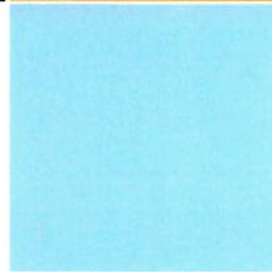




TOP-2



District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Gadsden
West Gadsden Middle School

Due-October 1

Form Number DMT, TOP-2, incorporated in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., effective August 2018

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide districts to develop a plan for implementation of a district-managed turnaround plan. The district shall provide the Department with the plan for approval by the State Board of Education (SBE).

Directions

Districts shall complete this Step 2 form for each school that is required to implement a district-managed turnaround plan. This completed form must be signed by the superintendent or authorized representative and emailed to BSI@fldoe.org no later than October 1. The subject line of the email must include district name, school name and TOP-2.

School

In the box below identify the name and MSID number of the school that will be supported through the district-managed turnaround plan.

School Name/ MSID Number

West Gadsden Middle School/0052

Needs Assessment

The district is responsible for documenting a needs assessment that uses quantitative and qualitative data to identify the needs of the school system, including needs identified by families and the community.

The summary of the needs assessment results must address points of strength and opportunities for growth in the school system (at both the district and school level) in each of these three domains:

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership
2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
3. Positive Culture and Environment

In the box below, describe the methodology used for the needs assessment, including 3-year data trends from the state, district, and school levels. Include a review of all strategies to determine which are improving the school and should be reinforced or supplemented, as well as which strategies are not resulting in improvement.

Describe the methodology used for needs assessment, including 3-year data trends from the state, district, and school levels.

There were a variety of methods used in the development of the needs assessment, including but not limited to:

Data Review: Analyzing school academic performance data, school discipline and attendance data, and trends in parent engagement

Focus Groups: Interviewing a carefully selected small group of people to participate in a focused discussion led by an experienced evaluator to collect in-depth thoughts and opinions on a topic

Key Informant Interviews: Intensive interviewing with an individual who meets specific selection criteria based on their personal experience

Community Meetings: Gathering information from individuals in a targeted population from the community

Surveys: Annual climate surveys and parent surveys from the program at the school that provided specific information used to create statistical summaries of data.

Gadsden County School District had a very good 2018-2019 school year based on the direction provided from the needs assessment that was developed by the entire educational and business community. In 2017, the Gadsden County School Board voted to reconfigure several schools and close two schools. The result of these changes brought fourth and fifth graders from several schools together into a single community of middle school spanning grades 4-8. Gadsden County has experienced an overall improvement in student performance over the past several years, however, West Gadsden Middle School (WGMS) has not experienced this same level of success and is underperforming on state assessments and on End of Course exams.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

There has been a very mobile teacher and school leadership population at WGMS for several years. Many core level classes suffered teacher vacancies throughout the 2018-2019 school year, necessitating school leadership to ‘teach’ classes, in addition to their administrative responsibilities, in order to maintain instructional support for students. This instability was combined with the devastation of Hurricane Michael to the west side of the county in October 2018 which left the community without power for weeks and much of its population doubled-up and/or residing in other parts of the county or adjacent counties with relatives while awaiting disaster assistance. Many teachers relocated after the hurricane which again left the school with many vacancies in core subjects for the remainder of the year. Even in the face of these two challenges, the school and its leaders managed to bring the school up to a very high “D” accountability grade at 40% proficiency (1% from a “C” accountability grade).

- Overall academic proficiency increased 6% (from 34 to 40%)
- ELA proficiency increased 4% (from 24 to 28%)
- ELA learning gains increased 5% (from 34 to 39%)
- ELA lowest quartile students increased 10% (from 31 to 41%)
- Math achievement increased 3% (from 32 to 35%)
- Math learning gains increased 7% (from 32 to 39%)
- Math lowest quartile increased 4% (from 30 to 34%)
- Science increased 19% (from 7 to 26%)
- Middle school acceleration increased 35% (from 33 to 68%)
- Social Studies decreased 40% (from 86 to 46%). The dramatic drop in Social Studies was primarily due to three of the school’s strongest Social Studies teachers leaving after the hurricane to relocate in south Florida.

There still remains much to be done for students so that they reach and exceed state averages of proficiency and can transition to high school prepared for their studies on grade level. Since school ended, the district and school leadership have been working closely reviewing: historical state assessment performance; reading/ELA and math performance (state assessments and local diagnostics); teacher attendance, performance, and annual professional learning; student attendance and social support needs; and parent engagement.

Below is a summary of pertinent assessment and progress monitoring data reviewed for WGMS by an external consultant for the most recent year of the district’s federal programs (Title I, Title II, UniSIG, Title III, Title IV, Title V, and Title IX). The data indicates that the overall proficiency of students attending WGMS is below the district and state averages in ELA, Mathematics and Science as measured by FSA. The combined performance data indicates the greatest challenge is academic proficiency in all core areas; however, the school has demonstrated a degree of promise for facilitating learning gains and improvements in all core subjects and on most EOCs for its most fragile learners.

Participants in the development of this plan included:

- Past Principal, Dr. Sonya Jackson (now administrator on special assignment)
- WGMS School Leadership Team
- Community Groups
- Florida State University, Dr. Ella-Mae Daniel and Dr. Dianna Wood
- Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, Dr. Maria Pouncey
- WGMS School Advisory Committee Members
- WGMS Faculty Groups
- GCCTA Teacher Bargaining Unit and negotiators
- Superintendent Roger P. Milton
- School Board Members
- Area Director for Secondary Education, Dr. Sylvia Jackson
- Area Director for Federal Programs, Rose Raynak

Gadsden County is the state’s only county with an African-American majority population. It is a rural county in the center of the Panhandle of Florida. Almost 30% of the population is below the poverty level and unemployment rate is 13%. One hundred percent (100%) of the students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) - 85% of the students are

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

directly certified under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for Title I services. All students in the district are provided with free breakfast and lunch in Gadsden County. 99% of the public schools are Title I schools.

The district has a state accountability grade of “C”, which it has maintained for four years and is only 2% below a “B” accountability grade, improving 7% even with the challenges of Hurricane Michael. Gadsden has consistently increased student academic learning gains in reading, science, and math for all student subgroups, especially for those students in the lowest 25% (quartile). Overall ELA proficiency in the district increased 3% points (from 35 to 38%) with a 1% increase in ELA learning gains and a 3% increase for ELA lowest quartile students. District math proficiency increased to 47% (up 1%) and science increased 4% (from 31 to 35%). Even though dramatic falls were seen in Social Studies for WGMS, the district overall increased 13% (from 52 to 65%). The school district serves 5,400 students in grades preK-12; 76% of students are African-American; 22% Hispanic; 2% multiracial/white/other. 90% of the students are economically disadvantaged. 15% are ESOL/ELL/Migrant and 25% of the students have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) as ESE students.

Thirty percent of the county is below poverty. Only 36.5% of the county residents have a high school diploma and only 19% have any college education. The county has seven municipalities. The school district is the major employer followed closely by the prison and law enforcement systems. The unemployment rate is 13% and almost 20% of the population receives public assistance.

Many of the students who graduate from Gadsden County and go on to college do not choose to reside in the county because of the lack of employment opportunities. The young population flight has further depressed the local economy. The school district and municipal leaders have brainstormed for the past several years to determine how to return Gadsden County to its once flourishing economy. One of the factors that keep businesses from locating in the area is the lack of qualified workers. School statistics are low and many families are choosing to locate in the state capital of Tallahassee twenty-five miles away to offer their children what they feel are better educational opportunities. The consensus of opinion between the educational community and the community-at-large is that the children’s educational proficiency needs to be increased to a competitive level with national standards to keep businesses and families from choosing other locations to live and operate.

Over the past several years, the school district's funding for educational programs has continued to fall. With the last legislative session there were many new statutory mandates placed on public educational institutions that were either severely underfunded or not funded at all, further reducing falling resources. Reduced entitlement grant funding (cuts of almost \$500,000 to Title I for 2019-2020 alone), falling enrollments, falling property values, and other falling revenues have caused the school district to cut staff to bare bones. Hurricane Michael caused over \$81 million dollars in structural damage to school sites in October 2018. To date, the district has received only \$400,000 from insurance companies and has had to hire a public adjuster and a mediator to argue for its fair payment from insurance companies. Prior to becoming eligible for any FEMA money, the district must come to some resolve with the insurance company on damage estimates. The costs of abatement to just keep schools operational has created a very serious deficit in educational budgets of the district and has necessitated the school district take out millions of dollars in loans to pay for employee payroll. The district has been forced to eliminate many non-critical instructional positions that provided students with individualized assistance to overcome reading challenges and supports for other social and emotional issues that are a barrier to higher academic proficiency.

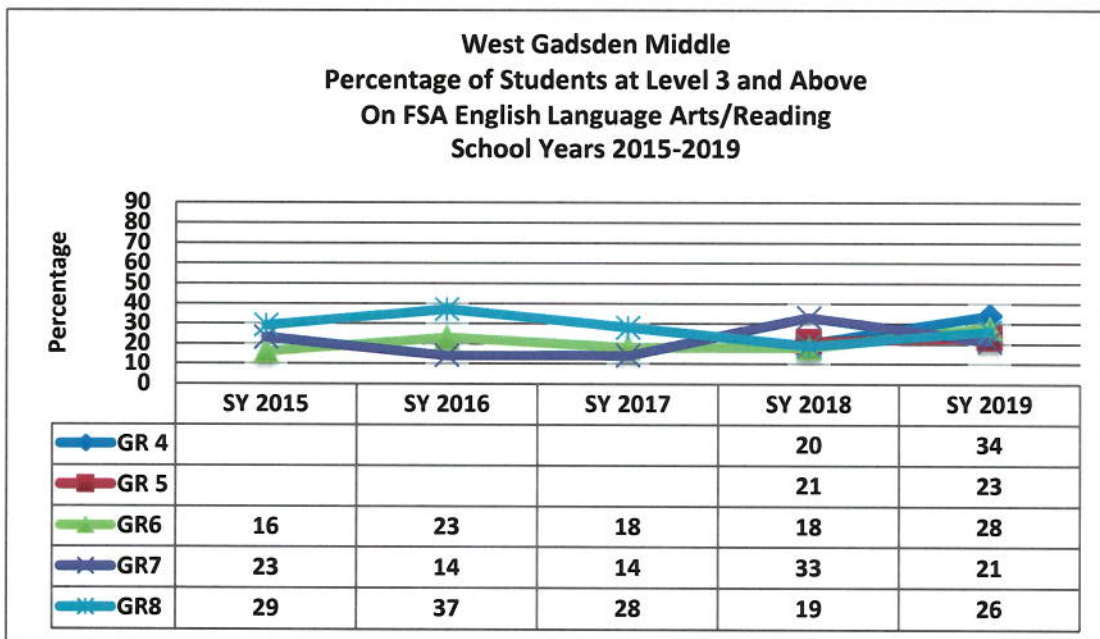
The district, much like the state of Florida and the nation, is experiencing a critical shortage of teachers. Salary raises of almost 5% have still failed to close the salary gap between Gadsden and other neighboring school districts as they have also raised salaries to attract more qualified teachers. Retention incentives were given to every fully certified teacher at the end of the school year to encourage their staying in Gadsden and yet recruitment incentives of other districts are enticing the certified teachers away. Gadsden is also offering recruitment incentives but there are simply not enough certified teachers to go around and the teachers who are certified often choose more urban areas like Tallahassee than the rural districts in North Florida. Gadsden is only 30 miles from Georgia and many of the bordering Georgia schools are offering incentive and salary packages that are thousands of dollars more than Gadsden is able to pay.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

The district is committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments that ensure continuous progress towards high student achievement. Each student is valued and the district believes that all students can learn. Through the collaboration of a caring school community, strong parent partnerships, and the proper allocation of resources, the district builds a future for its children as they prepare for success in life. Continuous improvement of the educational system is necessary to ensure students realize their potential in a rapidly changing, diverse, and global society. There is a need not only for certified teachers, but also for re-tooling teachers to be prepared to meet the challenges of rural schools, such as poverty, geographic isolation and the need to support a growing population of English learners. This project seeks to address the teaching and learning needs in grades 4-8 at West Gadsden Middle School. The systemic improvements will also serve as a platform for reforming other schools.

Gadsden uses data to drive all decision-making. The process is to provide forums (groups of stakeholders using mechanisms that evaluate needs) that ensure there is open communication at all times between different departments. Departments meet regularly with all stakeholder groups to review funding sources and data, including funding from state, federal and local sources, district mission/vision/goals, and the goals/deliverables of all state and federally funded projects to prioritize dollars to the needs of students in the district. These forums within the district, include but are not limited to: (1) Budget Meetings, (2) Extended Executive Management Team Meetings; (3) Executive Management Meetings, (4) Departmental Meetings, (5) Principal Leadership Team Meetings, (6) Interdepartmental Meetings, (7) Federal Program Collaboration Meetings, (8) Data Review Meetings, (9) and Community Assessment Meetings. These internal forums combined with community and site-based forums work together to establish the methodology for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services and programs to align interventions in Continuous Improvement and Support (CS&I) schools. After analysis of needs assessment data, the methodology used is the integration of all district, school, and community activities with financially informed project strategies to provide clarity and blend important metrics such as start-up costs, time needed, funding status, stakeholders involved, strategies, products, implementation of strategies, and identifying schedules for timely delivery of financially feasible projects designed to raise student proficiency and develop college and career ready students.

Year	ELA	ELA LG	ELA Low	Math	Math LG	Math Low	Sci	SS	Mid Acfr.	Points	Grade	Notes
18-19	28	39	41	35	39	34	26	46	68	356	D	900 pts. Poss.
17-18	24	34	31	32	32	30	7	86	33	309	D	900 pts. Poss.
16-17	19	29	33	15	23	36	18	20	22	351	D	1,000 pts. Poss. as a HS, prior to combination of district HS



District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

*Percent Point Change in Students Performing on Grade Level
iReady Reading EOY Diagnostic
School Year 2018-2019*

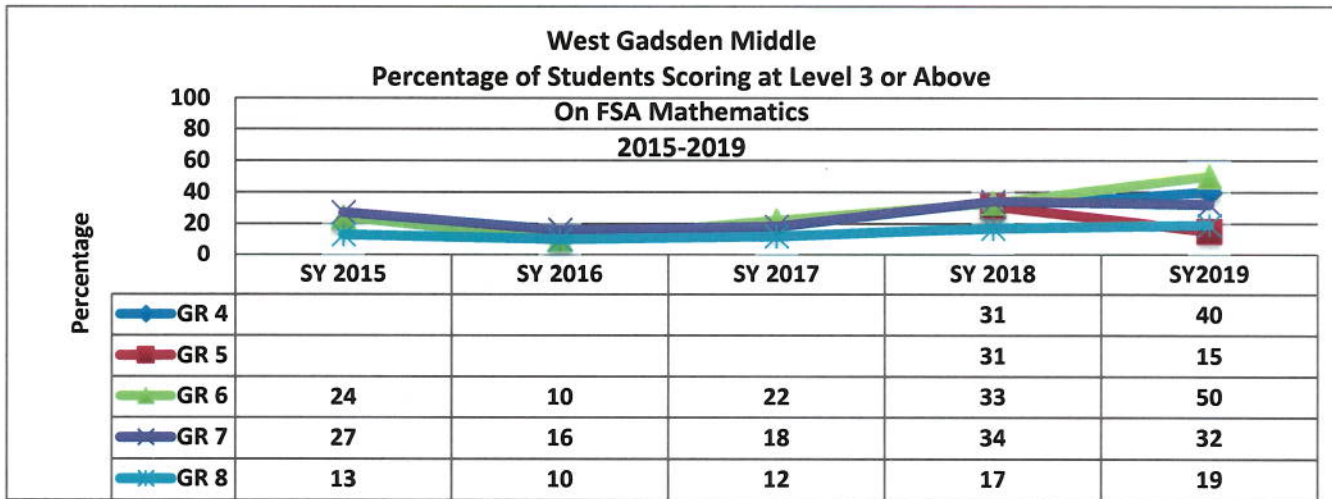
<i>School</i>	<i>Pre-Test (W1)</i>	<i>Post-Test (W3)</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>West Gadsden Middle</i>	6%	13%	7.0%
<i>Average</i>	19%	39%	19.8%

Source: iReady Diagnostic Report, 2019

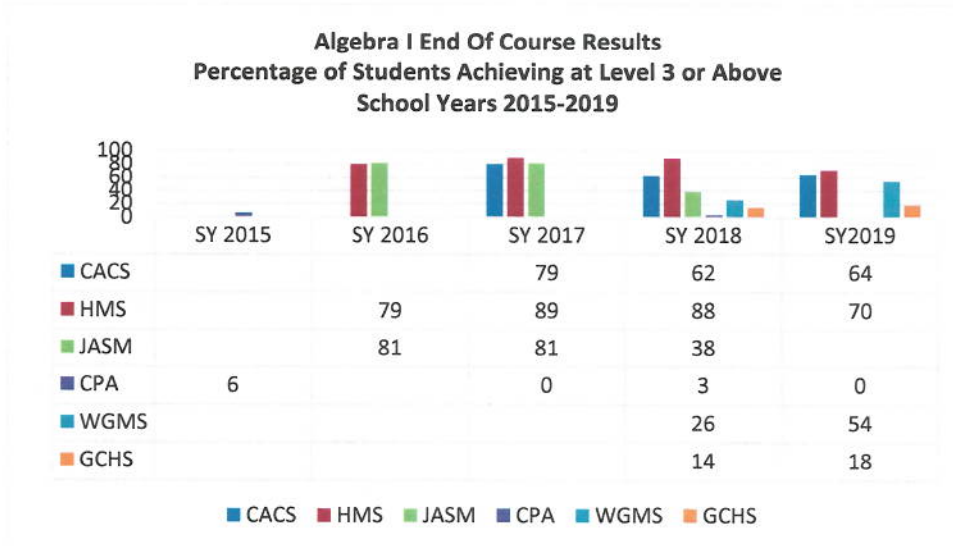
*Percent Point Change in Students Performing on Grade Level
iReady Mathematics EOY Diagnostic
School Year 2018-2019*

<i>School</i>	<i>Pre-Test (W1)</i>	<i>Post-Test (W3)</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>West Gadsden Middle</i>	16%	32%	16.0%
<i>Average</i>	20%	44%	24.6%

Source: iReady Diagnostic Report, 2019

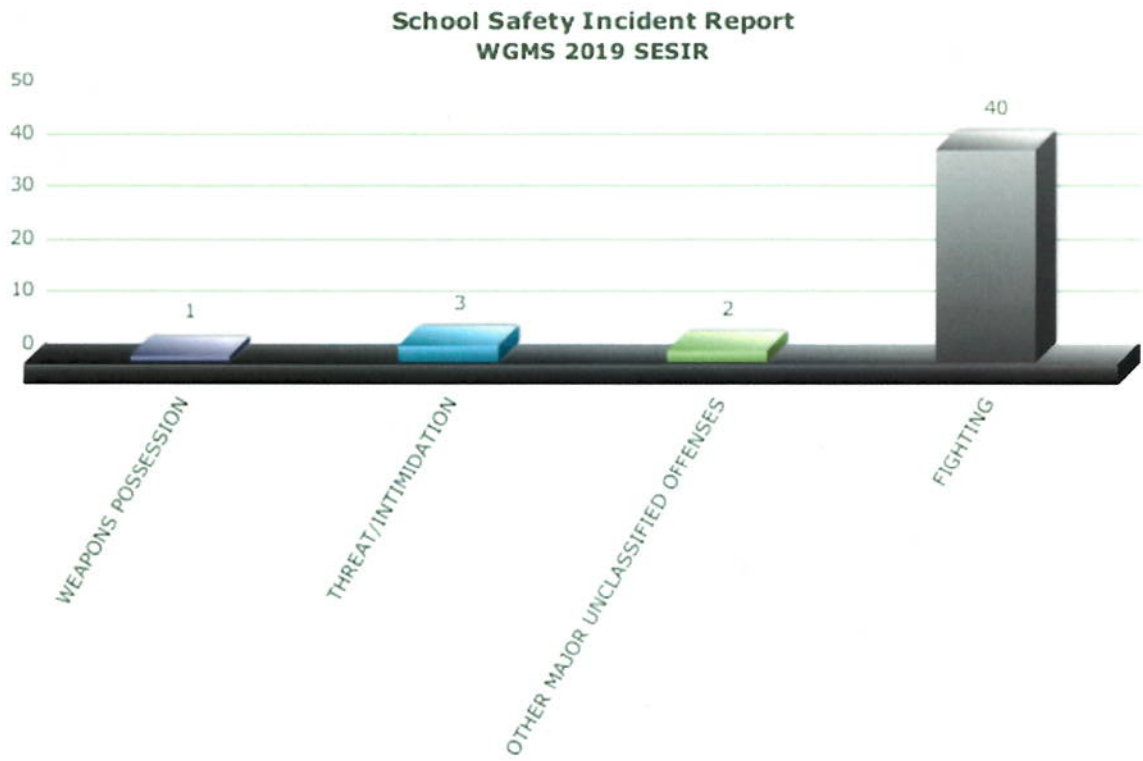
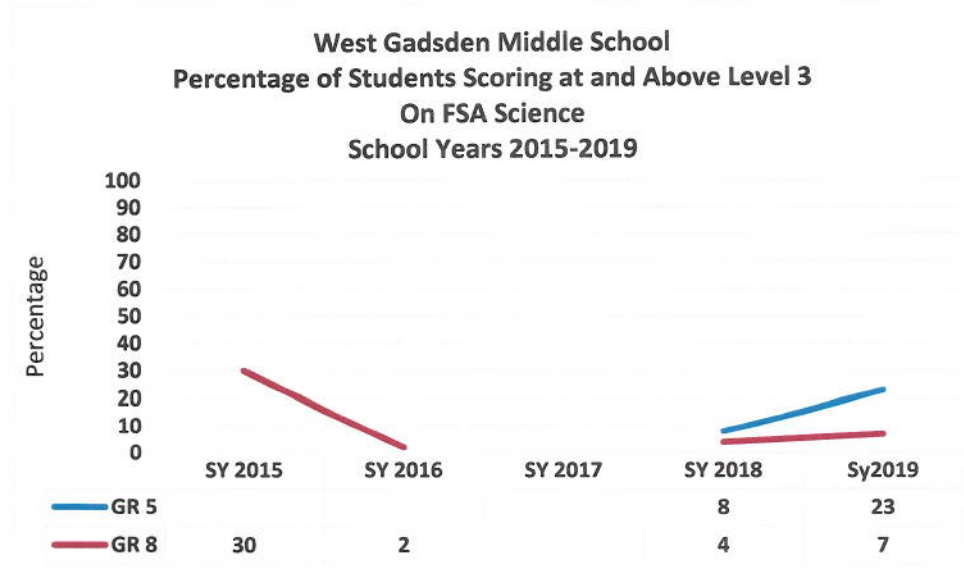


NOTE: This is a district-wide Algebra I EOC of which WGMS is included.

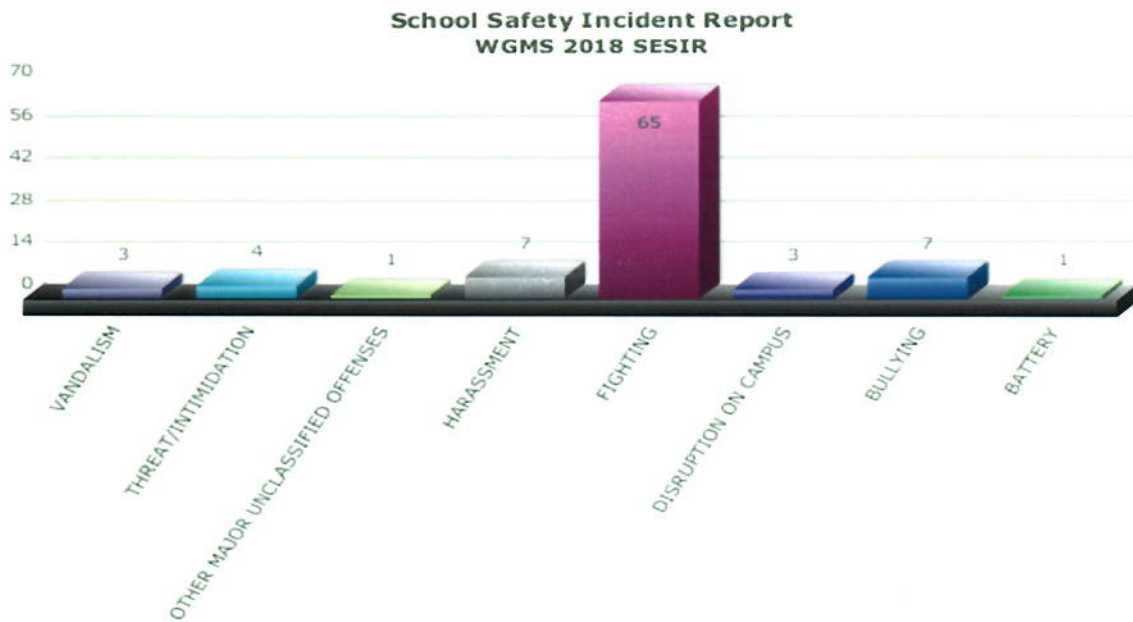


District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

NOTE: In 2017 all grade 8 took Biology and grade 5 was not housed at the school, that is why there is no Science data for 2017.



District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)



West Gadsden Middle School 2018-2019 Title I Data

Parent Climate Survey Results


West Gadsden Middle School

School Year 2018 – 2019

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, Don't Know

ITEM	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	DK
S4	This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect students' cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.	27%	54%	10%	2%	8%
S5	This school encourages students to take challenging classes no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, and/or cultural background (e.g., honor level courses, gifted courses, AP, or IB courses).	27%	65%	8%	0%	0%
S6	This school communicates how important it is to respect students of all sexual orientations.	25%	46%	6%	4%	19%
S7	This school helps me figure out what social and emotional skills my child needs to develop (e.g. self-control, problem solving, and/or getting along with others.)	29%	44%	21%	6%	0%
S8	At this school, my child feels he/she belongs	35%	50%	10%	6%	0%
S9	I feel welcome at this school.	40%	50%	4%	6%	0%
S10	This school encourages me to be an active partner in educating my child.	52%	33%	13%	2%	0%
S11	I feel comfortable talking to someone at this school about my child's behavior.	44%	42%	12%	2%	0%
S12	This school has quality programs for my child's talents, gifts, or special needs.	23%	48%	12%	8%	10%
S13	The school promptly responds to my phone calls, messages, or emails.	37%	48%	12%	4%	0%
S14	Staff at this school care about what families think.	35%	46%	15%	4%	0%

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

S15	At this school, the staff really care about my child.	31%	56%	10%	4%	0%
S16	Overall, the school is a friendly place.	37%	52%	6%	6%	0%
S17	My child is safe at school.	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%
S18	Racial/ethnic conflict among students is a problem at this school.	13%	23%	40%	23%	0%
S19	Physical fighting between students is a problem at this school	13%	29%	33%	25%	0%
S21	Bullying of students at school or school activities is a problem at this school.	17%	27%	35%	21%	0%
S22	Cyberbullying of students via electronic means or devices is a problem at this school.	13%	23%	21%	10%	33%
S27	This school notifies parents or guardians effectively in the case of a school-wide emergency.	37%	42%	6%	6%	10%
S28	This school takes effective measures to ensure the safety of students.	48%	31%	8%	4%	10%
S29	This school has made it clear to my child what he/she must do if there is an emergency, natural disaster or a dangerous situation during the school day.	37%	46%	4%	4%	10%
S30	This school looks clean and pleasant	29%	56%	8%	8%	0%
S31	The school building is well-maintained.	38%	46%	12%	4%	0%
S32	Attending school every day is important for my child to do well in his/her classes.	65%	33%	0%	2%	0%
S33	This school has high expectations for students.	44%	48%	4%	4%	0%
S34	The school sees me as a partner in my child's education.	38%	46%	10%	6%	0%
S35	My child's teachers make themselves available to me.	37%	48%	12%	4%	0%
S36	The programs and resources at this school are adequate to support students with special needs or disabilities.	13%	63%	21%	2%	0%
S37	Students have enough healthy food choices at this school.	8%	52%	13%	6%	21%
S38	This school provides high quality services to help students with social and/or emotional needs.	17%	42%	10%	8%	23%
S39	This school has enough programs that develop students' social and emotional skills (e.g., self-control, problem solving, or getting along with others).	17%	56%	21%	6%	0%
S40	When my child does something good at school, I usually hear about it.	21%	44%	25%	10%	0%
S41	This school communicates school policies and procedures clearly to parents and guardians.	33%	50%	13%	4%	0%
S42	School rules apply equally to all students.	29%	44%	12%	6%	10%
S43	Discipline is fair	27%	44%	10%	4%	15%
S44	Overall, I am satisfied with the climate and services of the school.	27%	54%	15%	4%	0%
Item	Statement	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
S20	I am satisfied with the climate and services provided for my child at school.	25%	46%	23%	6%	0%

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Item	Statement	Not a Problem	Small Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Large Problem	Don't Know
S23	At this school, how much of a problem is student drug use?	85%	10%	4%	2%	0%
S24	At this school, how much of a problem is student use of electronic cigarettes?	87%	6%	4%	4%	0%
S25	At this school, how much of a problem is student use of tobacco (e.g., cigarettes, chew, cigars)?	79%	12%	2%	8%	0%
S26	At this school, how much of a problem is student alcohol use?	79%	13%	4%	4%	0%

**Climate Survey Results Grades 5 – 8
West Gadsden Middle School
School Year 2018 – 2019**

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

ITEM	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
S6	All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.	52%	28%	10%	10%
S7	Boys and girls are treated equally well.	38%	34%	16%	12%
S8	This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identity.	24%	60%	14%	2%
S9	Adults working at this school treat all students with respect.	26%	40%	26%	9%
S10	People of different cultural backgrounds, races, or ethnicities get along well at this school.	26%	52%	17%	5%
S11	Teachers understand my problems.	21%	40%	29%	10%
S12	Teachers are available when I need to talk with them.	24%	57%	16%	3%
S13	It is easy to talk with teachers at this school.	26%	43%	22%	9%
S14	My teachers care about me.	28%	53%	9%	10%
S15	My teachers make me feel good about myself.	24%	57%	10%	9%
S16	Students respect one another.	16%	26%	41%	17%
S17	Students like one another.	17%	43%	31%	9%
S18	If I am absent there is a teacher or some other adults at school that will notice my absence.	33%	43%	21%	3%
S19	I regularly attend school-sponsored events, such as school dances, sporting events, student performances, or other school activities.	41%	38%	16%	5%
S20	I regularly participate in extra-curricular activities offered through this school, such as school clubs or organizations, musical groups, sports teams, student government or any other extracurricular activities.	36%	34%	24%	5%
S21	At this school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules.	19%	40%	30%	11%
S22	There are lots of chances for students at this school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.	42%	42%	12%	4%
S23	I have lots of chances to be a part of class discussions or activities.	23%	56%	12%	9%
S24	I feel like I belong.	32%	53%	7%	9%
S25	Students at this school get along well with each other.	12%	21%	46%	21%
S26	At this school students talk about the importance of understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others.	11%	25%	40%	25%
S27	At this school students work on listening to others to understand what they are trying to say.	11%	42%	25%	23%
S28	I am happy at this school.	35%	47%	11%	7%
S29	I feel like I am a part of this school.	39%	42%	7%	12%

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

S30	I feel socially accepted.	28%	51%	7%	14%
S31	I feel safe at this school.	23%	51%	12%	14%
S32	I feel safe going to and from school.	19%	63%	9%	9%
S33	I sometimes stay at home because I don't feel safe at this school.	12%	9%	44%	35%
S34	Students at this school bring guns or knives to school.	11%	9%	30%	51%
S35	Students at this school threaten to hurt other students.	30%	33%	19%	18%
S36	Students at this school steal money, electronics, or other valuable things while at school.	30%	32%	19%	19%
S37	Students at this school damage or destroy another students' property.	23%	30%	26%	21%
S38	Students at this school fight a lot.	53%	28%	9%	11%
S39	Students at this school are teased or picked on about their race or ethnicity.	35%	25%	23%	18%
S40	Students at this school are teased ore picked on about their cultural background or religion.	26%	35%	21%	18%
S41	Students at this school are teased or picked on about their physical or mental disability.	39%	32%	12%	18%
S42	Students at this school are often bullied.	34%	36%	25%	5%
S43	Students at this school try to stop bullying.	25%	34%	23%	18%
S44	Students often spread mean rumors or lies about others at this school on the Internet via social media (i.e., Facebook, email and instant message).	48%	23%	14%	14%
S45	Students use/try alcohol or drugs while at school or school-sponsored events.	5%	13%	32%	50%
S46	It is easy for students to use/try alcohol or drugs at school or school-sponsored events without getting caught.	5%	23%	23%	48%
S47	Students at this school think it is okay to smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day.	9%	20%	27%	45%
S48	Students at this school think it is okay to get drunk.	11%	18%	23%	48%
S49	Students at this school think it is okay to try drugs.	13%	23%	21%	43%
S50	Students know what to do if there is an emergency, natural disaster (tornado, flood) or a dangerous situation (e.g. violent person on campus) during the school day.	55%	30%	4%	11%
S51	If students hear about a threat to school or student safety, they would report it to someone in authority.	32%	25%	27%	16%
S52	The bathrooms in this school are clean.	13%	9%	32%	46%
S53	The temperature in this school is comfortable throughout the school year.	11%	32%	32%	25%
S54	The school grounds are well kept and free of litter.	18%	29%	27%	27%
S55	I think students are proud of how this school looks on the outside.	16%	45%	25%	14%
S56	Broken things at this school are fixed quickly.	11%	20%	52%	18%
S57	My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.	45%	41%	9%	5%
S58	My teachers give me individual attention when I need it.	30%	34%	25%	11%
S59	My teachers often connect what I am learning in the classroom to life outside the classroom.	36%	30%	4%	13%
S60	The things I am learning in school are important to me.	46%	48%	4%	2%
S61	My teachers expect me to do my best at all times.	59%	32%	5%	4%
S62	I can talk to my teachers about problems I am having in class	48%	38%	9%	5%
S63	I can talk with my teachers or other adult at this school about something that is bothering me.	43%	45%	7%	5%

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

S64	Students at this school stop and think before doing anything when they get angry.	21%	14%	30%	34%
S65	Students at this school try to work out their disagreements with another student by talking to them.	25%	23%	27%	25%
S66	My teachers make it clear to me if I misbehave.	41%	45%	5%	9%
S67	Adults working in this school reward students for positive behavior.	36%	45%	9%	11%
S68	School rules are applied equally to all students.	38%	38%	13%	13%
S69	Discipline is fair.	23%	36%	21%	20%

*Climate Survey Results Grade 4
West Gadsden Middle School
School Year 2018 – 2019*

ITEM	STATEMENT	PERCENTAGE			
		YES	SOMETIMES	NO	DON'T KNOW
S1	My teachers believe that all students can do good work.	88%	7%	1%	4%
S2	All students are encouraged to do their very best.	72%	18%	7%	3%
S3	My teacher does a good job of explaining what I am supposed to learn.	75%	21%	3%	1%
S4	I ask for help from my teachers or others when I need it.	44%	50%	4%	1%
S5	Teachers at this school know my name.	86%	0%	4%	10%
S6	My teacher misses me when I am absent from school.	33%	19%	18%	29%
S7	I can talk with my teacher or another adult at this school about things that are bothering me.	64%	29%	6%	1%
S8	My classmates like me.	36%	33%	7%	24%
S9	I know how to make friends with people.	88%	13%	0%	0%
S10	I care about other people's feelings and respect what they think	65%	29%	6%	0%
S11	I am careful when I use something that belongs to someone else.	82%	10%	6%	3%
S12	If disagree with someone I do it without starting a fight or an argument.	64%	25%	11%	0%
S13	My teacher helps me when I do not understand the lesson.	74%	25%	1%	0%
S14	I respect people even if they are different or are not like me.	65%	18%	17%	0%
S15	Students in this school help each other.	25%	63%	6%	7%
S16	Some students are bullied at this school.	57%	35%	4%	4%
S17	I feel safe at school.	40%	32%	28%	0%
S18	I like my school.	46%	29%	25%	0%

Gadsden County's focus priority is to address the growing rate of chronic absenteeism and encourage regular attendance for every public school student. Building alternatives for discipline and restorative practices are also priorities of the Superintendent and the School Board. *School Board Policies* have been reviewed and revised to ensure the importance of attendance and behavior for every child in every grade is stressed. *Student Progression Plans* and *Student Code of Conduct Plans* have been reviewed and revised to embrace state and local policies about attendance and behavior ensuring coordination and continuity in enforcement of attendance and behavior policies and also assuring that there are no inherent barriers that would further exacerbate attendance or behavior problems. The community and school district have combined into a task force designed to bring health, housing, justice, transportation, law enforcement, and education agencies together in collaborative, coordinated efforts to help every student attend every day. Driving up attendance and improving behavior for students from high-poverty neighborhoods, is the single most impactful factor that will raise academic achievement, high school graduation, and college attainment rates. Through these improvement efforts, the community will be more economically productive and progress socially.

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Identify strategies that have evidence of improvement at the school and how they will be reinforced or supplemented.

- Academic interventionists have been added in Math for more support for fragile students. The primary concentration of effort in 2018-19 will be placed on “bubble” children and their improvement in learning gains, especially in Algebra I.
- Children have been identified who were retained the year before, who are level 1 or 2 children on the verge of becoming level 3 or higher, and/or who have demonstrated previous years of growth and ability who have not performed at the same level the prior year. Once identified, targeted supportive interventions are assigned to those children to identify specific needs using data and differentiating instruction to improve their academics.
- International teachers certified in math and science have been added to the staff who are contracted to stay with the district for three years. This will offer the school not only qualified staff for subjects that were vacant most of last year, but it will provide some consistency in instruction for these critical subject areas.
- Interventionists have been added for attendance, behavior, and student support to assist leadership with closer progress monitoring of students and to alert leadership about interventions necessary to improve attendance and behavior. General attendance improved from 91.69% average attendance in 2017-18 to 92.16% in 2018-19. While general attendance is important, chronic absenteeism (which includes all time from instruction in all classes each day, including suspensions, tardies, and other excused absences) continue to be addressed in 2019-20. Behavior incidents were frequent and still remain an area of concern to be prioritized in 2019-20 with Restorative Practices and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) approaches to build on relationships and work to change the school culture while addressing root causes.

Identify strategies that have not resulted in improvement. What will be done differently?

- Professional Learning Communities were not implemented with fidelity and/or regularly.
- There was limited district support with instructional specialists in core subject areas as they were extended to other CS&I schools and one fell ill and was unable to support the school for most of the last semester.
- Professional learning opportunities were offered but with teacher attendance and mobility being primary areas needing improvement, professional learning was not closely monitored for attendance or implementation into classrooms.
- Progress monitoring was not implemented with enough regularity to ensure quality learning was ongoing in classrooms every day.
- Attendance follow up was implemented but with the Hurricane, it did not receive as much attention as other priorities to get children back into schools safely for most of the school day.
- Attendance of teachers was sporadic as a result of the hurricane and also with the additional challenges of the behavior and social issues students returning from the devastation brought with them. Teacher turnover was very high.
- Behavior issues were prevalent and needed more support from school leadership than there was time available.
- There was reduced attention to middle school acceleration in career education so that leadership could concentrate more staff on ELA, Math, and Science improvement to raise the school grade.

School leadership assists staff in providing and supporting them through Professional Learning Communities (PLC). The PLCs develop rigorous lessons and focus activities and common planning on Florida standards and student needs. PLCs are job-embedded in order to develop a culture of continuous improvement throughout the school. Weekly PLC meetings have been scheduled throughout the new school year.

There are dedicated instructional specialists/coaches assigned specifically to WGMS to support teachers in reading, math, and science. The specialists/coaches provide specific and targeted support to teachers through the coaching model (pre-planning, modeling, observing, and debriefing) and support teachers in effective evidence-based instructional strategies designed to improve students' academic performance. Instructional leaders at the district have a revised plan of work for instructional specialists to ensure they are available more often to the school to support the onsite specialists. The instructional specialists, in concert with the Area Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, facilitate common planning where teachers jointly plan, observe, analyze, debrief and refine classroom lessons to improve student outcomes.

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In addition, the district and school facilitate more frequent professional learning for principals, teachers, and interventionists at the site. Teachers with any observed weaknesses are referred to Edivate (an online learning system); and/or to the online PAEC or Beacon programs through the District Professional Learning Center. Teachers are provided multiple opportunities during faculty meetings and PLCs to share promising practices. A part of the school's culture is to provide opportunities for teachers to serve as models and mentors for specific content areas. Teachers are provided opportunities to observe colleague teachers during classroom instruction to acquire innovative instructional delivery through feedback and collaboration. All teachers attend common planning weekly and come prepared to discuss promising practices in lesson delivery as well as developing and selecting higher-level questions to incorporate into lessons for the next week. Item specifications are reviewed to ensure targeted skills are addressed for each standard and are following district pacing guides. In an effort to further close the achievement gaps, interventions are provided daily to all learners. From the data, students are profiled and placed into the appropriate interventions by the subject area specialists/coaches and the teachers. Assessment data are collected and analyzed weekly by school leaders. The school leadership team, in collaboration with the instructional specialist and classroom teacher determine appropriate interventions to be differentiated based on student need. Interventions take place throughout the day through pull-outs and small group settings guided by instructional specialists/coaches. The students' progress is closely monitored by instructional specialists/coaches and the school leadership team and additional adjustments are made to the interventions as needed and recommended to ensure ongoing progress and acceleration. Classroom teachers who may need support with specific standards and/or skills are also identified through this data analysis. Instructional mentor support is assigned by the Principal to support specific teachers based on data outcomes. The leadership team closely monitors weekly student progress to ensure the rigor of the standards is being met. The administrative team develops weekly "look-fors" in order to facilitate instructional walk-throughs. One of the root causes of low proficiency can be attributed to new teachers' limited content understanding of the Florida Standards and the lack of rigor. In an effort to continuously assist teachers with Standards Mastery, the district provides Standards Based Instruction professional learning. Implementation is done by the District Professional Learning Director. Instructional specialists continue to build capacity through modeling lessons for teachers, conferencing with teachers, and facilitating teachers observing other teachers in order to strengthen areas of weaknesses. All instructional staff are required to integrate evidence-based strategies within their respective areas to support and improve academic achievement.

Attendance interventionists are used to provide consistent, just-in-time attention to student tardies, absences, and suspensions. A missed day or hour of instruction is lost time where a student can learn at the level of rigor necessary to become college and career ready. The attendance specialists work collaboratively with the school leadership team to identify root causes and link parents and students with the appropriate supports necessary to enable them to come to school regularly and reduce missed instructional time. Teacher attendance is monitored weekly so that school and district leadership can identify problem areas early and see if there are root causes and/or interventions that they can put into place to support teachers and enable them to be there every day ready to teach. Behavior specialists and student support mentors are provided as interventionists to implement Restorative Practices and SEL interventions that reduce the use of punitive suspensions and work at building relationships that are directed at identifying causes of behavior. Once identified, the behavior interventionists and student support mentors work with parents and students to address the causes of misbehavior before they become problematic and lead to suspensions and/or expulsions.

Different approaches to career education at the middle school have been taken. Rather than just an approach on Microsoft Office Suite programs, children are offered Culinary Arts and Web Development to better engage them. Programs are geared to keep students learning and solving problems using critical thinking skills. The district is committed to providing every student with a world-class education that prepares them for college and careers in the 21st Century. As a district, Gadsden County seeks teachers and staff who are dedicated to the success of all students, particularly those in fragile schools; committed to producing quantifiable student achievement gains; and a willingness to persevere through the use of problem-solving models and turning challenges into opportunities.

Implementation Plan

Part A. Summarize the district-managed turnaround plan and describe how the needs assessment results will be addressed in each of these three domains:

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership
2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
3. Positive Culture and Environment.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Part B. In this plan, verify that each assurance outlined in the TOP-1 form for district-managed turnaround has been addressed.

Part A.

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership

Empower teachers and develop leaders

Teachers want to be part of the decision-making process in the school. By allowing teachers to help create the world in which they work, greater levels of engagement and ownership follow. Teaching staff are used to help school leaders set the vision, inspire excellence, and adopt systems to monitor teacher performance and student learning. Leaders empower, coach, and support teachers. Leaders set ambitious goals and hold high expectations for every staff member. Leaders hold courageous, pivotal conversations with staff when there is a loss of focus, forgotten commitments, and/or a decrease in engagement. WGMS develops teacher-based, grade-level, and department teams in the building to analyze student data, monitor student learning, share high-leverage strategies and continually review/unpack standards. The district leadership team supports the school and embraces these same practices. There is distributive leadership throughout the school that emphasizes collaboration and development of social capital and creates/communicates success criteria for each developed learning target.

2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)

Focus on student learning, improving collaboration, and systemically reflecting on the connections between teaching and student learning

WGMS leaders evaluate every practice in the school from lesson plans, educational software and teacher professional learning unrelated to student outcomes, to teachers working in isolation. Identified focus areas are vocabulary acquisition, numeracy, personalized learning, and literacy across all content areas. Technology, blended learning, facilitated classrooms, and personalized learning are at the forefront of school discussions but the essential link is between teachers and students and the strategic alignment of resources and leadership to improve those connections. WGMS has identified core-plus-one initiatives for subject resources; rigorous rubrics are being used to assess performance and communicate results continuously; implementation timelines have been developed to communicate expectations so everyone in the building understands what success looks like; teachers are being provided with time and support to master new practices through flexible schedules; meetings are set to formatively evaluate intended outcomes and the need to revise strategies to meet goals; conversations about non-negotiables are facilitated by school leaders; conversations with teachers focus on evidence related to student learning and how to differentiate learning when students do not master material.

3. Positive Culture and Environment

Relationship Building A primary strategy that was initiated last year and led to some level of success but that needs to be more effectively deployed at the school again this year is relationship building, finding students doing good, and setting up intrinsic and extrinsic levels of student rewards for good behavior and attendance. Establishing relationships is a critical component of the building blocks necessary to move a school and a district from Good to Great. Fostering positive, healthy school climates and helping students learn from their mistakes lead to improved student success. Restorative practices, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and other school diversion programs like Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and Multiple Tiers of Support System (MTSS) can be seamlessly integrated into the classroom, curriculum, and culture of schools and can help transform schools to support the growth and health of all students. Teachers and administrators are provided additional professional learning in how to transform the school into a positive relationship-based education system starting with welcoming students to the school, providing each student with peer mediators and adult mentors, learning how to de-escalate situations, and helping to resolve conflicts positively so that the learning process can continue.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Part B.

Plan to verify that each assurance has been addressed

1. District Leadership Team has an integral role in school improvement

District EMT has established non-negotiables for turnaround schools which include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Strategically leverage time and resources*

Rather than viewing time as a never-ending challenge, WGMS is embracing the challenge of time as an opportunity to optimize strengths and refine focus. WGMS is using time differently to better reflect priorities. Master schedules include time for re-teaching; enrichment periods for students mastering material; collaboration time for teachers to share practice, examine student work, and review/analyze data; increased instructional time for reading and math; collaboration time for teachers to improve their practice by developing skills and enhancing mindsets through PLCs; and prioritizing extra time for struggling students outside the regular school day. To use time more effectively, WGMS has developed, implemented, and systematically reviews formative and benchmark assessment data; explores ways to differentiate instruction based on student needs; ensures Restorative Practices, SEL, MTSS, and PBS models are implemented with fidelity; implements systematic approaches to monitoring struggling students' performance and developing timely responses; embeds professional learning for staff aligned to school and district strategic objectives; and ensures collaboration time for teachers is purposeful and focused. WGMS schedules time every week for purposeful collaboration, to review student data and share classroom strategies; creates time for continuous professional learning; creates structures and routines that support a school-wide response to intervention to more effectively support struggling students; develops structures to support school-wide responses for enrichment; and adopts systems to regularly and frequently monitor student learning.

- *Develop a balanced assessment approach*

Frequent and timely monitoring of student learning is essential to school improvement. Posting and communicating learning standards and teaching standards in a student-friendly language are also critical to school improvement. A rigorous, balanced assessment system is the only way to understand the connections between the curriculum, standards, and how those concepts translate into student learning. WGMS works with the district Area Directors of Curriculum and Instruction and instructional specialists to systematically unpack state standards, rewrite learning targets with success criteria, and revise assessments to align with revised learning targets and success criteria. The school allocates resources to embed formative instructional practices; uses frequent benchmark assessments every two to four weeks; has teachers create assessments for learning before developing their lessons; has teachers know and regularly talk about where their students are in the learning process; ensures all students understand learning targets and can self-assess where they currently are; and develops and communicates success criteria for each learning target.

- *Use multiple measures, including growth, to inform improvement and accountability*

Value-added information is a key source for school improvement to allow teachers and leaders to dig deeper and ask more questions about student learning. WGMS collects and analyzes data from multiple sources to determine benchmarks for performance. Each incoming students' data is reviewed carefully. Monthly data collection processes that include all staff are put into place to discuss student needs and progress. Teachers participate in daily and weekly monitoring of informal data that drives daily teaching decisions. WGMS uses data, regardless of the story it communicates, to improve performance and strategically align resources to support improvement. School leaders monitor implementation of initiatives; ensure the use of multiple measures to make decisions on how best to leverage time, talent, and resources; monitor student learning in a systematic approach by reviewing student performance data; and hold staff and themselves accountable to review formative, summative, and perception data.

Instructional program aligns with the standards: All teachers attend common planning weekly and come prepared to discuss promising practices in lesson delivery as well as developing and selecting higher-level questions to incorporate into lessons for the next week. Item specifications are reviewed to ensure targeted skills are addressed for each standard and are following district pacing guides. In efforts to close the achievement gaps, interventions are provided daily to all learners. From the data, students are profiled and placed into the appropriate intervention by the subject area specialists and teachers. Assessment data is collected and analyzed weekly by school leaders. The school leadership team, in collaboration with the instructional specialists and classroom teachers determine appropriate interventions to be differentiated based on student needs. Interventions take place throughout the day through pull-outs and in small group settings guided by instructional specialists. Student progress is closely monitored by instructional

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

specialists/coaches and the school leadership team with additional adjustments made to the interventions as needed and recommended by instructional specialists/coaches to ensure ongoing progress and acceleration. Classroom teachers who may need support with specific standards and/or skills are also identified through this data analysis. Instructional support is assigned by the Principal to support specific teachers based on the data outcomes. The leadership team closely monitors weekly student products to ensure the rigor of the standard is being met. The administrative team develops weekly “look-fors” in order to facilitate instructional walk-throughs. One of the root causes of low proficiency can be attributed to new teachers’ limited understanding of the Florida Standards and the lack of rigor. In an effort to continuously assist teachers with Standards Mastery, the district provides Standards Based Instruction. Implementation is done by the District Professional Learning Director. Instructional specialists continue to build capacity through modeling lessons for teachers conferencing with teachers and facilitate teachers mentoring/observing other teachers in order to strengthen areas of weaknesses. All instructional staff are required to integrate evidence-based strategies within their respective areas to support and improve academic achievement.

District prescribes and requires progress monitoring

The Area Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction, in collaboration with the Superintendent, and other EEMT members (a.k.a. the Turnaround Team for WGMS) are directly responsible for supervising the TOP principal, TOP leadership team, and managing the work of the district’s instructional specialists. The Area Director does site visits weekly and meets with members of the school leadership team on the campus to do progress monitoring. Assessments and instructional programs are reviewed for their effectiveness in providing standards-based instruction and the rigor necessary to improve student achievement. Reviews of regular monitoring assessments are done to determine progress. Classroom walkthroughs occur weekly to review implementation of strategies and differentiated instruction. Review of standards mastered by students occur bi-weekly by the classroom teacher and instructional specialists assigned to that subject area. Data are used to adjust interventions and/or differentiate strategies or instruction based on student needs. Review of data for fragile children is part of regular weekly leadership team meetings to determine changes in instruction or strategy that may be necessary for reinforcement of standards. Common planning teams meet weekly to review student data and determine if the subject area as a whole need to change strategies or if individual teachers who are struggling with content knowledge or implementation of standards-based instruction need assistance or more training. A member of the school leadership team is in every common planning team meeting to assist and report to the turnaround principal ways the leadership team and/or district can assist in providing support to individual teachers or subject-areas. The turnaround principal calls faculty meetings weekly to review progress of the school as a whole and identifies any needs from faculty or students that require attention or support. The Superintendent works closely with the Bargaining Unit to negotiate for flexibility of teacher hours to include more common planning time after the regular school day without incurring additional salary costs – as part of the salary differential on the pay scale for teachers recruited and retained at the school. The content-area instructional specialists continue to provide specific intense services to the TOP school by offering job-embedded professional development for instructional programs and use of quality assessments, co-teaching and modeling experiences, collaborative planning, and the implementation of the coaching cycle. The instructional specialists monitor the subject-area teachers assigned to them to ensure that professional learning is transferred to the classroom. The goal of the turnaround team is to support the implementation of all the turnaround strategies, with a targeted focus on standards-based instruction, assessments designed to measure standards, and evidence-based practices. The Area Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for facilitating collaboration among the various departments within the central office and the school; monitoring progress; and for aligning expertise and resources so that instructional leaders and teachers at the school are adequately supported in the following areas:

- Data disaggregation and data-based decision making
- Progress monitoring systems
- Differentiated/Tiered professional growth and development

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Explain the correlation between the School Improvement Plan (SIP, annual school plan) and this proposed district-managed turnaround plan (TOP-2, 2-year district plan). Describe how the district and school leadership team are working together to implement the plans to improve the school.

Correlation between SIP and TOP-2:

The district strategic plan is the overriding document that drives school reform. From this global set of goals, the district strategic plan is developed to guide schools in the development of their overall school improvement plans based on their school-specific data and components. WGMS is allocated UniSIG, Turnaround Schools Supplemental Services Allocation (TSSSA), UniSIG Supplemental Teacher Allocation, and Title I funding to assist with school reform. All of these applications and plans are derived specifically from the school improvement plan. Before the TOP2 is developed, there is review of all plans to ensure that there is an alignment of plans so that there is no program fragmentation and a reduced duplication of effort. Requirements from state, local, and federal levels are combined with state and district efforts and the district-managed turnaround planning supports all funding and other plans.

Turnaround not only dramatically increases student proficiency, but also increases the depth of structural capacity and behavioral improvements that allow the positive changes to continue beyond the formal partnership of the school and its community. Turnaround allows the district to gain a new level of expertise and strategic support for the entire district, school leadership, teachers, and the communities that make up the schools and district. Strategies and activities in the DMT TOP2 plan for WGMS include prioritizing a granular level of change along with a large systemic plan for change. The best turnaround partners are ‘boots-on-the-ground’. The turnaround strategies and activities coordinated in this plan and the DMT TOP2 for WGMS combine expertise and fresh ideas to bring to the table and support the school to create a vision of change. Creating a clear tie between the work in the schools and the work with and in communities that surround the school supports the idea that an investment in education must include an investment in school communities. Joint ownership of what happens in schools guarantees success. Alignment of resources and results are combined and coordinated with a focus on student achievement. Effective turnaround strategies capitalize on strong sustainable partnerships for turning around the school.

Describe how the district and school leadership team are working together to implement the plans to improve the school.

The district’s focus areas for WGMS are instructional programs, assessment, attendance, behavior, and leadership. A turnaround team is established at the school. The turnaround principal has a record of proven effectiveness working to improve fragile schools. In addition to the turnaround principal, an administrator on special assignment has been assigned to the school and the principal has been appointed a retired, highly qualified, past-Deputy Superintendent, Dr. James Brown to mentor her along the way to improved academic achievement. The school’s leadership team consists of two qualified assistant principals who have both served as school leaders and academic coaches for several years. They have worked with challenging populations and have helped facilitate significant learning gains in academic subjects by mastering standards. They will be joined by a Math and Algebra Specialist, a district Secondary Reading Specialist, and a Science Specialist. This leadership team, with mentorship and support, effectively plan and monitor instruction to determine if the school is on track to meet academic goals. The school leadership team identifies school-level barriers and works collaboratively with the district to reduce barriers to the school’s success. District support focuses on assessment, instructional programs, and leadership. Appropriate and rigorous assessments are identified through a variety of sources including but not limited to Unify (Performance Matters), vendor Standards Mastery diagnostics, instructional specialist developed subject-area assessments, and review of other successful public assessments written by highly effective subject-area specialists in other Florida districts. Other vendor developed assessments are reviewed to support the turnaround school. They are evidenced-based assessments with a high degree of reliability and predictability for student mastery of standards. Proactive leadership, evidence-based instructional programs, and standards-based assessments assist the school leaders and instructional specialists in determining student needs and allows them to use data to drive instruction and make immediate adjustments to strategies and instruction necessary to reach goals. Highly qualified/certificated subject-area teachers, Instructional Specialists/Coaches and other support staff assist students in receiving the necessary resources to achieve higher academic proficiency. Federal resources have been dedicated to assist the turnaround school in meeting its needs for attendance and behavior support, supplemental instruction programs, and other

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

supplemental staffing to assist with progress monitoring and restorative practices. The Superintendent has sought support of senior leadership at FDOE and other legislative bodies to assist with prioritizing funding for the turnaround school and its feeder pattern schools. FEFP has been reviewed and prioritized for the turnaround school, including SAI dollars. All programmatic and financial resources are aligned to reduce fragmentation and avoid duplication so that the necessary resources can be dedicated to the turnaround school.

Turnaround Strategies include the following six approaches:

1. **Diagnosis** – must be quick, honest, personal, data-driven, build on leader strengths and shortfalls and determine the composition of the turnaround team.
2. **Targets** – are set and owned by the principal, not just handed down as a mandate; are doable with ‘stretch’ commitments, not just hopes; convene and drive teams; and push for academic achievement, not peripherals.
3. **Message** – conveys a personal “brand”; counters current perceptions and dynamics; prompts energy, urgency, and action; and goes from informing to persuading.
4. **Data Use** – translates information to useful insight for teaching and learning; identifies what is needed to hit the target and track progress toward it; shows performance differences among classrooms and students; and 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; and exchanges what is not a resource for what is
6. **Successful Classrooms** – spends time where it counts most, in the classrooms; provides help to teachers in critical areas; gives immediate and useful feedback; and generates ideas and actions out of successful practices.

Leadership is the primary strategy that will reduce/eliminate internal systemic barriers and address the needs of the school. Turnaround leaders in the turnaround team at WGMS include the following six characteristics:

1. **Energy** – they have the stamina and staying power and are able to get a second wind when necessary; they are enthusiastic and optimistic; they have a passion for achievement; and they are able to motivate others with forward momentum.
2. **Bias to Act** – they are focused on solutions; they have a sense of urgency; they are opportunity driven; and they are impatient with just another plan, meeting or committee.
3. **Results-Oriented** – they are outcome-based rather than process-based; they need to see achievement more than get power or affiliation; they have clear and compelling targets set for success; and they are able to get and use performance data.
4. **Personal Responsibility** – they take more than their fair share of responsibility; they acknowledge errors and mistakes as a basis of learning; they focus on personal as well as group responsibility; and they look to internal more than external causation.
5. **Inclined to Teams** – they see creation, not agreement; they form teams from differences, not just from the like-minded; they share credit as well as information; and they encourage solutions that meet outcomes.
6. **Educational Know-How** – they know how to create effective learning in classrooms; they are educational leaders more than administrators; they have strong diagnostic and development skills; and they are effective at applying curriculum and tools for learning.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan Assurances

The district must agree to ALL of the following assurances by checking the boxes below.

Assurance 1: District Capacity and Support

The district shall ensure the district leadership team, which includes the superintendent and district leadership, has an integral role in school improvement. This team may include those in charge of curriculum, general and special education, student services, human resources, professional development and other areas relevant to school improvement. The district leadership team shall develop and implement the district-managed turnaround plan. The district shall dedicate a position to lead the turnaround effort at the district level. The selected employee shall report directly to the superintendent and support the principal.

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- ☒ The district shall ensure that instructional programs align to Florida’s Standards for English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, social studies and science. The district shall provide the evidence that shows instructional programs to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students and how they are different from the previous programs. The district shall demonstrate alignment of Florida’s Standards across grade levels to improve background knowledge in social studies, science and the arts.
- ☒ The district shall prescribe and require progress monitoring assessments that are aligned to Florida’s Standards in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science for all students. The district shall ensure that its progress monitoring assessments are predictive of statewide assessment outcomes and provide valid data to support intervention and acceleration for students.

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

In the box below, the district should provide information about its systems that support school leadership teams to implement turnaround interventions, including the following: alignment and allocation of support and resources, policies and practices, governance systems for review and monitoring. At a minimum, the narrative shall address the following:

1. Describe the district leadership team and its role in implementing the DMT plan.
2. Explain how the district allows for flexibility in areas such as staffing, scheduling and budgeting, to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes.
3. Identify how the new or revised instructional programs align to Florida’s Standards for ELA, mathematics, social studies and science; the research that shows it to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students; and how they are different from the previous programs.
4. Identify progress monitoring and summative assessments aligned to Florida’s Standards that will be used in the school.
5. Based on the analysis of progress monitoring and summative assessment data, describe any changes that will be implemented to provide continuous support for the school.
6. Explain the district’s allocation of supports and resources and how they align to the specific needs of the school.
7. Identify and describe the district policies and practices that will need to be reviewed and changed to support the school.
8. Describe the system that the district will put in place to review and monitor the effectiveness of the support.

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

1. District Capacity and Support

Leadership Team and Role

The Executive Management Team (EMT) led by the Superintendent and Area Directors of Instruction and Federal Programs along with the Directors of Finance, Interim Human Resource Director, and Coordinator of Safety are responsible for the implementation of the turnaround plan, in collaboration with WGMS principal, school leadership staff, and the principal mentor. The Extended Executive Management Team (EEMT), which includes Curriculum and Instruction; Professional Learning; Parent Services; Transportation; Maintenance; Food Service; Media and Technology (MIS/IT); English Language Learners (EL), Exceptional Student Education (ESE); and Data/Assessment, assist the EMT in implementing the turnaround, reviewing supporting program implementation at the school, and making recommendations for re-prioritizing existing resources to fully support the turnaround effort at the middle school. All individuals listed have specific roles and responsibilities that make up the capacity of the district. The teams meet monthly to address needs and provide specific assistance and support to WGMS. The turnaround principal, Mrs. Juliette Jackson, is supervised by Area Director of Secondary Instruction, Dr. Sylvia Jackson. The direct supervisor of the Area Director of Secondary Instruction is Superintendent Roger P. Milton.

2. Staffing Flexibility

The district’s leadership team meets monthly with the principal to review district and state assessments and problem solve collectively to support the school’s success and to overcome internal and external barriers that could impede school improvement. Human Resources has prioritized the school for staffing by sending candidates to the

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

principal for review before other schools. Once candidates are cleared by the district, the principal has the autonomy to select teachers based on their discretion. The district is collaborating with the Gadsden County Collective Teacher Association (GCCTA) bargaining unit to review faculty at the schools based on evaluation data and VAM performance for reading and mathematics to ensure the most committed and highest performing teachers serve students at the schools. Voluntary and involuntary transfers are being initiated to create faculties that could effectively raise student achievement. International Teachers have been recruited for the hard-to-fill critical need areas of Science and Math. Any teacher transfers are first based on VAM data and principal evaluations. The principal is returning to the school. This was done to give the school a renewed start with a dynamic turnaround principal leader while keeping in place the past principal to assist as an extra administrator to support last year's level of improvements and keep the school on track to even greater improvements in 2019-2020 school year.

3. Instructional Programs

The school leadership team identifies school-level barriers and works collaboratively with the district to reduce barriers to the school's success. District support focuses on assessment, instructional programs, and leadership. Appropriate and rigorous assessments are identified through a variety of sources including but not limited to Unify (Performance Matters), vendor Standards Mastery diagnostics, instructional specialist developed subject-area assessments, and review of other successful public assessments written by highly effective subject-area specialists in other Florida districts. Instructional programs the district uses to support the turnaround school are evidenced-based programs with a high degree of reliability and predictability for student mastery of standards (i.e., iReady Reading and Math, STAR Reading and Math, Accelerated Reader, Write Score, Adaptive Curriculum, Pearson Interactive Science, Gateway Civics, Khan Academy, Algebra Nation, etc.). As students are identified as needing additional assistance in reading, math and/or science, they are placed into intervention courses/programs during the school day, in addition to their grade-level core courses. The program that is being used to support accelerated learning and credit recovery is Edgenuity Content course selection. Reading deficiencies are addressed by a combination of Intensive Reading courses, blended learning in other core subject areas, national test preparation remedial coursework, and other resources that the turnaround leader determines are necessary to improve student proficiency. Instead of allowing students to freely register for elective courses, the focus is on improving basic level skills of students as identified by data and then moving students on to electives after successful exit from the deficiency core area courses.

Proactive leadership, evidence-based instructional programs, and standards-based assessments assist the school leaders and instructional specialists in determining student needs and allow them to use data to drive instruction and make immediate adjustments to strategies and instruction necessary to reach goals. Highly qualified/certificated subject-area teachers, Instructional Specialists, Coaches, and other support staff assist students in receiving the supports necessary to achieve higher academic proficiency. Federal resources are reviewed with the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) to assist the turnaround school in meeting its needs for assessments, supplemental instruction programs, and other supplemental staffing/recruitment/retention incentives.

4. Progress Monitoring

Based on progress monitoring, changes include but are not limited to, more frequent staff meetings; deeper data analysis; closer alignment of strategies to outcomes; and closer attention to the most fragile students. District staff have weekly meetings to review school-based instructional focus and intervention groups and other school diversion programs. The turnaround team reviews data that links to instructional strategies needed by teachers and students after each quarter. The team also reviews progress monitoring data at grade level meetings with teachers after each administration of the district baseline, mid-year and end-of-year assessments. During the meetings, students who are not meeting/exceeding standards and those students at risk for not meeting mastery are identified and action plans are developed to address deficiencies. Professional learning and resources necessary to improve instruction student performance, and assist with the social emotional well-being of the students are also identified and monitored to ensure consistent support.

Assessment data are collected and analyzed weekly by the school leadership team. The school leadership team, in collaboration with the instructional specialists/coaches and classroom teachers determine appropriate differentiated interventions based on student need. Interventions takes place throughout the day through pull-outs guided by the

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instructional specialists/coaches. The students' progress is closely monitored by instructional specialists/coaches and the school leadership team. Adjustments are made to the interventions as needed and recommended by instructional specialists/coaches to ensure ongoing progress and acceleration. Classroom teachers that need support with specific standards and/or skills are identified through data analysis. Instructional support is assigned by the Principal to support specific teachers based on the data outcomes. The leadership team closely monitors weekly student products to ensure the rigor of the standard is being met. The administrative team develops weekly "look-fors" in order to facilitate instructional walk-throughs. Assessments that are included for review and to be progress monitored include STAR Reading and Math Diagnostics; iReady Reading and Math Diagnostics; Acaletics; state FSA, FAA, and EOC assessments (baseline and end of year); and other district developed subject area diagnostics pertinent to determining success and progress of students in subject areas.

5.Changes to be implemented through Continuous support

What are you doing differently to provide continuous support for the turnaround school?

There are instructional specialists/coaches this year specifically assigned full-time on-site in Reading, Math, and Science to support WGMS. The specialists/coaches provide specific and targeted support to the fragile school. The coaching model (pre-planning, modeling, observing, and debriefing) is used to support teachers in effective evidenced-based instructional strategies that improve students' academic performance. The instructional specialists/coaches assist and provide support to teachers in the development of rigorous standard-based lessons via Professional Learning Communities and effective common planning. Instructional leaders at the district work with instructional specialists continuously to build and develop the skills necessary to successfully support classroom teachers in the areas of planning, delivery of instruction, differentiated instruction, data analysis, and digital fluency. The instructional specialists, in concert with the Area Directors of Instruction, facilitate the common planning process, in which teachers jointly plan, observe, analyze, debrief and refine classroom lessons to improve student outcomes. In addition, the team facilitates effective professional learning for principals, teachers, and specialists/coaches at the site. Teachers are given an opportunity during faculty meetings to share instructional promising practices. A part of the school's culture is to also provide opportunities for teachers to serve as models and mentors for specific content areas. Teachers are provided opportunities to observe colleague teachers during classroom instruction to acquire innovative instructional delivery through feedback and collaboration. PLCs are job-embedded in order to develop a culture of continuous improvement throughout the school. All teachers attend common planning prepared to discuss promising practices in lesson delivery as well as developing and selecting higher level questions to incorporate into lessons for the week. Item specifications are reviewed to ensure targeted skills are addressed for each standard and are following district pacing guides and focus calendars. In efforts to close the achievement gaps, interventions are provided daily to all learners. From the data, students are profiled and placed into the appropriate interventions by the subject area specialist and the teachers.

6. Alignment and allocation of support and resources and alignment of needs

These targeted supports are directed at improving student proficiency, when implemented correctly and properly assessed and monitored. The supplemental resources for the regular school day interventions are provided from federal dollars. Dollars do not supplant the district's responsibility to provide a basic education or basic education resources. Dollars for after-hours support come from supplemental federal dollars for afterschool programming. The district has high expectations of all students and teachers. It plans to and conducts frequent reviews of student progress with teachers to set differentiated goals designed to meet academic outcomes.

Extended Time:

The school day (per Florida Statute) is required to operate a minimum of 300 minutes per day (six 50-minute periods). WGMS operates on a 350-minute day (seven 50-minute periods) to provide additional time during the regularly scheduled school day for intervention courses in core subject areas. In addition to carving out additional time during the school day, 21st Century Community Learning Centers further supports the most fragile learners five days a week for 1.5 hours of remediation and instruction each morning and for an additional 1.5 hours four days a week (Monday through Thursday) for a total of 13.5 hours a week. These courses/programs support the district's area of focus for instructional programs and assessments.

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School Environment

Gadsden County recognizes the importance of fostering a safe and supportive environment for students and families. Student attendance is not the problem as data supports that over 92% of students attend regularly. Supporting quality instructional programs, providing every classroom with a qualified and highly effective instruction, better monitoring the implementation of instructional programs through quality and appropriate assessments, and providing the school with a proven turnaround leader are the additional supports the district provides with this plan. Behavior specialists from the Exceptional Student Education Department are assigned to WGMS to provide ongoing social/emotional/mental health support to students. These specialists coordinate services from community agencies to meet the needs of the whole child and their families (i.e., health, social, emotional, physical, employment, training, etc.). They are advocates for students to solve barriers that hinder school success. External experts are involved in implementing Restorative Practices, SEL, PBS, and MTSS to develop a stronger school culture involved in reducing punishments and building restorative relationships between parents, teachers, and students. Visiting teachers and attendance/behavior interventionists are assigned to do home visits when students who are not attending school regularly are identified by school leadership. Homeless outreach specialists connect homeless students and their families to community services and provide homeless students and unaccompanied youth with the access to a free and appropriate education without barriers. The district contracted its English Learner (EL) and Immigrant services with Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC) to align services for its next largest population with the regional Migrant Education program and maximize services without duplication of resources. Gadsden County continues to provide district support that focuses on behavioral expectations and aims to improve the character of the child beyond the school and into the community. Students are challenged to step up and take responsibility and are rewarded by summer employment and other employment opportunities as peer tutors in middle school and other opportunities into their high school years. Students are provided opportunities to self-assess, identify personal strengths and areas for growth, and set goals to continuously develop and improve their character. Cloud9 Character Education program through Destination Knowledge has been purchased by the Gadsden Title IV, Part A program to further support positive character education. The character education program is an additional strand in curriculum of the district's 21st Century Community Learning Centers. By implementing a strong character education program along with Restorative Practices/SEL/PBS/MTSS, communities and schools mutually benefit. The district makes extended efforts to link students with adults on the campus who they can go to throughout the year for social and emotional support. Student Support Mentors have been added to the school for additional on-site support. Through the development of self-advocacy plans, goal-setting, small group mentoring, and personalized guidance and support, this helps the district to lay the foundation for academic success. Parents are strongly encouraged to become full partners in their children's education. The Parent Resource Center has implemented multiple ongoing mechanisms for engaging families and the community in school improvement efforts through a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. The Parent Resource Center has markedly increased the number of partnerships with community-based organizations in order to create opportunities for parents to utilize community resources over the past several years. Community meetings are held regularly to discuss School Board initiatives and school improvement direction for its public schools. The Parent Resource Center conducts ongoing parent workshops, computer literacy courses and provides other parent, foster child, and homeless services and outreach to all parents in the various communities of Gadsden County. The Parent Resource Center empowers parents with information, resources, and services available through the school, the district and community-based agencies in order to encourage a family environment that promotes learning.

Professional Learning

In an effort to continuously assist new teachers with Standards Mastery, the district provides Standards-based instruction professional learning. Implementation is done by the district Director of Professional Learning. Instructional specialists/coaches continue to build capacity through modeling lessons for teachers, conferencing with teachers and facilitating teachers observing other teachers in order to strengthen areas of weaknesses. All instructional staff are required to integrate evidence-based strategies within their respective areas to support and improve academic achievement. The district is committed to providing every student a world-class education that prepares them for college and careers in the 21st Century. In order to accomplish this, it is imperative that the highest qualified teachers and staff are recruited and retained for sustainability. As a district, Gadsden County seeks teachers who are dedicated to the success of all students, particularly those in fragile schools; committed to

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producing quantifiable student achievement gains; and a willingness to persevere through the use of the problem solving model and are able to turn challenges into opportunities.

7. Policies and practices

What district policies will need to be reviewed and/or changed to support the turnaround school?

All district policies are being reviewed at the present time. Current proposals for revisions include the following:

3120.04 - EMPLOYMENT OF SUBSTITUTE AND PART-TIME INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF –language has been revised with specific limitations of time a substitute may be used as a temporary teacher in turnaround schools

1130 - APPOINTMENT, ASSIGNMENT, TRANSFER, AND PROMOTION OF ADMINISTRATORS the language has been expanded to include assignment of administrators placed in turnaround schools

3130 - APPOINTMENT, ASSIGNMENT, TRANSFER, AND PROMOTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF language has been expanded to include assignment of instructional staff placed in turnaround schools

The combined Leadership Team (made up of the EMT, and EEMT) has the following internal business practices (policies) and procedures in place to guide the school-based leadership team and provide direct support systems to WGMS:

Internal Policy (Business Practice) 1 – Hold Monthly Leadership Meetings

Procedure for Internal Policy 1: The Leadership Team is scheduled to meet monthly to review the recommendations resulting from School Board meetings and to progress monitor the TOP school in the areas of: Supportive Environment, Effective Leadership, Data /Student Achievement, Collaborative Planning and Teaching, Ambitious Instruction and Learning, and Family/Community Involvement.

Internal Policy 2 – Provide information and data for the Community Assessment Team (CAT) Meetings

Procedure for Internal Policy 2: The Leaderships Team provides the appropriate data from the needs assessment results to the CATs for the purpose of allowing the community an opportunity to stay abreast of the progress made by the school and be able to make informed recommendations for continual improvement.

Internal Policy 3 – Provide updates from TOP school to the EMT

Procedure for Internal Policy 3: The TOP school’s principal, school leadership team, school-based instructional specialists, and/or instructional/content specialists meet at least monthly to review/analyze progress of student achievement. The results of the meeting are provided to the members of the EEMT to assist with progress monitoring.

Internal Policy 4 – Monitor monthly reports on the level of progress each district department is making to support and assist the TOP school in accomplishing and meeting their goals.

Procedure for Internal Policy 4: Each department represented on the EEMT provides reports on their responsibility related to assisting the TOP school. These reports are shared with the EMT to provide additional support and identify next steps for the school.

Internal Policy 5 –Work collaboratively with the Bureau of School Improvement to monitor effectiveness of the implementation of WGMS’ TOP.

Procedure for Internal Policy 5: During this process, the EEMT meets with the Bureau of School Improvement to ensure that the district is supporting all of the initiatives identified with the TOP, School Improvement Plan, and District Strategic Plan related to WGMS.

Internal Policy 6 – The EEMT implements “TOP Instructional Reviews” at WGMS to ensure initiatives are effectively being implemented and to support student achievement.

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Internal Procedure for Policy 6: The Leadership Team works collaboratively with the Director of the Bureau of School Improvement (BSI), the Regional Executive Director (RED) of the Northwest region, and other members of the BSI Team to visit the “TOP” school once a semester to perform the Instructional Review.

8. What system will the district put in place to monitor the effectiveness of your support?

The Area Director of Secondary Instruction, in collaboration with the Superintendent, and other EEMT members (a.k.a. the Turnaround Team for WGMS) are directly responsible for supervising the TOP principal, TOP leadership team, and managing the work of the district’s instructional specialists. The Area Director does weekly site visits and meets with members of the school leadership team on the campus to do progress monitoring. Assessments and instructional programs are reviewed for their effectiveness in providing standards-based instruction and the rigor necessary to improve student achievement. Reviews of regular monitoring assessments are done to determine progress. Classroom walkthroughs occur weekly to review implementation of strategies and differentiated instruction. Review of standards mastered by students occurs at least once bi-weekly by the classroom teacher and instructional specialists assigned to that subject area. Data is used to adjust interventions and/or differentiate strategies or instruction based on student needs. Review of data for fragile children is part of regular weekly leadership team meetings to determine changes in instruction or strategy that may be necessary for reinforcement of standards. Common planning teams meet weekly to review student data and determine if the subject area as a whole need to change strategies or if individual teachers who are struggling with content knowledge or implementation of standards-based instruction need assistance or more training. A member of the school leadership team is in every common planning team meeting to assist and report to the turnaround principal ways the leadership team or district can assist in providing support to individual teachers or subject-areas. The turnaround principal calls faculty meetings weekly to review progress of the school as a whole and to identify any needs from faculty or students that require support. The Superintendent works closely with the Bargaining Unit to negotiate for flexibility of teacher hours to include more common planning time after the regular school day without incurring additional salary costs – as part of the salary differential on the pay scale for teachers recruited and retained at the school. The content-area instructional specialists continue to provide specific intense services to the TOP school by offering job-embedded professional learning for instructional programs and use of quality assessments, co-teaching and modeling experiences, collaborative planning, and to assist with implementing the coaching cycle. The instructional specialist monitors the subject-area teachers assigned to him/her to ensure that professional learning is transferred to the classroom. The goal of the turnaround team is to support the implementation of all the turnaround strategies, with a targeted focus on standards-based instruction, assessments designed to measure standards, and evidence-based practices. The Area Director of Secondary Instruction is responsible for facilitating collaboration among the various departments within the central office and the school; monitoring progress; and for aligning expertise and resources so that instructional leaders and teachers at the school are adequately supported in the following areas:

- Data disaggregation and data-based decision making
- Progress monitoring systems
- Differentiated/Tiered professional growth and development

All of these measures combined provide the district with measures of effectiveness of strategies. Project external evaluations also provide a review of strategies implemented, goals met and unmet, and revisions to strategies to meet goals.

Assurance 2: School Capacity-Leaders and Educators

The district shall ensure the school has effective leaders and educators capable of improving student achievement.

Leaders

The district leadership team, in collaboration with the school, shall develop an annual professional development plan that provides ongoing tiered support to increase leadership and educator quality.

The district shall ensure the principal and assistant principal have a successful record in leading a turnaround school and the qualifications to support the student population being served.

The district shall ensure that the principal will be replaced, unless recommended for retention in collaboration with the Department, upon entry into district-managed turnaround based upon the individual’s turnaround record and degree of success, the length of time since turnaround success, the

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

degree of similarity in the student populations and any other factor that would indicate the principal will have turnaround success with this school.

Educators

- The district shall ensure it has reviewed practices in hiring, recruitment, retention and reassignment of instructional personnel with priority on student performance data.
- For districts with more than five schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a Differentiated Accountability (DA) school with a rating of either Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM), is less than the district average. For districts with five or fewer schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a DA school with either a rating of Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state VAM, is less than the state average.
- The district shall ensure the instructional staff who do not have a state VAM rating and who do not show evidence of increasing student achievement are not rehired at the school.
- Pursuant to section 1012.2315(2)(a), F.S., the district must ensure that the percentage of temporarily certified teachers, teachers in need of improvement or out-of-field teachers assigned to the school is not higher than the district average.

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity-Leaders

In the box below, the district must provide information about its systems to ensure the school has an effective administrator capable of leading the turnaround efforts, including desired experience and competencies, recruitment and retention incentives and operational flexibility. At a minimum, reply to the following:

1. Has the principal been retained or replaced? Include the principal's name and start date, selection process and leadership experience.
2. Provide evidence that indicates the principal and assistant principal have a proven record of success in turnaround schools and the qualifications to support the community served.
3. Will other members of the school leadership team be retained or replaced and when? Explain the team's turnaround experience.
4. Does the district offer incentives to attract and retain principals willing to lead a turnaround school?
5. How does the district build the capacity of turnaround leaders?
6. What operational flexibility will be afforded to the principal, such as the degree of input in selecting their school leadership team and instructional staff?
7. What actions will the district take regarding the school leadership team after the first year of this plan if the school's grade does not improve?

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Leaders

School Capacity

1. Has the principal been replaced or retained?

Yes, replaced

Include, name, date, selection process, leadership experience

Juliette Jackson

August 10, 2019

After a meeting and discussion of the Turnaround status of WGMS, the Superintendent met with FDOE, his leadership team, the School Board, and the 2018-2019 leadership team at WGMS to discuss potential actions that would result from the school being identified in Turnaround. With a very limited bench of leaders for selection and the loss of the district's lead principal to the neighboring school district, the Superintendent determined that it was best to choose a proven turnaround leader for WGMS who could assist the leadership team in turning the school around. Because of all of the learning gains and the positive progress the past leader provided to the school in almost coming out of turnaround, the Superintendent agreed to let the past principal stay at the school with the turnaround principal to assist in implementing strategies that proved effective with the students in 2018-2019.

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2. Proven Record of Success

Principal proven level of success in turnaround schools and qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Bethune-Cookman College
- Two Master's Degrees from the University of Florida (Psychological Foundations of Education and Guidance) and Florida A&M University (Educational Leadership)
- Florida Certification in the areas of Guidance & Counseling (K-12), Psychology (K-12), School Principal (all levels), and Middle School Endorsement
- 28 years of experience in public education and 4 years in corporate education
- Served as Educational Analyst with the Florida House of Representatives, Classroom Teacher, Guidance Counselor, Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, Principal and Associate Director of Teaching and Learning for the College Board
- During her two-year tenure, with the College Board, Ms. Fisher-Jackson was responsible for restructuring the curriculum for failing high schools in the State of Florida (The Florida Partnership).

West Gadsden Middle School is led by a former turnaround principal who has improved a Turnaround high school from a "D" to a "C"; a middle/high school from an "F" to "C"; a middle school from an "F" to a "C"; and a triple "F" combination middle/high school from a "D" to "C".

Will other members of the leadership team be retained or replaced, when? What is the turnaround team's experience?

One Assistant Principal at the school will be replaced and a new Assistant Principal has been recruited who has experience in working in Turnaround Schools for the past four years. The AP replacement was part of the leadership team that helped the largest school in the district come out of turnaround two years ago. The recruited Assistant Principal comes to the school with a vast amount of experience in literacy, has successfully modeled literacy and reading strategies as a Reading Coach, and has a demonstrated record of turning around fragile ELA teachers. The new secondary Reading Specialist is a Literacy Coach who has demonstrated effectiveness with turnaround schools and has effectively modeled strategies for fragile teachers that have resulted in student achievement. An administrator on special assignment has been added to the leadership team to work with parents, character education, student attendance and behavior. Other interventionists have been added to the school team in attendance, behavior, and academics to provide additional support to teachers and students.

Does district offer incentives to retain and attract principals to lead turnaround schools?

Turnaround principals are placed at the top of the pay scale for school principal on the salary schedule; given operational flexibility; allowed their choice of school leadership team members; given flexibility in teacher assignments; and given flexibility in the hiring and staffing process. School leader end-of-year bonuses for improving school grade are provided.

How does the district build the capacity of turnaround leaders?

The district offers opportunities to become part of the Commissioner Leadership Academy (Dr. Brian Dassler Academy) and opportunities to attend National and State Conferences featuring expert sessions about High Poverty, At Risk, Minority, Restorative Practices, and other related issues that align with and are comparable to the challenges in the turnaround school they lead. Every year, the performance of each school administrator is evaluated in three domains: 1. Student Growth Measures 2. Leadership Practice 3. Deliberate Practice, to ensure continuous improvement. A school leader who receives a rating of "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" is issued an Individual Performance Intervention Plan (IPIP) to appropriately support the leader in specified areas of need. Through Leadership Development programs, school site administrators are provided opportunities to participate in college level and professional level courses/training to strengthen their professional skills; and opportunities to meet with district leadership and instructional specialists to gain a deeper understanding of the standards and learn instructional best practices on how to provide appropriate feedback and support to teachers based on the identified needs. In addition, administrators are provided opportunities to participate in district and educational organization sponsored learning institutes and leadership conferences. Principals are provided mentorship through ongoing professional learning experts. A highly qualified and successful retired Deputy

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Superintendent has been assigned to the principal to mentor and to share some of the strategies he has found to be successful. Leadership Teams (consisting of district leaders, instructional leaders, and school administrators) are held monthly and provide an opportunity for the school principal to share best practices, analyze data, reflect, do book studies, and collaborate with their colleagues. The purpose of this group is to build the principal's capacity as an instructional leader. Classroom observations support the principal in analyzing classroom instruction and defining structures of support.

What operational flexibility will be offered to principal?

Principals are afforded operational flexibility with regard to the selection of members of the leadership team, site-based lead teachers and instructional specialists, community involvement, and behavior specialists. Principals have the flexibility to hold interviews for vacant positions within their school and hire candidates that best meet the needs of their school and who are a good fit for the school culture.

Gadsden County places responsibility for designing a district turnaround plan in the hands of the Turnaround Team in collaboration with the principal of the turnaround school. The responsibility of implementing a school-level turnaround plan is a collaborative effort between the Turnaround Team and the school's principal and teaching staff. The principal in the turnaround school is given the authority to implement a reform plan that is specific to the needs of the school and its students that is aligned to the district's strategic plan. The principal is given the flexibility to hire staff and develop a team of teachers who are committed to positively impacting school improvement. No teacher is placed at the school that has not met with the approval of the turnaround principal and other committed staff members who form the school leadership team. The principal determines if a staff member is not supportive of their reform plan to implement turnaround strategies. Staff members who are not supportive of the reform plan are removed from the school at the principal's request. The district leadership team, with school leaders input, selects district-wide initiatives to be used in every school. However, the principal at the turnaround school has flexibility to determine the school schedule, student groupings, additional interventions that support the district initiatives, and other instructional strategies. A primary focus of the turnaround principal is on building relationships and changing the school culture to build both teacher and student expectations.

What action will the district take with the school leadership team after the first year if the grade does not improve?

The district will allow the principal a maximum of two years to improve the school culture and student academic proficiency. After that point, the school leader will be replaced and the leadership team will be evaluated to determine if they are a good fit for the incoming turnaround leader.

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Educators

In the box below, the district must include information about its systems to ensure the school has effective educators capable of improving student achievement, including priority in hiring, recruitment and retention incentives and professional development and coaching support provided by the district. At a minimum, reply to the following:

1. What is the process for filling vacancies at this school, specifically in the core content areas? Is this school given priority in hiring? Is hiring completed at the district level so vacancies at turnaround schools are filled before other schools are permitted to hire? Is there a MOU or union agreement to this effect?
2. How does the district ensure students at this school are instructed by a certified instructional personnel when unexpected vacancies arise?
3. Does the district offer bonuses and, if so, what are the qualifications and conditions (e.g., length of employment commitment, performance)? Is there a union agreement to this effect?
4. Does the district offer incentives to Highly Effective or Effective state VAM instructional personnel to reduce turnover at turnaround schools?

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Assurance 2: Narrative-School Capacity- Educators

1.Process for filling vacancies- hiring priority-MOU

The Human Resource Department works closely with district and site leaders to support recruitment efforts in staffing. Recruitment efforts include, but are not limited to: hosting numerous recruitment events where CS&I schools are strongly encouraged to participate and afforded the option to proactively select teachers through advanced hiring commitments for existing and anticipated instructional vacancies; allowing CS&I schools earlier access to qualified candidates in an effort to fully staff their schools; and partnering with local colleges and universities to provide interns. Recruitment efforts are extended by creation of pool applications on the district website so that there would be an ongoing pool of candidates to select from should a teacher decide to leave the school or the district earlier than the end of a school year; outreach to business partners and employment bureaus to market recruitment events/initiatives and promote instructional job opportunities; advertisements on national electronic platforms (e.g. teachers-teachers.com, teach.org); searching pools of retired highly effective teachers; seeking college and university partnerships that provide intern support, community connections, STEM project-based experiences, and other classroom experiences); targeting second-career teachers and offering alternative certification and varying levels of support to get them highly qualified; providing year-long and summer training programs and resources for first year teachers to convert temporary certifications to professional certifications; providing virtual and site-level resources to all teachers to improve their instructional knowledge and skills (School Improvement Network); and providing mentors to support Year 1-3 teachers to encourage retention, particularly at the schools where they are most needed. The Superintendent has pledged that if a candidate, especially in math and science, can demonstrate highly effective VAM scores then the starting salary schedule can be exceeded to a maximum of ten steps above starting level as an incentive to attract the highest qualified candidates and/or retain highly qualified teachers. In order to recruit the highest qualified candidates to serve as instructional specialists, eligible teachers are screened and a select group of applicants are interviewed. Specialists receive a salary that exceeds the salary scale for a certified teacher. Through this process, the district has been able to attract high-performing classroom teachers to serve as instructional specialists in the turnaround school. Title I funding is utilized to acquire content-specific school site specialists and provide them with additional stipends upon successful completion of academic outcomes at the schools they serve. Recruitment Partnerships are maintained with Florida State University, Florida A & M University, Flagler University, St. Leo University, Grand Canyon University, Tallahassee Community College, and local Career Source networks. Recruitment events in 2018-19 included, but were not limited to: Florida A & M Teacher Recruitment Fair; Florida State University Education and Career Fair; Valdosta State University Recruitment Fair; Flagler College Seminar; Career Source Capital Region Event; Gadsden County Job Fair; Great Florida Teach-In; Northwest Teacher Recruitment Fair; FFMT 17th Annual Teacher Recruitment and Professional Development Symposium; and Gadsden County School District Teacher Recruitment Fair and Transfer Day.

Recruitment and retention efforts include assisting new teachers with the paperwork and assurances necessary to have educational loans forgiven, reimbursement of test costs for successful completion of subject area exams and coursework for endorsements (i.e., reading, ESE, ESOL); college-level courses through BEACON and PAEC at no individual charge to add professional credentials to their portfolio; reimbursement for the cost of attaching endorsements to professional certificates; stipends for attending professional development and other trainings and workshops to expand teacher skills and content knowledge; district level teacher induction programs [Alternative Certification Program, College of Education, Professional Educator Competency, PAEC New Teacher Academy (formerly proPEL)]; workshops in critical foundational topics; networking opportunities; webinars and web conferences; PAEC Teacher Recruitment & Retention Workgroups; and opportunities to attend trainings and conferences (all expenses paid) for special groups of educators (i.e., Music, PE, AP, IB, etc.).

What is the process for filling vacancies at this school, specifically in the core content areas?

Advertisements are posted on many local and regional venues to attract highly qualified candidates; paralleling this strategy, voluntary and involuntary transfers of highly qualified and highly effective staff from other district schools who could help the turnaround school have been implemented. If a vacancy occurs in a core content area, highly qualified staff, site leadership, and/or curriculum support specialists, who hold appropriate certification, cover courses until a teacher is identified.

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Is this school given priority in hiring?

Yes. District policies support priority hiring in turnaround schools. MOUs support priority hiring for turnaround schools. The Superintendent has pledged that if a candidate, especially in core subjects, can demonstrate highly effective VAM scores then the starting salary schedule can be exceeded to a maximum of ten steps above starting level as an incentive to attract the highest qualified candidates and/or retain highly qualified teachers. Highly effective candidates are prioritized to the turnaround school, if they are highly certificated.

Is hiring completed at the district level so vacancies at turnaround schools are filled before other schools are permitted to hire?

Staffing meetings are held with each principal beginning in March of the year before an upcoming school year to identify staffing needs based on student enrollments so that they can be fully staffed with highly qualified staff by the first day of school. After analyzing preliminary assessment data, district leadership assesses the qualifications of the sitting principals to maintain a high level of academic achievement. Once a turnaround school is identified, the principal leader is identified and is allowed to immediately identify and/or advertise for staff to follow him/her to the turnaround school. This may be done earlier than the typical March start of staff planning or it may happen later in the semester, as the critical need is identified based on progress monitoring and assessment scores. Once identified, a turnaround school is given priority for hiring staff before other higher performing schools.

2.How does the district ensure students at this school are instructed by a certified teacher when unexpected vacancies arise?

This school is given priority for assignments of instructional specialists. An Area Director of Curriculum and Instruction is assigned to the school to do weekly progress monitoring. District reading, math, and science specialists are scheduled to be at the school weekly. In the event of a vacancy, the school leadership team, its internal instructional specialists and coaches, and the district instructional specialists, coaches, and Area Directors step to the plate and teach until the vacancy can be filled by a certified teacher or a highly quality expert in the subject area.

Is there a union agreement to this effect?

The hiring process for critical need staff is a collaborative arrangement previously agreed upon with the union prior to MOU requirements. These processes are already in place between the bargaining unit and the Superintendent. Criteria for changes to school board polices and MOUs with the union have been presented to the School Board. Meanwhile, the Superintendent has pledged that if a candidate, especially in core content subjects, can demonstrate highly effective VAM scores then the starting salary schedule can be exceeded to a maximum of ten steps above starting level as an incentive to attract the highest qualified candidates and/or retain highly qualified teachers.

MOU

The district has had several meetings with the bargaining unit to implement recruitment and retention processes and secure equitable placement of high quality teachers and staff at the turnaround school. The Superintendent and district union negotiator have a signed preliminary MOU that has been School Board approved and it should be ratified very soon. Meanwhile, the Superintendent has pledged that if a candidate, especially in core content subjects, can demonstrate highly effective VAM scores then the starting salary schedule can be exceeded to a maximum of ten steps above starting level as an incentive to attract the highest qualified candidates and/or retain highly qualified teachers. Criteria for teachers and instructional specialists to be retained is that at least 65% of their students have achieved learning gains on an average over a three-year period if they have a VAM score. Criteria for new teachers and instructional specialists without a VAM score would include learning gains calculated according to the number of years they have taught reading and/or math and will be based on increased student achievement. Teacher and principal evaluations have been developed and approved by FDOE and the bargaining unit. Evaluations are used to determine placement and/or retention at the turnaround school. Evaluations include analysis of school, subject, and classroom data from district and state assessments. The bargaining agreement has maintained a high percentage (50%) of teacher evaluation scores to be driven by the teacher's VAM scores.

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3. Does the district offer incentives to reduce turnover at turnaround schools? Does the district offer bonuses and, if so, what are the qualifications and conditions (e.g., length of employment commitment, performance)? Is there a union agreement to this effect?

School leader end-of-year bonuses for improving school grades are provided. Whole school bonuses (in addition to any school recognition dollars) for overall improvement of school grade – are divided equally by all staff at the school, including food service, transportation, and custodial. There have been several Memoranda of Understanding developed with the bargaining unit in the past as the district has provided intense services to lower performing schools and they all included funding incentives. The Superintendent has resurrected this process to include agreement with the bargaining unit over the level of bonuses offered that can be supported by sustainable funding. The Superintendent uses his discretion to determine recruitment and retention bonuses for highly qualified candidates if they are able to effect change in the turnaround school. This past school year the Superintendent insisted that every fully-certified teacher with an effective or highly effective evaluation be provided a retention bonus.

VAM

The VAM scores were recently released for 2018-19 and include experienced teachers from 2016-2019. Many of the teachers at WGMS were not included in the VAM scores because they are teachers of non-VAM rated subjects. In the cases of the non-VAM teachers, the latest teacher evaluation was used to identify their level of proficiency based on at least 50% of student learning gains. The Superintendent has pledged that if a candidate, especially in core content subjects, can demonstrate highly effective VAM scores then the starting salary schedule can be exceeded to a maximum of ten steps above starting level as an incentive to attract the highest qualified candidates and/or retain highly qualified teachers. Unsatisfactory VAM teachers receive intense intervention and monitoring by the school leadership team after development of an individual professional development plan that targets weaknesses identified in classroom walkthroughs. Professional development is provided by the ePDC system of professional learning offered through PAEC, through BEACON (University courses), and through district professional learning. Progress monitoring of professional learning is done by the school leadership team, the Area Director of Secondary Education, the Director of Professional Learning, and the district instructional specialists. District trainings are provided by the Director of Professional Learning, instructional specialists, and are available from intervention vendor trainings designed to meet the individual needs of each teacher.

Assurance 2: Verification-School Capacity- Educators

In the box below, describe the specific actions the district has taken to recruit instructional personnel with state VAM ratings of Highly Effective and Effective to this school. Describe how the district has reassigned or non-renewed instructional personnel with state VAM ratings of Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory to a school not in DA and how the district filled any vacancies resulting from these reassignments with certified instructional personnel.

What actions have been taken to recruit with state VAM ratings of Highly Effective and Effective to this school?

In the 2018-19 school year, the School Board approved the third-year in a row of bonuses and raises for every staff member, including a bonus in 2018-19 for every fully-certified teacher. All non-instructional staff received a salary increase of 3% in 2018-2019. Recruitment bonuses, retention bonuses, and performance pay bonuses were also paid during 2018-19 and continue to be paid into the 2019-20 school year. The Superintendent has strongly insisted that language in the MOU prioritize highly effective teacher recruitment. Inter-district transfers of effective and highly effective teachers are ordered when the turnaround school has levels of teachers that are not effective above the district average. Title I funding is utilized to provide additional recruitment bonuses for effective and highly effective teachers. UniSIG roll forward funding is also utilized to recruit and retain effective and highly effective VAM teachers to the school. Additional stipends are also provided upon successful completion of academic outcomes at turnaround schools. Recruitment Partnerships are maintained with Florida State University (FSU); Florida A & M University (FAMU); Flagler University; St. Leo University; Grand Canyon University; University of West Florida; University of Central Florida; Tallahassee Community College; and local Career Source networks to improve opportunities to bring high qualified teachers to Gadsden Schools. In spite of all these recruitment efforts, 43 new teachers have been recruited in the district for 2019-20 and 23 of the district's highest performing

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teachers have been recruited by a neighboring district, along with one of the district’s highest performing principals. Gadsden County continues to enhance and expand its recruitment efforts to attract even more qualified teachers for its students.

How many instructional personnel were reassigned or non-renewed due to state VAM ratings of Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory?

At the end of 2018-19 of the 40 instructional staff, 12 were not recommended back due to needing improvement or unsatisfactory ratings on their teacher evaluations. Many of them were first year teachers who did not generate a VAM score but school leadership found their performance to be less than acceptable for the fragile children they were responsible for in the school. In August, each teacher with a 2018-2019 VAM score of needs improvement and unsatisfactory is reevaluated to determine if their placement at the school should continue (two unsatisfactory teachers have been reassigned and another teacher is pending reassignment); two teachers were moved to non-VAM scored subjects where they had proven effectiveness in improving student performance in that subject area. Some teachers received multiple VAM scores (two) that were both effective and needs improvement. Placement for these teachers was determined by assigning them to the subject area where they had an effective VAM score. While there are some staff still remaining at the school with unsatisfactory and needs improvement VAM scores, the new principal has met with each of them to determine what generated the score; what supports they need in the classes they will be offering in 2019-20 to keep this rating from recurring; what type of professional learning they need to assist them with content and instructional strategies; and what type of resources they need to be more effective. All of those supports are being provided for the teachers. Peer mentors have been assigned to the most fragile teachers as additional internal support.

Confirm that all reassigned instructional personnel were not reassigned to DA schools.

All reassigned instructional personnel were not reassigned to CS & I schools. Those that were reassigned were placed in other district schools or they chose to leave the district because of the reassignments.

How did the district fill the vacancies? Have all vacancies been filled with certified instructional personnel?

Vacancies are filled through a variety of measures, including but not limited to: recruitment fairs, advertisements in local and regional media, including social and web-based media; partnerships with community and university partners assisting with identification of potential teachers; voluntary and involuntary transfers of high effective staff from other district schools who could help the turnaround school; and if a vacancy occurs during the year in a core content area, highly qualified staff, site leadership, and/or curriculum support specialists with appropriate certification are assigned to cover the courses until another high qualified teacher is identified. All vacancies at the school that have been filled since the beginning of the school year have been filled with certified instructional personnel. There are two resource support staff vacancies for ESE and non-VAM classes.

Fill out the table below to verify the most recent three-year aggregated state VAM classification data.

STATE VAM DATA- School % Compared to District and State%				
3- year aggregated VAM Data	Highly Effective (HE)	Effective (EF)	Needs Improvement (NI)	Unsatisfactory (UN)
Number of instructional personnel	3	8	2	4
School %	17.6%	47%	11.76%	23.53%
District %	17%	41%	18%	24%
State %	17%	54%	14%	14%

Acknowledgement

The district verifies the information in this form and confirms that they have collaborated with the school and the RED.

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Name and title of person responsible for completing and submission of the TOP-2

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Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement (due October 1)

September 30, 2019

Superintendent signature (or authorized representative)

