

# Showcasing & Sharing Successful School Redesign Initiatives

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



*Dr. Alice Lindsay, Director Florida and the Islands Regional Comprehensive Center at ETS*

I hope this school year is off to a great start. I want to thank many of you for sharing your successful journey of redesign at the Florida Association of School Administrators (FASA) Conference in July. Attendees were able to learn some strategies they can use as they go about improving their own schools.

As we embark on another year I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our plans for year four. This is the final year of the Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center (FLICC) grant and as we wind down, Secondary Schools Redesign Initiative (SSRI) efforts will be focused on building leadership capacity to sustain the important work of secondary school redesign beyond the life of the grant. In keeping with this theme, we will continue to work closely with Steve Barkley, who will help facilitate our professional conversations around sustainability. Each district will also have the opportunity to schedule one day for Barkley to visit the district to provide support and assist in moving your redesign efforts forward.

During year four we will also be working closely with the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) to help support intervention strategies addressed in the state's Differentiated Accountability Plan. Since improving the quality of instruction has been a continuing theme of our SSRI work, we will be working with the FLDOE to introduce Lesson Study as a vehicle to advance the development of more rigorous and relevant lessons. Dr. Lois Easton, author of Powerful Designs for Professional Learning, and a leading consultant in the field of Lesson Study, will be conducting a series of regional institutes on Lesson Study. These institutes will be designed to sharply focus the work of your Professional Learning Communities on improving student achievement through the use of lesson study protocols. District teams will be invited to attend. Invitations will be coming out soon with more specifics about dates, locations and intended participants. Although exact locations are still being finalized, the schedule for these institutes is listed below:

Dec. 17, 16	Region 1	Tallahassee
Nov. 16, 17	Region 2	Ocala
Nov. 19, 20	Region 2	St. Augustine
Dec. 3, 4	Region 3	Orlando
Dec. 7, 8	Region 4	Tampa
Dec. 10, 11	Region 4	Naples
Dec. 14, 15	Region 5	Boca Raton

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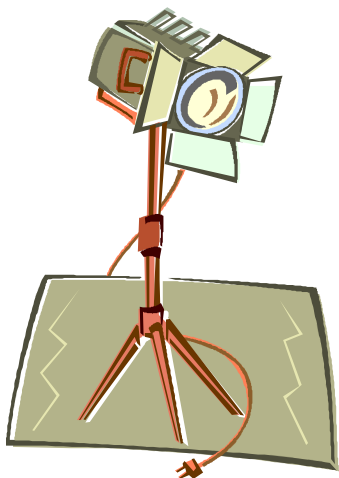
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As the SSRI project comes to a close, we want to share the exciting work of our participating schools and districts. In order to expand capacity around the state to promote the work of secondary school redesign, SSRI schools will be invited to develop a school profile that showcases their successful redesign initiatives. These profiles will be posted on the FLDOE and FLICC web sites so other secondary schools around the state can access them and learn more about successful secondary school redesign efforts. Site visit protocols will also be developed in the event interested schools request a visit to learn more about your secondary redesign efforts.

As in the past three years, your work will continue to be supported by your SSRI coach and the FLICC team and their partners. We look forward to an exciting year ahead!

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### **SPOT LIGHT on Elise Russo, Ed.D.**



Elise Russo became part of the SSRI family in 2009. She serves as the SSRI contact for the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE)/Successful Practices. Russo is a senior associate at ICLE serving as the lead for programs and services in elementary education, English language learning, special education, and maximizing the potential of successful schools. She is the lead for International Center consultant recruitment, training, and support.

Prior to joining ICLE, Russo held administrative positions, including Executive Director for secondary education, district science chair K-12, and administrator for secondary curriculum, in several school districts in New York state. The bulk of her career was spent at the New York State Education Department where she was responsible for working with teachers from across the state to develop the science core curriculum documents aligned with state learning standards as well as the development of state science examinations for grades 4, 8, and high school. In addition, Russo worked closely with the New York City Board of Education to provide support to schools under registration review.

Russo holds a doctorate from the State University of New York at Albany in curriculum and instruction, and teaching certificates in preK-6 education, biology, chemistry, earth science, and for school district administrator. She has served as a science consultant to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). She has also written several science books to support students as they prepare for state examinations as well as elementary texts aligned to science standards in several states. Russo began her career in education teaching high school science in upstate New York and remains active in professional organizations, serving on various committees and executive boards.

If you haven't had the opportunity to meet and chat with Russo be sure to do so; she is a wonderful person to know and has a wealth of information to share.

## Lessons Learned from Nation's Most Successful Schools



At the Florida Association of School Administrators (FASA) Leadership Conference, July 26-29, Secondary School Redesign Initiative (SSRI) coaches, partners, and administrators in participating schools and districts had the privilege of attending Dr. Willard Daggett's keynote, "The Nation's Most Successful Schools: Lessons Learned."

For those who have had the opportunity to hear Dr. Daggett in previous sessions, his presentation continued to provide the listener with updated economic news and the implications for educators. The following eight Components and Implementation Steps for School Excellence were integrated throughout his presentation:

1. Create a culture to support relationships, rigor and relevance for ALL students.
2. Build and use data to guide whole-school/district reform.
3. Create and support leadership teams.
4. Define student learning expectations.
5. Concentrate on effective instructional practices.
6. Address organizational structures.
7. Monitor student progress.
8. Review and refine process.

Those of us involved in secondary school redesign can relate to the integration and application of these eight components into their schools through commitments to the Learning Criteria, Professional Learning Communities and the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships (RR&R) model. As we continue into year four of our SSRI, schools and districts will have the opportunity to further embed lessons learned and network with others who are moving toward excellence.



Dr. Daggett also took the opportunity to make some introductory remarks at the Secondary School Redesign showcase presentations. To summarize his words, he paid tribute to Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center (FLICC) under the leadership of Dr. Alice Lindsay, director, and to Karen Underwood, previous director and current consultant. He acknowledged FLICC's foresight in providing opportunities for schools and districts to develop redesign initiatives based on their respective district and school needs. Such efforts have moved the state of Florida ahead in ways that are worthy of being emulated by others.



## SIX SCHOOLS SHOWCASE THEIR SUCCESSES at FASA CONFERENCE

On Tuesday, July 28 attendees at the FASA conference were given the opportunity to hear from six schools who have participated in SSRI since 2006. Dr. Daggett and the audience focused on the presentations as presenters shared their successes and outlined the processes, procedures, and proven research strategies they utilized. The program description of each presentation follows along with some pictures of the audience and presenters. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the presenters.



School Name	Presenters	Session Description
<p><b>Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred, Inc., Polk County</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 863-295-5955  <a href="http://www.discoveryacademy">http://www.discoveryacademy</a></p>	<p><b>Carol Fulks</b> Executive Director  <b>Kevin Warren</b> Principal  <b>Darryl Jemison</b> Assistant Principal</p>	<p><b>Out with School Improvement Plan – In with Learning Criteria and Learning Communities</b></p> <p>With our SACS and charter renewals both facing us this year, we decided to work smarter, not harder. Our Leadership Council worked in learning communities and used the format of the Learning Criteria to develop our long range plan for improvement, data gathering and self-study for all areas of our school life.</p>
<p><b>Lake Butler Middle School, Union County</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 386-496-3046  <a href="http://www.union.k12.fl.us/LBMS/index.htm">http://www.union.k12.fl.us/LBMS/index.htm</a></p>	<p><b>Rhonda Clyatt</b> Reading Coach  <b>Bobbie Morgan</b> Director of Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p><b>Boys and Their Brains</b></p> <p>While examining our FCAT results, Thinklink scores and discipline data to make curriculum decisions, we noticed a pattern over the past several years. We seemed to be missing the mark with our adolescent boys. This session described how the reading coach facilitated a book study based on <i>The Minds of Boys</i> by Michael Gurian to foster discussion of ideas about how to revise teaching strategies to meet the needs of “middle school” boys.</p>

<p><b>Martin County High School, Martin County</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 772-219-1800 <a href="http://mchs.sbmc.org/">http://mchs.sbmc.org/</a></p>	<p><b>Ellie Thompson</b> Math Teacher (pictured below) <b>Virginia Skinner</b> Assistant Principal (not pictured)</p> 	<p><b>Using a Differentiated Approach to Professional Development to Implement Rigorous/Relevant Instruction</b></p> <p>How does a school train a diverse group of teachers to implement rigorous and relevant instruction? Presenters shared a process that was used to guide teachers through the creation of a Gold Seal lesson. Recognizing that teachers are at different levels of understanding and implementation, we modeled differentiated instruction in our professional development plan. Samples of professional development activities and Gold Seal lessons were shared.</p>
<p><b>Marion Technical Institute, Marion County</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 352-671-4765 <a href="http://www.marion.k12.fl.us/schools/mti/">www.marion.k12.fl.us/schools/mti/</a></p>  <p>Diane Clinton</p>	<p><b>Mark Vianello</b> Principal <b>Stacey Rutherford</b> Coordinator <b>Diane Clinton</b> Internship Coordinator <b>Brian O'Connor</b> Senior Manager, Technical Operations Lockheed Martin Ocala</p>	<p><b>Economic Trends and Education</b></p> <p>The forecast for the global economy teeters and totters affecting each of us – especially educators. Can America’s educational system keep up? Not without significant change. As the world economy evolves, new employment and business opportunities will develop, rapidly changing what is expected from high school graduates. The only way for America to keep up is for business to get in the classroom - literally. Marion Technical Institute is a model for this change as it has created true partnership with business and community leaders including county and state “movers and shakers.” MTI offers high school completion, career certifications, career coaches, internships, and college credit simultaneously. This session described how industry stakeholders share responsibility for student success by overseeing a challenging academic curriculum that places learning in the context of real-world applications, a demanding technical curriculum that delivers knowledge required for high-skill/high-wage employment, and a work based-learning curriculum that offers students opportunities to learn through internships, corporate training, and job shadowing. The school has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, identified as an ICLE model high school, selected as a Florida CHOICE replication site, and garnered multiple other awards.</p>

<p><b>South Fork High School, Martin County</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 772-219-1840 <a href="http://sfhs.sbmc.org/">http://sfhs.sbmc.org/</a></p>	<p><b>Annabel Haskett</b> English Teacher (pictured below)</p> 	<p><b>Fearless Freshmen: Success Is the Only Option</b></p> <p>The 2008-2009 school year kicked off with the opening of South Fork's new 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center. Our presentation focused on the lessons learned in our first year, student achievement trends, attendance, and innovative activities that have been implemented to capture student interests. Freshman faculty interviews as well as student interviews were included to share a variety of perspectives on our efforts to ease the transition into high school.</p>
<p><b>New Smyrna Beach High School</b></p> <p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 386-424-2555 <a href="http://schools.volusia.k12.fl.us/nsbhigh/">http://schools.volusia.k12.fl.us/nsbhigh/</a></p>	 <p><b>Dr. Carol Kelley</b> Principal (left)</p> <p><b>Alicia Parker</b> Teacher Leader (right)</p>	<p><b>Freshman Plus: A Multi-Faceted Approach for At-Risk 9<sup>th</sup> Graders</b></p> <p>The transition from middle school to high school can be a challenge for adolescents. Some struggling students have more difficulty being academically and socially successful. The "Freshman Plus" program at New Smyrna Beach High School has tackled this challenge with a multi-faceted approach utilizing academic instruction, personal/social counseling, and special education support services to identified low-performing ninth grade students. An overview of the program, data collection techniques and interpretation, and large group counseling strategies were presented.</p>



As the picture indicates the sessions were well attended and the audiences were attentive listeners.

# Florida and the Islands Regional Comprehensive Center at ETS

**Florida and the Islands  
Regional Comprehensive  
Center at ETS**  
— Florida, Puerto Rico, and the  
U.S. Virgin Islands

[Alice Lindsay](#), Ed.D., Director  
[Karen Underwood](#), Consultant  
SSRI Project Lead  
[Bridget McGilvra](#), M.Ed., Puerto  
Rico DOE Liaison  
[John Lockwood](#), Ph.D., Florida  
DOE Liaison  
[Evelyn Dosal](#), Staff Assistant III

## Address

**Florida and the Islands  
Regional Comprehensive  
Center at ETS**  
1000 North Ashley Drive, Suite  
312  
Tampa, FL 33602

**Phone: 1-800-756-9003**

**Fax : 813-228-0632**

**HTTP://www.ets.org/flicc**

Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center (FLICC) is operated by Educational Testing Service (ETS). The Center is one of 16 regional centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The mission of the regional technical assistance centers is to help build capacity of state departments of education to assist low-performing districts and schools close the achievement gap and meet the goals of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. FLICC, located in Tampa, FL serves the state of Florida and the territories of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands.

The goals of the Center are focused on 5 priorities:

1. Improving teacher quality
2. Enhancing school and district leadership quality
3. Implementing data and research-based strategies to turn around low performing schools
4. Creating strategies to meet the needs of special populations
5. Increasing community and stakeholder involvement

The Center offers technical assistance in the following areas:

- Implementing school improvement efforts to help meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements
- Identifying and adopting instructional and assessment methods that have been proven effective through scientifically based research, especially for students with special needs
- Designing programs and strategies and allocating resources to recruit, train, and retain talented teachers and school leaders
- Enhancing assessment and accountability systems

## PARTNERS

### David C. Anchin Center

College of Education

University of South Florida

4202 East Fowler Ave., EDU  
162  
Tampa, FL 33620

Contact Information

Phone: 813-974-9793

Fax: 813-974-6126

Christine Crocco, Senior  
Program Associate  
E-mail: [crocco@coedu.usf.edu](mailto:crocco@coedu.usf.edu)

Barbara McClamma, Senior  
Program Associate  
E-mail: [bclam@aol.com](mailto:bclam@aol.com)

**HTTP://anchin.coedu.usf.ed**

### FASA, Florida Association of School Administrators

326 Williams Street

Tallahassee, FL 32303

Contact Information

Phone: 850-224-3626

Toll Free (Florida) 800-593-  
3626

Fax: 850-224-3892

Jim Warford, Executive  
Director/CEO

E-mail: [jwarford@fasa.net](mailto:jwarford@fasa.net)

Mike Tremor, Associate  
Director

E-mail: [mtremor@fasa.net](mailto:mtremor@fasa.net)

**HTTP://www.fasa.net**

### International Center for Leadership in Education/Successful Practices Network

1587 Route 146

Rexford, NY 12148

Contact Information

Phone 518-399-2776 Ext 235

Fax: 518-399-7607

Elise Russo, Senior Associate

E-mail: [Elise@leadered.com](mailto:Elise@leadered.com)

**HTTP://www.successfulpractic  
es.org**