

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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March 8, 2005

MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties

From: Jim Warford, K-12 Chancellor

Subject: Public School Contracted Management Services

Florida is leading the nation in raising student achievement, but unfortunately there are some schools that continue to have more than 75% of their students not reading on grade level. It is my belief that all students can learn and we can no longer accept excuses as to why so many students in one school can not read on grade level. The mission of the Department of Education is to “increase the proficiency of all students within one seamless, efficient system, by providing them with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents, and communities.” The State Board of Education has adopted a Strategic Plan that includes strategies, activities and performance measures to help ensure:

- every public school classroom is led by a highly effective teacher;
- every student progresses and advances to the next educational level based on proficiency;
- every student is proficient on grade level in reading, writing and mathematics; and
- every educational institution is led by a quality instructional leader.

The State Board of Education is interested in identifying potential companies and organizations that may be interested in operating a persistently failing Florida public school as defined by receiving a school letter grade of “F” for at least two out of the three past school years. To that end, we are beginning an informal process of identifying viable parties that would be interested in this effort. This information is being sent to private sector educational management

JIM WARFORD

K-12 CHANCELLOR

organizations, Florida School Boards, Florida Public and Private Universities and Community Colleges, and charter school operators in Florida. In addition, we will utilize several marketing strategies, such as the Florida Administrative Weekly, advertisements in Education Week, etc. to identify interested companies and organizations. If your company or organization is potentially interested in operating a persistently failing school in Florida for the 2005-06 school year, please complete the company/organization profile and FAX (850)245-5036 or e-mail (chancellor.warford@fldoe.org) by March 30, 2005.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Purpose: To operate a Florida public school that has been identified as a persistently failing school as evidenced by receiving a school letter grade of “F” for at least two out of the three past school years.

Persistently Failing Schools: Of the 2650 schools graded as part of the state’s accountability system, 41 schools received a letter grade of “F” for the 2004-05 school year. The state has 14 persistently failing schools as defined by receiving a letter grade of “F” for at least two out of the three past school years (three elementary, three middle and eight high schools). These may or may not be eligible for school management contracts for 2005-2006 depending on their school grade for 2004-2005.

Information regarding persistently failing schools may be accessed at the following web sites:

For School Grade Reports: <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>

For School Demographics: <http://doeweb-prd.doe.state.fl.us/eds/nclbpar/main0304.cfm>

For School Improvement Plans (need six digit ID in list provided):

http://sip.osi.fsu.edu/sip_template/login.aspx

Management Expectations:

1. Create an operating strategy that reflects the characteristics of a highly effective school:
 - instructional leadership by all administrators
 - clearly stated and focused mission
 - high expectations for students, teachers, and administrators (create a climate where all staff and students believe that “All Students Can Learn”)
 - opportunities to learn
 - high level of student time-on-task
 - frequent monitoring of student progress
 - safe and orderly climate
 - positive home/school relationship

2. Implement Florida's Continuous Improvement Model as the school improvement model, including key components such as:
 - activities specific to the instruction of the Sunshine State Standards (SSS) in all curriculum areas, and a system of reading instruction that is research based and approved by the Just Read, Florida! Office;
 - assessing student learning through frequent progress monitoring, in alignment with an instructional calendar and focused lessons (SSS), and in appropriate grade levels;
 - monitoring students' progress frequently and developing a process for mid-course correction of academic interventions based on students' response to interventions;
 - developing a specific plan for students performing below grade level in reading, math and science that is different from services previously provided to these students; and
 - providing remediation for struggling students and enrichment activities for successful students during and after regular school days.
3. Implement an educational delivery system that is not "status quo", and reflects a proven method of improving student achievement.
4. Applications should seek to address innovative strategies that will impact overall achievement and serve as models for potential replication.
5. Align fiscal and human resources with the school improvement plan to ensure maximum leverage of all resources are focused on targeted improvement activities, rather than random acts of improvement, to increase student achievement.
6. Provide research based professional development grounded in student achievement data to help ensure teachers receive training in needed areas. Ensure each teacher's individualized professional development plan is based on strategies and activities to increase student achievement, especially in the areas of reading, math and science.
7. Hire a highly effective principal, teachers, and staff with demonstrated ability to improve student achievement.
8. Build strong partnerships with parents, community organizations and local businesses. Actively seek the support of the school community and engage the community in the school improvement process.
9. Operate all aspects of the school.

Performance Expectations (specific expectations will be negotiated depending upon the school selected for contract management):

1. Increase the school letter grade from an "F" to a school letter grade of "D" or higher.
2. Increase the percent of students performing at grade level as evidenced by earning achievement level 3 or above on the FCAT in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science no less than 5 percent annually until 75 percent or more are at grade level.
3. Increase the percent of students making annual learning gains as measured by FCAT in the areas of reading and mathematics no less than 5 percent annually until 75 percent or more are making annual learning gains.

4. Increase the percent of students identified as the lowest 25 percent in reading making annual learning gains as measured by FCAT no less than 5 percent annually until 75 percent or more are making annual learning gains.
5. If serving grade 3, decrease the percent of retained third-grade students annually.
6. If serving grade 10, increase the percent of tenth-grade students earning the scores required to obtain a standard diploma on the first administration of the grade-10 FCAT.
7. Provide targeted assistance and intervention to subgroups assessed through alternative methods.
8. Provide targeted assistance and intervention to students who have not been successful in obtaining level three or above FCAT score(s).
9. If serving third-grade students, provide targeted assistance and intervention to current third-grade students with performance data indicating they are reading below grade level.
10. If serving high school students, provide targeted assistance and intervention to current 11th, 12th, or 13th grade students who have been unsuccessful in obtaining the FCAT target score(s) required to obtain a standard diploma.
11. Increase student attendance rates annually.
12. If serving high school grades, decrease the drop out rate annually.

Eligible Applicants:

Private Sector Educational Management Organizations, Florida School Board, Florida Public and Private Universities and Community Colleges, Charter School operators and other companies or organizations that have a prior history of operating a successful K-12 public school.

Time Frame:

Begin services prior to the 2005-06 school year and provide services throughout the 2005-06 school year. Continuation of services will be based on the company's or organization's ability to meet or exceed the contract performance expectations. The contract performance expectations will be negotiated at the time specific schools are identified.

Funding:

The school is expected to receive funding in the same manner the school is currently funded by the state and the school district. A company or organization may seek additional grant and other funding opportunities for the school if deemed necessary.

Legal Requirements:

The company or organization shall comply with all applicable school board policies, federal and state laws and rules.

**SERVICE PROVIDER PROFILE
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SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION

1. NAME OF COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION
2. CONTACT NAME, ADDRESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION
3. NAME OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS, PRESIDENT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, ETC.
(WHO IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION?)
4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION

RELEVANT PRIOR EXPERIENCES AND REFERENCES

5. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE ANY PRIOR OPERATING EXPERIENCE YOUR COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION HAS HAD OPERATING A K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL. INDICATE WHETHER YOUR ENDEAVORS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND TO WHAT EXTENT. PARTICULARLY ADDRESS SUCCESS YOUR COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION HAS HAD PROVIDING INTERVENTION TO STRUGGLING READERS.
6. IDENTIFY REFERENCES FOR PRIOR BUSINESS EXPERIENCES OPERATING A K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL
7. WHY SHOULD A FLORIDA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OR THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION HIRE YOUR SERVICES TO OPERATE A PERSISTENTLY FAILING SCHOOL?
8. WHY DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION CAN BE MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN ATTAINING INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN A PERSISTENTLY LOW PERFORMING SCHOOL IN FLORIDA?

Specifically describe and explain your Proposed Management Strategies and activities to meet the performance expectations identified above. Use the PERSISTENTLY FAILING SCHOOL INFORMATION provided above to CREATE A HYPOTHETICAL SCHOOL MODEL (clearly describe and identify your hypothetical school model) that your organization will use as an example to explain and describe the MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES YOUR ENTITY WILL USE TO MEET THE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS IDENTIFIED ABOVE. Address each of the following management expectations as you describe your companies proposed management strategies and activities.

SERVICE PROVIDER PROFILE
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Management Expectations:

1. Create an operating strategy that reflects the characteristics of a highly effective school:
 - instructional leadership by all administrators
 - clearly stated and focused mission
 - high expectations for students, teachers, and administrators (create a climate where all staff and students believe that “All Students Can Learn”)
 - opportunities to learn
 - high level of student time-on-task
 - frequent monitoring of student progress
 - safe and orderly climate
 - positive home/school relationship
2. Implement Florida’s Continuous Improvement Model as the school improvement model, including key components such as:
 - activities specific to the instruction of the Sunshine State Standards (SSS) in all curriculum areas, and a system of reading instruction that is research based and approved by the Just Read, Florida! Office;
 - assessing student learning through frequent progress monitoring, in alignment with an instructional calendar and focused lessons (SSS), and in appropriate grade levels;
 - monitoring students’ progress frequently and developing a process for mid-course correction of academic interventions based on students’ response to interventions;
 - developing a specific plan for students performing below grade level in reading, math and science that is different from services previously provided to these students; and
 - providing remediation for struggling students and enrichment activities for successful students during and after regular school days.
3. Implement an educational delivery system that is not “status quo”, and reflects a proven method of improving student achievement.
4. Applications should seek to address innovative strategies that will impact overall achievement and serve as models for potential replication.
5. Align fiscal and human resources with the school improvement plan to ensure maximum leverage of all resources are focused on targeted improvement activities, rather than random acts of improvement, to increase student achievement.
6. Provide research based professional development grounded in student achievement data to help ensure teachers receive training in needed areas. Ensure each teacher’s individualized professional development plan is based on strategies and activities to increase student achievement, especially in the areas of reading, math and science.
7. Hire a highly effective principal, teachers, and staff with demonstrated ability to improve student achievement.
8. Build strong partnerships with parents, community organizations and local businesses. Actively seek the support of the school community and engage the community in the school improvement process.
9. Operate all aspects of the school.

SERVICE PROVIDER PROFILE
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Specifically identify the strategies and activities that your entity will use to meet each of the identified performance expectations for the hypothetical school model that you have created to respond to this request for information. [note specific performance expectations will be negotiated depending upon the school selected for contract management]:

1. Increase the school letter grade from an “F” to a school letter grade of “D” or higher.
2. Increase the percent of students performing at grade level as evidenced by earning achievement level 3 or above on the FCAT in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science no less than 5 percent annually until 75 percent or more are at grade level.
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11. Increase student attendance rates annually.
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Please return to Chancellor Jim Warford
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