

UNISIG APPLICATION

50 - Palm Beach



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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).

Developing a SIP:

The School District of Palm Beach County's Division of Performance Accountability provides face-to-face SIP training to assist schools in completing the SIP. The training is mandatory for all Principals who are encouraged to select a SIP team to attend the session. In addition to the Principal, SIP team members include any or all of the following: Assistant Principal, Single School Culture Coordinator, Grade level/ Content Leaders, Academic Coaches, and/or Regional support personnel (including Instructional Leads and Specialists).

As a follow-up to the initial training, the District offers additional support labs to assist schools in the writing and completion of their SIPs. SIP teams are encouraged to attend these labs to receive personalized, one-on-one support. All FY19 face-to-face SIP training sessions provide an opportunity for work sessions for SIP teams to collaborate and develop their SIP as well as instruction and support for the following:

- SIP and Strategic Plan alignment requirements
- School Advisory Council overview information
- SIP template updates, management, content continuity, and submission requirements

Since the UniSIG schools must complete their SIPs prior to the trainings, the District scheduled one-on-one and small group sessions with each of the Principals and their Principal supervisors (i.e., Regional or Instructional Superintendents) to provide support prior to the scheduled sessions to ensure they meet the UniSIG application deadline. During these sessions, the School Improvement Specialist presented information provided in the SIP face-to-face training. The District also provided data panels to each of the four DA Principals so they could answer the pilot SIP questions and identify their gaps, trends, declines, and areas of improvement. The Specialist then assisted each Principal with the completion of the pilot SIP, offering one-on-one personalized assistance. Since the UniSIG timeline necessitates the SIP for the DA schools be completed prior to school-year employees returning to their schools, the Principals will present the SIP as well as information on UniSIG (and the alignment of the two) to their SIP teams, once those employees return to work. If there are any revisions or edits based on these

meetings, the Principals will revise their SIPs accordingly.

Additionally, School Advisory Councils (SACs) review and approve SIPs and the annual implementation budget. At the first SAC meeting of the year, the Principal will present the SIP as well as information on UniSIG and the alignment of the two. SAC input on the SIP will be documented in the meeting minutes. If there are any revisions or edits based on these meetings, the Principal will revise the SIP accordingly and then bring the SIP back to the SAC for approval. The School Board will then approve all SAC-approved SIPs in time to meet the Bureau of School Improvement's deadline of October 15th.

Implementing a SIP:

The Superintendent is fully committed to school turnaround and pledges that all District academic and student support services are available to the DA schools. The Superintendent has instructed executive staff to support and assist the schools. In addition, the Superintendent has initiated a policy of protected time for Principals and school leadership teams by limiting meetings, mandates, and other actions that impact the focus on teaching and learning at the schools.

The Regional Superintendents have also developed plans for optimal human resource allocation to the schools. Several members of the Regional staff (e.g., Coaches and Specialists) spend a designated amount of time each week at the schools to ensure that the schools have all of the supports necessary to be successful in their turnaround efforts.

A District Leadership Team is led by the Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation and is made up of representatives from District departments including Student Services, Human Resources, Professional Development, Curriculum, Research and Evaluation, and School Transformation as well as the Regional Superintendent. This Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation is considered the "Turnaround Lead" for the District, and she and the Team support the DA Principals in their implementation of their SIPs through participation in continuous improvement activities (including instructional reviews and data chats). Multiple instructional reviews (IRs) are facilitated by the Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation and include the District Leadership Team as well as the FDOE Regional Executive Director or a team member. The purpose of the IR is to analyze the school's performance/trend data, conduct learning walks to monitor instructional practice, engage in planning and problem solving to ensure previously identified barriers are being reduced, and identify new barriers. In addition to IRs, the DA Principals participate in one or more data chats with the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent, the District's Academic Cabinet, and the District Leadership Team for collaborative problem-solving focused on school improvement. The Team also supports any activities that directly correlate to their area of expertise (e.g., Teaching and Learning helps implement supplemental curriculum).

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.

Process through which the LEA identifies and aligns all district resources:

The process through which the District identifies and aligns all District resources is guided by the District's Strategic Plan. Detailed project plans have been developed by nineteen strategic initiative teams. Called blueprints, these plans include work-plan projections, milestone deliverables, performance

indicators, proposed budgets, identified interdependencies, and stakeholder engagement plans. The development of these blueprints identifies resources and ensures the alignment to the District's long-term outcomes.

A Strategic Initiative Management (SIM) Council conducts monitoring and initiative reviews to ensure initiative success, system coordination, and alignment of resources. The SIM council consists of the Academic Cabinet (led by the Deputy Superintendent), Strategic Plan Coordinator, and all active Strategic Initiative Executive Sponsors and Owners. Each Executive Sponsor is a member of the Executive Cabinet. It is the primary responsibility of the Executive Sponsor and Owner to manage the initiative and ensure success. The mandatory SIM Council meetings allow for a review of the identified active initiatives, resource deployment and alignment through a continuous improvement protocol.

In addition, individual divisions and departments must present and justify their annual budgets to the Superintendent's Executive Cabinet (comprised of executive leadership from each division in order to include budget and operations). Executive Cabinet carefully analyzes all requested line items to ensure they support the District Strategic Plan. This process eliminates duplication across divisions and departments and enables a true alignment of resources to help the District reach its long-term outcomes. After budgets are approved, each division and department maintains an inventory of the resources respective to their areas of focus. The Divisions and Departments ensure that resources are available to schools, based on differentiated need (e.g., the Department of Teaching and Learning monitors and supports the deployment of iReady Reading and Math Diagnostic to schools to ensure that all schools have the appropriate number of licenses assigned to meet to their specific student needs).

Methodology for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services and programs:

The Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation (the transformation lead for the District), working alongside the Directors of both Budget and of Federal/State Programs, ensures necessary budgetary resources are available to support all DA schools. The Assistant Superintendent ensures that District funds, from all sources, are aligned to best support these schools, who have the highest needs and where these efforts can achieve the greatest impact.

Urgent needs are addressed on an ongoing/as needed basis during the Regional/Instructional Superintendent's weekly site visits. Data collected by the Regional/Instructional Superintendents is shared with the Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation. The Assistant Superintendent then shares the data with the Deputy Superintendent and Academic Cabinet. The Cabinet meets weekly and analyzes the data, determines resources and supports needed, and develops an action plan. The Assistant Superintendent then works with the Regional Superintendent (who works directly with the Principal and school leadership team) to ensure the deployment of the resources as well as to monitor the implementation of the plan for fidelity and achieving successful outcomes.

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.

Policies and practices the LEA shall seek to add, modify or remove:

The previous practice of the Regional Superintendent leading the instructional reviews (IR) has changed. The Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation now leads the IR. In addition, the entire IR process has been revised.

Rationale for the proposed changes:

The IR has been lengthened to four hours and will be held four times per year. The revised IR agenda is designed to address Accountable and Shared Leadership, Standards-Based Instructional Learning, and Positive Culture and Environment. This new format, aligned to the sections of Turnaround Plan-2 (TOPS2), allows a deeper dive into data in order to pinpoint the areas that the school needs to focus on in order to raise its grade to a C or higher. This shift also moves the IRs to the Central District Office. This maximizes support for DA schools from the highest levels and helps to ensure that any additional resources identified as necessary for school turnaround are easily and immediately accessible to the schools.

Steps required to make the modifications, including person(s) responsible for implementation and follow-up:

The Assistant Superintendent of School Transformation is responsible for the implementation of the new IR process. She will communicate the new process to the Regional Superintendents who will collaborate with the Principals to organize them for the schools.

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).

Operational flexibility is defined as affording schools the opportunity to make decisions regarding staffing, time task calendars, and budgeting to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes. The District provides flexibility to the DA schools in staffing decisions by allowing priority hiring. The Regional/Instructional Superintendents, as the Principal supervisor, also provide flexibility to the Principal in building their master schedules, including extended learning time for students and teachers (e.g., professional development and collaborative and collegial planning). In addition, the schools have flexibility in developing their school calendars to include school-based assessments, professional development, in-school and out-of-school enrichment activities, school events, parent engagement initiatives, and the ability to flexibly use instructional time.

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 District collaborates with community and business partners to support student needs, promote community involvement, implement programs, coordinate services, and provide resources to students and families. Most schools have partnerships with multiple community and business partners, and they are committed to continuing to work with their existing partners as well as to forge new partnerships with organizations that are able to support their schools. Together, the schools, partner organizations, and businesses are able to provide additional high-quality resources and services to students and families while comprehensively focusing on health and wellness, as well as academic achievement.

Specifically, the District's Partners in Education (PIE) Program is an enterprising initiative that allows businesses and community organizations to support public education in Palm Beach County. The partnerships are dynamic, innovative, mutually beneficial, and contribute significantly to educating students and preparing them to be successful in the global market place. Becoming a PIE is an opportunity for the academic and business community to unite in a way that enhances the learning environment for students. Resources offered by businesses and community organizations (i.e., volunteers, funding, equipment, materials, scholarships, and assistance with special events) positively impact student achievement and enrich the lives of students. Businesses and community organizations become PIEs with the District by accessing the PIE website and completing a Business Partnership Agreement form. Business partnerships can be established at the school base level or District-wide. At

the end of each school year, the partnerships are assessed to determine the impact on students, school, and future direction of the engagement.

In addition, the Department of Safe Schools oversees the Behavioral Health Cooperative Agreement process. Through this process, the District partners with agencies that comprehensively provide a variety of mental health and/or counseling services for children and their families in schools. In order to become an agency with a cooperative agreement, agencies must complete applications, meet specific criteria, complete forms for reporting and student confidentiality, go through a legal review, and be approved by the School Board.

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.

The UniSIG application will be available to the entire school community upon request but specifically presented at SAC, which includes family, staff, leadership, and local business representation, as they work to approve the SIP. The application will also be made available and discussed at each school's required annual Title I meeting (families), one Leadership Team Meeting (leadership), and a staff meeting (teachers/staff). This will ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the UniSIG project and its intended outcomes.

District policies and procedures mandate that all communications and informational materials are sensitive to needs of students and families and are developed in multi-lingual formats, including Spanish, Haitian- Creole, Q'anjobal'al, and Portuguese, as appropriate to reach non-English speaking families. The UniSIG application made available at the Title I meeting will be translated for parents/caregivers who are non-English speaking.

Methods and timelines for reporting student progress:

Student progress will be reported during Title I Family Engagement Meetings. All Title I Elementary Schools are required to have three meetings while Title I Secondary Schools are required to have two. Progress will be presented using easy to understand graphs and tables and will be translated for any parents/caregivers who are non-English speaking. Student progress will also be reported and discussed at SAC meetings.