



Executive Summary

Walker 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?

At Walker Elementary, there are 654 students. The breakdown per grade level is as follows: Pre-K-57 students; K-78 students; 1st-87 students; 2nd-89; 3rd-108; 4th-136; 5th-103 students. 50.1% of the students are male, and 49.9% are female. 3.8% are White, 95.5% are Black, 2.2% are Hispanic, 0.2% Asian, and 0.5% are multi-racial. 5.1% are ELL, 9.2% are ESE, and 98.7% of the student population receives free/reduced lunch. Walker Elementary was reconstituted for the 2015-2016 school year, hiring new administration and instructional staff. Walker Elementary is located within the 33311 zip code, where the community's population consists of 46.4% males, and 53.7% females. 72.9% of the community's population has earned a high school diploma, 11.4% hold a bachelors degree and 3.8% hold a graduate or professional degree. 22% of the population is unemployed. The Black race population is significantly above the state average. The average household income is \$27793.00.

Over the last 3 years, home sales have steadily increased. 50.1% of the population has lived in their home for at least the last 5 years. Population density is 6311 people per square mile. Within the last 3 years, there has been an increase in luxury apartment homes as well as retail shopping areas.

Walker Elementary is a re-constituted school effective the 2015-2016 school year due to academic performance in the last 3 years. Consequently, 89% of instructional staff, as well as administration, are new to the school. The school is challenged by low parental involvement/participation, and the students exhibit severe behavior issues.

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.

Walker Elementary School's purpose, mission, and vision is "All students will learn and meet high expectations in a supportive, customer focused environment". We achieve this in a variety of ways. First, at each grade level, teachers use a Math checklist to track student progress from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. The students in grades 2-5 use Reflex Math, focusing on Math fluency facts for standards based instruction. IReady is also used to support math and reading standards instruction. Student iPads, Laptops, MP3 Players and the STAR reading program allow our students to use technology daily to support and increase math and reading skills. All grade levels use small group instruction integrating technology and the use of math manipulatives. Students in grades 2-5 are currently working on increasing math fluency through the use of Minute Fluency drills. The teachers in 2nd grade are working toward their goal in math to ensure that at least 75% of the students are mastering their multiplication facts for one through five times tables. Grades K, and 1 utilize Innovations for Learning, emphasizing reading skills. Walker Elementary School offers an extended day (extra hour) learning for all students K-5. During this extended hour in the day intensive instruction is provided, at all grade levels, for 1 hour. Students focus on improving reading through the use of several programs including Phonics for Reading, Quick Reads, Foundations, Houghton Mifflin Cold Reads, Houghton Mifflin Tool Kit, Journeys Write in Readers, and R.E.W.A.R.D.S. During the school-wide Enrichment hour, Arts Integration allows students to participate in performing arts through Band, Drama, and Chorus.

Walker Elementary has incorporated Wildcat Camp, a free tutoring program in Reading and Math offered to our students in grades 3-5. Because we believe all students can learn, we are constantly aware of our students' needs and have frequent RTI meetings to ensure we are meeting the needs of all of our students. The school has had immense success with the rate of students entering the RTI process. Students in the RTI process have been more successful due to teacher training. Progress monitoring and tracking is becoming more efficient, and students' learning needs are being more accurately addressed.

In the area of customer service, parents are offered Literacy Night at each grade level to introduce them to their children's grade level curriculum with interactive activities and tools they can use at home to support their child's education. Teachers offer the convenience of parent conference nights twice a year as we strive to focus on customer service. Kindergarten orientation is conducted in the spring to inform parents about registering students for kindergarten and to make them aware of the curriculum. At Walker Elementary we believe in customer service, and this begins in the front office. A friendly and professional staff greets parents with immediate assistance to support administration's open door policy. Walker Elementary School offers a choice of after care programs that provide scholarships for all parents and include 21st Century, and two different YMCA programs. Family Night events such as Batty Bingo, Barnes and Nobles and McDonald's Night encourage our parents to become involved in the school environment while connecting our community to the school and families. The school website, marquee, and parent link phone calls keep parents current on all events happening at the school. Teachers are in constant communication with parents through email, phone, and use of student agendas. Such communication is meant to keep parents informed, improve student attendance and increase parental involvement, thus improving student learning. Recently, during the holiday season, our students performed for the community at our holiday program at our school's auditorium as well as participating in a number of community parades.

At Walker Elementary, we believe communication at all levels is vital. We participate in weekly grade level team meetings (attended by support staff), PLC meetings, faculty meetings, weekly support staff meetings, and team leader meetings. Administration issues a weekly calendar of events and a Friday Forum to communicate with teachers.

Cloud 9, is our school-wide character education program, with a focus on improving behavior and social skills of all students, and consequently improves academics. This program is designed to enhance individual character traits and allows students to learn and put into practice problem solving skills/coping mechanisms for use in school and in the real world.

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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.

Walker Elementary is a magnet school for performing arts and effective the 2015-2016 school year, became a National Turnaround Arts School, indicating that the school uses arts education as a tool to increase student proficiency. The school has been a struggling institute of learning and is in the process of improving student mastery in all academic areas, as well as improving behavior and attendance. Specific areas of improvement include learning gains in reading (specifically phonics in primary grades, and comprehension in intermediate grades), and attendance with the goal to decrease the number of absences and student tardies. In previous years, the school has been below the district average in both of the aforementioned areas, however, during the 2015-2016 school year, the school has made improvements to meet the district's averages in attendance and tardies. Based on the most recent Broward Standards Assessment (BSA), Student learning gains have increased by 50% (projected number of level 1 student in FSA has decreased from 60 % to 30% in grades 3, 4, and 5). As a result of the school's transition into a National Turnaround Arts School, and increased parent communication, defiant behaviors, referrals and suspensions have been reduced. Teachers receive rigorous professional development in both standard curriculum and Turnaround Arts Curriculum, allowing these goals to be met. Walker Elementary recently received the award for Best Elementary Marching Band, and has been nominated for the district's School of Character Excellence Award.

Additional Information

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

Walker Elementary is a D5 school indicating that all 5th grade students have access to their own laptops while in school with the option to take those laptops home. We are in the process of trying to provide these same opportunities for our 3rd and 4th graders, by providing D3 and D4 laptops. Our school is a National Turnaround Arts school integrating the performing arts: chorus, band and drama, for all students on a daily basis. Students also receive an additional hour of intensive instruction in ELA, which is proving to be effective as reflected by our recently BSA (Broward Standards Assessment) and RIGBY/DRA2 reading assessment scores. We also monitor the Standards Based Learning through Progress Monitoring, and this information is charted and used to guide instruction. We project that learning gains will increase by 50%, and the aforementioned charts will assist in tracking the growth. We anticipate that these increases in student proficiency will better prepare our students to achieve mastery in the next grade level and through their academic career.