

## **Education Innovation and Research Program (EIR) Project Abstract**

**Applicant Name:** Texas A&M University Research Foundation

**Project Title:** Enable Middle-Graders with Powerful Reading Comprehension (**EMPOWER**)

**Type of Grant Requested:** (select one)      X Expansion

**Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses:** (select all that apply)

X Absolute Priority 1-- Field-Initiated Innovations: Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy

**Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses:** (select all that apply)

XX Competitive Preference Priority 1— Returning Education to the States

XX Competitive Preference Priority 2— Education Choice (High-Impact Tutoring)

**Total number of students to be served by the project:** 16,200

**Grade level(s) to be served by the project:** Grades 6-8.

**Definition of high-need students:** Students Eligible for a Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

**Brief description of project activities:** We will evaluate and scale the evidence-based Knowledge Acquisition and Transformation (KAT) practice-based professional development, web-based 360 degree supports to practitioners, teacher-led lessons (daily 15 minutes) , and the intelligent tutoring system for the structure strategy (ITSS) for 45 minutes weekly. We will gather data through school onboarding in five states and customize solutions based on state and local needs. A strong randomized controlled trial (RCT) will be conducted to gather impact and correlational evidence to establish the impact and scalability of the EMPOWER solutions for reading comprehension and motivation in middle grades.

**Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes:** The project has two goals: (1) Recruit and Onboard Schools and Create New KAT Resources for School Textbooks and State Standards for Grades 6-8 in Five States, and (2) Determine Impact, Cost, and Scalability Factors of EMPOWER Components. We will establish the impact estimates for the intervention and correlate fidelity and other components to the outcomes for general and special education students. Roadmaps to achieve success for 100% of students will be produced based on the findings.

**Summary of how the project is innovative:** This project taps highly scalable, effective, and efficient web-based tools that are customized to state and local needs. ITSS is a high impact tutoring system with What Works Clearinghouse strong evidence. The KAT-PBPD uses the same ITSS infrastructure for teacher professional development through asynchronous and synchronous scalable innovations. The innovation takes the four KAT modules that have been successfully deployed in upper elementary grades through the EIR KATE grant and creates new solutions for the middle grades.

**Other studies related to the proposed project:** S411A210002 EIR KATE for Elementary Grades and the SEED MOOV U423A180074

**Proposed implementation sites:** Arkansas, Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah.

**Organizations partnering with this project:** Texas A&M University Research Foundation, Tennessee Reading Research Center (Evaluator), Analytica Insights Inc. (Evaluator), Problem Solutions (Technology Platform), and State Teacher Ambassadors.