

# UNISIG APPLICATION

## 28 - Highlands



Dr. Brenda Longshore, Superintendent

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## Purpose and Outline of the UniSIG Proposal

Under section 1003 of Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Public Law No. 114-95, each state educational agency (SEAs) shall reserve funds for school improvement, no less than 95 percent of which shall be used to make grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) on a formula or competitive basis, to serve schools implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under section 1111(d).

For 2017-18, Unified School Improvement Grants (UniSIG) will be awarded on a formula basis. Eligible applicants are local educational agencies (LEAs) with funded Title I schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement, as well as LEAs with high schools, Title I or non-Title I, that have a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 67 percent or less, regardless of the school grade earned.

### Part I: Eligibility and Program Requirements

The district reviews the list of eligible schools and allocations and ensures the requirements of UniSIG are met by providing assurances and summaries as applicable.

### Part II: Needs Assessment

For each eligible school, the district demonstrates it has completed a thorough analysis of state-, district-, and school-level data (qualitative and quantitative) in order to identify points of strength and opportunities for growth to inform strategic goal formulation.

### Part III: District Problem Solving

The district documents one or more strategic goals for improving the identified schools, anticipates barriers to the goals, identifies strategies to reduce or eliminate the barriers, and creates an implementation plan for each strategy to include both action steps and monitoring activities.

### Part IV: Budget

The district incorporates a budget that indicates the amount of UniSIG funds the district will use in each eligible school. Each budget line item, except indirect costs, is directly tied to an action step identified in Part III.

## LEA Eligibility and Program Requirements

### Eligible LEA and Allocations

### LEA Assurances

#### Request for Applications

We have read the Request for Applications (RFA) in its entirety and understand the intent and requirements of the Unified School Improvement Grant (UniSIG) program.

YES

#### General Terms, Assurances, and Conditions

We understand the LEA must have a signed statement by the agency head certifying applicant adherence to FDOE's General Terms, Assurances, and Conditions for Participation in Federal and State Programs.

YES

#### Risk Analysis

We understand the LEA must have a Risk Analysis (DOE 610) on file with the Florida Department of Education in order to apply for UniSIG.

YES

#### Supplement, not Supplant

We understand that each school the LEA will serve must receive all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of UniSIG funds.

YES

#### Allocation to Schools

We understand the LEA must allocate 100 percent of funds (less indirect costs) generated under UniSIG to the eligible schools.

YES

#### Alignment of Strategies

We understand strategies to be implemented under this program must be aligned with Florida's State Board of Education Strategic Plan.

YES

#### Alignment of School Improvement Plans (SIP)

We understand each strategy to be funded under this program must be identified as an **Activity** (within the Standard SIP) or an **Area of Focus** (within the Pilot SIP), with associated budget lines for each school to be served.

YES

#### Greatest Need

We understand programs, activities, or strategies to be implemented must specifically address the academic achievement of schools and students that demonstrate the greatest need.

YES

**Instructional Programs**

We understand evidence-based instructional programs must be implemented.

YES

**Extended Learning Time**

We understand that extended learning time activities required of an elementary school designated as one of Florida's lowest performing must not be funded through UniSIG.

YES

**Deliverables and Monitoring**

We understand deliverables will be monitored quarterly by the LEA for each school site funded through UniSIG. The LEA must monitor deliverables and be prepared to submit them to the Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) upon request. BSI reserves the right to do desktop or on-site monitoring of each school site and LEA.

YES

## Supports for School Improvement

**Improvement Planning**

Describe how the LEA will support each school identified as comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and/or targeted support and improvement (TS&I) in developing and implementing a school improvement plan (SIP).

The Curriculum and Instruction department will directly support the DA schools through the assistance of the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary, the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary, Math Specialist, Science Specialist, ELA Specialist, Federal Programs Resource Teacher, CTE Resource Teacher, Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services. The C&I department commits to:

- Weekly site based grade level/subject area meetings in each level 1 subject area. (PLC)
- Subject Area Specialist(s) will make monthly visits to assist with curriculum and instruction in each level 1 subject area.
- All elementary school students will have access to the i-Ready online instruction at least 45 minutes per week for each level 1 subject area. STRIVE FOR 45.
- All middle school students, excluding advanced students, will have access to the i-Ready online instruction for at least 45 minutes per week for each level 1 subject area.
- Teachers will follow district created curriculum maps (instructional plans) utilizing the adopted curriculums in each level 1 subject area. \*see below
- All elementary and middle school students will take the i-Ready Diagnostic three times per year in reading and math.
- All students will participate in progress monitoring and/or common assessments in science, reading, and math.
- Administration will lead data chats with district personnel at least twice per year.
- Each school will create and submit a MTSS plan for reading and/or math.
- Teachers will attend district provided trainings/meetings in their content area.
- Monthly SARC meetings will be held at each school. Social workers will attend.
- Strategies to address attendance will be included in the school-wide MTSS plan.
- All personnel involved with attendance, including data operators, will attend district training.
- A report on attendance will be provided at the monthly principals' meeting by the district.
- Monthly MTSS/PBIS meetings will be held at each school. Psychologists will attend.
- Strategies to address discipline will be included in the school-wide MTSS plan.
- Core Calculator Data will be reviewed monthly.
- All personnel involved with discipline will attend district training.
- A report on discipline will be provided at the monthly principals' meeting by the district.

### **Alignment of Resources**

Describe the process through which the LEA identifies and aligns all district resources (e.g., personnel, instructional, curricular, policy) in order to meet the needs of all students and maximize desired student outcomes. Include the methodology for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services and programs to align to interventions in comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and targeted support and improvement (TS&I) schools. Provide the person(s) responsible, frequency of meetings, how an inventory of resources is maintained, and any problem-solving activities used to determine how to apply resources for the highest impact.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT), consisting of the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendents for Finance, Student Support, Secondary, and Elementary, meets on a weekly basis to identify and share district and school-related issues that need the support and assistance from the district level.

This communication structure allows for open dialogue and joint problem solving that provides for the alignment of resources across the district to address priority issues within the district. The collective and comprehensive knowledge among the members of this team affords the sharing of ideas and strategies that can be immediately utilized by the district and schools.

The basis for the discussions consistently center around data elements (quantitative) and individual and collective concerns (qualitative) that provide the ELT with the information necessary to best align resources with the need.

### **District Policies and Practices**

Identify specific policies and practices the LEA shall seek to add, modify, or remove in order to establish or strengthen systems that support school-based leadership teams to implement interventions. Provide the rationale for the proposed changes and the steps required to make the modifications, including person(s) responsible for implementation and follow-up.

Based on the leadership of the Superintendent, Highlands County has a practice of sun setting, resetting, or implementing the policies and practices that support the advancement of the district's vision and mission. For example, a recommended change to the Student Progression Plan will include the advancement of students at the high school level from grade to grade until 11th grade rather than holding students at 9th grade because of the promotion requirements that are district developed. The goal is to excel students in a timely manner, provide credit recovery/grade forgiveness options sooner that a student stays on track to promote and graduate on time.

The Assistant Superintendents have the primary responsibility to gather information from the parents, students, and staff, make proposed revisions to policy and practices within the structure of the statutory language, inform the Superintendent and School Board; and ultimately, seeking approval for inclusion in the practices of the district.

### **Operational Flexibility**

Provide the LEA's definition of "operational flexibility" provided to comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and targets support and improvement (TS&I) schools to enable full and effective implementation of the school improvement plan (SIP).

The district provides the school with operational flexibility for such issues as staffing, master schedule, school day, school calendar, and budgeting to implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.

School leaders exercise autonomy to align policies and practices with the major reform

efforts outlined in the school's turnaround plan. Examples of resource use will reflect enhanced flexibility and align with the major reform efforts outlined in the school's turnaround plan.

### **External Partners**

Describe the LEA's rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partners with whom the LEA will partner.

The SBHC recognizes that fair and open competition is a basic tenet of public purchasing; that such competition reduces the appearance and opportunity for favoritism and inspires public confidence that contracts are awarded equitably and economically. To accomplish this, the Superintendent, his designee, or the Coordinator of Purchasing in matters related to purchasing, for purchases of goods or services totaling less than the formal bid-threshold adopted by the SBHC, may choose to use informal or formal written quotes or for purchases of goods or services totaling more than the formal bid threshold adopted by the SBHC may choose to issue requests for bid proposals, request for proposals or request for qualification statements. Specific procedures to be followed in both instances are set forth later in this manual.

This purchasing procedures manual endeavors to define when informal quotes can be used to select the lowest price from a responsible and responsive supplier or if formal written quotes or the competitive sealed proposal process has to be used to select the supplier. It discusses situations when State Statutes and the State Board of Education Rules may, by regulation, provide for alternative procedures to the competitive sealed process when the character of the item requested renders competitive sealed proposals impractical. Procedures for emergency and sole source purchases are discussed as well as procedures for the purchase of goods or services when the cost is determined to be less than or more than the amount established for the Category Two Bid Threshold as defined in Florida Statutes, Chapter 287.017. The Superintendent, or his designee or (the Coordinator of Purchasing as it relates to these procedures) may also deem it to be in the best interest of the SBHC to use State Purchasing Contracts, State Pricing Agreements, or other Governmental Agency contracts such as but not limited too other School Districts, Counties, or Cities.

Expenditures from district and all other funds available for the public Schools programs conducted in the Highlands County School District shall be authorized by law and must be in accordance with policies and procedures approved and adopted by the SBHC. This manual is intended to establish and describe appropriate procedures and mechanisms to govern the expenditure of funds available to the SBHC for purchase of goods and services required in conducting the business of the SBHC.

No person, unless authorized by SBHC Rules, may make any purchase, any rental, or enter any lease or contract involving the use of SBHC funds, including petty cash and internal funds. All purchases of goods or services, excluding petty cash purchases, regardless of the process used to determine the cost and supplier, will require the issuance of a SBHC purchase order prior to obligating or encumbering SBHC funds or will require the use of the SBHC Purchasing Card.

### **Dissemination**

Provide the methods for dissemination of this application to stakeholders (i.e., students, families, school staff and leadership, and local businesses and organizations) and describe the methods and timelines for reporting student progress, including how communication is provided in a parent-friendly, understandable format, and in multiple languages, if necessary.

Services provided under this grant application are integrated and coordinated with other programs under ESEA and ESSA. Each school has a School Advisory Council (SAC), composed of parents, school personnel and students that meet on a regular basis (monthly at least 6X a year). Information regarding the ESEA and ESSA programs are shared with school SACs and the District School Advisory Council (DSAC). Each year, Title 1 schools will hold an Annual Title 1 parent meeting in the fall during which parents are apprised of the ESSA programs. Student and program outcomes and home to school

communication are reported to parents in a language understood by the parent, unless clearly not feasible. Examples of information disseminated include, but are not limited to, State Accountability and local report cards, individual student FSA and/or FCAT 2.0 results, district and school, parent and community meetings, The 2018-19 Parent Guide, school newsletters, Parent Right To Know letters, 4 week notices for teachers who are not infield, notice of meetings for parent information and education. In addition to parent involvement/education programs scheduled by schools, the district holds meetings three times a year in each town with migrant/ELL/immigrant parents to notify them of services and programs offered by the LEA. At times Migrant advocates make home visits to disseminate such invitations. Flyers are sent home with students and the Migrant department mailout flyers when possible. The LEA reports student assessments through report card pick after scores come out. The LEA reports school and district grades in the fall through backpack distribution. The LEA has the Parent Guide, Code of Conduct, and Student Progression Plan on the LEA's website, but parents requesting a hard copy may receive one at the child's school. The Right to Know Letter is sent home on the first day via backpack. FSA scores are published in the local newspaper in the summer. School grades are also published in the local newspaper for the community when the grades are released.