

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Action Item

July 18, 2018

SUBJECT: Review of Turnaround Option Plan for School District of Escambia County

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1008.33, Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Escambia has one school that requires a new turnaround plan:

- Warrington Middle School

10

Supporting Documentation Included: Turnaround Option Plan for Warrington Middle School and District response letter. Contract with External Operator (under separate cover)

Invited Presenters: Malcolm Thomas, Superintendent, Escambia County Public Schools; Gerald Boone, School Board Chair; Hershel Lyons, Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools; and Wallace Selph, Regional Executive Director, Bureau of School Improvement



Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2 Escambia County Public Schools

This form, to be used by districts for implementation in 2018-19, satisfies the requirements of Form TOP-2, which is incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C. (2014).

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

Warrington Middle School

External Operator (EO)

Part I: Needs Assessment

Item 1: Description of the needs assessment methodology and summary of the results.

2017-2018 School Grade Components: WARRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL						
	English Language Arts (FSA & FSAA)	Mathematics (FSA, EOCs, FSAA)	Science (NGSSS, EOC, FSAA)	Social Studies (EOCs)	Graduation Rate	Acceleration Success
Achievement (% of students ≥ 3)	25	21	36	49	N/A	N/A
Learning Gains	39	37				59
Lowest Quartile Learning Gains	41	37				
Total Points Earned By Your School / Points Possible:				344/900		
% of Possible Points Earned By Your School:				38%		
School Grade for 2017-2018:				D		

2016-2017 School Grade Components: WARRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL						
	English Language Arts (FSA & FSAA)	Mathematics (FSA, EOCs, FSAA)	Science (NGSSS, EOC, FSAA)	Social Studies (EOCs)	Graduation Rate	Acceleration Success
Achievement (% of students ≥ 3)	24	23	25	42	N/A	N/A
Learning Gains	43	41				76
Lowest Quartile Learning Gains	36	42				
Total Points Earned By Your School / Points Possible:				352/900		
% of Possible Points Earned By Your School:				39.0%		
School Grade for 2016-2017:				D		

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

2015-2016 School Grade Components: WARRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL						
	English Language Arts (FSA & FSAA)	Mathematics (FSA, EOCs, FSAA)	Science (NGSSS, EOC, FSAA)	Social Studies (EOCs)	Graduation Rate	Acceleration Success
Achievement (% of students ≥ 3)	25	22	39	25	N/A	N/A
Learning Gains	42	37				33
Lowest Quartile Learning Gains	41	42				
Total Points Earned By Your School / Points Possible:				306/900		
% of Possible Points Earned By Your School:				34.0%		
School Grade for 2015-2016				D		

2016-2017 Learning Gains: WARRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL						
	Level 1					
	Low Level 1		Medium Level 1		High Level 1	
	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains
ELA	38	0	58	8.62	147	21.09
MATH	47	0	81	12.35	138	25.36

	Level 2			
	Low Level 2		High Level 2	
	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains
ELA	83	44.58	57	63.16
MATH	56	46.43	54	50

	Level 3		Level 4		Level 5	
	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains	Count of Students Making Gains	% of Students Making Gains
ELA	88	85.23	40	92.5	7	100
MATH	75	88	26	96.15	3	100

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

Item 2: Rationale for the turnaround option(s) selected.

The Escambia County School District has determined that a contract with an outside entity that can serve as an external operator of the School is the best turnaround option for Warrington Middle School. A contract with The Rensselaerville Institute (hereinafter referred to as TRI) will be presented to the School Board of Escambia County for approval on July 17, 2018. TRI meets the definitions of “outside entity” and “external operator” set forth in Section 1008.33(4)(b), Florida Statutes, and Section 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., in that it has demonstrated effectiveness in the academic operations of school district schools and has a successful record of providing support to improve the academic performance of high-poverty, low-performing schools.

TRI has a demonstrated record of effectiveness over the last 18 years with turnaround schools, creating teacher pipelines and training programs; evaluating and creating career paths for teachers and administrators; and partnering with schools in turnaround status all over the nation to effect school improvement and reform.

Gillian Williams, President of TRI, leads the organization to new areas of focus and higher levels of impact. She brings her strategic leadership to a team that works nationally to achieve outcomes for human gain. This work is done directly with the folks who spark change in a wide range of communities, schools, and other nonprofit organizations. In 2001, Gillian Williams founded TRI’s signature initiative, School Turnaround, and grew the program from a summer conference to a multifaceted, nationally recognized initiative. Gillian Williams started her career as an educator in 1990, working as a bilingual teacher in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. In 1997, she became the youngest elementary school principal at one of New York City’s most beleaguered schools, Public School 63 in the South Bronx. In her first year, Gillian Williams led a turnaround that lifted the school from its dismal standing on the state’s list of persistently failing schools.

Mildred Toliver serves as the Executive Director of School Turnaround at TRI. She joined School Turnaround after participating in the program as a school principal. She now works with principals, teachers, district administrators, and school boards, leading national and regional training and kicking off many of TRI’s educational initiatives. Mildred Toliver leads the team of School Turnaround Specialist and provides professional development for them at TRI. Prior to TRI, she was principal of SS Dillow Elementary in Fort Worth, Texas. After her first year in the School Turnaround program, the school showed gains in some area up to 35%. Student outcomes

TRI has proven success in Florida improving school grades:

Gasden County High School, Gasden County, Florida: School Grade of **D** in 2017 to School Grade of **C** in 2018.

George W. Munroe Elementary School, Gasden County, Florida: School Grade of **F** in 2017 to School Grade of **A** in 2018.

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

TRI has proven successful experiences (partial) in similar demographic districts/middle schools:

Gaston Middle Northampton, NC

Demographics:

5-8 with 202 students

93% African American

98% FRL

Accomplishments:

Sixth grade math scores improved by 31% points

Conway Middle Northampton, NC

Demographics:

5-8 with 384 students

70% African American

99% FRL

Accomplishments:

Eighth grade reading scores improved by 19% points

Kirby MS Fort Worth, TX

Demographics:

6-8 with 700 students

63% Hispanic

82% FRL

Accomplishments:

Seventh grade reading scores improved by 22% points

Part II: Implementation Plan

A. Areas of Assurance

Item 3: Description of how the district will address the Areas of Assurance required by the selected turnaround option(s), as acknowledged in Phase 1.

The External Operator selected will conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment for the school that at a minimum, includes:

- Review school staff qualifications, leadership, staffing, instruction, curriculum, academic intervention systems, professional learning communities, data teams, common planning, instructional coaching, and the student assessment process.
- Review all centralized District supports to the school, students, staff, and community, which includes but is not limited to areas such as budget, facilities, supplies, maintenance, food service, transportation, technology infrastructure, and resources.
- Develop a staffing plan. The staffing plan shall be implemented by TRI in coordination with District.

District Capacity and Support

- Access: Provide access to the school at all times during the term of the contract.
- Funding: Provide all funding that the school would normally receive, including entitlement funding.
- Transportation: Provide transportation services for the School at a level consistent with other District schools. The District will receive all revenue pertaining to transportation services.
- Food Service: Provide food services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools. The District will receive all revenue pertaining to food services.
- Technology: Provide technology support services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- Custodial Services: Provide custodial services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- School Resource Officer: Provide a school resource officer for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- Maintenance: Provide maintenance services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- Human Resources: Provide human resource services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- Exceptional Student Education: Provide Exceptional Education students with programs implemented in accordance with applicable Federal, state and local policies and procedures; and, specifically, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, sections 1000.05 and 1001.42(4)(1) F.S., and Chapter 6A-6 of the Florida Administrative Code.
- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Services: Provide ESE services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.
- English as a Second Language: Provide English as a Second Language services for the school at a level consistent with other District schools.

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

School Capacity

Administrators and Educators

- All personnel assigned to the school will be District employees. Salaries and benefits will be paid by the District with District funds.
- TRI shall have full authority to recommend school leadership and instructional personnel assignment to school.
- TRI shall have full authority to require leadership staff to participate in mandatory TRI conferences to become part of a larger network and learning community of other successful turnaround leaders.
- TRI shall have full authority to make all recommendations for the selection, placement, termination and training of teachers at school.
- A Memorandum of Understanding has been executed with the Collective Bargaining Unit that addresses the selection, placement, and expectations of instructional and educational support personnel and provides the school principal with autonomy described in 1012.28(8), F.S.

B. Areas of Focus

Item 4: Area(s) of Focus selected by the district based upon the school’s needs assessment.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Assessments | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. School Leadership |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Instructional Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Increased Learning Time |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Differentiated Instruction | |

Item 5: Summary of the strategies the district will implement to reduce or eliminate internal systemic barriers and address the needs of the school, including a description of how the district will address the selected Area(s) of Focus.

Based on the results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment the External Operator selected will provide:

Assessments

- TRI shall ensure facilitation of all required State assessments, District benchmark assessments, and alternate assessments and comply with State reporting procedures. TRI will use the District benchmark assessments at regular intervals to enable the school to assess school-wide, grade-level, class, and individual student progress toward hitting established targets. They will align assessments and benchmark tests, create an assessment database, train key personnel on database maintenance, train key leaders and teachers on data analysis, and create usable reports for students, parents, and school support staff.

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2

for districts implementing in 2018-19

Differentiated Instruction/Instructional Programs

- TRI shall have primary responsibility for all school academic programs, oversight, selection, placement, coaching, evaluation, assignment of responsibilities and reassignment of school leadership and instructional personnel; professional development; identification, training and coaching of professional learning community leaders, student academic assessment and development of curriculum and instructional materials.
- Provide ongoing professional learning for all instructional staff on skills necessary to meet turnaround goals and social-emotional needs of students.
- TRI will determine the curriculum and instructional interventions necessary to meet/exceed targets.
- TRI will improve school in terms of student performance on FSA and School grade while implementing instructional systems that will build capacity of the school to sustain and continue its own improvement in preparation for returning school to Board control. This includes behavior, climate, and culture of the school; developing a scalable model of rigorous instruction and student engagement; providing a data-driven roadmap to empower teachers and leader and aligning curriculum, culture, and instructional systems to attain and sustain levels of performance.

Leadership Development

The Principal, along with the Leadership Team, make up the “School Turnaround Team”. The School Turnaround Team will receive training on the six characteristics of successful turnaround leaders and the six key strategies for turnaround. These will be immediately applied to the school by the school team in the form of a Turnaround Design. TRI and the School Turnaround Team will a set of achievement targets, a new message for your school, and a pragmatic course of action based on proven strategies for immediate and incisive change.

TURNAROUND STRATEGIES

1. DIAGNOSIS

- Quick, Honest, Personal
- Data-Driven
- Builds on leader strengths and shortfalls
- Determines composition of initial turnaround team

2. TARGETS

- Set and owned by the principal—not handed down as someone else’s mandate
- “Doable with a stretch” commitments—not just hopes
- Convene and drive teams
- Push to academic achievement—not peripherals

3. MESSAGE

- Conveys a personal “brand”
- Counters current perceptions and dynamics
- Prompts energy, urgency, and action
- Goes from informing to persuading

4. DATA USE

- Translates information to useful insight for teaching and learning
- Identifies what’s needed to hit the target and tracks progress toward it
- Shows performance differences among classrooms and students
- Identifies specific skills and strategies to be addressed

5. ALIGNMENT

- Invents assets—beyond the obvious
- Harnesses resources such that they aim directly at the target
- Excludes anything not on a direct path to hitting the target
- Exchanges what’s not a resource for what is

6. SUCCESSFUL CLASSROOMS

- Spends time where it counts most—in classrooms
- Provides help to teachers in critical areas
- Gives immediate and useful feedback
- Generates ideas and actions out of successful practices

TURNAROUND LEADERS

1. ENERGY

- Stamina and staying power—can get a second wind
- Enthusiasm and optimism
- Passion for achievement
- Motivate others with forward momentum

2. BIAS TO ACT

- Focus on solutions
- Sense of urgency
- Opportunity-driven
- Impatient with another plan, meeting, or committee

3. RESULTS ORIENTATION

- Outcome matters more than process
- Need for achievement (more than power or affiliation)
- Clear and compelling targets for success
- Ability to get and use performance data

4. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Take more than fair share of responsibility
- Acknowledge errors and mistakes as basis of learning
- Focus on personal as well as group responsibility
- Look to internal more than external causation

5. INCLINED TO TEAMS

- Seek creation, not agreement
- Form teams from differences, not the like-minded
- Share credit as well as information
- Encourage solutions that meet outcomes

6. EDUCATIONAL KNOW HOW

- Know how to create effective learning in classrooms
- An educational leader more than administrator
- Strong diagnostic and development skills
- Effective at applying curriculum and tools for learning

Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2
for districts implementing in 2018-19

The Rensselaerville Institute: External Operator for Warrington Middle School

- ***Outcome is increase in student achievement; school achieves FLDOE grade of “C” or better***
- Supervision of staff and leadership
- Capacity building of leadership and staff through intensive daily training, coaching and support
- 5-year partnership with full school and gradual release to local leadership
- Equal partnership with school district to support leading change at the EO school
- Provide on-the-ground support through an “in residence” Lead Principal
- TRI has local level control through school leadership structure but mutual consent with district around major decisions

- TRI has primary responsibilities for day-to-day
- In collaboration with district, determine staffing based upon readiness and capacity criteria
- Hire staff, as appropriate, and develop new pipelines for teachers and leaders
- Establish relationships with higher education institutions for teacher and leader pool

- Provide training and ongoing support to school leaders and teachers
- Provide training and support to district leaders to support durable change
- Develop intensive curriculum training modules
- Support rigorous professional learning communities
- STEM curriculum and teaching expertise
- Summer PD academy for teachers and leaders
- Ongoing teacher training on core modules and use of data to inform instruction

- Assess current organizational structure’s impact on student outcomes and realign to maximize impact
- Assess the school and district’s current assets and resources and align to student outcomes

- Engagement of students in Community Sparkplug projects for community service credit
- Implement Community Sparkplug projects to engage people to drive change at local level