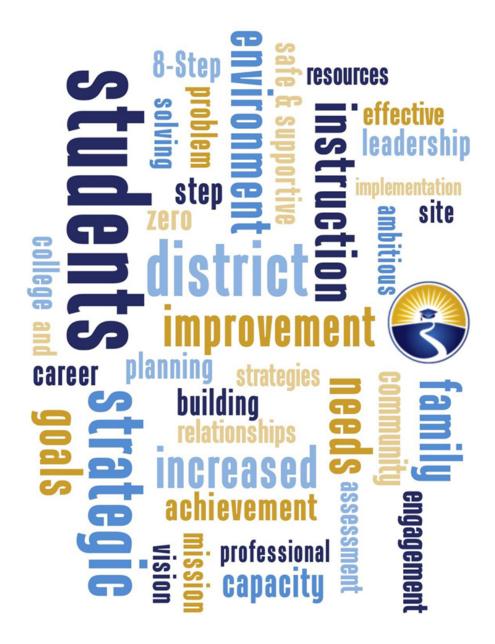# UNISIG APPLICATION
62 - Taylor

Mr. Danny Glover, Jr., Superintendent

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Purpose and Outline of the UniSIG Proposal

Under section 1003 of Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Public Law No. 114-95, each state educational agency (SEAs) shall reserve funds for school improvement, no less than 95 percent of which shall be used to make grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) on a formula or competitive basis, to serve schools implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under section 1111(d).

For 2017-18, Unified School Improvement Grants (UniSIG) will be awarded on a formula basis. Eligible applicants are local educational agencies (LEAs) with funded Title I schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement, as well as LEAs with high schools, Title I or non-Title I, that have a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of 67 percent of less, regardless of the school grade earned.

Part I: Eligibility and Program Requirements

The district reviews the list of eligible schools and allocations and ensures the requirements of UniSIG are met by providing assurances and summaries as applicable.

Part II: Needs Assessment

For each eligible school, the district demonstrates it has completed a thorough analysis of state-, district-, and school-level data (qualitative and quantitative) in order to identify points of strength and opportunities for growth to inform strategic goal formulation.

Part III: District Problem Solving

The district documents one or more strategic goals for improving the identified schools, anticipates barriers to the goals, identifies strategies to reduce or eliminate the barriers, and creates an implementation plan for each strategy to include both action steps and monitoring activities.

Part IV: Budget

The district incorporates a budget that indicates the amount of UniSIG funds the district will use in each eligible school. Each budget line item, except indirect costs, is directly tied to an action step identified in Part III.

LEA Eligibility and Program Requirements

Eligible LEA and Allocations

LEA Assurances

Request for Applications
We have read the Request for Applications (RFA) in its entirety and understand the intent and requirements of the Unified School Improvement Grant (UniSIG) program.

YES

General Terms, Assurances, and Conditions
We understand the LEA must have a signed statement by the agency head certifying applicant adherence to FDOE's General Terms, Assurances, and Conditions for Participation in Federal and State Programs.

YES

Risk Analysis
We understand the LEA must have a Risk Analysis (DOE 610) on file with the Florida Department of Education in order to apply for UniSIG.

YES

Supplement, not Supplant
We understand that each school the LEA will serve must receive all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of UniSIG funds.

YES

Allocation to Schools
We understand the LEA must allocate 100 percent of funds (less indirect costs) generated under UniSIG to the eligible schools.

YES

Alignment of Strategies
We understand strategies to be implemented under this program must be aligned with Florida's State Board of Education Strategic Plan.

YES

Alignment of School Improvement Plans (SIP)
We understand each strategy to be funded under this program must be identified as an **Activity** (within the Standard SIP) or an **Area of Focus** (within the Pilot SIP), with associated budget lines for each school to be served.

YES

Greatest Need
We understand programs, activities, or strategies to be implemented must specifically address the academic achievement of schools and students that demonstrate the greatest need.

YES

Instructional Programs
We understand evidence-based instructional programs must be implemented.

YES

Extended Learning Time
We understand that extended learning time activities required of an elementary school designated as one of Florida's lowest performing must not be funded through UniSIG.

YES

Deilverables and Monitoring
We understand deliverables will be monitored quarterly by the LEA for each school site funded through UniSIG. The LEA must monitor deliverables and be prepared to submit them to the Bureau of School Improvement (BSI) upon request. BSI reserves the right to do desktop or on-site monitoring of each school site and LEA.

YES

Supports for School Improvement

Improvement Planning
Describe how the LEA will support each school identified as comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and/or targeted support and improvement (TS&I) in developing and implementing a school improvement plan (SIP).

The district leadership team will work very closely with the school leadership to determine improvement areas of focus through data analysis, determination of root causes, and networking with community stakeholders. Work sessions to collaboratively plan and develop the improvement plan will be scheduled as needed. Ongoing joint oversight and communication regarding progress and additional needs will happen throughout the year.

Alignment of Resources
Describe the process through which the LEA identifies and aligns all district resources (e.g., personnel, instructional, curricular, policy) in order to meet the needs of all students and maximize desired student outcomes. Include the methodology for coordinating and supplementing federal, state and local funds, services and programs to align to interventions in comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and targeted support and improvement (TS&I) schools. Provide the person(s) responsible, frequency of meetings, how an inventory of resources is maintained, and any problem-solving activities used to determine how to apply resources for the highest impact.

The collective responsibility of the District Leadership Team is to ensure alignment between state, district, and school initiatives through implementation of the District MTSS Plan. This is achieved through regular analysis of the results of universal screenings and Early Warning Systems data provided by school-based leadership teams, review of summative data collections such as MTSS Surveys, Needs Assessments, Benchmarks of Quality, and statewide assessments, as well as on-going assessments including classroom walkthroughs to provide input, oversight and leadership for the school-based leadership teams, working in a cooperative spirit for continuous improvement of student achievement. The Director of Instruction (DOI) is responsible both for school improvement and federal programs under ESEA. In this capacity, the DOI relies on several district processes to analyze data and meets with school leaders and other district leaders to prioritize funds and activities. Allocations of local and federal funds are aligned with school needs with interventions applicable to the school's focus areas and differentiated accountability designations. Schools with a Focus or Priority designation receive additional support as determined by problem solving outcomes.

Protocols used within the LEA to ensure identification and alignment of resources aimed at maximizing

student potential are

1. Annual Summer Leadership Institutes and Conferences are scheduled by the Director of Personnel/ Professional Development and the Director of Instruction/Federal Grants. The intent of this leadership institute is to provide a focused opportunity to problem-solve around data at the district, school, classroom, teacher, and administrative levels. Agenda items include articulation sessions for transitioning grades (pre k to K; 2 to 3; 5 to 6; 8 to 9) to ensure that plans for needed instructional supports for all students are in place; strategies to align tiered supports within the district, develop and insure the inventory of resources is maintained; and provision of administrative training to insure school-based leadership is equipped to provide clear guidance for instructional decision-making at the school and classroom level.

2. LEA-wide school-level data chats and FCIM activities enable schools to identify trends and patterns using school-wide and grade-level data gathered at quarterly intervals to provide high-quality instruction and address intervention needs. The District-Based Leadership Team conducts quarterly on-site visits to assist school administration in calibrating their instructional assessments and support of teachers and helps to insure that the practice of high-quality instruction and intervention are matched to student needs during these visits. After all assessments and site visits are completed, district-wide debriefing sessions are facilitated by the Director of Instruction to ensure desired student outcomes are maximized across priority and focus schools. The district calendar of assessments, on-site visits, and instructional leadership meetings are scheduled by the Director of Instruction and Federal Programs.

3. The Technology and Curriculum Specialist conducts regularly scheduled meetings with Instructional Coaches to ensure that coaches are adequately prepared to provide instructional support at every grade level in the core subject areas. The Supervisor of ESE/Student Services conducts regularly scheduled monthly data reviews with the district PBS Coaches to review discipline data, discuss trends, evaluate needs and develop plans to improve student engagement at Tiers 1 and 2. In addition to meeting with the PBS Coaches, weekly meetings are held with ESE Specialists to discuss the quality delivery of services and review discipline records for students with disabilities who are served across all three tiers. Coordinated meetings between deans and ESE Specialists, which will also include the Director of Student Support Services, will be held to review data concerning disproportionate discipline issues in the district.

The process of working collaboratively between the district and school level teams, as well as with support personnel (subject area coaches, PBS coaches, ESE Specialists) helps to ensure organizational readiness for systemic change. Collaboration and calibration are key to the successful implementation of improvement plans in the Taylor County School District.

District Policies and Practices
Identify specific policies and practices the LEA shall seek to add, modify, or remove in order to establish or strengthen systems that support school-based leadership teams to implement interventions. Provide the rationale for the proposed changes and the steps required to make the modifications, including person(s) responsible for implementation and follow-up.

The district has been very proactive in the quest for school improvement. Ongoing professional development is provided to staff, instructional coaches, and leadership. The Taylor County School District shall continue to use a reflective collaboration process to determine school needs and make adjustments to the improvement action plans. Improving student achievement will involve a careful analysis of student data with particular attention being given to each areas of focus.

It is the intent of the LEA to provide an efficient Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) with sufficient professional development based upon the identified needs of the instructional personnel to enable high quality standards-based instruction. Utilizing data-differentiated instruction to provide instructional supports and interventions that are directly correlated to student need will be the ultimate goal.

Problem solving and action planning require time! The district and the schools are committed to providing time for district personnel, school leadership, instructional coaches, and teachers to meet, discuss, reflect upon data, and make informed instructional decisions. Schools will be required to outline this annually within their improvement planning schedules which will includes: School-wide Data Analysis Days, Teacher and Student Data Chats, FCIM Plans, EWS Monitoring and MTSS Intervention meeting dates and times. It is the intent of the LEA that continual exposure to data will help to build a district and school cultures that value the use of reliable, complete information to guide decisions and solve problems.

School improvement efforts can and will improve student learning. There is no beginning or end to school improvement; it is cyclical. Essentially, the 8 step problem solving model will be used to guide decisions to add, modify, or remove improvement strategies. The District Leadership Team will facilitate the problem-solving process on an as needed basis.

Data driven decision making will result in:
-focused staff development programs as an improvement strategy to address documented problems/ needs
-budget allocations for programs based upon data-informed needs,
-staff assignments based on skills needed as indicated by the data,
-organized factual reports to the community about the learning progress of students,
-goal setting based on data about problems with possible explanations,
-staff meetings that focus on strategies and issues raised by the local school's data,
-regular parent communication regarding the progress of their children, and
-administrative team meetings that focus on measured progress toward data-based improvement goals.

Specific policies and practices that the district plans to create or modify in order to strengthen the systems that support school-based leadership teams as they implement interventions:

1. Early Warning System: Evaluate needs at various grade levels and develop district protocol to address the identified needs.
2. Progress Monitoring Data Collection: Determine specific data sets and formats for collection to facilitate cross-school interface and articulation.
3. MTSS District-wide Intervention and Data Capture Processes: Develop formal system and collection process across all tiers, including specially designed instruction and related services.
4. Action Planning and Problem Solving Process: Normalize the use of the 8 Step Problem Solving Model across the district at the leadership level and the 4 Step Problem Solving Process at the school and student level.

Continuous efforts are required if the district and school leadership teams is to refine and ingrain the policies and practices outlined above.so that the way of work is completed with automaticity.

Operational Flexibility
Provide the LEA's definition of "operational flexibility" provided to comprehensive support and improvement (CS&I) and targets support and improvement (TS&I) schools to enable full and effective implementation of the school improvement plan (SIP).

The Taylor County School district affords each site based leadership team the operational autonomy to utilize the 8 Step Problem Solving Model to make decisions about staffing needs, scheduling resources, and allocating budget funds as necessary. Participation in regularly scheduled and on-going monitoring through coordinated efforts of the school and district leadership teams of the schools' resources enables adjustments to be made as needed. Flexible and focused accountability and support systems are critical to continuously improving the academic achievement of all students, closing achievement gaps, and providing educational equity. School-based leadership has the charge to recognize student growth and school progress through the use of Florida's Grading System to align accountability determinations with support and capacity-building efforts, and provide for systemic, context-specific interventions that focus on the lowest-performing sup-groups with the largest achievement gaps. If a need arises, the school based leadership team has the authority to revise plans and reallocate resources.

Some of the district initiatives that guide and support sound decision making and operational flexibility are:
-Monthly Instructional Leadership Meetings which provide a venue for open discussion about site based needs, concerns, and problem solving.
-Quarterly School Level Data Chats and Florida Continuous Improvement Model (FCIM) Action Planning create an ongoing analytical environment where School Based Leadership Teams (SBLT) are constantly working with teachers to assess growth and areas in need of additional support.

Although the district provides guidance and develops protocols for school endeavors, the actual inner-workings of the school are facilitated by the principal. Decisions about teacher evaluation, placement, and scheduling are handled at the school level, as are,decisions regarding differentiated recognition, accountability, and support. The principal also has autonomy over managing the school's allocations and budget utilization to meet the needs of the school.

External Partners
Describe the LEA's rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partners with whom the LEA will partner.

The process of recruiting, screening, selecting and evaluating external partners will be made collaboratively between the district and the school leadership. Having a thorough knowledge of the school site culture, demographics, and data will assist the team in determining partners that will fit the needs of Steinhatchee School. Onsite vendor presentations and research reviews will assist the team in determining the best partnerships to propitiate the improvement efforts of the school. Thorough review of vendor qualifications and products will be completed prior to securing services.

Dissemination
Provide the methods for dissemination of this application to stakeholders (i.e., students, families, school staff and leadership, and local businesses and organizations) and describe the methods and timelines for reporting student progress, including how communication is provided in a parent-friendly, understandable format, and in multiple languages, if necessary.

The UniSIG improvement plan will be shared with families during the annual Title I Annual Meeting and at School Advisory Council Meetings. Ongoing progress related to implementation of strategies will be shared at monthly SAC meetings.