



Executive Summary

Sunrise Middle School

Broward County School District

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Description of the School.....	2
School's Purpose.....	3
Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement.....	4
Additional Information	8

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

As of February 2016, we have approximately 1247 students enrolled at Sunrise Middle. Our school represents various ethnic backgrounds:

- White 318 students (26%)
- Black/African American 652 students (52%)
- Hispanic 214 students (17%)
- Multi-Racial 28 students (2%)
- Asian 32 students (3%)
- Native American or Native Indian 3 students (0.2%)

Our female student population is 621 students (50%) and 626 male students (50%).

Our staff members also represent various ethnic backgrounds, which represent our student population.

Our staff members hold various educational degrees ranging from Bachelor's to Doctorate degrees.

Our school is a National Recognized Montessori Magnet School of Excellence driven by the Montessori learning approach and philosophy in which 550 students (44% of the entire student body) students are enrolled.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Sunrise Middle's mission is to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective environment that enables students to meet the state's student academic achievement standards by:

- Ensuring a safe and nurturing environment
- Maximizing the effectiveness of instruction by keeping teaching updated on the most current instructional strategies
- Increasing student achievement in
 - o English Language Arts
 - o Writing
 - o Reading
 - o Math
 - o Social Studies
 - o Science
- Collaborating with parents and community in a partnership characterized by communication and mutual respect
- Teaching and supporting core values such as:
 - o Honesty
 - o Self-control
 - o Respect
 - o Kindness
 - o Citizenship
 - o Tolerance
 - o Cooperation
 - o Responsibility

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Sunrise Middle School is a nationally recognized Montessori school, which provides a project-based educational approach to 550 students. Our vision is to foster a community of life-long learners who will be prepared to participate in a culturally diverse society. The mission of the Montessori Magnet Program is to deliver a rigorous course of academic study through a curriculum that integrates Montessori philosophy and contemporary methods of education. With an emphasis on independent learning, we endeavor to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment where students will excel academically and approach their lives and work with well-developed critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

The Montessori curriculum is based on the Florida State Standards and the essential components of early adolescent development: trust building, self-expression, self-reflection, commitment, and responsibility. These essential components of early adolescence are integrated into an advanced curriculum through enrichment projects, curriculum guides, community meetings, trust builders, a leadership development program, community service activities, student-led conferences, a moving-up ceremony, and field studies.

The Montessori Program is based on the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. Dr. Montessori was a visionary and a brilliant scholar. In 1896, she was granted a degree of doctor of medicine, which made her the first woman to graduate from medical school in Italy. Her job as a volunteer assistant at the University of Rome included work with children. This experience fostered in her an interest in psychology and human behavior. By 1906, she resigned to her position as professor of anthropology at the University of Rome to work with children of working families. This is where she developed her educational methods, which became so successful that even children considered having many hardships in their lives began to pass state examinations. Dr. Montessori soon discovered that when children are exposed to hands-on, stimulating, real life experiences they inherently know what they need to learn and are capable of collecting tremendous amounts of information and wisdom about the world around them. Dr. Montessori revolutionary principles about children and the process of learning have changed education around the world. Today, there are more than 4,000 Montessori programs in this country and over 2,000 worldwide.

The Montessori Program at Sunrise Middle is scheduled using a two-person team teaching approach. One of the teachers teaches Math, Science and Critical Thinking, while the other teacher teaches Language Arts, Social Studies and Critical Thinking. This concept assists our students with the transition from elementary to middle school by limiting the number of teachers they have on a daily basis, while at the same time fostering the relationship between teacher and student. It allows the teachers to get to know their students' strengths and weaknesses so they can monitor the progress students make throughout the year. They adjust instruction where necessary to meet the needs of their students and take advantage of their learning strengths. This relationship is further enhanced by looping the students with the same teachers from 7th to 8th grade, where our teachers spend two years with each one of their students to enable their learning growth.

The course work in the Montessori Magnet Program is rigorous and challenging. The learning process is divided into three periods: Period one provides teachers with the opportunity to deliver the lesson, period two affords students time to demonstrate understanding of the concept being taught and period three includes blocks of extended time to investigate the lessons being discussed, team up with their peers to discuss projects, as well as make presentations to the rest of the class. Critical Thinking is taught through an advanced placement curriculum with novel studies, projects, field trips and other activities embedded in the lessons.

The course work is focused around teacher-created curriculum guides. Curriculum guides are similar to syllabi; they let the students know what they will be doing throughout the quarter. The assignments in the curriculum guides include a variety of challenging and rigorous activities, which encompass the various learning modes of the students, provide opportunities for choices and enrichment, and afford students the opportunity for self-expression, commitment, self-reflection, responsibility, and leadership.

Community meetings are also an integral part of the program and are held daily in the Montessori classrooms. A student called the "leader"

Executive Summary

Sunrise Middle School

runs the meeting. The role of the leader is assigned in a rotation, so every student has an opportunity to be the leader. This activity is designed to help students develop leadership skills, communication skills, improve students' self-esteem and confidence, promotes respect and a sense of community, and build trust amongst teachers and peers.

Our Magnet students also have a service-learning requirement. Service learning provides students with the opportunity to become involved in their community, for them to feel they can contribute to the welfare of others. In addition, service learning fosters acceptance and compassion for different types of people. Our students receive satisfaction by helping others through various community projects. This involvement can be in the form of beach clean up, school beautification, visiting the elderly, visiting people at the hospital, assisting at a soup kitchen, or any of the other worthwhile causes commonly available in the community. All students are required to complete five (5) community service hours per quarter.

Student-Led Conferences (SLC) - SLC are held twice a year at the school. This parent-student meeting gives the student the opportunity to showcase their best work. It also allows the parent to experience the growth shown by their child during the formal parent-student conference. The student attends the meeting with a prepared portfolio that has goals for the year, inventories of how the student learns best, samples of work for each core class and reflections of what has been learned up to the time the meeting takes place. The objective of this activity is to teach students leadership, organizational, and communication skills, goal setting, self-reflection, and self-evaluation.

Trust Builders (TB) - Montessori students participate in higher order thinking games called Trust Builders. Through these activities we intend to teach students effective communication skills, trust building, and leadership skills. TB also stimulates creativity and higher order thinking. Through the trust builders, students learn how to work cooperatively in a group. They also learn how to be reliable and to depend on others to achieve a common goal.

Classroom Responsibilities: Students in the Montessori classrooms are grouped into different teams with specific tasks. Students remain in these teams for a period of nine (9) weeks before they rotate to another team. Among their responsibilities, students are asked to care for the environment, are responsible for setting up for any activity requiring the use of technology and lead community meetings. Through these activities, students learn to cooperate with others, communicate more efficiently, negotiate and solve problems. This is true preparation for life!

The Montessori Magnet Program at Sunrise Middle School consists of approximately 550 students, 27 teachers and a magnet coordinator. The Montessori Magnet at Sunrise Middle has a very diverse student population. The programs demographics is as follows: 41% White, 32% Black, 20% Hispanic, 7% other (Asian, Pacific, Indian...).

For the past 3 years the Montessori Magnet Program at Sunrise Middle School has been recognized by the national renowned organization, Magnet Schools of America (MSA). In 2013, the Montessori Magnet was awarded the 2013 Merit School of Excellence, in 2014 the Montessori Magnet Program received the Magnet School of Distinction award, and in 2015 the Montessori Program was once again recognized as a Magnet School of Distinction. This prestigious award is only given to outstanding magnet programs across the United States and it recognizes the high standards of education and excellence provided to students by our hardworking staff, the uniqueness of Montessori philosophy and the effort of volunteer parents and community members.

The Magnet Schools National Merit Awards program recognizes member magnet schools/programs that demonstrate a high commitment to academic standards, curriculum innovation, desegregation/diversity efforts, specialized teaching staffs, and parent and community involvement.

At the end of the 2014-2015 school year we started the P.R.I.D.E positive school-wide behavior initiative through:

- Positive attitude
- Respect
- I will be on time
- Dress code
- Environment

This school-wide behavior initiative is showcased in every classroom and points are rewarded to students to exemplify each component of P.R.I.D.E. through HERO program. Due to P.R.I.D.E. our disciplinary infractions have decreased by 70%.

Our school's Title I Parent Involvement activities have increase parent participation through Parent University Nights:

Executive Summary

Sunrise Middle School

GEM Math Parent Night for students excelling in math through an accelerated math curriculum for high-school credit

Parent Technology Night detailing various instructional resources to help prepare students for the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) and/or End-of-Course (EOC) Credit Exam

Science Fair showcasing our students Science Fair projects in alignment with the district's Science Department

History Fair showcasing our students History Fair projects in alignment with the district's Social Studies Department

Literary Fair showcasing our students Literature Fair projects in alignment with the district's Reading and Language Arts Department

Our school offers various student-mentoring programs, which provide academic and character-building support for selected students. Our school's Minority Student Task Force (previously Black Male Task Force) aligns with the district's initiative to close the achievement gap amongst minority students. The Minority Student Task Force works with the Guidance Department to help overage students meet grade-level requirements through academic monitoring support.

Our school cultivates leadership amongst staff members through S.A.I.L. (Sunrise Aspiring Innovating Leaders) by providing guidance and support as administrators, educators, and school leaders. S.A.I.L instills invaluable leadership skills in communication, instructional practices and continuous improvement by exemplifying Florida Leadership Principal "Standard 7: Leadership Development: Effective school leaders actively cultivate, support, and develop other leaders within the organization."

The Sunrise Middle Chess Club's purpose is to bring together chess players in our school who would like to share their hobby and interest in chess with each other. We promote increased knowledge and understanding of the game of chess for its own sake as an art and as an intellectual sport. Our club impacts students by providing a casual atmosphere where they can learn new chess strategies and sharpen their skills by friendly gaming competitions. This is our first year having a chess club in a long time so we are keeping it strictly social at the moment. We hope to challenge nearby schools to friendly chess tournaments next year.

Our school's Peer Counseling program promotes and creates well diverse and preventative programs year round. The following programs are presented to Peer Counseling students, which are shared with their peers.

- 211 Broward Self Awareness presentation on services offered.
- Guest speaker from Hanley Center on Alcohol Literacy
- Conflict Mediation training to Peer Counselors to handle peer conflict throughout the school population
- Mentoring/ Tutoring peers for both academics and social behavior
- Training to selected student body on tobacco prevention by Nova Southeastern Medical Students
- All peer counselors trained on domestic violence and healthy relationships thru Women in Distress
- All peer counselors trained on suicide awareness (Mental Health Counselor from SBBC)
- All peer counselors trained on cancer awareness
- All peer counselors trained on drug awareness & prevention (MADD and Hanley Center)
- School-wide awareness about drug prevention through Peer Counseling program (Red Ribbon Week)
- School-wide awareness about reporting to Silence Hurts through Peer Counseling program
- Peer Counseling program involves student body in Peace Week Activities
- School wide assembly titled, "STAND STRONG" conducted by peer counselors to make their peers aware how to stand up to a bully.
- Rachel's Challenge assembly for 7th and 8th grade students about kindness & compassion. Program followed up with a school wide project of creating a "kindness chain" that will be taken to the ATI Rally and displayed in cafeteria.

The Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) is a Federal program sponsored by the United States Armed Forces in high schools across the United States and United States military bases across the world. It is a program offered to high schools that teaches students character education, student achievement, wellness, leadership and diversity. It is a cooperative effort between the military and the high schools to produce successful students and citizens, while fostering in each school a more constructive and disciplined learning environment.

Working in conjunction with Fort Lauderdale High School's JROTC Commander, Sunrise Middle School has been an active participant at the middle school level for approximately two years, as an after-school activity. During the 2014-2015 school year, we participated in two

Executive Summary

Sunrise Middle School

District-wide competitions, and earned first place in our Division in one of them. Our Color Guard also presented Arms for numerous opening ceremonies both at Sunrise Middle and FLHS. Students enjoyed a field trip to FLHS where they received a firsthand look at the opportunities awaiting them in high school and discovered that many former Sunrise students are now currently enrolled in JROTC.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Sunrise Middle is making the effort to continue to increase parent involvement. We would like to improve the attendance at Parent University Nights and other events in order to increase parent involvement and knowledge pertaining to student's academic and behavioral progress.