

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## PROJECT APPLICATION

<b>Please return to:</b>  Florida Department of Education Office of Grants Management Room 332 Turlington Building 325 West Gaines Street Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400 Telephone: (850) 245-0496	<b>A) Program Name:</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Schools of Hope – Whole School Transformation Model (Traditional Public Schools) (TOP-3)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TAPS NUMBER: 18A085</b></p>	<b>DOE USE ONLY</b>  Date Received  <div style="text-align: right; color: blue; font-style: italic;">             2017 AUG 15 AM 11:46              RECEIVED              CONTRACTS &amp; FINANCIAL              SERVICES DIVISION           </div>								
<b>B) Name and Address of Eligible Applicant:</b> <p style="text-align: center;">Pinellas County School Board 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770</p>		<b>Project Number (DOE Assigned)</b>								
<b>C) Total Funds Requested:</b>  \$ 1,568,000.00  <hr style="width: 50%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DOE USE ONLY</b></p> <b>Total Approved Project:</b>  \$	<b>D) Applicant Contact &amp; Business Information</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;"> <b>Contact Name:</b> Felita D. Grant, Ed.D.         </td> <td style="width: 40%;"> <b>Telephone Numbers:</b> 727-588-6256         </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <b>Fiscal Contact Name:</b> Mary Conage, Ed.D.         </td> <td>           727-588-6299         </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <b>Mailing Address:</b> 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770         </td> <td> <b>E-mail Addresses:</b>  <a href="mailto:grantf@pcsb.org">grantf@pcsb.org</a>  <a href="mailto:conagem@pcsb.org">conagem@pcsb.org</a> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <b>Physical/Facility Address:</b>            Largo Middle School            155 Eighth Avenue, Largo, FL 33771         </td> <td> <b>DUNS number:</b> 0105088844   <b>FEIN number:</b> 596000799         </td> </tr> </table>		<b>Contact Name:</b> Felita D. Grant, Ed.D.	<b>Telephone Numbers:</b> 727-588-6256	<b>Fiscal Contact Name:</b> Mary Conage, Ed.D.	727-588-6299	<b>Mailing Address:</b> 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770	<b>E-mail Addresses:</b> <a href="mailto:grantf@pcsb.org">grantf@pcsb.org</a> <a href="mailto:conagem@pcsb.org">conagem@pcsb.org</a>	<b>Physical/Facility Address:</b> Largo Middle School 155 Eighth Avenue, Largo, FL 33771	<b>DUNS number:</b> 0105088844  <b>FEIN number:</b> 596000799
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<b>CERTIFICATION</b>  <p>I, <u>Michael A. Grego, Ed.D.</u>, as the official who is authorized to legally bind the agency/organization, do hereby certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that all the information and attachments submitted in this application are true, complete and accurate, for the purposes, and objectives, set forth in the RFA or RFP and are consistent with the statement of general assurances and specific programmatic assurances for this project. I am aware that any false, fictitious or fraudulent information or the omission of any material fact may subject me to criminal, or administrative penalties for the false statement, false claims or otherwise. Furthermore, all applicable statutes, regulations, and procedures; administrative and programmatic requirements; and procedures for fiscal control and maintenance of records will be implemented to ensure proper accountability for the expenditure of funds on this project. All records necessary to substantiate these requirements will be available for review by appropriate state and federal staff. I further certify that all expenditures will be obligated on or after the effective date and prior to the termination date of the project. Disbursements will be reported only as appropriate to this project, and will not be used for matching funds on this or any special project, where prohibited.</p> <p>Further, I understand that it is the responsibility of the agency head to obtain from its governing body the authorization for the submission of this application.</p>										
<table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <b>E)</b> <u>Michael Grego</u>            Signature of Agency Head         </td> <td style="width: 40%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <u>SUPERINTENDENT</u>            Title         </td> <td style="width: 20%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <u>8/14/17</u>            Date         </td> </tr> </table>			<b>E)</b> <u>Michael Grego</u> Signature of Agency Head	<u>SUPERINTENDENT</u> Title	<u>8/14/17</u> Date					
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# Competitive Application for Whole-School Transformation Model (Traditional Public Schools) – TOP 3 Pinellas County Public Schools

*This form satisfies the requirements of Form TOP-3 in conjunction with Form TOP-2 (first-time DMT). Only districts seeking funding under the Schools of Hope program for traditional public schools should apply. This application is due August 15, 2017.*

## [Largo Middle School – School Number 0141]

## WRAP-AROUND SERVICES THROUGH DISTRICT-MANAGED TURNAROUND

## Part I: Needs Assessment

**Item 1:** Description of the needs assessment methodology and summary of the results to develop the whole-school transformation plan. Also, describe who participated in the formulation of this plan.

## Needs Assessment Overview &amp; Summary – Pinellas County School District

**Pinellas County Schools has conducted an extensive analysis of Largo Middle School as a part of its annual review of student performance data.** As a part of the district's commitment to continuous improvement, district-level leaders have met with the school's principal and with the Community Assessment Team to review school performance data, and identify the root causes for the school's academic performance. The Community Assessment Team is assembled annually to review data and provide feedback to schools under the state's Differentiated Accountability plan. Additionally, as a part of the Pinellas County School's Bridging the Gap initiative, several community forums were held and facilitated by district-level leaders. This public collaboration provided for an open invitation to parents/family members and community stakeholders to provide input to further support the district's continuous improvement efforts. Information gathered from the forums was also used in making recommendations to the school principal.

The Pinellas County School District's needs assessment methodology includes a data review related to five domains, including essential strategies and key metrics for each area. The five domains are as follows:

- Effective Leadership

Pinellas County Schools is dedicated to having the best leaders in place at our TOP 2 schools, as well as a support structure to help these leaders grow and flourish.

Essential strategies/school support includes ongoing trainings in school turnaround strategies, restorative practices and equity pedagogy; quarterly data chats with district level leaders; and side-by-side coaching in leadership competencies.

Outcomes to measure success includes school grade improvement, Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and End of Course (EOC) student learning gains, Subgroup results; and AdvancED climate survey results by staff, students and parents.

- Collaborative Teaching

Pinellas County Schools has committed to providing our TOP 2 schools with the best instructional staff members possible and the professional development training and supports to help them understand the unique competencies required to teach in more challenging school environments.

Essential strategies/school support includes Marzano's instructional framework and high yield instructional strategies; professional development training in school turnaround competencies; and embedded instructional coaches.

Outcomes to measure success includes classroom observation data; review of cycle assessments (progress monitoring by teacher); and review of FSA and Value Added Model (VAM) results by teacher.

- **Ambitious Instruction**

Pinellas County Schools has designed an ambitious, research-based model for instruction in these schools that support strong growth trends and continued improvement toward a full transformation.

Essential strategies/school support includes increased extended learning programs, including Summer Bridge and Saturday Academies; and additional support services personnel to support student needs (mental health counselors, psychologists, social workers and paraprofessionals). Outcomes to measure success include the number of students participating in extended learning opportunities; and ELA, mathematics and science proficiency rates.

- **Safe and Supportive Environment**

Pinellas County Schools has invested considerably in the methods and tenets of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the problem-solving processes of Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to support a safe and healthy learning environment for all.

Essential strategies/school support includes ongoing school leader trainings in restorative practices and discipline disparities; additional paraprofessionals assigned to classrooms as teaching partners; and teachers-in-training to support increased student learning and authentic student engagement.

Outcomes to measure success includes number of school referrals by school; and number of out of school suspensions by school.

- **Family and Community Engagement**

Pinellas County Schools has made parent and family engagement in Differentiated Accountability (DA) schools a priority and has partnered directly with Dr. Karen Mapp from Harvard University in establishing the strongest protocols possible in supporting these schools. Essential strategies/school support includes the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project (in collaboration with the American Federation of Teachers and the Pinellas County Teacher's Association); training for school leaders and staff in the Dr. Mapp Dual Capacity Framework; and a partnership with the Pinellas Education Foundation to provide mentors to students in our turnaround schools.

Outcomes to measure success include AdvancED parent survey results; the number of parents attending learning-centered activities and offerings; and the number of parents utilizing school support services.

### **Needs Assessment Summary – Largo Middle School / Academic Performance**

The Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) for Largo Middle School showed some positive trends, thus providing evidence that with continued and increased support, proposed initiatives could further propel the school's performance forward. Academic test results for Largo Middle School show a percentage increase in students scoring Level 3 and above in ELA (all grades); Mathematics (all grades except grade 6); Civics; Science; Algebra I, and Geometry. Notable gains include a 15-point increase in 7<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, and a 9-point increase in 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics.

**Needs Assessment Summary – Largo Middle School / Safe Environment**

Largo Middle School's out-of-school suspensions showed a noteworthy decrease, indicating that the climate, culture and discipline are all on a positive trend and trajectory. From 2015 to 2017, the total out-of-school suspensions decreased by 85 (a 23.7% drop).

**Needs Assessment Summary – Largo Middle School / Climate Surveys**

Annually, the district uses climate survey results from AdvancED to help determine areas of need related to school improvement, such as school culture for learning, collaboration for professional growth and family and community engagement. Staff survey results at Largo Middle School indicate high levels of agreement in the following areas: students are held to high academic standards, staff are accountable for student learning, teachers participate in collaborative learning communities (across grade levels and content areas), staff members use data to address the unique learning needs of students, staff participate in continuous professional learning based on the identified needs of the school, school staff monitors student readiness and success at the next level, school leaders monitor data related to student achievement and school leaders monitor data related to school continuous improvement goals. Staff survey results at Largo Middle School show the greatest need in the following areas: school has a formal process in place to support new staff members in their professional practice, and school provides high quality student support services (ex: counseling, referrals, educational planning, etc.).

Parent surveys results at Largo Middle School indicate high levels of agreement in the following areas: the school has high expectations for students in all classes, students have up-to-date computers and technology to learn, student access to support services are based on students identified needs, and students are prepared for success in the next school year. Results from the parent surveys show the greatest need in the following areas: teachers provide an equitable curriculum that meets student's needs, teachers meet student's learning needs by individualizing instruction, and teachers helping parents understand their child's progress.

Student survey results at Largo Middle School indicate high levels of agreement in the following areas: teachers explain their expectations from learning and behavior so they can be successful, teachers provide them with information about their learning and grades, school prepares them for success in the next school year. Results from the student surveys show the greatest need in the following areas: students treat adults with respect and students respect the property of others.

**Item 2:** Explain how the school is going to leverage community assets, improve school and community collaboration, and develop family and community partnerships.

**Largo Middle School seeks to leverage community assets to improve school and community collaboration by developing family and community partnerships.** For 2017-18, St. Paul's United Methodist Church will provide mentors, tutors, and Lunch Pals for students at Largo Middle. A partnership with Dunkin Donuts will provide funds for student incentives to promote positive student behavior. The school is working to establish a partnership with Grace Christian Fellowship to provide tutors, mentors, and donations to support students and families.

Currently, a part-time Family and Community Liaison is funded by the Pinellas County District to assist with volunteer programs and community partnerships. As a result of this grant, Largo Middle School would supplement this position with a full-time Family and Community Liaison dedicated to working within the community and the City of Largo to expand and increase partnership opportunities. This position could be shared with Mildred Helms Elementary School (also a School of Hope applicant), a direct feeder school to Largo Middle School, and located in the Largo community. The goal is to

establish and sustain additional, easy-to-access resources for families such as food, clothing, and school supplies for students and families in need and to ensure mental health, medical, and social services are available to students who need them.

### Part II: Implementation Plan

#### A. Areas of Assurance for Whole-School Transformation Plan

Below are the six key areas of assurance selected by the district based upon the school's needs assessment to implement a whole-school transformation model.

The school will:

1. Provide wrap-around services that develop family and community partnerships
2. Increase parental involvement and engagement in the child's education
3. Establish clearly defined and measurable high academic and character standards
4. Identify a knowledge-rich curriculum that the school will use to focus on developing a student's background knowledge
5. Provide professional development that focuses on academic rigor, direct instruction, and creating high academic standards and character standards.

The school district will:

6. Identify, recruit, retain, and reward instructional personnel.

**Item 3:** Explain the strategies the school will implement to provide wrap-around services that develop family and community partnerships.

**Largo Middle School collaborates with the YMCA of the Suncoast to provide before and after school programs to provide a safe environment for students and families in need of extended day services.** Collaborative efforts include the elimination of costs to families for this program. Largo Middle School will continue to partner with YMCA Suncoast to ensure that program activities and opportunities are engaging to students and linked to learning goals.

Largo Middle also participates in the grant-funded Florida Aware program. The program's focus is on long-term systems change for integrating school and community-based mental health supports within a multi-tiered service delivery framework based on a shared youth, family, school, and community vision. The goals of the project include increasing youth access to mental health services and support, increasing the implementation of evidence-based culturally responsive mental health practices, and increasing awareness of mental health issues within youth, families, schools, and communities.

As a result of this grant, Largo Middle School will seek to expand upon the Florida Aware project to provide additional support services for students and families by also funding a full-time nurse and social worker and supplemental guidance counselor. The duties of these positions will focus on the overall goals outlined in the school improvement plan including: facilitating and supporting academic/behavior plans, addressing attendance, helping students understand their abilities, environmental factors, educational needs and making personal and social adjustments, conducting evaluations/re-evaluations for consideration of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services, serving as a home-school liaison, serving

### Turnaround Option Plan –3

on school teams such as School Based Leadership and Child Study Teams, referring to community resources, and providing individual and group counseling.

**Item 4:** Explain the strategies the school will implement to increase parental involvement and engagement in the child's education.

The Pinellas County School District has supported the school with extensive training for school leaders and staff members in the Dual Capacity Framework from Dr. Mapp/Harvard University. Parent and family workshops linked to learning will be offered throughout the year focusing on how parents and families can support students at home. Parents will be trained on how to register for and use the parent/student portal to monitor student assignments and progress throughout the year.

Additionally, the school's Title I Parent and Family Engagement plan includes a focus on providing quarterly English Language (EL) family workshops to offer information and resources in the family's native language. Student planners, the school website, phone calls home, and mailing information home are additional ways the school communicates with parents and families.

As a result of this grant, staff will participate in professional development through a third party agreement. The Parent Teacher Home Visit (PTHV) project will establish supplemental support for the family engagement pillar of this project. The training content would include: Sessions centered on building the capacity of educators to effectively build meaningful relationships with the families of their students, starting with a voluntary home visit. Topics would include: the research behind the model, logistics, step-by-step skill-building and practice in engaging families, overcoming barriers (money, time, fear), culture and cross-cultural connection, and taking it back to the classroom

Another way to engage families would be through the school nurse and school social worker. The school nurse and social worker will provide opportunities to expand outreach directly to families. Along with personnel from the Florida Aware project, the nurse and social worker will offer courses at Largo Middle School during the day or in the evening for parents and families. These courses will focus on areas such as: health and nutrition, community resources for families, student advocacy, mental health awareness, and other issues related to student educational needs.

**Item 5:** Explain the strategies the school will implement to establish clearly defined and measurable high academic and character standards.

**As a Title I and turnaround school, Largo Middle has identified school reform strategies to assist in their continuous improvement work.** Students at Largo Middle School are on an 8-period, block schedule and their school reform strategies include:

- Strategies to increase the quality and quantity of instruction using research-based methods and interventions.
- Research-based reform strategies directly aligned with the findings of the school's needs assessment.
- A detailed, enriched and accelerated curriculum for all students
- Interventions to address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly those who are low achieving and students representing all major subgroups participating in the schoolwide program.
- Specific strategies that assist teachers in determining if student needs are being met.

Action steps to support the school reform strategies put into place at Largo Middle School include classroom intervention teachers to provide additional small group supports to targeted students in

intervention classes, providing teachers with stipends for professional development and contracted services to increase teacher knowledge and practice of Marzano strategies, particularly in Domain 1, Kagan cooperative learning strategies and opportunities to work collaboratively in PLCs to review data, and write curriculum and assessments. Additionally, the school hires consultants to deliver ongoing professional development focused on Marzano and Kagan strategies. Largo Middle School also provides MTSS coaches to provide intensive support to teachers on academic interventions to differentiate instruction, classroom management, and culturally responsive teaching, and the school provides supplemental extended learning opportunities and instructional materials to support student engagement, remediation and acceleration. Embedded into school reform practices is a thread related to teachers assessing students and identifying root causes of deficiencies so that teachers are better able to differentiate instruction for student learners. This is one reason the school moved to the NWEA MAP assessment this year.

As a result of this grant, another focus for Largo Middle School will be to expand the use of iReady for mathematics in grades 7-8 (it is currently being used in grade 6). iReady delivers engaging online lessons at each student's level based on results from the online adaptive diagnostic. iReady's tools for instruction are teacher-led, Common Core lessons that represent best practices and relate directly to skills assessed in the diagnostic. Lastly, iReady's reports pinpoint students' abilities down to the sub-skill level and provide teachers with a detailed action plan and resources for differentiated instruction. By expanding iReady to grades 7 and 8, this will help support the needs of students' schoolwide. Through this means, teachers will be able to assess their students and make a determination on student needs, customize writing their lessons based on the benchmark, and they will have a tool that will assist with differentiating instruction with greater fidelity.

Another strategy supported by this grant (to increase high academic standards) is to enhance the current Summer Bridge program design for student learning to better support educating the "whole" child. The Summer Bridge Middle School program is for current fifth, sixth and seventh grade students who are performing below grade level in reading and/or math or need additional help to stay on track. Summer Bridge prepares students for maximum success when the school year begins. The program offers engaging reading, mathematics and science activities as well as individualized instruction. Lessons blend technology with small group instruction, hands-on experiments and project-based learning. An example would be to increase student offerings and participation with an academic focus (in the morning) for student scholars, and to offer enrichment-based activities (in the afternoon), thus creating a full-day summer extended learning program, at no cost to students and family members. Such activities could include jazz band, concert band, and student competition participation – all of which would support the already strong music program at Largo Middle School, and provide a deeper learning connection for students in a meaningful and relevant way. Transportation for extending learning programs will be provided.

Largo Middle School's students also participate in character development activities and initiatives which are embedded into the curriculum. The students at Largo Middle School are introduced to a new character standard each month. Teachers are responsible for building character education into the curriculum. Character education principles include such things as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, courage, diligence, integrity, caring and citizenship – all necessary life-skills for students to learn and possess.

**Item 6:** Explain the strategies the school will implement to identify a knowledge-rich curriculum that the school will use to focus on developing a student's background knowledge.

**The schools who are a part of our district's Transformation Zone** (schools that need more support as they strive to ensure that students are prepared for 100 percent success) **utilize the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum to support their scholars** in engaging with fellow students and teachers in an age-appropriate, respectful manner. Along with the use of SEL curriculum; the school implements best strategies from district- wide supported Restorative Practices. This includes the use of culturally responsive learning circles to support academic and social growth. The SEL curriculum places a strong focus on critical social competencies necessary for academic and life successes such as: resiliency, self-management, and responsible decision-making skills – with the expected outcome of improved student attitudes towards self and others, increased pro-social student behaviors, and lower levels of behavioral concerns, emotional distress and improved student academic performance.

In addition to the above, Largo Middle School has a strong focus on theme-based units and (if awarded this grant) will seek ways to expand on their current International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum by embedding academically based educational (single-day) field trips, such as the Salvador Dali Museum and the Museum of Science and Industry. Another strategy that will be used to expand student background knowledge will be to expand the current Arts Conservatory for Teens program (ACT) from 1 day/week to 3 day per week. ACT is a comprehensive arts education and youth empowerment magnet program supported by the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance for before and after school arts programs. The mission of ACT is to educate, empower, and enrich the lives of youth and teens in our communities by fostering creativity through arts education, professional theatrical productions, career guidance, healthy living, and leadership development, primarily for youth and teens of lower to moderate income families. ACT's model to educate, empower and enrich young people has helped hundreds of youth and teens of our community – offering hope in realizing their dreams and career aspirations.

Largo Middle School will also fund a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEAM) summer camp. The STEAM camp offers a variety of activities and hands-on lessons that makes learning more relevant and meaningful for students. The STEAM camp at Largo Middle School has traditionally had strong community ties as community partners have voluntarily come in to speak with students as a part of this summer-program. As a result of this grant, school leaders would like to expand program participation by inviting more students as well as offering camp registration and transportation, at no cost to students and families.

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 district developed curriculum guides and modules of instruction. These modules follow the Marzano lesson framework and provide an opportunity for scaffolding of material, rigor and enrichment. In middle school, the curriculum is built through curriculum guides as well, but also tied to specific core curriculum materials adopted through the state process.

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

Lastly, funds from this grant will support school staff with professional development in Foundations of Culturally Responsive Instruction. This course provides both a theoretical framework and practical

strategies for connecting students to rigorous, standards-based content in engaging, relevant ways. School staff will apply learning from the course in three key areas:

- 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.
- 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.
- Engaging Culturally Diverse Learners- Teachers will incorporate the 6 Ms of Culturally Responsive Instruction (Conage, 2014) into lesson planning and daily instruction.
  - 1) **Meaning** - Scaffolding learning by making relevant connections between students’ lived experiences, interests, cultural assets, and/or funds of knowledge.
  - 2) **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.
  - 3) **Monitoring with feedback** – Using strategies and structures to assess understanding, provide useful, timely feedback, and celebrate student’s progress towards identified standards.
  - 4) **Mouth** – Using strategies and structures to help students process content through recitation, dialogue, discussion, or debate.
  - 5) **Movement** – Using strategies and structures to help students process content through active engagement.
- 6) **Music** - Using strategies and structures to help students process content through rhythm and song.

**Item 7:** Explain the strategies the school will implement to provide professional development that focuses on academic rigor, direct instruction, and creating high academic standards and character standards.

**Largo Middle offers a Middle Years Programme (MYP) focusing on an IB curriculum for all students.** Teachers are offered stipends, using Title I funds, to participate in training beyond the contractual day and school year. Largo Middle School will continue to support teacher participation in MYP trainings throughout the year and during the summer with the addition of grant funds. Teachers will receive stipends to work collaboratively to develop units of study based on IB unit planner criteria beyond the contracted day. Using ManageBac software for lesson planning, content teachers develop themed units of study that incorporate FSA benchmarks within the IB curriculum focusing on academic rigor and high academic standards.

Teachers are provided with embedded coaches in reading/literacy, mathematics and science to support growth in instructional practice. Coaching focuses on Marzano high yield strategies for student achievement. As part of the district’s Transformation Zone (TZ), TZ coaches will supplement the work of the embedded coaches and provide additional support for school improvement. Content area coaches will support teachers in professional learning communities to review student data and progress monitoring assessments to develop differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students.

Character standards are embedded within the MYP/IB framework. Largo Middle utilizes the IB Learner Profile to focus on character standards, introducing one characteristic each month. Teachers reinforce each character strand within their content curriculum throughout the month. The school implements Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and provides student incentives for positive behavior. Partnerships with local businesses in the community help to provide funds for student incentives. Continued and increased support for teacher professional development for MYP/IB is a focus

to ensure all MYP/IB criteria are implemented with fidelity and teachers are delivering highly effective instruction.

**Item 8:** Explain the strategies the school district will implement to identify, recruit, retain, and reward instructional personnel.

**Largo Middle uses a variety of strategies to identify, attract, retain and reward highly qualified staff.** The school's principal works alongside the Human Resources department to ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals assigned to Largo Middle School meet the highly qualified requirements and are assigned to the areas in which they are certified to teach. Additionally, all teachers are offered a bonus twice per a year as an incentive to teach at Largo Middle School. Opportunities are also provided for instructional staff to attend high quality professional development and conferences. By doing so, the school and district leaders are demonstrating their commitment to continuous school improvement as well as supporting teacher growth and enhancing their professional practice. School leaders also attend job fairs in as part of their efforts to attract and promote employment at Largo Middle School.

The district has also created this year a new Talent Acquisition Team as part of the district's Human Resources Department with a specific emphasis on hiring top talent, especially minority talent, into our turnaround schools. Largo Middle has been identified as part of the Transformation Zone to receive this priority support.

A thorough review of the school VAM data / results was conducted and, as a result, Largo Middle was given a priority option to non-renew teachers with "less than effective" or "unsatisfactory" results, unless other performance data showed the teacher to be improving to a point that another year of coaching and support would benefit the teacher and learners at the school.

A process has been established that coordinates these decisions among the principal and Area Superintendent so that the strongest and most promising teachers are in place at the school.

#### **B. Correlation Between Whole-School Transformation Model and District-Managed Turnaround**

The evaluation process for this application will consider how this model correlates to the strategies and activities listed in the TOP-2 document.

**Item 9:** Summary of the strategies the district will implement to reduce or eliminate internal systemic barriers and address the needs of the school, including a description of how the district will address all of the Areas of Assurance.

**The Pinellas County School District is committed to reducing or eliminating internal systemic barriers by establishing a district level monitoring team.** This team (called the A-Team) will meet weekly to discuss school trend data and related academic and operational supports required to move the school forward. The team reports directly to the Superintendent and has been give full authority to remove all barriers to school improvement.

The district has also added Largo Middle to its Transformation Zone and this is another key step in reducing system barriers and increasing supports for this school. The Transformation Team will work side-by-side with the school to support focused interventions and has a Director of School Transformation in place who reports to the Superintendent and can cut through any barriers that arise.

### **District Capacity**

Pinellas County Schools has created a District Support Model that is designed to differentiate support for schools and comprises a series of interventions that are tracked carefully through the district's assessment and research department to ensure that the resources and interventions are evidence-based and implemented with fidelity.

The district's Transformation Zone was created to intensify a series of supports specific to this model and, in doing so, create a much more aligned set of resources for our neediest schools.

### **PCS Support Model for 2017-18**

- **Tier I – Operational and Instructional Support for all schools.**
- **Tier II – Supports for schools with a C grade (low C, preventive measures).**
- **Tier III -- Transformation Zone: Supports for schools with a D grade or previous F.**
- **Tier IV – Transformation Zone: Supports for schools with an F (and all district Scale Up schools).**

Largo Middle School received a D grade and has been placed into the Tier III supports. Those supports include the following:

- Priority for “Just in time” coaching support from district-level coaches as well as school-funded embedded coaching.
- Monthly Instructional Support Model visits from Teaching and Learning specialists, aligned to LSI Rigorwalk.
- Weekly action boarding activity led by Director of School Transformation, with the Area Superintendent and Executive Director for Middle School attending when available.
- Quarterly data chats based on formative results with recommended actions similar to this year's Comstats (possibly aligned to area meetings).
- Directed guidance in school improvement planning using the State DA CIMS tool and resource site.
- Additional teacher planning as part of the 8-period, A/B block – The district will negotiate with is teacher's union to require one 45-minute period of structured planning per week led by the administrative team during the student day during the existing daily 90-minute planning period.
- SEL programs implemented as coordinated by Director of School Transformation.
- Specialized professional development led by the Transformation Zone Team.

The district's monthly Instructional Support Model visits to Largo Middle will provide district leaders with an opportunity to visit classrooms and communicate with the school-based leadership team to determine if any barriers to learning exist related to resources, policies and practices, and governance.

## School Capacity

### *Administrators*

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 Instructional Support Model (ISM) team, the Director of School Transformation is charged with visiting the schools to shadow the school principal and coach the principal and administrative team on school structures, data analysis, and instructional support.

As part of this process, the principal will be required to present a quarterly data update to district leadership as part of the Transformation Zone's Comstat 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.

### *Educators*

Pinellas County Schools has an ambitious pay structure that is designed to recruit and retain the best teachers in our turnaround schools. All teachers (and administrators) in our turnaround school receive a bonus for coming to the school and remaining at the school. This has been established as a method for recruiting the top talent and increasing staff stability in our neediest schools.

Additionally, Largo Middle has been provided unique incentives that supports the continued growth of its teachers and staff.

This includes:

- Full-time, embedded instructional coaches.
- Access to district "Just in Time" instructional coaches as needed.
- Recruitment and retention incentives available only to schools in turnaround (mentioned above).
- Priority status in hiring, including the ability to hire outside of the district transfer period.
- Support from a new Talent Acquisition Team created as part of the district's Human Resources Department.

The district has carefully reviewed the staff at Largo Middle School to ensure that all current staff members are certified or not out-of-field. The principal and Area Superintendent have also reviewed the most recent three-year aggregated VAM classification and final evaluation data to ensure that no teachers were retained who were rated "less than effective" or "unsatisfactory" results, unless other performance data showed the teacher to be improving to a point that another year of coaching and support would benefit the teacher and learners at the school.

**Item 10:** Summary of how this model correlates to the strategies and activities listed in the district-managed turnaround plan submitted in the TOP-2 document.

**Pinellas County Schools has been intentional in crafting this model in direct correlation to the TOP-2 plan as it relates to a whole-school, whole-child approach to school turnaround.** The district has invested in a series of turnaround interventions in its schools and a continuous improvement evaluation and methodology that attempts to isolate the most effective supports in our district schools. Those interventions and the district's ongoing evaluation of the data in our turnaround schools shows that a full-service, whole-school approach is required to improve schools in any lasting way. This research is similar to the findings from the University of Chicago and its published 5Essentials for school improvement.

The district has created a series of supports for Largo Middle School that are undergirded by this research related to:

- Ensuring rigorous, standards-based instruction
- Growing and supporting teachers / collaboration around data
- Involving and engaging families and community members

Those supports are clearly articulated in the Top 2 plan for Largo Middle School. Specifically, this model connects to the Top 2 plan by supporting and funding the following:

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

To ensure that this model is directly related the Top 2 plan for Largo Middle, the school will incorporate a theory of change related to the key components of the community school model, including:

1. Curricula that are engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging.
2. High-quality teaching.
3. Wrap around supports and opportunities.
4. Positive Behavior/Intervention supports, including restorative practice.
5. Authentic family engagement.
6. Inclusive school leadership / shared ownership and responsibilities between the school and community team.

**Item 11:** Identify and describe the areas of assurance your district has the capacity to sustain after the Schools of Hope funding expires.

**Pinellas County Schools is committed to establishing a model for school turnaround and the requisite tiered interventions and supports that will ensure a lasting continuous improvement culture.** The district has put into place a multi-year, research-based approach to supporting schools in turnaround and identifying schools that may need additional supports before they enter turnaround status. The district's efforts have been well-documented and are evidenced by its steady decrease in the number of schools in turnaround and its dramatic drop in F schools.

The district is committed to being the first large school district to have no D or F schools and ensuring that no D or F schools arise in the future. This funding will only serve to enhance those efforts and

ensure that this goal will become a reality sooner and with a greater assurance that strong systems will be in place for years to come.

Among those assurances are:

**A district structure designed to support schools that is cross-departmental and systematic.**

- The district's tiered Support Model described above provides systematic levers that support schools as needed and is not connected to any one funding source, one person or one department.
- The district's Transformation Zone is not designed as a separate department but is better described as a series of supports (extended time, data analysis, coaching cycles, etc.) that are uniquely intertwined with the accountability systems that the district has in place (ie. school visits and principal evaluation from the Area Superintendent).

**A collaboration and coaching model designed to support continuous instructional improvement.**

- The district's Instructional Support Model (ISM) is a unique and lasting intervention that is connected directly to the Teaching and Learning division in collaboration with the Transformation Zone team. This ensures that school visits include a consistent and aligned observational lens and a common language and framework related to instructional rigor and student engagement
- The district's coaching model for both embedded and district "Just in Time" coaches is designed to be responsive to whatever are found as growth opportunities during the ISM visits described above. In this way, the coaches in place at the school sites are aligned to the supports provided by the district. This also aligns with the district's model for rigorous, standard-based instruction and ensures that all schools will continue to improve in a lasting manner that is unrelated to state accountability structures and outside funding sources.

These strategies and interventions are all part of the district's plan to create sustainable solutions around school improvement that will impact all schools in relation to their needs and all children in relation to their unique growth steps and pathways toward a lifetime of success.

*By submission of this plan, the district verifies that this whole-school transformation model was developed in consultation with the school's principal.*