



# **Executive Summary**

**Forest Hills 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?**

Forest Hills Elementary has 755 students and is located on 85th Avenue and just south of Sample Road in Coral Springs, Florida. This Title I school currently has 85% free and reduced lunch. The school population is made up of 15% White, 38% Hispanic, 38% African-American, 4% Multi-ethnic, 4% Asian, and 1% Indian. The community is made up of 50% single-family homes (houses, condominiums, and town-homes), and 45% of the population residing in rental communities. A unique feature of this community is that it is surrounded by local businesses who partner with our school each year to help students achieve academic success.

## **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.**

Forest Hills Elementary was established in 1974 in the City of Coral Springs, Florida. Forest Hills Elementary is a hidden gem located on Forest Hills Circle. It is a Title I School with about 85% of the students on Free and Reduced Lunch. The population is quite diverse as it has one third of its students in the ELL subgroup. It has approximately 755 Prekindergarten through fifth grade students. The Exceptional Special Education programs have rapidly increased and now include three specialized E.S.E. prekindergarten classes, three intensive E.S.E. prekindergarten classes, and even one regular-voluntary Title I funded prekindergarten class. Most of our E.S.E. prekindergarten students who are not within boundary, reassign to our school upon entering kindergarten. Hence, our students' needs in kindergarten through fifth grade are met through a personalized approach. We also have two VPK classes on campus. A portion of our population is also transient. Some of our families, for example, travel to their native country and return after several days or weeks. The community consists mostly of working class parents. Many of who speak another language such as Spanish, Creole, Portuguese, or Mandarin. The school provides translators for Spanish, Creole, Portuguese, and Mandarin, as these are the main languages spoken. For homes not having internet access, parents are encouraged to visit the front office when in order to apply for free/reduced lunch, pay for field trips or aftercare, or other sign up for school-related activities. Students are offered computer access for digital instruction from 7 a.m. - 7:40 a.m. A free breakfast is provided to all students beginning at 7 a.m. The media center is open for book check out throughout the school day for both, students and parents. The media center also has a parent resource area that contains academic games to assist parents with skills reinforcement at home. Parents are provided with needed assistance through the school's guidance counselor, social worker, and community business partners that offer a plethora of resources. The school also has a Listener Program for select students who demonstrate a need for the program.

Additionally, students are provided with specialized programs that include a full-time music, S.T.E.M., and Physical Education teachers. Afterschool enrichment classes are also offered: guitar, science through gardening (i.e. Planeteers), and mathletes (student's preparing for district-wide math competition). Forest Hills also provides a quality aftercare program for our students of working parents. The aftercare program includes a hot supper, homework help, tutoring by our very own teachers, as well as opportunities for computerized academic practice. Enrichment activities are also planned. Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) are provided for select students through our aftercare.

Our highly qualified staff is dedicated to academic excellence. Staff is provided with professional learning communities with regular communication from administration to ensure alignment of the school's vision. Teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities such as reading and gifted endorsement coursework. Due to retirements and movement, Forest Hills Elementary has hired several new teachers and transfers. For many of us, this is our first year working together as a team. New teachers are provided with not only the district's mandated T.I.E.R. support program, but mentoring through a monthly professional learning community as well.

Forest Hills Elementary is proud to offer the students and families it serves quality programs and personalized instruction. We believe that the families are an integral part of student successes; and therefore, the school provides the parents with opportunities for stakeholder input on school-based decisions as well as decisions that pertain to the family's child. Parent workshops are also provided along with activities that

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promote community socialization. Forest Hills will continue to strive toward meeting the needs of all of its students.

## **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.**

Forest Hills Elementary is proud to have blended classrooms in grades two through five. Each student is furnished with a laptop for instructional purposes. Our kindergarten and first grade classrooms have approximately ten laptops, and two desktops in each classroom. Our preschool classes are provided with mini iPads and a desktop computer. Primary students are also provided with RAZ Kids and Reading A-Z for online balanced literacy opportunities. iReady is also used for reading as well as mathematics in kindergarten through fifth grade as an instructional reinforcement. Our online programs embrace the Florida Standards. Our digital resources assist the teachers instruction using 21st Century techniques, and engage students in relevant lessons/activities.

Forest Hills Elementary is also the proud owner of its own Certified Wildlife Habitat and edible garden that are maintained through the Planeteers enrichment group. This vast outdoor area serves as an outdoor learning lab for all students. Students embrace the standards while focusing on relevant ways in which to reduce their carbon imprint on the Earth.

The school is also an Innovative Program: Junior Quantum Leap. This is an accelerated program for gifted and high achieving students. Eligible students are also registered in Broward Virtual courses and advanced academically. Forest Hills has placed in Broward County's annual mathematics competition each year and won First Place in the District's Battle of the Books Competition.

Our school's area of need includes closing the reading gap as identified by the 2017-2018 Florida Standards Assessment's, E.L.A. assessment. As a result, the school has an aggressive Response to Intervention program that meets weekly to follow student progress and make necessary alterations to programs. The school has two reading resource instructors who are dedicated to pulling out tier 3 students for needed research-based programs such as Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, and Leveled Literacy Intervention. Data including student achievement graphs demonstrate that student progress is being made. According to the 2017-2018 F.S.A. data, reading 58% of our third, fourth, and fifth graders achieved a provisional level 3 or above which is up 4% from the previous year. In addition, data indicates that the greatest area of weakness is the integration of knowledge and ideas. As a result, instruction has been modified to have a focus on this area of weakness. Best practices such as our weekly, grade level professional learning communities and bi-weekly Response to Intervention meetings have been scaled up as well.

Overall, Forest Hills has maintained a school letter grade of "B" on the State of Florida's school grading system. This year we will continue to have a laser focus on the additional points needed to move from a "B" school to an "A" when the results are released July 2019.

## **Additional Information**

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

Forest Hills Elementary is a proud to be the home of talented and dedicated teachers as well as staff who keenly plan strategic activities to bridge the learning gap. We are on-going learners who reflect on our students' needs and attend valuable professional learning opportunities that enhance our teaching skills. Lastly, we embrace the diverse community of learners that we serve on a daily basis.