

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Action Item**  
October 18, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Review of Turnaround Option Plan for School District of Hamilton County

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Consideration of Turnaround Option Plan for Approval

**AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION**

Section 1008.33, Florida Statutes

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

- Hamilton County High School

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**Supporting Documentation Included:** 2017-18 Turnaround Option Plan and Addendum

**Invited Presenters:** Rex Mitchell, Superintendent, Hamilton County Public Schools; Johnny Bullard, 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 Hamilton County School District

*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).*

**Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2**  
*for districts planning in 2016-17 for implementation in 2017-18*

**Hamilton County High School 0032**

**Option: External Operator- To Begin in 2018-19**

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**Part I: Needs Assessment**

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

The 5Essentials Survey was administered to students, teachers and parents at Hamilton County Middle High School in the Spring 2017. 5Essentials is an evidence-based system designed to drive improvement in schools nationwide. A diagnostic assessment of school effectiveness based on more than 20 years of research, 5Essentials assesses schools’ strengths and weaknesses in five key areas for improving school success and student learning:

- Effective Leaders: The principal works with teachers to implement a clear and strategic vision for school success.
- Collaborative Teachers: The staff is committed to the school, receives strong professional development, and works together to improve the school.
- Involved Families: The entire school staff builds strong relationships with families and communities to support learning.
- Supportive Environment: The school is safe and orderly. Teachers have high expectations for students. Students are supported by their teachers and peers.
- Ambitious Instruction: Classes are academically demanding and engage students by emphasizing the application of knowledge.

76% of students and 78% of teachers responded to this survey and overall performance implementation rating was “weak”.

For the past 3 years Hamilton County High School has earned a grade of “D” after earning an “F” the previous year. Teacher turn-over remains over 50% and the principal was replaced as of July 1, 2017.

An analysis of student achievement data from the 2017 FSA and EOC indicates that the school will in all likelihood fall below a grade of “C”.

ELA proficiency	
7 <sup>th</sup>	24%
8 <sup>th</sup>	14%
9 <sup>th</sup>	32%
10 <sup>th</sup>	18%
Math proficiency	
7 <sup>th</sup>	32%
8 <sup>th</sup>	26%
Algebra I	26%

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Algebra II	2%
Geometry	26%
Science Proficiency	
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	24%
Biology	31%
US History Proficiency– 21%	

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

The district leadership team has determined that the best turnaround option for Hamilton County High School is for the 2018-19 school year is to contract with an outside entity that has a demonstrated record of effectiveness to operate the school. (This option may include a district-managed charter school.) The district will spend the next few months investigating various organizations that will meet the guidelines and will enter into a contract with such organization on or before January 31, 2018.

In the meantime, the district will continue to utilize the district management turn-around option and will engage in a partnership with an educational management organization in order to provide the teachers at Hamilton County High School with intensive support in meeting the needs of all students at the school during the 2017-18 school year and pursue contracting with an external partner / provider that would continue to work with the district if necessary in the 2018-19 school year.

The newly elected superintendent has replaced the school principal along with teachers whose state VAM score was unsatisfactory. The district leadership team believes that an external operator is best equipped in providing teachers with support in delivering standards-based instruction and in implementing systems that will lead to school improvement. The support from the external partner will ensure Hamilton County High School achieves a grade of “C” or higher in 2018.

**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.

**Assurance 1: Contracting with External Organization**

The district shall enter into a contract with a school turnaround or education management organization to operate the school, following established district policies and procedures for contracting with external providers. This contract will be negotiated and signed no later than January 31, 2018 to go into effect for the 2018-19 school year. A table with action steps and timeline are included after the assurances within this document.

In the meantime the district will enter into a partnership agreement with an educational management organization that will assist with teacher training and support for high quality instructional delivery to

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ensure that all of Hamilton County High School student needs are met.

**Assurance 2: Selecting a Successful Organization**

The district will investigate a number of organizations and will ultimately select an organization with a successful record of providing support to high-poverty, low-performing schools, and shall provide evidence of its qualifications to the department. The contract with this organization will be signed on or before January 31, 2018 to take effect in the 2018-19 school year. A table with action steps and timeline are included after the assurances within this document.

Hamilton County School District will also enter into a contract with an external partner prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year. It is anticipated that this will be the same organization that is chosen as the external operator for the 2018 -19 school year. The goal of this partnership will be to provide teachers with intensive support to include professional development and coaching in order to impact the instructional delivery practices that will best meet the needs of all students.

**Assurance 3: Instructional Staff**

For the 2017-18 school year, teachers with “unsatisfactory” state VAM scores were not rehired at the school. There are currently four (4) classroom teacher vacancies at Hamilton County High School. One (1) of these vacancies is in Mathematics, one (1) in Science, and two (2) in Reading. The district is advertising and recruiting online using teachers-teachers.com as well as the district website. District leadership continues to participate in virtual career fairs and have plans to fill these positions with highly qualified, effective teachers prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year. One current instructor was effective during the 2015-16 in which she was teaching Civics and raised the school proficiency score by 13% in one year. During the 2016-17 the school administration chose not to offer Civics and moved the teacher to a different area during which time her VAM score moved to Needs Improvement. This instructor is vital to our turnaround success as she has been returned to the Civics classroom for the 2017-18. The school will develop an improvement plan with the teacher to ensure her return to a status of effective or above by the end of the 2017-18 school year.

The District will provide Human Resources support for the selected External Operator, including sharing teacher evaluation results to support the operator with instructional staffing decisions as well as conducting necessary background checks.

The District will adhere to the following timeline to complete the tasks outlined in the above assurances.

<b>Assurance #</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
2	Determine which External Operator should manage the school in 2018-19.	Research organizations with a successful record of providing support to high-poverty, low-performing schools	December 19, 2017
1	Select the External	School board votes to	January 19, 2018

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	Operator that will manage the school in 2018-19.	turn-over the management of the school to the External Operator for the 2018-19 school year	
1	Sign Contract with External Operator	Enter into a contract with a school turnaround or education management organization to operate the school, following established district policies and procedures for contracting with external providers.	January 31, 2018
1 & 2	Provide FLDOE with documentation	Provide signed contract with External Organization and evidence of its qualifications to the department.	January 31, 2018
3	Provide the External Operator with the most recent VAM data and assist them in obtaining access to any resources needed to hire only effective and highly effective teachers.	Inform 2017-18 staff that they will be employees of the External Operator in 2018-19 and that those with less than effective VAM scores will not be reappointed to the school.	

**District Capacity and Support**

The Hamilton County School District, in partnership with the external organization, will determine and provide structures and systems that support the school-based leadership team and teachers in their efforts to improve student achievement and the overall performance of the school for school year 2017-18 and will plan for a smooth transition from partner to operator for the 2018-19 school year.

**Turnaround Option Plan – Phase 2***for districts planning in 2016-17 for implementation in 2017-18***School Capacity*****Administrators***

The district has recruited an effective administrator capable of leading the turnaround efforts at HCHS. The new principal at Hamilton County High School is Dr. Felecia Moss. Dr. Moss a proven record of successful school improvement/school renewal efforts.

February 2017-June 2017 Hamilton County School District

Reading Coach: Worked with school, district leaders, and DA team to review data and begin formulating a plan for continuous school improvement by focusing on instruction, curriculum, and environment.

July 2016-February 2017 Madison County School District

Coordinator Accountability and Planning

Worked with all schools in using data for school improvement:

As a part of the district Academic Services team, supported principals in using data as a part of the learning community with the emphasis on using data to drive the work of the school collaboratively and reflectively.

May 2015-July 2016 Madison County School District

Turnaround Leader and SIG Administrator

SIG Cohort Year 2: Worked with Regional DA team and external lead partner to implement and evaluate assurances and areas of focus as outlined in TOP District Managed Turnaround.

2011-2013 Hamilton County School District

Dr. Moss has strong leadership competencies and has worked with districts as a turnaround leader and SIG administrator. She previously worked with Hamilton County as their transformation specialist. She worked directly with Central Hamilton Elementary School during 2011-2012 school year and their school grade went from an F to a C that year.

Principal Metcalfe Elementary 2005-2010

Dr. Moss was trained in the Florida Continuous Improvement Model through Department of Education Region 2 School Improvement Office and was a participating principal with the Laster Center for Learning at the University of Florida, College of Education. She implemented a plan that focused on school culture as a professional learning community, data, high octane teaching and community involvement. During her tenure at Metcalfe Elementary the school's turnaround efforts propelled their school grade from an F to an A in one year. After that year, the school remained a C. Her body is work is documented in the Florida Department of Education school grades reports.

1998-2005 Newberry High School

As an assistant principal and principal in Alachua County, Dr. Moss worked at a small rural school and built a culture of high expectations and higher level courses for all students. During her leadership, Newberry High School grew its AP options, increased the number of students taking and passing higher level and AP courses and the school was consistently a C or higher during her tenure (1998-2005)

Operational flexibility will be negotiated as needed in order to address any policies or procedures that are acting as barriers to school improvement. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) will be established



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with the collective bargaining unit to address any contractual issues that are barriers to the way of work at HCHS.

**Educators**

The district, in partnership with the external organization will provide teachers with training and support in the delivery of standards-based instruction that meets the individual needs of all students. Teachers with less than effective state VAM scores will not remain in core subject areas at HCHS. The district will employ strategies in partnership with NEFEC (Northeast Florida Educational Consortium) that will aide in the recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers and provide staffing stability to the school. It is anticipated that these efforts will result in many of these same teachers being hired by the external operator chosen for the 2018-19 school year.

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**B. Areas of Focus**

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

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

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

The external operator may choose to employ additional or different focuses for the 2018-19 school year, In the meantime, while acting as an external partner in the 2017-18 school year, they will utilize diagnostic assessments that will lead to the implementation of strategies designed to reduce or eliminate internal systemic barriers, and address the unique needs of HCHS. These assessments will identify strengths and weaknesses in academic achievement, professional development, learning environment, instructional leadership, and other school improvement areas.

The Superintendent has restructured the district in order to streamline both human capital and financial resources. Principals and district staff members will have immediate and direct access to the superintendent so that needs are addressed quickly and efficiently.

The Superintendent will coordinate district initiatives as they pertain to HCHS with the selected external operator during the 2017 – 18 school year.