



Executive Summary

Watkins 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?

Watkins Elementary is a neighborhood school located in the Town of Pembroke Park. The school was established in 1955, but then reconstructed in 1996. The majority of our 675 students live within the city of West Park and Pembroke Park. Our school serves students from Pre-K - 5th grade, including a special program for Emotional Behavior students. Our demographic make-up is comprised of 79% Black/African American, 17% Hispanic, 2% White, and 2% Multi-racial. Ninety-six percent of the students are economically disadvantaged receiving free or reduced lunch. There are forty-two instructional teachers, four full time special teachers, plus a part time special teacher; four support staff members as well as ten teacher assistants to support the academic and social needs of our students. The instructional teaching staff is comprised of 61% Black/African American, 20% Hispanic, 15% White and 4% Multi-racial. Fifteen percent of these teachers are in their first year of teaching.

Watkins has been working over the last three years to increase our school grade. We are proud to show that for the 2014-2015 school year our school grade increased from an "F" to a "D". While we are making improvements in our school grade we know we are far from our goal. Last year we went through the SSOS process, which involved the community and school in conversations about what the community would like to see for the school. Several meetings were held over the course of the year where members of our school and community were able to share in discussions on changes that would benefit our students. As a result, Watkins has a focus on Linking Languages and Literacy. Phasing foreign language and the communication program out we now have implemented Dual Language classes in Kindergarten and first grade. The dual language program allows our students to not only learn to speak the language, but read and write it as well. Each year we will continue to add a new grade level to this program. Within the next five years the program will be fully implemented from K-5 grade. Additionally, through this process we were able to begin a leveled book room for our teachers. Our teachers now have a plethora of leveled readers to utilize while instructing their students.

Over the last three years Watkins has been lucky to have a group of parents who worked diligently to build a working Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA is still going strong and each year new participants join to help support our students and staff through many different programs and projects.

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.

School's Mission: The mission of Watkins Elementary is to create an environment where students and staff exceed the academic expectations set to meet their maximum potential.

School's Vision: Watkins is committed to all students, faculty and staff to reach their maximum potential as they become College and Career ready.

Watkins Elementary is proud to provide many different programs to the students and community we serve. Our students attend school from 8:10a.m. - 3:10p.m.

With a focus on literacy, our teachers have been working all year developing interdisciplinary lessons that align the science standards with the ELA standards allowing students to blend reading and science. With the addition of our Book room teachers have a plethora of books to support the different academic levels of the students. With our additional hour of reading we are able to focus on 10 minutes of fluency, 30 minutes of standards based instruction based on student need, the infusion of the Leveled Literacy Intervention program, and 20 minutes of a read aloud. Our students in 4th and 5th grade are Digital classrooms where each student has their own laptop for instruction. It is awesome to see our students learning in the digital world. While in school, students are able to participate in several different specials, physical education, Spanish, communication, technology and creative writing. Students experience all of these specials through a rotating schedule. We are fortunate to have teachers willing to give their time back to our student's afterschool. These teachers allow our students to participate in one or several extra curricular programs. These programs include, Science club, Coding club, Art club, Gentleman's club, A.R.I.S.E., and the Watkins Dance team.

Select students have the opportunity to participate in Saturday school with a focus on the core academic areas. Additionally, our support staff infuses additional support groups throughout the school day.

Partnerships within the community really bring us together. Over the last two years we have developed partnerships with several businesses and organization. BSO, West Park, Town of Pembroke Park and Stratton Home Charitable Foundations. Last year with the help of BSO, Town of Pembroke Park and West Park we were able to become a recipient of a Scholastic Oasis Reading room. This beautiful calming room is open throughout the day for students and teachers to use with volunteers from the community. Students can go and read individually, with a partner or as a group. Stratton Home Charitable foundation has helped provide us with school supplies, technology and rewards prizes for students who are successful in either academics or their behavior.

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.

Over the last two years we have had teachers who worked diligently to bring a butterfly garden to life. After writing and receiving two grants we were able to not only plant the garden, but also include a quiet area where students and teachers can work on academic lessons while enjoying the beauty of the garden.

Each year we have teachers who apply for Florida Impact grants, last year two of our teacher received funding from Florida Impact to implement their programs within their classrooms.

Over the next three years we are continuing are focus on the number of students who are proficient in the core content areas. There are many things in place to help support us with this challenge. Our teachers continue to participate in the latest professional development trainings to build on their knowledge base. Not only do we attend trainings, but make sure we follow up on the implementation of the trainings. We have even taken the time to have teams of teachers visit other schools to see programs in full implementation. Some of the best learning is done, by actually seeing. Another area that we continually try to work to improve is the participation by the parent and community members. In the last two years we have worked to increase the amount of participation are our school. To begin with we created the Parent Universities, now called the Parent Success Academy. This is a series of trainings designed to teach the parent's strategies and activities to use with their children at home. This year we included morning and evening sessions which allowed us to meet the needs of more parents. Additionally, we scheduled the Title I van to be in attendance as well. It was nice to see the parents utilizing another resource.

Additional Information

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

Watkins Elementary is an amazing neighborhood school. During the 2015-2016 school year we able to use the SMART Bond money to purchase additional technology to ensure students had sufficient technology to meet individual needs. We purchased different devices to support students at each grade level, and took into consideration the needs of our students with disabilities. The students and teachers have been actively working on these new devices. This purchase also allowed us to create one to one digital classes in fourth grade, which added to our fifth grade group. With the support of teachers, staff, community and the students we are moving forward to ultimate overall success.