

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROJECT APPLICATION

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Please return to: Florida Department of Education Office of Grants Management Room 332 Turlington Building 325 West Gaines Street Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400 Telephone: (850) 245-0496	A) Program Name: Schools of Hope – Whole School Transformation Model (Traditional Public Schools) (TOP-3) TAPS NUMBER: 18A085	DOE USE ONLY Date Received Project Number (DOE Assigned)
B) Name and Address of Eligible Applicant: Pinellas County School Board 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770		

C) Total Funds Requested: \$ 584,000.00 <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">DOE USE ONLY</p> Total Approved Project: \$	D) Applicant Contact & Business Information <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> Contact Name: Felita D. Grant, Ed.D. </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> Telephone Numbers: 727-588-6256 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Fiscal Contact Name: Mary Conage, Ed.D. </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> 727-588-6299 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Mailing Address: 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770 </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> E-mail Addresses: grantf@pcsb.org conagem@pcsb.org </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> Physical/Facility Address: Midtown Academy 1701 10t Street South St. Petersburg, FL 33705 </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> DUNS number: 0105088844 FEIN number: 596000799 </td> </tr> </table>	Contact Name: Felita D. Grant, Ed.D.	Telephone Numbers: 727-588-6256	Fiscal Contact Name: Mary Conage, Ed.D.	727-588-6299	Mailing Address: 301 4th Street SW, Largo, FL 33770	E-mail Addresses: grantf@pcsb.org conagem@pcsb.org	Physical/Facility Address: Midtown Academy 1701 10t Street South St. Petersburg, FL 33705	DUNS number: 0105088844 FEIN number: 596000799
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CERTIFICATION

I, Michael A. Grego, Ed.D., 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.

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.

E) Michael A. Grego SUPERINTENDENT 8/14/17
 Signature of Agency Head Title Date





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.

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 & Summary – Pinellas County School District

Pinellas County Schools has conducted an extensive analysis of Midtown Academy 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 includes 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 – Midtown Academy / Academic Performance

Midtown Academy is a first-year public school in our district and no trend data exist. The school is a previous charter school that had been an F and is a school that the district has invested in for the first time in 2016-2017. Though the data there are clearly behind most schools, the district interventions at Midtown are just underway and data from this needs assessment show that the school climate, cultural and instructional standing are improving.

Needs Assessment Summary – Midtown Academy / Safe Environment

Midtown Academy's out-of-school suspensions show 42 for 2016-17, which is not far out of line from similar schools. There are no previous data to report since this is the first year that Midtown has been opened a district public school, though many district visits to the school show strong processes and improving instruction.

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

Midtown Academy leverages community assets to improve school and community collaboration by fostering a partnership with the City of St. Petersburg to provide tutors, mentors, and educational resources for students. Raymond James Financial, a local business partner, supports the school's Lunch Pals program by providing mentors for students.

There is an interest from many community stakeholders to examine the quality of early childhood programming. Head Start provides Pre-Kindergarten (PK) services for students in Pinellas County and promotes school readiness for students from birth to age five, specifically supporting low-income families. Most of these students matriculate to kindergarten in Pinellas County. Lutheran Services is the grant recipient for Head Start services in Pinellas County. There is mutual benefit for Pinellas County Schools and Head Start/Lutheran Services to gauge and increase the quality of pre-kindergarten programming as students enter the K-12 system. This includes collaborative training opportunities for teachers, data sharing and specially designed transition services. For the 2017-18, Lutheran Services will lease on-site space at Midtown Academy. These children will feed into Midtown when they enter kindergarten. By partnering with Head Start, Pinellas County is able to have an impact on the quality of programs and support for PK students, teachers and families. This is needed to increase the kindergarten readiness rate for all students.

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, Midtown Academy would supplement this position with a full-time Family and Community Liaison dedicated to working within the community and the City of St. Petersburg to expand and increase community and business partnership opportunities.

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.

Midtown Academy collaborates with R’Club Child Care 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. In partnership with the R’Club Out of School Time (OST) program and the Pinellas Juvenile Welfare Board, students participate in the Promise Time Extended Learning program weekly throughout the year. The Promise Time initiative focuses on the acceleration, achievement, and advancement of academic performance for students in Pinellas County Title I elementary schools. Students who participate receive OST programming with enrichment overlays, paired with Title I supplemental programming for iReady online curriculum for reading and math, small group tutoring for reading and math, and a variety of enrichment club activities.

As a result of this grant, Midtown Academy will use funds to expand its efforts to provide additional support services for students and families by funding a full-time nurse and social worker. 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, conducting evaluations/reevaluations for consideration of ESE services, serving as a home-school liaison, serving 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.

With funds from this grant, Midtown Academy will participate in training for school leaders and staff members in the Dual Capacity Framework from Dr. Mapp/Harvard University to foster increased parental involvement. 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. Student planners, the school website, phone calls home, and mailing information home are additional ways the school communicates with parents and families.

Grant funds will provide staff with stipends to participate in professional development through a third-party agreement via The Parent Teacher Home visit project and will establish supplemental support for the family engagement pillar of this project. The training content will 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, and fear), culture and cross-cultural connections, and taking it back to the classroom.

The supplemental school nurse and social worker will provide opportunities to expand outreach directly to families. Training courses will be scheduled during the day or in the evening for parents and families. These courses will focus on topics 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, Midtown Academy has identified school reform strategies to assist in their continuous improvement work. 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 Midtown Academy include implementing professional development for best practices and high-yield strategies, enrichment activities during the school day and in extended learning programs, use of technology to enhance student learning and engagement, use of iReady for interventions, and using an MTSS coach to assist with data analysis and to ensure that appropriate interventions are provided for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students.

Midtown Academy offers curriculum at both the elementary and middle school level. Reading proficiency at the elementary level is monitored using NWEA MAP, Istation and Running Records and instruction is differentiated and targeted to meet student needs based on progress monitoring measures. At the middle school level, students are monitored using NWEA MAP and iReady. Math proficiency at both levels will be monitored using NWEA MAP and elementary students will use ST Math, a visual instructional program that builds a deep conceptual understanding of math through rigorous learning and creative problem solving.

Midtown Academy will have an extended day for the 2017-18 school year to provide students with additional time for targeted and differentiated instruction. Teachers will have additional structured planning time to review student data and develop lesson plans to meet rigorous academic standards.

Midtown meets the social-emotional needs of students through a variety of methods and services. Counseling needs are met through the guidance counselor, social worker, and psychologist. Students may be referred for services by a parent or teacher through the process provided by the Midtown Student Services team. Midtown also has onsite services provided by Suncoast Counseling Center.

Students at the school will be taught mindfulness skills to help develop a healthy social and emotional life and to assist them in becoming functioning members of society. Students will be taught mindfulness as an alternative to counseling. Mindfulness addresses the social-emotional learning (SEL) needs of students by helping students develop core life skills. The five areas of SEL are: 1) self-awareness, 2) self-management, 3) social awareness, 4) relationship skills, and 5) responsible decision-making.

Midtown will also implement the STRIDE Scholar Motto which states the following: At Midtown Academy scholars are always making strides toward success. A STRIDE Scholar: Safely seeks success! Tries to do their best! Respects everyone! Inspires others! Desires peaceful resolutions! Engages in learning! The STRIDE Scholar Motto will be the umbrella under which the school develops common area rules, classroom rules, and criteria for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) celebrations. Students will also be recognized with Scholar Dollars when they make choices which reflect the STRIDE Scholar Motto. Scholar Dollars will be able to be submitted for prizes or for entry in PBIS celebrations.

As a result of this grant, another strategy (to increase high academic standards) will be to enhance the current Summer Bridge program design for student learning to better support educating the “whole” child. The Summer Bridge Elementary and Middle School Programs are for students currently in kindergarten through seventh grade who are performing below grade level in reading or math or who need additional help to stay on track. Summer Bridge prepares students for maximum success when the next 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) where students remain actively and authentically engaged in meaningful and relevant ways. Transportation for extended learning will be provided with grant funds.

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 need more support as they strive to ensure that students are prepared for 100 percent success during their educational journey) 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 the 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.

Midtown Academy will meet the social-emotional needs of its students through a variety of methods and services. Counseling needs will be met through the guidance counselor, social worker, and psychologist. Students may be referred by to these services by a parent or teacher through the process provided by the Midtown Student Services team. Midtown also has onsite services provided by Suncoast Counseling Center. Additional resources for supplemental or intensive needs are put in place by the social workers and guidance counselors. As mentioned above, students will be taught mindfulness as an alternative to counseling.

Midtown will also provide before/after school and Saturday learning enrichment opportunities for students to build background knowledge and to provide students with an enriched curriculum. 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 provide an opportunity for students to build mastery in content beyond core academic subjects, deepening skills and interests.

Funds from this grant would be used to support resources and materials for these programs. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in academic field trips designed to enrich and extend classroom learning. Student field trips related to the curriculum may include: the Botanical Gardens, Heritage Park, Weedon Island, the Florida Aquarium, and the Mahaffey Theater. The field trips will give teachers an opportunity to teach topics beyond the required curriculum and will increase student access to community resources.

Midtown would like to further support student learning and develop student background knowledge by using grant funds to participate in the Tune Into Reading (TiR) program. TiR is a computer-based reading improvement program. This computer-based program improves reading skills by engaging students in activities in which their ability to learn is enhanced by the power of music. When using this program, children tend to think it's a singing game but they are actually practicing essential reading skills. This independent university-and research based program- covers the following areas geared toward student learning and improvement:

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Students enter the program at their individual level and work on grade-level and age appropriate content.
- **Activities:** Specially written songs for the program are leveled for reading difficulty, strategic vocabulary, and comprehension.
- **Strategic Vocabulary:** Derived from major nationally used lists. Clickable words are defined using multimedia auditory and visual aids.
- **Songs exposing students to narrative or expository text:** Modeled by a native speaker to teach pronunciation while the rhythm and melody of the song embed this enhanced learning experience into long-term memory.
- **Quizzes:** Monitor progress, provide feedback, and support response-to-intervention implementations in real time.
- **Ease of Use:** Program automatically adjusts the difficulty level of the material.

Grant funds for Midtown will further support implementing the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM), a research-supported model to support total school improvement. This model allows schools to be flexible in developing its program based on considerations such as resources and student population. It also involves input from the community. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model is characterized by high standards and advanced level of academic challenge for all students, a flexible approach to curriculum that accommodates individual student needs, responsiveness to the needs of low achieving students by replacing traditional remedial methods with an enrichment approach and the development of motivation, creativity, thinking skills, and cooperativeness by taking student interests and learning styles in consideration. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model is a hands-on approach to enrichment that focuses on the use, rather than assimilation, of information and the student's role as a first-hand inquirers. Midtown will utilize the support of community partners to share their expertise in "Makerspace" labs. Teachers, students and community will come together in these labs to collaborate and create real-world projects.

Community partners will share their “expertise” to assist in building students’ background knowledge in various fields such as, engineering, arts, finance, and entrepreneurship. This grant will provide funding for professional development of staff on SEM as well as the supplies for makerspace lab.

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.

As a result of this grant, school staff will be supported 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.

Teachers at Midtown Academy will be provided with coaching in reading/literacy, math and science to support growth in instructional practice. Coaching will focus on the Marzano high-yield

strategies for student achievement. As part of the district's Transformation Zone (TZ), TZ coaches will supplement the work of the school and district coaches to provide additional support for school improvement. Content coaches will support teachers in professional learning communities to review student data and progress monitoring assessments to develop differentiated instruction to meet the specific needs of students. Teachers' professional development will be supported with stipends to attend trainings and work collaboratively with peers to develop lesson plans, write curriculum and assessments, and review student data beyond the contract day.

Midtown Academy will also provide professional development around the "STOIC strategy," which focuses on providing teachers with tools that have an impact on building relationships and a successful learning environment in the classroom. The STOIC philosophy assists in establishing effective classroom structures, expectations, observing and monitoring, positive interactions, and correcting misbehavior fluently. Using this philosophy with fidelity creates multiple opportunities for establishing and cultivating relationships.

An additional strategy that Midtown will focus on related to high academic standards is the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). AVID is an academic, regularly scheduled elective class, during the school day, based on writing as a tool of learning, the inquiry method and collaborative grouping. The three main components of the program are:

- Academic Instruction
- Tutorial support
- Motivational activities

AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. AVID students are typically those who are capable of completing a college preparatory path with support. These students often are not realizing their full potential academically. In the identification process a number of criteria are considered, including:

- States Scores
- 2.0-3.5 GPA
- Citizenship
- Attendance
- Desire and Determination
- First in the Family to Attend College
- Historically underrepresented in 4-year colleges/ Universities
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Other Special Circumstances

AVID activities include a number of things such as:

- Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization Reading (WICOR) methodologies are the basis for curriculum instruction.
- Students participate in field trips to colleges/universities.
- College students act as role models and facilitate academic discussion in regularly scheduled tutorial groups.
- Students develop academic and social skills for the success in all subject areas
- Guest speaker provide motivation and college and professional career information

- AVID students participated in extracurricular and community events.

AVID also has a heavy focus on parent participation and involvement. AVID parents are to encourage their students to achieve academically, participate on an advisory board and in AVID parent and site team meetings, and maintain regular contact with the AVID coordinator. Lastly, tutors are essential to the success of the AVID elective class, where they facilitate student access to rigorous curriculum. As students from colleges and universities, tutors receive formal training and also serve as role models. AVID students who continue their education in college often return to the program as tutors.

To support school implementation of the AVID program, a team of Midtown teachers will participate in the AVID conference scheduled for June 2018. This training will focus on:

- Culturally Responsive Instruction: Empowering Students
- Culturally Responsive Instruction: Empowering Educators
- Preparing for College
- And content specific trainings

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

Midtown Academy 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 meet the highly qualified requirements and are assigned to the areas in which they are certified to teach. Opportunities are also provided for instructional staff to attend high quality professional development and conferences. The school also offers competitive packages for teachers to earn bonuses for retention and recruitment. By implementing these activities, 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 the efforts to attract and promote employment at Midtown Academy.

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. Midtown has been identified as part of the Transformation Zone to receive this priority support and, as an F school, is given unique access to applicants as they are identified.

A thorough review of the school VAM data / results was conducted and, as a result, Midtown 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. It is important to point out that Midtown has only had one year of VAM data in its current model, not the three-year aggregate.

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 added Midtown to its Transformation Zone last year and this is another key step in reducing system barriers and increasing supports for this school. The Transformation Team is working 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).**

Midtown received an F grade and has been placed into Tier IV along with our five Scale Up for Success schools in receiving the most aggressive support that the district offers. Those supports include the following:

- **An extended school day / instructional day (90 minutes), partially supported by Title I funds.**
- **Additional teaching planning. Flexible instructional model. Dedicated intervention time.**

Turnaround Option Plan –3

- Increased Extended Learning budgets and programs, including a 6-week Summer Bridge Program, partially supported by Title I funds.
- Increased teacher training. A minimum of five additional training days a year are required at these 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 monthly ISM visits).
- Monthly Instructional Support Model (ISM) visits by district Teaching and Learning staff, aligned to LSI Rigorwalk.
- Priority access to “Just in Time” district coaching support in addition to school-embedded coaches.
- 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 support services personnel provided to schools (full-time psychologist, social worker, 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, IStation, etc.), partially supported by Title I funds.
- Establishment of Transformation Zone team led by a new Director of School Transformation, supported by Title I and Title II funds.
- Weekly action boarding activity led by TZ director with area superintendent and executive director attending when available.
- Quarterly data chats based on formative results with recommended actions similar to this year’s Comstats (possibly aligned to area meetings).
- SEL programs implemented at each school, coordinated by Director of School Transformation.
- Directed guidance in school improvement planning using the State DA CIM tool / site.

The district’s monthly Instructional Support Model visits to Midtown 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. The principal at Midtown has participated in these presentations previously and has shown that she can adequately analyze school data and plan for targeted improvements. 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, Midtown 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 Midtown 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. It is important to point out that Midtown has only had one year of VAM data in its current model, not the three-year aggregate.

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 Midtown that are undergirded by this research related to:

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- 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 Midtown. 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 Midtown, 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.

Midtown has already embraced and incorporated some of the key elements of this model, including some creative and supportive efforts around positive behavior interventions and restorative practices. The yoga / meditation room is one such example, as explained in the Top 2 plan for Midtown.

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.

