

## **Executive Summary**

**Stirling Elementary School**

**Broward County School District**

**Mrs. Jacqueline Arnaez, Principal**

**5500 Stirling Road**

**Hollywood, FL 33021**

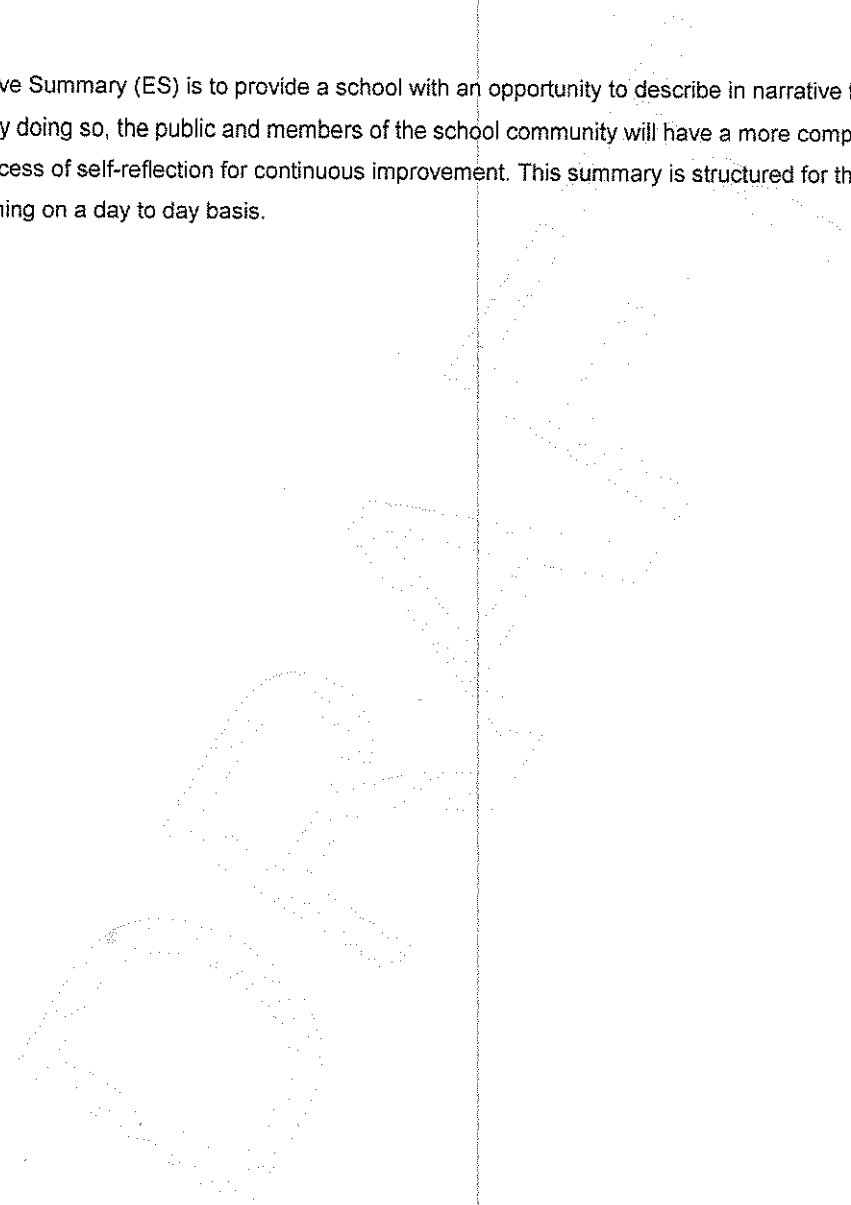
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## **Introduction**

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?**

Upon entering Stirling Elementary School, you will be greeted with a warm welcome in an inviting atmosphere. Stirling Elementary School is a traditional, Title 1 school located in Hollywood, Florida. Stirling's mascot is the Stallion, and our colors are green and white. Stirling Elementary School opened its doors in 1956. The original building was torn down and rebuilt in 1993. The location of Stirling Elementary is geographically diverse—to the south is a residential community, to the west is an apartment rental community, and to the north is a main road with commercial businesses. Neighboring Stirling to the east is a Broward County Public High School, Hollywood Hills High School. The school community has been impacted recently by the addition of public charter schools and religious day schools built in the area.

Stirling Elementary School has fluctuated in size over the years, but currently maintains a student population of approximately 625 students. Currently, the school houses Kindergarteners through fifth graders and an ESE Special Program for students with Intellectually Disabilities, or InD. To date, Stirling has 4 Kindergarten classes, 5 first grade classes, 6 second grade classes, 6 third grade classes, 4 fourth grade classes, and 4 fifth grade classes. Our InD program is made up of 6 classrooms and services approximately 35 students. Our student population consists of 75% minorities, and 79% of the students are on free/reduced lunch. The school's students demographics by race/ethnicity are as follows: 4% Asian, 22% Black, 46% Hispanic, 2% Multi-racial, and 25% White. In addition, our ESOL population is 33% of the total number of students.

Some of the changes experienced over the last three years include changes within the administration and economic hardship within the community. Changes within the administration include the former principal's retirement and the appointment of our new principal in April of 2015, as well as the former assistant principal's promotion to principal at another elementary school and the appointment of our current assistant principal in July of 2015. The economic depression within our community has created lost jobs and wages for many of our families. It has become the school's responsibility to help meet some of the basic needs of our students so that they can come to school ready to learn. We work closely with our families to provide food through our community Mobile Food Pantry and Universal Breakfast program. Our school's Social Worker also works with our families to provide school uniforms to those in need.

The staff at Stirling Elementary consists of 81 members. We have 29 K-5 classroom teachers, 6 Special Program teachers, 11 Teacher's Assistants, and 5 Special teachers who teach Art, Science lab, Physical Education, Spanish, and Music. Additionally, Stirling has 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 4 Support Staff members, 4 ESE teachers (which includes 2 Speech/Language Pathologists), 5 Clerical members, 4 Custodians, 1 school nurse, 2 pool substitutes, and 6 Cafeteria staff members. We also have 5 District-level, part-time members who provide supports such as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, School Psychology, Family Counseling, and Social Work. One hundred percent of our instructional staff are highly qualified. Five of our instructional staff members hold National Board Certification and 20 have an Advanced Degree. Our staff's demographics consist of the following: 94% females and 6% males. Fifty percent of the staff is white, 35% is Hispanic, and 15% are black. The diversity of the staff mirrors that of both the community and the student population.

## 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.**

The mission of Stirling Elementary School is to academically and socially prepare all students by promoting intensive academic and behavioral programs in a changing, diverse society. We will strive to meet these challenges through data-driven intervention programs, improving academic areas in all subgroups, prioritizing school safety, and increasing our commitment to parental and community involvement. Our mission is to successfully improve our school's performance by meeting annual measurable objectives and increasing student assessment scores.

As a school, we strive to meet the needs of the "whole child." We understand that learning can only take place if a child's social-emotional needs are met, as well. To that effect, we take pride in the work that we do to support students in this capacity. This support may be in the form of one-on-one sessions or group sessions with the School Counselor or Social Worker. We also have mentoring programs through the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization and another mentoring program for our Latino students through our partnership with Hollywood Hills High School, called "Latinos in Action." Additionally, we have volunteers who come in and act as "listeners" to students in need of additional encouragement. We establish relationships with our families and provide support by directing them to external agencies that can help, as well.

The teachers at Stirling Elementary are continuous learners who strive to implement the most effective instructional strategies in a learning environment where students feel safe and the level of engagement is high. In order to achieve this, our teachers participate in multiple professional development opportunities throughout the school year. These professional development sessions are focused around teachers gaining a deep understanding of the curriculum and standards and executing lessons in such a way that students will develop and apply the knowledge and skills that they are learning. We want our students to be prepared for the 21st century by setting high expectations for all and by teaching them to be thinkers and problem-solvers. Furthermore, the teachers work collaboratively to plan and create lessons that are both rigorous and cognitively engaging. It is through these weekly Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs, that teachers share ideas and effective instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms.

The staff at Stirling Elementary School believes that all children can succeed and will work tirelessly and collaboratively to achieve this goal. In fact, our teachers often spend additional time before and after school assisting students through remediation and enrichment in reading and math.

## 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.**

This year, Stirling received \$198,000 in technology through the General Obligation SMART bond. With this additional technology, all of our fourth and fifth grade students have a personal laptop. All K-3 classrooms are equipped with 7 laptops. In addition, all instructional staff members received a laptop, as well. All classrooms and buildings are equipped with wi-fi capabilities, making technology integration possible. In fact, our fifth grade classrooms have the District's D5 platform, which enables students and teachers to use the computers to access the curriculum and engage in innovative lessons. In the 2016-2017 school year, we are exploring the possibility of also implementing the D4 platform into all of our 4th grade classes.

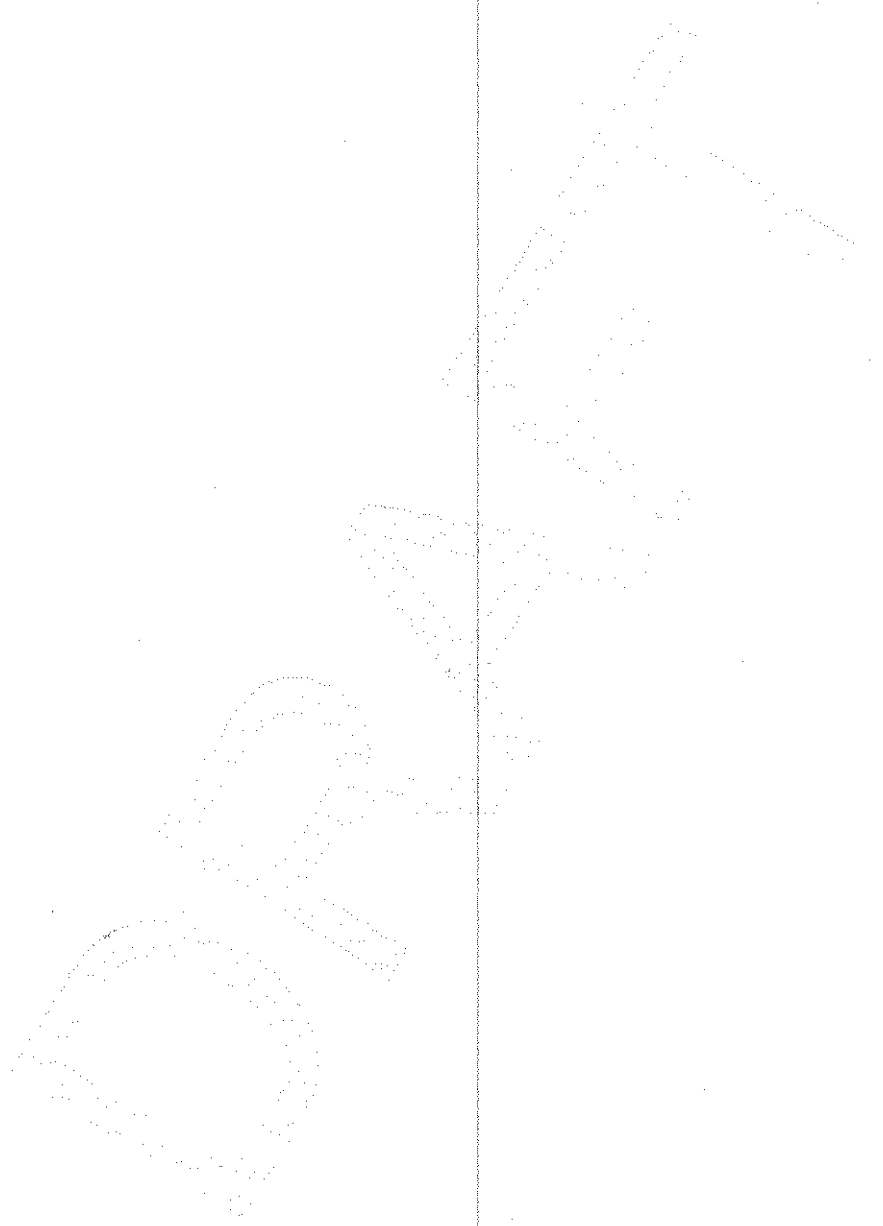
Over the last three years, Stirling Elementary has been working to improve its Stirling Elementary is in the process of improving its relationships with external stakeholders. Currently, our PTA provides volunteers, funding for extra programs and services, and support for our staff. We are also building relationships with community and business by forming partnerships with Sunshine Aftercare, Publix Supermarket, Horace Mann, Galaxy Skateway, and Jaons Korean Martial Arts Studio.

During the 2015-16 school year, we have increased the number of parent involvement opportunities and events. Parents are invited to celebrate their children's successes at honor roll and other awards assemblies and monthly "Kids of Character" recognition ceremonies. To both encourage parental involvement and improve our attendance rate, we also acknowledge students quarterly for "perfect attendance" at these assemblies. To build character and reduce discipline incidents, we also select "Super Stallions" from every class who demonstrate characteristics of a model citizen. Furthermore, each grade level will open its classroom doors, during the school day, and invite parents to participate in an interactive parent-student project or activity. Stirling also provides a monthly parent involvement activity or training in the evening in order to maintain a welcoming atmosphere for our parents. We hosted evening events like Publix Family Math Night, the Showcase of Success, Science Family Night with the Museum of Discovery and Science, and a night that promoted literacy called "Fall into Literacy." In addition, Stirling invites parents and community members to participate in our annual Career Day. We are hoping to continue to expand our parent participation through parent groups such as the PTA and SAC and other parent initiatives.

We are also improving in the area of enrichment by providing our third, fourth, and fifth graders with the opportunity to participate in after school enrichment clubs. Students are engaged in the arts, languages, music, gardening, technology, theatre, and community projects through this program. We also plan multiple field trips for all grade levels to enhance the curriculum. Some of these field trips include performances at the Broward Performing Arts Center, hands-on exploration at the Museum of Science and Discovery, and real-world experiences on the GABIE bus and at JA Biztown. At the end of the school year, our 4th graders will learn about Florida history by taking a trip to St. Augustine. Lastly, our 2nd and 3rd graders participate in the First Move Chess Program. Every week, these students become critical thinkers as they learn the art of playing chess with their peers.

In 2016-2017, Stirling will be one of a select group of elementary schools in Broward County to start an official debate program in our 5th grade language arts classrooms. In the next three years, we will be both a D4 and D5 school. We are also adopting the Dual Language program at Stirling Elementary School and will have a dual language class in kindergarten in 2016-2017, dual language classes in kindergarten and first grade in 2017-2018, and dual language classes in 2018-2019 in kindergarten, first, and second grades. Beyond 2019, we will expand the Dual Language program with the addition of a subsequent grade level to eventually include the program on all grade levels, K-5. Over the next three years, Stirling Elementary will benefit from being part of the "Children's Literacy Initiative" grant. This grant will include "early literacy leadership development, coaching and professional learning for our K-3 teachers, and best practices/materials for

teaching early literacy."



## Additional Information

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

Stirling Elementary School is one of the only Broward County Public Schools to participate in the Project Unify/Special Olympics program. Our school has a team of athletes that work together on track and field events and will compete at the State level. This is a special initiative that encourages inclusion and acceptance of students with special needs.

Next year, Stirling Elementary School will offer a Dual Language program beginning in Kindergarten. The goal of this program is to educate students in both their native language and one additional language. Our Dual Language program will consist of English and Spanish. In subsequent years, we plan to offer this program in other grades, as well.

Stirling Elementary had been an "A" or "B" school from 2008 to 2012. In 2013 and 2014, the school fell to a "C," (which was adjusted to a B in 2013). For the 2014-2015 school year, we are proud to say that the school moved back up to a "B." Our students demonstrating proficiency in Science increased 14%, from 49% to 63%. As a result, multiple schools paid a visit to Stirling this year to learn about our best practices in Science. Students demonstrating proficiency in Math also increased in 2014-2015, from a 46% to 55%. In order to improve our ELA/Reading proficiency level, our school's improvement goal for the 2015-2016 has been in this area. Our school is focused and deliberate about the planning and progress monitoring centered around the teaching and learning of the English/Language Arts Florida Standards. Our overall increase in student achievement for the 2014-15 school year can be attributed to the hard work and collaboration of the entire school community.