**Description of the School**

Upon entering Griffin Elementary, you will feel a warm and inviting climate which permeates the entire school environment. Griffin Elementary School was established in 1979 to serve the neighborhood and community in grades K-5. At that time, it consisted of classrooms, offices, cafeteria, and a media center. In 1991, there was an addition of 7 classrooms, ESE and Guidance offices, staff lounge, bathrooms, computer lab, and a covered patio. Griffin Elementary is located in Cooper City, a family-oriented community with great parental involvement. Many of our parents and teachers attended Griffin Elementary when they were children, and have chosen to remain in the community to ensure that their children can experience and contribute to the academic and social success that the Griffin Elementary family offers. Many of our teachers who have been here over 20 years are now teaching their previous students’ children. This happens often, as faculty and staff maintain a dedication to the students and the mission of this school. Many of these employees take their personal time to mentor and spend time with our students, even outside of school hours.

Our employees consist of 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 5 clerical staff, 23 paraprofessionals, 4 cafeteria staff, 4 custodians, 1 SRO, 1 social worker, 1 technology specialist, 1 literacy coach, 1 guidance counselor, and 1 school nurse. Students have access to district staff, including: 1 family counselor, 1 occupational therapy, 1 psychologist, and 1 social worker. We also have 5 kindergarten teachers, 4 first grade teachers, 6 second grade teachers, 5 third grade teachers, 4 fourth grade teachers, and 4 fifth grade teachers, and 4 specials teachers. In addition, we have 14 ESE instructional staff members. They include: 1 ESE specialist, 1&1/2 speech pathologist, 2 VE support teachers, 9 ESE teachers, of which 5 are classrooms service students with EBD, 4 preschool ESE classrooms, and one ESE pool substitute teacher. Griffin Elementary has a high percentage of ESE students which we work with diligently to ensure that every child achieves their highest potential, regardless of their academic or social background. It’s no wonder that Griffin has maintained an A letter grade for 14 years now.

With a growing community, Griffin Elementary currently has 626 enrolled students, of which 38% participate in the federal free or reduced breakfast or lunch program. Our school student population is a diverse community of learners, who are nurtured and guided by innovative teachers in a happy learning environment. Of these students, 55% are Caucasian, 31% are Hispanic, 6% are African American, 3% are Asian, 4% are multi-racial, and 1% is other. Our teacher to student ratio is 18:1 in grades K-3, and 22:1 in grades 4 and 5. Our highly qualified teachers ensure that the standards are being implemented and assessed to achieve learning gains in all areas.

Together, we make sure that all of our students are receiving high quality education by working with a growth mindset, in which we are all moving forward to achieve our mission.

**School’s Purpose**

Griffin Elementary is a safe and nurturing environment where all students can achieve their highest academic and social potential. We are committed to developing intellectual independence and risk-taking through inquiry-direct experience, and collaboration to promote success in an ever-changing world.

It is our belief that:

* Student learning is the chief priority for the school.
* All students can learn.
* Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches to support their learning.
* Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, cultural, emotional and intellectual needs.
* Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school’s mission.

Griffin Elementary School’s Mission

*Griffin Elementary is committed to provide an enriched learning environment that will focus on 21st Century Learning to prepare our students to be college and career ready.*

Griffin Elementary School’s Vision

*Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*

We accomplish these goals by focusing on teacher/student relationships, demanding high performance, holding to high expectations through implementation and monitoring, and by providing opportunities for self-exploration and self-development. We also have a strong community support through our School Advisory Committee and P.T.A., who provides excellent participation by volunteering, fund raising, and staff support. Our wonderful volunteers assist with Media Club, our school publishing center and the school Chess Club.

**Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement**

At Griffin Elementary, we pride ourselves on the wonderful opportunities provided to our students as well as the community.

Griffin Elementary strives to stay abreast of the current technological trends. We are committed to employing researched based educational strategies and techniques to promote higher order and critical thinking skills. Through a General Obligation bond in 2015, our school was provided with 44 teacher laptops, 184 student laptops, 3 clerical computers, and 25 computer workstations for the computer lab. In addition, each instructional classroom has a Promethean board. Griffin staff participate in Techy Thursday twice a month, in which teachers and staff are invited to share about and learn different programs, apps and websites that will contribute to success and learning in the 21st Century.

Griffin Elementary is committed to preserving our community, schools and the future of our planet. We take great pride in the many awards, grants and sustainability initiatives that are ongoing with our students, teachers and community. Our campus has had burrowing owls for over 20 years. Using grant money, we installed artificial burrows at our school and in local neighborhood parks. We were the first school in Broward County to partner with Project Perch, which educates and protects burrowing owls. Other Sustainability Initiatives include:

* Recycling - Students pick up recycling twice a week from classrooms.
* School Garden – Students, parents & partners created 4 raised beds and a rain barrel to capture rain water.
* Increase Biodiversity – Atala Butterflies
* Increase Water Efficiency
* Increase Energy Efficiency
* Reducing Waste -
* Environmental Club – 4th and 5th grade students collect recycling, host speakers, visit the Materials Recycling Facility and the Waste to Energy Plant.

In order to make our campus more sustainable, we were awarded the following grants this year:

* Seed grant from NWF $500
* P3 Eco Challenge award $500
* Waste Management grant $750

This year the environmental club, ECO Patrol, took sustainability issues and brainstormed ways to help. Students came up with ten proposed thematic environmental and sustainability focus areas. Areas are: water, biodiversity, healthy living, school grounds, transportation, climate change, healthy schools, sustainable food, consumption & waste, and energy. Each month, students will focus on a new pathway.

Griffin Elementary is not only interested in our own community, but that of the planet. Griffin Elementary, through the International Environment Program, was awarded a three year grant and partnership with EPA Taiwan (EPAT). In its first year, this Eco-Campus partnership program provided high-quality collaborative education experiences for our students from diverse cultures, which included a visit from the Taiwanese Delegation. Griffin is proud to be registered as an Eco-School.

The Cooper City community is a great part of Griffin Elementary School and lends itself to many of our activities and events. Our local Partners in Education help us in a myriad of ways; from donating food for luncheons, to math night, to assisting with behaviors. Our Partners include: Papa Johns, Beef O’Bradys, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Publix, Target, Pizza Fusion, Barnes and Noble, Walmart, City of Cooper City, Miami Marlins, McDonald’s, Burger King, Dairy Queen, AXA Financial and Karate America. In several situations, Karate America has donated time and effort to students with behavioral concerns. Each outcome was a positive influence on the student’s school and home life. Our partner, the City of Cooper City, was awarded Partner of the Year with Broward Schools in 2015. The staff at Griffin Elementary believe that “it takes a village”, and we surely take advantage of that!

Other accolades awarded to Griffin Elementary include the following:

* A+ School for 15 years in a row
* Golden School Award for 30 years
* Miami Marlins “Think Tank” Award
* Winner of Haiku Poem for Broward County
* Partner of the Year award

Griffin Elementary has been an A-rated school for the past 14 years. Based on test scores, our students are proficient in all areas of testing. Results for last year include: ELA Proficiency 62%, Math Proficiency 76%, Science Proficiency 55%. While all of our scores are proficient, we are constantly looking for strategies to improve on our success.

**Areas of Improvement**

As we consider areas of improvement for the next three years, we continue to work on improving student performance and improving technology. Although our Students with Disabilities are continuing to meet expectations, data proves that we must continue to close the achievement gap in certain areas. After much analysis, we discovered that some of our ESE students are not meeting requirements in the area of science. We noticed that our science test scores have not improved as much as expected during the past two years. Strategies are being put into place to improve this. Support staff, administration, leadership and teachers attended professional development and training on better integration of science into the total classroom. There will be more push-in vs. pull-out for ESE services. Also, students will not be pulled out during science lessons, insuring that they have the same opportunities as their gen-ed peers. We have now integrated science into all areas of learning, with an emphasis on reading. Teachers now have a block of time specifically allotted to science, which includes culminating activities and hands-on activities. Vertical planning across grade levels has proven successful, as well. Our teachers and administration visited other schools with high science scores and large ESE populations. This SES visit proved to be insightful and extremely useful in planning for positive changes at Griffin. While this is a long-term process, Griffin Elementary staff and teachers are positive about the future outcomes.

In the area of technology, we would like to update our classrooms to 21st Century technology standards by installing short throw projectors in each classroom to eliminate the safety hazard of wiring on the floors. Also, to free up the teachers to be able wirelessly connect their devices to the projector. Each short throw projector, including installation and electric, would cost approximately $1,800 per classroom.

These challenges are sure to increase in the upcoming years, but Griffin Elementary is prepared to accept these challenges to help our students discover, think, grow and learn to work independently to become productive members of society and our community.