fewer behavior referrals.
- Overall student proficiency across funded campuses increased 3%, to 73%.

Washington County Educational Foundation

STEM/STEAM Classroom Modernization Grant

Total Teacher Impact: 20
Total Student Impact: 134



Across Washington County, classrooms serving students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade lacked the technology needed to keep pace with modern STEM instruction. The Washington County Educational Foundation identified STEM as a district priority, recognizing that hands-on classroom tools and updated equipment were essential to giving students meaningful exposure to science, technology, engineering, and math.

To close that gap, the Foundation invited teachers across the district to apply for funding to modernize their classrooms. Awarded funds outfitted STEM and STEAM stations with updated technology and the consumable supplies needed to keep them running, reaching pre-K through twelfth grade students districtwide. The program is projected to help 70 percent of participating students reach or exceed Level 3 on the FAST progress monitoring assessment in reading and math.

Results:

- 25-26 end of year 4th Reading scores for Florida Assessment for Student Testing were 63% level three and above. 24-25 end of the year scores were 55% level three and above--an increase of 8%.
- 25-26 end of year 4th Math scores for Florida Assessment for Student Testing were 66% level three and above. 24-25 end of the year scores were 57% level three and above, a 9% increase.
- 134 4th grade students benefited from this grant.



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