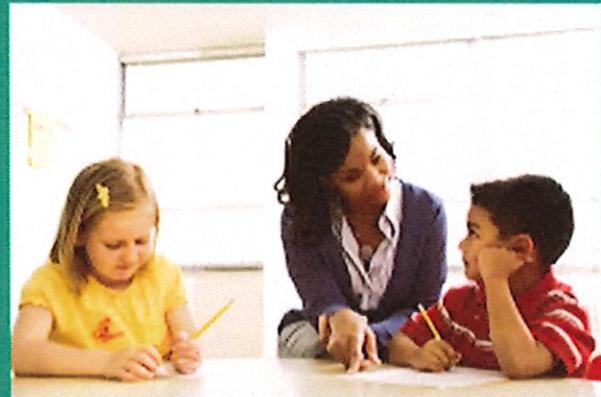




FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org



**TOP-1**



## **Turnaround Option Plan – Step 1(TOP-1)**

### **3-Options**

1. Closure
2. Charter
3. External Operator/Outside Entity

**Pasco County Schools  
Rodney B. Cox Elementary School**

*Due: September 1 for Cycle 1 or November 1 for Cycle 2-4*

Form Number TOP-1, 3-Options, incorporated in Rule 6A-1.099811, F.A.C., effective (Date)

# Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide districts to plan for the implementation of one of the three turnaround options (Closure, Charter or External Operator/Outside Entity) to improve the school's grade to a "C" or higher.

## Directions

Districts shall complete this Step 1 form for each school that has selected one of the three turnaround options (Closure, Charter or External Operator). This plan must be submitted by the district to the Regional Executive Director (RED) for review and feedback before submitting it to BSI. The plan must be approved by the local school board. This completed form must be signed by the superintendent or authorized representative and emailed to [BSI@fldoe.org](mailto:BSI@fldoe.org), no later than September 1 if one of these three options is Cycle 1 or November 1 if Cycle 2-4. The subject line of the email must include district name, school name and TOP-1.

## School

In the box below, identify the name and MSID number of the school that will be supported through the turnaround option plan.

School Name/ MSID Number
Rodney B. Cox Elementary/0021

## Stakeholder Engagement

In the box below, describe the district's efforts to engage and involve stakeholders, including the Community Assessment Team (CAT), to determine causes for low performance, and make recommendations for school improvement. Include a list of names and affiliation of CAT members. The RED or their designee shall be a member of the CAT. Include a list of meetings that were held regarding the development of the turnaround option plan, as well as scheduled meetings that will be held during implementation of the plan.

**Names and affiliation of CAT members:**

Wendy Lane, Principal  
Bailey Morris, Assistant Principal  
Darrin Williams, Community Member  
Shawntina Eaten, Parent  
Charity Cacho, Parent  
Brian Lamar, Community Member  
Cathy Wheeler, Student Support Assistance Program, Staff  
Ashley Baker, ELA Coach, Staff  
Lisa Smith, STEM Coach, Staff  
Melissa Scott, Staff  
Jennifer Austin, Staff  
Ana Santana, Staff  
Debra Rabon, Staff  
Kim Poe, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary, District

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

Patrice Bradarich, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Specialist, District  
Kara Owen, ELA Specialist, District  
Matthew Testoni, Community Engagement Specialist, District  
Alyssa Ramsey, Resiliency/Behavior Specialist, District  
Iravonia Abiola, School Improvement Supervisor, District  
Vanessa Hilton, Chief Academic Officer, District  
Lucinda Thompson, Regional Executive Director/BSI, State  
Bianca Williams, Regional Assistant Director/BSI, State  
Julie Statton, School Improvement Specialist/BSI, State

### **Dates of CAT meetings**

August 29, 2024, 7:30-8:30 AM  
November 22, 2024, 7:30-8:30 AM  
February 21, 2025, 7:30-8:30 AM  
May 16, 2025, 7:30-8:30 AM

### **What school data was analyzed?**

- Achievement Data /ESSA (3 Year Historical)
- EWS Academic
- EWS Behavior/Attendance
- Student and Staff Engagement

### **Identified causes of low performance:**

The Community Assessment Team at Rodney B. Cox Elementary School conducted an in-depth analysis of various data sources to identify the underlying causes of low academic performance. Through this analysis, several significant themes emerged, highlighting the following areas to be addressed: student engagement, increasing parental involvement, and improving monitoring and support systems to address the barriers effectively.

1) Student Engagement and Motivation: Issues such as low attendance, student engagement, and motivation are highlighted. The importance of after-school clubs, sports, and other motivational activities is stressed to keep students engaged.

2) Class Size and Teacher Effectiveness: There are repeated mentions of class size, indicating it's a significant concern. There was an emphasis on having highly effective teachers and understanding the impact of class size on student outcomes. Staff reported a need for more reading-endorsed staff and support in earlier grades.

3) Support Systems and Parental Involvement: Parental involvement and home communications, especially for Spanish-speaking families, are crucial. Additionally, community support and incentives for teachers play a role in addressing these barriers.

### **Recommendations for school improvement:**

#### Community Partnership and Engagement

- Prioritize the crucial role of parental involvement and home communications, especially for Spanish-speaking families.
- Identify community partners to support incentives for teachers.

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

### Standards Based Instruction and Learning

- To address the need for improved tracking and support systems, it was recommended that the school implement a robust data-driven monitoring of attendance, ELA, math, and behavior for specific cohorts and Tier 2 groups, ensuring timely and tailored interventions.
- Staff members suggested providing the training needed to secure more reading-endorsed staff and support in earlier grades.

### Positive Culture and Environment

- Establish a mentorship program where experienced educators guide and support students, fostering both academic and personal growth.
- To create an inclusive environment, provide staff training focused on enhancing customer service to better engage with diverse students and families.
- Plan for student-led discussion groups regularly to address campus issues and ensure that the support available is aligned with their needs, giving them a voice in shaping their learning environment.
- To address concerns related to low attendance and lack of motivation, consider providing a variety of after-school academic and non-academic activities that keep students engaged and motivated.

### **Other information:**

As part of the annual continuous improvement process, the school leadership team began to address several barriers in the school improvement plan. Implementation of this plan includes the following area of focus and related strategies:

- Benchmark aligned instruction
  - Instructional focus on explicit instruction in each content area
  - Use of gradual release model with clear teacher and student actions
  - Strategic planning structures to ensure teachers are supported by content coaches
  - Specific planning protocols to lead teachers through required lesson elements
  - Additional instructional support staff in each classroom

The school leaders also have developed a tight system to monitor the planning structures and transfer of planning into instructional implementation. This plan was refined after the leadership team attended the BSI summer institute held in Pasco County by the Region 4 state team.

## **Needs Assessment**

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

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

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

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

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Describe the methodology used for needs assessment, including 3-year data trends from the state, district and school levels.

### Results of Needs Assessment

To assist all schools in developing and implementing a school improvement plan, Pasco County Schools begins with a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) each spring as part of the district's continuous improvement model. This needs assessment includes analysis of student performance, analysis of stakeholder feedback, self-assessment, and site visits.

- Student performance is analyzed by reviewing current and three-year trend data by subgroup and school. Data sources include Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), Statewide Science Assessment, NWEA MAP Growth results and Renaissance Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM) screening and progress monitoring tools. Stakeholder feedback is analyzed by reviewing results from both the student and staff Gallup polls, staff and parent surveys, and focus groups.
- Multiple tools are used to conduct a self-assessment. Each school and the district rate themselves on the Cognia Standards for systems accreditation and reviews this information as it is aligned to the continuous improvement cycle. Additionally, Pasco County Schools reviews and evaluates its progress toward goals set using the Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE).
- Instructional Practice Observations, Professional Learning Community (PLC) rubrics, and Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS) screenings and tools are also completed by schools to gain insight into instructional and support practices.

An Assistant Superintendent, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Specialist, and District personnel engage in site visits with school leadership at the school during the needs assessment process to gain insight into the school's unique needs as well as identify focus for school improvement efforts and needs for implementing the plan.

At Rodney B. Cox Elementary, the approach employed for needs assessment within the school involves surveying all stakeholders to determine effective practices and areas requiring enhancement. Educators are encouraged to express their perspectives on initiatives that could foster the school's development and suggest how funds might be allocated to improve student outcomes. The leadership team allocates time to analyze data alongside administrators and their teams to discern trends and generate ideas for improvement. All insights obtained from these brainstorming sessions are utilized to address essential inquiries arising from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process.

The conclusion of the CNA results in the identification of the root causes of barriers, the development of a district and school improvement plan to overcome and reduce barriers to improvement. For the district, the result of the CNA drives refined plans annually, focusing on increasing overall math, literacy, science and social studies achievement, as well as community involvement. Additionally, the district uses this process to determine the allocation of support needed to implement each school's improvement plan.

The results of this most recent process revealed several key areas of need for the **District**:

- Elementary mathematics instruction
- Disciplinary literacy strategies
- Continued new teacher development
- Renewed system for development of teachers beyond year three
- Leadership development focus on systems and data literacy
- Culturally responsive customer service
- Community engagement resources and system for involvement at the school and district level

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

The district office has incorporated these results into professional development throughout the year, including coaching supports, teacher core content learning, and Principal and Assistant Principal Meetings.

- At monthly Principal and Assistant Principal Meetings this year, the focus is on improving math instruction at the elementary level, improving interdisciplinary literacy strategies district wide, and increasing community, staff, and student engagement.
- Each semester, professional learning is planned to reinforce knowledge of content benchmarks, understanding of state and district approved curriculum, as well as instructional strategies that reinforce the lesson elements of explicit instruction, adequate student practice time, monitoring for understanding, and release of learning to the students. This is provided for new teaches, as well as teacher beyond year three. Additionally, these sessions will be provided during the required Professional Development days on August 8 and October 15.

Additionally, coaches and school-based leaders engage in learning walks several times a year to learn about highly effective instructional practices and coaching feedback cycles that focus on ensuring that instruction is aligned to grade level benchmarks and student work. Additionally, Pasco County has hired a Community Engagement Specialist that will help build authentic district and community engagement connections with families and communities.

The result of the **School** needs assessment process revealed these areas of need:

- Low math achievement
- Need for specific content coaching
- Increased science focus school wide
- Lack of foundational skills focus in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English Language Arts
- Need for aligned intervention resources
- Lack of strong positive behavior system
- Lack of systems for monitoring and follow through

RBCES  Accountability Component	2024			2023			2022		
	School	District	State	School	District	State	School	District	State
ELA Achievement	21	51	57	17	47	53	22	52	56
ELA Grade 3 Achievement	16	51	58	13	46	53			
ELA Learning Gains	46	56	60				46		
ELA Learning Gains Lowest 25%	67	53	57				54		
Math Achievement	29	50	62	32	48	59	35	46	50
Math Learning Gains	45	54	62				54		
Math Learning Gains Lowest 25%	50	46	52				41		
Science Achievement	36	46	57	29	50	54	22	50	59

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

### Points of Strength and Areas for Growth

#### Transformational Leadership

Pasco County Schools' district-based leadership team is comprised of the Superintendent of Schools; the Chief Academic Officer; the Assistant Superintendents of priority schools, elementary, middle, and high schools; the director of Leading and Learning; a supervisor from the Office for Accountability, Research, and Measurement; an MTSS Specialist and the supervisor for School Improvement.

In addition to the CNA, the Superintendent's staff compile data on each school including student achievement data, leadership data, staff engagement, and instructional staffing to determine which schools are in greatest need of support within the system. Multiple levels of support are created and an accompanying guide for the delivery of support is developed. While very directive intervention and supports are provided to schools identified by BSI (earning a D or F grade), additional layers of support are developed for Priority and recently improved SI schools (earning a C grade). These schools are still monitored closely, as they have been identified as having risk factors and inconsistencies in student performance, and supports are aimed at mitigating these factors and ensuring there are strong system in place for school improvement.

For BSI School Supports, which is our most intensive layer of supports, these schools are being supported and monitored through the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) in addition to our district/school teams. To direct and monitor progress, the Assistant Superintendent leads quarterly data meetings and walkthroughs at BSI school which are in addition to support from the BSI state team. The Assistant Superintendent may require additional data reviews and walkthrough based on ongoing evidence of instructional practices and progress monitoring/benchmark data. District specialist supports are provided weekly for Math, ELA, and MTSS, and every other week for Science, Social Studies, and for special programs (ESE and ELL). Two instructional assistants for academic support are funded through UniSIG, while Title 1 funds support two content specific coaches, as well as three days of professional development in the summer. District quarterly assessments and ongoing progress monitoring assessments are required, and attendance is required at both Priority Improvement Workshops (for Principals and at least one coach or school staff). School-based coaches and new teachers are required to attend monthly coaching meetings and quarterly new teacher professional learning sessions.

For Priority School Supports (schools that have earned a low C grade), the Assistant Superintendent facilitates four data meetings and conducts four priority school walk-throughs. District specialist support occurs every other week for ELA, Math, and MTSS, and monthly for Science, Social Studies, and SSPS. If Title 1 funds are available, two coaches and three days of professional development are recommended. District progress monitoring assessments will be conducted, and attendance is required at priority school principal meetings and monthly coaching and new teacher professional learning sessions.

Clear instructional expectations have been communicated to BSI, Priority, and all other schools, which are monitored at the district and school levels to ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning in these buildings. These expectations include closely monitoring teacher teams in their Professional Learning Community (PLC) work, ensuring alignment with district goals. We will enforce the fidelity of curriculum implementation and adherence to the district's scope and sequence, guaranteeing consistency and quality across classrooms. Intentional coaching support will be provided to staff, tailored to their specific needs, to enhance instructional practices. Additionally, we will conduct weekly meetings with the coaching team to review progress and address challenges. Regular walkthroughs will also be conducted to observe classroom practices and provide timely feedback, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

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Points of Strength	Areas for Growth
Improvement of schools with F grades (none)	Need to tighten monitoring of at-risk C schools to ensure improvements in student performance
Recent development of Turnaround Leader pipeline, including support from national partner	Bench of Turnaround Leaders continues to be in need while current leaders engage in pipeline program
Monthly K12 Principal Meeting structure to ensure consistency in leader learning and development	Need for stronger focus on instructional leadership during Principal Meetings
New data systems developed within student information system	Need to build data literacy knowledge and practices throughout the district

Based on these areas identified, these improvements will be implemented:

### District

- Strengthened Tiers of Support for Priority School Improvement Structures
  - Data Literacy and systems for monitoring
  - Monitoring of instruction and impact of implementation through walkthroughs
  - Strong instructional leadership development
- Defined coaching supports through Assistant Superintendents, School Improvement Supervisor, District Coaching Coordinator and MTSS specialist
- Leadership team professional development through BSI Summer Training Institute on July 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>
- Coaching for Improvement through Summer Coaching Academy
- Continued development of turnaround leader pipeline
- Intentional Instructional leadership focus during K12 Principal meetings

### Rodney B. Cox Elementary School

- Recruitment of a new school turnaround principal during the Spring of 2024
  - Turnaround principal mentor and a Principal Coach for the Spring of 2024
  - Turnaround principal mentor continues to provide support for 2024-2025 school year
- Assistant Principal attended the Harvard School Turnaround for School Leaders Institute
- New allocation for a Science Coach (provides a distinct dedicated coach for mathematics and science)

### Standards-based Instruction and Learning (for student and adult learners)

The district is committed to fostering continuous growth and excellence among all educators by hosting two new Districtwide Professional Development Days. These days will provide core professional development across all content areas, ensuring that both new and experienced teachers receive the training and resources they need to succeed. To further support our new teachers, regional professional learning sessions and targeted support will be offered, equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to thrive in their classrooms and contribute to the success of our students. Additionally, all schools are required to have professional learning in alignment with their school improvement plans during Early Release Days. There are also New Teachers Trainings required quarterly. All schools are expected to have high functioning Collaborative Teachers Teams (Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), School Leadership Teams (SLTs), and School Intervention Teams to support the work of school improvement and high levels of learning and outcomes for all students.

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Points of Strength	Areas for Growth
New teacher professional learning system	Need to provide continued professional learning for teachers beyond year three (no PD required for these teachers during the 20/21, 21/22, 22/23 school years)
State and district approved, benchmark aligned curriculum provided in all core content areas	Need for teacher support in using benchmark aligned curriculum within district provided resources  Need for access to differentiated intervention resources in the areas of ELA and Mathematics
New data systems developed within student information system	Need to build data literacy knowledge and practices throughout the district

Based on these areas identified, these improvements will be implemented:

### District

- Use of state and district approved resources to ensure guaranteed access to grade level instruction and materials
  - Refinement of district provided resources to build benchmark knowledge, spotlight tested benchmarks, and prioritize aligned instructional supports
- Support of school based Professional Learning Community facilitators to build knowledge of high leverage practices like analyzing student work for intervention and enrichment purposes
- Support for use of evidence-based intervention/instructional strategies to address the learning needs of all students
- Dedicated on site core content support teams prioritized for most at risk schools
- Approval of additional intervention resources for use in BSI and Priority schools

### Rodney B. Cox Elementary School

- Implementation of iReady diagnostics and intervention system in ELA and Mathematics
- Implementation of the research-based reading foundational skills curriculum of UFLI in all K-2 classrooms
- Refinement of the district ELA Instructional Framework to include additional dedicated time for foundational skill development and practice
- Support for mathematics teachers in understanding the vertical and horizontal benchmarks that impact their strategies for addressing misconceptions and unfinished learning
- Training for mathematics teachers to build confidence in use of manipulatives to support benchmark aligned instruction
- Science teacher training to assist in using the district curriculum, the instructional model, and science investigates kits to increase student knowledge of science content
- Establishment of common planning time with dedicated content coach support weekly
- New dedicated science coach (continue separate mathematics coach)

### Positive Culture and Environment

The district has developed a comprehensive system that integrates Resiliency Standards and Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) into a framework for Compassionate Schools. These practices focus on fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students develop positive character traits, personal responsibility, mentorship and citizenship and critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Resiliency Standards empower students to overcome challenges, while PBIS provides a framework for teaching, monitoring, recognizing and reinforcing positive behavior. Together, these elements create a compassionate environment that supports the well-being and academic success of every student. Each school is expected to have clearly defined behavior levels of support, aimed at reinforcing the expectations of our district Collective Commitments for Compassionate Schools. Behavior expectations (aligned with Resiliency Standards) are to be taught and reinforced throughout the year, through an established system

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to acknowledge and celebrate positive student behaviors. Schools must also clearly define classroom and office managed behaviors to ensure that student time is maximized within their learning environment. Each school should address the behavioral health of the school within a leadership structure, and identify a regular meeting to prioritize and review Tier 1 behavior data and problem-solving areas of concern to include discipline rates. At the district level, there is a supervisor and coordinator of behavior supports, who support and coordinate district-wide behavior supports and monitor district wide data, along with specialists who support and monitor behavior interventions at identified school sites.

Points of Strength	Areas for Growth
District wide expectations for Compassionate Schools, training supports to assist schools in building a PBIS, adoption of state resiliency standards	<p>Inconsistent school-based implementation of PBIS</p> <p>Lack of student engagement reported by staff and leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to improve attendance rates</li> </ul> <p>Need to reduce exclusionary discipline</p>
District approved, standards aligned curriculum provided to support Resiliency Education	<p>Need for teacher support in using aligned curriculum to support resiliency</p> <p>Need to ensure consistent teaching of appropriate behaviors as part of instructional schedule</p>
New data systems developed within student information system	Need to build data literacy knowledge and practices throughout the district

Based on these areas identified, these improvements will be implemented:

### District

- Summer Resiliency Institute to build positive mindsets around PBIS for all schools
- Summer Behavior Solutions training to assist school teams in building system for positive behaviors and tiers of supports
- Dedicated summer leader training to assist in refinement of systems for PBIS and implementation of required PBIS practices
- Required monthly data meetings focused on addressing Tier 1 behaviors and developing interventions
- Development of new behavior data dashboard within student information system with accompanying data protocols for school use
- PBIS focused professional learning and problem solving at K12 Principal meetings during 2024-2025

### Rodney B. Cox Elementary School

- Restructured behavior team to push into classrooms for student support
- Shift to implementation of PBIS as a school wide initiative
- Dedicated instructional assistants for student behavior supports
- Increased celebrations of students to increase engagement a reinforce appropriate behaviors and academic improvement
- Lesson framework included specific planning for student engagement strategies as part of gradual release model
- Dedicated data meetings with content teams and individual teachers to monitor student data and successes

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**Identify strategies that have evidence of improvement at the school and how they will be reinforced or supplemented.**

**Identify strategies that have not resulted in improvement. What will be done differently?**

At Rodney B. Cox Elementary School, through the needs assessment process and within the BSI evidence of implementation meetings, practices were analyzed for effectiveness and the following findings were identified.

<b>Evidence of Improvement</b>	<b>What will be done differently?</b>
<p>The implementation of extended collaborative planning enabled our educators to assist one another effectively, ensuring that every student benefits from high-quality instruction. Through collective efforts, teachers and coaches exchanged best practices, monitored student progress, and refined their teaching methodologies.</p>	<p>The collaborative planning across multiple grade levels scheduled at the same time reduced the time available for coaches to focus on planning for each specific grade. This year, planning will take place with one grade level per session, with a dedicated content coach for each area.</p>
<p>The departmentalization (content specific scheduling) of our teaching staff facilitated specialization in their respective content areas, allowing them to concentrate on enhancing instructional practices within those domains.</p> <p>Our master schedule was designed to provide students with sufficient time for learning in core academic subjects.</p>	<p>Teachers did not have dedicated content coaching support for ELA, Mathematics and Science. There was one coach for STEM who did not have adequate time to coach in both science and mathematics. This year, there are distinct coaches for the areas of mathematics and science, and teachers will also engage in planning for instruction for each content area separately.</p>
<p>The availability of resources aligned with benchmarks was essential for enhancing student achievement, providing teachers with necessary instructional tools and allowing students to develop critical skills. By employing materials that align with the curriculum and standards, our educators are better equipped to plan for students to receive the support needed to understand key concepts.</p>	<p>In past years, teachers were not required to attend district professional learning for benchmark understanding or district curriculum. This year, district and school-based training for teachers will be specifically aimed at ensuring teachers understand content benchmarks, as well as how the district curriculum and supplemental resources are aligned to and prioritize these benchmarks, assisting teachers in using these more effectively.</p>
<p>Professional learning communities and tiered support systems were vital in guaranteeing that all students receive the support required for their success. These communities fostered collaboration and idea-sharing among teachers, while tiered supports offered targeted interventions for students facing challenges.</p>	<p>Teachers were not fully engaged with their data and with intervention action planning, as other support staff were responsible for understanding and monitoring tier 2 and tier 3 data. Moving forward, instructional staff will take on this responsibility to know each student’s data and performance levels.</p> <p>The lack of student ownership in their learning proved ineffective; therefore, students and teachers will collaborate to track and discuss data while establishing individual improvement goals, culminating in student-led conferences with parents.</p>

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3-Options**

	<p>Last year, administrators did not engage in one-on-one discussions with teachers about their data and goal setting, which will be prioritized this year.</p> <p>This year, we will also implement the iReady diagnostic and intervention system to increase teacher knowledge of student needs and provide immediate student access to personalized intervention supports.</p>
	<p>The lack of a strong behavioral system was an issue last year. This impacted student attendance rates and caused students to miss additional instructional time due to disciplinary issues. This year, we will implement a strong behavior system with PBIS, supported by the district. Additionally, we implemented a proactive strategy to kick off the year, with teachers emphasizing expectations throughout the day and in various areas of the campus.</p>
	<p>This school is the hub of the community and is a place where families can receive not only academic support, but also medical services and social supports. However, community support has waned in recent years. This summer, we engaged in the development of a new mission, vision, and motto to clarify our identity, guide our school community's direction, and re-engage with our broader Dade City community.</p>

**Select One Turnaround Option**

Check the box to indicate the turnaround option selected by the district.

- Closure (RC):** Close the school and reassign students to another school and monitor the progress of each reassigned student.
- Charter (CH):** Close the school and reopen the school as one or more charter schools, each with a governing board that has a demonstrated record of effectiveness.
- External Operator/Outside Entity (EO):** Contract with an outside entity that has a demonstrated record of effectiveness to provide turnaround services or operate the school. Check applicable options (may include one or a combination):
  - District-managed charter school or high-performing charter school network; or**
  - Contractual agreement that allows for a charter school network or any of its affiliated subsidiaries to provide individualized consultancy services.**

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

### Additional Information:

Pasco County School District has a unique, time-sensitive opportunity to sustain and accelerate the improvements already underway at Rodney B. Cox Elementary. One additional year under district management will cement gains in achievement, deepen community trust, and build a foundation for enduring success in this critical turnaround. Extending the district-managed turnaround plan is the best path forward for the students and the community.

**1. A Principal with Proven Impact and Deep Community Ties:** Appointed in January 2024, Rodney B. Cox Elementary's new principal has already driven measurable improvements. ELA and science scores have risen, with ELA achievement increasing from 17% to 21% and science achievement climbing from 29% to 36% in a matter of months. This leader, who was raised in the community and taught at the school, has a personal stake in Rodney B. Cox Elementary's success. The relationships she's built with students, families, and staff have rekindled community support and rallied local stakeholders who previously had minimal engagement with the school. Any external operator will lack this deep-rooted connection, and introducing one would disrupt the very trust and momentum now fueling student progress.

**2. An Unmatched Support Network and Proven Turnaround Success:** The district has a demonstrated record of success in school turnarounds. In the last year alone, four Pasco County schools improved from an F to a C grade under similar district-led strategies. This track record shows that Pasco's support structures—ranging from targeted professional development to data-driven instructional coaching—are effective and sustainable. The district has deployed these strategies at Rodney B. Cox Elementary, which already uses high-impact interventions like the iReady platform and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Moving to an external operator will risk diluting the impact of these resources and add unnecessary disruptions to a system that is making progress under current district guidance.

**3. Tailored, Intensive Support Plans Aligned with Unique Needs:** The Pasco County School District has crafted a turnaround plan finely tuned to Rodney B. Cox Elementary's unique challenges. Addressing areas such as foundational skills in reading and targeted math interventions, the plan includes data tracking systems to monitor progress and identify at-risk students. With dedicated weekly planning sessions and coaching for teachers, this focused approach will be difficult, if not impossible, for an external operator to replicate in the same time frame. An outside entity will likely require time to understand the community dynamics and school culture before making significant headway, ultimately stalling the upward momentum already in place.

**4. Critical Community Anchor Providing Holistic Support:** Rodney B. Cox Elementary is more than a school; it's a vital community anchor. With an on-site health clinic and a large Head Start program, the school is a hub of essential services for Dade City's families. The district has long understood and supported this community role, carefully building a turnaround plan that keeps these programs intact while enhancing educational quality. An external operator will lack the nuanced understanding of how these resources contribute to the well-being and engagement of students and families, potentially jeopardizing these services and their impact on student success. Community members, seeing the school's commitment to their broader needs, are stepping up to engage in ways they haven't before. Extending the current turnaround approach will ensure this pivotal community relationship is not compromised.

**5. Proven Path to Success with Minimal Disruption:** Turnaround success hinges on continuity and stability—critical factors that could be lost if an external operator were brought in prematurely. The district's comprehensive plan has been specifically designed to address and overcome barriers, with monthly data reviews and adjustments to ensure continued improvement. The district's proactive

## Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1) 3-Options

monitoring through its BSI and regional support teams ensures that every instructional and non-instructional factor is considered and adapted as needed. With one more year, Rodney B. Cox Elementary is primed to show significant, sustained growth with the very supports that have already delivered initial successes.

By extending Pasco County's management for just one additional year, Rodney B. Cox Elementary can solidify its upward trajectory with the proven, community-centered support systems already in place. This extension will not only empower current leaders, staff, and families to continue making a transformative impact but also establish the lasting structures necessary for sustained academic achievement. Supporting the district-managed approach honors the substantial progress achieved, strengthens community bonds, and demonstrates an unwavering commitment to Dade City's students.

### Selected Turnaround Option Plan Rationale

In the box below, describe the district's efforts to engage and involve stakeholders, CAT and the school leadership team in the selection of one of the three turnaround options. Provide the rationale for the selected turnaround option.

As noted above, the district is requesting an extension of our District Managed Turnaround plan.

With a new turnaround principal appointed as the school leader in January, we were able to see clear improvements in several key areas in the school, including student learning (increases in ELA and science from previous years), campus safety (focus group feedback), response to student data (increased learning gains in ELA and Mathematics), a reduction of student behaviors, and the development of monitoring systems.

With this new leader, who not only grew up in the community, but also attended Rodney B. Cox Elementary as a student and taught here as a teacher for much of her teaching career, we have seen an increase in community engagement (new community members on the CAT, with no community members attending in the past).

Our new CAT has committed to supporting the school in multiple ways to ensure its continued success. This school is the hub of the community and entering its 100<sup>th</sup> year of service to the citizens of Dade City.

During the August Community Assessment Team (CAT) meeting, the Chief Academic Officer shared the requirement of the school to have a Turnaround Plan, as well as the requirement to choose one of the three options provided. At that meeting, none of the members expressed a desire to close the school or to reopen the school as a charter school. Rather, as mentioned, the team focused on increasing community engagement with the school and celebrating the school's impact to the community for 100 years.

The school and district leadership teams, supported by the School Board Chairperson, believe that the school is well positioned to increase student achievement and thus earn at least a C grade with the plan outlined. However, if applicable, these teams recommend engaging with an external operator to support further improvement efforts at the school. This would maintain the existence of the school as a hub in the community. In addition to providing valued educational services as an elementary school, it also houses a community health clinic and large Head Start program, both of which provide stability and needed services to the community members.

In a follow up to the CAT, Principal Lane reiterated the requirement to choose an option in this plan and shared the recommendation by the school and district leadership team to engage with an external operator if needed. Principal Lane also communicated this option to her faculty and reinforced her belief that this will not be necessary with the expected improvements.

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)  
3-Options**

**Complete only the section for the selected turnaround option.**

The district must agree to ALL of the assurances for the selected turnaround option by checking the corresponding boxes.

**Reassignment and Closure (RC)**

**Assurance 1: Close and Reassign Students**

- The district shall close the school and reassign students to higher-performing schools with a “C” or higher in the district. *A new school does not qualify since it does not have a record of performance.*
- The district shall ensure that students from the closed school are not assigned to instructional personnel with VAM ratings or district evaluations that are below effective.

**Assurance 2: Monitoring Reassigned Students**

- The district shall monitor the reassigned students and report their progress to the Department for three years on a quarterly basis with the first year students from the closed school are reassigned. Reports shall include student attendance, grades and progress monitoring data aligned to Florida’s State Academic Standards, the type of intervention and instruction provided to students to address deficiencies, as well as all instructional personnel assigned to students and their VAM rating. The district shall provide quarterly reports to the RED.

**Assurance 3: Reassignment of Instructional Personnel and Administrators**

- The district shall ensure, for the upcoming school year, instructional personnel from the closed school with VAM ratings that are below effective are not reassigned to other School Improvement (SI) schools within the district.
- The district shall ensure that administrators from a school closed through selection of this turnaround option are not reassigned to other SI schools within the district for the upcoming school year.
- The district shall ensure that, for the upcoming school year, instructional personnel from the closed school who are rated below effective are not assigned to:
  1. A high school or middle school student who was taught by a classroom teacher with a VAM rating that is below effective for the previous school year in the same subject area.
  2. An elementary student who was taught by a classroom teacher with a VAM rating that is below effective for the previous school year.

**Charter (CH)**

**Assurance 1: Close and Reopen School**

- The district shall close the school and reopen it as a charter or multiple charters.

**Assurance 2: Contracting with Charter Organization**

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)  
3-Options**

The district shall enter into a contract with the charter organization following established district policies and procedures for contracting with external providers.

**Assurance 3: Selecting a Successful Organization**

The district shall select a charter organization that has a record of school improvement in turning around schools that are low-performing with students of similar demographics or a charter school with a record of high performance.

**Assurance 4: Selecting Leadership**

The district shall ensure the principal or school leader has a successful record and the qualifications to support the student population being served.

**Assurance 5: Selecting Instructional Staff**

The district shall ensure that instructional personnel with VAM ratings or district evaluations that are below effective pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S., shall not be staffed at the school.

**External Operator (EO)**

**Assurance 1: Selecting a Successful EO/Outside Entity**

The district shall select an EO/Outside Entity that has a record of school improvement in turning around schools that are low-performing with students of similar demographics.

**Assurance 2: District Capacity and Support:**

The district and the EO/Outside entity ensure the instructional programs align to Florida's state academic standards and provide data to support intervention for students.

The district and the EO/Outside entity ensure the development of an annual professional learning plan that provides ongoing tiered support to increase leadership and educator quality.

**Assurance 3: Selecting Leadership**

The district and the EO/Outside Entity shall ensure the incoming principal and school leadership team have a successful record in leading turnaround schools and the qualifications to support the population being served.

Ensure the principal will be replaced upon entry into EO/Outside Entity unless, in collaboration with the Department, it is determined that the principal will have the skillset for turnaround success at the school.

**Assurance 4: Selecting Instructional Staff**

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)**  
**3-Options**

The district and the EO shall ensure that instructional personnel with VAM ratings or district evaluations that are below effective, pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S., shall not be staffed at the school.

If the district establishes a district-managed charter school or a high-performing charter school network, the district shall ensure all instructional personnel are not employees of the school district, but are employees of an independent governing board composed of members who did not participate in the review or approval of the charter. (N/A)

The district and the EO/Outside Entity shall ensure the review of practices in hiring, recruitment, retention and reassignment of instructional personnel have been reviewed with priority on student performance data.

The district and the EO/Outside entity shall ensure that K-12 reading instruction is provided by teachers with a reading certificate, endorsement or micro-credential.

The district and the EO/Outside entity shall ensure submission of a MOU required by section 1001.42(21), F.S., that relieves the school from any contract restrictions that limit the ability to implement strategies to improve the school's low performance.

The district and the EO/Outside entity will ensure submission of a roster of instructional staff at the school.

**Assurance 5: Contracting with the EO**

The district shall enter into a contract with an EO/Outside Entity to provide turnaround services or to operate the school, following established district policies and procedures. To ensure the district is well positioned in contract negotiations with an EO for the upcoming school year, the following must be addressed in the contract:

1. Performance indicators and growth metrics that the EO/Outside Entity must meet during the term of the contract showing that the school is on track to earn at least a "C" grade within two years and that ties payment to such improvement;
2. The district's authority to terminate or non-renew the contract for a second year should the EO/Outside Entity fail to meet the performance indicators, growth metrics or fail to meet its contractual obligations;
3. Services and responsibilities for leadership and instructional staffing, curriculum and instruction, assessments, progress monitoring and professional learning;
4. EO/Outside Entity's record of school improvement and its role in recruitment, selection and placement of instructional personnel and the school leadership team;
5. Where the district has an existing contract with the EO/Outside Entity, a detailed provision outlining the new or modified services to be provided by the EO/Outside Entity;
6. A detailed budget with conditions of payment based on performance indicators, including a deferred payment of the final installment of 33% of the contracted amount until delivery of agreed upon improvement and outcomes. The contract must include a provision where the final 33% of the contract value may not be paid until and unless the EO/Outside Entity demonstrates that the school has achieved at least a "C" grade or that the school has improved by at least four school grade percentage points overall; and
7. The district's authority to modify, terminate or non-renew the contract for a second year should the

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)  
3-Options**

State Board determine the EO/Outside Entity failed to meet the performance indicators, growth metrics or is otherwise not on track to achieve a grade of at least “C” within two years of the release of school grades.

**Timelines**

**This timeline applies if the district selects RC.**

For Cycle 1, if the district selects RC, the district acknowledges that the plan (TOP-2) is due to the Department by October 1.

For Cycle 2-4, if the district selects RC, the district acknowledges that the plan (TOP-2) is due to the Department by January 31.

**This timeline applies if the district selects either CH or EO/Outside Entity.**

For Cycle 1, the district acknowledges that the plan (TOP-2) and the CH or EO/Outside Entity contract is due to the Department by October 1.

For Cycle 2-4, the district acknowledges that the plan (TOP-2) and proposed CH or EO/Outside Entity contract are due to the Department by January 31 and the district school board approved CH or EO/Outside Entity contract is due to the Department by May 1.

**Request for Extension of Turnaround Plan, Criteria and Due Date**

**The district requests additional time to implement its turnaround plan for the following year. The district meets the following conditions and shall provide evidence that the school is likely to improve to a “C” or higher by the end of following school year.**

Upon request from the district, the SBE may grant additional time for the district to implement its current turnaround plan if the following conditions are met:

1. The request, approved by the local school board, is received by the Department on or before November 1 on this form;
2. The request demonstrates that the school has a positive trajectory using the grade components listed in s. 1008.34(3)(b), F.S.;
3. The request demonstrates that the SI school has no instructional personnel with VAM ratings of Unsatisfactory and that the percentage of instructional personnel with VAM ratings of Needs Improvement is at or below the district percentage where the district has more than five schools, or the state percentage where the district has five or fewer schools;
4. During the remainder of the implementation of the turnaround plan, the district agrees to staff the school with no Unsatisfactory rated instructional personnel and maintain or improve the school’s VAM average, as provided in rule 6A.1.099811(16)(a)4.
5. The request includes a description of the services that will be implemented to ensure the sustainability of improvement in the next year and beyond.

In the box below, the district must provide evidence that the school met the above conditions. Explain how the school will improve to a grade of at least a “C” during an extended period of implementation of the turnaround plan. Outline any changes in activities and strategies that will occur should additional time be granted by the SBE.

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)  
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**Evidence that the five conditions were met:**

1. This request is being submitted on October 1, 2024.
2. As evidenced by an improvement in the student achievement since January of 2024 with the appointment of a former turnaround principal, the school is already on a trajectory to improve the school grade by the end of the 2024/2025 school year. Significant focus was placed in ELA and Science with this leader, and evidence of increases are below. In addition, ELP progress is noted, as this is a large part of the student population at the school.

<b>RBCES: Accountability Component</b>	2024	2023
ELA Achievement	21	17
ELA Grade 3 Achievement	16	13
ELA Learning Gains	46	
ELA Learning Gains Lowest 25%	67	
Science Achievement	36	29
ELP Progress	38	27

Additional, systems for instructional improvement have been planned for and the district is committed to ensuring this school’s success.

3. While the entire instructional team is much larger, Rodney B. Cox Elementary employs six instructional staff who have earned a state VAM. Of these, five staff members are Effective and one is rated Needs Improvement. The district’s average of Needs Improvement instructional staff is 17.93% and the school average is 17%. There are no staff at the school with a VAM of Unsatisfactory.
4. The district and school agree to employ no additional staff members at Rodney B. Cox Elementary who have earned a state VAM of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory. There is a process in place with our Human Resources department to complete a VAM check for any proposed hiring at each of our BSI schools. The hiring process is halted until this check occurs, and a BSI school, including Rodney B. Cox Elementary, is not allowed to hire any instructional staff who has a VAM of less than Effective.
5. In order to ensure sustainability of school improvement at Rodney B. Cox Elementary for 2024/2025 and beyond, the follow steps will be taken.

**Explain how the school will improve to a “C” or higher:**

The district recently saw an improvement in four formerly F school to grades of C in the 2023/2024 school year, as well as four additional schools improving from a D to a C grade in the same year. Our systems of supports are proven to assist schools in this improvement process.

Strategies from several of the schools that improved dramatically (F to C) are being implemented now with support at Rodney B. Cox Elementary, as indicated below.

- Implementation of iReady personalized intervention system.
- Adjustment of ELA Instructional Framework to meet the individual needs of students, with more dedicated time for foundational skills instruction provided in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA.
- Student data tracking system developed by schools referenced above will be utilized at Rodney B. Cox Elementary School to ensure collective responsibility of student performance and proven system of monitoring progress.

**Turnaround Option Plan—Step 1 (TOP-1)  
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- Implementation of PBIS to teach, reinforce and recognize resiliency standards.
- Dedicated professional learning, supported planning time, and coaching for teachers of mathematics

**Outline proposed changes and strategies that will occur during the extended period:**

The school, along with the district leadership team, and in collaboration with the BSI, has carefully analyzed the factors that were leading to improvement and those that were not increasing student performance. Many changes and new actions for improvement are outlined above, with specificity as to the expected changes and outcomes. These new systems and strategies will be carefully monitored at the school level to ensure improvements are actualized.

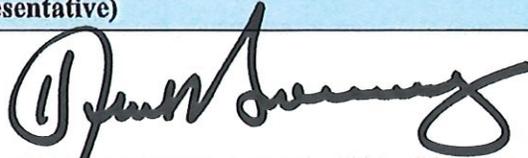
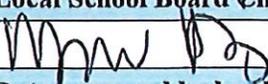
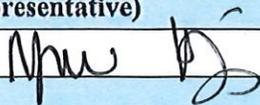
In addition, during this extended period, the Superintendent and district leadership team will hold a monthly data meeting to review the progress of all BSI schools, including Rodney B. Cox Elementary School. As barriers to improvement are noted, the leadership team will prioritize instructional and non-instructional supports to mitigate these issues. If student progress or improved instructional practices are not noted, the supervisor of school improvement will immediately collaborate with the BSI Team for support and guidance.

The district leadership team will work closely with the Region 4 BSI Team, including the Regional Executive Director, to carefully analyze the practices at Rodney B. Cox Elementary School, and identify areas in need of improvement through this school year that may lead to implementation changes. The district leadership team will ensure that supports from BSI are welcomed and embraced at the school.

The district team commits to maintaining current school turnaround leaders in place as long as there is evidence of improvement and the leader is supported by the BSI Team, knowing that leadership changes can derail improvement efforts.

**Acknowledgement**

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

<b>Name and title of person responsible for completion and submission of the TOP-1</b>	
Vanessa Hilton, Chief Academic Officer	
<b>Contact information: email, phone number</b>	
vhilton@pasco.k12.fl.us, 813-794-2650	
<b>Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement</b>	
10/1/24	11/5/24 revision
<b>Superintendent Signature (or authorized representative)</b>	
	
<b>Local School Board Chair Signature (or authorized representative)</b>	
	
<b>Date approved by local school board</b>	
10.1.24	Reviewed by school board 11/5/24



# Pasco County Schools

Dr. John Legg, Superintendent of Schools

7227 Land O' Lakes Boulevard • Land O' Lakes, Florida 34638

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The Honorable Ben Gibson, Chair  
Florida State Board of Education  
325 West Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Chair Gibson,

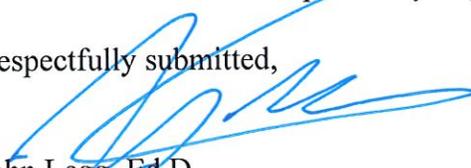
As the newly elected superintendent of Pasco County Schools, I am excited to join the dedicated team supporting our highest-need Opportunity School, Rodney B. Cox Elementary. When reviewing the current and already submitted TOP-1 Plan, seeking an additional year of district-managed turnaround, I am requesting this addendum be considered and accepted.

The current plan being implemented this year, as well as the TOP-1 proposal for extension, include tactics focused on increased capacity building of administrative and instructional personnel and increased student achievement accountability. To further strengthen this plan, however, I request to bolster this strategic support by including the following: a) an immediate partnership with External Operator, MGT, who has a proven track record of success in neighboring counties, including schools of similar demographics, b) an increased focus will be given to the large ELL population at the school, which will include a dual language program targeted to increase student outcomes of this specific subgroup, c) a streamlined district plan to restructure support, including a dedicated Assistant Superintendent for Opportunity Schools, will be implemented and targeted to not only support the sustained success at Rodney B. Cox Elementary School but our other Opportunity Schools, as well.

Through work outlined in this addendum and the increased effort and support to our existing district-managed turnaround efforts, we will elevate the learning gains and proficiency of our students at Rodney B. Cox and will build successful capacity for sustainable success not alone at Rodney B. Cox but for other similar schools in our district in the process.

I appreciate your consideration of this addendum to our TOP-1 plan requesting an additional year to implement our district-managed turnaround efforts. Through these additional strategic steps, I am confident that we can positively impact the outcomes for our students.

Respectfully submitted,



John Legg, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools