



“The Intersection of Progress and Practice: Actualizing the Science of Reading with Moonshot Moments”

**A Crucible of Practice Salon
December 10, 2024 / 12:30 – 2 pm EST**

CONVERSATION LEADS



Leslie Connelly
Moonshot Acceleration Team Coordinator

The Learning Alliance
School District of Indian River County, FL

Leslie Connelly received her BA in Elementary Education from Flagler College and is a certified K-6 Florida Educator. She earned a MA in Educational Leadership from the American College of Education. Connelly has a strong background in foundational literacy and has received certifications in evidence-research based programs, such as Wilson Reading System. Her experience includes teaching kindergarten through fifth grade, serving as a school-based Literacy Coach and District Literacy Specialist, and currently is the Coordinator of the Moonshot Acceleration Team at Vero Beach Elementary, a Moonshot School. She is employed by Indian River School District and works in partnership with The Learning Alliance to develop teacher knowledge, skills and implementation grounded in the Science of Reading. Her passion lies in providing students with high quality literacy experiences that further develop the love of reading while ensuring they are reading on grade level by 3rd grade.



Tiffany Hogan, Ph.D.
Speech & Language (SAiL) Literacy Lab Director

MGH Institute of Health Professions

Tiffany P. Hogan, PhD, CCC-SLP is a Professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston, Director of the Speech and Language (SAiL) Literacy Lab and the Center for Translational Research: Implementation Science,

and Dissemination for Equity, (cTIDE), and Research Associate at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Hogan has published over 100 papers on the genetic, neurologic, and behavioral links between oral and written language development, with a focus on improving assessment and intervention in schools, especially for neurodiverse children with Developmental Language Disorder, Dyslexia, and/or Speech Sound Disorders. Her advocacy for children with language, speech, and literacy differences has led her to co-found a DLD informational website: www.dldandme.org, organize an annual conference on implementation science, and contribute information for articles in numerous news outlets including the New York Times and the Boston Globe. Dr. Hogan is committed to implementing science and translating research into practice. She serves on national committees of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and is an elected board member of the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading. Follow Dr. Hogan's podcast here: [SeeHearSpeak Podcast](#)



David K. Moore, Ed.D.
Superintendent

School District of Indian River County, FL

Dr. David K. Moore's tenure as Superintendent of Schools in Indian River County (SDIRC) has been marked by unprecedented academic improvements over the last three years. Under Dr. Moore's leadership, the District improved its state ranking by an impressive 29 positions during the 2023-2024 academic year, moving from 38th in 2018-2019 to 9th for the District Grade. This progress represents the highest rate of improvement of any district in the State of Florida since 2018-2019. Additionally, in 2023-2024, state assessment results showed SDIRC students outperformed state averages in all tested areas. The percentage of schools earning a school grade of "A" or "B" soared from 47% in 2018-2019 to an extraordinary 95% in 2023-2024. Furthermore, the District's most recent high school graduation rate (2022-2023) reached 96%, ranking 3rd in the State of Florida. These achievements are not only unparalleled in the District's history but also set a new standard for educational excellence in Florida.

Dr. Moore has also been the driving force behind transformative improvements in the District's financial stewardship. Upon his arrival, the District faced financial instability and a declining fund balance. Under Dr. Moore's guidance, the District implemented comprehensive organizational and budgetary accountability systems that prioritized data-driven resource allocation and responsible spending. These efforts resulted in a significant shift in financial ratings from negative to stable to positive, as well as the creation of a healthy district fund balance. Since the 2019-2020 school year, district restructuring and reorganization efforts have generated cost savings of approximately \$4.5 million.

Moreover, Dr. Moore successfully negotiated a multi-year teacher contract, securing salary raises and operating millage to provide the fiscal resources necessary for expanding district supports. His leadership also led to the establishment of the Indian River Education Fund, the District's first direct support organization, which engages the private sector in intellectual and financial investment in the District. Additionally, the expansion of school choice and enhancements in instructional quality under Dr. Moore's leadership have solidified renewed trust and confidence in Indian River County's public schools. Dr. Moore's transformative impact extends beyond finances and academic outcomes. He spearheaded the development of the ACHIEVE 2025 District Strategic Plan, implemented the African American Achievement Plan, and built a robust system of instructional and leadership support to drive continuous improvement in classroom instruction. His initiatives have included leadership academies for administrators and instructional coaches and the establishment of a data-driven decision-making culture that permeates all levels of the district. Recognized as a "Superintendent to Watch 2021" by the National School Public Relations Association, Dr. Moore has further enhanced his leadership through prestigious professional programs, including the Yale University Fellowship for Educational Leaders and the Florida Chief Executive Officers-District Leadership Program. Notably, among the 28 appointed superintendents in Florida, only two rank higher in seniority, reflecting his longevity and commitment to the mission of education. Dr. Moore's leadership is characterized by his unwavering dedication to educational excellence and his extraordinary ability to drive transformative change in public schools. His results in Indian River County are not just a testament to his vision, but a powerful example of what can be achieved when a leader combines strategic acumen with a deep commitment to the students and communities they serve.



Danielle "Nell" Thompson, Ph.D.
President

The Reading League Montana

Danielle 'Nell' Thompson, PhD CCC-SLP, is a literacy leader, teacher of teachers, coach and, insatiably curious about all things that make people's lives better. She is a dynamic, fun, engaging human with tried-and-true experience in early childhood and school-age language and literacy education, language development and disorders, reading acquisition and disorders, staff wellness and mindfulness, positive thinking, and building positive change and momentum in schools. It has been said that *"Dr. Thompson is an asset to any school, district, leadership team, and/or state that employs her because her wisdom is deep, her practicality is on target and her happiness is infectious!"*

From her rural roots in North Dakota to her time spent as a Peace Corps volunteer in a Dominican Republic School for the Deaf, she spent a decade working as a PreK-12 Speech Language Pathologist and Teacher in public schools and Head Starts. Then one day, Dr. Nell realized she needed to do more for those who could not read. She spent the next

decade studying and researching, she became one of the original national Lexia LETRS trainers, she focused on reading development and disorders for her doctorate, and she obtained two leadership coaching certifications. Currently, she reaches and teaches leaders and educators as the President and Founder of The Transformative Reading Teacher Group, Founder and creative force for change behind the Big Sky Literacy Summit, Language is Everything, and she's the volunteer President of The Reading League Montana. Dr. Nell is also a Certified High-Performance Coach, a Maxwell Certified Leadership Speaker and Coach, founder of the Literacy Leadership Mentorship Series, and the co-author of The Transformational Literacy Leader course.

MODERATORS



Barbara Hammond
CEO and Co-Founder

The Learning Alliance

Barbara Hammond is the CEO and one of the three original founders of The Learning Alliance. She has a B.A. in Economics from Williams College and a Master's in Public and Private Management from Yale University. Barbara was a former consultant with Bain and Company in Boston and The Director of Strategic Planning for Shawmut Corporation in Boston. She now resides in Vero Beach, Florida and is the mother of two boys whose life stories inspired her to start The Learning Alliance as they learned self-leadership and resilience in the face of their learning challenges. Prior to starting The Learning Alliance, Barbara was Chairman of the Board of the Mental Health Association in Vero Beach where she spent 10 years helping the organization develop their strategic planning and fundraising activities.



Liz Woody-Remington
Chief Academic Officer and Co-Founder

The Learning Alliance

Elizabeth Woody-Remington is the Chief Academic Officer and one of the three original founders of The Learning Alliance. She has a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Delaware and Masters in Special Ed-Learning Disabilities from American University. She is a learning specialist who has her own practice called *Bridges to Learning* and works individually and in small groups with children who are struggling with learning differences. She lives in Vero Beach, Florida, and is the mother of two boys both of whom struggle with LD issues.

