

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Action Item**  
August 31, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Review of Revised Turnaround Option Plan for School District of Jefferson County

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Consideration of Turnaround Option Plan for Approval

**AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION**

Section 1008.33, Florida Statutes

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Jefferson County has two schools that require a revised turnaround plan:

- Jefferson County Elementary School
- Jefferson County Middle/High School

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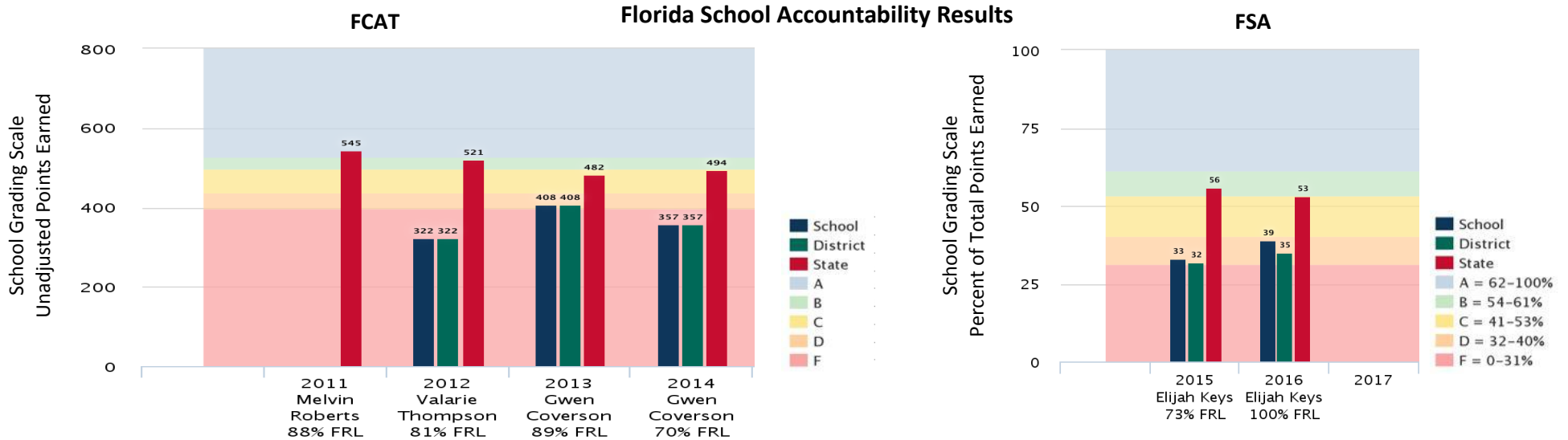
**Supporting Documentation Included:** School Data Profiles and Revised 2016-17 Turnaround Option Plan

**Invited Presenters:** Al Cooksey, Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools; Hershel Lyons, Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools; and Melissa Ramsey, Regional Executive Director, Bureau of School Improvement

## JEFFERSON COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### 2015-16 Turnaround Status: Implementing Year 2

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Baseline	2016
<b>School Grade</b>		F	D	F	D	D
Percent Points Earned		40%	51%	45%	33%	39%



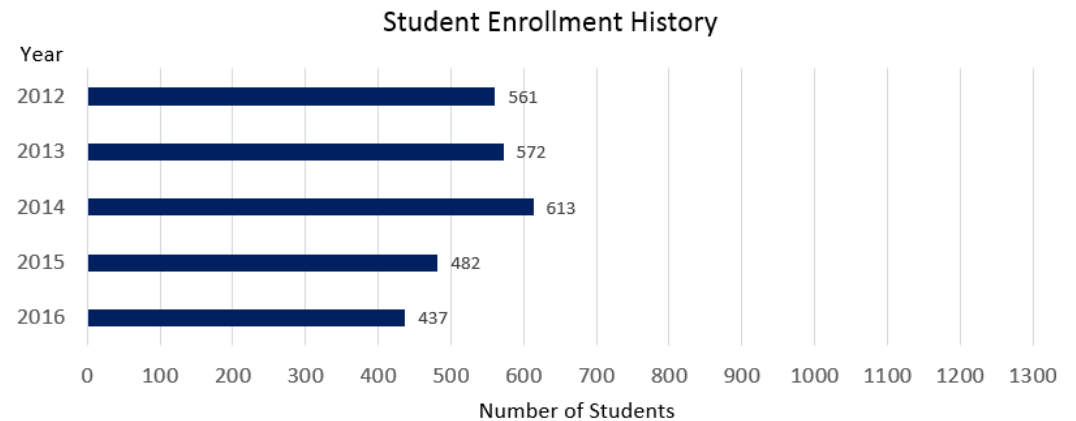
Percent of Teachers in VAM Classification 2015-2016				
Level (n)	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
School (9)	11%	67%	11%	11%
District (19)	16%	47%	11%	26%
State (51,022)	18%	54%	14%	15%

#### 2015-16 School Information

Grades Served: PreK-5  
 Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students: 100%  
 Percent of Minority Students: 81.2%  
 Percent of English Language Learners: 4.6%  
 Percent of Students with Disabilities: 20.6%

\* n = <10

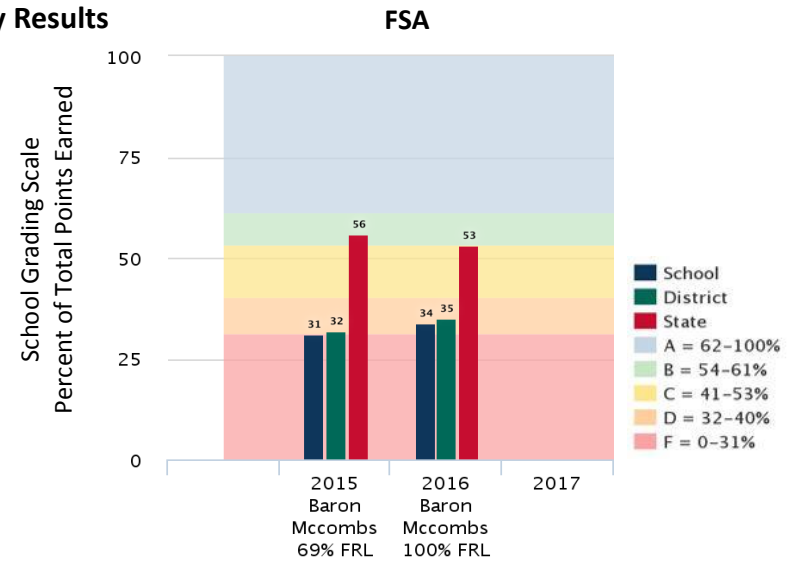
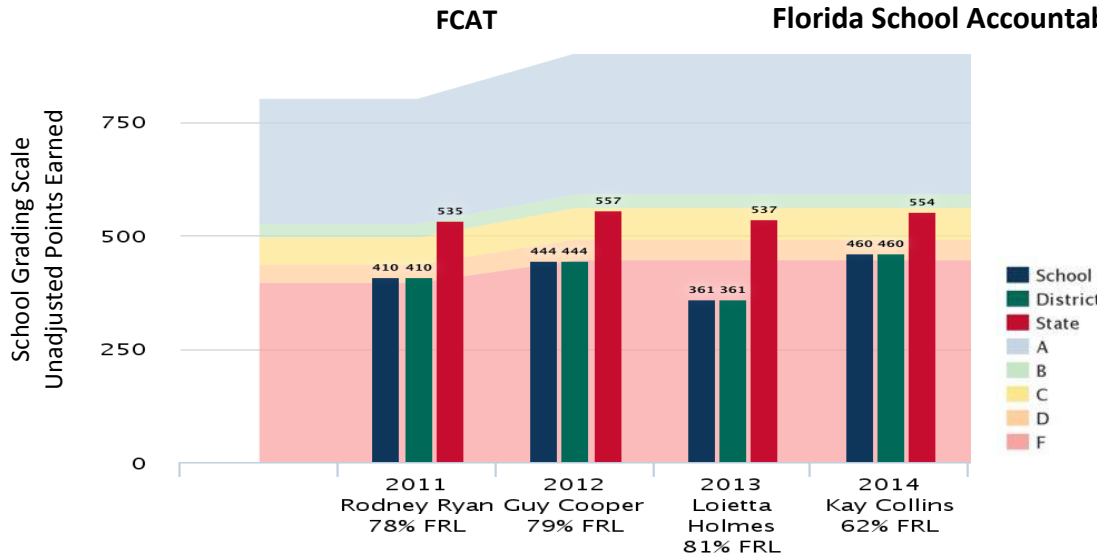
2016-17 Principal Elijah Keys (Confirmed by District 08/2016)



## JEFFERSON COUNTY MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

### 2015-16 Turnaround Status: Implementing Year 3

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Baseline	2016
<b>School Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>D</b>
Percent Points Earned	51%	48%	46%	50%	31%	34%



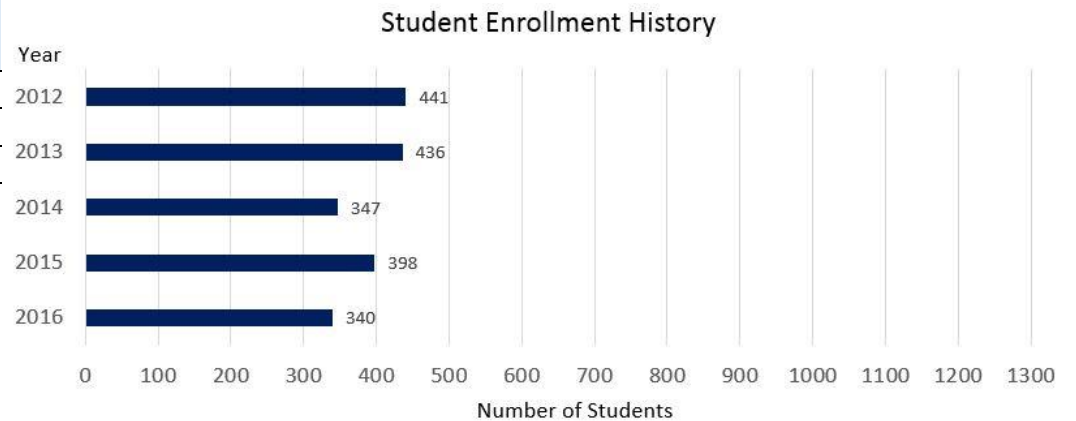
Percent of Teachers in VAM Classification 2015-2016				
Level (n)	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
School (9)	22%	33%	11%	33%
District (19)	16%	47%	11%	26%
State (51,022)	18%	54%	14%	15%

#### 2015-16 School Information

Grades Served: 6-12  
 Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students: 100%  
 Percent of Minority Students: 82.3%  
 Percent of English Language Learners: \*  
 Percent of Students with Disabilities: 13.2%

\* n < 10

2016-17 Principal Elijah Keys (Confirmed by District 08/2016)



## Jefferson County School District - Turnaround Option Plan 2016-2017 Final Addendum

### **Option: District-Managed Turnaround**

After review and inspection of our district's overall academic performance, coupled with a review of our financial status, the Jefferson County School District has determined that the services of an External Operator is not an option for school turnaround for Jefferson County schools. As noted in the correspondence from Commissioner Pam Stewart dated August 10, 2016, the school district faces a potential financial emergency. A financial emergency board has been appointed to assist the district in resolving the financial emergency. To this end, the Jefferson County School District is unable to fund external operators for the schools required to implement a turnaround plan. As outlined on the accompanying page, the cost for external operators for year one would be \$296,927.00. The district initially proposed the use of the Title I School Improvement funds, along with funds through School Improvement Grant, Cohort 4 (SIG4), if awarded. Commissioner Stewart shared that there were reservations with whether Title I funds could be used in the manner suggested.

Recognizing that we must improve our services to teaching and learning, the strategies listed below are being implemented, effective immediately.

- ❖ One principal has been assigned to oversee both the elementary and the middle high school. Mr. Key has a proven record of effectiveness in turning around low performing schools. In Jefferson County, he facilitated improvement at Jefferson Elementary by moving the school from an "F" to a "D". Results of the most recent assessment shows that the elementary school was on 2 percentage points from a letter grade of "C". Essentially, considering the size of the school, this percentage amounts to approximately three students.
- ❖ District Education Support team has been established and visit the elementary school weekly to conduct learning walks to support improved teacher instruction and student engagement. The district staff members will conduct learning walks, review student progress monitoring data, provide feedback and support, make recommendations, and mentor students and teachers.
- ❖ The District Leadership Team will meet weekly with the schools to ensure that students are progressing academically, socially and emotionally. Both organizational and program effectiveness will be assessed. Progress will be measured through peer observations, reviews of teacher assignments and corresponding student work and student performance data.
- ❖ One of the most significant changes that will occur during the 2016-17 school year is the implementation of a standardized assessment for grades Kindergarten through second. The district will implement the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and MAP for Primary Grades (MPG). These assessments will allow teachers to monitor students' progress, differentiate

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instruction, and provide families information about students' progress. Data will also allow the principal the opportunity to monitor student and school performance and work with instructional teams to maximize student growth. These data will be provided to the teachers prior to the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year as to inform instructional plans. MAP and MPG will be administered during the Spring Assessment window to establish consistency across all grade levels and to assert a sense of accountability for teachers in grades kindergarten through two. For grades three through five, Jefferson County Elementary School will utilize iReady as a diagnostic tool in the areas of ELA and mathematics.

- ❖ Jefferson County School District will continue to implement a newly established alternative program in an effort to improve the learning environment at each school by reducing the number of distractions. The alternative program at Turning Point takes a therapeutic approach to serve at-risk students who have not been successful in a traditional classroom setting due to behavior, academic, or attendance issues. Students receive individualized standards-based instruction using the A+ Learning online curriculum and participate in small group instruction as they work on remediation skills. Eligible students will be given the 18 ACCEL credit option which can accelerate student graduation and improve graduation rate. Since the district has struggled to graduate student served through the Exceptional Education Program, the A+ Learning online curriculum will be accessible to these students. By implementing the alternative program, not only are we improving the regular school environment, but we are also providing students who might otherwise leave school an opportunity to access quality education and earn a high school diploma.
  
- ❖ To support teacher preparedness, all teachers will be required to establish a professional development plan. Plans will include specific continuing education targets as determined by prior year student assessment data. New and beginning teachers will participate in the beginning teacher program established by PAEC; however, student progress monitoring data will also be reviewed and used to determine what professional development is needed on an ongoing basis.
  
- ❖ To ensure that students are provided standards-based instruction by certified, highly effective teachers, the district has committed to the monthly review of student performance data in order to monitor progress of students so that adjustments in instruction and or replacement of the instructor can begin immediately. At the school level, bi-weekly progress data will be reviewed by the principal, or his designees. Teachers will be required to articulate the specific strategies that will be implemented to facilitate student improvement. Evidence

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of the implementation of the strategies must be maintained and will be shared with the principal. Mandatory evidence must include contact with the parent or guardian.

- ❖ Parent engagement will be promoted and provided, where activities are open, informative and relevant to the needs of both students and parents. Teachers and faculty will keep parents informed of student progress and will work together to support the students. The Jefferson County School District is committed to providing quarterly updates to the Community Assessment Team, Title I Parent District Parent Advisory Committee and the School Board on the progress of the Turnaround Option Plan.
- ❖ The district has established a non-negotiable that requires that all instructional positions must be filled within thirty (30) days of a vacancy. The district has also committed to providing recruitment and retention bonuses in an effort to retain teachers and instructional coaches. The Human Resources Department will ensure that schools have all pertinent information for potential employees; however, the final decision of employment will be determined after legal requirements have been met, such as Criminal Background Clearance.
- ❖ A meeting with the Finance Director, Human Resource Director, Federal Programs Director and finance specialist was hosted prior to the start of the school year to determine funding priorities and staffing needs. The school principals were notified of staffing levels. Adjustments in the number of staff members will be made based on student enrollment. At present, there are five (5) vacancies across the district.
- ❖ To further facilitate the school's flexibility in funding, the school principal now has immediate access to the school budget and may request amendments in order to address the needs of the students as identified in the School Improvement Plans.
- ❖ The recruitment and retention of highly qualified, highly effective administrators, instructional staff and substitutes is a challenge in Jefferson County School District. The Human Resource director has worked to expand recruitment efforts to include additional colleges and universities. The current salary schedule is not competitive enough to attract the caliber of instructional leaders and staff needed to improve student performance; however, the district has committed to use funds, as available, to attract highly qualified, highly effective teachers. Additionally, the district has reached out to EdTraining Center, an online training vendor, to provide training for persons who will serve as substitute teachers in Jefferson County School District.

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- ❖ Due to the fact that there is only one elementary school in the school district, reassigning a teacher who is not performing is not an option, therefore, a teacher who is not performing, based on student performance data must be replaced. Such teachers will be immediately placed on a Corrective Action Plan, provided support through modeling by the instructional coach, and required to participate in applicable professional development. Learning walks and lesson plan reviews will be conducted after each intervention to document that the new skills are being applied. If the teacher does not improve after the adequate support and immediate feedback, he or she will not be recommended for reappointment.
- ❖ The Jefferson County School District is currently reviewing its evaluation system to ensure that it can be used to accurately reflect teacher performance. The classroom walkthrough tool will be revised to align with the teacher evaluation tool. Since VAM scores are received well after recommendations for reappointment are submitted, continuation of employment will be contingent upon VAM score designation of no less than effective. This strategy may require negotiations with the Teachers Union; only a preliminary discussion has occurred with district staff.
- ❖ All instructional personnel have received training in Kagan Day 1: Cooperative Learning. New and beginning teachers will receive training either during the Back to School Professional Development week or on the first Teacher Planning Day, depending on consultant availability. The school will require the implementation of no less than one Kagan structure each month. Evidence of implementation of the selected structure will be documented in lesson plans and through learning walks conducted by school administration, district administration and instructional coaches.
- ❖ Each school will be assigned an instructional coach for the areas of reading and mathematics. One science coach will serve both schools. The district has committed to hiring an individual with expertise in curriculum to support teaching and learning from the district level. The position will be advertised immediately.

The Jefferson County School District is committed to improving student performance by ensuring that an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. All personnel must be held accountable. There will be a review of assignments for each position in the district, as suggested by members of the local School Board and members of the FDOE Differentiated Accountability team. The district will continue to partner with the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium and the Florida Department of Education to improve teaching and learning.