

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Action Item**

July 17, 2017

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

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 new turnaround plan:

- Hamilton County High School

Supporting Documentation Included: 2017-18 Turnaround Option Plan and TOP 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).

Hamilton County High School 0032

Option: Education Management Organization (EMO)

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 th	24%
8 th	14%
9 th	32%
10 th	18%

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

Math proficiency	
7 th	32%
8 th	26%
Algebra I	26%
Algebra II	2%
Geometry	26%
Science Proficiency	
8 th grade	24%
Biology	31%
US History proficiency – 21%	

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 EMO (Education Management Organization).

The newly elected superintendent has replaced the school principal along with teachers whose state VAM score is less than effective. The district leadership team believes that an EMO 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 EMO will ensure Hamilton County High School achieves a grade of “C” or higher in 2018.

The district is currently in communication with two different education management organizations (District to District and Educational Directions) and will enter into a performance contract prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year.

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

Hamilton County School District will enter into a contract with one of the two education management organizations currently under consideration, prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year. The EMO will operate the school, following established district policies and procedures for contracting with external providers.

Assurance 2: Selecting a Successful Organization

Members of both organizations currently under consideration have a successful record of providing support to high-poverty, low-performing schools, and will provide evidence of its qualifications to the department, upon request.

Assurance 3: Instructional Staff

The superintendent has already ensured that teachers will not be rehired at the school, unless they are effective or highly effective instructors, as determined by the state provided VAM scores.

District Capacity and Support

The Hamilton County School District, in partnership with the EMO, 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.

School Capacity

Administrators

The current principal has been replaced with 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 has a proven record of success as a turn-around leader.

As a principal in Alachua County she worked at a small rural school and built a culture of high expectations for all students. During her leadership, Newberry High School increased the Advanced Placement (AP) options, and increased the number of students taking and passing higher level and AP courses. The school consistently earned a grade of “C” or higher during her tenure.

Dr. Moss was trained in the Florida Continuous Improvement Model and was a participating principal with the Laster Center for Learning at the University of Florida, College of Education. As principal at Metcalfe Elementary School she implemented a plan that focused on the school’s culture as a professional learning community. This included an intense focus on data analysis, high octane teaching, and increased 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.

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 increased from an “F” to a “C” that year. Dr. Moss is a graduate of Hamilton County High School, is seen as part of the community.

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

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

Educators

The district, in partnership with the EMO 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 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.

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 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 EMO will employ 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 EMO.