Plan Part 1: New Operator Management Plan

1. Why do you feel your organization is uniquely positioned to manage the school for which school you seek transfer of management? How does assuming management of this school fit into your broader network plans?

We feel uniquely positioned to take over management because of several key factors. First, it aligns with our mission and fundamental belief of building communities through great schools in which the community can connect to and identify with. We see turnaround /true neighborhood schools, with zoned enrollment, as our niche. Many charter organizations flourish in the traditional charter model of building one grade at a time with an application/lottery process. With our senior most administrative personnel all being seasoned educators with experience in turnaround environments, we relish in this side of the work and have data to support the success of our model. Our brief but strong track record addresses some key areas that are synonymous with effective turnaround neighborhood schools.

In bringing our student population from 487 to 640 in this current period, we were able to increase enrollment the first two years at Martin Luther King Jr. College Preparatory High School. This is significant in that the school was continuously loosing enrollment and we were able to increase our student population in a short period of time.

Through building a positive student culture that relies on very few rules but clear expectations under our tenants of DRIVE. (Discipline, Responsibility, Integrity, Vision, Effort), we were able to change negative perceptions of the school. Our scholars understand the importance of promptly arriving to school, following the school's dress code policy, respecting themselves and others and giving us 100% effort daily to ensure a successful end both academically and socially.

We created partnerships within the community with parents, politicians, clergy, business owners, alumni, and relevant stakeholders to help strengthen the school and solidify its place in the community. We were very intentional to allow our school to be used for a number of community events. During these events, visitors witnessed our scholars' pride and spirit of excellence which presents Martin Luther King Jr. College Preparatory High School the opportunity of becoming a neighborhood school that everyone in the community can be proud of. This is huge in turnaround work as it affords you grace when faced with the challenges this work inevitably brings.

We also provide wrap around services to alleviate as many barriers as possible that could potentially have a negative impact on our students' academic progress. Along with a social worker and a guidance counselor on staff, we partner with Communities in Schools and Agape. The model addresses dropout risk factors to free teachers to teach and students to learn. Through the efforts of a single point of contact – a school-based site coordinator – students at high risk of dropping out of school are identified by early warning indicators, their needs are assessed and he or she is then connected to community-based educational or social services, or both. Our school support team conducts a site assessment to determine the needs of the entire school and then maps those needs to community providers The site coordinator works inside school systems with principals, educators, graduation coaches and other personnel, and forges community partnerships that bring resources into the school, helping remove barriers to learning.

We have activities that students and families can connect to that create the pride needed in all neighborhood community school. We will have all major sports as well as band, majorettes, drum line, and choir. These are neighborhood activities that we also believe are extremely helpful in recruitment and increasing the student population. Our first school (King) received an overall school composite level 4 TVAAS on this past year's state assessment and grew by 1.6 points on average for the composite ACT score, superseding both the local district and national growth ACT average. This was attained in the first year of the new state standards. In addition, in our first year of operation we outscored the previous high school in every EOC category for proficiency.

We have been able to operate a healthy financial organization without huge amounts of philanthropy. Our model is more people and process driven and not program and devices driven. This allows us to operate leaner and obtain our desired results.

Finally, our senior leadership and founder are uniquely committed and connected to the city of Memphis and have a level of resolve for seeing this work succeed that is unmatched. There is a natural trust that comes with our connections to the communities in which we serve. We are granted grace and given the kind of support needed to see things through even during unstable and uncertain times. With that said, I think what is insanely unique about our organization is that the community actually wants us to take over operation of this school. That is unprecedented in this short but tumultuous history of ed-reform in Memphis and the state of Tennessee as a whole. We have spoken with parents, philanthropists, Uptown CDC, Klondyke CDC, Neighborhood Christian Center and with many others and all are excited about the potential of us becoming a part of their community.

Assuming the rights to operate this schools fits into our broader goals in three ways. One, it fits our desire to help strengthen and build communities through quality neighborhood community based schools. Secondly, our desire to have an impact on Frayser and the surrounding neighborhood of Memphis as a whole. Finally, to use the wealth of experience and knowledge that our senior leadership team has in leading middle schools. The Executive Director and the Chief Academic officer both were successful middle school principals and are humbly excited to once again take on that challenge.

We want to be clear that it is not our intention to use Humes as a feeder into our Martin Luther King Jr. College High school as this could potentially offset the eco system in the North Memphis area and cause Manassas to lose a large portion of its enrollment. We want to help strengthen Manassas by sending them students that are on grade level and ready for the increased rigors of high school. Our high school will definitely be an option for parents, but it is not our intent to use Humes as our feeder.

1. What plans do you have to support the staff, students, and parents of the school? What led you to believe these are the right supports?

Although the transition has its own unique variables, we have noted very similar trends. With that stated, during this next few months as this transition starts to take shape, we have supports that we have used in the past that were effective in our first transition of operation experience.

We know that engaging parents and truly making the connection to help them understand the overall process, providing several opportunities for parents to give their input on decisions being made, and truly helping them to feel like this is a collaborative effort are the most pivotal elements to the success of this process. We will start the process with informal meetings, visiting the area churches and businesses, walking in the car line before and after school, attending any school activity for the purpose of building relationships with parents and students.

It is our goal to provide several encounters with Humes so that they get a true feel for who we are as an organization. This is followed up with town hall meetings where we elaborate on the vision and receive input to determine the community's needs and what we are able to provide as it aligns with our fundamental belief systems and is financially feasible.

Beginning in January 2017, the Executive Director, Principal and Recruitment/Retention Development Coordinator will implement more aggressive student recruitment efforts. In order to retain the largest number of students at the school, we will use a multi-pronged approach. We administrators will set up booths in high-traffic neighborhood locations (e.g., grocery stores,

libraries and community centers) to distribute information about FCS and to field questions about the school. Additionally, we will conduct targeted outreach, including mailings, phone calls, and home visits. Representatives from the school will conduct promotional activities by speaking at those elementary schools that will feed into Humes. As a follow-up, FCS administrators, staff and volunteers will make neighborhood visits to areas likely to have high school aged children and knock on doors, distribute flyers and have informal conversations about the school. This process will be much easier in that the current Principal is remaining and the relationships he has already built with the parents will make this much more of a trusting environment on the front end thus for an easier transition. FCS representatives will attend neighborhood events as well as job and health fairs in the community, in order to promote the school and recruit future students. We are confident that these strategies will be effective in educating families about FCS and Humes. This will raise awareness about the school's mission and vision, enhancing recruitment, growing parental involvement in the school and increasing the commitment of the community to transformation.

The students currently attending the school will be introduced to the FCS leadership team by the current principal at a school wide assembly where we provide them with an opportunity to have designated students talk about some of the things they want to see stay the same and the things they would like to change. We have already met with a number of students and parents and have put together a presentation that will not only help them to understand the vision and mission but also to get them excited about the activities that we will be adding to the school.

They will be able to informally speak with us as we will be at the school having lunch with them and making ourselves a normal part of the school culture. We will bring our band and choir over during this schoolwide assembly celebrate them becoming a part of our family.

The staff will receive direct communication from us around the process of the transition. If they apply, each staff member will receive and recommendations from Dr. Crutchfield will be weighted heavily. We will be prepared to speak with them about our salary structure, raises and bonuses, health benefits, retirement benefits, 401k plans, PTO policy and all other pertinent questions as it relates to their employment. A member of our admin team will be at Humes daily in the office space that we have been provided and with our open door policy teachers can come to have one on one conversations with me to express whatever concerns they may have. Those who are not hired by us are expected to remain on for the duration of the school year.

Once we have taken complete operation of the school, the supports that we are currently using at King will be brought over and replicated on the middle school level. I spoke to some of those

supports in question one. However, they are grounded in our educational model that holds all students and stakeholders accountable and reflects the following:

Rigorous academics and extensive, differentiated support - all students will participate in a rigorous curriculum. All of our teachers will deliver high quality instruction, guided by a robust data-driven environment to provide targeted, differentiated academic supports, as well as advisory and character education. FCS believes in the power of exceptional educators and their ability to transform student lives. As such, FCS will be intentional and committed to hiring and growing highly effective teachers.

Extended instructional and professional development time FCS will provide a longer school day and year and will significantly increase students' instructional time in literacy and math. The day and year are also designed to allow for intensive professional development for teachers through extensive summer training, embedded coaching and weekly professional development sessions, including common planning time and structured data analysis.

Disciplined culture of achievement, character, and respect Character and leadership development will be a critical part of our program. FCS character values of Discipline, Responsibility, Integrity, Vision, Effort (DRIVE) will define the school's culture. Curricular themes and service learning components will align with the values; they will serve as the foundation of the school.

Community and service learning Through frequent school-wide communication and regular communication with individual families by teachers and advisors, we will establish a strong partnership with our families. Much of our community service efforts will be targeted toward the surrounding neighborhood in an effort to transform and be supported by the Klondyke and Uptown community. We will partner with a number of community organizations that will provide additional academic, mental and physical health services to our students.
Aligned with Dr. King's vision, community and service learning will be a key component of what we are currently practicing in the FCS schools. Students will engage in a specific number of service hours and corresponding projects.

Parent and community partnerships Through frequent school-wide communication and regular communication with individual families by teachers and advisors, we will establish

a strong partnership with our families. Much of our community service efforts will be targeted toward the surrounding neighborhood in an effort to transform and be supported by the Frayser community. We will partner with a number of community organizations that will provide additional academic, mental and physical health services to our students.

For students, we will offer a gradual creation of an arts department. We see the arts as a way to connect to the roots of the school and play to the Elvis Theme as we secure funds to start that process of building the program. We will add all major sports within reason depending on level of interest. We will offer all Special education services and be prepared to serve every student that walks through our doors including adaptive functional skills students. Also, our response to intervention (RTI) is a key element to how we are building momentum and showing growth with our students. Tuesday talks is another support that we will bring where leaders from across the spectrum visits the schools two Tuesdays a month and share with our students relevant social topics. We also have a partnership with Codecrew and will push coding into our new middle school. We have a partnership with Facing History and will add some tenants of its historical perspective to our curricular model as it relates to Social studies and Language Arts.

Teachers support will overlap with the students as it impacts how the students receive high quality instruction. We will continue our partnership with Leading Educators to provide support for our teachers. Teachers will have common planning time and will receive extensive Professional development lead by our Chief Academic Officer and Teacher Development Coordinator. Our monthly rotation for staff development is week 1 Whole Group Data analysis, week 2, vertical planning, week 3, is differentiated with new teacher support, SPED , and walkthrough issues for specific teachers, finally week 4 is individual time to catch up on life issue like Dr. appointments, etc.

Parents are continuously supported by the parent counselor. We have a parent center that is open for parents to use the internet and printer for professional and secular tasks. Parent meetings are held quarterly and there is a parent on our board who helps us understand the supports that are needed that may be overlooked. I will add a parent to the board from the Humes community as soon as we are approved.

2. Describe the student population you anticipate serving at the school. What unique challenges and opportunities do they face and how will you meet those needs

The student population we will serve mirrors the population we are currently serving.

6th-8th grade middle school (ASD charter)

2016 Enrollment: 315

100% Urban

Poverty Level 90%

Minority Population 98%

28% Special Educational Services

The community is in a different space than Frayser as it is in the center of a huge renovation project going on all around it. Thus the opportunity to at some point have a more diverse population of students and at the very least allows us to be able to count on enrollment beginning to increase in the years to come. There will be a working middle class sector of students who could possibly end up attending Humes and we are confident that we have a model that is attractive for students of all race, class, and academic levels. At present, we know that this population brings its definitive challenges. Homelessness, Socieo-emotional needs, substance abuse in homes, uniform needs, high sped population, and a number of scholars who are not reading on grade level. As was explained earlier, our supports are geared toward this population as we understand the very nature of turnaround is to serve the lowest performing and highest need schools. Through our various partnerships with Agape, CIS, Neighborhood Christian Center along with our RTI plan and our extensive SPED department, we are able to address the majority of the needs. Our instructional practices that lean heavily on RTI and interventions like Achieve 3000 and Compass Learning have proven to be effective and students are growing using this model.

3. How will you address the unique interest and needs surfaced by the transition council? How will you continue to build authentic support and engagement during the transition process?

We have looked at the issues presented by the council. Through planning with the current principal and Gestalt's leadership team, we are confident that we will be able to meet many of their needs. This includes some of the future plans they hope to implement, specifically the uniform (skirt, blazer) policy. Parents would like students to have the option to wear a more traditional uniform (khaki, polo) because it is more affordable.

The one to one technology model was one of the key things that the council wanted to remain. With the help of Gestalt we will ensure this model stays for the immediate future. We also

fundamentally believe in community schools having activities and programs that allow the community to enjoy and celebrate the students and their unique talents. Because of this, a sports program and the gradual creation of an arts program is high on our to-do list. As we continue to meet and speak with parents, and as more needs surface, we are committed to do what needs to be done to meet those requests.

Because the engagement is ongoing, we have secured the current principal to continue in that role if we are allowed to manage the school. He has a positive relationship with the students, parents, and community stakeholders. Monthly town hall meetings for parents are being planned; but more importantly the daily and weekly interaction of our leadership team will start to build relationships that will make the engagement process smoother.

During the second semester, we plan to utilize the office space provided by Humes. We have also started to look into potential parents who could serve on the FCS board. We firmly believe that transparency and accessibility will help parents and the community understand that their voices are not only heard but play a large part in the decision making process.

4. What was your due diligence/ vetting process for determining that managing this school is a sustainable solution for your organization and the school? How do you know that adding the school to your network is sustainable?

While creating a budget there must be an evaluation of hypothetical situations regarding unforeseen problems. This can include what the school would do if certain revenue does not materialize, expenses run higher than the current budget projections, or if there are cash flow issues. From a planning perspective, the school has tried to take the approach of under-estimating revenue and over-estimating expenses. This hedge already built into the current budget's outlook is the first line of defense if additional developments take place that threaten the financial picture. No additional fundraising or donations were added to the budget, despite the high likelihood that these funds would be a part of the Humes revenue mix. The omission of these funds was intentional to demonstrate that the educational model can operate sustainably on minimal fundraising and primarily on state and federal funds.

The leadership team at FCS spent an extensive amount of time analyzing enrollment. We recognized the downward trend of annual matriculation provided by Gestalt. Our previous experience performing turnaround work leads us to believe that we will be able to reverse the trend of neighborhood enrollment, similar to what we did at the MLK campus when taking over Frayser High School. However, in order to prepare for worst case scenarios our team ran an

enrollment analysis on levels from 210 up to 360 students, utilizing various staffing models and transportation plans. Our analysis shows that FCS is able to operate the school at all levels of enrollment within this range. Although operation at the lowest level yields less operating margin than those at higher levels, it is still possible to effectively run the school.

Below 210 students is not feasible under our analysis to operate the Humes campus. A comparison document of the possible minimum enrollment scenarios has been provided for your review.

The budget developed is a feasibility analysis based on the proposed program and school design. However, it is not the final operating budget. The budget will continue to undergo forecast revisions in the next year. If there is a material revision on revenues or expenses, the budget will have to be reevaluated, redeveloped, and approved by the Board of Directors. Positions may have to be reduced to part-time or delayed to a later start date. This includes certain equipment and furniture purchases. Service contracts may also have to be renegotiated for a reduced scope.

The experience acquired from successfully operating the MLK campus by FCS will be applied to the operation of the Humes campus. Through our analysis, we are confident that the Humes campus will be a financially feasible entity to operate under the FCS model.

Finally, we have received nothing but support and excitement from the community and major power brokers in the Humes area. Henry Turley, Tommy Pacello (Medical District Collaborative), Tanja Mitchell (Uptown CDC), and Ephie Johnson (Neighborhood Christian Center) have all admired the work we've started in Frayser and are excited to partner with us as we potentially join them in their community.

Attachments

Frayser Community Schools Board Approval

Henry Turley Support Letter

Frayser Community Schools Partnership letter

Signed Letter of Support- Uptown CDC