



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org



**TOP-2**



## **Turnaround Option Plan—Step 2(TOP-2)**

**External Operator/Outside Entity (EO)**

**Escambia County School District  
Warrington Elementary School**

Form Number TOP-2, EO, incorporated in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., effective August 2018

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

*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/Outside Entity (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](mailto: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
Warrington Elementary/0551

**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**

The Escambia County School District (ECSD) has determined that a contract with an outside entity that can serve as an external operator of the School is the best turnaround option for Warrington Elementary School. A contract with The Rensselaerville Institute (hereinafter referred to as TRI) will be presented to the School Board of Escambia County for approval on April 16, 2019. TRI meets the definitions of “outside entity” and “external operator” set forth in Section 1008.33(4)(b), Florida Statutes, and Section 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., in that it has demonstrated effectiveness in the academic operations of school district schools and has a successful record of providing support to improve the academic performance of high-poverty, low-performing schools.

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TRI has a demonstrated record of effectiveness over the last 18 years with turnaround schools, creating teacher pipelines and training programs; evaluating and creating career paths for teachers and administrators; and partnering with schools in turnaround status all over the nation to effect school improvement and reform.

Gillian Williams, President of TRI, leads the organization to new areas of focus and higher levels of impact. She brings her strategic leadership to a team that works nationally to achieve outcomes for human gain. This work is done directly with the folks who spark change in a wide range of communities, schools, and other nonprofit organizations. In 2001, Gillian Williams founded TRI's signature initiative, School Turnaround, and grew the program from a summer conference to a multifaceted, nationally recognized initiative. Gillian Williams started her career as an educator in 1990, working as a bilingual teacher in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. In 1997, she became the youngest elementary school principal at one of New York City's most beleaguered schools, Public School 63 in the South Bronx. In her first year, Gillian Williams led a turnaround that lifted the school from its dismal standing on the state's list of persistently failing schools.

Mildred Toliver serves as the Executive Director of School Turnaround at TRI. She joined School Turnaround after participating in the program as a school principal. She now works with principals, teachers, district administrators, and school boards, leading national and regional training and kicking off many of TRI's educational initiatives. Mildred Toliver leads the team of School Turnaround Specialist and provides professional development for them at TRI. Prior to TRI, she was principal of SS Dillow Elementary in Fort Worth, Texas. After her first year in the School Turnaround program, the school showed gains in some area up to 35%.

TRI has proven success in Florida improving school grades:

**Gasden County High School**, Gasden County, Florida: School Grade of **D** in 2017 to School Grade of **C** in 2018.

**George W. Munroe Elementary School**, Gasden County, Florida: School Grade of **F** in 2017 to School Grade of **A** in 2018.

TRI has proven successful experiences (partial) in similar demographic districts/middle schools:

**Gaston Middle Northampton, NC**

*Demographics:*

5-8 with 202 students 93% African American 98% FRL

*Accomplishments:* Sixth grade math scores improved by 31% points

**Conway Middle Northampton, NC**

*Demographics:*

5-8 with 384 students 70% African American 99% FRL

*Accomplishments:* Eighth grade reading scores improved by 19% points

**Kirby MS Fort Worth, TX**

*Demographics:*

6-8 with 700 students 63% Hispanic 82% FRL

*Accomplishments:* Seventh grade reading scores improved by 22% points

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**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.

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

The Superintendent appointed the current principal to Warrington Elementary School on May 30, 2018, to improve the school culture, student academic performance, and lead Warrington Elementary School to earning a school grade of C or higher. If Warrington Elementary School does not earn a C based on the 2018- 2019 FSA results, the principal will be reappointed for an additional year to continue the turnaround relationship established with TRI. In establishing a partnership with Warrington Elementary School, TRI conducted two interviews of the current principal and an intensive data review. TRI believes strongly that Tim Rose should remain as principal based on the data and interviews. TRI states that Tim Rose should continue as principal due to his willingness and aptitude to learn the behaviors and strategies proven to be effective in turnaround work.

TRI will conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment for the school that at a minimum, includes:

- Review school staff qualifications, leadership, staffing, instruction, curriculum, academic intervention systems, professional learning communities, data teams, common planning, instructional coaching, and the student assessment process.
- Review all centralized District supports to the school, students, staff, and community, which includes but is not limited to areas such as budget, facilities, supplies, maintenance, food service, transportation, technology infrastructure, and resources.
- TRI shall have full authority to recommend school leadership and instructional personnel assignment to school.
- TRI shall have full authority to require leadership staff to participate in mandatory TRI conferences to become part of a larger network and learning community of other successful turnaround leaders.
- TRI shall have full authority to make all recommendations for the selection, placement, termination and training of teachers at school.

**TRI: Criteria for Turnaround Leader Selection**

As part of the initial establishment of any partnership, TRI conducts an intensive due diligence to assure that the structures and personnel are capable of undertaking the urgent change needed to guarantee future student success. Leadership is the intense focus of TRI’s work, and they take the assessment of each leader and his or her capacity to specifically lead turnaround work very seriously. TRI looks for evidence of five readiness factors and six leadership capacity characteristics that are consistently found in effective turnaround leaders. In conversation with a candidate TRI is looking for evidence that supports the existence – or lack – of these qualities. TRI does not expect to see all of these fully realized; TRI is looking for them in some raw form.

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**Readiness Factors**

Sees School Failure As Urgent Problem

- Understands the school/district is failing many students
- This failure really bothers him/her personally

Gets And Likes Turnaround Approach

- Welcome the strong role he/she must play
- Likes the idea of a blunt, focused partnership with a specialist

Right Time In Life

- Is ready—right now—to lead a major change in this school/district
- No major distractions in his/her life that would make this hard to do

School/District Readiness

- At least 20% of direct reports see failure and want to take stronger steps
- Has a few key allies in the school/district to be part of Turnaround Team

Alignment With District and Board

- Will get backing for the tough calls and flexibility required to make them
- Has a “go to” person for intervention and support

**Leadership Characteristics**

Energy

- Stamina and staying power
- Enthusiasm and optimism
- Passion for achievement
- Motivates others with forward momentum

Bias to Act

- Sense of urgency
- Focus on solutions
- Driven by opportunities – not problems
- Impatient with plans, meetings and committees

Personal Responsibility

- Take more than fair share of responsibility
- Acknowledge errors and mistakes as basis of learning
- Focus on personal as well as group responsibility
- Look to internal more than external causation

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**Results Focus**

- Outcome matters more than process
- Clear and compelling targets for success
- Need for achievement
- Ability to get and use performance data

**Inclination to Teams**

- Seek action and creation, not agreement
- Form teams from differences, not the like-minded
- Share credit as well as information
- Encourage solutions that meet outcomes not plans

**Knowledge and Love of Learning**

- Know how to create effective learning in classrooms
- Be an educational leader more than administrator
- Strong diagnostic and development skills
- Effective at applying curriculum and tools for 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**

**The ECSD and TRI: Selecting Instructional Staff**

- TRI shall develop a staffing plan. The staffing plan shall be implemented by TRI in coordination with the District.
- TRI shall have full authority to recommend school leadership and instructional personnel assignment to school.
- TRI shall have full authority to make all recommendations for the selection, placement, termination and training of teachers at school.
- A Memorandum of Understanding has been executed with the Collective Bargaining Unit that addresses the selection, placement, and expectations of instructional and educational support personnel and provides the school principal with autonomy described in 1012.28(8), F.S.
- A teacher rated as Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement based on the current three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM) rating, on the district’s approved evaluation system, and an unsatisfactory rating by TRI, shall not continue to be staffed at Warrington Elementary School.

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### Assurance 4: Contracting with the EO

- The district shall enter into a 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. Services and responsibilities for leadership and instructional staffing, curriculum and instruction, assessments and progress monitoring, professional development and any other identified school improvement areas.
  2. The EO has a record of school improvement in turning around schools that are high-poverty and low performing with students of similar demographics.
  3. The role of the EO in the recruitment, selection and placement of instructional personnel with proven experience and capacity to serve students who may need intensive remediation and instruction.
  4. The role of the EO in the recruitment, selection, placement, training and oversight of the school leadership team, including specific information about the EO's authority in these areas.
  5. A detailed provision outlining the new or modified services provided by the EO if the district had an existing contract with the EO.
  6. A detailed budget.

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

Warrington Elementary School partnered with TRI in 2018-2019 to increase student achievement. The TRI Specialist assigned will make up to 10 site visits to the school. The TRI Specialist supports the administrative team to provide teachers with specific feedback on instruction, setting educational targets, and by ensuring all instructional resources/strategies are connected back to the standard being taught. The TRI Specialist provides model classroom training and set up. TRI partner schools also participate in monthly cohort meetings.

### The ECSD and TRI: EO Contract Assurances

- TRI shall have full authority to recommend school leadership and instructional personnel assignment to school.
- TRI shall develop a staffing plan. The staffing plan shall be implemented by TRI in coordination with the District.
- TRI shall ensure facilitation of all required State assessments, District benchmark assessments, and alternate assessments and comply with State reporting procedures. TRI will use the District benchmark assessments at regular intervals to enable the school to assess school-wide, grade-level, class, and individual student progress toward hitting established targets. They will align assessments and benchmark tests, create an assessment database, train key personnel on database maintenance, train key leaders and teachers on data analysis, and create usable reports for students, parents, and school support staff.

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- TRI shall have primary responsibility for all school academic programs, oversight, selection, placement, coaching, evaluation, assignment of responsibilities and reassignment 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.
- TRI shall provide ongoing professional learning for all instructional staff on skills necessary to meet turnaround goals and social-emotional needs of students.
- TRI will determine the curriculum and instructional interventions necessary to meet/exceed targets.
- TRI will improve the school in terms of student performance on FSA and school grade while implementing instructional systems that will build capacity of the school to sustain and continue its own improvement in preparation for returning school to Board control. This includes behavior, climate, and culture of the school; developing a scalable model of rigorous instruction and student engagement; providing a data-driven roadmap to empower teachers and leader and aligning curriculum, culture, and instructional systems to attain and sustain levels of performance.

**The ECSD and TRI: Draft Budget for EO Contract**

The external Operator shall receive compensation for services rendered at a fixed rate of two hundred and seventy thousand dollars (\$270,000.00) all-inclusive. All costs, fees and expenses shall be paid in twelve (12) monthly installments of twenty-two thousand five hundred dollars (\$22,500.00), commencing on July 31, 2019, for the 2019-2020 school year. One hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000.00) shall be paid in twelve (12) monthly installments of fourteen thousand five hundred eighty-three dollars and thirty-three cents (\$14,583.33) for the 2020-2021 school year. Seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000.00) shall be paid in twelve (12) monthly installments of six thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$6,250.00) for the 2021-2022 school year. Submission of invoices shall specify the services performed to include training provided, hours and days worked, where the work was performed and a summary of work performed by the External Operator. Services will continue until June 2024 and the parties will project year 4 and 5 cost at a mutually determined date.

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**The Rensselaerville Institute: External Operator for Warrington Elementary School**

***Outcome is increase in student achievement; school achieves FLDOE grade of “C” or better***

- Supervision of staff and leadership
- Capacity building of leadership and staff through intensive daily training, coaching and support
- 5-year partnership with full school and gradual release to local leadership
- Equal partnership with school district to support leading change at the EO school
- Provide on-the-ground support through an “in residence” Lead Principal
- TRI has local level control through school leadership structure but mutual consent with district around major decisions

- TRI has primary responsibilities for day-to-day
- In collaboration with district, determine staffing based upon readiness and capacity criteria
- Hire staff, as appropriate, and develop new pipelines for teachers and leaders
- Establish relationships with higher education institutions for teacher and leader pool

- Provide training and ongoing support to school leaders and teachers
- Provide training and support to district leaders to support durable change
- Develop intensive curriculum training modules
- Support rigorous professional learning communities
- STEM curriculum and teaching expertise
- Summer PD academy for teachers and leaders
- Ongoing teacher training on core modules and use of data to inform instruction

- Assess current organizational structure’s impact on student outcomes and realign to maximize impact
- Assess the school and district’s current assets and resources and align to student outcomes

- Engagement of students in Community Sparkplug projects for community service credit
- Implement Community Sparkplug projects to engage people to drive change at local level

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**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 are 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.

<b>Name and title of person responsible for completing and submission of the TOP-2</b>
Denny Wilson, Director of Continuous Improvement, School Choice, and ESOL
<b>Contact information: email, phone number</b>
<a href="mailto:dwilson2@escambia.k12.fl.us">dwilson2@escambia.k12.fl.us</a> (850) 723-3936
<b>Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement</b>
January 31, 2019
<b>Superintendent Signature (or authorized representative)</b>
