

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Action Item

October 18, 2017

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

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Consideration of Turnaround Option Plan for Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1008.33, Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Alachua has one school that requires a revision to their new turnaround plan:

- Hawthorne Middle High School

Supporting Documentation Included: 2017-18 Turnaround Option Plan

Invited Presenters: Karen Clarke, Superintendent, Alachua County Public Schools; Robert Hyatt, School Board Chair; Hershel Lyons, Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools; and Wayne Green, Regional Executive Director, Bureau of School Improvement



Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2 Alachua County Public Schools

This form, to be used by districts planning in 2016-17 for implementation in 2017-18, satisfies the requirements of Form TOP-2, which is incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C. (2014).

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Hawthorne Middle High School 0201

District-Managed Turnaround with External Partner (2017-18)/Closure (2018-19)

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Part I: Needs Assessment

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

District support is provided to all schools designated D and all are required to complete an SIP using Florida CIMS online template and the 8-step problem solving process. SIPs must include strategies to support district expectations. Plans are reviewed by the Executive Director of Curriculum and monitored for implementation monthly. Schools receive additional support from district curriculum specialists, literacy coaches, and other district personnel and are required to hold regular meetings to review benchmark assessment data and early warning system data.

Throughout and at the conclusion of the current school year, the district Curriculum Department, along with the leadership team at each D school, reviewed data from the school visits; survey results and data from the teacher, parent, and student climate surveys; behavior and attendance data; the district-wide, standards-based, progress-monitoring assessments administered by teachers for reading and mathematics; and the 2017 Florida Standards Assessment ELA, math, and science results as well as results from state required EOCs. Data from HMHS led to several specific conclusions:

According to the data profile for Hawthorne Middle High School there is a need for improvement in English Language Arts.

English Language Arts			
Achievement	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
6th	15%	40%	19%
7th	21%	21%	35%
8th	27%	30%	23%
9th	28%	30%	4%
10th	25%	39%	14%

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Additionally, data on state assessments show a need for improvement in almost all areas of mathematics.

Mathematics			
Achievement	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
6th	12%	35%	20%
7th	27%	24%	30%
8th	27%	30%	23%
Alg I	29%	12%	20%
Geometry	33%	19%	16%
Alg II	5%	21%	18%

HMHS made a target to reduce referrals and out of school suspensions by 10%. That target that was met and exceeded. The school-wide discipline plan which includes positive-behavior support will continue to keep this trend.

Year	Number of Referrals	Percent change
2015-15	158	Reduced by 44%
2016-17	88	

HMHS has more student absences than the district average. Student support services will implement a plan to address this data element so attendance improves.

Percentage of students with 15 or more unexcused absences in the 2016-17 school year		
Hawthorne Middle High School	25%	14% variance
District	11%	

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

The Alachua County School District has selected District-Managed Turnaround for this transition during the 2017-18 school year. This plan involves further utilization and refinement of the district-managed turnaround option while adding support from an outside agency. Alachua County Public Schools demonstrated success

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with the district managed/external partner during the 2016-17 school year. During that time, the district contracted with the Lastinger Center as the External Partner and hired a new principal for Lake Forest. Additional district supports were provided to the school, and strict adherence to the turnaround plan produced very satisfactory results across the board. Lake Forest Elementary School went from a school grade of F to a C utilizing this option.

Change in school leadership was a vital part of this turnaround plan. A new principal with a track record of success with student data and a commitment to turnaround has been selected. He has selected a new assistant principal who also has experience in success with turnaround. Removal of ineffective staff has already occurred. The administrative team at HMHS have the full support of the Superintendent and the Board.

Additionally, the district is planning for closure in the 2018-19 school year if HMHS does not earn a school grade of C or better. The closure/reassignment option was selected based on District, Board, and community input. We will reassign and monitor all students. The decisions made around the closure option will be in the best interest of students.

Part II: Implementation Plan

A. Areas of Assurance

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

Assurances for DMT/External Partner (2017-18)

District Capacity and Support

Employ an External Partner to Support and Services the TOP:

The District will support HMHS by hiring an External Partner to help manage the turnaround plan. The district hired an external partner, The Lastinger Center, for the first time in 2016-17 to support the Lake Forest Elementary turnaround plan. Prior to that, the UF Lastinger Center had extensive experience in school turnaround, having worked as an external partner to six elementary and four middle schools in Duval County Public Schools. At these schools, their work focused on the improvement of teaching quality through a comprehensive and aligned set of

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strategies. The Lastinger Center staff worked closely with the district and school leadership teams in Duval County to align supports offered to turnaround schools. Lastinger team members served on school leadership teams, were named within official school improvement plans, and collaborated across district initiatives related to enhancing literacy and educational equity through job-embedded professional development and instructional leadership.

Outcomes of these efforts demonstrated success in improving teacher retention, school culture, and school performance, particularly in elementary schools, which aligns well with Alachua County Public Schools' efforts with HMHS. Teacher retention went from 72% in the 2007-2008 school year to 80% in the 2010-2011 school year across the schools. School culture surveys pointed to positive changes in the areas of a welcoming environment, rigorous standards, and high quality instruction in language arts, mathematics, and science. And, the Duval schools all demonstrated improvements in their school grades. All schools rose at least one letter grade, four of the schools increased at least two letter grades, and two of the schools rose to an A grade over the course of the partnership. The Lastinger Center also demonstrated success in a comprehensive partnership at Andrew Jackson High School in Duval County, which at the beginning of partnership efforts was the state's lowest performing high school in 2011. Together with the school and the district, Lastinger Center helped coordinate school improvement efforts across a host of outside entities including Big Brothers Big Sisters, AVID and City Year. Once again, the partnership resulted in success, moving the school from an F to a B within a single school year.

Our experience in Alachua County last year with the Lastinger Center's work with Lake Forest was on par with these results. School culture surveys point to positive changes in the areas of a welcoming environment; an embracement of rigorous standards; and high-quality instruction in language arts, mathematics, and science. Discipline and attendance improved at the school. Ultimately, Lake Forest increased its school grade two letter grades, moving from an "F" to a "C."

To meet the identified needs of HMHS, the Lastinger Center will work directly with the ELA and math departments at HMHS to improve student performance in both areas. The Center will utilize interviews and diagnostic tools, including use of the Instructional Practice Inventory, which has proven effective in identifying instructional weaknesses across the school. The Lastinger Center will also be charged with working with district support staff and the administrative support staff at HMHS so that their use of the coaching cycle can be differentiated to meet the needs of each individual teacher. Additionally, they will assess current understanding of standards and standards-based instruction and will meet weekly with the administrative team to review progress monitoring data and to support the leadership team with implementation of the TOP.

Lastinger Center team members will meet monthly with teachers to support teachers in knowledge of the standards, data analysis, standards-based lesson planning, and in the effective use of a common board configuration. A part of their work will also assess classroom engagement, and they will work with school and district staff to design and

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implement strategies to improve student engagement across all curriculum areas. Team members will conduct professional development and help lead professional learning across the school. Finally, the Lastinger Center will work with the LEA and school-based staff to evaluate and improve community school support and understanding of the current status of the school and of student performance.

District Support for the TOP:***Executive Director Turnaround Lead:***

The Executive Director for Curriculum will work closely with the principal to implement the turnaround plan. Mrs. Jennifer Wise has been employed with the Alachua County school system since 1991 and has a track record of leading high performance at the school level. She began her career as a middle school teacher before becoming an assistant principal at a middle school. Mrs. Wise was appointed to the principal level in 2000 and served as the principal of Kanapaha Middle School until June 2015. Under her leadership, Kanapaha Middle School earned the grade of A with the exception of two years when the school grade was a B. Mrs. Wise was appointed to the position of Executive Director of Schools beginning July 1, 2015, where she gained extensive experience in working directly with school principals and their staff to lead turnaround efforts. In 2016-17 school year, she supported Chester Shell Elementary School who improved their school grade from D to B.

The Executive Director will plan biweekly reviews at HMHS to provide feedback and support to teachers and administrators. During these biweekly meetings, district staff, principal and the school leadership team will walk through classrooms and conduct a review of progress monitoring data. This data will be used to plan targeted services with support from the Research and Professional Development departments at the district level as well as through support from the Lastinger Center. The Executive Director, will deploy additional District resources based on school data and needs expressed by the principal. She will also make a monthly progress report to the Regional Executive Director, and collaborate with the regional DA team to facilitate the new Instructional Review process for HMHS.

Support for Attendance:

The District will provide training and support to the student services department at HMHS to help them develop a plan to monitor and provide early interventions for student absenteeism and truancy, a current concern as demonstrated through school needs-assessment data. The focus will be on the school factors impacting school attendance such as school climate, attitudes of administration, attitudes of teachers and support staff, and strictly following the district's truancy procedures. A district attendance specialist will be assigned, full-time, to Hawthorne Middle/High School in order to assist the school in monitoring student attendance daily. One role of the attendance specialist will be to make daily contact with parents of any student not in attendance in order to determine the cause of the absence. In addition to the contact from the attendance specialist, the school will communicate the attendance

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policy to parents in multiple ways such as newsletters, written communication at the time of enrollment, and during Open House. Classroom teachers will also encourage punctuality and attendance as they adhere to the school attendance policy. The Positive Behavior Interventions and Support team will include attendance as part of the school wide discipline plan. The attendance specialist will report to a designated senior staff member as needed to coordinate additional student support services, which may include home visits or referrals to Attendance Review Board.

The student support services department which includes administrators, the school counselor, the school nurse, the dean, and targeted outside agencies, will develop an individualized plan to address student attendance for any student who has three or more unexcused absences during a semester. The planning process will begin with a meeting scheduled to include at least one representative from student support services, the parent, the student, and the attendance specialist. The team will be tasked with writing an individualized plan to target the root cause of the absences, identify interventions needed, and build a personalized system of incentives and rewards. Parents, guardians, and students will be informed of additional community and district resources.

Supplemental Instructional Staff and Scheduling:

The district has allocated two additional instructional units above the district staffing formula so that a comprehensive school schedule can be achieved, including more support for intensive reading instruction. The master schedule will be revised to modify the block schedule utilized in recent years and a focus will be placed on increasing the instructional minutes dedicated to ELA and mathematics courses. All students in grades 6-10 will have 80 minutes of ELA/Reading and 80 minutes of math every day. ELA courses will be paired with intensive reading. For example, on the A day of the school calendar, students would meet with their English 1 teacher, and on the B day they will meet with their reading teacher who will be using the intensive reading curriculum at middle school and the PW Impact curriculum (TeEngagement) at high school. The same pattern would be followed for all students in grades 6-10. This will lead to double the instructional minutes spent on ELA and Reading than students had in the previous school year, which should lead to more proficiency in the FSA testing.

To address math achievement, math courses will be scheduled to be yearlong as well. Year-long math courses will be paired with intensive math. For example, on the A day of the school calendar, students would schedule for Algebra I and on B day, they would be schedule in Intensive Math. The student will have the same teacher each day. The same pattern would be followed for all students in grades 6-10 for their math courses. Again, this will lead to twice the instructional hours spent on math than the previous school year, which should lead to more proficiency on the EOC.

Dedicated Instructional Coaching:

HMHS will have two instructional coaches to support the TOP and to work with district staff and the External

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Partner in implementing the plan. The instructional coaches will provide professional development in common board configuration, standards-based lesson planning, and in culturally responsive classroom practices. Professional development will be followed by embedded coaching and modeling support, provided by the instructional coaches. One of the selected instructional coaches has over ten years' experience in reading instruction at the secondary level, with an Effective VAM score. She has earned her Coaching Certification through the University of Florida, Laster Center, and has also worked as an external expert for FDOE to review the middle school Florida ELA Formative Assessment Repository. The other instructional coach comes from a position at an A high school where she serves as both a reading teacher and an instructional coach. Her VAM score for the students she has been responsible for have her rated as highly effective and she has the fifth highest VAM score in our district.

School Capacity***Administrators***

The district has selected a principal with a data profile that demonstrates strong student achievement. Mr. Daniel Ferguson has the knowledge and ability to be an instructional leader of the school. He is committed to participating in professional development with the faculty so that he can provide the necessary follow up and feedback to improve practices in the classroom. Mr. Ferguson has demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the Florida Standards, data analysis, and effective instructional practices needed to improve student achievement. He is a proven instructional leader who raised the letter grade at Idylwild Elementary School from a D to a B in 2012, and maintained a letter grade of C or better in subsequent years of his leadership. Having been a principal at every school level, Mr. Ferguson is prepared to address individual student needs based on data and to implement instructional strategies to increase student achievement at Hawthorne Middle High. He brings more than ten years of school-based administrative experience, and was recruited with a salary incentive. He will have the autonomy to deploy additional resources and the accountability to use those resources based on data analysis.

Mr. Ferguson has selected as his assistant principal, Ms. Elizabeth Williamson. Ms. Williamson has successful turnaround experience, most recently at Shell Elementary school who went from a D to a B in 2017. She led bi-weekly teacher data chats with coordinated standards-based lesson planning at Shell Elementary. Skillful use of the progress monitoring data and the ensuing lesson planning with differentiation based on individual student need is her specialty. Ms. Williamson will be a strong instructional leader at Hawthorne Middle High School.

Educators

Six teachers have been removed because their student data results on State Assessments did not meet expectations and/or they were not committed to turnaround. They are as follows:

- Biology teacher with 14% proficiency on EOC
- Middle school math and science teacher with a VAM score of Needs Improvement

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- High School ELA teacher with a VAM score of Needs Improvement
- High School ELA teacher with a VAM score of Unsatisfactory
- An ESE teacher with a VAM score of Needs Improvement
- Elective teacher not committed to turn around

HMHS will have priority in hiring experienced teachers with a proven record of student success. The Human Resources Department screens applicants and gets VAM scores or other student data where available. The district has signed an MOU with the teacher's union for incentive pay for the purpose of recruitment and retention of effective teachers at HMHS. All teachers will receive additional professional development in common board configuration, standards-based lesson planning, and in culturally responsive classroom practices. Hawthorne is fully hired with the following highly qualified teachers and their VAM scores:

Assignment	VAM	Category
Social Studies/Agriculture	N/A	N/A
Science	N/A	N/A
Spanish/CTE	N/A	N/A
Math	0.124	Effective
ELA	0.029	Effective
Math	-0.618	Unsatisfactory*
Math	N/A	N/A
Media	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	N/A	N/A
Math	-0.629	Needs Improvement**
ELA	N/A	N/A
ELA	1.49	Highly Effective
Science	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	N/A	N/A
ELA/Math/Science	0.542	Highly Effective

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ELA	0.387	Effective
ESE	N/A	N/A

*Teacher was given an effective rating by the State in 9th grade Algebra 1 in both 2015-16 and 2016-17 (51 students). He was rated unsatisfactory in 2016-17 for 8th Grade FSA Math (19 students). The teacher has two years of effective VAM ratings in Algebra I and one year of Unsatisfactory VAM for 8th grade FSA Math. The teacher will teach only Algebra I for 2017-18. The teacher will be placed on an improvement plan. He will be reassigned at the end of the 17-18 year unless the school earns a grade of C or higher and he earns a VAM score of effective or highly effective.

**The teacher has two years of effective VAM scores prior to 2016-17. For 2015-16 and 2016-17, she was required to implement robotics within her math block, and her VAM decreased. In 2017-18, robotics will not be included in her math block. The teacher will be placed on an improvement plan. She will be reassigned at the end of the 17-18 year unless the school earns a grade of C or higher and she earns a VAM score of effective or highly effective.

Assurances for Closure/Reassign (2018-19)

Close and reassign students:

HMHS students in grades 6-8 will be reassigned to a district middle school with a school grade of no less than C. Students in grades 9-12 will be reassigned to a district high school with a school grade of no less than C. The reassignment will be based on the timeline as follows. All decisions about reassignment will be made in the best interests of each student.

The timeline for closure is planned as follows:

1. In August of 2017, the District will send a letter of initial notification to all parents of HMHS students of the potential closure in 2018-19.
2. At the April 1, 2018 Board Meeting, there will be a Rules Development Workshop for Board Zoning Policy to make the adjustments for the closure of HMHS including Board discussion on school options for reassigned HMHS students.
3. At the May 15, 2018 Board Meeting, there will be a First Reading of the Board Zoning Policy with the new boundaries and new assigned schools.
4. On June 19, 2018 there will be a Public Hearing on the proposed new zoning boundaries in the Zoning Policy.
5. On July 17, 2018 there will be a final reading of the new Zoning Policy at the Board Meeting.

On July 18, 2018 letters will be mailed to the parents of all HMHS students with notification of their newly zoned school.

Monitoring Reassigned Students:

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Students reassigned from HMHS will be systematically monitored in their new schools for three years. The student data monitored will include state and district assessment data, quarterly course grades, and all early warning signs such as attendance and discipline. The district will utilize the Student Information System, and the EWS dashboard to monitor all students. Progress of every student will be reported to the Department of Education for three years following closure.

B. Areas of Focus

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

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

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

Instructional Programs

To address the instructional program needs, the district is going to purchase Everglades Math & Science to target middle school students. The high school reading teachers will begin to utilize the TeEngagement curriculum. These district identified, standard-based intensive-intervention instructional programs have a proven track of improving student learning and will be used with fidelity. Teachers will receive district support with implementation throughout the school year. The ELA, math, science and social studies Curriculum Specialists will work directly with the Instructional Coaches each month to scaffold the pacing guides to be sure the teachers have the tools they need to differentiate instruction and to reach the appropriate level of complexity for each standard. Test-item specs and pacing guides will be reviewed to make certain standards are taught appropriately. Instructional coaches will in turn, provide daily support for core academic teachers with interventions, developing mini-assessments, modeling, and progress monitoring. Professional development for MTSS, data analysis, and standard-based instruction will be provided to improve student understanding of standards. Common planning will help assure effective time for PLCs, collaboration, and sharing of best practices. School administration and district leadership will monitor progress weekly and conduct frequent walk-throughs.

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Differentiated Instruction

The instructional support team (IST), together with the instructional coaches, will engage faculty members in year-long job-embedded professional development in differentiated instruction. The block schedule is designed so that all academic teachers will provide standards-based whole group instruction coupled with targeted interventions in small groups for the purpose of remediation and enrichment. Supplemental instructional materials such as Everglades Math and Science, USA Test Prep, and TeEngagement will be used for remediation. Project-based learning and acceleration will be provided as enrichment. Teachers will assign tasks to students and students to groups as determined by ongoing progress monitoring data. The instructional coaches and district curriculum specialists will support teachers with planning, assessment, and instructional strategies. Additionally, they will provide job-embedded professional development through the coaching cycle.

Staff from the Lastinger Center, our external partner, will observe classrooms and collect data on pedagogy, assigned tasks, and student engagement. They will provide feedback to teachers and administrators, offer targeted professional development, and submit detailed monthly reports to district staff. Data collection and professional development will be focused on increasing student engagement and improving the level of differentiation in all academic areas.

School Leadership

As noted, a new principal has been hired. The principal will work closely with an external partner hired to help manage the turnaround plan. Needs assessments show that in addition to a change in leadership, instructional staff, and the addition of external supports, there needs to be a shift in school culture to one with a focus on high expectations and the protection of instructional minutes. The school leadership, with the support of district staff and the external partner, will help teachers improve the quality of lesson plans, implement best practices, utilize curriculum materials with fidelity, and engage in frequent data monitoring.

The principal will form an Instructional Support Team (IST) at the school for the purpose of monitoring individual student progress and designing appropriate interventions. This team will consist of the principal, assistant principal, instructional coaches, and invited district curriculum specialists at the school. The IST will meet weekly to coordinate efforts, review and analyze data, discuss implications for instructional practices, prescribe intervention strategies to improve academic

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performance, review results from mini lessons, and plan support for instructional staff.

An early warning system will be developed and include the following early warning indicators: a) Attendance below 90 percent, regardless of whether absence is excused or a result of out-of-school suspension. b) One or more suspensions, whether in school or out of school. c) Course failure in English Language Arts or mathematics during any grading period. d) A Level 1 score on the statewide, standardized assessments in English Language Arts or mathematics. e) Any student identified in the lowest quartile. f) Graduation Cohort. g) GPA below 2.0. The early warning system will show students with more than one indicator. The team will contact the parent(s) of any student with one or more indicators. An intervention plan will then be developed for the student.

The principal will focus on the school culture to develop a sense of urgency, and a set of high academic standards for all students. Emphasis will be placed on identifying and including more students in advanced courses, industry certifications, and dual enrollment in addition to meeting all requirements for graduation.

Increased Learning Time

To address the need to increase learning time, the master schedule will be changed to increase instructional minutes in ELA and math classes for all students. A school-wide discipline plan including positive behavior support will be continued and adhered to with fidelity in order to protect instructional minutes during the school day. Improving student attendance will be a priority of both the school's student support services department and the District student support services department. Additional personnel will be employed at the school level to encourage attendance through regular home contact and through adherence to the district truancy program. Resources will be also deployed to increase parent contact and make home visits as needed. After-school tutoring will be made available for students identified during progress monitoring as needing extra intervention.