

TOP-2

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Pinellas County
Gulfport Montessori Elementary School

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide districts to develop a plan for implementation of a district-managed turnaround plan. The district shall provide the Department with the plan for approval by the State Board of Education (SBE).

Directions

Districts shall complete this Step 2 form for each school that is required to implement a district-managed turnaround plan. This completed form must be signed by the superintendent or authorized representative and emailed to BSI@fldoe.org no later than October 1. The subject line of the email must include district name, school name and TOP-2.

School

In the box below identify the name and MSID number of the school that will be supported through the district-managed turnaround plan.

School Name/ MSID Number
Gulfport Montessori Elementary / 1691

Needs Assessment

The district is responsible for documenting a needs assessment that uses quantitative and qualitative data to identify the needs of the school system, including needs identified by families and the community.

The summary of the needs assessment results must address points of strength and opportunities for growth in the school system (at both the district and school level) in each of these three domains:

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership
2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
3. Positive Culture and Environment

In the box below, describe the methodology used for the needs assessment, including 3-year data trends from the state, district, and school levels. Include a review of all strategies to determine which are improving the school and should be reinforced or supplemented, as well as which strategies are not resulting in improvement.



Introduction:

Pinellas County Schools is committed to academic excellence in creating the highest possible performance outcomes for the students at Gulfport Montessori Elementary School. As such, the district has conducted an extensive analysis of the supports and interventions in place at Gulfport Montessori as part of its annual review of student performance data and the district's commitment to continuous improvement. This review includes a longitudinal analysis of the interventions in place presently, as well as those piloted and modified at the school over the past five years.

A district team met with the school leadership team and the Community Assessment Team to review school data, determine causes related to the school's growth areas, and make recommendations for improvement. A full rendering of our analysis and the substantive conclusions are offered via this document and are specific to the unique opportunities and challenges at Gulfport Montessori related to the following domains:

- Accountable and Shared Leadership
- Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
- Positive Culture and Environment

Gulfport Montessori Elementary is part of an ongoing, research evaluation to identify and build upon the strengths at the school and to isolate growth opportunities in pursuit of academic excellence for all children. To better inform and validate the ongoing initiatives at the school, the district has contracted for 2019-20 with a national research team to provide further insights into current strengths and growth steps. As such, the district has been proactive in creating a robust, evidenced-based model for school turnaround and to champion innovative solutions specific to this school's population and community.

Pinellas County Schools is fully committed to supporting Gulfport Montessori as part of its differentiated system of supports for schools. The district's tiered-support model continues to evolve and mature as data are reviewed and best practices are identified. Based upon our analyses of the school's contemporary trends, we have concluded that the best solution in supporting Gulfport Montessori is to build upon the successes already in place via the district's Transformation Zone, and supplement those with additional resources in light of findings of this needs assessment. It should be noted that nearly half of the students at Gulfport are in the Montessori magnet program, which is open to both zoned and non-zoned students. This unique approach provides great flexibility in meeting children where they are, with a focus on hands-on, didactic materials and an inquiry-based approach.

The district is proud of its successful history of school improvement, and we recognize that our efforts at Gulfport Montessori must be executed and monitored even tighter to sustain the school's continuous

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instructional and leadership growth. As evidenced by the district’s steady drop in D and F schools, the district’s Transformation Zone has a strong record for supporting schools in turnaround and the assignment of Gulfport to the intensive supports provide within the zone ensures that improvement will continue. We believe that the actions outlined in this Turnaround Option Plan will advance the school beyond the minimum standards to attain a grade of C and provide lasting success moving forward.



Gulfport Montessori Elementary: **Summary of key strategies / interventions**

Robust supports already in place:

- Dedicated support from the district’s Transformation Zone team, including bi-weekly visits to the school, review of lesson plans, classroom walkthroughs, and analysis of assessment data.
- Extended Learning Programs funded by the district and community partners. This includes a partnership with the Juvenile Welfare Board to support Promise Time, an after-school program that provides students with quality reading and mathematics instruction.
- Recruitment / retention / and school performance salary packages (up to \$25,000 additional pay).
- Hiring and recruitment advantages outside of the teacher contract that are provided to schools (e.g., the ability to hire outside of the contractual transfer window, unique job fairs, etc.).
- Full-time, embedded instructional coaches and lesson-planning support (ELA, Math, Science and MTSS).
- Additional paraprofessionals and teacher interventionists to support instruction and small-group intervention.
- Additional support services personnel (full-time psychologist, full-time social worker, and counselor).
- A six-week Summer Bridge program, including field experiences, for intervention and enrichment. The program is designed to reduce the summer slide in reading, mathematics and science and excite students about future learning opportunities.
- Gifted screening for every student in the school to support increased identification of minority students eligible for gifted services.
- Family engagement training and related “linked to learning” workshops based on the work of Dr. Karen Mapp / Harvard University.

Additional supports planned for 2019-20:

- A new principal with turnaround experience and a track record of strong academic gains at a nearby Title 1 school. One-on-one coaching of the new principal provided by the district’s Chief Transformation Officer.
- Additional personnel to assist with the school’s ELL and ESE students and to impact smaller class sizes.

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- District assignment of its most effective Instructional Staff Developers in ELA, Math and Science to provide the embedded coaches at Gulfport Montessori with weekly support (coaching the coaches).
- Weekly support from the Transformation Zone Literacy Coach, ESE Specialist, and District Math Specialist as needed.
- Use of the iReady intervention curriculum for ELA and Math after a review of student “gains” showed that additional resources were needed.
- Supplemental support for students through the use of strategies from (AVID) Advancement Via Individual Determination to build successful academic habits. Selected teachers attended the AVID summer institute to learn the latest in AVID methodologies and strategies to successfully implement the program.
- A new partnership with Achievement Network to provide on-site training to the instructional coaches and teachers specific to the instructional shifts required by the Florida standards.
- Support from the Cambio Group in working closely with the site-based equity teaching team to support the implementation of equitable learning initiatives. This includes a thorough examination of current culturally proficient and culturally responsive teaching research and practices and self-reflection of personal cultural knowledge and awareness.
- Additional support for the ESE program to ensure early interventions and accommodations are being met with fidelity.

Pinellas County Schools / Key Strategies Overview

As part of the district’s innovative approaches to school turnaround, Superintendent Michael A. Grego and the Pinellas County School Board have invested in an ambitious support structure that provides for an increasing number of strategies and interventions to support schools based upon their unique needs. It should be noted that Pinellas County Schools has a long history of taking aggressive and proactive approaches in supporting our most struggling schools. The district has exited many schools from turnaround status, which is a testament to our School Board’s willingness to do “whatever it takes” to ensure student achievement for all.

In response to the state’s call for bold, innovative approaches to school turnaround, Pinellas County Schools has dramatically and exponentially invested in our most struggling schools each year. The district’s model of tiered supports is designed to increase resources annually in response to each school’s needs and then differentiate the manner and degree that the interventions are provided. The proactive nature of these efforts is yet another example of our district’s commitment to being a state leader in creative and effective school turnaround solutions.

The structure for the district’s support for schools is as follows:

1. **Continuous feedback on the elements of excellent instruction** is provided through the Transformation Zone site visits. Pinellas County Schools has established a unified definition of excellent instruction that outlines what students, teachers, and leaders do in

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meeting high instructional standards. These expectations are continually monitored through instructional rounds and site visits.

2. **A district Multi-Tiered System of Support** is in place that outlines interventions, processes, and progress measures that are unique to each school’s needs. Additionally, the district has established an ongoing developmental, research evaluation of our turnaround initiatives and all of the strategies and interventions in place to support learning. A weekly meeting of the district’s executive leadership is in place to monitor these interventions and their impact on schools.

3. **A dedicated Transformation Zone team** is on-site in our turnaround schools to provide a series of intensive supports and coaching to our teachers and leaders. This team is led by our Chief Transformation Officer, Ms. Nikita Reed, whose reputation and track record on school turnaround is much-acclaimed and impressive. Ms. Reed and her team have full authority to coordinate with the Superintendent and Teaching and Learning Division to provide real-time solutions to the school with great efficiency in removing any barriers related to academics, staffing, operations, and culture and climate needs.

Needs Assessment / Measures / Summary:

A thorough data review has informed every aspect of this plan and is connected to a number of ongoing monitoring systems and supports in place at Gulfport Montessori to ensure alignment to the domains below:

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership
2. Standards-Based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
3. Positive Culture and Environment

<p>PCS / Definition of Excellent Instruction</p> <p><u>Students are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cognitively engaged in rigorous, standards-based content •Empowered to take ownership of their learning •Demonstrating understanding of learning 	<p><u>Teachers are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Building intentional plans to ensure delivery of standards-based instruction •Gradually releasing responsibility of learning •Providing feedback about the learning •Providing multiple ways to assess learning 	<p><u>Leaders are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting goals and developing actionable plans, aligning resources, and monitoring data around learning • Building a positive culture and climate by being visible and supportive, and via feedback and coaching to teachers • Empowering teacher growth through PLCs, collaboration, and distributed leadership
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Summary conclusions related to continuous growth at Gulfport Montessori Elementary:

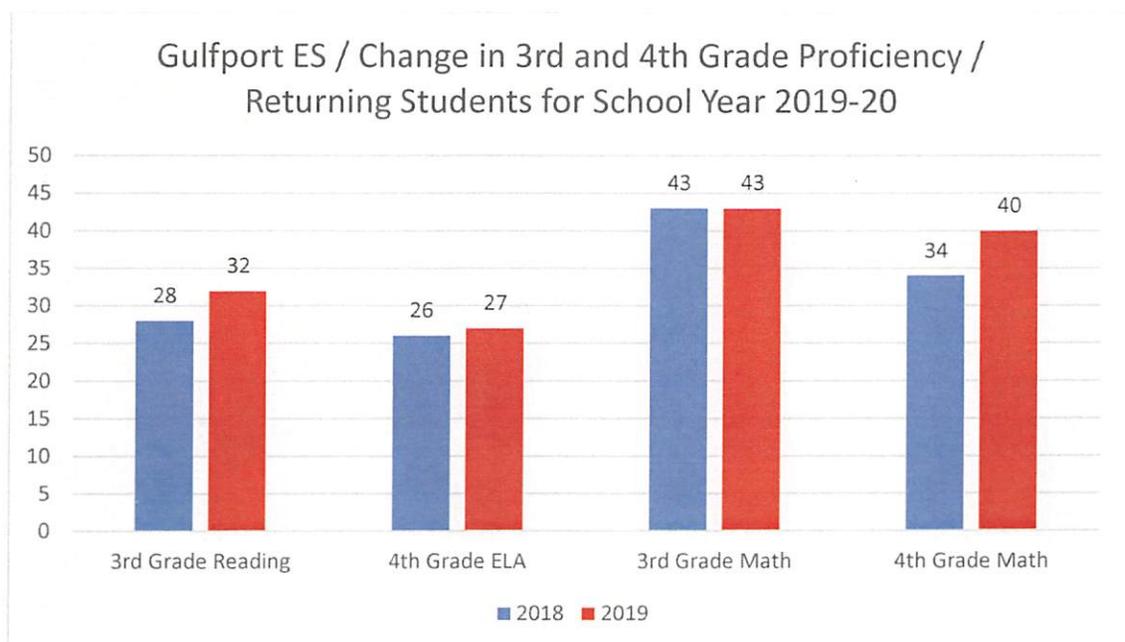
The district's comprehensive data review provides evidence that the district's turnaround model has contributed to increases at Gulfport Montessori, even though the school grade remained a D in 2018-19.

- **Gulfport Montessori** received a C grade two years ago after having been a D previously. This provides us strong evidence that the school can attain a C or higher again and (with proper support) maintain a satisfactory school grade moving forward.
- **To increase achievement and secure an improved school grade, our primary conclusions reached through our data review are as follows:**
 - The school showed slight decreases overall from 2018 to 2019 in FSA proficiency and gains, though positive trends were evident in 3rd and 4th grades (both ELA-Reading and Math). The school's 3rd grade Reading proficiency improved by 4 percentage points and its 4th grade ELA improved by one percentage point. In fact, within the ELA strands measured on the FSA, the writing scores at Gulfport improved sufficiently as a result of unique interventions in place at the school. Those same solutions will be employed for the reading strands in 2019-20. In math, 3rd grade proficiency remained the same, though 4th grade improved by 6 percentage points to its highest point in several years (see table below). These data provide strong evidence that school interventions are having a positive impact and the school is likely to reach a C grade in 2019-20.
 - To ensure continued growth at Gulfport, the district has installed a new principal with a proven track records of success. The school's principal is arriving from Pinellas Park Elementary School, a Title 1 school in Pinellas County. Pinellas Park increased its grade from a D to a C grade under the principal's leadership. This includes double-digit increases (10+ points) in math proficiency, science proficiency, math gains, and ELA gains.
 - The principal is well-known as a dedicated curriculum leader who has partnered with her teachers in unpacking the standards and using materials and assessments tailored to the unique population of the students at her schools.
 - The biggest drop in scores for Gulfport from two years ago (when the school had a C grade) is found in the ELA and Math learning gains for students in the bottom quartile (L25). It should be noted that there are fewer than 50 students in the L25 cell at Gulfport and percentages can fluctuate based on the performance of a few students. With this in mind, the school has put a dedicated plan in place to identify, support, and monitor each child in the bottom quartile individually.

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- In support of increased learning gains, the school has employed improved intervention protocols that are better aligned to core instruction and bi-weekly assessments to measure student progress.
- The district has also provided two supplemental classroom teachers to lower the teacher-pupil ratio beyond the class size requirement and provide focused support for English Language Learners, ESE students, and students needing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.
- A challenge at Gulfport has been a large turnover of its teaching staff over the past three years. That has contributed to some instability since the school last had a C grade. Since the hiring of the new principal, staff stability has improved. Of the school's 47 teachers who ended last school year, 44 returned for the 2019-20 school year (a 94% rate).
- The school has seen a decrease in its science scores and the district has provided the school with a full time Science Coach/lab teacher. An intentional science action plan is in place to focus on 3rd and 4th grade Science Standards based upon a recent 5th grade Science diagnostic.
- The district has invested in *Reading Recovery* at Gulfport as a promising, new intervention for at-risk readers in first grade.
- The district's Transformation Zone team has also increased its visits to the school to support the implementation of improved Tier 1 processes and "conditions for learning," which have already shown improvement with new leadership in place.

• Table 1. School Performance Trends / Returning Students / Gulfport Montessori Elementary School





NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Pinellas County Schools has conducted an extensive analysis of Gulfport Montessori Elementary as part its annual review of student performance data and the district’s commitment to continuous improvement. Specifically, the district has established an ongoing developmental, research evaluation of our turnaround initiatives and all of the strategies and interventions in place to support learning. The evaluation design is collaborative and involves mixed methods—both quantitative and qualitative. This allows for triangulation of information sources, and to provide a more in-depth understanding of our turnaround efforts as well as the strength and fidelity of implementation.

The recommendations provided for Gulfport Montessori are aligned to a recurring set of best practices and recommendations that have been revisited during the past three years. It is important to note as well that the data for Gulfport are evolving as new assessment and observational data are reviewed. For this reason, the Transformation Zone team meets each Monday with our Superintendent of Schools and key district leaders to remain nimble and actionable in their supports.

In reaching conclusions specific to Gulfport and its needs for 2019-20, the Transformation Zone team employed both a resource and gap analysis methodology in the development of a whole-school transformation plan for the school. The components of the five-step needs assessment process are described below.

1. Review of Areas of Assurance- The needs assessment process commenced with a review of the areas of assurance outlined by the state. Each area of assurance was examined through the lens of our District Strategic Plan and Bridging the Gap Plan, which provide a framework for academic excellence and closing of achievement gaps through evidence-based, equitable educational practices. The guiding question for this review was, *“What is the district’s capacity and commitment to support the implementation of a whole-school transformation model?”*
2. Review and Analysis of Pertinent School Data- After making a determination of district capacity and commitment for implementation of a whole-school transformation model, a critical review and analysis of pertinent school data was conducted. Both qualitative and quantitative measures were examined, with the goal of creating a comprehensive school profile. The guiding question for this review was, *“What are the current school conditions for teaching, learning, and achievement?”*

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3. Resource Analysis and Asset Mapping- Subsequent to the review and analysis of pertinent school data, the existing assets and resources at Gulfport Montessori Elementary were identified. This process was informed by goals, strategies, and resources outlined in the School Improvement Plan, Title I Schoolwide Plan, and Turnaround Option (TOP-2) Plan. The guiding questions for this strategic analysis were, *“What is the school’s current capacity to effectively implement a whole-school transformation model? What supports are already in place?”*

4. Gap Analysis- Armed with information about existing assets at the school, an objective analysis was made to identify remaining gaps in resources and supports. Consideration was given to current federal, state, and local resources. The guiding questions for this analysis were, *“What needs have not been adequately addressed by existing resources? How will additional resources address remaining gaps or augment existing supports to maximize the return on investment, without duplicating efforts?”*

5. Identification of High Yield Practices and Programs- The final step in the needs assessment process was the identification of evidence-based, high yield practices and programs to address remaining gaps or enhance and extend existing resources. The guiding question was, *“What practices and programs will maximize our capacity to effectively implement a whole-school transformation model, based on this needs assessment?”*

The district also reviewed the results from the AdvancED survey conducted at Gulfport Montessori. The 360-degree survey of school staff, students, and parents support conclusions related to school environment, leadership capacity, and family engagement. District leaders also met with the principal and with the Community Assessment Team to review school performance data, determine causes for the school’s performance, and make recommendations for school improvement.

3-YEAR DATA TRENDS

A core component of our needs assessment process is an analytical review of 3-year data trends for student achievement. In 2018-19, Gulfport Montessori’s overall school grade points and proficiency rates dropped for ELA, Math, and Science. Additionally, the school saw significant drops in students making learning gains, especially among those students in the bottom quartile (L25).

Gulfport Montessori had previously shown steady improvement in gains so that must be a primary area of focus for the school to meet and sustain its goal of a C grade or higher.

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Three-year data trends are summarized in the tables below.

Tables 3 and 4. School Grade Trends / Gulfport Montessori Elementary School

Gulfport Elementary		ELA / Reading		Math		Science	Total Points Earned	% of Total Possible Points	Grade
2019	Proficiency	29		36		25	241	34	D
	Gains	39 <small>ALL</small>	27 <small>L25</small>	42 <small>ALL</small>	43 <small>L25</small>				
2018	Proficiency	31		38		39	262	37	D
	Gains	37 <small>ALL</small>	28 <small>L25</small>	46 <small>ALL</small>	43 <small>L25</small>				
2017	Proficiency	34		39		28	302	43	C
	Gains	45 <small>ALL</small>	51 <small>L25</small>	51 <small>ALL</small>	54 <small>L25</small>				
CHANGE in Students Scoring Proficient / 3-Year TREND / All Grades		ELA -5		MATH -3		SCI -3			

Gulfport Elementary	ELA	ELA Gains	ELA Gains L25	MATH	MATH Gains	MATH L25	SCI	TTL PTS	% PTS	19	18	17	% Min	% Econ Disadv
2019	29	39	27	36	42	43	25	241	34	D	D	C	77.6	100
2018	31	37	28	38	46	43	39	262	37		D	C	77.3	100
2017	34	45	51	39	51	54	28	302	43			C	74.2	100
3-Year TREND	-5	-6	-24	-3	-9	-11	-3	-61						



ANALYSIS OF EXISTING STRATEGIES

An analysis of 3-year data trends led district and school leaders to reflect on existing strategies and the extent of their effectiveness. This reflection included identification of potential barriers to their efficacy. Below is a description of strategies that have been implemented, including a summary of their impact on school improvement.

Strategy 1: Provide support for rigorous, standards-based instruction.

Professional development is provided for all teachers on the Marzano instructional framework and the high-yield strategies for improving learning through increased rigor. On-site instructional coaches, including “Just in Time” coaches who remain on call as needed, provide embedded supports for teachers in standards-based planning and instruction. Regular classroom observations are conducted by district staff, with feedback aligned to the LSI Rigorwalk. This process in Pinellas County is referred to as the Instructional Support Model (ISM). Weekly visits are also conducted by the Transformation Zone team, with specific feedback to school leaders and instructional coaches on best practices for conducting instructional walkthroughs and providing meaningful feedback to teachers.

This strategy is evidenced-based and critical to the school’s success, though our analysis shows that not all classrooms are adequately teaching to the rigor and complexity of the standard. Some ways that the district is addressing this is to partner with the Achievement Network to train the school’s coaches and teachers on how to improve instruction specific to text and task complexity and the instructional shifts.

The district’s Transformation Zone team is also partnering with Gulfport in providing targeted, on-site coaching to school leaders in implementing strong Tier 1 processes and maximizing conditions for learning. Additionally, the Transformation Zone team has increased its level and depth of support for Gulfport specific to increasing academic rigor, including visiting the school bi-weekly, and systemically improving instruction via the process outlined below.

Additional instructional supports specific to Gulfport Montessori:

- Instructional walkthroughs (observations) weekly by Transformation Zone director and reflection left with regards to focus areas. Teacher/principal/coach agree and then review to ensure purposeful and focused follow-up visit.
- Instructional coaches and teachers work together to correct and put standards/complexity in place. Reviewed upon next visit to ensure that complexity is visible.
- Lesson plans are forwarded via email or Planbook access provided to Transformation Zone team. Instructional coach completes walkthrough with director.
- Walkthroughs and grade level meetings are held to collaborate with regards to DOK levels and opportunities to “think” for students (coaches model, if needed).

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Strategy 2: Provide additional learning time for core instruction.

A review of the outcomes data and classroom observation metrics show learning gains were not found across the board among many students. In response, the district has better aligned this classroom intervention time and has added the iReady intervention curriculum in support of improved ELA and Math results.

The district also added additional paraprofessionals at Gulfport Montessori who are academically focused and trained to support student growth. The school is dedicated to strengthening the core academic program by assigning paraprofessionals and other instructional support personnel to provide timely, additional assistance for students and utilization of supplemental, research-based instructional materials.

Strategy 3: Provide timely, additional assistance for students not meeting standards beyond the instructional day.

Increased extended learning budgets and programs are in place, including a Summer Bridge Program to address summer learning loss. Gulfport Montessori also increases learning time with a partnership with 21st Century Learning, where students not only receive assistance with core curriculum but also engage in Project-Based Learning Activities.

This is another best practice that the district remains committed to. Our data review shows that the district's Promise Time intervention at Gulfport Montessori is supporting student growth and that the Summer Bridge program is addressing summer learning loss. The Promise Time initiative focuses on the acceleration, achievement, and advancement of academic performance for students in the district's Title I elementary schools. Participating students have weekly access to small group tutoring and the online iReady curriculum for reading and mathematics. In addition, enrichment overlays are provided through a variety of asset and interest-based club activities.

Strategy 4: Provide resources and supports to recruit and retain highly effective teachers and school leaders.

Recruitment, retention, and school performance pay bonuses are provided.

Our data review shows that an increasing number of veteran teachers were hired at Gulfport Montessori for 2019-20, though it is not clear as of yet whether these financial incentives were key drivers. Since the hiring of the new principal this summer, staff stability has improved. Of the school's 47 teachers who ended last school year, 44 returned for the 2019-20 school year (a 94% rate). As well, the school was intentional in carefully reviewing its state-issued VAM data by teacher in making critical instructional placement decisions for 2019-20.

Strategy 5: Provide resources to support students' social-emotional wellbeing and remove barriers to learning in school.

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Additional support services personnel have been allocated to support the safety and security needs of children and support increased instructional time (e.g., psychologist, social worker, paraprofessionals). Extensive training has been provided in Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Additional paraprofessionals have been assigned to elementary classrooms to serve as “teaching partners,” per each school’s needs (supports increased learning and improved engagement). Monthly training has been provided for school leaders in restorative practices and discipline disparity.

Real-time data are made available daily to school leadership teams, including:

- Student Attendance (daily attendance rate, percentage of students missing 10% or more days, etc.).
- Student Discipline (referrals by type, out-of-school suspensions, in-school suspensions, and discipline disparity data).
- Early Warning Indicators (students with excessive referrals, excessive absences, F grades or low test scores).
- Students At-Risk (student-by-student alerts for meeting multiple risk factors – color-coded by red / yellow / green).
- Student Assessment data (FSA, MAP, Running Record, etc.).

Our analysis shows that the students who are most in need at the school (Tier 3) may require additional social-emotional supports than were provided in previous years. The district already provides additional support services personnel (full-time psychologist and full-time social worker), with related wrap-around services at no cost to families in need.

The district is going to supplement these efforts in 2018-19 by hiring an MTSS coach to narrow the focus on students in Tier 3 and to track specific interventions tied to their unique needs, as well as the hiring of additional teacher units to reduce class size.

Strategy 6: Provide dedicated, comprehensive support for school staff to effectively implement evidence-based principles and practices of school transformation.

Daily support for teachers and school leaders is provided by the district Transformation Zone team and Learning Specialists. Ongoing training is provided in school turnaround strategies, restorative practices and equity pedagogy in schools. Quarterly data chats are held with district leadership team to discuss progress monitoring metrics.

Data in support of this strategy is not yet clear, as the equity and turnaround strategies are still in the early implementation stages. To accelerate this work, the district has provided training to a cross-functional equity team at the school, including a certified trainer in restorative practices (certified by the International Institute on Restorative Practices). The school principal also took part in the recent cohort of the New Leaders training program, which included face-to-face and on-site training in turnaround competencies as well as leadership walks at other schools.

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Strategy 7: Provide resources and supports for meaningful engagement of families and community.

Extensive training has been provided for school leaders and staff members in the Dual Capacity Framework from Dr. Mapp of Harvard University. The school has made a commitment to unique enrichment and learning opportunities for students and parents.

Gulfport Montessori leverages community assets by maintaining strong and collaborative partnerships with local partners.

A part-time Family and Community Liaison is provided by the school district to assist with volunteer programs and community partnerships. To supplement these efforts, Gulfport Montessori will pursue grant monies to establish and sustain additional, readily accessible family connections and resources such as food, clothing, school supplies, as well as mental health, medical, and social services.

Implementation Plan

Part A. Summarize the district-managed turnaround plan and describe how the needs assessment results will be addressed in each of these three domains:

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership
2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)
3. Positive Culture and Environment

Part B. In this plan, verify that each assurance outlined in the TOP-1 form for district-managed turnaround has been addressed.

Part A. The district-managed turnaround plan will entail implementation of a whole-school transformation model. Results from the needs assessment will be addressed through strategies described in the three domains below.



STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES / Gulfport Montessori Elementary School

The needs assessment process revealed strengths and opportunities for improvement at the district and school levels in three domains—Accountable and Shared Leadership, Standards-Based Instruction and Learning, and Positive Culture and Environment. Identified strengths will continue to be leveraged for continuous improvement. Opportunities for growth will be strategically addressed through implementation of this Turnaround Option Plan.

1. Accountable and Shared Leadership

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Strengths: The Pinellas County School District recruits, develops, and retains highly effective school leaders by providing multiple, differentiated, and timely supports to build instructional leadership for highest student achievement. This includes guidance for strategic, efficient utilization of available human and fiscal resources. Some existing strategies and supports are:

- The selection of the principal, assistant principals, and instructional coaches at all Transformation Zone schools (including Gulfport Montessori Elementary) is conducted through a series of interviews and a review of employee work history that is intended to locate leaders who have strong turnaround competencies.
- The principal at Gulfport Montessori is a veteran principal with vast experience in curriculum design and coaching others. She is entering her first year as the principal at Gulfport after leading a successful Title 1 school. School performance metrics and observational data show that the principal has the ability to rally a team and align teachers to the skillsets (qualities of an effective turnaround leader.)
- A primary role of the Chief Transformation Officer is to provide ongoing support for principals to create and sustain optimal conditions for learning at schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).
- Particularly in our TOP 2 schools, essential strategies for school support include ongoing training in school turnaround strategies and solutions, restorative practices and equity pedagogy.
- District partnerships with the Southern Regional Education Board and National Institute for School Leadership allows practicing and aspiring school leaders to strengthen knowledge and skill through participation in Turnaround Leaders and Executive Development programs.
- Transformation Zone staff engage in quarterly data chats with school leaders and provide ongoing, job-embedded coaching in critical competencies for leadership and school operations.
- An AdvancED® survey is administered districtwide to administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and results are utilized for strategic planning and data-driven decision making.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- The district's Transformation Zone supports several district schools and, as such, must effectively differentiate the team's on-site visits to schools in monitoring and growing leadership at Gulfport Montessori and other schools with recent changes in leadership (new or newer principals, etc.). Still, the track record of the incoming leadership team at Gulfport should make the transition easier than most. The Transformation Zone team will make weekly visits to the school and one-on-one coaching of the principal by the Transformation Zone chief will occur.
- The leadership team at Gulfport Montessori is instructionally strong, though the team is new to working together and must quickly build strong relationships among each other and the staff. This will require coaching and monitoring by the Transformation Zone team.

2. Standards-Based Instruction and Learning

Strengths: The Pinellas County School District provides structures and resources to support teacher collaboration for professional growth. The role of teacher leadership is acknowledged and celebrated as integral to authentic and sustained school improvement. The Pinellas County School District supports rigorous, standards-based, culturally responsive instruction in all classrooms, as well as enrichment and

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extension of learning beyond the classroom. Instruction is thoughtfully planned to foster the 21st century skills of critical thinking, effective communication, authentic collaboration, and creative approaches to problem solving for all students. Some existing strategies and supports are:

- Teachers participate in weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) where they share instructional strategies, review and discuss samples of student work, analyze formative assessment data, and receive pedagogical support from instructional coaches.
- Teachers participate in facilitated observations of effective instructional strategies, with processes for reflection and planning.
- Job-embedded instructional coaches provide side-by-side support and guidance for teachers during daily instruction.
- An Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teachers and Teaching (ECET2) program is implemented to foster teacher leadership and advocacy.
- A strategic focus is placed on providing our TOP 2 schools with the most effective instructional staff members possible and the professional development training and supports to help them understand the unique competencies and collaborative skills required to teach in more challenging school environments.
- High-quality, research-based instructional materials and resources are provided for teachers to support rigorous, standards-based instruction that engages all learners.
- Curriculum guides are utilized to facilitate effective lesson planning and appropriate pacing of instructional units.
- A re-structured instructional day provides increased learning time throughout the week, and a technology-based Beyond the Classroom initiative supports continued student learning over weekends and holidays.
- The NWEA MAP assessment is administered in reading, mathematics, and district common assessments are administered in science three times a year to provide timely, reliable data for measuring student progress and guiding instruction.
- Short formative assessments are also administered around key standards, with feedback provided immediately to teachers and grade-level teams to support planning around standards that may require re-teaching.
- In our Transformation Zone schools that require a TOP-2 plan, recruitment, retention, and performance incentives are provided to recognize and reward ambitious instruction and increased student achievement.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Gulfport Montessori has opportunities for growth in strengthening the rigor of core instruction to ensure students are working at the complexity of the standards. To support school improvement in this regard, the district has provided a full-time ELA, science and math coach. The district has also partnered with the Achievement Network to train the school's coaches and teachers on text and task complexity and the instructional shifts.
- The district has also coordinated bi-weekly visits to the school to conduct instructional rounds and action key drivers to move learning forward.
- The school should be mindful in addressing critical reading standards in support of student growth. While progress was evident in writing strands, reading strands saw less improvement.

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- Another growth opportunity is providing students with intensive, differentiated support and scaffolded instruction to remediate all learners (especially ELL students). In response, the district has better aligned this classroom intervention time and has added the iReady intervention curriculum in support of improved ELA and Math results.
- Gulfport Montessori has also hired additional teachers to better support ELL scholars at the school.

Specific Strategies to Support Standards-Based Instruction / Learning

Strategy 1: Provide rigorous, standards-based, culturally responsive core instruction.

Pinellas County Schools works to ensure that every student masters the Florida Standards each year. This mastery level expectation includes supports to develop background knowledge for students that do not bring the same sets of experiences to the standards. In primary and intermediate grades, students learn through Units of Inquiry and curriculum designed by teachers, supported by job-embedded instructional coaches. These units are designed based on the Marzano instructional framework, and they provide explicit opportunities for differentiated scaffolding, selection of materials, and increased rigor based on students' needs.

Students will use a range of subject-specific knowledge, concepts and skills to develop a deeper understanding of grade level standards, facilitated by an inquiry-based learning approach. Students will receive supplemental support using Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) strategies to build successful academic habits to prepare for middle and high school. Selected teachers will have the opportunity to participate in the AVID summer institute to learn the latest in AVID methodologies and strategies to successfully implement the program.

The district has adopted *Journeys* by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as the Comprehensive Core Reading Program. *Journeys* is a standards-based core program with instructional materials and assessments for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. In addition, the Elementary Reading & Language Arts department provides teachers with a yearlong curriculum designed to meet the demands of the Florida Standards. The Modules Curriculum is designed to include a balance of reading, writing, speaking, and listening opportunities. This curriculum includes teacher resources, a suggested scope and sequence, daily sample plans, sample charts, and exemplar lessons. The scope and sequence of lessons allows for students to study important topics in depth and over time, spiraling back to concepts within and across years.

It should be noted that the district commissioned an outside research team to review its curriculum and materials in support of turnaround schools like Gulfport. As a result, several critical changes were made for 2019-20 that are designed to impact student growth. Among those is the adoption of the Ready Mathematics curriculum. Math proficiency will be monitored using NWEA MAP and iReady.

Reading proficiency will be continually monitored using NWEA MAP, iReady and Running Records, and instruction will be adapted to accelerate or enrich students, based on progress monitoring measures. Gulfport Montessori is supported by supplemental paraprofessionals and teachers in training to serve as "teaching partners" who support increased learning and improved engagement in classrooms daily. Funds from this grant will be used to hire three additional classroom teachers

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who will be strategically placed to lower teacher to pupil ratios and provide intensive support for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students.

Pinellas County voters approved a referendum that provides additional funds for reading, technology and the arts to support this core curriculum. In all cases, culturally rich supplemental materials are provided to schools through district funds and referendum funds.

School staff will apply knowledge of culturally responsive instruction in three key areas:

1. The Classroom Environment- Teachers will engage in thoughtful, intentional planning to ensure the learning environment is characterized by clear learning targets, a knowledge-rich, culturally relevant curriculum materials, and student-centered teaching and learning.
2. Components of Learning- Teachers will design and implement instruction in a manner that allows students to gather, process, store and retrieve academic content through lessons designed to tap into students' semantic, episodic, procedural, and reflexive memory.
3. Engaging Culturally Diverse Learners- Teachers will incorporate AVID's Culturally Relevant Teaching and the 6 M's of Culturally Responsive Instruction (Conage, 2014) into lesson planning and daily instruction. Lesson plans and pedagogical practice will be characterized by an intentional focus on:
 - Meaning- Scaffolding learning by making relevant connections between students' lived experiences, interests, cultural assets, and/or funds of knowledge.
 - Models – Using explicit methods and concrete examples as a bridge to help move students from what they already know and can do towards meeting the identified standards for proficiency and performance.
 - Monitoring with feedback – Using strategies and structures to assess understanding, provide useful, timely feedback, and celebrate student's progress towards identified standards.
 - Mouth – Using strategies and structures to help students with processing content through recitation, dialogue, discussion, or debate.
 - Movement – Using strategies and structures to help students with processing content through active engagement.
 - Music - Using strategies and structures to help students with process content through rhythm and song.

Strategy 2: Provide academic enrichment and extension.

Academic enrichment and extension opportunities will be provided for students through a coordination of funding sources (district, Title I, SIG). Students will have access to enrichment clubs and activities before and after school and during the summer. Through a collaborative partnership with the R'Club, extended learning programs for students provide a safe environment for students and families in need of these services. This partnership ensures that dependable child care is provided to participating families. The partnership with the R'Club (housed on the Gulfport Montessori Elementary School's campus), the Pinellas Juvenile Welfare Board, and the Pinellas County School District, will continue to provide extended learning time for students who participate

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in the Promise Time program throughout the year. The Promise Time initiative focuses on the acceleration, achievement, and advancement of academic performance for students in the district's Title I elementary schools. Participating students have weekly access to small group tutoring and the online iReady curriculum for reading and mathematics. In addition, enrichment overlays are provided through a variety of asset and interest-based club activities.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in STEM camps, Crazy 8's Math Club, and Coding clubs. These cross-curricular enrichment opportunities will build new skills and interests, develop self-confidence, and provide cross-disciplinary, real-world learning opportunities that support core subjects. Enrichment clubs will provide an opportunity for students to build mastery in content beyond core academic subjects, deepening skills and interests.

Strategy 3: Provide timely, effective intervention for students not meeting standards.

Instructional coaches for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) will assist with analysis of data to determine and develop effective interventions. Two supplemental classroom teachers will lower the teacher-pupil ratio beyond the class size requirement and provide focused support for English Language Learners, ESE students and students needing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. The Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program will be expanded with identified students in reading, supported by part-time/hourly teachers or paraprofessionals. If the Schools of Hope Grant is awarded, three supplemental classroom teachers will be funded to lower the teacher to student ratios in selected classrooms to provide additional targeted support for students.

Strategy 4: Provide additional learning time.

Additionally, the Promise Time Extended Learning Program will be provided after school each day. All students will have access to myON, an award-winning personalized literacy environment that incorporates a state-of-the-art learning platform and an enhanced digital reading content. The myON program generates individualized, interest-based recommendations within all learners' target Lexile® ranges to engage them with just-right texts. A Makerspace will be created for students to work collaboratively, explore interests, and develop critical thinking skills through hands-on learning experiences. The Media Specialist will work with school teams to integrate projects for use of the Makerspace to complement grade-level curriculum standards and to plan and host Saturday School Academies for students and families to work on projects within the Makerspace.

Strategy 5: Provide resources and supports for character education

The Strong Kids-Strong Start social-emotional learning (SEL) program will be implemented to cultivate strong classroom relationships and to provide a holistic approach for creating and sustaining a safe, supportive, respectful learning environment. A school-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program will also be implemented, with a focus on recognizing and rewarding students who exhibit positive behavior and character traits.

2. Positive Culture and Environment

Strengths: The Pinellas County School District facilitates the development and preservation of learning conditions that are most conducive to student learning. Supplemental instructional and student services resources are strategically allocated to remove barriers and provide differentiated supports, based on students' needs. The Pinellas County School District advocates authentic engagement of families and the community as allies in educating all students. We recognize that our family, business, and community partners possess unique experiences, perspectives, and funds of knowledge that are essential to improving learning outcomes for all students and closing achievement gaps. Some existing strategies and supports are:

- School teams receive training and ongoing support for effective implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).
- Schools teams receive training and support for implementation of restorative practices, as well as guidance for analysis of discipline disparities and action planning.
- Supplemental instructional and student services personnel (paraprofessionals, psychologists, and social workers) are assigned to our TOP 2 schools to provide a network of supports to meet academic and social-emotional needs of students.
- Extended learning programs are provided to ensure students receive timely, effective intervention and enrichment during the school year and to mitigate learning loss during the summer.
- The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (SEDL, 2013), based on the work of Dr. Karen Mapp of Harvard University, provides a research and evidence-based foundation for family and community engagement.
- Workshops with an explicit link to learning are offered for families throughout the school year, and surveys are administered to inform continuous improvement of offerings.
- District leaders and school principals met most recently with the Community Assessment Team during the summer of 2018 to review school performance data, celebrate successes, examine root causes for academic underperformance, brainstorm solutions, and identify needed supports for our TOP 2 schools.
- The Superintendent facilitates multiple family and community forums throughout the district. Written feedback received during these transparent and collaborative sessions is utilized to identify and implement relevant strategies and supports, particularly those that will lead to closing of achievement gaps.

Opportunities for Improvement:

Gulfport Montessori Elementary has opportunities to grow in creating structured, Tier 1 expectations for all students. These structures were clearly outlined but not always consistently followed to fidelity in previous years and that has contributed to lower student achievement. The school has made “conditions for learning” a top priority and maximizing these conditions across all classrooms.

The new principal at Gulfport worked closely with the Transformation Zone team and processes at the school have already improved.

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The school also has opportunities for growth in eliminating barriers to student well-being and increasing the emphasis on providing social-emotional supports for the whole-child to optimize the learning environment. The school is committing to combatting this challenge as part of a whole-school, whole-child approach and is pursuing additional grant funding to meet this need. This is closely aligned to the school's Montessori approach.

The funding is designed to impact (among other things):

- Wrap-around services that develop family and community partnerships
- Improved parental involvement and engagement / data discussions “linked to learning”
- Increased focus on high academic and character standards for all children

Part B.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan Assurances:

District Capacity and Support

District A-Team / Turnaround Schools / Weekly Monitoring and Support

Pinellas County Schools has established a district level monitoring team (called the A-Team) in support of these schools that meets every Monday to discuss the school trend data and related academic and operational supports required to move the schools forward. This team is led by the Superintendent and has full authority to remove all barriers to school improvement. The team is comprised of the following district leaders:

- **Superintendent:** Dr. Michael A. Grego
- **Deputy Superintendent:** Dr. William Corbett
- **Chief Transformation Officer:** Ms. Nikita Reed
- **Area Superintendent for each school:** Mr. Bob Poth, Mrs. Patricia Wright, Dr. Barbara Hires, Mr. Ward Kennedy
- **Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning:** Mr. Kevin Hendrick
- **Associate Superintendent for Student and Community Support Services:** Ms. Lori Matway
- **Executive Director for Elementary Education:** Mr. Mike Feeney
- **Executive Director for Middle School Education:** Dr. Dywayne Hinds
- **Regional Executive Director:** Attending as needed.

The district A-Team explained above has full authority to make changes and provide supports to the schools as needed. The team meets every Monday and relies on weekly updates from the schools via three related support mechanisms described below.

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These three direct supports ensure that any and all actions, policies and procedures are implemented in support of school-based leadership teams at our turnaround schools.

- **Transformation Zone established.** This team is on the ground in the turnaround schools every week and is charged with coaching teachers and leaders in the key actions and pillars of school turnaround. The team is headed by our Chief Transformation Officer and reports progress, needs and next steps to Dr. Grego and the district A-Team so improvements can be made efficiently.

Both initiatives are designed around a series of research-based interventions and resources that have shown success in supporting similar schools across the country. The initiatives have focused on supporting the schools through additional classroom assistance, enhanced learning opportunities for children, behavior management systems, ongoing professional development, comprehensive mental and social counseling, enhanced family engagement, frequent district monitoring, preferential human resource supports, and comprehensive wrap-around services.

The interventions and resources are closely aligned to those outlined within the 5Essentials framework that was developed through research conducted by The University of Chicago. The 5Essentials are **effective leadership, collaborative teachers, supportive environment, involved families, and ambitious instruction**. Rooted in the 5Essentials framework, a theory of change was developed that aligned the work of the TZ around five pillars of school turnaround: **Teaching and Learning; Aligned Staff; Culture and Climate; Leadership; and Systems and Operations**.

Goals

- **Immediate:** Build the capacity and effectiveness of school leaders and instructional staff to increase student achievement at each of the eight TZ schools.
- **Long-term:** Apply a transference of best practices in the eight TZ schools to other school sites in the district to support a widespread increase in student achievement.
- **Classroom observation / site visits.** The Transformation Zone conducts ongoing site visits to our neediest schools and visits classrooms to observe growth in instruction specific to rigor and student engagement. Those results are shared immediately with the school-based leadership teams and every Monday at the weekly A-Team meetings and follow-up coaching and professional development is provided. These visits are coordinated with the Teaching and Learning division staff as needed.
- **SBLT observation / site visits.** The Chief Transformation Officer has direct oversight of the school curriculum, training, and principal development. She visits with school leadership at each turnaround school to follow up on the actions suggested by her team and the A-Team following a site visit.

A Tiered Support Model / Differentiated Supports for School Improvement

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Pinellas County Schools has invested in a vigorous support structure that creates an increasing number of strategies and interventions to support schools in need (see explanation in previous section above).

- **Tier 1** -- Supports for All Schools
- **Tier 2** – Supports for DA and district Priority Schools
- **Tier 3 / 4** – Supports for Turnaround Schools

Tiered Supports / School-by-School Interventions

It should be further noted that Pinellas County Schools has developed its own listing of schools in need of tiered supports. Though this list is closely linked to student performance data and school grades, schools can be moved into tiers based on a variety of needs. This ongoing analysis is conducted through the work and data review of the district A-Team and allows for our district to connect schools to necessary supports during the school year, without waiting for school grades or a final list of DA and turnaround schools from the state.

As it relates to changes to specific policies and practices required to implement change in the district's turnaround schools, the district has been successful to date in the following ways:

- **Teacher Contract:** Negotiations with teacher union regarding pay / extended day / transfer window / opt out.
- **Human Resource Practices:** Change in transfer window / involuntary transfers not placed in DA schools.
- **Payroll / Differentiated Pay:** Recruitment / retention / school performance bonuses.
- **Discipline Policies:** Discipline Disparity research / equity research briefs. New restrictions on types of offenses that lead to suspension and limits on number of days of suspension (School Board supported).

District Turnaround Office

As previously stated, the district formed the Transformation Zone in 2016 and hired a director as our district turnaround leader. The director position has now been upgraded to an assistant superintendent level and, as such, the new Chief Transformation Officer reports directly to the superintendent and has full authority to direct turnaround actions in those schools.

Assurance 2: Leaders

Pinellas County Schools has created a deliberate system for monitoring, supporting, coaching and evaluating administrators in its turnaround schools related to the key turnaround competencies needed to move our schools forward. In addition to the visits by the Transformation Zone team, the Chief Transformation Officer is charged with visiting the schools to shadow the school principal and direct the principal and administrative team on school structures, data analysis, and instructional support.

The current principal at Gulfport Montessori is beginning her first year at the school. As part of the district's Transformation Zone, she will be required to present a quarterly data update to district leadership as part of

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

the Transformation Zone’s Compstat presentations. These efforts are designed to grow the school leader’s current capacities and inform the district’s decision as to the current leader’s ability to move the school out of its turnaround status.

The district will also conduct regular visits to the school and coaching sessions from the Transformation Zone chief and those visits, as well, will provide further evidence of the leader’s skills moving forward. The leaders at all turnaround school are monitored closely and will be considered for replacement if the district finds that the leader does not have the capacity to significantly improve student outcomes.

An ongoing search is underway to attract top leaders from around the state and nation as part of the work of our district’s Talent Acquisition Team. Principals at our turnaround schools are provided substantial recruitment and retention bonuses, as well as performance bonuses based on school performance criteria.

Assurance 2: Educators

The district has been purposeful and deliberate in assuring that all teachers were observed adequately and their instructional practice and student data results were analyzed to ensure that the best teachers were retained for the 2019-20 school year. The district’s offices of Human Resources, Professional Development and Assessment, Accountability and Research compiled extensive teacher performance data in support of these decisions.

The data provided were:

- All final evaluation ratings per teacher.
- All scores per teacher in the area of instructional practice (Domain 1 of the Marzano scale) (principal’s rating).
- All state VAM scores per teacher (as available).
- All district cycle / interim assessment data per teacher (teacher score versus school and district average).

It should be noted that these data were combined with related observational and teacher growth data that the principal used in making decisions about retention.

As described above, the district developed an exhaustive data review of every teacher in the turnaround schools to ensure that only effective and highly effective teachers were rehired, unless other data showed that the teacher was improving to a point that another year would benefit the teacher and learners at the school. In fact, our district has negotiated specific contract language that provides the principal with the right to “opt out” teachers who are not showing adequate skill to work in challenging school environments. The principal and Transformation Zone chief reviewed each teacher at each school in supporting the principals in their retention decisions.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

The district has provided several related hiring advantages to Gulfport Montessori, including:

- An open transfer window that allows these schools to advertise and hire teachers at any time during the year.
- An assurance that no teacher who was removed from another school can be placed at these schools without the principal's support.
- Significant recruitment, retention and school performance bonuses.

Explain the correlation between the School Improvement Plan (SIP, annual school plan) and this proposed district-managed turnaround plan (TOP-2, 2-year district plan). Describe how the district and school leadership team are working together to implement the plans to improve the school.

Correlation between SIP and TOP-2:

Gulfport Montessori Elementary, in collaboration with Teaching & Learning leadership, will be using several updated ELA and Math resources to help teachers focus on standards-based curriculum. Teachers will receive ongoing professional development and coaching from school-based coaches and district staff and will be garnering direct support from coaches at Learning Sciences International (LSI). Instructional staff will continue to implement the research-based Marzano tools that are aligned to unpacking the standards to identify critical content. Staff will participate in PLCs and Transformation Zone professional development that will focus on reading standards.

- Professional Development will be provided to teachers by Achievement Network to help them understand the standards. The ELA coaches will continue the work through grade-level collaborative planning.
- Teachers will unpack standards and align instruction accordingly, develop rigorous learning targets on identified key standards.
- iReady is an online program that is an adaptive diagnostic that pinpoints scholars' down to the sub-skill level. Based on research, iReady instruction will aid Gulfport Montessori students in making substantial learning gains across key subgroups and meet the evidence criteria for ESSA. Staff will implement this program with fidelity in order to yield the desired results by every scholar on the spring FSA in Reading.
- Achievement Network coaches will help Gulfport create structures that will advance our priorities and support strong teaching and learning cycles, including: an instructional leadership team to drive the work, regular time for teachers to collaboratively plan from standards and analyze data and/ or scholar work, routines to give teachers high-quality feedback, and time reserved for meaningful leader reflection and preparation. Building content knowledge through planning and analysis.
- Teachers will utilize high yield instructional strategies to develop number sense, flexibility, and fluency alongside growth mindset.
- Through professional development, teachers will build an understanding of the Mathematical Shifts.

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- Through collaborative planning with the academic coach, teachers will review standards so that they will be better equipped at addressing misconceptions in math.
- Teachers will administer regular bi-weekly formative assessments, aligned to test specs, and utilize this data to strategically differentiate instruction and form intervention groups.

Progress monitoring will include: Bi-weekly assessment data; iReady data; MAP data and TZ team visits.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan Assurances

The district must agree to ALL of the following assurances by checking the boxes below.

Assurance 1: District Capacity and Support

The district shall ensure the district leadership team, which includes the superintendent and district leadership, has an integral role in school improvement. This team may include those in charge of curriculum, general and special education, student services, human resources, professional development and other areas relevant to school improvement. The district leadership team shall develop and implement the district-managed turnaround plan. The district shall dedicate a position to lead the turnaround effort at the district level. The selected employee shall report directly to the superintendent and support the principal.

The district shall ensure that instructional programs align to Florida's Standards for English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, social studies and science. The district shall provide the evidence that shows instructional programs to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students and how they are different from the previous programs. The district shall demonstrate alignment of Florida's Standards across grade levels to improve background knowledge in social studies, science and the arts.

The district shall prescribe and require progress monitoring assessments that are aligned to Florida's Standards in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science for all students. The district shall ensure that its progress monitoring assessments are predictive of statewide assessment outcomes and provide valid data to support intervention and acceleration for students.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

In the box below, the district should provide information about its systems that support school leadership teams to implement turnaround interventions, including the following: alignment and allocation of support and resources, policies and practices, governance systems for review and monitoring. At a minimum, the narrative shall address the following:

1. Describe the district leadership team and its role in implementing the DMT plan.
2. Explain how the district allows for flexibility in areas such as staffing, scheduling and budgeting, to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes.
3. Identify how the new or revised instructional programs align to Florida’s Standards for ELA, mathematics, social studies and science; the research that shows it to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students; and how they are different from the previous programs.
4. Identify progress monitoring and summative assessments aligned to Florida’s Standards that will be used in the school.
5. Based on the analysis of progress monitoring and summative assessment data, describe any changes that will be implemented to provide continuous support for the school.
6. Explain the district’s allocation of supports and resources and how they align to the specific needs of the school.
7. Identify and describe the district policies and practices that will need to be reviewed and changed to support the school.
8. Describe the system that the district will put in place to review and monitor the effectiveness of the support.

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

As described above, Pinellas County Schools has established a district level monitoring team (called the A-Team) in support of these schools that meets every Monday to discuss the school trend data and related academic and operational supports required to move the schools forward. This team is led by the Superintendent and can remove all barriers to school improvement. The team is comprised of the following district leaders:

- **Superintendent:** Dr. Michael A. Grego
- **Deputy Superintendent:** Dr. William Corbett
- **Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning:** Mr. Kevin Hendrick
- **Chief Transformation Officer:** Ms. Nikita Reed
- **Executive Director for Elementary Education:** Mr. Mike Feeney
- **Executive Director for Middle School Education:** Dr. Dywayne Hinds

The district A-Team explained above has full authority to make changes and provide supports to the schools as needed. The team meets every Monday and relies on weekly updates from the schools via three related support mechanisms described below.

These three direct supports ensure that any and all actions, policies and procedures are implemented in support of school-based leadership teams at our turnaround schools.

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Transformation Zone: This team is on the ground in the turnaround schools every week and is charged with coaching teachers and leaders in the key actions and pillars of school turnaround. A weekly update is provided to Dr. Grego and he and the Chief Transformation Officer conference weekly to discuss next steps.

Instructional Site Visits. The district’s Transformation Zone team conducts ongoing site visits to our TZ classrooms to observe growth in instruction specific to rigor and student engagement. Those results are shared immediately with the school-based leadership teams and every Monday at the weekly executive meetings and follow-up coaching and professional development is provided.

A key focus of our district is providing differentiated supports to our schools and allowing for unique flexibility and autonomy to our neediest schools (which are listed above as Tier 3 and 4 schools). This structure allows principals many options in writing unique plans to improve their schools. Chief Transformation Officer and her team have already begun working with each school team to design an instructional schedule and staffing model that meets each school’s needs.

The schools have been provided greater flexibility in the following areas:

- **Instructional model and materials.**
- **Hiring and transfer processes and timelines.**
- **Teacher retention decisions.**
- **Intervention materials and supports.**
- **Scheduling / Budgeting / Title I Plans.**

The key component to school autonomy is the school leader and his or her vision around instructional models, materials and training that supports each school’s unique environment. In support of this autonomy, the Teaching and Learning division engaged this Spring in the process of researching over a dozen different instructional resources for ELA and mathematics in order to provide school leadership teams in our turnaround schools with a menu of research-based and proven tools for possible use with their students. The team of reviewers consisted of several principals, members of the Transformation Zone team, Teaching and Learning staff, instructional coaches, teachers and curriculum specialists. These groups used research protocols including the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) to vet materials and determine whether resources were research-based, effective and showed positive results with at-risk students. In addition, educational consultants contributed with an external review of the same materials.

At the conclusion of the review process, school leadership teams were provided with the autonomy to decide which instructional and intervention resources would best supplement their core instruction based on the specific needs of their students. In addition, they set timelines for the purchase of materials and created plans for professional development for their teaching staffs. District staff also continues to work collaboratively with schools to secure the resources needed to provide selected materials.

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School leadership teams in the district’s turnaround schools are provided with both flexibility in scheduling, budgeting and the autonomy to decide which instructional and intervention resources would best supplement their core instruction based on the specific needs of their students. Recommended scheduling guidelines are provided to all schools in the district, but schools develop their individual schedules according their own needs and instructional model. Likewise, schools are provided with base budgets and staffing models and subsequently can supplement or adjust these allocations to meet their needs. In addition, all schools are provided with instructional materials and resources according to student enrollment, but can choose from a menu of research-based and proven tools to supplement their program as they see fit.

Great autonomy is also provided to schools related to their Title I plans and budgets (including extended learning budgets and plans) and to the design and manner of professional development at the school sites. The district allows principals in these schools to recruit, hire, train, review and, if needed, to “opt out” teachers. The schools have unique advantages in that they can hire teachers at any point during the school year and do not have to take an “involuntary” transfer teacher they do not want. This degree of autonomy is outlined in our district personnel policies and teacher contract.

Pinellas County Schools works to ensure that every student masters the Florida Standards each year. This mastery level expectation includes supports to develop background knowledge for students that do not bring the same sets of experiences to the standards. In primary and intermediate grades, students learn through Units of Inquiry and curriculum designed by teachers, supported by job-embedded instructional coaches. These units are designed based on the Marzano instructional framework, and they provide explicit opportunities for differentiated scaffolding, selection of materials, and increased rigor based on students’ needs.

The district has adopted *Journeys* by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as the Comprehensive Core Reading Program. *Journeys* is a standards-based core program with instructional materials and assessments for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. In addition, the Elementary Reading & Language Arts department provides teachers with a yearlong curriculum designed to meet the demands of the Florida Standards. The Modules Curriculum is designed to include a balance of reading, writing, speaking, and listening opportunities. This curriculum includes teacher resources, a suggested scope and sequence, daily sample plans, sample charts, and exemplar lessons. The scope and sequence of lessons allows for students to study important topics in depth and over time, spiraling back to concepts within and across years.

It should be noted that the district commissioned an outside research team to review its curriculum and materials in support of turnaround schools like Gulfport. As a result, several critical changes were made

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for 2019-20 that are designed to impact student growth. Among those is the adoption of the Ready Mathematics curriculum. Math proficiency will be monitored using NWEA MAP and iReady.

Reading proficiency will be continually monitored using NWEA MAP, iReady and Running Records, and instruction will be adapted to accelerate or enrich students, based on progress monitoring measures. Gulfport Montessori is supported by supplemental paraprofessionals and teachers in training to serve as “teaching partners” who support increased learning and improved engagement in classrooms daily. Funds from this grant will be used to hire three additional classroom teachers who will be strategically placed to lower teacher to pupil ratios and provide intensive support for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. Math proficiency will be monitored using NWEA MAP and iReady.

Metrics to Measure Success

Formative and progress monitoring measures include:

- Reading proficiency (NWEA MAP, iReady, Running Record)
- Math proficiency (NWEA MAP, iReady)
- Science proficiency (District Common Assessments)
- Number of students accessing extended learning options – percentage growth.
- District Summer Bridge program measures – percentage growth.

Summative outcomes include:

- Reading and math proficiency (FSA)
- Reading and math gains (FSA)
- Science proficiency (State assessment)

A Tiered Support Model / Differentiated Supports for School Improvement

Pinellas County Schools has invested in a vigorous support structure that creates an increasing number of strategies and interventions to support schools in need.

- **Tier 1** -- Supports for All Schools
- **Tier 2** – Supports for DA and district Priority Schools
- **Tier 3 / 4** – Supports for Turnaround Schools (Transformation Zone)

Tiered Supports / School-by-School Interventions

It should be further noted that Pinellas County Schools has developed its own listing of schools in need of tiered supports. Though this list is closely linked to student performance data and school grades, schools can be moved into tiers based on a variety of needs. This ongoing analysis is conducted through the work and data review of the district A-Team and allows for our district to connect schools to

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

necessary supports during the school year, without waiting for school grades or a final list of DA and turnaround schools from the state.

Pinellas County Schools has committed to a number of strategies, interventions and supports for Gulfport Montessori that are already in place in our most challenging schools. Those include:

- Flexible instructional model. Dedicated intervention time.
- Increased Extended Learning budgets and programs, including a 6-week Summer Bridge Program, partially supported by Title I funds.
- Increased teacher training. Additional training days each year are required in our Transformation Zone schools, supported by Title I and Title II funds.
- Increased leadership training, including monthly training around disciplinary disparity and implicit bias.
- Increased district monitoring and support (ex. weekly district A-Team meetings and ongoing site visits).
- Recruitment / retention / school performance pay bonuses, supported by Title I and Title II funds.
- A comprehensive data matrix on teacher effectiveness to support recruitment and retention decisions.
- Hiring and recruitment advantages provided to schools (ability to hire outside of transfer window, unique job fairs, etc.).
- Additional paraprofessionals provided to schools per each school's needs, supported by Title I funds.
- Additional instructional coaches provided to schools per each school's needs, supported by Title I and Title II funds.
- Increased technology and software resources (take-home laptops for students), partially supported by Title I funds.
- Establishment of Transformation Zone team supported by Title I and Title II funds.

As it relates to changes to specific policies and practices required to implement change in the district's turnaround schools, the district has been successful to date in the following ways:

- **Teacher Contract:** Negotiations with teacher union regarding pay / extended day / transfer window / opt out.
- **Human Resource Practices:** Change in transfer window / involuntary transfers not placed in DA schools.
- **Payroll / Differentiated Pay:** Recruitment / retention / school performance bonuses.
- **Discipline Policies:** Discipline Disparity research / equity research briefs. New restrictions on types of offenses that lead to suspension and limits on number of days of suspension (School Board supported).

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Assurance 2: School Capacity-Leaders and Educators

The district shall ensure the school has effective leaders and educators capable of improving student achievement.

Leaders

The district leadership team, in collaboration with the school, shall develop an annual professional development plan that provides ongoing tiered support to increase leadership and educator quality.

The district shall ensure the principal and assistant principal have a successful record in leading a turnaround school and the qualifications to support the student population being served.

The district shall ensure that the principal will be replaced, unless recommended for retention in collaboration with the Department, upon entry into district-managed turnaround based upon the individual's turnaround record and degree of success, the length of time since turnaround success, the degree of similarity in the student populations and any other factor that would indicate the principal will have turnaround success with this school.

Educators

The district shall ensure it has reviewed practices in hiring, recruitment, retention and reassignment of instructional personnel with priority on student performance data.

For districts with more than five schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a Differentiated Accountability (DA) school with a rating of either Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM), is less than the district average. For districts with five or fewer schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a DA school with either a rating of Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state VAM, is less than the state average.

The district shall ensure the instructional staff who do not have a state VAM rating and who do not show evidence of increasing student achievement are not rehired at the school.

Pursuant to section 1012.2315(2)(a), F.S., the district must ensure that the percentage of temporarily certified teachers, teachers in need of improvement or out-of-field teachers assigned to the school is not higher than the district average.

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity-Leaders

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

In the box below, the district must provide information about its systems to ensure the school has an

Gulfport Montessori Elementary / Leadership Team

The school leadership team at Gulfport Montessori is new to the school and is comprised of a strong, highly qualified team of turnaround leaders. This includes the principal, assistant principal, and skilled instructional coaches.

The principal, Ms. Wendy Bryan, has joined Gulfport for the first time this year after a very successful job leading Pinellas Park Elementary School (a Title 1 school in Pinellas County). During her tenure as principal there, Pinellas Park moved from a D to an C and saw double-digit increases (10+ percentage points) in nearly every school grade cell.

Ms. Bryan is a dedicated curriculum leader who has partnered with her teachers in designing her own curriculum and assessments tailored to the unique population of the students at her schools. She brings those skills to her new role at Gulfport.

Ms. Bryan has the unique ability to influence others and rally them to a common cause. In fact, she has used those skills to successfully bring additional highly qualified teachers to Gulfport even during her first few weeks on the job.

The assistant principal at Gulfport is Ms. Neala Jackson, who brings exceptional experience and a strong instructional lens to the job. She will be a dynamic partner to Ms. Bryan and to the teachers at Gulfport Montessori.

Monitoring, Supporting Leaders

As mentioned above, Pinellas County Schools has created a deliberate system for monitoring, supporting, coaching and evaluating administrators in its turnaround schools related to the key turnaround competencies needed to move our schools forward. In addition to the visits by the Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) Team, the Chief Transformation Officer is charged with visiting the schools to shadow the school principal and direct the principal and administrative team on school structures, data analysis, and instructional support.

District leadership will monitor student outcomes throughout the school year and administrative changes will take place if necessary.

effective administrator capable of leading the turnaround efforts, including desired experience and competencies, recruitment and retention incentives and operational flexibility. At a minimum, reply to the following:

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

1. Has the principal been retained or replaced? Include the principal's name and start date, selection process and leadership experience.
2. Provide evidence that indicates the principal and assistant principal have a proven record of success in turnaround schools and the qualifications to support the community served.
3. Will other members of the school leadership team be retained or replaced and when? Explain the team's turnaround experience.
4. Does the district offer incentives to attract and retain principals willing to lead a turnaround school?
5. How does the district build the capacity of turnaround leaders?
6. What operational flexibility will be afforded to the principal, such as the degree of input in selecting their school leadership team and instructional staff?
7. What actions will the district take regarding the school leadership team after the first year of this plan if the school's grade does not improve?

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Leaders

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Educators

In the box below, the district must include information about its systems to ensure the school has effective educators capable of improving student achievement, including priority in hiring, recruitment and retention incentives and professional development and coaching support provided by the district. At a minimum, reply to the following:

1. What is the process for filling vacancies at this school, specifically in the core content areas? Is this school given priority in hiring? Is hiring completed at the district level so vacancies at turnaround schools are filled before other schools are permitted to hire? Is there a MOU or union agreement to this effect?
2. How does the district ensure students at this school are instructed by a certified instructional personnel when unexpected vacancies arise?
3. Does the district offer bonuses and, if so, what are the qualifications and conditions (e.g., length of employment commitment, performance)? Is there a union agreement to this effect?
4. Does the district offer incentives to Highly Effective or Effective state VAM instructional personnel to reduce turnover at turnaround schools?

Assurance 2: Narrative-School Capacity- Educators

The district has been purposeful and deliberate in assuring that all teachers were observed adequately and their instructional practice and student data results were analyzed to ensure that the best teachers were retained for the 2019-20 school year. The district's offices of Human Resources, Professional Development and Assessment, Accountability and Research compiled extensive teacher performance data in support of these decisions.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

The data provided were:

- All final evaluation ratings per teacher.
- All scores per teacher in the area of instructional practice (Domain 1 of the Marzano scale) (principal's rating).
- All state VAM scores per teacher (as available).
- All district cycle / interim assessment data per teacher (teacher score versus school and district average).

It should be noted that these data were combined with related observational and teacher growth data that the principal used in making decisions about retention.

As described above, the district developed an exhaustive data review of every teacher in the turnaround schools to ensure that only effective and highly effective teachers were rehired, unless other data showed that the teacher was improving to a point that another year would benefit the teacher and learners at the school. In fact, our district has negotiated specific contract language that provides the principal with the right to "opt out" teachers who are not showing adequate skill to work in challenging school environments. The principal and district Transformation Zone chief reviewed each teacher at each school in supporting the principals in their retention decisions.

The district has provided several related hiring advantages to Gulfport Montessori, including:

- An open transfer window that allows these schools to advertise and hire teachers at any time during the year.
- An assurance that no teacher who was removed from another school can be placed at these schools without the principal's support.
- Significant recruitment, retention and school performance bonuses.
- A dedicated minority hiring team in Human Resources to recruit, hire, and place teachers at our most challenging schools.

Assurance 2: Verification-School Capacity- Educators

In the box below, describe the specific actions the district has taken to recruit instructional personnel with state VAM ratings of Highly Effective and Effective to this school. Describe how the district has reassigned or non-renewed instructional personnel with state VAM ratings of Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory to a school not in DA and how the district filled any vacancies resulting from these reassignments with certified instructional personnel.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Assurance 2: Verification-School Capacity- Educators

The district developed an exhaustive data review of every teacher in the turnaround schools to ensure that only effective and highly effective teachers were rehired, unless other data showed that the teacher was improving to a point that another year would benefit the teacher and learners at the school. In fact, our district has negotiated specific contract language that provides the principal with the right to “opt out” teachers who are not showing adequate skill to work in challenging school environments. The principal, Area Superintendent for each school and district Transformation Team reviewed each teacher at each school in supporting the principals in their retention decisions.

The district has provided several related hiring advantages to Gulfport Montessori, including:

- An open transfer window that allows these schools to advertise and hire teachers at any time during the year.
- An assurance that no teacher who was removed from another school can be placed at these schools without the principal’s support.
- Significant recruitment, retention and school performance bonuses.
- All core instructional positions are filled by certified instructors.

Fill out the table below to verify the most recent three-year aggregated state VAM classification data.

STATE VAM DATA- School % Compared to District and State%				
3- year aggregated VAM Data	Highly Effective (HE)	Effective (EF)	Needs Improvement (NI)	Unsatisfactory (UN)
Number of instructional personnel (49)	1	11	4	4
School %	5%	55%	*20%	**20%
District %	10.6%	53.7%	17.5%	18.2%
State %				

*Two teachers with an aggregated state VAM of needs improvement are effective in the ELA VAM Category and teach ELA only.

*One teacher with an aggregated state VAM of needs improvement is effective in the ELA VAM Category and teaches gifted only.

* One teacher with an aggregated state VAM of unsatisfactory is effective in the ELA VAM Category and will teach ELA only when she returns from her maternity leave.

** Two teachers with an aggregated state VAM of unsatisfactory are effective in the ELA VAM Category and teach ELA only.

** One teacher with an aggregated state VAM of unsatisfactory is teaching primary only.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan—Step 2 (TOP-2)

Acknowledgement

The district verifies the information in this form and confirms that they have collaborated with the school and the RED.

Name and title of person responsible for completing and submission of the TOP-2
Lori Matway, Superintendent Student and Community Services
Contact information: email, phone number
matwayl@pcsb.org 727-588-6033
Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement (due October 1)
September 30, 2019
Superintendent signature (or authorized representative)
