

Park Ridge Executive Summary 2018-2019

#1 Description of School

Park Ridge Elementary began serving the Deerfield Beach community in 1972. Over the course of several years the school rating, based on the state's school performance scale, had declined and for several years maintained an "F" rating. Additionally, Park Ridge was identified as one of the district's lowest performing schools. To address this, the district chose to initiate what has been identified as a "Turn-Around" model.

This "Turn-Around" model was put into place during the 2015-2016 school year. The superintendent recruited one of the district's highest performing principals to lead the turn-around at Park Ridge. The assistant principals at the school were both specially trained in "Turn-Around" leadership. All new instructional staff were recruited and hired by the new leadership at the school.

In the three years since the model was put in place, the school's grade has raised to a "C" rating, we maintained a c rating this year, the building had a technology infrastructure upgrade, more than \$300,000 worth of technology has been purchased, and the facility has received extensive remodeling and "beautification."

Enrollment to Park Ridge prior the implementation of the "Turn-Around" model dropped below 511 students. This year we have 555 students enrolled at Park Ridge and students continue to enroll transferring to us from other schools both in and out of the district. Our current demographics are as follows: just under 4% of our population is classified as White, approximately 81% as Black, and almost 14% as Hispanic. We are a Title 1 school with more than 95% of our students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. In addition, we have approximately 185 of our students in grades K-5 or 41% of our students classified as ELL meaning that their native language is not English. Our predominant languages are Creole, Spanish, and Portuguese. Many of the parents of our students do not read or speak English, so we need to ensure that communication between home and school is provided in a variety of languages in order to meet the needs of our families.

Of the 555 students currently enrolled, 98 students are in our Pre-K and Head Start Programs. While these programs are housed at our school, there are

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strict guidelines and separate line item budgets for these programs. The program consists of: 4 Head Start classes, two of which are three-year old classes and two of which are four-year old classes. Students in this free program qualify based on their family's financial need. The Head Start program serves not only our immediate community but also other areas of Deerfield Beach. Approximately 40% of the students attending our Head Start program are zoned to attend our school for Kindergarten. The rest are zoned to other home schools. We also have two Specialized Pre-Kindergarten classes for students eligible for early intervention programs based on their Special Education status. The three and four-year olds in this program are zoned to our school and have been identified as needing specialized preschool services with a wide range of exceptionalities including "Developmentally Delayed" and "Autism Spectrum Disorder". Each of the Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten classes has a state certified teacher, as well as, an Educational Support Person, an aide specially assigned to work with these students.

#2 School's purpose

Our school Mission and Vision focus on creating an environment that fosters love and respect while nourishing a child's love of learning. Additionally, we recognize that student success often depends on meeting their basic needs. Therefore, providing our families with wrap around services is a vital part of our school purpose. "Park Ridge Elementary shall be a community that nourishes academic excellence for all students and demonstrates leadership in character development. We are dedicated to our students, their families and our community by fostering respect, leadership and lifelong learning in an environment that is safe, secure and incorporates an innovative, hands-on approach to learning." High levels of achievement are accomplished through measurable academic standards aligned with state standards and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) lesson offerings.

An important element of our success has to do with the way our students and their families have embraced STEM as a major focus. Through our partnership with Discovery Education, our STEM Lab and Coding Classroom, teachers and students are actively engaged in STEM activities. With this as a primary focus, students are applying science, math and engineering to real world problems. They are building connections of reading informational text in the Language Arts class to reading and writing in the worlds of science and math. Teachers

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can reinforce collaboration, critical and creative thinking and communication skills, which are vital to today's world. Having Discovery Education, the STEM Lab, and a classroom where students code daily helps to build classroom equity and develops an awareness of the diverse opportunities for engineering, science and technical careers. Finally, these programs encourage our minority students and girls to consider engineering, science, and math as future career options.

While in its infancy, we also are bringing the world of robotics to Park Ridge. Students in grades K-5 have an opportunity to work alongside one of our district science coaches who monthly brings an assortment of robots. Recently Park Ridge was awarded a grant for two classroom sets of Dash and Dot Robots. Building a strong robotics program will further support our STEM initiative.

Students using computers to learn doesn't stop with our STEM and coding initiatives. This year we are expanding our environmental science program. This year classes will be learning about garden to table environmental science, as they plant, grow, harvest and eat vegetables from their own classroom gardens. This addition brings science and lifecycles to life for our students.

#3 NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS and areas of improvements

Park Ridge has not only been recognized for a school on the move, as we continue to strive to further the academic success we have had in our first few years here, but we also have earned numerous awards and have seen growth and achievements in many areas.

Our school and teachers have received dozens of grants to fund innovative classroom projects. These projects include some related to our STEM initiative, gardening, and classroom technology. School reading grants have funded class libraries. And other grants have brought special programs and speakers into our school. All these grants provided resources to further engage our students in learning.

Through our partnership with Discovery Education, the students are privy to Discovery Techbook. This interactive textbook uses the 5E method to teach science standards. We also are privileged to have two coaches from Discovery

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Ed in our site for a week each month. These coaches work alongside the classroom teacher sharing strategies that ignite a passion for learning. Children have learned alternative methods to sharing knowledge through activities such as Build a Board and video responses. We are the only school in the District that has a partnership with Discovery Education and the only one currently using the Techbook.

Our parent engagement programs continue to attract hundreds of parents, relatives and community members. These programs are designed to share relevant information with parents related to curriculum, provide parents resources to engage their children in learning at home, include opportunities to enjoy fun parent-child experiences, and help us create a school that serves as a center for our community.

Park Ridge is proud of its professional development plan. Our teachers have opportunities to grow and learn monthly. We embrace the PLC method and have used this model to help steer the course of our academic plan. The root of the PLCs at Park Ridge is the Student and Adult CARE Cycles. Our model is unique as we have a PLC facilitator's group that is the hub for disseminating information. This core group of educators meets monthly. Each month a major focus is established. Focuses have centered on Standards Based Instruction, Formative Assessments, Learning Goals and Scales, Feedback, Accountable Talk, analyzing student work to plan for differentiation. These focuses then go back to the individual grade level PLC's where teachers learn and share best practices. All with the common goal of meeting the needs of our children.

Our coaches offer before and after school hands-on engaging workshops where the staff can come and learn the best practices in reading, math or science. These sessions are well attended. At the end of these sessions the teachers walk away with strategies they can use that day in the classroom. History shows us that the population we serve very rarely can see there are careers for them in these fields. It is up to us as educators to ignite a passion for science within our children.

We also have opened our doors to the district for trainings. Recently the Tech Meet Up was held at Park Ridge. We encourage our teachers to continue to learn best practices by sharing with others and this was a great opportunity to do that with teachers from across the district. It is also a goal of Park Ridge to

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be able to welcome Pre-service teachers from colleges and universities in the area. In just the three years we have had 36 FAU students on our campus working with our students and learning from our staff. We will be hosting several other district trainings on our campus in the coming months, helping us ensure that Park Ridge is a place for learning for adults as well as for kids.

When you engage students in quality learning, people notice and will recognize you for your success. Park Ridge has been recognized as a National Model School for the Leader in Me program. A program designed to help us build the leadership capacity of our students. We have received “Best Broward Program” Award from the Reading Pals program. Several of our teachers have been awarded the distinction of “Discovery Den Star,” a national recognition from Discovery Education recognizing teachers that have demonstrated excellence and a willingness to share their expertise with their peers. Among other awards, one we are especially proud of is being recognized by the City of Deerfield Beach as the “Best School in the City.” This distinction was awarded to us at the annual City of Deerfield Beach Founder’s Day Parade.

#4 Additional Information