



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org



TOP-2



Turnaround Option Plan—Step 2(TOP-2) External Operator (EO)

Pinellas County Schools
Sandy Lane Elementary

Form Number TOP-2, EO, incorporated in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., effective August 1, 2022

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)
External Operator**

Due: October 1 for Cycle 1 or January 31 for Cycle 2-4

Purpose

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

Directions

Districts shall complete this Step 2 form for each school for which the district is selecting EO. This completed form must be signed by the superintendent or authorized representative and emailed to BSI@fldoe.org no later than October 1 if Cycle 1 or January 31 if Cycle 2-4. The subject line of the email must include district name, school name and TOP-2 (EO).

School

In the box below, identify the name and MSID number of the school that will be supported through EO.

School Name/ MSID Number
Sandy Lane Elementary/3871

EO Assurances

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

Assurance 1: Selecting a Successful EO

The district shall select an EO that has a record of school improvement in turning around schools that are high-poverty and low-performing with students of similar demographics.

Description of how the district will address Assurance 1: Selecting a Successful EO

Pinellas County Schools (PCS) believes that contracting with an EO with a proven track record of success in transforming school performance will provide a mechanism to fully and permanently impact the current and future success of Sandy Lane Elementary. The following is the District's transparent and intentional outline of a bold new vision for school turnaround.

1. The District is fully committed to Sandy Lane, its students and families. Proposing this innovative turnaround model is a way of supporting and honoring the surrounding school communities and positively impacting the social and economic infrastructures already in place.

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2. The District will contract with Learning Sciences International (LSI) in November 2021. LSI will be provided complete autonomy to operate all aspects related to school leadership, teacher hiring, training and evaluation, instructional materials, curriculum design, coaching and instructional methodology.
3. The District has partnered with LSI at Bear Creek, Fairmount Park and Lakewood elementary schools and has seen the value and quality of its work through increased student achievement and improved school grades. The District is not proposing a simple collaboration or consulting relationship with LSI, rather a release of full instructional control to LSI.
4. The District has a proven track record for improving schools in turnaround – moving from 7 schools with an F in 2015 to one school with an F in 2019. As such, the District has the pedigree and capacity to successfully implement this plan as described.
5. Lakewood Elementary was the only Pinellas County School operating under an external operator, LSI, during the 2020-21 school year. The amazing results of that partnership are documented below:

LAKWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

School Year	ELA	ELA Gains	ELA Gains L25	Math	Math Gains	Math Gains L25	Science	Total Points	% of Points	% Tested	Grade
2020-21	41	71	93	62	88	92	44	491	70	99	A
2018-19	20	36	43	17	31	39	27	213	30	100	F
2017-18	18	30	42	22	24	13	12	161	23	100	F
2016-17	22	28	37	30	48	47	22	234	33	100	D

LSI has a record of school improvement in turning around schools that are high-poverty and low-performing. Their empowerment of schools and districts to transform core instruction and leadership practices results in rapid gains in student learning, especially students of similar demographics to Sandy Lane. They are a research-based organization dedicated to the development of teacher expertise and comprehensive school leadership, working closely with leading researchers and educators to reimagine school success and achieve sustainable school performance. Every activity, strategy, and intervention have either attained or is in the process of attaining criteria for evidence-based practices under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) at Levels II or III. Their metrics-driven methodologies are designed from decades of research, working with schools and districts across the U.S., state DOE's, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in Florida, and the Wallace Foundation in Des Moines, Iowa.

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Results of LSI’s Schools for Rigor treatment in Florida turnaround schools.

District	School	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Change
Osceola	Central Avenue ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	C	C	→
Osceola	Deerwood ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	C	↑
Osceola	Flora Ridge ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	C	↑
Osceola	Thacker Avenue ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	C	C	→
Palm Beach	Belle Glade ES	F	C	N/A	D	C	↑
Palm Beach	Canal Point ES	F	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	↑
Palm Beach	Glade View ES	D	C	N/A	F	C	↑
Palm Beach	Glades Central HS	C	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	→
Palm Beach	Gove ES	D	D	N/A	N/A	N/A	→
Palm Beach	Lake Shore MS	F	C	N/A	D	C	↑
Palm Beach	Pahokee ES	D	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	↑
Palm Beach	Pahokee MS/HS	C	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	→
Palm Beach	Pioneer Park ES	D	C	N/A	N/A	N/A	↑
Palm Beach	Rolling Green ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	C	↑
Palm Beach	Rosenwald ES	D	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	↑
Pasco	Gulfside ES	N/A	D	C	N/A	N/A	↑
Pinellas	Bear Creek ES	D	C	A	C	N/A	↑
Pinellas	Azalea MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	C	D	↓
Pinellas	Fairmount Park ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	F	C	↑
Pinellas	Lakewood ES	N/A	N/A	N/A	F	F	→
Polk	Kathleen Senior HS	N/A	N/A	N/S	C	C	→
Putnam	George C. Miller MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	C	↑
Putnam	William D. Moseley ES	N/A	N/A	F	D	C	↑
Seminole	Idyllwilde ES	N/A	D	D	N/A	N/A	→
Seminole	Midway ES	N/A	D	C	C	C	↑
Seminole	Pine Crest ES	N/A	F	D	D	C	↑
Seminole	Spring Lake ES	N/A	N/A	C	C	C	→

Demographics of students at Sandy Lane: 73.7% minority; 88.2% Economically Disadvantaged
Demographics of students in the treatment schools:

District	School	Percent of Minority Students	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students
Osceola	Central Avenue ES	92.6	100
Osceola	Deerwood ES	90.5	100
Osceola	Flora Ridge ES	88.7	100
Osceola	Thacker Avenue ES	87.5	100
Palm Beach	Belle Glade ES	96.2	96.4
Palm Beach	Canal Point ES	96.0	98.9
Palm Beach	Glade View ES	99.7	97.2
Palm Beach	Glades Central HS	98.2	94.6
Palm Beach	Gove ES	96.4	97.2
Palm Beach	Lake Shore MS	99.2	96.6
Palm Beach	Pahokee ES	97.6	97.2
Palm Beach	Pahokee MS/HS	98.7	95.2
Palm Beach	Pioneer Park ES	99.4	99.7
Palm Beach	Rolling Green ES	98.2	99.2

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Palm Beach	Rolling Green ES	98.2	99.2
Palm Beach	Rosenwald ES	99.0	98.6
Pasco	Gulfside ES	41.9	87.7
Pinellas	Bear Creek ES	61.2	100
Pinellas	Azalea MS	68.2	100
Pinellas	Fairmount Park ES	93.3	100
Pinellas	Lakewood ES	89.4	100
Polk	Kathleen Senior HS	61.8	80.8
Putnam	George C. Miller MS	71.0	100
Putnam	William D. Moseley MS	81.9	100
Seminole	Idyllwilde ES	81.7	83.9
Seminole	Midway ES	84.2	84.8
Seminole	Pine Crest ES	72.0	92.4
Seminole	Spring Lake ES	76.0	80.2

Assurance 2: Selecting Leadership

The district and the EO shall ensure the incoming principal and school leadership team have a successful record in leading turnaround schools and the qualifications to support the population being served. The district and the EO shall complete a Principal Change Verification Form when there is a proposed principal change at the school no later than 10 days prior to the proposed principal hire date.

Description of how the district will address Assurance 2: Selecting Leadership

The District and LSI ensure (1) the principal and school leadership team will have a successful record in leading turnaround schools and the qualifications to support the population being served; and (2) a Principal Change Verification Form will be completed if there is a proposed principal change at the school no later than 10 days prior to the proposed principal hire date.

The selection of the principal, assistant principals, and instructional coaches at all district Transformation Zone schools, which includes Sandy Lane, is conducted through a series of interviews and a review of employee work history that is intended to locate leaders who have strong turnaround competencies.

The LSI Team Lead and Assistant Team Lead will conduct a structured needs assessment of the principal’s knowledge, skill, and capacity as an instructional leader. This assessment includes an in-depth interview and observation of the principal during classroom walk-throughs.

The School Leadership Assessment seeks the competencies and skills that are the hallmarks of principals who successfully turn around low-performing schools (Public Impact, 2008). These competencies and skills are:

Achievement

- The drive and actions to set challenging goals and reach a high standard of performance despite barriers.

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- Taking responsibility to improve outcomes and implement initiatives to accomplish sustainable results.

Impact and Influence

- Acting with purpose of affecting the perceptions, thinking, and actions of others.

Monitoring and Directiveness

- The ability to set clear expectations and to hold others accountable for performance.
- Mindfulness of school performance needs and holding teachers and administrators accountable for high standards.

Team Leadership

- Assuming authoritative leadership of a group for the benefit of the organization.
- Working with a group to leverage their input, develop actionable goals, and implement change in a school.

Self Confidence

- A personal belief in one's ability to accomplish tasks and the actions that reflect that belief.

Recognition of Instructional Practices

- Ability to discern instructional strategies and quality of implementation.
- Ability to recognize the alignment of student evidence to target standards.

Use of Data to Drive Instruction

- Relentless collection and examination of student evidence of learning aligned to the standards.
- High expectations of teachers to adapt and improve instruction based on short-cycle data.

Operational Practices

- Use of distributive leadership to ensure a smoothly running organization.

Parent and Community Connection

- Continuous outreach to parents and the community to build collaborative relationships that support learning.

Assurance 3: Selecting Instructional Staff

The district and the EO shall ensure that teachers rated as Unsatisfactory and Needs Improvement based on the three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM) rating and on the district's approved evaluation system, pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S., shall not be staffed at the school.

If the district establishes a district-managed charter school, the district shall ensure all instructional personnel are not employees of the school district, but are employees of an independent governing board composed of members who did not participate in the review or approval of the charter.

Description of how the district will address Assurance 3: Selecting Instructional Staff

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The District ensures teachers are not, and will not be, hired at the school unless they are effective or highly effective instructors, as defined in the District’s approved evaluation system, pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S. In cooperation with LSI, the District will review the evaluations and VAM data for every teacher at the school and commits to ensuring that teachers rated as Unsatisfactory and Needs Improvement, based on the three-year aggregated state VAM rating and on the district’s approved evaluation system, will not be staffed at the school.

The District has negotiated specific contract language providing the principal with the right to transfer teachers who are not showing adequate skill, ability and/or results to work in challenging school environments. Under this arrangement, the principal, the Chief Transformation Officer and the Executive Director for Elementary Education reviewed each teacher at the school in supporting the principal’s retention decisions. These decisions will now transfer to the EO, LSI.

The District has provided several related hiring advantages to Sandy Lane Elementary that will continue, including:

- An open transfer window that allows these schools to advertise and hire teachers at any time during the year.
- An assurance that no employee, including teachers, who was removed from another school can be placed at these schools without the approval from the principal (which will now be extended to LSI).
- Significant recruitment, retention and school performance bonuses.
- The teacher contractual day extended from seven and one-half (7.5) hours to nine (9) hours. The additional seventy-five (75) minutes per week are used to add an additional forty-five (45) minutes of structured planning per week and an additional thirty (30) minutes of uninterrupted planning time per week. Additionally, the student day was increased by sixty-five (65) minutes per day.
- Annually instructional staff receive a \$3,000 recruitment and retention bonus.

As such, the District will not allow for any artificial or contractual barriers to the successful hiring, assignment and training of the teachers that might impede the work of the EO.

Assurance 4: Contracting with the EO

The district shall enter into an annual contract with an EO to operate the school following established district policies and procedures. To ensure the district is well positioned in contract negotiations with an EO the following must be addressed in the contract:

1. Performance indicators to demonstrate that during the term of the contract there will be quantifiable evidence of improvement showing that the school is on track to earn at least a “C” grade within two years and that ties payment to such improvement;
2. The district’s authority to terminate or non-renew the contract for a second year should the EO fail to meet the performance indicators or fail to meet its contractual obligations;
3. Services and responsibilities in leadership and instructional staffing, curriculum and

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- instruction, assessments, progress monitoring and professional development;
4. The EO's role in recruitment, selection and placement of instructional personnel and the school leadership team;
 5. Where the district has an existing contract with the EO, a detailed provision outlining the new or modified services to be provided by the EO; and
 6. A detailed budget with conditions of payment based on performance indicators, including a deferred payment of the final installment of 33% of the contracted amount until delivery of agreed upon improvement and outcomes. The contract must include a provision where the final 33% of the contract value may not be paid until and unless the EO demonstrates that the school has achieved at least a "C" grade or that the school has improved by at least four school grade percentage points overall.

Description of how the district will address Assurance 4: Contracting with the EO

The District intends to enter into an annual contract with an EO, Learning Sciences International (LSI), to operate the school following established district policies and procedures. The following will be addressed in the contract:

1. Sandy Lane will continue to use the District's established interim/benchmark assessments and statewide summative assessments. In addition, student progress toward mastery of standards-driven learning targets will be tracked daily using LSI's Standards Tracker technology tool and district progress monitoring tools. Data collection through Standards Tracker will be used to develop correlations between daily formative tracking and interim/benchmark and summative assessments and improve teacher accuracy in assessing student evidence of learning progress. LSI will make monthly reports of progress to the District through the Executive Action Team.
2. The term of the contract will commence on the effective date and continue through the 2022-23 school year unless terminated earlier. The contract will terminate if Sandy Lane receives a grade of "C" or higher when grades are reported by the FLDOE following administration of the FSA for the 2021-2022 school year.
3. LSI will oversee all school operations and will have access to school grounds at all times during the term of the contract.
 - After the effective date, LSI will complete a comprehensive assessment of the needs of the school, including a review of school staff, leadership, staffing, instruction, curriculum, academic intervention systems, professional learning communities, data teams, common planning, instructional coaching, and the student assessment process and all other systems necessary to develop a staffing and professional development plan for the 2022-2023 school year.
 - In and around May 2022, LSI will prepare the School Leadership Team to execute the 2022-23 School Plan, including training for all administrators, school-based instructional coaches and professional learning community leaders. There will be a teacher orientation and training prior to the beginning of the school year, which will be conducted by LSI.
 - LSI will have primary responsibility for all school academic programs; oversight, selection, placement, coaching, evaluation, assignment of responsibilities and re-

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assignment of school leadership and instructional personnel; professional development; identification, training and coaching of professional learning community leaders, student academic assessment and development of curriculum and instructional materials. If any elements of school operations are identified by LSI as contributing to the school's lack of performance, they will provide notice to the District. A good faith effort will be taken by the District to correct the condition within sixty (60) days following issuance of the notice.

- LSI will improve the school in terms of student performance on FSA and school grade, while implementing next generation instructional systems that will build the capacity of the school to sustain and continue its own improvement in preparation for returning the District control as stipulated in the contract. This includes improvement of behavior, climate, and culture of the school. The goal of this model is to reach beyond school improvement and attain transformation of the school into a scalable model of rigorous instruction and student engagement, providing a data-driven roadmap designed to empower district leaders and teachers. The model aligns curriculum, culture and instructional systems to attain and sustain high levels of performance through:
 - Strong instructional leaders who recognize and support rigorous teaching and learning.
 - Expert teacher leaders who coach and guide peers to instructional expertise.
 - Skillful teachers who guide and inspire students to high academic performance.
 - Engaged students who self-regulate, collaborate, and think creatively with challenging academic content.
 - Informed and involved families and community members who take pride in the school as an example of world-class education.
 - Professional development for administrators, coaches, PLC leaders, and teachers.
 - Coaching for principal and administrators, teacher leaders (coaches and PLC leaders), and teachers.
 - LSI's Tracker technology with included instructional tools and data systems that are used to enhance instruction.
 - Implementation of next generation systems to reinvent the school in a replicable, scalable model.
 - ELA and Math model curriculum for new pedagogy utilizing open resources.
- 4. The record of school improvement is detailed within Assurance 1. LSI will have primary responsibility for the selection, placement, coaching, evaluation, assignment of responsibilities and re-assignment of school leadership and instructional personnel. The District will give LSI priority in selecting and placing teachers and administrators for the school. The District will ensure that staffing of the school is consistent with staffing ratios established by LSI, subject to reasonable budgetary constraints. This will include one or more assistant principals, as well as school-based, qualified, full-time instructional coaches, as required given the size of the student

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population and faculty. All school staff will be selected through an interview protocol set by LSI. They will make all school personnel placement decisions. In the event that an individual is not the best fit for the school as determined by LSI, the District will reassign that individual in a setting to be determined by the District.

5. This will be a new contract between Pinellas County Schools and LSI as the EO for Sandy Lane Elementary.
6. The contract will include a detailed budget with conditions of payment based on performance indicators. Should the school receive a grade of “D” or “F” when grades are reported by the FLDOE following administration of the FSA for the 2021-2022 school year, LSI will perform services described in the contract for the purpose of improving student achievement and the school’s grade for the following year. The final 33% of the contract value will not be paid until and unless LSI demonstrates that the school has achieved at least a “C” grade.

Acknowledgement

Check the box that applies to the district selection of EO.

For Cycle 1, the district acknowledges that the plan and the final EO contract is due to the Department by October 1.

For Cycle 2-4, the district acknowledges that the plan and proposed EO contract are due to the Department by January 31 and the final EO contract is due to the Department by May 1.

Name and title of person responsible for completing and submission of the TOP-2
Lori Matway, Associate Superintendent Student & Community Support Services
Contact information: email, phone number
matwayl@pcsb.org 727-588-6033
Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement
September 30, 2021
Superintendent Signature (or authorized representative)
