



Executive Summary

Gator Run Elementary School

Broward County Public Schools

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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?

Gator Run Elementary is located in Weston, Florida. Currently there are over 1,300 students enrolled. There are two large buildings and 16 portables located on campus, and all rooms are currently occupied to accommodate the growing student population. A unique challenge that occurs yearly at Gator Run, is the large number of students who arrive after the start of the school year, especially after Winter Break. Many of these students are also active ESOL students. Currently there are about 400 active ESOL students. Due to the large student population, the size of the staff is uniquely large. Grade level teams average about 12 teachers, allowing the personalization of professional development to be challenging. Gaining consensus among grade level teams, as well as the whole staff, can also be a challenge.

As of 10/19/17, Gator Run Elementary had 1,293 students enrolled in grades PreK-5. 48% of students identified as White (Non-Hispanic), while 39% of students identified as White-Hispanic, 3% of students identified as Black, 7% identified as Asian, and 3% identified as Multiracial. Using the benchmark day enrollment count, Gator Run Elementary had 1,294 students enrolled on September 14, 2015 in grades PreK-5. 33% of students identified as White (Non-Hispanic), while 56% of students identified as White-Hispanic, 4% of students identified as Black, 5% identified as Asian, and 2% identified as Multiracial. On September 8, 2014, 1,252 students were enrolled in grades PreK-5. On September 9, 2013, 1,178 students were enrolled in grades PreK-5.

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.

Gator Run Elementary's purpose statement reads as follows: "We will inspire our students with a creative, innovative, and challenging environment, while promoting confidence through collaboration, inquiry, and exploration." We believe this perfectly illustrates our vision and expectations for our students. We are excited to offer Digital 4 and Digital 5 programs for our fourth and fifth graders, allowing maximized student learning and engagement using the 1:1 technology model in grades 4 and 5. Our school places emphases on inquiry and exploration aimed at mastery of the Florida standards, our school places an emphasis on inquiry and exploration through the incorporation of various programs.

Genius Hour is an individualized, passion-based learning experience that we have initiated in grades 2-5. These students are given the time to explore personal interests and share their discoveries with others. This cutting-edge movement that is designed to allow students to explore their own passions, thoroughly examine subjects that deeply interest them, and give them the opportunity to reap the rewards of learning for learning's own sake. By design Genius Hour breaks the mold of rubrics, answer sheets, and grading scales and instead focuses on creative exploration, in-depth examination and perseverance. Through this unique program, students are developing the tools needed to become lifelong learners.

STEM Days, school wide Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math days take place on all Early Release Days. All classrooms participate in open-ended problem solving activities, which has reinvigorated these half days and brought an increased attention to and excitement for science to both students and teachers. STEM is student directed and collaborative program allowing students to problem solve while working on these projects together.

In addition, we have a large Extended Learning Opportunities Program, staffed by our own educators, that offers everything from American Sign Language to Drama to Movie Making, to name but a few. All of these examples perfectly embody our purpose statement.

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.

Gator Run Elementary's notable achievements involve many of the program offerings and school programs mentioned above, including our Genius Lounge and Genius Hour program, our move to flexible seating and classroom redesign, and our school wide STEM days. These programs, and others, have received print and television coverage, as well as having served as a guide for many other educators and schools who have visited and modeled their programs after ours. In addition, our school has become an example for the successful use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to involve parents in their children's classrooms, create Professional Development opportunities for our educators, and bring our school community together and connected in new and exciting ways. For the 2017-2018 school year we have added a MakerSpace Lounge special, where students are encouraged to imagine, create and build using various materials.

With the overwhelming success and positive response to our previous new ideas and methods, we are looking to extend and expand our focus on critical thinking and innovative exploration with additional programs. The first one we are opening next year is our Makerspace Lab, where all students will have the opportunity to learn and grow through play, while developing their imagination and collaboration skills. For the 2017-2018 school year, we continue our amazing Dual Language program in Kindergarten, First and Second grade. There are a total of 40 students broken into 2 groups of 20. These students are taught half the day in English and half the day in Spanish. The lessons are ongoing and are never repeated. Learning takes place mostly through centers. Reading groups are taught twice a week in English and twice a week in Spanish. These students are brought together for play and free choice time and are considered "one big family". This program has been truly amazing and has allowed these students to be immersed in learning in both English and Spanish.

Gator Run has been an A-rated school since the Florida grading system was designed.

Areas for improvement includes improvement on the professional development of the school as well as more focused Professional development. Hiring a more diverse faculty would also benefit the overall school cultural and moral.

Additional Information

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

At Gator Run Elementary, we believe in a philosophy of risk-taking both within our students and teachers. We host many annual events that bring the community together, including an Annual Multicultural Festival. At this event, about 25 countries represented the diverse make-up of Gator Run Elementary, where attendees are able to visit display booths where they can learn about each country's heritage.