



# **Executive Summary**

**Bright Horizons School**  
**Broward County School District**

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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?**

Bright Horizons is a Special Day School, located in Deerfield Beach, Florida, serving approximately 150 students ranging from Kindergarten through age 22 and from diverse multi-cultural backgrounds. (White 33%, Black 44%, Hispanic 18%, Asian 1%, and Multi Racial 3%) Students enrolled at Bright Horizons are classified as Intellectually Disabled, Autistic, Physically Impaired, Other Health Impaired and experience global delays. All students have an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) and many have FBA/PBIPs (Functional Behavior Assessments/Positive Behavior Plans)

Bright Horizons School is one of two Special Day Schools located in Broward County serving Intellectually Disabled students. Students residing in Broward County north of Sunrise Blvd. and meeting placement criteria may be staffed into Bright Horizons. Bright Horizons is not a neighborhood school, but yet, serves the northern half of Broward County. Because of that, Bright Horizons students reflect the demographics of Broward County as a whole. Additionally, the staff demographics mirror that of the students. During the last three years, the only changes experienced by Bright Horizons have been students entering or exiting due to natural migration. Due the significant medical needs of the student population, Bright Horizons maintains three registered nurses on staff. Additionally, Bright Horizons provides academic instruction and behavioral support as well as speech, physical and occupational therapy services as needed. Behavior support includes two certified behavior specialists and a crisis team who have specialized training in verbal de-escalation techniques and crisis management. Bright Horizons maintains low student to adult ratios in the classrooms. Each class consists of a Special Education Instructor and a minimum of two classroom assistants. In some cases, due to significant behaviors, an additional assistant may be in the classroom to provide extra support. The Leadership Team in the school is comprised of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Staffing Specialist, Job Coach, Autism Coach and the two Behavior Specialists.

## **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 Bright Horizons School is to provide an individualized, intensive and supportive education for exceptional students with significant global disabilities.

Bright Horizons is a Special Day School, serving students whose needs are unable to be served in a typical school despite additional supports and services. Following the belief that all students can learn, students are provided academic instruction through 12th grade in the areas of reading, math, language arts, science and social studies. Instruction is aligned with the Florida Standards Access Points. In addition, vocational, communication, social and self-help skills are emphasized. Students over the age of 18 participate in a functional vocational program designed to prepare them for post-school opportunities. The Community Based Instruction program described in the additional information section closely aligns with this instruction.

In accordance with federal regulations, the IEPs (Individualized Educational Plans) are updated a minimum of once a year by the IEP team consisting of the LEA (Staffing Specialist), classroom teacher, parents/guardians, Speech Language Pathologist, related therapists and other professional persons involved in the child's education. Realistic and obtainable goals are written to help move the student to the next level. Outside agencies also participate in these meeting whenever it will enhance the future of the student.

## **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.**

Bright Horizons School has added unique academic curriculum in order to meet the complex learning needs of our students. A reading cadre was established utilizing a professional learning community to significantly modify a traditional reading program in order to accommodate the learning styles and levels of our students. Additionally, Bright Horizons School has been on the cutting edge of utilizing Boardmaker On-Line (web-based technology) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. BHS is the only Special Day School to fully implement this curriculum within specified classrooms. This has enabled, BHS to form a significant partnership with Boardmaker On-Line Inc. Continued growth within the reading cadre and the Boardmaker partnership over the next three years is anticipated..

Another feature of our partnership with Boardmaker is that students are able to access the Boardmaker On-Line program at home for continued practice on the weekly lessons. Parents have found this feature to be very beneficial for their child as well as keeping them informed of daily progress. Each student has his or her unique account that keeps track of lessons completed and the level of mastery for each lesson. Teachers are able to assign individual lessons for each student based on classroom progress.

Bright Horizons is also very proud of the garden projects. What began as a classroom garden has expanded to a school-wide project within the past three years. Grants and donations have been utilized to create a sensory garden that provides students with opportunities for hands-on exploration of nature. Students are involved in all aspects of gardening from a school-wide composting endeavor to seed planting and general plant maintenance. Adaptive gardening equipment allows for the most physically challenged students active participation. As our gardens grow over the next three years, so will our students' opportunities and experiences.

## **Additional Information**

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

Bright Horizons School is proud to possess the most comprehensive Community Based Instruction program for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This program provides students the opportunity to transfer skills learned in the classroom to real-life experiences in the community. Our students start attending community locations and events at an early age to work on social skills, communication and appropriate behavior skills in the community setting. As they get older, the trips turn into more vocational opportunities and higher-level community skills. Our Job Coach works closely with the Autism Specialist to build partnerships with businesses in the community. These partnerships provide opportunities for students to experience authentic work.

Bright Horizons School also maintains three vocational labs providing opportunities for our students to practice living skills as well as job skills. Community partners have provided us with jobs that have been adapted for the many skill-levels of our students. For example, we package the pieces for a wheelchair tie-down assembly for a local manufacturing company. Our students also wash, dry and fold the towels for seven local businesses using our laundry lab. These "jobs" provide authentic work experiences for our students.