

TOP-2

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

DUVAL
Highlands Middle School

Due-October 1

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

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

Purpose

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

Directions

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

School

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

School Name/ MSID Number
Highlands Middle School /MSID # 162441

Needs Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

Recognizing the essential insight and expertise needed to truly turn around the learning trajectory of a school that is underperforming, Duval County Public Schools began its needs assessment process for Highlands Middle. This was accomplished through a shared understanding of the essential competencies of what a struggling school, embedded within an aging inner city community, needs in order to be successful at providing a high quality education for the community of students that the school serves. Duval's Executive Leadership Team, under the direction of the Superintendent, Dr. Diana Greene, and the Academic Leadership team at Highlands Middle, immediately engaged in a deep analysis of all available data upon the release of the 2019 FSA performance data to ascertain potential barriers

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impacting students increased learning and achievement at the school. The internal review and initial plans for whole school improvement planning process was comprehensive and collaborative. With the supporting guidance of the Superintendent, a comprehensive committee that encompassed stakeholders from all levels to include: Cabinet level leadership (Deputy Superintendent, Chief of Schools, Chief Academic Officer), the Region Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement, Executive Directors who support the Region and the Office of School Improvement, Highland Middle School’s Administrators, Teachers, Parents, and other Community Stakeholders, all engaged in a comprehensive 8 step problem solving process. During this process, the aforementioned team reviewed both qualitative and quantitative data which encompassed state, district, and school level data to identify evidence of possible strengths and areas of needed growth at Highlands Middle in order to define a specific plan for whole school transformation.

The state, district, and school specific data in the following tables collected from district progress monitoring assessments and survey reports, along with input from the school’s administration, faculty and staff, parents, Parent Teacher Association, School Advisory Council, Duval’s Community Assessment Team, and other community stakeholders, was used extensively to assist with the formation of a comprehensive plan for school wide improvement at Highlands Middle School.

State FSA Historical Trend Data Reviewed:

Test/Grade level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
FSA ELA						
6	201,652	52.1%	211,076	51.6%	115,058	54.4%
7	199,442	52.1%	201,077	51.0%	110,914	52.3%
8	198,936	54.7%	201,907	57.6%	115,624	56.3%
FSA Math						
6	196,774	51.1%	202,926	51.5%	110,087	54.5%
7	178,766	52.7%	180,509	54.0%	98,794	54.0%
8	132,456	45.6%	130,496	44.7%	60,008	45.9%
Science						
8	213,043	51.1%	211,927	54.9%	195,621	48.5%

State FSA Historical EOC Trend Data Reviewed

Test/Grade level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
FSA Algebra 1 EOC						
8	63,335	87.8%	69,053	87.5%	71,610	86.4%
FSA Geometry EOC						
8	16,489	94.2%	17,914	95.2%	20,589	95.2%
Civics						
7	192,079	40.6%	185,407	71.0%	190,102	71.9%

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Duval District FSA Historical Trend Data Reviewed:

Test/Grade level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
FSA ELA						
6	8,924	43.4%	9,441	43.6%	9,378	46.8%
7	8,722	43.8%	8,717	41.4%	9,368	43.7%
8	8,524	49.9%	8,588	50.7%	8,695	48.8%
FSA Math						
6	8,381	39.4%	8,805	41.9%	8,983	51.2%
7	8,556	48.0%	8,436	49.6%	8,419	47.2%
8	5,166	32.4%	5,023	31.2%	4,865	31.8%
Science						
8	8,158	46.9%	7,859	43.9%	7,766	39.6%

Duval District FSA EOC Historical Trend Data Reviewed:

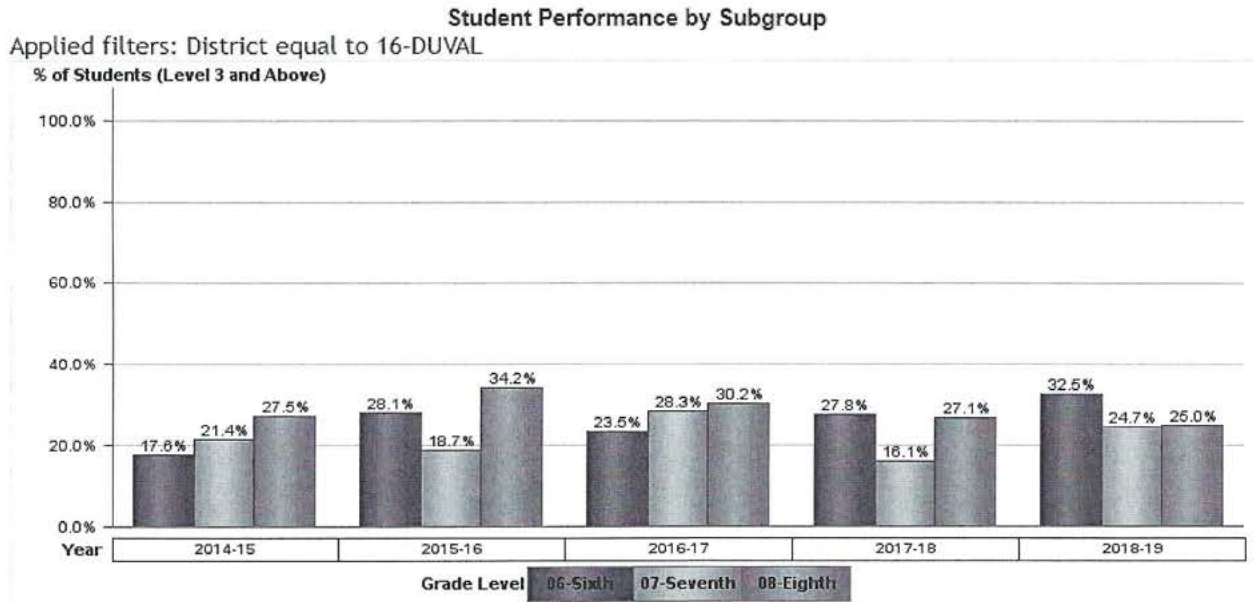
Test/Grade level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
FSA Algebra 1 EOC						
8	2,712	82.9%	3,070	81.5%	1,982	54.1%
FSA Geometry EOC						
8	738	95.3%	777	97.0%	2,664	79.5%
Civics EOC						
7	8,272	65.0%	4,563	83.3%	3,995	56.5%

Highlands Middle Historical Trend Data Reviewed:

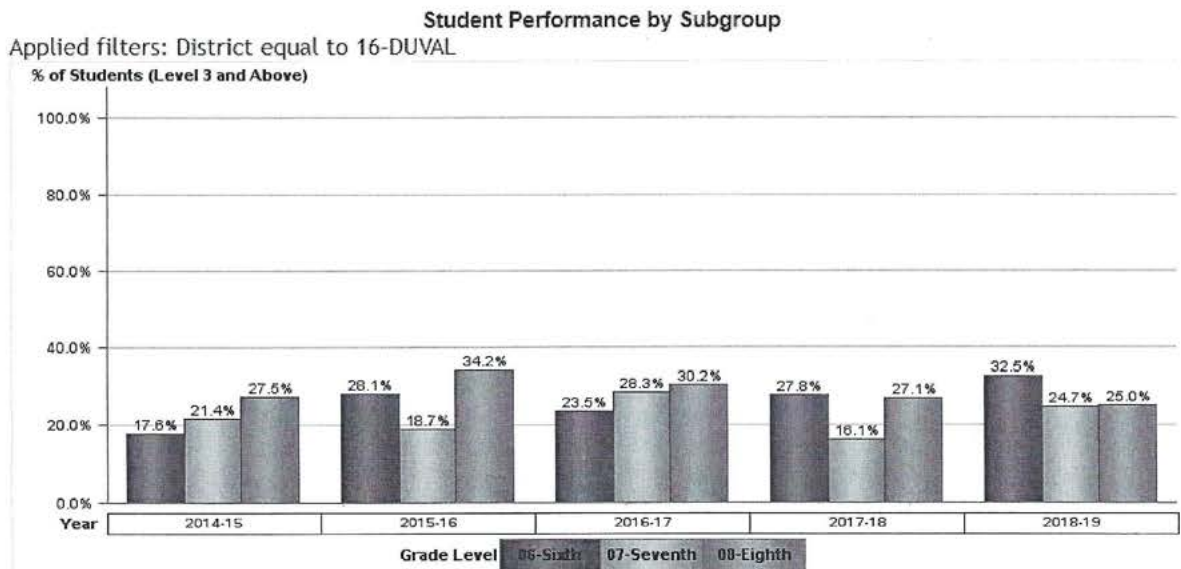
Test/Grade level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
FSA ELA						
6	255	16.5%	255	20.0%	323	32.5%
7	252	17.1%	231	23.4%	299	24.7%
8	273	31.1%	239	21.8%	272	25.0%
FSA Math						
6	261	11.5%	266	18.4%	315	25.1%
7	261	24.1%	242	28.1%	296	30.7%
8	232	26.7%	200	24.0%	185	14.1%
Science						
8	275	32.0%	217	22.6%	271	24.0%

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Highlands Middle School - ELA



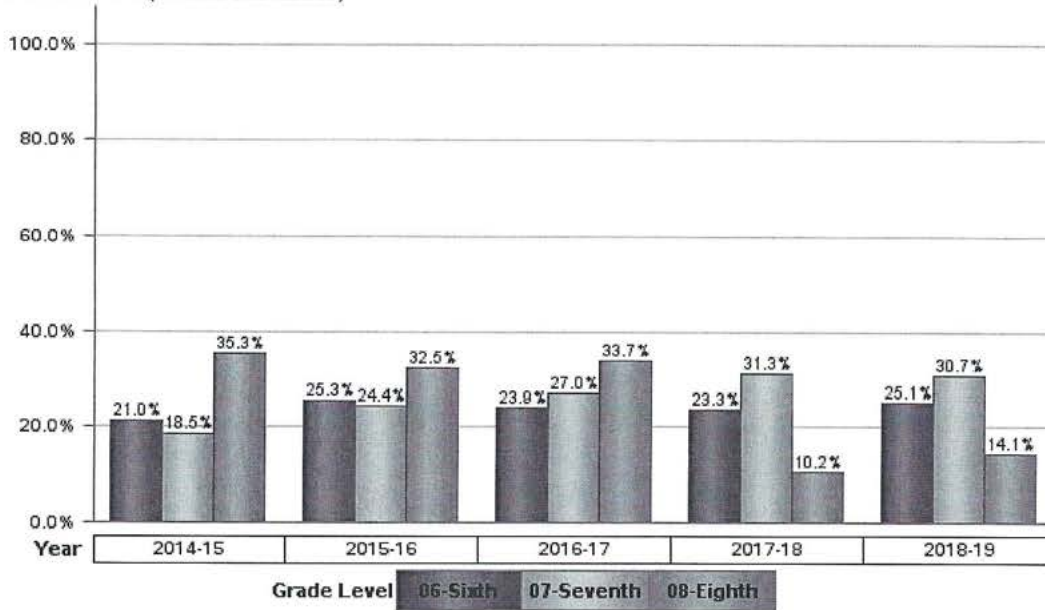
Highlands Middle School – Math



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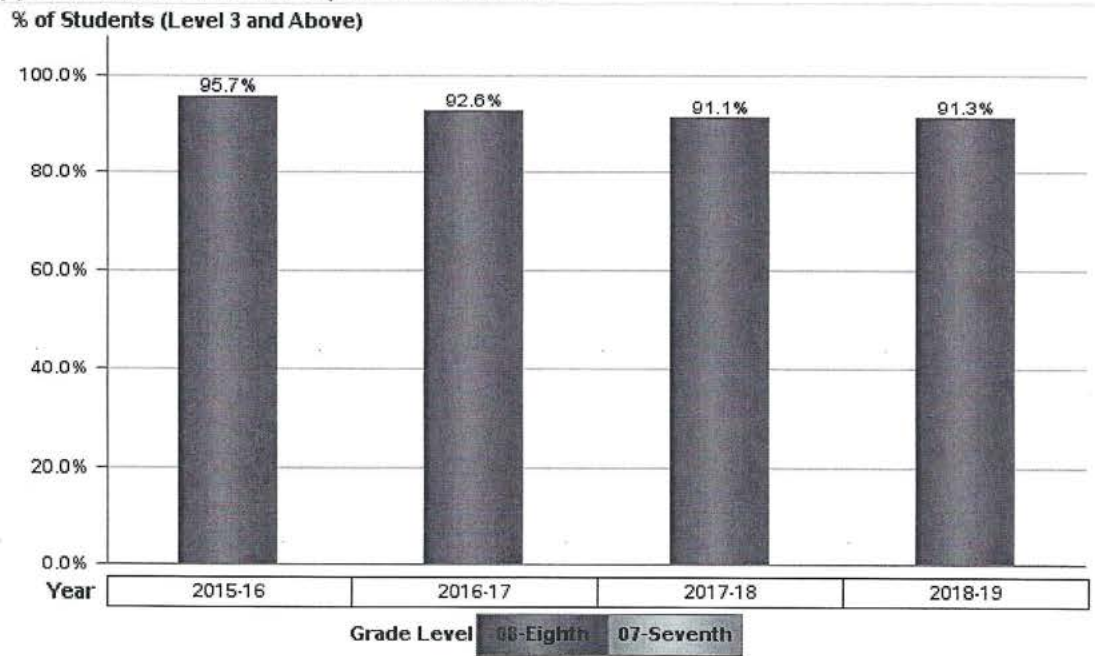
Highlands Algebra 1 EOC

Student Performance by Subgroup
 Applied filters: District equal to 16-DUVAL
 % of Students (Level 3 and Above)



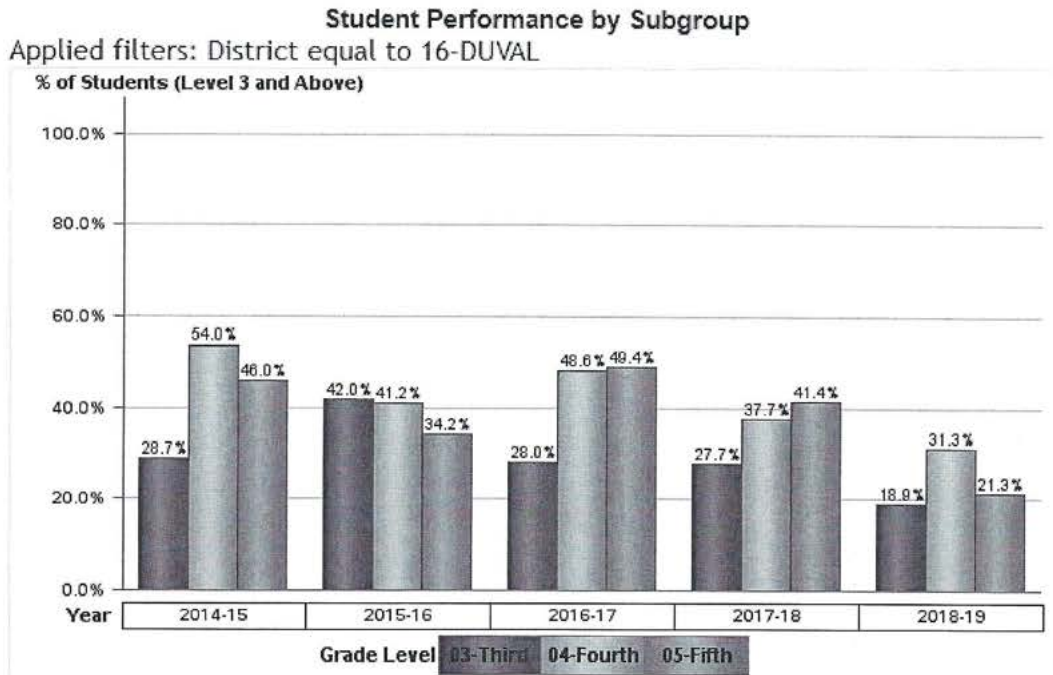
Highlands Civics

Student Performance by Subgroup
 Applied filters: District equal to 16-DUVAL
 % of Students (Level 3 and Above)

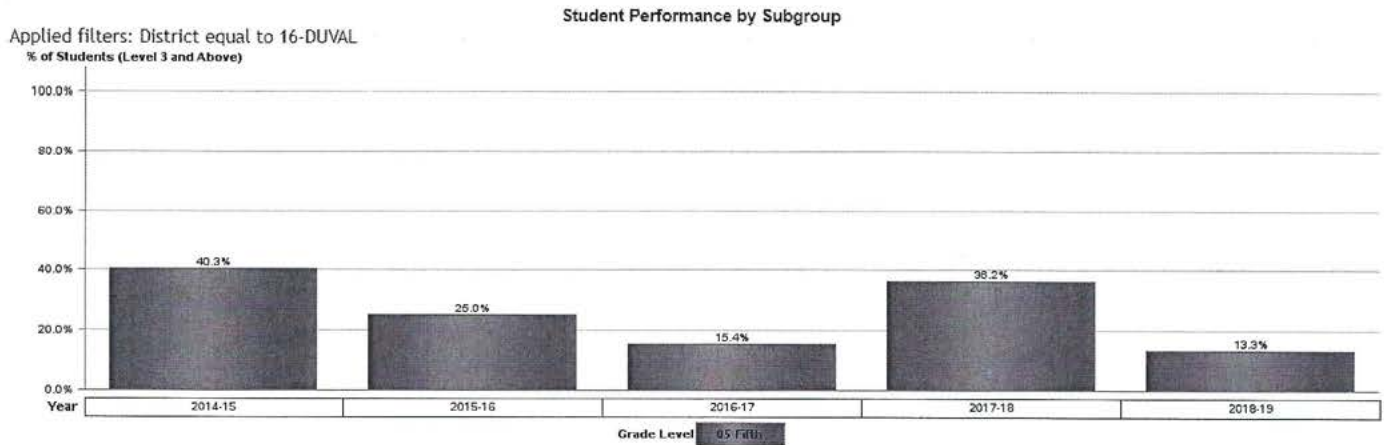


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Highlands – Math



Highlands – Science



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Highlands Middle School

Middle School (6-8)
10913 Pine Estates Road East, Jacksonville, FL 32218



5Essentials Survey



Parent Survey



For 2019, Highlands Middle School is not yet organized for improvement

The overall performance score is comprised of each of the 5Essential scores. Schools that are at or above benchmark on 3 or more essentials are 10 times more likely to improve than schools that are below the benchmark.

[About the Survey](#)

THE 5ESSENTIALS
How is Highlands Middle School performing on each of the 5Essentials?

ALL MEASURES
How is Highlands Middle School performing across all measures?

Survey Response Rates for Highlands Middle School

Respondent	Response Rate	(Florida)
Students	66.9%	(70.2%)
Teachers	75.0%	(77.9%)
Parents	25.9%	(23.2%)

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

Accountable and shared leadership:

Duval’s leadership and community assessment team determined that the best turnaround option for Highlands Middle School is District-Managed turn-around (DMT).

1. Duval County Public Schools has demonstrated successful results in increasing student achievement through the support of our district Innovation and School Improvement (ISI) support team. Prior DMT supported Middle schools have demonstrated performance gains within one year of dedicated support. In an effort to accelerate and empower sustainable change,

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the Regional office for Innovation and School Improvement has been re-envisioned and now includes a staff of instructional leaders with content specific proven experiences in increasing student learning and school improvement instructional leadership at both the Middle and the secondary level.

Currently, Highlands Middle is under the direct supervision of the Regional Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement, one who has extensive proven experience with supporting and transforming struggling schools. Additional guidance and support is also provided by a comprehensive executive team, content specific instructional specialist and a full wrap around service group, which is a culture & climate support team that includes a social worker, truancy officer, and a positive behavior specialist to provide attendance and full wrap around support as identified by school data.

2. The Innovation and School Improvement's (ISI) Regional instructional support team includes content specific curriculum specialist in the areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, science social sciences and data analysis. The re-envisioned ISI office also supports a recently enhanced culture & climate team which includes a social worker, truancy officer, and a positive behavior specialist to provide strategic support in strategies for increasing student attendance and behavior infractions that impact daily classroom instruction. This additional tier of support will advise the school's administration with providing direct student behavioral health support and early intervention resources. The school's counselor will collaborate with the district assigned Culture and Climate support team to provide an array of educationally-relevant services to students through a comprehensive wrap-around service model.

Standards-based instruction and learning:

The focus of the district's turnaround plan for Highlands Middle is to provide tiered, systematic, and targeted instructional support to address the challenges that impacted student learning. As noted earlier, the school has faced considerable changes within last few years, and the strategies outlined within this section have been designed to provide tools to address the school's current needs. These turnaround instructional strategies are research-based, and have proven results within Duval County Public Schools, and elsewhere throughout the state and the nation. The district refers to these as "coaching-mentoring-partnering" strategies, and they have been tied to the findings from the Community Assessment Team.

Baseline and ongoing progress monitoring assessment data (provided by Achieve 3000, i-Ready, Corrective Reading, ACALETICS, and other district progress monitoring assessment tools) will continue to be utilized to set the instructional focus and inform instructional practices at the school. The District's framework for excellent instruction and classroom instructional monitoring tools will direct and guide both school leaders and content area teachers along with intervention support staff in making data driven decisions necessary for continued improvement. To support these efforts, the district will implement the following strategies:

1. Innovation and School Improvement leadership will collaborate with district content directors and specialists to design and present interactive learning sessions that will drive

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Highland’s instructional staff deeper into grade level and content specific standards and instructional implications revealed through data analysis.

2. Region leadership and content area specialist will support job-embedded professional learning community trainings in effective use of intervention tools to build and support small group differentiated instruction that addresses each of the school’s targeted student populations (Proficient, Approaching, Below) in increasing grade level proficiency.
3. Major emphasis will continue to be on effective standards based instructional planning that supports and increases student grade level reading, math, and science proficiency in both bottom quartile and overall grade level performance indicators.
4. Content specific training sessions will be provided for teachers in order to support school teacher teams in the identification and unpacking of priority standards for each quarter of instruction identified within the district’s curriculum guides; grade and content specific differentiated lesson planning through demonstrations of instruction that highlight deliberate practices; and in recognizing student learning “look fors” that demonstrate standards mastery.
5. Through engaging professional development and coached practice walkthroughs, the school’s leadership team will also learn how to systematically collect classroom-level data from many classrooms and aggregate that data to expose patterns and trends within their school’s instructional program. Teachers will also learn a protocol to facilitate structured reflective data conversations with their students that increase the self-efficacy needed to transform a learner.
6. The Office of Innovation and School Improvement support team and Regional Executive Directors, along with the State assigned RED will conduct monthly data meetings with the school’s leadership team, working collectively to identify key areas of needed support in order to assist intervention staff in providing effective tiers of support specific to meeting individual student growth area needs.
7. This aligned observational and ongoing student achievement data process will also provide the regional support staff with information that can be used to offer additional support and/or resources as needed.

Positive culture and climate:

First, the district regional leadership in coordination with a newly hired principal at Highlands Middle School, plans to support the administration and staff at Highlands Middle with leveraging the school’s existing partner as effective resources to supporting specific challenges that the students and families face to include the following:

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1. Continue to use the *5Essential* survey in order to streamline the school's focus on the 5 foundational elements that make a successful school: Effective Leaders; Collaborative Teachers; Involved Families; Supportive Environments; and Ambitious Instruction. The leadership will continue to work and improve on the greatest area of weakness, Involved Families. This purposeful internal review of current systems will allow current leadership at the school to better understand the underlying issues that must be addressed to create an environment conducive to learning and that will foster reengagement of its most needed stakeholders. Highland's administration will continue to closely monitor progress and reassess strategies based upon those survey results.
2. Continued involvement of current student support staff: Highlands Middle will continue to rely heavily on the expertise of the school's team of teachers to provide historical context and knowledge of community and student needs, content specific instructional specialist, and the full wrap around service support from its partnership with United Way of Central Florida which provides wrap around support that is necessary to support and sustain and rigorous and supportive learning environment that encourages attendance and positive student, parent, and teacher relationships as identified by school data.
3. A more improved and targeted calendar of Parent Academy events: The Duval County Schools Parent Academy provides courses for families at locations throughout the district. Highlands Middle will work with their partners to offer Parent Academy courses that address the specific needs of their student families on site at the school. The Parent Academy will serve as a platform for direct contact with families, addressing the whole child. Additionally, school leadership will encourage participation in the courses by offering high interest, interactive events, and sessions offered will be in response to needs identified by parents and assessment tools.
4. Reach out to active small business owners, home associations, and other community organizations to increase neighborhood participation and buy-in. The neighborhood where the school is situated is an established community The school leadership will work to re-engage their neighborhood associations, small business owners, and other community partners to join their advisory council with a mission to encourage increased participation from the disengaged members of the community.

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

Highlands Middle School is one of Duval's most fragile schools. The school's needs assessment review of data indicated that during the 2018 - 2019 school year Highland Middle demonstrated an increase in overall English Language Arts proficiency (4%) but demonstrated a loss of 7% in ELA Learning Gains; and an additional loss of 2% in ELA lowest 25th Percentile proficiency.

Highlands Middle School's overall mathematics proficiency experienced a slight increase in 2019 increasing (2%), but unfortunately, both student math learning gains and lowest 25th percentile student data demonstrated a decrease of four percentage points from the prior year. Grade 8 Science data demonstrated a slight decline as well of one percentage point, but the most significant loss of proficiency was the loss of (-42%) percentage points in Civics proficiency , along with the other noted decreased grade components, resulted in the school earning 40% of the available school grading components.

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The committee had a shared belief that the inconsistency in standards based instruction in multiple core content area classrooms, greatly impacted active student engagement and resulted in a marked decrease in student achievement. In addition to the aforementioned student outcome data, instructional walk through data demonstrated an inconsistency in standards based instruction occurring in classrooms, inconsistent use of student data to plan for and differentiate instruction, checks for understanding to ensure student's demonstration of learning of concepts and skills were meeting aligned performance expectations of grade level, content specific standards.

Implementation Plan

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

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

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

Part A.

Duval County Public Schools Community Assessment Team and District Leadership have determined that the best Turnaround Option Plan for Highlands Middle School is a District – Managed – Turnaround (DMT) Plan, with that objective in mind, the following strategies for accountable and shared leadership are either being sustained, supplemented, or newly implemented to support the district's efforts of school wide transformation:

1. Accountable and shared leadership:

Duval County Public Schools has demonstrated successful results in increasing student achievement through the support of our district turnaround support team approach. Prior DMT supported Middle schools have demonstrated performance gains within one year of dedicated support. In an effort to accelerate and empower sustainable change. This year the turnaround support team, has been re-envisioned and now the Region for Innovation and School Improvement. The ISI support team still includes a leadership team with proven experience in increasing student learning and school improvement to support Middle Grades Instructional level students and teachers but has also added instructional support for accelerated math and science content area specialist.

Currently, Highlands Middle is under the direct supervision of the Region Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement. The Region Superintendent has extensive proven experience with supporting and transforming struggling schools. Additionally, the administrative team at Highland is further supported by an Executive Director who has experience in turning around several schools with similar demographics, content specific instructional specialist who have worked extensively in high poverty, under-performing schools environments; and a full wrap around support service group, that includes a social worker, an on-site truancy officer, a behavior interventionist to provide attendance and full wrap around support as identified by school data.

2. Standards-based Instruction and Learning:

The ISI Region’s instructional support team includes, as previously mentioned, includes content specific curriculum specialist in the areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, science, civics, and data analysis. The focus of the district’s turnaround plan for Highlands Middle is to provide tiered, systematic, and targeted instructional support to address the challenges that impacted student learning. As noted earlier, the school has faced considerable changes within last few years, and the strategies outlined within this section have been designed to provide tools to address the school’s current needs. These turnaround instructional strategies are research-based, and have proven results within Duval County Public Schools, and elsewhere throughout the state and the nation:

- a) Region leadership and content area specialist will support job-embedded professional learning community trainings in effective use of intervention tools to build and support small group differentiated instruction that addresses each of the school’s targeted student populations (Proficient, Approaching, Below) in increasing grade level proficiency.
- b) Major emphasis will continue to be on effective standards based instructional planning that supports and increases student grade level reading, math, and science proficiency in both bottom quartile and overall grade level performance indicators.
- c) Content specific training sessions will be provided for teachers in order to support school teacher teams in the identification and unpacking of priority standards for each quarter of instruction identified within the district’s curriculum guides; grade and content specific differentiated lesson planning through demonstrations of instruction that highlight deliberate practices; and in recognizing student learning “look fors” that demonstrate standards mastery.
- d) Through engaging professional development and coached practice walkthroughs, the school’s leadership team will also learn how to systematically collect classroom-level data from many classrooms and aggregate that data to expose patterns and trends within their school’s instructional program. Teachers will also learn a protocol to facilitate structured reflective data conversations with their students that increase the self-efficacy needed to transform a learner.

3. Positive Culture and Environment:

The re-envisioned Innovation and School Improvement Region is further providing comprehensive culture and environment support at Highlands Middle through a team that has been directly dedicated from the department of Student Discipline and Support Services to support schools within the region. This dedicated team includes a social worker, truancy officer, and a positive behavior specialist, to provide strategic support in strategies for increasing student attendance and behavior infractions that impact daily classroom instruction.

This additional tier of support will advise the school’s administration with providing direct student behavioral health support and early intervention resources. Highland’s guidance counselor will collaborate and on-site wrap around support staff with work collaboratively with

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the district climate and culture staff team assigned to the Innovation and School Improvement Region to provide an array of educationally-relevant services for Highland’s students and their families through a comprehensive wraparound service model.

Part B.

Duval County Public schools verifies that it has addressed the following assurances as agreed upon within Highlands Middle School’s TOP-1 submission as follows:

- As previously noted within this submission, the district verifies that the districts’ leadership team, had an integral role in developing this plan for school improvement. Our team, under the direct supervision of the Superintendent, Dr. Diana Greene included, the Chief of Schools, the Chief Academic Officer, the Innovation and School Improvement Region Superintendent, several Executive Directors who support the region, the Office of School Improvement, the Office of Assessment and Accountability, along with Highland’s new Principal, Assistant Principal, school coaches, interventionists, teachers, staff, parents, and other community stakeholders worked to collectively develop the district-managed turnaround plan for the school. The Regional Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement, will lead the district’s turnaround efforts as articulated within this plan.
- The district can assure that all instructional programs and frameworks are aligned to the Florida Standards in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science, be utilized for all students at Highlands Middle and are supported with supplementary materials in addition to those provided through the district’s standard adoption process that have evidence of effectiveness with high-poverty, at-risk students similar to the population of students served at Highlands.
- The district has prescribed and requires progress monitoring assessments, aligned to Florida’s Standards in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science, be utilized for all students at Highlands Middle. These progress monitoring assessments (provided by Achieve 3000, i-Ready, Corrective Reading, and other district interim assessments) will be used to set the instructional focus and inform instructional practices at the school. The district further assures that these progress monitoring assessments are predictive of statewide assessment outcomes and provide the school’s administration with valid data to support intervention and acceleration for students.
- The district has also worked to ensure that the school has effective leadership and educators capable of improving student achievement by conducting a comprehensive review of performance data to include summative evaluation and state released VAM to select current staffing for the school.
- As Duval County has more than five “D” or “F” schools receiving support, Duval staff has worked to ensure that that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned Highlands Middle with a rating of either Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM), is less than the district average.

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Assurance 2: School Capacity-Leaders and Educators

Duval County Public Schools verifies that it has addressed the following assurances as agreed upon within Highlands Middle's TOP 1 submission as follows:

- The district replaced the prior school administration upon notice of the school's earning a second grade of "D" in July of 2019. As noted within the school's TOP 1, the district assures the current administrator possesses a recent turnaround record of success in improving schools of similar student populations and other factors that were identified as barriers during Highland's comprehensive needs analysis.
- The district further assures that all hiring, recruitment, retention, and reassignment of instructional personnel at Highlands Middle have been thoroughly reviewed with priority focus on student performance data in alignment with the most recent three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM) and/or district assessment data for non-state assessed grades and/or content areas.

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

Correlation between SIP and TOP-2:

Highland's DMT TOP II is directly aligned to their current 2019-2020 School Wide Improvement Plan. The school has embedded comprehensive strategies to address specific areas of concern that were identified during the problems solving process used to formulate the school's DMT TOP II. All strategies included within Highland's SIP have been reviewed by the district's assigned RED and incorporated within the TOP 2 to ensure that all plans of action are consistent and directly correlated with the identified action steps and focus areas of support embedded in the School's Plan for Improvement. To ensure a complimentary and tiered application of all resources, both human and capital is utilized, the school's TOP II was designed to directly correlate with the learning goals and target student achievement objectives articulated within each area of focus in their 2019-2020 School Wide Improvement Plan.

Describe how the district and school leadership team are working together to implement the plans to improve the school.

For the 2019-2020 school year, aforementioned, Highlands Middle School is now under the direct supervision of the Region Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement. Additionally, the school is further supported by an Executive Director, and a content specific instructional support team. Through quarterly data meetings with the school's leadership team, coaching support plans and content specific training sessions will be created to provide Highland's teacher teams support in areas identified from progress monitoring data and informative classroom level data collected during systematic

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instructional reviews. To further strengthen the collaboration amongst stakeholders in improving the overall academic achievement at Highlands Middle School, the district and school leadership will engage in a mid-year review cycle that will include pairing students, parents, and teachers, as partners in a reflective data conversation. Teachers will work side by side with their students during parents conferences where the student will facilitate a reflective data conversation with their parent/guardian in order to increase the student's ownership and instill self-efficacy in their need to transform as a learner.

District-Managed Turnaround Plan Assurances

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

Assurance 1: District Capacity and Support

- The district shall ensure the district leadership team, which includes the superintendent and district leadership, has an integral role in school improvement. This team may include those in charge of curriculum, general and special education, student services, human resources, professional development and other areas relevant to school improvement. The district leadership team shall develop and implement the district-managed turnaround plan. The district shall dedicate a position to lead the turnaround effort at the district level. The selected employee shall report directly to the superintendent and support the principal.
- The district shall ensure that instructional programs align to Florida's Standards for English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, social studies and science. The district shall provide the evidence that shows instructional programs to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students and how they are different from the previous programs. The district shall demonstrate alignment of Florida's Standards across grade levels to improve background knowledge in social studies, science and the arts.
- The district shall prescribe and require progress monitoring assessments that are aligned to Florida's Standards in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science for all students. The district shall ensure that its progress monitoring assessments are predictive of statewide assessment outcomes and provide valid data to support intervention and acceleration for students.

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

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

1. Describe the district leadership team and its role in implementing the DMT plan.
2. Explain how the district allows for flexibility in areas such as staffing, scheduling and budgeting, to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes.

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3. Identify how the new or revised instructional programs align to Florida’s Standards for ELA, mathematics, social studies and science; the research that shows it to be effective with high-poverty, at-risk students; and how they are different from the previous programs.
4. Identify progress monitoring and summative assessments aligned to Florida’s Standards that will be used in the school.
5. Based on the analysis of progress monitoring and summative assessment data, describe any changes that will be implemented to provide continuous support for the school.
6. Explain the district’s allocation of supports and resources and how they align to the specific needs of the school.
7. Identify and describe the district policies and practices that will need to be reviewed and changed to support the school.
8. Describe the system that the district will put in place to review and monitor the effectiveness of the support.

Assurance 1: Narrative of District Capacity and Support

The district’s plan of designing a comprehensive system of support for these schools begins with understanding the essential competencies that a large urban school district requires at its highest levels in order to ensure that the greatest needs of our most challenged school communities are met. With that understanding in mind, Duval’s Executive leadership team under the direction of the Superintendent, Dr. Diana Greene, includes all cabinet level members and other essential executive level staff. This team was established to identify and provide both comprehensive and targeted levels of support to each identified schools.

To lead the implementation of the identified supports for continuous improvement of schools in Duval County, the Superintendent also appoints the Deputy Superintendent and the Chief of Schools, a who also has demonstrated evidence of the essential competencies needed to direct the work of turning around Duval’s most challenged schools, to guide the work of the team and the appointed Region Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement. Collectively, the Team works to ensure that the necessary flexibility in the areas of staffing, scheduling, budgeting, and other operational areas area addressed in a manner that supports the implementation of a comprehensive plan needed to turnaround the trajectory of Duval’s most challenged schools. To further ensure the school’s plan of improvement is not hindered, the district’s current strategies for supporting our turnaround schools allows for flexibility in essential areas such as staffing, scheduling and budgeting. The district’s Human Resources staff play a critical role, through both their recruitment efforts and individualized support, in supporting our TOP schools to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improving overall student achievement outcomes at their schools.

Additionally, through an MOU between the district and the bargaining agent for instructional personnel, the district prioritizes the staffing needs of its TOP schools. In addition to receiving priority access to internal and external candidate information, TOP school principals receive priority access to local recruiting events. Normal hiring and transfer guidelines are also waived for TOP schools as well as contractual language defining employee transfer eligibility, thereby providing increased staffing flexibility. Moreover, the district has engaged part-time staffing supervisors who

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pre-screen applicants for referral to TOP schools. While candidate referrals are provided to TOP school leaders, hiring and placement decisions are made at the school level further supporting the school leaders' autonomy to hire and staff based upon individual school improvement planning priorities. Making systemic change can be hard. Effectively leading change requires moving from the notion that formal leaders must be the all-encompassing facilitator for the change.

Through the District's Turnaround Regional Leadership team's support, Highlands Middle School's new administration and academic leadership team will be receiving guidance in a step by step process for implementing their school's improvement plan by the creation of systemic procedures and process for structuring the change needed to support school improvement. The school's leadership team will engage in professional learning about what research suggests it takes to facilitate change in a secondary system including the creation of change facilitation teams, the different change facilitator roles on that team, and how to effectively implement their school improvement plan to ensure collective responsibility for a successful change effort.

Finally, to monitor the effectiveness of the aforementioned district managed plans of support, direct coaching support will be provided to the administration at Highlands Middle from the Innovation and School Improvement Region Superintendent. The school principal will also have ongoing monitoring meetings with their assigned executive director and the region superintendent. These meetings will also provide opportunities to glean insight and program effectiveness, additional areas of needed instructional/leadership mentoring regarding best practices in educational leadership, and other essential indicators that may need real time adjustments to ensure academic improvement occurs as planned.

Assurance 2: School Capacity-Leaders and Educators

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

Leaders

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

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

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

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Educators

- The district shall ensure it has reviewed practices in hiring, recruitment, retention and reassignment of instructional personnel with priority on student performance data.
- For districts with more than five schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a Differentiated Accountability (DA) school with a rating of either Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state Value-added Model (VAM), is less than the district average. For districts with five or fewer schools, the district shall ensure that the percentage of instructional personnel assigned to a DA school with either a rating of Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement, based on the most recent three-year aggregated state VAM, is less than the state average.
- The district shall ensure the instructional staff who do not have a state VAM rating and who do not show evidence of increasing student achievement are not rehired at the school.
- Pursuant to section 1012.2315(2)(a), F.S., the district must ensure that the percentage of temporarily certified teachers, teachers in need of improvement or out-of-field teachers assigned to the school is not higher than the district average.

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity-Leaders

In the box below, the district must provide information about its systems to ensure the school has an effective administrator capable of leading the turnaround efforts, including desired experience and competencies, recruitment and retention incentives and operational flexibility. At a minimum, reply to the following:

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

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Leaders

As a result of past school performance data, the former principal of Highlands Middle School was replaced in July of 2019. As the Superintendent has the full authority and discretion in the selection and hiring of the administrative leadership, a process was initiated, under the guidance of Superintendent, to identify potential leadership to assume governance at Highlands Middle School for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The district's Chief Human Resource Officer, in collaboration with the Chief of Schools and Regional Leadership, developed an administrative candidate selection pool

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of possible candidates that met the necessary leadership characteristics as described in the DMT Top Plan assurances.

These characteristics included, but were not limited to, prior recent experience as a school leader in a turnaround school, record of academic performance in all measurable/assessed content areas, demonstrated effectiveness with improving school culture, evidence of implementation of strategies to address early warning indicators (such as attendance, discipline, suspensions, etc.) and experience with stakeholder engagement. In July of 2019, after a review of the preferred candidate pool, Mrs. Kenyanna Wilcox was assigned as the new principal for Highlands Middle School.

Mrs. Wilcox began her educational career teaching students' math and science in both elementary and middle school classrooms in 3 of Duval County's inner city, high poverty and underperforming schools. During her time teaching, she developed a passion, along with a sense of urgency, for working with at risk student populations. In 2014, as part of her efforts to become a more active catalyst in changing the academic landscape for students in her community, she accepted a position at Westside High School in order to gain experience with at the High School Level, but primarily for the opportunity to work under the direct guidance of Mr. Greg Bostic, one of the District's Master Principals.

Recently, to ensure that schools identified for intensive support were able to receive consistent and effective leadership, that had successful experience with strategies for and developing teachers and instructional support staff in challenging learning environments that were inconsistent with providing effective standards based instruction that resulted in continuous student achievement, the district to steps to increase the level of leadership development of its administrative teams by creating a leadership comprehensive support system. Part of that system included, pairing new assistant principals, with seasoned administrators, who had not only proven track records of successfully working in challenged school environments, but also had demonstrated evidence of being able to build capacity in their supporting staff.

Subsequently, Mrs. Wilcox, after serving 2 years as an assistant principal under a master principal, was named principal's Southside Middle School where she led the school for 2 years, maintaining a grade of "C" during both years, but also working to develop a learning climate and culture that was more conducive to supporting active participation and engagement from all stakeholders.

In addition to the change in school principal, the leadership team has been enhanced with a two newly assigned assistant principals, one (Mr. Robert Gresham) with extensive experience with K-12 administrative experience and, whom prior to joining Highland's administrative team, was instrumental in the turnaround efforts at Hyde Park Elementary which increased its 2018 school grade of "F" to a 2019 school grade of "C". The two assistant principals, under the guidance of the Master Principal, will lead the following supports to their designated grade level teachers:

- Real time, data driven instructional support with corrective feedback focused on increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap in all ESSA subgroups;
- Serve as the lead of grade level ELA, Math, and Science Professional learning communities based upon school data reviews;

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- Ensure alignment of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment processes to promote effective student performance; and support the effective use of benchmarks, learning, and expectations.
- Provide direct feedback measures to identified instructional staff to ensure accountability for all participants engaged in the educational process; and
- Work cohesively with the school's Master Principal, to support and promote a positive learning culture through job-embedded, real time provide coaching of identified instructional staff.

Once assigned to the academic leadership Mrs. Wilcox and her supporting assistant principals began working with the instructional staff on the school's plan for improvement. A major priority, articulated within the school's SIP is addressing all barriers identified during the school's 8-Step problem solving process. The new leadership is confident that with the recent enhancements that made to Highland's school specific DMT support plan, along with the inclusion of continued the shoulder to shoulder coaching support from, a peer mentoring principal, Master Principal, and the Regional Superintendent for Innovation and School Improvement, Highlands Middle School's students will produce the appropriate achievement gains this year.

Although Duval County Public Schools has confidence in the current leadership and support systems, DCPS is also committed to bringing in new leadership to Highlands Middle School's current administrative team if the schools grade does not demonstrate improvement.

Assurance 2: Narrative of School Capacity- Educators

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

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

Assurance 2: Narrative-School Capacity- Educators

Duval's Human Resources staff works with school and region leadership in the referral and selection of candidates for identified vacancies. TOP Schools, like Highlands Middle School, are given priority access to transfer teachers, new hires, and open contract candidates who are offered contracts of employment at recruiting events the district attends as well as recruiting events

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sponsored by the district. TOP schools are also allowed to hire and double staff positions for anticipated vacancies due to resignations, additional funded position, and/or administrative transfers. Standard hiring and/or transfer guidelines are also waived for TOP schools as well as contractual language defining employee transfer eligibility, thereby providing increased staffing flexibility. District staff support schools by assisting in identification and pre-screening of candidates, however final placement is made by the principal after reviewing a candidate's application or other credentials and conducting a school-based interview. An MOU between the district and employee union is in place which sets forth the allowance for prioritized staffing at TOP schools. To ensure that students enrolled within any of Duval County Public Schools, implementing an approved TOP, are instructed by certified instructional personnel when unexpected vacancies arise, the district's human resources staff collaborate with school and region leadership in the referral and selection of candidates for identified vacancies. SI designated schools, like Highlands Middle, are given priority access to transfer teachers, new hires, and open contract candidates who are offered contracts of employment at recruiting events the district attends as well as recruiting events sponsored by the district.

Additionally, TOP schools are allowed to hire and double staff positions for anticipated vacancies due to resignations, additional funded position, and/or administrative transfers. When unexpected vacancies arise, the schools utilize the substitute staffing services available to the district. Instructional support staff and administrative staff oversee the work of substitutes to ensure the quality of instruction continues while recruiting efforts are ongoing. To further support the recruitment as well as limit the amount of turnover of highly qualified staff at our priority schools, the district, through an MOU with the union, offers teacher retention and performance incentives to teachers at TOP schools. The district provides full-time eligible Instructional and Administrative staff who are employed at a TOP school an annual Retention Incentive. In exchange for the Retention Incentive payment, the Employee agrees to remain at the School for the commitment period of two (2) consecutive school years.

Finally, a Performance Incentive/Bonus of \$3,000- \$5,000 is paid to instructional and administrative personnel if the school grade improves to a grade of "C" or greater. To be eligible for the Performance Incentive, a staff member must have been employed at the School (not on unpaid leave) during the October and February survey periods of the 2019-2020 school year, must have signed the Incentive Agreement for that year, and must have received an Effective or Highly Effective evaluation. Employees who transfer to another district school or department or separate from the district are not eligible to receive the performance incentive.

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Assurance 2: Verification-School Capacity- Educators

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

What actions have been taken to recruit with state VAM ratings of Highly Effective and Effective to this school?

- Duval leadership upholds a belief that the most essential component to an effective school is the quality of the personnel and their effectiveness. Annually, the district's Human Resources staff participate in up to 50 recruitment events. The TOP school staffing supervisor works exhaustively to ensure that hiring referrals for teacher staffing at our priority schools, are only made if VAM data scores are in the effective or highly effective range
- Additionally, with the recent introduction of the Unified School Improvement Grant Supplemental (UniSIG) Teacher Allocation, the district has been able to reach out with an even larger incentive package to teachers in and near our district, by being able to add \$7,500 to *\$15,000 in addition to our current supplement package to teachers who meet the eligibility criteria as Highly Effective and Effective based upon their state VAM data to come and teach at Highlands, this new additional incentive helped to open new avenues of incentivizing Highly Effective and Effective teachers to join instructional teams in supporting the most fragile schools within our district.

How many instructional personnel were reassigned or non-renewed due to state VAM ratings of Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory?

- Duval County Public School's human resource and district regional staff worked collaboratively to ensure that all teachers hired, rehired, and or transferred were deemed effective or highly effective, in accordance with section 1012.34, F.S. Highlands Middle had 9 teachers administratively transferred due to released aggregate state VAM rating data of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

Confirm that all reassigned instructional personnel were not reassigned to DA schools.

- All instructional personnel with state VAM ratings of Needs Improvement were not reassigned to School Improvement (DA) schools.

How did the district fill the vacancies? Have all vacancies been filled with certified instructional personnel?

- Duval's Human Resource created a priority candidate referral and selection process to supports Region Leadership and Schools like Highlands Middle that are identified for School Improvement, as defined within *SB Rule 6A-1.099811*. This priority staffing system, gives schools priority access to referrals and selections of instructional candidates, which includes new hires, transfer teachers and open contract candidates who are offered contracts of

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employment at recruiting events the district attends. Additionally, all TOP schools, like Highlands Middle School, are allowed to hire and double staff positions for anticipated vacancies due to resignations, additional funded positions, and/or administrative transfers.

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

STATE VAM DATA- School % Compared to District and State%				
3- year aggregated VAM Data	Highly Effective (HE)	Effective (EF)	Needs Improvement (NI)	Unsatisfactory (UN)
Number of instructional personnel	0	6	1	0
School %	0%	85.7%	14.3%	0%
District %	16%	53%	16%	16%
State %	17%	54%	14%	14%

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Acknowledgement

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

Name and title of person responsible for completing and submission of the TOP-2
Jacqueline Kelley, Executive Director
Contact information: email, phone number
kelleyj@duvalschools.org ; (904) 390 – 2623 or (904) 314 - 8677
Date submitted to the Bureau of School Improvement (due October 1)
October 1, 2019
Superintendent signature (or authorized representative)
